

the
**PROUTY
PROJECT**

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Read'n Route To: _____

Return To: _____

"C" NOTE QUOTE:

"Just believe in people, give them a chance to make decisions, take risks and work hard. We could have made this work selling cabbages."



Congratulations Andy!

● **If you know who said this quote,** please call 952.942.2922 or send an e-mail to melissa.gennert@proutyproject.com with your answer before Thursday, January 31 – one guess per individual. If we have more than one correct answer, we throw those names in a hat to draw the winner of a \$100 gift certificate.

**And Last Issue's Winner is...
Andy Alderson, Couple to Couple
League, Cincinnati, OH**

Andy knew that Nelson Mandela said, *"We will work to support courage where there is fear, foster agreement where there is conflict and inspire hope where there is despair."*

Thank You

Over the past 45 days, I have called all the clients with whom we worked in 2007. Your continued input and feedback is much appreciated as we head off to our strategic planning offsite next week. It's a joy and honor to work with you.

STRETCH Foundation

A special thanks to Susan and Bill Sands for their recent donation to our STRETCH Foundation. We appreciate your generosity. In addition, we write a check (1% of our firm's annual revenue) to the STRETCH Foundation on March 1 every year.

2008 STRETCH Expedition

On March 1, 2008 we head to India to learn about microfinancing as a tool to help eliminate poverty. Interested? Get your visa, get on the plane and join us! We encourage you to call us for more information 952.942.2922.

Here's to a **great 2008**, full of lots of **stretch** in your **strategy**,

Jeff Prouty



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● STRATEGIC PLANNING

GREAT VISION, MISSION AND VALUE STATEMENTS



mike.felmlee@proutyproject.com

Article by
Mike Felmlee

Many of our clients engage us to help them think about their vision, mission and value statements. Despite the volumes written, why is there still so much confusion about what constitutes really good vision, mission and value statements today?

Well, we are reminded of this challenge every day by the quote on our wall of the *Creative Think Tank*, our office in Minneapolis. It reads:

“Definition of a mission statement: long, awkward sentence that reflects management’s inability to think clearly.”

— Dilbert

When our clients read this it usually generates some chuckles in the room.

Then we ask them about their own company vision, mission and value statements. We typically get a long pause. We then challenge them to articulate their vision and mission and to do so in 25 words or less. And then we wait for an even longer pause.

Granted, it is not easy. Yet, the challenge is absolutely critical to the success of your organization as everything you do should be aligned with the vision. If not, you are expending energy for little gain.

We believe you should be able to articulate what you do as an organization and where the organization is going, in 25 words or less, and with great passion and energy. If you cannot, you need to start over.

This is the first in a three-part series around our best thinking about company vision, mission and value statements. In this article, I will focus on your company’s vision statement. I will speak to your mission and value statements in subsequent articles.

To help our clients think about their company’s vision, we provide them a *Harvard Business Review* article entitled, “Building Your Company’s Vision,” written by Jim Collins and Jerry Porras.

In this article, Collins and Porras use a framework to describe an organization’s vision. It includes both a **core ideology** comprised of an organization’s core values and core purpose (a handful of timeless guiding principles and the reason you exist), and an **envisioned future** comprised of a BHAG (pronounced BEE-hag, which stands for a Big, Hairy, Audacious 10-to-30 year Goal) and a vivid description which is what you would look like if you accomplished your BHAG.

We believe it’s the best information in the marketplace today, having withstood the test of time.

The BHAG usually generates the most attention from our clients. Case in point, many of us can recite the most famous BHAG of our lives with little prodding. President Kennedy said it in 1961 when he declared, “We will put a man on the moon by the end of the decade.” Why is this so?

To help provide context for really BOLD BHAGs, Collins and Porras categorize them into four broad categories. These examples include:

1 Target BHAGs:

- Become a \$125 billion company by the year 2000 (Wal-Mart, 1990)
- Become the dominant player in commercial aircraft and bring the world into the jet age (Boeing, 1950)

2 Common-enemy BHAGs:

- Crush Adidas (Nike, 1960’s)
- Knock off RJR as the number one tobacco company in the world (Philip Morris, 1950’s)

3 Role-model BHAGs:

- Become the Harvard of the West (Stanford University, 1940’s)
- Become the Nike of the cycling industry (Giro Sport Design, 1986)

4 Internal transformation BHAGs:

- Become number one or number two in every market we serve (General Electric, 1980’s)
- Transform this company from a defense contractor into the best diversified high-technology company in the world (Rockwell, 1995)

Here is your vision challenge. Rate the following six questions (each worth a maximum of five points) to test your current vision or BHAG and determine if it is truly:

BIG enough
HAIRY enough
and **AUDACIOUS** enough.

Description	Rating Scale (1=low, 5=high)
1. Is it clear?	_____
2. Is it measurable?	_____
3. Is it compelling?	_____
4. Does it act as a catalyst for team spirit?	_____
5. Does it have a 50% to 70% probability for success?	_____
6. Does everyone in your organization believe you can do it?	_____
Total (maximum of 30 points)	_____

Is your BHAG easy to grasp? Easily understood? Is it strategic versus tactical? Will it call you to action?

Please let us know how you scored.

We’d love to help you raise your score and **STRETCH** your vision in 2008!

● ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

HELP WANTED: LEADERS



grayce.belvedere.young@proutyproject.com

Article by
Grayce Belvedere Young

Lately I've been reading a number of articles and books that explore the growing concern around the talent gap in terms of sheer number of people to accomplish the work, skill sets required to successfully achieve one's business goals and leadership skills to motivate people to work together to accomplish more than they can individually.

"Most organizations and nations are still asleep, unaware that there are problems brewing, convinced that any shortages in talent will be short-lived. The reality is that these are not temporary changes but massive dislocations that will forward companies without people resources to move, sell, merge or go out of business" (page 92) *Extreme Future* by Dr. James Canton.

These are huge issues that cannot be solved readily or quickly, and certainly, not individually or by one organization or nation. So then, what does an organization do to address the talent gap?

One avenue is to focus on developing your current employees and grooming them for new skills, new experiences and/or new roles. This is not for the faint of heart as it requires both a long-term view and a broad approach to development. Long-term speaks for itself. A broad approach to development means a combination of experiences and actions that include:

- Experiential, on-the-job learning;
- Learning from others, both formally and informally; and
- Self-study or classroom learning.

This notion intuitively makes sense therefore, the next question is how does one go about ensuring development occurs, particularly when most employees have more work than hours in the day? The

secret lies in connecting the development actions to one's performance goals (both current and future).

The first aspect to consider is whether the development is for one's current role, such as a specific skill acquisition, or for a future role, such as learning a new functional area of expertise, or for both. If you are asking an employee to grow in one's current role, many of the development actions will be very functionally specific and must tie very closely with the person's performance goals. For example, if your account manager needs to work with new clients in a new industry, she may have actions on her development plan that include, by respective category:

Experience: Research current clients' businesses by reading their websites, annual reports and recent news; outline your annual customer analysis and plan.

Others: Work with the business development person to watch and learn how she approaches new clients; outline your selling approach and ask for feedback from peers or your manager.

Education: Read a book on solutions selling or value-added selling; join a professional sales association.

If you are asking an employee to prepare for a future role that requires leading a much larger team, his development actions will look different and must build on his longer-term performance results.

Experience: Write your department's strategy and goals aligned to the corporate strategy; with each team member, outline individual performance goals tied to the overall plan; learn and apply leveraging team member's individual talents to the benefit of the entire team.

Others: Serve in a leadership capacity on a non-profit board; join or lead an "outward bound" type of experience that requires everyone to work well together.

Education: Participate in a course on making the transition to manager; read a book on leading teams or being a leader.

The development actions for one's current role are much more targeted and, generally, shorter in duration, tied to goals. For future roles, the development actions are broader, longer-term and require someone to really stretch themselves outside of their comfort zone to grow.

The challenge to create a development plan for most people is two-fold:

- 1 Taking time to invest in yourself and your career (remember how long college/business school seemed at the time? Yet that was a huge investment in current success).
- 2 Going the extra step to reflect on what you've learned and transfer the learnings to the next assignment/project/client/team member.

Development is very similar to exercise. You must do some type of exercise every day to be physically fit; you cannot simply work-out once a month for five hours and expect to be fit. If you want to be a leader in the organization, you must invest the necessary time, energy and commitment to your growth. If you are currently a leader in your organization and you wish to grow those around you, you must invest in them and their development to build for the future.

If you know that your ability to fully execute your company's strategic plan is limited by not having the right people with the right skills/competencies to accomplish current and future work, please give me a call. I get jazzed about helping organizations groom their team members for success through development.

● TEAM DEVELOPMENT

IS IT LEGACY OR IS IT LEADERSHIP?



Article by
Anne Jaeger

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An organization's strategic planning process is a big and exciting endeavor. Dialogues around mission, vision and value statements often bring out the question, "What will our legacy be 10, 20 even 50 years from now?" An organization's legacy stems from the individual leaders.

Today, many people spend a significant amount of time at work. As humans, we all want to know that the things we do make a difference – that our efforts are valued and relevant. Deep down, we as leaders are seeking to establish our own meaningful legacy. To help in this endeavor consider the following five thoughts:

① **People are complex – get to know yourself REALLY well!**

It shows up time and again – self-awareness is the number one job for leaders because understanding how one's legacy may unfold is significant. This is not to say that legacies only come from those who know themselves well; however, at the core, legacy is about what one values and stands for, how one lives those values day-to-day and what is achieved as a result.

To help individuals and teams illuminate their preferences and explore best paths to excellence, we recommend and use many tools. Myers-Briggs®, 360 feedback and leadership profiles all help us articulate our own path to excellence.

② **Share it.**

Without sharing your talents, gifts, skills, personality, style, desire and values, your legacy cannot grow. Ensure that those in your sphere of influence understand how and what you want to contribute. Even through hours of conversation and meetings, it can still be

unclear. We believe that moving teams into action accelerates the clarity.

We recently worked with a senior team from a Fortune 500 company. They spent the morning sharing leadership profiles within the team, such as sharing key characteristics, priorities and personal values. In the afternoon, we designed a team challenge that put conversation into action. Not only did team members get to know one another well in a short period of time, they also had the opportunity to ask clarifying questions of one another and offer congratulatory comments in the spirit of admiration.

③ **Personal board of directors.**

When you share your goals and values, how does your personal board of directors respond? Do they perceive the same things about you that you do? What amazing things do you do that others value and that you may take for granted? Where have they seen you at your best? Where can they challenge you? As leaders, vulnerability is a right of passage. You need to hear AND respond to the good, the bad and the ugly.

One of our Prouty Partners, Robyn Waters, developed her own personal board of directors as a way to help her explore options for leaving the corporate world and reinvent herself. This hand-picked group of advisors offered their insights and encouragement, as well as challenges and support, as she worked to reframe her career and create a new personal brand.

④ **Consider your executive summary.**

A legacy goes beyond the details and events to what is left behind – your personal sound byte or epitaph. To continuously strive for improvement,

Jerry Rauenhorst, founder of Opus Corporation, always asks, "Is there a better way?" Consider asking yourself, "**How** will I be remembered?" versus "**What** will I be remembered for?"

The scene from the movie *Dead Poet's Society* is a great invitation to consider. Robin Williams plays a teacher in a traditional New England boarding school for young men. He challenges his class to think beyond their text books, graduate school and professional tracks. He asks, "The powerful play goes on, and you may contribute a verse. What will your verse be?"

⑤ **"Exercise" and wellness.**

We are constantly evolving and growing. While a legacy can be left because of a single event, more often we consider legacies that emerge over time. I am reminded of our 2006 Stretch Expedition leader, Chandrani Alwis, who has family on the southern coast of Sri Lanka.

After the tsunami washed ashore in 2004, she led our team of twelve to her home village to help with rebuilding efforts and raising over \$160 thousand to construct 125 single family homes and a community center. Chandrani stays in touch with the recipients of the homes built and continues to develop her commitment to affordable housing with Habitat for Humanity in the Twin Cities. "Exercise" means we practice and grow, we are disciplined and we commit to developing. Wellness means we feel good and strong about our actions.

With the New Year upon us, what type of legacy will you build in 2008?

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Bigger Goals • Bolder Strategies • Better Collaboration

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THANKS!