

SIMPLE Vision – Purpose

Welcome back to this session of Guidestone University. Last session we looked at Non-negotiables, the first component in creating vision, and in this session we're going to look at "**Purpose**".

Purpose is what you are all about. It's your organization's reason for existing. **Your purpose is how you and how your work is going to impact the marketplace,** so it allows you to create products and create services to execute the vision. Your purpose should elicit emotion in your team and in your market. It should be compelling, it should be exciting.

Our purpose at Guidestone is this: **We exist to lead purposeful and lasting life-change within every leader that we coach and counsel to help them to simplify their life and work so they can live with purpose, lead with passion, and leave a legacy.** That's our purpose. Your purpose reflects your idealistic motivation for doing the work of your organization. **It captures your soul and it captures the soul of your team.** It reveals who you exist to serve and why.

Here's the interesting thing about purpose: **You can never fully accomplish purpose.** It is forever pursued, but never achieved. But, you can fulfill it every single day despite challenging situations. So, here's what we need to look at as we create purpose, the purpose for our vision.

Some people call it purpose statement, some people call it your mission, and other people call it vision statement. We call it purpose because we want it to embody, we want the word – the semantics matter, we want the word to embody what it is that we are creating, what it is that we're drafting.

Here are a few questions as you develop purpose. These questions will help you to get clarity around who you exist to serve and why. So, we're going to ask the following questions to determine our purpose or to help us to draft our purpose.

Number one: **Ask five why's.** You've probably seen exercises similar to this in strategic planning, and another administrative and executive processes in your work. You want to

start with the descriptive statement like, “We deliver X Services.” Then we begin asking, “Why is it important that we deliver those services?” and you come up with an answer and you’ll say, “Why is that important?” and you come up with an answer to that question and then you ask again, “Why is that important or why is that important that we continue to do that?” or “Why are we interested in serving that segment of the market?” or “Why are we interested in serving the segment of the market that way?” After a few why’s, you find that you’re getting down to the fundamental purpose of your work, fundamental purpose of the organization. So, number one, ask five why’s.

Number two: **Suppose your company went out of business. Its products or services are discontinued, its operations are shut down, it utterly and completely ceases to exist. What would be lost?** If your organization went out of business, it shut its doors never to open again, what would be lost and why is it important that your organization continues to exist? In fact, you can have your company or your organization on one side of town and another company, and another organization on the other side of town and have no competition with each other if your purposes are clearly articulated and your vision is clearly articulated.

It’s why I work at one point in a city in South Carolina, a small city of less than twenty-thousand people where there were four significant universities. So, what would be lost if your organization no longer exists and why is it important that it continues to exist.

Number three: **If you woke up tomorrow with enough money to retire, why would you continue to work with this organization?** Maybe some of you are nearing retiring, you’re already asking these types of questions. If you woke up tomorrow with enough money to retire, why would you continue to work with this organization?

Then as you ask those questions, begin drafting your purpose and wordsmith it together. Now, I want to give you a few examples of purpose and the thing to remember as I read this to you, and we’ll put them in to screen here for you, is to remember that these are not perfect examples of purpose and they’re definitely not perfect examples of purpose for you. You need to go through the work. The success of your organization, the success of you fulfilling or living out vision is directly related to the work that you put in to creating purpose and creating vision.

Let me read a few to you, some of these are really good. 3M. Most of you have heard of 3M as related to the adhesive product that can do a whole lot more than that.

3M core purpose: to solve unsolved problems innovatively.

Hewlett-Packard- **to make technical contributions for the advancement and welfare of humanity.**

Mary Kay Cosmetics- **to give unlimited opportunity to women.**

Nike- **to experience the emotion of competition, winning, and crushing competitors.**

I mean, Nike is for sure - and even in some of those others - they are huge compelling statements. They become this giant magnet that pulls us toward accomplishing that vision, fulfilling that vision every single day.

Action Step

You are going to draft your purpose in a full-sentence, a compelling sentence, you're going to **draft your purpose in a full-sentence format**. Okay? Now if you need to go back to watch this session again, listen to this session again, do that while you work through this. You may want to work two or three times to get clear on your mind what you're going to focus on in this session, or as you write out your purpose. So our action step is, write out the purpose in a full-sentence format; a compelling, exciting vision for you, and we'll see you on our next session.