How Having a Clear Purpose Attracts People/Resources/Customers
It’s All About Us:

- Me – 1970 Epiphany, L&OD junkie for 30 years, Maple Frost Farm, NOFA IC and NH.
- Show of Hands: are you here representing a:
  1. Farm or Ag Biz
  2. CSA
  3. Farmer’s Market
  4. Co-Op
  5. Non-profit org
  6. For profit Org
  7. Gvt Agency
  8. Educational Institution
Premise

- My experience is that many non-profit businesses, farms, CSA’s, etc are **not** getting the needed level of resources, funding or support.
- This can be due to the **lack of a clear, unique, compelling vision** that satisfies all of your stakeholders.
- Lots of vision statements have become dated due to the **Cat 5 (think Hurricane) change** we are in.
- And….Even where I see an effective vision in place it is **seldom leveraged** in the best ways.
Learning Objectives/Outcomes

- Learn the power of having a unique, compelling, inspiring vision and purpose
- Determine what your entity stands for
- Create a desired future state that attracts people, resources and “pollinators” to your enterprise
- Learn how to make your vision become reality
- Time permitting….moving from Vision to Purpose
Agenda

- What is a vision - Define It
- The power of vision – Understand It
- Creating your vision - Build It
- Becoming your vision - Be It
- From vision to purpose – Expand It
What Is Vision

- A desired future state
- Inspiring, compelling
- Should be concise
- Has been created with input from multiple sources
- Defines what we aspire to become. You aren’t there yet. Declaring and naming it helps to make it come true!
Some Facts from Non-Profits

• General Findings
• The best visions are inspirational, clear, memorable, and concise.
• Avg length for the top 30 non-profits is only 14.56 words
• The shortest contains only three words (Human Rights Campaign)
• The longest contains 33 words (Creative Commons)
Examples: (short)

- **Oceana** seeks to make our oceans as rich, healthy and abundant as they once were. (14)

- **Ducks Unlimited** - Wetlands sufficient to fill the skies with waterfowl today, tomorrow and forever. (13)

- **NPR**, with its network of independent member stations, is America’s pre-eminent news institution (12)

Like/Don’t Like/Why
Examples: (medium)

- **ASPCA**: That the United States is a humane community in which all animals are treated with respect and kindness. (18)

- **Smithsonian**: Shaping the future by preserving our heritage, discovering new knowledge, and sharing our resources with the world (17)

- **WWF** (World Wildlife Fund): We seek to save a planet, a world of life. Reconciling the needs of human beings and the needs of others that share the Earth (25)

Like/Don’t Like/Why
Examples (longer)

- **Special Olympics**: To transform communities by inspiring people throughout the world to open their minds, accept and include people with intellectual disabilities and thereby anyone who is perceived as different. (28)

- **Creative Commons**: Our vision is nothing less than realizing the full potential of the Internet — universal access to research and education, full participation in culture — to drive a new era of development, growth, and productivity. (33)

- **Amnesty International**: Amnesty International’s vision is of a world in which every person enjoys all of the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments. (31)
Example – NOFA NH

Vision: (What We Aspire To)

We actively promote regenerative, ecologically sound gardening, farming and land care practices for healthy communities. We help people build local, sustainable, healthy food systems in our communities.

Like/Don’t Like?
Vision vs Mission vs Values

- **Vision** – *Future aspiration. Long term horizon.* Should not change much. Used to get at the core of your existence and why you are unique.

- **Mission** – *Current orientation.* Describes what you are doing to fulfill your vision. Much more specific than vision. Can and should change as conditions change but not annually!
Vision vs Mission vs Values

Values
- Your set of beliefs
- Guiding principles
- Channels behavior
- Help you establish your culture, along with Vision, over time
- Needs to closely connect to your vision as well as mission
- Helps describe how people will interact with one another
The Power of Vision

- Establishes “True North” (compass)
- **Focus** and identity
- Facilitates the creation of goals and strategies
- Faster, better decisions
- Creates meaning
- Attracts energy and resources
The Power of Vision

- We are overwhelmed with info
- SADD - Societal Attention Deficit Disorder
- Can help you rise above the clutter
- A truly inspirational, aspirational vision will motivate
- Powerfully influence your culture which then shapes behavior
Lets Get To Work!!

Creating Your Vision
Step 1 – Your Essence

Write down some words or phrases that capture the uniqueness and the soul of your entity. This is fundamental to your existence. It defines you. Examples

Tips:

- Braindump or mind map. Just write stuff down - This is the BIG PICTURE
- Think about how you are making the world, region, community a better place
- Words need to have juice and power
- Would you work/volunteer/donate for this entity?
- Action verb and present tense
Another Approach

- Imagine this entity 3 years from now, August 9th, 2016
- A reporter from the local newspaper has come to interview you about your organization
- Write the headline and key points of their article
- How will this organization have made a difference in their marketplace, communities, world at large in the last 3 years
- What will the reporter see people doing?
- How will people be interacting?
- What will make the reporter remember you vs all of the other entities he interviews?
Changing Your Current Vision

- What has changed?
- What is your current vision is no longer relevant?
- New products and services?
- New customers/members/stakeholders?

Tips:
- Don’t throw the baby out with the bath water!
- Save what you can
- Tread lightly
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<th>Essence in Key Words/Phrases</th>
<th>What Value Is Added?</th>
<th>For Who, Where?</th>
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Step 2 – Adding Value

Identify the key 1 - 3 things your entity produces. What do you produce that makes the world, region, community a better place. Could be a service. Write these down in column two

Tips:
- Find out what your customers/members value
- What does your community value?
- What makes sense given your resources?
- Leverage your expertise and what you are passionate about
- Think really high level – get out of the underbrush
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Step 3 – For Who, Where?

Write down who receives your products/services in the 3rd column and if the location is critical then call it out.

Tips:
- Think very broadly about your potential stakeholders.
- Who would like to be your customers in the future.
- Should align to who would benefit by your products/services.
- If the region is important then be specific...i.e “in the CT River Valley” – this creates a connection and helps build community.
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Step 4 – Put It Together

Use your worksheet and begin playing with different combinations. Give yourself plenty of options. Create your vision statement. Examples.

Tips:
- Stay with the process
- Minimum of 5 written potential vision statements!!
- Keep looking for different combinations
- New things will emerge…..don’t be a slave to the 3 columns
- This is a right brain exercise…..don’t engage logical side yet
- Then….choose your top 2 - 3.
Step 5 – Share Your Possibilities

Turn around/Look ahead of you and team up with 1 or 2 other people and share your situation and your top 2 - 3 statements. Help each other determine what statement is the best fit for your situation. I will become part of this process.

Tips:
• Does your statement fulfill the requirements that were established?
• Is it clear, concise and describe UNIQUENESS?
• Make it have staying power… (>3 years)
Step 6 – Declare It

Put a stake in the ground and declare one now. Write it down! Take back and run this by:

- Partners
- Workers/Board
- Possible “pollinators”
- Customers
- A few key members

Tips:
- Get other important stakeholders to get skin in the game by allowing suggestions to be made.
- Commit to get it done by the end of the month
Becoming Your Vision

- Communicate It
- Live It
- Align What You Do to It
Principal #1 - Communicate It

1. Get others involved in creating a communication/marketing plan - develop a tagline (<8 words)
2. Let your members/customers/”pollinators” see it….a lot.
3. Put it front and center at every meeting/work session.
4. Ask others in your entity what the vision means to them
5. Make it visible and make it pop. Web, social media, biz cards, etc.
Principal #2 - Live It

- Be a light not a judge
- Measure yourselves against it
- Use some of the words at every opportunity
- Walk the talk
- Monitor your actions/behavior against it
Principal #3 - Align to it

- Use it to guide what’s In or Out for you
- Use it to build your goals and strategies
- Align your systems, structures, processes and practices to support and reinforce it. Total Congruence here or else it’s just talk with no meaning
- Everything that you do must align to it at some level
From Vision to Purpose

Expand It
From Vision to Purpose

- Vision alone may not be enough if you need to communicate specifically what you do and what you believe in
- Just a vision alone is not grounded enough in the present
- A purpose statement is most powerful as it contains all 3 elements
Purpose Statement

- **3 Parts:**
  - **Who We Are (Our identity….aspirational)**
  - **What We Do (Our current activities….major components of our work)**
  - **What We Believe (Our value system, how we make a difference…..inspirational)**

- **Your identity (vision) must be established first then work on the rest**
Case Study – NOFA NH

Vision: (What We Aspire To)

We actively promote regenerative, ecologically sound gardening, farming and land care practices for healthy communities. We help people build local, sustainable, healthy food systems in our communities.
Case Study – NOFA NH

Mission: (What We Do)

NOFA NH:

- Educates farmers, gardeners, land care providers and consumers of food on the benefits of natural, organic and ecological growing practices.
- Encourages a natural husbandry of the earth that is permanent, renewable and sustainable
- Promotes public and environmental health by encouraging the use of safe, non-toxic materials for farmers, gardeners and land care providers.
- Strengthens the future of agriculture and local communities by actively supporting the growth of local, sustainable food systems
- Conducts pilot projects to demonstrate the feasibility and benefits of using organic agricultural practices
Case Study – NOFA NH

Values : What We Believe:

- 100 years of chemical dependency are trumped by (15,000) years of organic living
- All things are interconnected
- The regenerative capacities of the earth
- Slow food
- Synergy
- Local AND organic
- Taking reasonable, adventurous leaps of faith to advance the cause of organic, clean agriculture.
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