

Crafting Your Personal Mission Statement

Determining and Living Your Life According to Your Core Values

Directions: Place an "X" by 20 values that are key to you. Narrow the list to ten core values and then further narrow the list to three core values. Use these three core values as a common thread to weave throughout the writing of your mission statement.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Achievement <input type="checkbox"/> Advancement and Promotion <input type="checkbox"/> Adventure <input type="checkbox"/> Affection (love and caring) <input type="checkbox"/> Arts <input type="checkbox"/> Challenging problems <input type="checkbox"/> Change and variety <input type="checkbox"/> Close relationships <input type="checkbox"/> Community <input type="checkbox"/> Competence <input type="checkbox"/> Competition <input type="checkbox"/> Cooperation <input type="checkbox"/> Country <input type="checkbox"/> Creativity <input type="checkbox"/> Decisiveness <input type="checkbox"/> Democracy <input type="checkbox"/> Ecological awareness <input type="checkbox"/> Economic security <input type="checkbox"/> Effectiveness <input type="checkbox"/> Efficiency <input type="checkbox"/> Ethical practice <input type="checkbox"/> Excellence <input type="checkbox"/> Expertise <input type="checkbox"/> Fame <input type="checkbox"/> Fast living <input type="checkbox"/> Fast-paced work <input type="checkbox"/> Financial gain <input type="checkbox"/> Freedom <input type="checkbox"/> Friendships <input type="checkbox"/> Growth <input type="checkbox"/> Having a family <input type="checkbox"/> Helping other people <input type="checkbox"/> Helping society <input type="checkbox"/> Honesty <input type="checkbox"/> Independence <input type="checkbox"/> Influencing others <input type="checkbox"/> Inner harmony <input type="checkbox"/> Inner passion <input type="checkbox"/> Integrity <input type="checkbox"/> Intellectual status <input type="checkbox"/> Involvement <input type="checkbox"/> Job tranquility | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership <input type="checkbox"/> Location <input type="checkbox"/> Loyalty <input type="checkbox"/> Market position <input type="checkbox"/> Meaningful work <input type="checkbox"/> Merit <input type="checkbox"/> Money <input type="checkbox"/> Nature <input type="checkbox"/> Being around people who are open and honest <input type="checkbox"/> Order (tranquility, stability) <input type="checkbox"/> Personal development (living up to my full potential) <input type="checkbox"/> Physical challenge <input type="checkbox"/> Pleasure <input type="checkbox"/> Power and authority <input type="checkbox"/> Privacy <input type="checkbox"/> Public service <input type="checkbox"/> Purity <input type="checkbox"/> Quality of what I take part in <input type="checkbox"/> Quality relationships <input type="checkbox"/> Recognition (respect from others) <input type="checkbox"/> Religion <input type="checkbox"/> Reputation <input type="checkbox"/> Responsibility and accountability <input type="checkbox"/> Security <input type="checkbox"/> Self-respect <input type="checkbox"/> Serenity <input type="checkbox"/> Sophistication <input type="checkbox"/> Stability <input type="checkbox"/> Status <input type="checkbox"/> Supervising others <input type="checkbox"/> Time freedom <input type="checkbox"/> Truth <input type="checkbox"/> Wealth <input type="checkbox"/> Wisdom <input type="checkbox"/> Work under pressure <input type="checkbox"/> Work with others <input type="checkbox"/> Working alone <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
|--|---|

Source: Adapted from *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook* by P.M. Senge, Currency Publisher, 1994.

Mission Statement Draft

Preparation

Completing the following statements may help you determine the focus and wording of your personal mission statement.

I am at my best when . . .

I am at my worst when . . .

I am truly happy when . . .

I want to be a person who . . .

Someday I would like to . . .

My deepest positive emotions come when . . .

My greatest talents and best gifts are . . .

When all is said and done, the most important things in life are . . .

Possible life goals for me are . . .

Review

Writing a mission statement requires deep reflection about who we are and what our purpose is. Review your mission statement when it is still in draft form. Ask yourself the following questions.

Does my mission statement ...

Bring out the best in me?

Challenge and motivate me?

Communicate my vision and values?

Address significant roles in my life?

Express timelines, proven principles that produce quality of life results?

Represent the unique contribution I can make to society?

The Creation of a Personal Mission Statement

By following the suggested six steps below, you will be able to begin writing a personal mission statement that will inspire you and will provide direction and guidance for your life. Remember that a personal mission statement is as much discovery as it is creation. Don't rush it or set rigid timetables for yourself; rather, go slowly through the process, ask yourself the right questions, and think deeply about your values and aspirations.

A meaningful personal mission statement contains two basic elements. The first is what you want to do – what you want to accomplish, what contributions you want to make. The second is what you want to be – what character strengths you want to have, what qualities you want to develop.

Step 1 Define what you want to be and do

Some of the elements I would like to have in my mission statement are:

What I'd like to do:

What I'd like to be:

Step 2 Identify an Influential Person

An effective tool to focus in on what you want to be and do is to identify a highly influential individual in your life and to think about how this individual has contributed to your life. This person may be a parent, work associate, friend, family member, or neighbor. Answer the following questions, keeping in mind your personal goals on what you want to be and do.

Who has been one of the most influential people in my life?

Which qualities do I most admire in that person?

What qualities have I gained (or desire to gain) from that person?

Step 3 Define your Life Roles

You live your life in terms of roles – not in the sense of role playing, but in the sense of authentic parts you have chosen to fill. You may have roles in work, in the family, in the community, and in other areas of your life. These roles become a natural framework to give order to what you want to do and to be.

You may define your family role as simply “family member.” Or, you may choose to divide it into roles, such as “wife” and “mother” or “husband” and “father.” Some areas of your life, such as your profession, may involve several roles. For example, you may have one role in administration, one in marketing, one in personnel, and one in long-range planning. Examples:

*Wife/Mother, Manager-New Products, Manager-Research,
Manager-Staff Development, United Way Chairperson, Friend*

*Husband/Father, Salesman-Prospects, Salesman –
Financing/Administration, March of Dimes Regional Director,
Friend*

Define up to six life roles and then write these roles in the boxes provided on the next page. Then project yourself forward in time and write a brief statement of how you would most like to be described in that particular role.

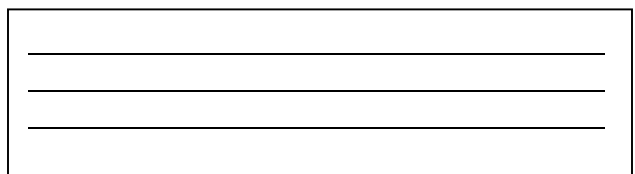
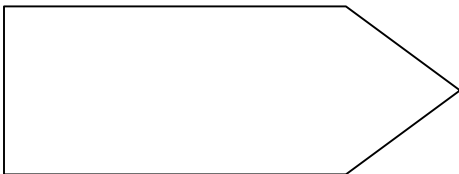
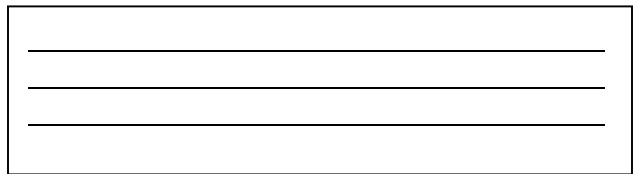
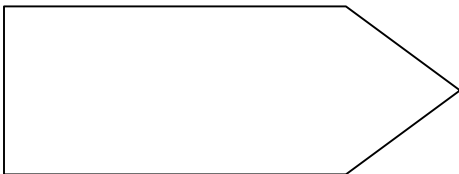
By identifying your life roles you will gain perspective and balance. By writing these descriptive statements you will begin to visualize your highest self. You will also identify the core principles and values you desire to live by.

Step 3 Define your Life Roles (continued)

Roles



Statement



Step 4 Write a Draft of your Personal Mission Statement

Now that you have identified your life roles and have defined what you want to be and do, you are prepared to begin working on your personal mission statement.

In the space provided below create a rough draft of your mission statement. Draw heavily upon the thinking you've done in the previous three steps. Carry this draft with you and make notes, additions, and deletions before you attempt another draft.

Step 5 Evaluate

It is important that you do not let your personal mission statement become outdated. Periodic review and evaluation can help you keep in touch with your own development and keep your statement in harmony with your deepest self. Continually ask yourself the following questions.

Is my mission based on timeless, proven principles? Which ones?

Do I feel this represents the best that is within me?

During my best moments, do I feel good about what this represents?

Do I feel direction, purpose, challenge, and motivation when I review this statement?

Am I aware of the strategies and skills that will help me accomplish what I have written?

What do I need to start doing now to be where I want to be tomorrow?

The final test ... does this statement inspire me?

Personal Mission Statement Samples

My mission is to give, for giving is what I do best and I can learn to do better.

I will seek to learn, for learning is the basis for growth and growing is the key to living.

I will seek first to understand, for understanding is the key to finding value and value is the basis for respect, decisions and action. This should be my first act with my wife, my family, and my business.

I want to help influence the future development of people and organizations. I want to teach my children and others to love and laugh, to learn and grow beyond their current bounds.

I will build personal, business and civic relationships by giving frequently in little ways.

I see each day as a clean slate, a fresh chance to write a new script and seize new opportunities. I value life's experiences and seek to learn and grow from each one. In my daily endeavors, I avoid neither risk nor responsibility; nor do I fear failure, only lost opportunity.

I am a responsible spouse and parent; I give priority to these roles. I value differences and view them as strengths. I seek to build complementary win-win relationships with family, friends, and business associates. To keep these relationships healthy and to maintain a high level of trust, I make daily "deposits" in the "emotional bank accounts" of others.

In my profession, I am responsible for results. I act with courage, consideration, and discretion. I prefer to let my works speak for me and believe in achieving visibility through productivity. In planning my weeks and days, I focus on key roles and goals to maintain balance and perspective. Knowing that how I perform affects how I feel about myself, I seek to do my best and record how I feel in daily entries in a personal journal.

I value my personal freedom of choice and my rights to exercise that freedom. I am more a product of my decisions than conditions. I do not allow present circumstances or past conditioning to determine my responses to the challenges I face. I choose to focus on the positive, to work within my circle of influence – to act directly on things I can do something about – and thereby reduce my circle of concern.

Source: *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* by Stephen R. Covey, Free Press, 2004.