

Creating Your Vision

A vision is a statement about what your organization wants to become. A critical early step in more deeply integrating volunteers in your agency is the development of your volunteer engagement vision. It will serve as a unifying and motivating force that will help your staff and leadership lead the transformation. Your vision will also let staff know where the organization is going and ideally generates enthusiasm among those working towards this transformation.

Your volunteer engagement vision should resonate with all members of your organization and help them feel proud, motivated and part of something larger than themselves. It should stretch the organization's capabilities and image of itself as volunteers become more deeply integrated into the organization. When stakeholders (e.g., board, staff) internalize the vision statement, they will take action to make the vision statement a reality.



A good vision statement is often a sentence or a short paragraph consisting of two to four sentences or a number of bulleted phrases. But there are no hard and fast rules about creating a vision statement. The most essential element is that you take the time to articulate what your organization aspires to do and that it is achievable. It's also important to phrase the vision in a positive and inspirational manner.

Effective vision statements have six key characteristics:

- **Imaginable:** They convey a clear picture of what the future will look like.
- **Desirable:** They appeal to the long-term interest of employees, customers, stakeholders and others who have a stake in the Service Enterprise transformation.
- **Feasible:** They contain realistic and attainable goals.
- **Focused:** They are clear enough to provide guidance in decision making.
- **Flexible:** They allow individual initiative and alternative responses in light of changing conditions.
- **Communicable:** They are easy to communicate and can be explained quickly.

You can use the worksheet on the following page to help create your organization's vision for volunteer engagement.

Invite staff, volunteers, and senior leaders to participate in this exercise. First complete the visioning individually, then gather as a group to develop an organizational vision.

Write your organization's mission and/or vision statement here:

Individual Exercise

Jot down your thoughts on how your organization could work with volunteers. What would success look like?

Organizational Exercise

Gather with other volunteers, staff and leadership to visually depict your ideas on flip chart paper.

Identify differences in the illustration and how you currently engage volunteers.

- What is your organization's vision for working with volunteers?
- How would you define success in 12 months?
- How would you define success in 24 months?