

Three

Creating Shared Vision: Key to Leadership

The very essence of leadership is that you have to have vision. It's got to be a vision you articulate clearly and forcefully on every occasion. You can't blow an uncertain trumpet.

—Father Theodore Hesburgh¹

What Is Vision?

A vision is a “picture of the future that we wish to see or create.” The three elements of this process are: Future, Wish to Create, and Picture. First, something in the future is unknown and, therefore, it is something that has to be imagined. So, the question is—should we accept a vision of something which is unknown because of the inherent mystery and risks? It is generally accepted, however, that the job of a vision is to articulate or propose a future that would be clearly better than our current situation. Therefore, it is a future that we want to see, create, or aspire to.

The second element is that “we wish to create” this future. This has several implications. One, the stakeholders of an organization (staff, board, shareholders, and even customers) would be willing to put in effort to support a vision in order to realize that future. Two, a vision should be “high,” “lofty,” or aspirational enough to inspire stakeholders to action. Three, it should engage not only the mind but the heart and spirit as well.

¹ Retrieved from www.thinkexist.com/quotes/theodore_hesburgh/, accessed on January 5, 2013.

It should provide meaning and value to the organization's work and the stakeholders' effort. They should feel that the vision is worth going for and, therefore, it should tap into their deepest personal concerns, needs, or hopes as human beings. According to Bennis and Goldsmith, a good vision is based on two deep human needs: Quality and Dedication.²

Thirdly, a vision is the "picture" of the future. How the leader can describe and share this "picture," that is in his/her mind as clearly and as widely as possible, is the key to developing a good vision. As the picture is related to something in the future, a vision can be grand and somewhat "cloudy" but it should be simple and memorable. The different levels of specifics (of the vision) could later be embodied in mission statements and organizational goals and objectives.

The future is not a result of a choice among alternative paths offered by the present, but a place that we create, first in the mind, next in will, then in action. The future is not some place where we are going, but a place we are creating. We do not discover the paths but make them, and the action of making the future changes both the maker and destination. (Anonymous)

There are many grand and lofty forward-looking visions articulated by governments around the world, especially those in developing countries. One of the better known country-level development visions is Malaysia's "Vision 2020," a call for the country to acquire developed country status by the year 2020.³ The articulation, sharing, and promotion of such a vision are to propel the whole country (i.e., the stakeholders) on a journey toward an aspiration (developed country status). Vision 2020 is an example of a "successful" vision as it has endured more than 20 years after its first appearance in 1991. Even with the new

² Warren, B., & Goldsmith, J. (1994). *Learning to lead: A workbook on becoming a leader*. Massachusetts, USA: Addison-Wesley, p. 126.

³ "Vision 2020" was proposed by Mahathir Mohamad, then Prime Minister of Malaysia, when he tabled the Sixth Malaysian Plan before the Parliament in 1991. Retrieved from www.wawasan2020.com/vision/.

leadership, Malaysia today continues to use Vision 2020, modified and updated, as a national aspiration.

Traditionally, most organizations had a mission statement but now it is common that they include a vision as part of their organizational ethos. Nanus describes an organizational vision as a

realistic, credible, attractive future of your organization...an idea so energizing that it, in effect, jump-starts the future by calling forth the skills, talents, and resources to make it happen (and) a sign-post pointing the way for all who need to understand what the organization is and where it intends to go.⁴

Finally, there are personal visions, a future that one sees for oneself. Leaders are usually individuals with strong personal visions. If they have the energy, determination, and resources to take their vision forward, they can do great things for themselves or for the organization they lead. Whichever level a vision is, what is common is the desire to realize or reach for a better and improved future, for oneself, for an organization, or for a country.

Three Levels of Vision

Ideally, vision at these three levels—personal, organizational, and societal—should be in harmony as only then can people participate whole heartedly in creating that future.

For instance, an organization working for the prevention of HIV/AIDS could, at the first level, be guided by a general societal vision of an “AIDS-free generation.” Inspired by this, it could develop its own organizational vision such as “Reaching to all with HIV prevention,” something that should be in harmony with all its stakeholders and, most likely, compatible with many personal visions.

⁴ Nanus, B. (1995). *Visionary leadership: Creating a compelling sense of direction for your organization*. San Francisco, USA: Jossey Bass, p. 8.

It has always been asked: Why does vision matter? One of the best answers to that question is also very simple: “If you don’t know where you’re going, you might end up someplace else.”⁵

Visions are powerful stuff. They can make donors part with their money “for a good cause;” investors to put their faith in “someone’s dream;” or volunteers to willingly give their time because “they believe;” or employees and colleagues to work 110 percent “because we are in this together.”

The Power of Vision

Leaders may come in all shapes and sizes, or they may be found in unexpected places or surfaced in times of crises and upheavals. But one thing that they all definitely have in common is—a vision. Warren Bennis, who is one of the earliest researchers to make the connection between vision and leadership, says that leaders are the most results-oriented people in the world.⁶ Results attract attention and followers and believers.

According to Boyett and Boyett, the major shift in leadership thinking in recent years has been to go from the traditional strategist to the visionary.⁷ Because the world has become more complex, researchers say that strategies alone are no longer enough. There is a growing consensus that hard-nosed methodical analysis of the old days cannot move people enough to commit that extra 10–20 percent to deliver superior results. It is now widely accepted that monetary or other tangible rewards can move or motivate people only to a certain extent but for commitment that is sustainable, what works is usually something intangible. Hence, “vision” has become the key to effective leadership.

⁵ Yogi Berra Quotes. Retrieved from www.goodreads.com/authors/quotes/79014.Yogi+Berra/.

⁶ Bennis, W., & Nanus, B. (1985). *Leaders: The strategies for taking charge*. New York: Harper and Row, p. 28.

⁷ Boyett, J., & Boyett, J. (1998). *The guru guide: The best ideas of the top management thinkers*. New York, USA: John Wiley & Sons.

Goleman⁸ says it well: “Great leaders move us. They ignite our passion and inspire the best in us.” What does it take to ignite that passion or give us that excitement? We believe that it is leaders who have visions. Visionary leadership has been described as a force that moves people and mobilizes resources to get things done. Vision is the glue that binds people together, that produces great teams, that acts as a catalyst to provide synergy. It is a powerful force and absolutely essential for effective leadership.

If we transpose this line of thinking to the world of health programs, we know that visionary leadership is even more vital, given the state of many such programs in developing countries, with respect to funding, resources, needs, or emerging needs, and so on. Do we have leaders with a vision? How do we know we have a vision? How do we create a shared vision and why? And what can a shared vision do for the organization we lead? These are some of the questions we address in the following sections.

An Organizational Vision

An organizational vision is guided by the purpose, goals, and rationale for which the organization exists. Most members of the organization (such as staff, board members, executives, and so on) would have a sense of a common understanding and collective responsibility for achieving its purpose and goals. However, Senge, in his well-regarded book *The Fifth Discipline*,⁹ suggests that a vision is only one of four components of an organization’s guiding aspiration (see Box 3.1).

We can see that while goal is specific, vision is both vague and succinct. Box 3.2 lists some examples of visions created to match specific MDGs:

⁸ Goleman, D., Boyatzis, R., & McKee, A. (2002). *The new leaders. Transforming the art of leadership into the science of results*. London, UK: Little Brown.

⁹ Senge, P. (1994). *The fifth discipline: The art and practice of a learning organization*. New York: Currency/Doubleday.

Box 3.1: An Organization's Guiding Aspiration: Vision, Values, Purpose, and Goals

Vision: *An image of our desired future.* It is a statement or a picture that shows where we want to go, and what we will be like when we get there. Characteristics of a good vision are

- It is appropriate for the organization and for the times.
- It sets standards of excellence and reflects high ideas.
- It clarifies purpose and directions.
- It inspires enthusiasm and encourages commitment.
- It is well-articulated and easily understood.
- It reflects the uniqueness of the organization.
- It is ambitious.

Values: Values guide us on *how we expect to travel to where we want to go*. Values describe how we intend to operate, on a day-by-day basis, as we pursue our vision. For instance, Gandhi said that, in all human endeavors we cannot be certain of the ends, and, therefore, we should be sure of our means.¹⁰ Values are best expressed in terms of behavior.

Purpose or Mission: *What the organization is here to do.* It represents the fundamental reason for the organization's existence. What are we here to do together? We may never get to the ultimate purpose of our organization, but may achieve many visions along the way. There are several examples of organizational mission. A famous example is when President Kennedy gave NASA a difficult and challenging mission in 1961: "Land man on the moon within a decade."¹¹ This lofty and difficult mission was realized when Neil Armstrong put man's first step on the moon. A more recent example is when the Government of India launched the NRHM in 2006 to bring about architectural corrections to the government's rural health system.

Goals: *Milestones we expect to reach.* Every vision needs to be converted into specific, realizable goals. Goals represent what people commit themselves to do, often within a short period. Goals are specific outcomes we wish to achieve over a defined period of time, similar to "milestones" on a journey to a destination (vision).

Source: Senge (1994).¹²

¹⁰ Iyer, R. (2012). Means and ends in politics. Retrieved from www.mkganchi.org/g.relevance/chap28.htm, accessed on January 25, 2012.

¹¹ President John F. Kennedy's speech before a joint session of Congress. The decision to go to the moon (May 25, 1961). Retrieved from <http://history.nasa.gov/moondec.html/>.

¹² Senge, *The fifth discipline*.

Box 3.2: Goals and Attributed Visions

Millennium Development Goals	Vision (attributed to)
<p><u>MDG 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger</u> <u>Target:</u> Halve the number of people living below the poverty line by 2015</p>	<p>“Make Poverty History” <i>(a slogan used by civil society organizations)</i></p>
<p><u>MDG 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger</u> <u>Target:</u> Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger</p>	<p>“No Hunger” <i>(President Lula of Brazil)</i></p>
<p><u>MDG 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases</u> <u>Target:</u> Halt and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other major diseases by 2015</p>	<p>“Zero New HIV infections” <i>(UNAIDS. World AIDS Day Report 2011)</i></p>

Source: Authors.

While other theorists may differ in interpretations or definitions but generally, very similar or compatible traits have emerged to describe “vision,” often as a process of thinking or a possibility or potential that exists in the future. Here are two examples (see Figure 3.1):

It is a terrible thing to see and have no vision. (Helen Keller)

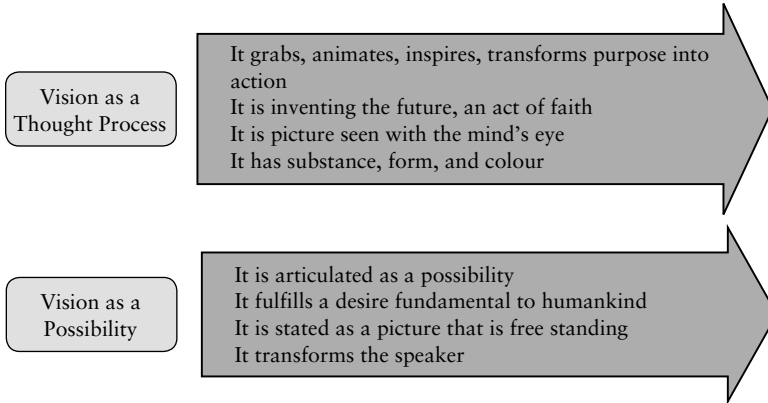
What do we look for in a vision? Vision should have certain characteristics before it can have the desired effect of influencing or inspiring people (see Box 3.3):

Can we “humanize” a vision and assign it specific qualities? Box 3.4 offers some suggestions:

The fact that we cannot achieve tomorrow what we want is the worst reason not to act today. (Anonymous)

In haste to assign characteristics and qualities to a vision, we should recognize what a vision is or is not designed to do, see Box 3.5.

Figure 3.1: *Characteristics of a Vision*



Source: Authors.

Box 3.3: *Characteristics of Good Visions*

A Good Vision

- Gives meaning to the changes expected of people
- Evokes a clear and positive mental image of a future state
- Creates pride, energy, and a sense of accomplishment
- Is ambitious, memorable, motivating, idealistic
- Offers a view of the future that is clearly and demonstrably better
- Fits the organization's history, culture, and values
- Sets standards of excellence that reflect high ideals
- Clarifies purpose and directions
- Inspires enthusiasm, encourages commitment
- Reflects the uniqueness of the organization
- Grabs attention
- Guides day-to-day activities
- Screens out the unessential
- Energizes people to transcend the bottom line
- Provides meaning and significance to daily activities
- Bridges the present and the future
- Moves people to action

Source: Boyett and Boyett (1998), p. 19.¹³

¹³ Boyett and Boyett, *The guru guide*.

Box 3.4: 10 Qualities of a Vision

1. A vision engages your heart and spirit.
2. A vision taps into embedded concerns and needs.
3. A vision asserts what you and your colleagues want to create.
4. A vision is something worth going for.
5. A vision provides meaning to the work you and your colleagues do.
6. By definition a vision is a bit cloudy and grand (if it were clear it wouldn't be a vision).
7. A vision is simple.
8. A vision is a living document that can always be expanded.
9. A vision provides a starting place from which to get to more and more levels of specificity.
10. A vision is based on two deep human needs: quality and dedication.

Source: Bennis W. and Joan Goldsmith (2010). Learning to Lead: A workbook on becoming a leader. New York, USA: Basic Books.

Box 3.5: What a Vision Is Not?

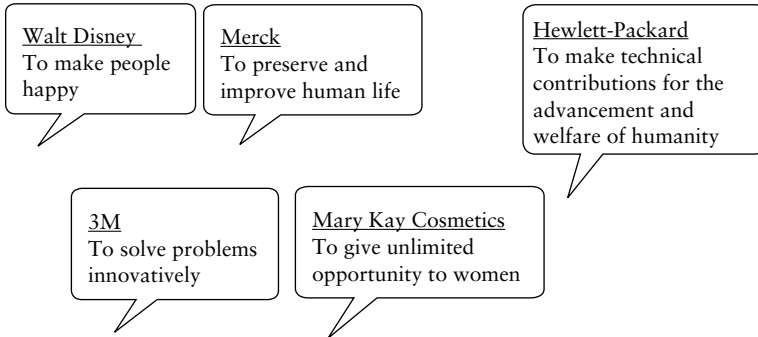
A Vision

- Is not a Prophecy* → Although a vision is a mental picture of the future, it cannot predict future events.
- Is not a Mission* → A vision gives direction while a mission gives purpose.
- Is not Factual* → Because it doesn't exist in concrete terms. A vision does not deal with reality but with possible and desirable futures.
- Is not a Constraint* → On actions except for those that are not consistent with it.
- Is not Static* → Vision may change as more experience is gained or context changes significantly. As it is said that "vision is not cast in stone."
- Cannot be True or False* → As it is a picture of the future, it is neither true or false which are attributes associated with the current situation.

Source: Adapted from several sources.

It is easier to define what we do not want. Why? We have seen them. In contrast, we have not seen the future. It is harder to visualize "tomorrow" or "future." It is also more difficult to think of committing ourselves to a challenging task.

Figure 3.2: Some Examples of Corporate Visions



Source: Adapted from several sources.

Some examples of visions of famous corporations are given in Figure 3.2.

Exercise Vision: Questions to Ask

When you are developing a vision for your organization, ask yourself the following questions:

- What is unique about your organization?
- What are your values and how do they shape your priorities for the future?
- What do your clients or the people you serve really need that you could provide or how do you add value to their quality of life?
- What would make people commit their mind and heart over the next three to seven years?
- What results does the organization hope to accomplish?

Exercise Developing a Vision

Write a vision of your organization, either an existing one or one you would like to see.

Checklist	How Good Is Your Vision?
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How do you know if your vision is “successful” or any good? Answer the following questions with a tick (✓) in Yes or No columns in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: *How Good Is Your Vision?*

	Yes	No
1. Does this vision lead everyone in the organization in the best possible direction?		
2. Will it benefit all members equally?		
3. Will it help to sustain and protect the organization over the long term?		
4. Can I, as a leader, articulate the mission clearly to all members of the organization?		
5. Can the vision be expressed as a slogan?		
6. Will the members of my group accept the vision with enthusiasm?		
7. Am I highly enthusiastic about it myself?		
8. Will the vision increase motivation appreciably?		
9. Is it sufficiently visionary to work?		
10. Is it the best vision under the circumstances?		
Number of Yes/No		

Source: Adapted from Chapman (1989), p. 109.¹⁴

Scores:

- One to four Yes: Poor quality vision—try again.
- Five to seven Yes: Getting there—take another look.
- Eight or more Yes: Congratulations. You have a good and suitable vision.

¹⁴ Chapman, E. (1989). *Leadership: What every manager needs to know*. New York: MacMillan Publishing.

Dream versus Vision

Are visions the same as dreams? Certainly, there seems to be a fine line between these two. The connection between dreams and visions is logical. But we believe there is a crucial difference. Many examples of renowned leaders' visions have elements of a dream, something grandiose, something far-reaching and fantastic that they perhaps "saw" (hence "envisioned") in their sleep. Do dreams become visions automatically? For the purpose of discussion, two examples of famous "dreams" are used: the song "Imagine" by Beatle John Lennon and "I have a dream" speech¹⁵ by Dr Martin Luther King.

EXAMPLE 1: This is one of the most famous songs of the 20th century. Fitting for the era when it was written (the 1970s) by John Lennon, this song has been embraced by the peace movement as emblematic of its aspirations and hope.¹⁶ It endures to this day as a messenger of peace (see Box 3.6).

EXAMPLE 2: This is one of the most famous speeches of our modern era (see Box 3.7). Even though it was specific to the conditions of race relations in the US, its message of civil rights and freedom found resonance around the world.

Exercise Dream versus Vision: What Is the Difference?

Identify the difference between them. Are they the same, interchangeable or distinct and separate? What is/are the key factor(s)?

¹⁵ This 17-minute speech by Dr Martin Luther King, Jr, delivered on August 28, 1963 on the steps of Lincoln Memorial, calling for an end of racism in the US, was a defining moment in the American civil rights movement.

¹⁶ Retrieved from www.metrolyrics.com/imagine-lyrics-john-lennon.html/.

Box 3.6: The Power of a Song

“Imagine”

Music and lyrics by John Lennon

*Imagine there's no heaven
It's easy if you try, No hell below us
Above us only sky, Imagine all the
people
Living for today...*

*Imagine there's no countries
It isn't hard to do. Nothing to kill or
die for
And no religion too,
Imagine all the people, Living life in
peace...*

*You may say I'm a dreamer
But I'm not the only one,
I hope someday you'll join us
And the world will be as one*

*Imagine no possessions
I wonder if you can
No need for greed or hunger
A brotherhood of man
Imagine all the people
Sharing all the world...*

*You may say I'm a dreamer
But I'm not the only one
I hope someday you'll join us
And the world will live as one*

Source: www.metrolyrics.com/imagine-lyrics-john-lennon.html

Box 3.7: Excerpt from a Speech by Dr Martin Luther King, August 1963

“I Have a Dream”

“... I say to you today, my friends, that in spite of the difficulties and frustrations of the moment I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.

I have a dream that one day the nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: “We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal.”

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day even the State of Mississippi, a desert state sweltering in the heat of injustice and oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream today....”

Source: Retrieved from www.youtube.com/.

Review		Comparing Dream and Vision	
Comparison			
“Imagine”		“I have a dream”	
It was a dream that inspired many. But John Lennon did not personally take much action for peace. Basically, the song carried the message.		It was a dream that also moved millions. It turned into a critical inspiration for a whole civil rights movement in the US and the world. Martin Luther King’s personal experience of discrimination fired him up and he went on to devote his life’s work to civil rights.	
↓		↓	
Remained a dream.		Became a vision that resulted in many social changes.	
<p>Visions and dreams have many things in common. Both are pictures, mental models of someone’s imagination. Both do not represent current reality. However, a dream will remain a dream if we do not work toward realizing it by giving it our personal commitment and taking action. But with extra work (like Dr King) a dream can become a great vision inspiring millions of people!</p>			

Vision without action is a dream
Action without vision is simply passing time
Action with vision is making a positive difference.
 (Joel Barker’s quote. Retrieved from www.thinkexists.com)

Vision and Action

Visions are essentially imaginative pictures of someone’s idea and passion, a mental construct that points to a scenario in the future that is better, stronger, improved, more appealing, and so on. To accept someone’s vision is a personal act of faith—why would we be willing to do that? Perhaps it is due to a basic human desire for change as a way to seek improvements in our lives. Therefore, you can’t have a grand vision and not change fundamentally the way you do things. Because visions, by their very nature and

intentions, demand change, big change! But how big should it be? The question is: how deeply do you care? Consider the following:

- Achieving any vision has a price. If stakeholders really want something, they must be willing to pay the price. Then, consider how much are you willing to change?

In view of the above, consider whether your vision should be floor-setting (what is the least we should aim for) ... or “going for the ceiling” (what we truly want “no matter what”).

- How much can a person achieve? It is unlikely that a person will achieve more than his/her or her vision. We can turn things around and say, a vision limits what we can do! The only true limits are the ones that the mind accepts. For example, Abraham Lincoln lost 18 elections before he became the President of the US!

Reflection: What are the limits of your achievement? Why?

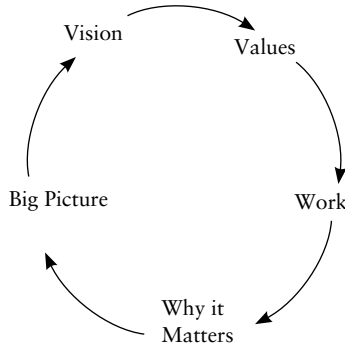
Creating a Shared Vision

Many leaders seek to achieve the commitment and focus that comes with genuinely shared visions. Unfortunately, too many people still think that “vision” is the top person’s responsibility. It may be true that many individual leaders’ visions could succeed in carrying an organization through a crisis or transition. But there is a deeper challenge: creating a common sense of purpose that binds people together and propels them to fulfill their deepest aspirations within what the organization is trying to achieve.

Catalyzing people’s aspirations doesn’t happen by accident; it requires time, care, and strategy.

Thus, the discipline of building a shared vision is centered around a never-ending process—around vision, values, why their work matters, and how it fits in the larger world (see Figure 3.3).

Figure 3.3: *The Circle of Creating Shared Vision*



Source: Authors.

There is a need to get people to “buy-in” to the vision, to enlist others in the dream (see Box 3.8). Leaders need to communicate the purpose and build support for the direction. It is not enough for a leader to have a vision.

Box 3.8: *Positive Impact of Vision*

When a vision is well accepted, shared, and communicated, there is buy-in. The positive impact on staff could be

- Job satisfaction
- Motivation
- Commitment
- Loyalty
- Team spirit
- Clarity about organizational values
- Pride in organization
- Increase in productivity

Source: Adapted from several sources.

If this vision, however brilliant it may be, is not shared, it is of no use to anyone. Members of the organization (including outside stakeholders) must understand, accept, and commit to the vision. In other words, the hopes and dreams of the relevant parties are aligned. When they do, the organization’s ability to change and reach its potential soars.

Leadership is not about one person's solo dreams; it is about developing a shared sense of destiny; it is about enrolling others so that they can see how their own interests and aspirations are aligned with the vision of the organization. They, thereby, mobilize to commit their individual energies to its realization.

Shared Vision: Precepts to Acceptance

A successful strategy for building a shared vision will be built around several key precepts:¹⁷

- *Every organization has a destiny:* A deep purpose that expresses the organization's reasons for its existence.
- Clues to understanding an organization's deeper purpose can often be found in its *founder's aspirations* and in the reasons why the whole sector came into being.
- Not all visions are equal. *Visions, which tap into an organization's deeper sense of purpose, and articulate specific goals* that represent making that purpose real, have unique power to engender aspiration and commitment.
- Many members of the organization, especially those who care deeply for it, have a *collective sense of its underlying purpose*.
- Thus, at the heart of building a shared vision is the task of designing and evolving ongoing processes in which people at every level of the organization, in every role, can *speak from the heart about what really matters to them* and be heard by senior management and others.
- Finally, there is the innate pull that emerges when we hold *a clear picture of our vision juxtaposed with current reality*.

¹⁷ Senge, P. (1990). *The fifth discipline: The art and practice of learning organizations*. Retrieved from www.jerrit.msu.edu/pdf/Bulleting1999Vol10-4.pdf/, accessed on January 5, 2013.

As the above precepts suggest, the shared vision is essentially focused around building shared meaning. Shared meaning is a collective sense of what is important and why.

In the following, we cite three examples of great health successes as documented by Center for Global Development.

EXAMPLE 1: Creating a Shared Vision through Advocacy for Tobacco Control in Poland

Tobacco is the second deadliest threat to adult health in the world and causes one in every 10 adult deaths. In the 1980s, Poland had the highest rate of smoking in the world. Nearly three-fourths of Polish men aged 20 to 60 smoked every day.

As the tobacco epidemic was escalating in the early 1990s, historic changes in Poland set in motion powerful influences that helped in amplifying anti-tobacco voices. Poland's scientific community laid the foundation of the anti-tobacco movement when they first established in-country scientific evidence illustrating the devastating health impact of smoking. Research conducted in the 1980s by the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Memorial Cancer Centre and Institute of Oncology contributed to the first Polish report on the health impact of smoking, highlighting, in particular, the link between smoking and the escalating cancer outbreak in Poland. The body of evidence about the harmful effects of smoking and the need for tobacco-control legislation were further strengthened through a series of international workshops and scientific conferences held in Poland.

With solid evidence in hand, Poland's budding civil society took up the call for tobacco-control measures. Health advocates in Poland were first brought together around the anti-smoking cause in the 1980s as civil society was experiencing a renewal. During this time, anti-tobacco groups, such as the Polish Anti-Tobacco Society, were formed which began to interact with the WHO, the International Union against Cancer, and other international groups.

Later, in the new political milieu, when NGOs could freely form, Poland's civil society had an even stronger voice. In 1990, Poland hosted "A Tobacco-Free New Europe" Conference of Western and Eastern European health advocates, which resulted

in a set of policy recommendations that later proved instrumental in shaping Poland's anti-tobacco laws. Finally, the Health Promotion Foundation was established to lead health promotion and anti-tobacco education efforts.

The free media was essential to the success of the advocates' movement to control tobacco use. In the new democratic era, the Polish press could cover health issues, including the reporting of scientific studies illustrating the health consequences of smoking. The dissemination of this information raised awareness about the dangers of smoking and shaped public opinion about tobacco-control legislation. It also provided a venue for health advocates to broadcast special advertisements with health messages, such as how to take steps to quit smoking.

In 1995, the Polish Parliament passed groundbreaking tobacco-control legislation, which included the requirement of the largest health warnings on cigarette packs in the world, a ban on smoking in health centers and enclosed workspaces, a ban on electronic media advertising, and a ban on tobacco sales to minors. Health education campaigns and the "Great Polish Smoke-Out" have also raised awareness about the dangers of smoking and have encouraged Poles to quit. Cigarette consumption dropped by 10 percent between 1990 and 1998.

EXAMPLE 2: Creating a Shared Vision for Reducing NTDs in Chile by Technical Experts as Champions

In Chile, where folate supplements, fortified breakfast cereals, and other commercial products were out of reach for most income groups, it was necessary to develop a new method of reaching pregnant women with folic acid. Eva Hertrampf, one of the leading academics from the Institute, says:

Aware of the effect of folic acid on the prevention of neural-tube defects, in 1997 a group of academics from Chile's Institute of Nutrition and Food Technology convinced authorities from the Ministry of Health to convene a working group to evaluate the feasibility of implementing folic acid fortification to prevent NTDs.

The working group, composed of academics (pediatricians, nutritionists, geneticists, food technologists), industry

representatives (millers, premix vendors, pharmacists), and professionals from the Ministry of Health (representatives from the nutrition unit, monitoring, and primary child care programs), recommended that Chile should adopt the fortification of wheat flour with folic acid to prevent NTDs. Strong evidence was marshaled by the research community to support the government's decision to introduce an important nutrition intervention.

*EXAMPLE 3: Acknowledged Leader Champions the Cause of Reducing Guinea Worm in Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa*¹⁸

Progress was extremely slow until 1980s in addressing the guinea worm problem. Key events in the 1980s helped in overcoming these obstacles and turning the tide in the fight against guinea worm. In 1986, the World Health Assembly (WHA), the highest governing body of the WHO, passed a resolution that set the elimination of guinea worm as a goal of the organization and bestowed greater international legitimacy to the campaign. That same year, a meeting of public health leaders from 14 African countries helped to make important strides toward filling the gaps in data, awareness, and political commitment on the continent.

In 1986, US President Jimmy Carter began his personal involvement with the campaign which lasted nearly 20 years. By assuming the role of the lead NGO, providing both financial and technical support to these national eradication programs, the Carter Center became a powerful advocate which prompted a major turning point in the campaign.

With the technical and financial support of a global coalition of organizations led by the Carter Center, the United Nations Children's Fund, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the WHO, 20 countries implemented national guinea worm eradication programs, run through their ministries of health. The primary interventions of the campaign included the provision of safe water (through deep well digging, applying larvicide, and purifying water through cloth filters); health education; and case containment, management, and surveillance. As a result, guinea worm prevalence dropped 99.7 percent. By 2005,

¹⁸ Retrieved from http://cartercenter.org/health/guinea_worm/index.html/.

less than 11,000 cases were reported, a drastic change from the estimated 3.5 million people infected in 1986.

Sharing the vision statement met with skepticism at first, but as I kept coming back to parts of it over time, everyone bought into the idea. People began to see it as a statement about what we wanted to build together.

(Kevin Philbin, Solectron)¹⁹

*A leader is best When people barely know he exists.
Not so good When people obey and acclaim him.
Worse when they despise him.
But of a good leader
Who talks little
When his work is done,
His aim fulfilled,
They will say "We did it ourselves." (Lao Tse)²⁰*

Building a Shared Vision

Shared vision strategies should be developmental. Every stage of the process should help to build both the listening capacity of the top leaders and the leadership capacities for the rest of the organization. There are four possible modes of the strategy for building a shared vision. Each organization uses a predominant mode. You can objectively assess which is the mode used in your organization and then plan to move to the next higher mode. The term "Boss" is used to mean a formal leader, executive manager, or somebody who has sufficient authority and autonomy to preside over a visioning process. Other participants are referred to as members.

Senge et al. (1994) identify four modes for creating a shared vision as follows:²¹

¹⁹ Quoted in Kouzes & Posner, p. 141.

²⁰ Retrieved from www.motivatingquotes.com/leadership.htm/.

²¹ Senge, P., Kleiner, A., Ross, R., Roberts, C., & Smith, B. (1994). *The fifth discipline fieldbook: Strategies and tools for building a learning organization*. New York: Doubleday.

1. *Telling* → Boss knows what the vision should be and the organization is going to have to follow it.
2. *Selling* → The boss knows what the vision should be but needs the organization to “buy-in” before proceeding.
3. *Testing/consulting* → The boss is putting together a vision and tests his/her ideas or consults to seek creative input from others.
4. *Cocreating* → The boss and members of the organization through a collaborative process build a shared vision together.

Telling: Although “telling” is a traditional and somewhat authoritarian form of instigating change, a “told” vision is still a vision, with power to galvanize activity. The boss could clearly describe the vision and say that we cannot afford otherwise. Leaders make full use of the power of language to communicate a shared identity and give life to visions. After a period of time, people will have to leave if they cannot support the new direction. There are limits to “telling.” People often do not remember what they are told or interpret it differently. “Telling” often works when there is a crisis.

Selling: The leader, by “selling” his/her vision, tries to inspire or motivate people to join him/her, thereby trying to enlist as much commitment as possible. “This is the right thing to do and I believe in it,” a chief executive may say, “but we can only do it if the organization comes on board with me.” There are limits to selling. The boss wants to hear yes and the employees want to hear that they will keep their jobs. A compliant “yes” often seems like the safest course of action. If more commitment is needed then higher modes of testing/consulting or cocreating are needed.

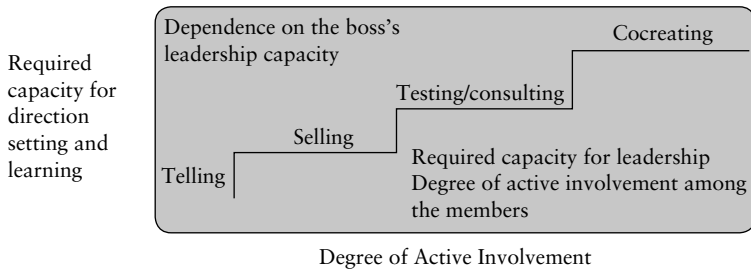
Testing/Consulting: Testing is used when the leader “lays the vision for testing” but is prepared to revise it if necessary. It would not be possible for the boss to have all the answers so consulting could be a preferred mode. Consulting process may throw open many options and it may be difficult to reconcile them. This, therefore, requires a higher level of organizational capacity. If the organization is not ready then testing or selling may be the modes to use.

The first task in enlisting others is to identify constituents and find out what their aspirations are. By knowing their constituents, by listening to them, and by taking their advice, leaders are able to give voice to constituents' feelings.

Cocreating: It is an important day when people begin to work for something they want to build rather than just to please their boss. The organization whose leaders and members understand this is ready to benefit from a "cocreating" shared vision process. In this process, teams articulate their sense of common vision. They start with their personal visions and the organization becomes a tool for people's self-realization. Many leaders imagine that encouraging people to identify and express their personal vision would lead to anarchy and disarray. Experience shows that this assumption is ill founded. Most teams actually share a fundamental sense of alignment. If there is a deep lack of alignment, the leader should be concerned about it.

Thus, each higher mode of creating a shared vision involves a higher level of capacity on the part of the organization (see Figure 3.4). Telling has higher dependence on the boss's capacity for leadership and less dependence among the members of the organization. In contrast, cocreating has less dependence on the boss's leadership capacity and requires high level of capacity among members.

Figure 3.4: Modes for Creating a Shared Vision



Source: Senge, 1994.²²

²² Senge, P., Kleiner, A., Ross, R., Roberts, C., & Smith, B. *The fifth discipline fieldbook*.

Enlisting Others

Enlisting others in a common vision by appealing to shared aspirations is the key to leadership. Kouzes and Posner give the following advice, which uses a mix of the already discussed modes of creating a shared vision:

- Get to know your constituents
- Find the common ground
- Draft a collective vision statement
- Expand your communication skills
- Breathe life into your vision
- Speak from the heart
- Listen first and often
- Hang out

*A blind man's world is bound by the limits of his touch;
an ignorant man's world by the limits of his knowledge;
a great man's world by the limits of his vision.* (E. Paul Hovey)²³

Exercise What Do We Want to Create²⁴

There are two ways you can create a shared vision in your team:

1. Asking key questions
2. Seeking common motivators

Asking Key Questions: Asking key questions is an essential first step in the process of creating a vision. It can be done in two steps: (1) vision of the future and (2) current reality.

The team should spend time only with the questions which are meaningful to them. The words, phrases, and ideas that emerge from this exercise become the seed thoughts for a shared vision.

²³ Retrieved from www.goodreads.com/.

²⁴ Senge et al. *The fifth discipline fieldbook*.

Step 1: Vision of the Future

It is five years from today's date now. It is your job to describe it as if you were able to see it, realistically around you. Make sure each member of the team has an opportunity to comment on each of the following questions. You can do this exercise in a group within your team or organization.

- Who are the stakeholders of this organization that we have created (five years from now)?
- How do we work with them?
- How do we produce value for them?
- What are the most influential trends in our sector?
- What is our image among our clients and competitors?
- How do we compete?
- What is our organization's role in our community?
- What is our unique contribution to the world around us?
- What is the impact of our work?
- How do we raise our needed financial resources?
- What does our organization look like?
- How do we handle good times?
- In what ways is our organization a great place to work?
- How do we know that the future of our organization is secure?
- What are our values?
- How do people treat each other?
- How are people recognized?

Step 2: Current Reality

Now come back to the current year and look at the organization today.

- What are the critical forces in our systems?
- Who are the current stakeholders today—inside and outside?
- What change do we perceive taking place among our stakeholders?
- What are the most influential trends in our sector today?

- What aspects of our organization empower people?
- What aspects of our organization disempower people today?
- How is the strategic plan currently used?
- What major losses do we fear?
- What do we know (that we need to know)?
- What don't we know (that we need to know)?

Step 3: After a Vision Presentation

- For you, what are the keywords in this vision statement?
- Do you feel that it is a meaningful vision?
- Based on your own reactions and feelings, what implications do you see from this vision statement, about your organization's visioning process?

Seeking Common Motivators: You would need to identify those stakeholders you want your vision to inspire. Who are they? Be sure to include as many groups as you can identify. What motivates them? See the following example.

Stakeholder: Community

Motivators: Quality services, access to needed services, low cost, life-saving, respect from service providers.

1. Step 1: Identify each stakeholder group and list their motivators.
2. Step 2: Now review what you have written with one objective in mind: To identify what these stakeholders have in common? What can you do to appeal to their overlapping interests?

Complete below:

What they have in common?	How I can appeal to this motivator?
---------------------------	-------------------------------------

Step 3: Now complete the following:

Stakeholder: _____

Motivators: _____

Stakeholder: _____

Motivators: _____

Group Exercise **Creating and Sharing a Vision**

Guidelines

You will be assigned to one of the four groups: organization, community, program development, and policy stakeholders (for details of the work of each group, please see the following paragraphs in this exercise). Your task is to create a shared vision. Please select a role for each of the members. A member from each group would make a three-minute presentation on their “shared vision.” An observer will be assigned to each group who will give his/her observations on the process in about two minutes (40 minutes is the total time allocated for the exercise).

1. Organization

Mr S, the founder of an NGO Urban Slum Trust (UST), recently retired as executive director and Ms Y, a recently retired corporate executive, has taken over.

UST was funded by Mr S when he retired from government service seven years ago. He was very concerned about reproductive health conditions in urban slums in his city and was able to secure

some funding from a donor to start this NGO. Subsequently, the NGO had earned credibility for its clinic and community-based work. Its staff comprised a finance and administration head (FA), a program manager (PM), two supervisors (S1 and S2), a doctor (Doc), a midwife (MW), and 10 community workers (see Box: Characters for Organization Group).

- | |
|---------------------------------------|
| Characters for Organization Group |
| 1. Ms Y: Executive Director |
| 2. Doctor |
| 3. Head of Finance/
Administration |
| 4. Program manager |
| 5. Supervisor 1 |
| 6. Supervisor 2 |
| 7. Midwife |
| 8. Community worker |

Ms Y felt that the organization should have a definite vision which can guide its work, now that it was well established in the community. She called a meeting of selected staff and posed the question: What are we?

Task: Create a shared vision for UST.

2. Community

Your rural village community of 10,000 population has never given any importance to women's health. However, in a recent local government election, a woman (Mrs Margo) has been elected as its head. She is very keen to improve women's health, particularly their reproductive health. There is a nurse-midwife posted in this village. The health center is about 20 km away and shared taxis are available to reach this town. She feels that a common vision should be developed.

She called a meeting of the local government unit (LGU) members (Mrs Margo and two male members), leader of the local churches, and the nurse-midwife to develop a shared vision (see Box: Characters for Community Group).

Task: To create a shared reproductive health vision for the community.

Characters for Community Group

1. Mrs Margo: Head of LGU (a feisty lady)
2. Mr M1: Member of LGU (businessman)
3. Mr M2: Member of LGU (teacher at local school)
4. Father X: Head of local churches
5. Ms NM: Nurse-midwife

3. Program Development

The government has decided to launch an Adolescent Reproductive Health (ARH) Program. However, there is considerable concern in many circles that ARH will actually increase sexual activity and is not good for government to do. Mr YP has recently been appointed to

Characters for Program Development Group

1. Mr YP: Head of ARH
2. Mr EO: Education Director
3. Ms NG: Head of NGO active in ARH
4. Mr RL: Local religious leader
5. Mr TP: Head of TV division of Ministry of Information and Broadcasting

develop this program. He felt that program development should be guided by a shared vision. Therefore, he convened a meeting for himself and a group of local leaders from various sectors (see Box: Characters for Program Development Group).

Mr YP began by asking the question: What do we want to create?

4. *Policy Stakeholders*

The health minister of your country recently visited an international conference where it was recommended that each country should formulate its reproductive health policy.

Upon her return, she has asked you, the Permanent Secretary, MOH, to convene a small group to develop a shared vision to guide the policy. You have convened a meeting of the various government and local leaders (see Box: Characters for Policy Stakeholders Group).
Task: Create a shared vision to guide the reproductive health policy.

Characters for Policy Stakeholders Group

1. Ms AB: P. Secretary, MOH
2. Ms YZ: Commissioner, Maternal Health
3. Mr PD: Director, Population Board
4. Ms XT: Commissioner, STI/HIV/AIDS
5. Ms NM: Head of local NGO

It is not what the vision is but what it does...
(Kazuo Inamori, Kyocera Inc.)²⁵

Benefits of Developing a Shared Vision

There are several benefits of developing a shared vision, which is the key to visionary leadership.

- Shared vision provides focus and energy in a learning organization. You cannot have a learning organization without a shared vision.

²⁵ As cited in Senge (1990), p. 207.

- Generative learning occurs only when people are trying to do something that matters deeply to them.
- Shared vision clarifies what is important and what is not.
- Shared vision makes our work much more meaningful.
- Shared vision fosters risk-taking and innovation.

On the other hand, what happens when we don't have a vision at all or when we have a vision and it is not shared? The organization suffers from

- Confusion
- Low effectiveness
- Inefficiencies
- Loss of time and opportunities
- Pettiness prevails

Thus, where there is no shared vision, people go in different directions and confusion prevails. Cynicism arises when there is a divergence between talk and actions leading to a false vision.

In the presence of a shared vision, pettiness disappears. In the absence of a great dream, pettiness prevails. (Peter Senge)²⁶

CASE STUDY 1: Creating a Shared Vision Requires Persistence: Mechai Viravaidya and Leadership for HIV and AIDS in Thailand

Dr Mechai Viravaidya, one of the early leaders for HIV and AIDS, mounted a campaign in 1987 to educate the public about AIDS through the Population and Community Development Association (PDA), an NGO he founded. Despite official denial, Viravaidya knew that AIDS was a problem for Thailand. The campaign used mass media extensively, including IEC materials (audio tapes, videocassettes, books, pamphlets, etc.), lectures, and discussions at public and private

²⁶ Ibid.

institutions, to explain modes of HIV transmission and how it could be prevented.

If promiscuous behavior was the norm among Thai men, then once HIV infection reached a critical mass among sex workers, it would spread rapidly into the general population. However, there were powerful vested interests: brothel owners, police, and politicians who had financial interest in propagating and expanding the sex industry.

Viravaidya took his message to the two most powerful men: the Prime Minister and the Army Chief General. The Prime Minister did not agree to chair the National Committee on AIDS. However, the General considered the proposal and agreed that Army would spearhead the mobilization of a national effort to combat the growing AIDS menace. Army TV and radio channel launched a three-year nationwide education campaign to prevent further spread of HIV.

For about a year, Viravaidya personally campaigned assiduously for concerted action against HIV/AIDS. He urged businesses to take care of their own workers rather than waiting for the government. More than 100 companies enrolled in PDA's Corporate Education Programme on HIV/AIDS.

Viravaidya knew he needed reliable data to quantify the economic implications of HIV if he wanted to convince the government. He assembled a team of economists and social scientists to research and compile the data; the findings presented at 1990 International Congress on AIDS in Bangkok were startling. The then Prime Minister immediately created a National Advisory Committee and appointed Viravaidya as the chairman; the Committee was responsible for developing a National Plan for the Prevention and Control of HIV/AIDS. Even with a change of government and a new position as Minister of Tourism, Public Information, and Mass Communication, Viravaidya continued to be involved with HIV and AIDS; he asked and got responsibility for coordinating the National AIDS Prevention and Control Programme.

Later in the 1990s, under another Prime Minister, a multi-sectoral HIV/AIDS program was launched that was based

on many of Mechai Viravaidya's initiatives. A multi-sectoral National AIDS Committee chaired by the Prime Minister was established, which implemented a massive educational program and instituted the now famous 100 percent condom policy for commercial sex workers. A convincing body of evidence indicates that the number of new HIV cases had declined and the incidence of STDs had fallen in Thailand. Thailand, today, has one of the most effective programmes for HIV and AIDS in Asia Pacific. For that, Mechai Viravaidya bears much of the responsibility (see Box 3.9).

Box 3.9: *Creating Shared Vision for HIV/AIDS in Thailand*

Leadership Lessons

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Source: Authors.

CASE STUDY 2: People Buy into the Leader, Then the Vision Story of Mahatma Gandhi²⁷

The Law of Buy-In

Today, people take for granted that Gandhi was a great leader. But the story of his leadership is a marvelous study of the Law of Buy-In.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, called Mahatma (which means "great soul"), was educated in London. After finishing his education in law, he traveled back to India and then to South Africa. There he worked for 20 years as a barrister and political activist. During that time he developed himself as a leader, fighting for the rights of Indians and other minorities who were oppressed and discriminated against by South Africa's apartheid government.

²⁷ Maxwell, J. *The 21 irrefutable laws of leadership*. California, USA: Thomas Nelson, p. 143.

By the time he returned to India in 1914, Gandhi was well-known and highly respected among his countrymen. Over the next several years, as he led protests and strikes around the country, people rallied to him and looked to him more and more for leadership. In 1920, a mere six years after returning to India, he was elected president of the All India Home Rule League.

The most remarkable thing about Gandhi isn't that he became their leader, but that he was able to change the people's vision for obtaining freedom. Before he began leading them, the people used violence in an effort to achieve their goals. For years riots against the British establishment had been common. But Gandhi's vision for change in India was based on nonviolent civil disobedience. He once said, "Non-violence is the greatest force at the disposal of mankind. It is mightier than the mightiest weapon of destruction devised by the ingenuity of man."

Gandhi challenged the people to meet oppression with peaceful disobedience and noncooperation. Even when the British military massacred more than 1,000 people at Amritsar in 1919, Gandhi called the people to stand, but without fighting back. Rallying everyone to his way of thinking wasn't easy. But because the people had come to buy him as their leader, they embraced his vision. And then they followed him faithfully. He asked them not to fight and eventually they stopped fighting. When he called for everyone to burn foreign-made clothes and start wearing nothing but home-spun materials, millions of people started doing it. When he decided that a March to the Sea to protest the Salt Act would be their rallying point for civil disobedience against the British, the nation's leaders followed him the two hundred miles to the city of Dandi, where they were arrested by government representatives.

Their struggle for Independence was slow and painful but Gandhi's leadership was strong enough to deliver on the promise of his vision. In 1947, India gained Independence. Because the people had accepted Gandhi, they accepted his vision.

And once they had embraced the vision, they were able to carry it out. The leader finds the dream and then the people. The people find the leader and then the dream (see Box 3.10).

Box 3.10: *Creating Shared Vision on Non-violence Movement by Gandhi*

Leadership Lessons

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Source: Authors.

*All men dream; but not equally.
Those who dream by night in the dusty recesses of their minds
Awake to find that it was vanity;
But the dreamers of the day are dangerous men,
That they may act their dreams with open eyes to make it possible.
(T. E. Lawrence)²⁸*

²⁸ Retrieved from www.goodreads.com/.