



Ensure You'll **Endure**.™

Wealth Planning and Transfer •

Business Acceleration •

Human Capital Development

The Power of Vision

Cornerstone has had the opportunity to work alongside many businesses and their leadership teams to create, refine, and activate strategic plans that move organizations forward. With our expertise, we sometimes pick up where another outside advisor has left off. It never ceases to amaze us how some of their existing strategic plans are overly complicated, and how little has been accomplished since the previous plan was first created. We tend to take a more pragmatic approach to creating the plan, but we follow a disciplined path in so doing. Our approach includes the following steps:

1. Assess where you are now. Start by looking outside the company to discover and evaluate what opportunities and threats are present in the external environment.
2. Look internally to define the relevant strengths and weaknesses that exist within your company. Be honest in your assessment.
3. Describe your intended destination (your vision statement).
4. Plot out and then detail the major areas of focus (aka. Big Rocks) that will help you to achieve your vision.

While this process sounds simple enough, it isn't simple. It requires thought, teamwork, and purposeful work.

So what are you to do? Spend quality time constructing your vision statement. Give it effort, time, and real thought. A vision statement needs to be something that your company can "see" in a way that makes the employees want to move toward and achieve it.

We believe that there are several primary characteristics of a powerful vision, including:

Challenging. There must be a balance between having visions that are seen to be achievable, and those that also challenge and stretch people. They lose power if they are too far either way. However, the right balance can inspire people beyond what they think of as their limits.

Clear. A vision must be able to be readily communicated and understood by a broad range of people. This doesn't necessarily mean it needs to be simple, but the essence of it must be able to be captured and conveyed to achieve a common understanding.



Compelling. Powerful visions must draw people, attract them, and make them want to take action and overcome obstacles to achieve it. It must feel worth achieving, worth putting real effort into getting there.

Aligned. The vision must fit with the organization and its people, culture, history, and its competitive advantage. This requires an insider's understanding of what will make sense and work within that context, while possibly stretching a little beyond.

Inclusive. A strong vision statement is inclusive and actionable, helping employees see how their contributions advance leadership's goals. This alignment empowers teams to recognize their impact within the company, the lives they touch, and the broader community they serve.

Distinctive. Every organization is unique, and it is almost impossible to take another's vision and expect it to work for you. A vision holds immense power when it is distinctly relevant to both the organization and the people it serves.

Strategic planning is not merely a budget exercise, or an extension of what you are now doing. It requires you to think strategically by crafting your vision to go beyond past achievements and to build on your success. By anticipating these possibilities and proactively positioning yourself to capitalize on them, you create a dynamic roadmap for long-term growth and resilience.

Is your vision doing its job? You're not alone in this; many companies face similar challenges in creating actionable plans. The good news? It's fixable! Build a vision that drives your business and inspires your company!