

Team Purpose and Mission

A team's purpose is defined by its mission. The team mission is something that the team intends to do. It is the object for which the team exists as determined by the team leader and team members. It is a clearly stated purpose that serves to direct and motivate the team in pursuit of its goals.

The team mission is driven by the organization's vision. The organization's vision provides a "big picture" perspective that serves to align people, ideas and attitudes. The organizational vision may be as vague as a dream or as clear as a specific outcome. It must, however, be communicated to team members in such a way that they are inspired to be part of it. To be successful, the team must align its purpose or mission the organization's vision.

Defining Your Team's Mission

Effective teams are driven by an inspiring mission that must technically support the organization's vision of a desired future state. The mission, best expressed in writing, states the team's intended direction and acts as a guide to direct all of the team's efforts.

A clearly articulated mission provides the foundation for developing goals and action plans that will assist the team in reaching its desired outcome. In addition, it provides the team with the basis for determining what decisions must be made and the possible methods for finding workable solutions.

The mission statement must be:

- 1. Inspirational:** It must provide an uplifting idea about what the team can ideally become.
- 2. Clear and challenging:** It must describe a clear future state, not simply a description of the current situation.
- 3. Differentiating:** It must describe the "uniqueness" of the team and how it can position itself to be distinctly different from the competition.
- 4. Stable but constantly challenged:** It must provide direction and stability over time, adjusting as required to account for changes in the environment.
- 5. Beacons and controls:** It must provide understanding of basic values and direction so that people can live it with unswerving consistency.
- 6. Empowering:** It must help to draw forth the best from people
- 7. Future oriented:** It must assist in establishing commitment, confidence, and new direction.
- 8. Lived in details, not broad strokes:** It must focus the day-to-day actions and set the current situation in motion toward a preferred future.