

## PERSONAL MISSION, VALUES AND VISION STATEMENTS

Many practitioners and reflectors on the role of leader state clearly that leadership of others is strongly connected to leadership of yourself. To lead others in terms of purpose, direction, and behaviours you first need to have done some of your internal work. What is your mission in life/work? What is your vision of your future? What are the principles and values that guide you?

As a human being, manager, leader we are at once both who we are now and who we are developing into, our potential; we are at any time in both a state of being and of becoming.

James Collins and Jerry Porras (James Collins, 2001) found in their research, that a significant number of people found the key concepts they identified with organisations were useful in their personal and family lives. There is a human need for people to identify with their core self, asking questions important to them:

- *Who am I?*
- *What do I stand for?*
- *What is my purpose?*
- *How do I maintain my sense of self in this unpredictable world?*
- *How do I have meaning in my life and work?*
- *How do I remain renewed, engaged and stimulated?*

One concept described was “**preserve the core/stimulate progress**” and many applied it to the basic issues of being human, self identity and self renewal. It is a concept that recognises that individuals and organisations need stability and continuity and have a basic need to *preserve the core* at the same time that change and development (*stimulate progress*) are necessary or are occurring. They go together, paradoxically, and the stronger the core, the more ability and opportunity an individual has to embrace change pro-actively and to stimulate progress with purpose.

Change and a vision of the future often are not always clear and as predictable as may seem. Collins and Porras (Porras, 1997)

*“People cannot reliably predict where they are going and how their lives will unfold, especially in today’s unpredictable world.”*

Stephen Covey(1992) calls for and describes principle centred living.

*“Principles are self evident self validating natural laws. They don’t change or shift. They provide true north direction to our lives when navigating the streams of our environment. Principles apply at all times in all places. They surface in the form of values, ideas, norms and teachings that uplift, ennoble, fulfil, empower and inspire people.....Principles unlike values are objective and external. They operate in obedience to natural laws, regardless of conditions. Values are subjective and internal. Values are like maps. Maps are not the territories: they are only subjective attempts to describe or represent the territory. The more closely our values or maps are aligned with correct principles – with realities of the territory, with things as they really are – the more accurate and useful they will be.”*

(Covey, 1992 Pg 19-20)

## PERSONAL MISSION, VALUES AND VISION ACTIVITY

Stephen Covey (2004) suggest that *people can’t live with change unless there’s a changeless core inside them. The key to the ability to change is a changeless sense of who you are, what you are about and what you value.*

### Create your own values timeline

- What are the key milestones of your development?
- What beliefs, values and behaviours were formed?
- What is most important to you in the ways that you work and relate to others?

### On Your Own

- Create a Personal Mission Statement for yourself.

It is like a Personal Constitution Document articulating your purpose and values; why you exist and how you are in the world. This may be relevant to work, family and community.

(You can refer to it for both long and short term decisions and actions. It will be a clear reference point for present day and future living. It is the unchanging core that centres and guides you.)

