

**SOUTHWESTERN ASSEMBLIES OF GOD UNIVERSITY**

**Organization Communication, Conflict Resolution, & Negotiation  
LDR 5223-532**

**Instructor: Dr. Danón Carter**

**Assignment #2: Personal/Professional Ethos and Vision and Mission  
Statement(s) and Core Values**

**STUDENT DATA**

**Kathleen Smith**

**kathleenjsmith@lionmail.sagu.edu**

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### Personal/Professional Mission and Vision

On a daily basis, 21<sup>st</sup> Century lives are filled with decisions and defined directions—whether it is a destination typed into the GPS, a multi-faceted work project with a single marketing purpose, an assignment with clearly defined, high expectations, or a focused prayer time for the lost and hurting of the world. People make distinct decisions that have evident cyclical purpose. However, how often is this purpose just as clearly defined as the daily endeavors? Leaders are pulled in many different directions with astounding opportunities, and the higher the capacity of the leader, the larger this demand becomes. High capacity leaders want to be “yes” people and accomplish many feats, yet every person has their limit. Frequently, the struggle to know this limit is rooted in a lack of clear purpose and direction for one’s personal life.

To hear of a business or organization having a clearly defined purpose or mission statement is not a foreign concept to most people. Author and speaker, Andy Andrews, notes that, “Mission statements help businesses stay aligned with the values they find most important and ensure they’re staying focused on the way they want to impact the world. They can also help attract customers who share the same values” (Andrews, 2017). However, although the recognition of the critical value of a mission statement to an organization, most people fail to give an equal value to developing a personal mission statement.

Proverbs 29:18 reads, “Where there is no vision, the people perish...” (King James Version). People will perish, not only because of a lack of direction to go, but also for going too many directions in life. A priority to the development and revisiting of a personal mission statement remains an important factor for any leader. A focused

mission and vision allows a leader to set goals and establish tangible plans that get them to a fulfillment of their purpose. A mission statement becomes the compass to remind one of their personal “true North” in which to direct the decisions they make. “Discovering your purpose will put your life into crystal-clear perspective,” says Mark Victor Hansen (as cited in Rushfeldt, 2005).

When people lose sight of their personal purpose or never choose to define it, there are repercussions that can occur. Gifted leaders who operate and make decisions without a clear direction will likely experience burnout, family stress, and/or a lack of happiness due to the failure to keep their purpose for their lives at the fore front of decisions regarding how they spent their time, talents, and energy (Christensen, 2010). Without a known mission, there is a lack of boundaries to how one spends their time. Although boundaries do not immediately speak of the freedom found in pursuing one’s own purpose, they are essential to remaining focused on what is most important and to allow one the freedom to achieve those narrowed and goal-pointed tasks/opportunities (Andrews, 2017). These repercussions ultimately hinder a leaders effectiveness, credibility, and availability in their area of purpose.

Being authentic and honest with oneself about the direction in which one wants their life to go is essential for an effective leader both in their personal and professional lives. Cecile Peterkin notes, “A personal vision/mission statement is the framework for creating a powerful life” (Peterkin, 2003). This mission statement becomes the driving force behind the exercise of mind, talent, energy, and passion. It allows for a leader to make directed decisions that will produce accomplished goals and dreams brought to reality. In *First Things First*, Stephen Covey stresses the motivation from an effective

mission statement as, “accessing and creating an open connection with the deep energy that comes from a well-defined, thoroughly integrated sense of purpose and meaning in life” (as cited in Rushfeldt, 2005). A strong mission, followed by clear vision statements and values to drive them, has the potential to release power and effectiveness in a leader.

Mission statements reveal the “why” or purpose of people’s lives. Vision statements add the “how” and outline specific ways to accomplish a mission (Rushfeldt, 2005). Vision reveals the tactics used to see a purpose through to fulfillment. Values, as Scott Wilson, pastor of the Oaks Fellowship, states, “put flesh on the vision’s bones and describe the specific elements of what the vision looks like in day-to-day operations” (Wilson, 2010, p.49). Values are the beliefs and core principles that will be embedded in the efforts of accomplishing the mission.

The remainder of this paper will focus on my own development and discovery of my mission and the vision and values that reflect the accomplishment of that mission. My professional and personal mission, as my reason for being and hopes to accomplish in life, can be summed to the statement:

*To empower and advocate for the marginalized in society to reach their purpose and potential.*

### **Professional Vision and Values**

My mission in my professional life is primarily lived out through my involvement education. Various roles I have been given or hope to be in one day will assist in fulfilling my mission.

In the education field, empowering students is my ultimate goal. Our society commonly labels young people as demoted individuals, especially young people of a minority race. They are frequently expected to fail and not live up to their potential until they are much older. However, I do not believe that has to be the case for every child, nor should it be a case dependent on race. My former educational experience and where I will be teaching next year reflect this in demographic, academic, and socio-economic statistics.

Although I teach high school math, my heart for education is not to instill a love for mathematics in my students. My classroom is a place where students, regardless of their background, educational history, ethnicity, or gender, may have the opportunity to grow as a person. They will feel believed in and championed on to the greatness that lies within them. Learning mathematical standards is a practice of discipline and skill in my classroom. That is not where my classroom begins and ends. Rather, instilling values, encouraging, and standing up for their potential both in academics and life remains my passion in this field. One day, my hope is for this professionally to evolve into an educational based outreach center for at-risk youth.

My professional vision statement is: This will be accomplished by educating both in traditional and non-traditional contexts, and it will be achieved through speaking arrangements, blogging, and other forms of communication. The following principles communicate the values, in which drive my mission and professional vision:

- Foster an environment in which *encouragement* thrives, no matter external factors.
- *Love* God, and love people—all else flows from here.

- Provide a learning and growing environment where every person is treated *with respect*.
- *Excellence* honors God and inspires people. Pursue it as standard.
- Be *responsible* for what you put your hands to.
- Embrace *diversity* as an essential element of society and God's creation.
- Dedicate yourself to *serve* as a form of leading, and commit to *servanthood* as a way of life.
- Choose *personal growth* in every area of your life, and instill that in others.

### **Personal Vision and Values**

My personal life involves not only family and friends, but also, my ministry is encompassed here. My mission plays a significant part in ministry and leadership development opportunities.

In my personal life, my focus is in developing people and loving them where they are. My current roles that help to fulfill my mission are Growth Track leader, small group leader, spoken word artist, blogger, and speaker. In these areas, I am able to empower others and advocate for change. The marginalized societal members that I have the opportunity to encourage in my personal life are not just youth but expanding to young adults, women, and minorities. I currently speak on racial reconciliation through spoken word and written pieces, speak and write on women's rights/egalitarianism, and lead leadership and personal development classes for young adults.

My greatest passion and cry of my heart is for the church to take her stand in social justice. Social justice expands to all areas of society—from socio-economic

factors to continued racial divides to educational hindrances for the less fortunate. My personal life is dedicated to seeing change where it needs to be, standing up for what must be addressed, and developing and equipping people to believe in themselves beyond where they are or have been.

Thus, my personal vision statement is: This will be accomplished through speaking and writing opportunities and leadership development trainings. Many of my values remain true between my personal and professional life; however some will have a greater influence in one area than the other. The following principles communicate the values, in which drive my mission and personal vision:

- *Love* God, and love people—all else flows from here.
- *Excellence* honors God and inspires people. Pursue it as standard.
- Be *responsible* for what you put your hands to.
- Embrace *diversity* as an essential element of society and God's creation.
- Dedicate yourself to *serve* as a form of leading, and commit to *servanthood* as a way of life.
- Choose *personal growth* in every area of your life (spiritually, physically, emotionally, relationally), and instill that in others.
- Daily desire *joy*, and give it freely to others.
- Remain *dedicated* to your mission, your task, your passions.

### **Conclusion**

Mission and vision statements provide a vehicle for the communication of one's personal values and passions ("The Role of Mission, Vision, and Values", 2015).

Mission is a target for strategic development within one's vision, and mission is the ultimate guiding principle in which one determines where to invest their time, money, and relationships. Without a point of focus for life's endeavors, one will never truly be able to make the impact that is possible through them. Focusing one's purpose is a key endeavor for every leader, so that, regardless of what may come one's way, they will have a clear direction that no setback nor discouragement will be able to stop or alter. As Henry David Thoreau affirmed, "In the long run men only hit what they aim for" (as cited in Rushfeldt, 2005).



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