The leader as a vision giver

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“Vision is the ability to see what might be, rather than what is” – Geoff Rutter

A vision statement for your church, company or organisation will describe the preferred or desired state. It is a description of how it will position itself in the future.

“It is a picture of what is possible… It is the gift of eyes of faith to see the invisible, to know the unknowable, to think the unthinkable, to experience the not yet.” Lovett H. Weems, Jr.

“Significant vision precedes significant success” – Fred Polak

- Having vision forces us to take a stand for a preferred future.
- Having a vision helps leadership focus on the long-term perspective, and serve as a benchmark for evaluating actions.
- Having a vision gives momentum to the entrepeneuring aspect of the work or business because it gives us something we are willing to take risks for.
- Having a vision helps create discontentment with the mediocrity of our current comfort zone.
- Having a vision keeps people energised, motivated and on course.
- Having a vision focuses on priorities
- Having a vision invites and draws others

“My interest is in the future because I’m going to spend the rest of my life there” – Charles Kettering

Vision without action is merely a dream
Action without vision just passes the time.
Vision with action can change the world – Joel Barker

“Where there is no vision the people perish” Proverbs 29:18

We need a vision
- That is clear,
- That is tested,
- That has limits.
- That has been incubated
- That is written down

“When it comes to the future, there are three kinds of people: Those who let it happen, those who make it happen and those who wonder what happened”
John Richardson
Vision and Moses’ Leadership (Exodus 3:8)
1. It gave his people a true sense of destiny
2. It brought coherence to his people (Judges 21:25)
3. It bred endurance in them
4. It provided continuity for his people
5. It solved his identity problems (Ex 3:11)
6. It solved his authority problems (Ex 3:13)
7. It bridged the credibility gap (Ex 4:1)
8. It answered the ability problem (Ex 4:10)
9. It became the basis for his security (Numbers 12:1-16; 17:1)

“I pray that your inner vision may be flooded with light to enable you to see what hope the fact that He called you gives you” (Ephesians 1:18 Barclay)

“There is no more powerful engine driving an organization towards excellence and long range success than an attractive, worthwhile and achievable vision of the future, widely shared” Burt Nanus

Basic of a vision
(By George Barna, ‘Turning vision into action’)

1. Vision is a clear and precise mental portrait of a preferable future
2. Vision is related to mission but different
3. Vision is tangible to the beholder – a living image
4. Vision involves change – it will threaten your comfort zone
5. Vision redefines success
6. Vision is not easily embraced by others
7. Vision is not for the fainthearted – it demands perseverance and hard work
8. The vision is well aware of the context in which the vision must be accomplish
9. Vision does not happen in a vacuum – it is revealed from our mission, values, strategies, tactics and goals and made practical in the context.
10. Vision is discerned through an information gathering and analytical process
11. Vision unfolds progressively
12. Vision is as much a journey as it is a destination
13. Vision outlives the visionary
14. Vision often frightens people
15. Vision motivates the masses

Indicators

“Some men see things as they are and ask ‘why?’ I dream of things that never were and ask ‘why not?’” – George Bernard Shaw
Indicators of Visionary living

1. Efficient use of time: ministry/business-driven priorities
2. Vision is a conscious decision - making filter
3. Willing to make the tough decisions on the basis of the vision
4. Anticipate barriers and obstacles because of their commitments to the vision; not discouraged by challenges
5. Prepared to be in ministry/business based on the vision, for the long haul
6. Altered attitude: more hopeful and optimistic than circumstances merit.
7. Frequent and realistic evaluation of how they are faring in the vision quest – this leads to excellence.

Personal Interactions

1. Strategically communicate the vision to others
2. Enlist support for the vision from others
3. Intentionally thank those who collaborate in the vision
4. Encourage those who labour in pursuit of the vision

“If a man hasn’t discovered something he will die for, he isn’t fit to live” – Martin Luther King