

THE MISSION: IMPROVING CARE

The Background

After a decade of rapid expansion through acquisitions and organic growth, a multinational healthcare company needed to update its mission and vision statements to chart a new course for the expanded company.

The Challenge

Any mission and vision statement needed to engage employees as much as customers. It needed a compelling story to bring a diverse group of employees together.

The Request

"In the past, we focused on our history and how that experience made us a trusted business partner. But now we need to emphasize our commitment to the future."



The First Step

After about five years of working with this company, and numerous opportunities to voice my opinion about brand and messaging strategy, I finally had the opportunity to help the company formally articulate what it stood for, in forward-looking terms.

I analyzed competitors, and determined what made this company stand out in the marketplace. This helped me to identify what was special about the company, the affiliated brand names, and its goals for the future.

But mission and vision statements are as much about the employees as they are about customers. I also did internal research to assess what employees needed to feel connected to their company, and to their customers.



What Changed?

- The conversation moved from a reliance on trusted history to a commitment to a long-term relationship that customers could count on in the future.
- The tone shifted from “we want to be your first choice for products” to “we help you to help your patients.”

The Company

Revenue: \$1.75 billion

Employees: 7,000

Industry: Healthcare

Image courtesy Piron Guillaume via Unsplash.com.

The Structure

While the structure of mission and vision statements is fairly straightforward, the tone is not. Previously, these statements equated the company’s longevity with customer trust. As such, the tone was about the products (“We’ve been your supplier of XYZ product for more than one hundred years”), and not about patients.

I shifted the tone to focus on empathy for people. The company would no longer position itself as a purveyor of products. Instead, it would focus on solutions: how the company would work closely with healthcare providers to develop cost-effective answers to real-world problems.

Through these close-knit partnerships, the company would have unique insight into clinical challenges. By solving these problems, the company could empower healthcare providers deliver the best possible patient outcomes.

This also improved employee engagement, helping them to see how their innovation could make a real difference in people’s lives.

The Result

The mission and vision, adopted in 2012, carried the company through to its next restructuring in 2016. The current vision continues to follow this evolution, putting patients above products.