

Creating Your Personal Vision Statement

By Kathleen Barton, MBA

Are you living the life you desire? Having a personal vision is critical to having the life that you want! Your personal mission or vision is your reason for being; it's why you're here on this earth. According to Stephen Covey, author of ***Seven Habits of Highly Effective People***, a personal mission statement is "a powerful document that expresses your personal sense of meaning and purpose." It includes the qualities you'd like to have and what you'd like to contribute to the world. It should inspire and motivate you to be the best that you can be.

Having a personal vision is critical for having the life and career that you want! If you don't create your vision, it will be determined for you by your circumstances and by other people. Having a defined vision helps you live your life on purpose rather than by chance.

I wrote my vision statement years ago. Having a defined vision has given me a sense of purpose and meaning. It helped me clarify what's really important to me, and now I'm more committed to my values. My personal vision has provided me with focus and direction. It motivates me to achieve more in life.

How do you create your personal vision statement? Set aside some quiet time for yourself. Find a place where you won't be interrupted or distracted. Allow yourself at least an hour or two. Get comfortable and relaxed. Prepare to be open and explore your values and vision. Your mission comes from deep inside you, so listen to your heart's desire. Answer the following questions thoughtfully.

1. What would I most like to have in my life?
2. What are my greatest moments of happiness and fulfillment?
3. What qualities and characteristics are most important to me?
4. What activities in my personal life are most fulfilling?
5. What activities in my professional life are most fulfilling?
6. What do I want to accomplish in my lifetime?
7. If I had unlimited time and resources, what would I do?
8. What talents and skills do I have?
9. How can I best contribute to others?
10. What legacy do I want to leave?

Once you've answered the questions, look for common themes. Having done this preliminary work, then answer the question, "What is my personal vision?" Write whatever comes to mind. This becomes your first draft of your personal vision statement. Review and refine it until you feel comfortable with it. The format is up to you. It can be one page (or two or three), one paragraph, or one sentence. As long as it is meaningful to you, that's all that matters.

Once it's written, refer to it often. You might even memorize it, so that it becomes ingrained in you. Your personal vision becomes your personal constitution. Use it to guide your day-to-day decisions and actions. By doing so, you'll find that you move closer and closer to achieving your vision. Then when you reach the end of your life, you can look back with peace and satisfaction knowing that you have achieved your mission in life!

*Kathleen Barton is a keynote speaker, workshop presenter, and life coach specializing in life purpose, career success, and work-life balance. She is the author of **Finding Your Purpose and Passion in Life** audio/workbook. Kathleen can be reached at www.YourLifeBalanceCoach.com.*