

## Creating a Personal Mission Statement

### **How do you know that you have arrived if you don't know where you are headed?**

Creating a personal mission statement forces clarity, helps you define purpose, and serves as the foundation for your life goals. It also helps you identify the underlying reasons for your choices and behaviors and what truly motivates you to make change. As author (of [The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People](#)) Stephen Covey says, your mission statement is about “defining the personal, moral and ethical guidelines within which you can most happily express and fulfill yourself.” Writing it down on paper makes it real. Your mission statement becomes your own personal constitution — the basis for life-directing decisions, as well as making daily choices that impact you and those around you.

### **If you'd like to write your own personal mission statement, here are 8 steps to get you started:**

#### **Step #1: Examine the lives of others.**

Think of a person in history or in your life whom you admire. What are the qualities of that person that you would like to emulate?

These qualities can relate to their character, values, achievements, personality, or simply the way they live their lives. Consider the specific reasons you admire the person, and list those qualities in detail.

#### **Step # 2: Determine your ideal self.**

Define the type of person you want to become, not just what you want to have or achieve. This ideal should reflect your core values and your definition of living with integrity. Consider all areas of your life, as a spouse, friend, employee, parent, etc. and who you want to be in each of those roles.

I find it helpful to write down the phrase, “As an ideal spouse (or friend, parent, etc.), I want to . . .” Then fill in the end of the sentence with as many outcomes as you wish to become. For example, you might write: As an ideal spouse, I want to:

- Express my love daily in words, affection, and action;
- Be supportive and attentive to my spouse's needs;
- Work through conflict calmly and in the spirit of compromise;
- Be fully present and emotionally intimate.

This exercise may take some time, but it is well worth the effort beyond its usefulness for your mission statement. It helps you clarify your personal operating system and reminds you of what you are capable of becoming.

#### **Step # 3: Consider your legacy.**

Determine all of your life roles (career, family, community, etc.), and write down a short statement of how you would like to be described in each of those roles. Think about how you would like the important people in your life to remember you and talk about you.

For example, you might want your boss to say, “He was a man of character and integrity who was a compassionate and inspiring leader and a visionary for our organization.”

This exercise may feel awkward, but no one else has to see it. It is to help you decide how you want to step into each of the roles in your life and to clarify in concise words how you want others to perceive you.

#### **Step #4: Determine a purpose.**

Write down a purpose for the four fundamental elements of who you are: physical, mental, emotional and spiritual. In each of these areas, what is the most important way you want to express yourself. This may seem

confusing, but it's really simple. We tend to go about our lives without considering our purpose for our essential being and how we want to direct that purpose.

So with this exercise, see yourself as CEO of each of these four areas. As [CEO of your physical life](#), your purpose might be to *treat your body as sacred* by practicing fitness, healthy eating, daily affection, and pleasurable physical experiences. Your purpose for your mental life might be *to become a [life-long learner](#)* by expanding your skills, problem solving, and challenging yourself.

### **Step #5: Clarify your aptitudes.**

What are the talents and skills you possess that are most important to you and that you actually enjoy? Part of your mission statement should reflect your best aptitudes and strengths, these are what create joy and energy in our lives. When we spend our time on what we do well and enjoy, our lives not only have meaning but also it has vibrancy.

Make a list of all of your personal and professional talents, aptitudes, and skills — even those you may take for granted, like being a good friend or having the ability to organize well. Then circle the skills you enjoy or find fulfilling. Focus on these.

### **Step #6: Define specific goals.**

Based on everything you outlined above, what are some related goals you want to achieve in your life? Goals are specific, measurable, achievable, results-focused, and time bound.

As you look at the people who inspired you, the ideal self you've defined, the legacy you want to leave, the purpose you have for the elements of your life, and the aptitudes you want to enjoy, what are the outcomes you want to achieve for your life?

You might want to [create goals](#) for various areas of your life — from your relationships to your hobbies.

### **Step #7: Craft your mission statement.**

Taking into account steps 1-6, begin crafting your personal mission statement. Keep it simple, clear and relatively brief — from a few sentences to a couple of paragraphs. You can write it as a statement that flows or with bullet points. How you craft it is less important than what you want to express.

The point is you want a statement that will guide you in your day to day actions and decisions, as well as your long term goals. Try to keep your words positive and affirmative. Focus on what you want rather than what you don't want.

## **Here are some examples of mission statements to give you some ideas:**

### **Sample 1:**

*My mission is to act as an instrument of positive change in my family, my work and my community. I will utilize all of my and will participate in all aspects of my life with energy, purpose and gratitude. I will utilize my talents in strategy and administration to ensure that my home is loving and calm, my workplace is productive and positive and my community is responsive and growing. Through this focus I will give more than I take and will provide a positive role model for my children.*

### **Sample 2:**

*My mission in life is to have my own family. I need to remember that what I do now in my life will affect them. Because of this, I try my best to do the right things that will benefit my future. I would someday like to have a large farm with horses where I can help handicapped children. I'd like to work with animals, perhaps even be a veterinarian. Most of all, I want to have time for my family. So today, I will study hard and stay away from things that may hinder my dream from happening.*

### **Sample 3:**

*To find happiness, fulfillment, and value in living, I will seek out and experience all of the pleasures and joys that life has to offer. My core values are not limitations restraining me on this hedonistic quest for fun. Rather, they provide a framework for identifying, pursuing, and achieving those pleasures that last the longest and are the most satisfying. The greatest joy of all is being worthy of the respect and admiration of family, friends, and business associates*

### **Sample 4:**

*To remember where I have been and where I will go through maintaining positive relationships with family and friends. To choose the ethical way by making a personal commitment to honesty and integrity. To find peacefulness within myself by looking inward while using my heart to guide my dreams and desires, and my mind to pursue knowledge, creating balance among all of my obligations. To content myself in my surroundings so I will always know where security lies within my life. To build a reputation of being dedicated to every goal I choose to pursue while having successes in both my personal and professional life. To enjoy every moment along this journey finding laughter, love, and happiness with each day that passes.*

(Sources: [www.missionstatements.com](http://www.missionstatements.com), and [msb.franklincovey.com](http://msb.franklincovey.com))

### **Step #8: Refine it.**

Creating a mission statement is not something you do in a day. It does require introspection, self-analysis, clarity of mind, and often several drafts before you produce it in a final form.

It might several weeks or even months before you feel really comfortable with your mission statement, before you feel it is complete and concise expression of your innermost values and directions.

Review the personal mission statement regularly and feel free to revise and update it as you continue to ponder your values and goals. Keep it within view so you can read it regularly. Use it as your personal framework for your life, and every time you make an important decision, let your mission statement be your guide.

**Name:**

:

**Do My Actions Support My Words?**

Identify your career/college goal and list 5 things (evidence) of what you are doing to reach these goals **or** changes that you need to make to move towards the goal.

	<b>Goal</b>	<b>Evidence</b>
<b>Example</b>	Doctor	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. I'm passing all my classes with A's/B's or better.</li><li>2. I need to take as many science classes as available.</li><li>3. My 4 year course of study will meet the A-G requirements.</li><li>4. I will regularly meet with my counselor to make certain I am "on track" and taking the right courses.</li><li>5. I need to take the SAT/ACT for college admission.</li><li>6. I will be motivated and make my education a priority in my life.</li><li>7. I will be organized</li><li>8. I will learn to be a great manager of my time.</li><li>9. I will ASK FOR HELP WHEN NEEDED</li></ol>
<b>1</b>		
<b>2 (Alternate Career)</b>		

Links:

[mynextmove.org](http://mynextmove.org)

[knowhow2go.acenet.edu](http://knowhow2go.acenet.edu)