

How to Create a Comprehensive "Community of the Future" Vision

1. Identify or develop a community organization with an interest in all aspects of the community that will perform or direct the community vision process.
2. Define the purpose for the community vision.
 - a. Illustration purposes-to challenge people's thinking.
 - b. Develop a shared vision from which committed persons can "take action." (To accomplish a shared vision, a significant portion of people affected by it must be involved in its creation.)
3. Broaden the perspective of persons creating the vision by assisting them in identifying the following:
 - a. Forces from both inside and outside the community that are having an impact on the community.
 - b. Trends in the community.
4. Engage citizens in a creative brainstorming session on the desired features of life in their community in the year 2010 or the 21st century.
 - a. Have citizens identify or "discover" positive and negative trends in the community.
 - b. Develop an extensive list of community strengths and weaknesses.
 - c. Lead citizens in a brainstorming discussion about the kind of future community they prefer. Use a combination of open-ended and specific questions.
5. Combine the results of these sessions in a 2 or 4 page "script" of life in the future community then publicize and distribute it widely.
6. Conduct reaction discussion meetings and consensus building-modify and reshape "community vision" to reflect community consensus.
7. If vision is for "action," organize action projects that will help reach vision.

Suggested Criteria: A Community Vision Statement must be:

- Understandable.
- Readable.
- Not too long (2 or 3 pages).
- Based on a rationale (which is apparent to the reader). .A mixture of both desirable features from today and desirable "new" features.
- Related to the overall world of the future.
- Viewed as attainable with a concentrated positive effort by the community.
- Composed in commonly understood language
- Able to be illustrated graphically and through plays or skits.

Tools for development of a community vision are found on the following pages.

Sample Worksheet

Information Sheet to Stimulate Discussion About "Community of the Future"

SOME DRIVING FORCES AND FACTORS AFFECTING YOUR FUTURE

1. TECHNOLOGY

- Technology advancement.
- Utilization of technology into society.
- Availability of "new" technology.
- Unexpected implications of technology.
- Education system use and teaching of "new" technology .

2. INFORMATION

- Information explosion (currently doubles every 2.5 years).
- Information dissemination and availability. .Information utilization (specialized or integrated ways). .Education system and teaching of "new" information.

3. VALUES

- Values and attitudes responsiveness to change. .Diverse generational values and attitudes.
- Values and ethics regarding "others."
- Values and attitudes toward other cultures and "outsiders."

4. CITIZENS AND GOVERNMENT

- Expanded or lessened role of government. .Expanded or lessened citizen responsibilities. Abilities of citizens to act together outside of government.
- Centralization or decentralization of government and public decision making.

5. ECONOMIC

- Shifting global concentrations of wealth. .Capability to compete in global markets (on both quality and price bases).
- Ability to create or enter "open" markets.
- Ability to create profitable "economies of scale" (as corporations, communities, or countries).
- Ability to think and act strategically (as individuals, communities, corporations, or countries).
- Individual and societal motivations toward work and wealth.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL

- Physical environment capacity to support life. .
- Climatic changes created by humans and capacity to correct environmental problems.
- Level and availability of natural resources.

SAMPLE WORKSHEET

YOUR COMMUNITY:

DATE:

Your "Vision" of Your Community in the Year 2010

Some Questions to Answer

- What kind of community do you really want to exist in 2010, or sooner?
- Considering the numerous changes happening in the world, what impact will they have in your community?

Dream ahead to a time when the best of today's community can be enhanced by positive changes. This discussion exercise is intended to help you and others participating in community engagement to design your community of the future.

Please respond to as many of the following questions as you can within the allotted time and then participate in the discussion and brainstorming session that follows. (This questionnaire will be collected at the end of the discussion, as well.)

1. It is the end of the typical workday in your community of the future -2010 A.D., to be specific.
 - ✓ What type of work have people in your community been doing?
 - ✓ How many hours per week are people working? When does work end?
 - ✓ What do people do in their non-working time?
 - ➔ Immediately after work?
 - ➔ At various seasons throughout the year?
2. What will your community be noted and recognized for? Why will it be distinctive?
3. How will people spend their evenings and weekends in their community of the future? What will be different from today?

4. Who will be attending school in this community?
 - ✓ What will be happening to make sure that "high quality" education is provided?

5. What will be the characteristics of family life in this community of the future?
 - ✓ What will be the relationships between adults? .What will be the relationship between adults and children?
 - ✓ What will be the relationship between siblings?
 - ✓ What kind of extended family will exist?
 - ✓ What will family members do together?

6. How and what will people of the community be celebrating "together"?

7. How will people's artistic, "special" and creative abilities be expressed in this community?

8. What will be happening to make the community an "even better" place to live?

9. What new technology will be present in your community of the future?

10. What kind of recreational, educational, and employment options will be available for residents?

11. Why will people want to move to your community of the future?

12. What are the values of the community?

PLEASE RETURN TO:

Taken from the "Leadership: Sustaining Action on Community and Organizational Issues" Notebook, North Central Regional Center For Rural Development in cooperation with the conNEcting Nebraska Technology Management Team of the University of NE Cooperative Extension.

Writing the Community Vision Statement

Answers to the following questions will provide direction for the overall composition of the vision statement. The exact details of the vision will have emerged from the group analysis of the engagement results.

1. Is there an overall THEME to the community of the future which can be used in the early part of the vision to capture attention?
2. Are there words or phrases in the engagement discussion of the community of the future which relate to community IMAGE-REPUTATION-UNIQUENESS, and would be ATTENTION GETTING?
3. What lifestyle descriptions would ILLUSTRATE daily life in the "community of the future"? Could these be presented in the form of skits or short plays?
4. What DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE AND LIFESTYLE would potentially jolt readers to realize that change forces will affect their community whether people want them to, or not?
5. For what change does some type of CAUSAL FACTOR need to be described to make the change seem possible?
6. What wording should be used to indicate CONTINUITY with today's community and reassurance that its good aspects will be carried forward into tomorrow's community?

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A Simplified Way of Developing Scenarios

Creating Future Scenarios Through Groups A Story About the Future

1. Identify the scope (community, industry, organizational, personal, etc.) and purpose of the scenario.
 - a. For illustration of discussion purposes.
 - b. As a basis for taking action - to create a desired scenario or prevent an undesirable scenario from happening. **If so, the people who must take action need to be involved in its development!**
2. Present, describe, discuss important facts, variables and decisions which affect the current and future situation.
3. Review the current situation in printed and/or verbal form.
4. Group development of scenarios-two approaches
First: Organize groups on random basis and ask them to develop best case/worst case/most likely scenarios (or alternate wording).
Second: Organize groups for scenario building according to attitude/outlook.

Assist the group to do a self assessment for their outlook on change.
For example...

Little change possible	Some change possible	Significant change possible
0	5	10
Pessimistic that change will happen	Somewhat Optimistic	Optimistic that change will happen
0	5	10

The scale will be selected according to the type of condition under discussion.

5. Report and discuss on the alternate scenarios. Debate the differences.
6. Analyze the common elements and agreements between the scenarios (reality - plausibility check) . Is consensus possible?

PLAUSIBILITY CHECK

CONTINUITY	Can we get there from here?
SELF -CONSISTENCY	Do the elements of this scenario fit together in a reasonable manner?
SIMILARITY	Would we be able to recognize this future condition from our understanding of the present?
CAUSALITY	Are causal relationships among the factors evident and reasonable?
HOLISTIC TRENDING	Is a direction toward global interdependence apparent?
GOAL SEEKING	Is intentionality or purposefulness evident in this scenario, either explicitly or implicitly?

7. Present one or more scenarios to interested audience or action groups.

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