

CREATE YOUR VISION STORY

The importance of having a clearly articulated vision for your business and your life cannot be overstated. If you don't know where you're going, you are not going to get there.

Regardless of whether you have been in business for a few weeks or many years, creating or revisiting your vision will give you the clarity to set the goals and take the actions that will get you there. It gives you a touchstone to come back to when making decisions for your business. Do not skip this exercise.

Your vision story provides you and everyone who works with your company both **direction and inspiration**. Your vision should encompass the **Why, What** and **How** of your business. If your vision story does not inspire you to keep going when the going gets tough, and it doesn't inspire others to want to join you, then go back and give it another try.

Instructions:

This exercise will take time and space to do it justice. Carve out some uninterrupted time, at least an hour, to work on it. Set yourself up in an environment that encourages deep, creative thinking.

Imagine you have just gotten in a time machine, and are visiting your business 5 years in the future, and you have created your ideal business. What do you see? How do you know it is your ideal business?

Describe, in the form of a story, what your ideal business looks like. Write it in the present tense, **as if it is happening now**. Make it as visual and descriptive as possible, as if you were writing a movie script. Include the following elements in your story:

1. Why does your business exist?

In his best-selling book "Start With Why" Simon Sinek describes how most ordinary companies talk about *what* they do and *how* they do it, but extraordinarily successful companies make it clear up front *WHY* they do what they do. Include the purpose behind your business, what you are trying to accomplish.

For example, Pumpkin Plan Your Biz exists because everyone deserves the opportunity to create their own destiny. Profit First Professionals exists to eradicate entrepreneurial poverty.

Hint: "We exist to make money" is not enough of a "why" to inspire others. People want to feel a sense of significance, a sense of a greater purpose, and will buy from and associate with companies that make them feel that.

2. Push your comfort zone.

When writing your vision story, do not worry if you do not know how you will accomplish it. Once you establish what you want to accomplish, you will figure out how to get there. Do not hold

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yourself back by telling yourself that your dream is impossible or even improbable. If people didn't have impossible dreams, we would still be traveling by horse and buggy, and we certainly would not be sending astronauts into space.

3. Make your story specific and concrete.

The more specific your Vision Story is, the more likely you are to achieve it.

Describe in your narrative:

- Your company culture, whether you have employees and what qualities they have. What do you do to cultivate your company culture? Do you have an office, multiple offices, or are you a virtual company?
- The products and services you are providing. What impact are your offerings having on the world? Include how you are selling and marketing your products and services.
- Your financial position. What is your revenue level, your profitability? What are you paying yourself? What are you paying your employees?
- Your own role in the company. What are you doing day to day? What lifestyle are you living as a result? Describe your ideal workday.

4. Share your vision and use it as a guiding light.

Once you have written your inspiring Vision Story, share it with your stakeholders often. Make sure that your employees understand your company vision, and the role that they play in making it happen.

When making business decisions, determine whether that decision is in line with your Vision.

Make sure to read and revisit your vision often, so that it continues to inspire you to make it happen.

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My Vision Story