

How to Create a 20/20 Business Vision and Why it Matters

By Roxanne Emmerich | Sunday, June 21, 2009

At some point in his or her career, every politician gets tarred with a catch phrase--and usually not a flattering one.

George Bush, Sr. is stuck with two. There was "Read my lips, no new taxes," of course. But only slightly less unfortunate was his dismissal of what he called, "The 'vision thing.'"

He was trying at the time to shake the impression that he was a competent day-to-day manager but he lacked any grander vision of where he wanted to lead the country. His choice of words and tone of voice didn't exactly help.

John F. Kennedy had a vision: "A man on the moon before the end of the decade." And it inspired the seemingly impossible. We had about 15 percent of the needed know-how when he made that declaration.

Bill Gates had a vision that there would be a computer on every desk in America. And this was back when most people didn't even know what a computer was!

Why vision matters

I once had a CEO look me straight in the eye and say he didn't really "go for" visions. "I put my energy into training," he said.

But training for what? I wondered. You do training without a vision, you're all gas pedal and no windshield.

A study at the Sloan School of Management showed that leaders who create, communicate, and implement successful organizational visions were more successful in EVERY measure than those who did not.

Three elements of a truly GREAT vision

Powerful, effective, propelling visions all have three things in common:

1. **Short, simple and strong.** Shorter is stronger. Take a given sentence and ask which words are pulling their weight and which can take a hike. Change vague expressions like "high-quality" and "world-class" into specific, powerful language that reflects your values. Simpler is also better. Use words a fourth grader could understand.
2. **Visual.** A statement that doesn't create a powerful visual image of the future isn't a vision. It doesn't give people anything to keep in their mind's eye while they work. You need a landmark on the horizon or you're driving blind.
3. **Of service to others.** Make sure your vision statement reflects an intense, focused drive to serve the needs of your customers, not just to "satisfy."

The human spirit will not invest in mediocrity. That's why a vision always starts with a bold and audacious idea. A vision statement is nothing less than an invitation for o
What accounts for the difference between "Oh crap, it's Monday" and "Thank God it's Monday"? It's your happiness. And, for your own emotional and mental health, you need to feel happy at work.

Vision doesn't stop at the top

Once you've got your vision defined--your clear, concise, powerful, visual, service-oriented vision--don't put it in the drawer. Pour it all over your company. Let it seep into every nook and cranny of everything your company does. Put it on the lips and in the hearts of your workforce or it will never find its way into the wider world.

The turning point for a vision is when everyone sees it, gets it, and buys into participating to make it happen. And if you've built your vision around a bold and audacious idea, a ludicrous, unreasonable, captivating idea--like, oh, I don't know, going to the moon--people will throw their hearts over the bar with you to make that unreasonable dream a reality.

Roxanne Emmerich is renowned for her ability to transform "ho-hum" workplaces into massive results-oriented "bring-it-on" environments. To discover how you can create a 20/20 business vision, motivate employees, ignite their passion and catapult performance to new levels, check out her new book – Thank God It's Monday. Now, you can get a free sneak preview at:

http://www.thankgoditsmonday.com/preview_the_book/