

HOW TO CREATE A COMPELLING MISSION STATEMENT FOR YOUR BUSINESS

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What makes a good mission statement is creating a succinct sentence that captures your company purpose, a catchy slogan, or something more. The best mission statements leave a lasting impression of your brand in the minds of your consumers, encouraging them to choose you over your competitors. A quality mission statement incorporates your company core values and reflects your organisation's personality.

So, how do you get started with crafting your own? And which companies are doing it right?

Let's first explore what a mission statement is and how to create one for your own business. Sometimes it's hard to get going so we've also included 12 examples of the mission statements from other well known brands to provide you with some inspiration.

1. What is a Mission Statement?



A mission statement is defined as an action-based statement that declares the purpose of an organisation and how they serve their customers. This sometimes includes a description of the company, what it does, and its objectives.

A mission statement is a short summary of your company's purpose.

A mission statement provides perfect clarity behind the "what," the "who," and the "why," of your company. The best mission statements are guidelines by which a company operates. Everything you do as a company should work toward your mission statement.

Most mission statements are between one and three sentences, never exceeding 100 words. The best mission statements are typically a single succinct sentence, so keep this in mind when crafting yours.

Your company's mission statement should be communicated to employees before their first day on the job. It should be highlighted on all your recruiting and onboarding materials, and employees should know it by heart. After all, this is the mission your employees should be aligned with every day. Otherwise, they'll come into work feeling aimless and struggling to understand their purpose.



It's also important to understand how a mission statement fits into other commonly discussed areas that are useful for your business. It can be confusing to understand the differences between mission, vision and strategy.

A simple way to get clear on how it all fits together is as follows:

What = mission/goals

Why = purpose/vision

How = strategy

Who = people & network

2. How to Create a Compelling Mission Statement?



To craft a compelling mission statement, you'll need to follow a few steps. First, be careful, you don't want to fall into the trap of accidentally creating a vision statement, which is different than a mission statement. A vision statement describes what a company aspires to be, as opposed to what it is now.

When creating a mission statement, avoid the common pitfall of trying to summarise your company's services in a generic sentence.

The three steps you can go through to create a compelling mission statement are shown below.

Step 1 - Interview Leadership

First, interview your leadership team about what they believe your company's purpose is. Ask questions like:

- What prominent challenges does our company solve? Why are we in business?
- When you first applied, why did you want to work for us?
- Who are our customers, and what do they value most?
- What kind of image do we want to convey to the outside world as a company?

- How do we use our products and services to reach our goals?
- What do you think our organization's purpose is?
- What do you like about working for our company?
- What differentiates us from our competitors?
- What underlying philosophies and principles shaped your responses to the previous questions?

The best mission statements are developed by the leaders of your company who understand your organisation's direction.

Ensure every member of the leadership team is involved in this process. Take notes during your interviews and observe similarities and differences between the answers. Do you see certain themes or topics emerging? If so, you can use these to shape your mission statement.

Step 2 - Identify Common Themes from Your Interviews

Next, review the common themes that emerged during your conversations, distilling them into paragraphs. You'll want to set aside several hours to do this, or even an entire day. It's important that you carve out the necessary time to spend on this process since crafting a mission statement is critical to identifying the motivations behind your business. When developing ideas, keep the following in mind:

- Your mission statement should be attainable. Your company should be working toward it already and it should be possible to achieve.
- Ensure your mission statement is clear so everyone can understand it.
- The best mission statements are inspiring for management and staff.
- It should set your company apart from others and be unique to you.
- Your mission statement needs to be credible and inspire buy-in from all your major stakeholders.

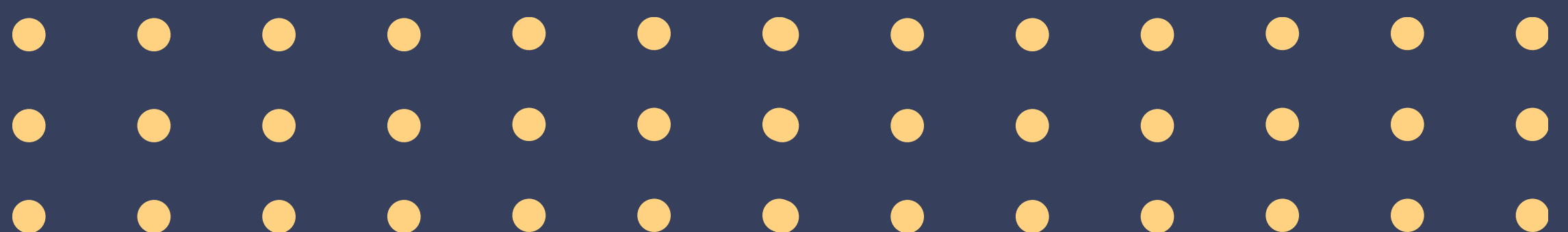
Once you've identified your themes, distil them down to simple sentences that capture the mission of your company.

Once you have these paragraphs written, rewrite each to be more succinct. Eliminate as many unnecessary sentences as you can. Once you have each paragraph distilled down to three sentences, challenge yourself to combine these sentences into a single thought that encapsulates your theme. Do this with every theme you've discovered during your interviews and you'll end up with several options for a mission statement to present to leadership.

Step 3 - Present to Leadership

Once you have identified a few options for your mission statement, present them to leadership and get feedback. Be prepared to hear a lot of conflicting opinions — this is all part of the process!

Mission statements don't evolve in a vacuum, and it will take time to iterate on your ideas. The hard work you put into this will be worth it as a strong mission statement has longevity and will be with you for many years to come.



Once your leadership team has fully bought into your mission statement, you're ready to start communicating about it to your employees.

3. Common Mission Statement Mistakes to Avoid



While you're developing ideas for your mission statement, be sure to avoid the following common mistakes:

1. Leaving Little Space for Inspiration

A mission that reads more like a fact sheet than something that explains a company's reason for existing won't be effective. Avoid simply listing what your company does and shift your focus to the bigger picture, focusing on what guides your company strategy and inspires your workforce.

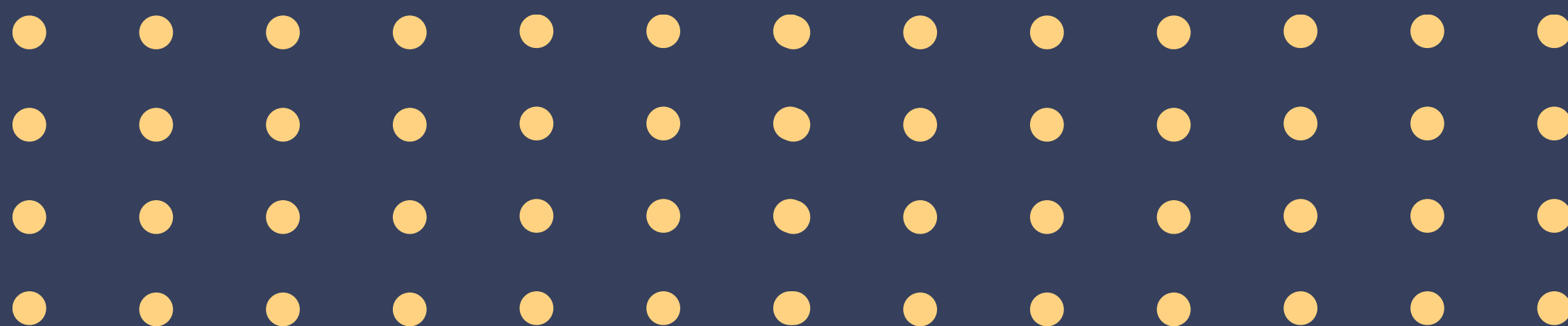
Be sure to have fun with your mission statement! Don't craft something that doesn't resonate.

2. Lacking Personality and Fun

The best mission statements incorporate your company's unique personality. Your mission statement should not be devoid of humanity. While it's tempting to create a mission statement that presents your company as a professional and serious organisation, it's more important (and ultimately more beneficial) to reflect the culture that makes your company unique.

3. Using Buzzwords and Jargon

Bogging down your mission statement with buzzwords and jargon is a common mistake companies make when crafting mission statements. The best mission statements are comprised of simple, clear language that directly communicates a company's purpose.



Examples of the best Mission Statements:



Having said all of this, sometimes it can be hard to know where to start, so having some inspiration from other companies that are doing it well and have compelling mission statements can help you start the process and get creative.

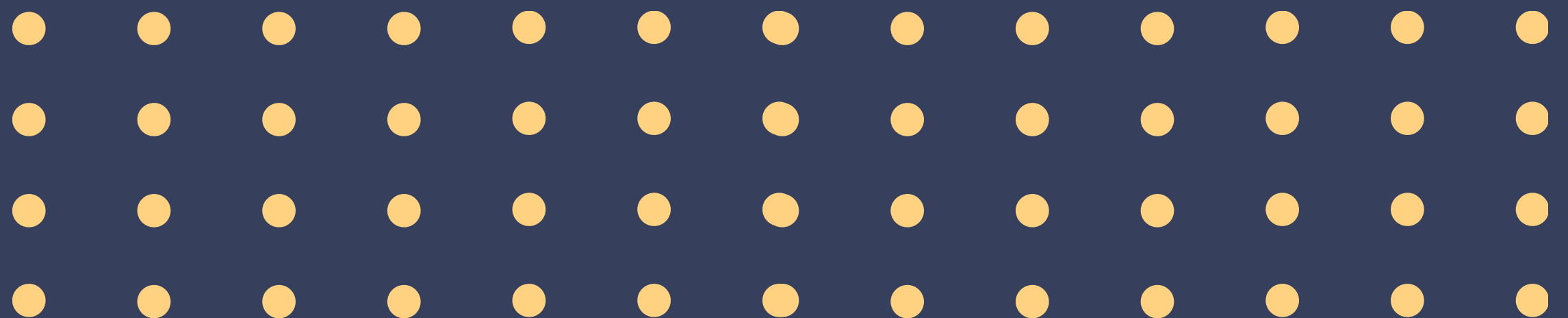
However, be careful not to take someone else's mission statement and tweak it to fit yours. Much better to go through the process above to ensure that your mission statement comes with energy, passion and knowledge from your teams which makes it uniquely yours!

Here are examples of the best mission statements from some of the most well-known brands across the world for you to review and use as inspiration for creating your own unique mission statement.

1. Google - 'To organise the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful'
2. Apple - 'To bring the best personal computing experience to students, educators, creative professionals, and consumers around the world through its innovative hardware, software, and internet offerings'
3. Microsoft - 'To empower every person and every organisation on the planet to achieve more'
4. McDonald's - 'To be our customers's favourite place and way to eat and drink'
5. Coca Cola - 'To refresh the world in mind, body, and spirit, to inspire moments of optimism and happiness through our brands and actions, and to create value and make a difference'
6. Tesla - 'To accelerate the world's transition to sustainable energy'
7. TED - 'Spread ideas'
8. KFC - 'Serve finger lickin' good food to all our customers'
9. IKEA - 'To offer a wide range of well-designed, functional home furnishing products at prices so low that as many people as possible will be able to afford them.'
10. American Express - 'We work hard every day to make American Express the world's most respected service brand'



11. Virgin Atlantic – ‘To embrace the human spirit and let it fly’
12. British Airways – ‘To ensure our customers fly confidently that together, we are acting responsibly to take care of the world we live in’
13. LinkedIn – ‘To connect the world’s professionals to make them more productive and successful’
14. PayPal – ‘To build the web’s most convenient, secure, cost-effective payment solution’
15. Amazon – ‘To be Earth’s most customer-centric company, where customers can find and discover anything they might want to buy online, and endeavours to offer its customers the lowest possible prices’
16. Ferrari – ‘We build cars, symbols of Italian excellence the world over, and we do so to win on both road and track. Unique creations that fuel the Prancing Horse legend and generate a “World of Dreams and Emotions.”’
17. Asana - ‘To help humanity thrive by enabling all teams to work together effortlessly’
18. Nike - ‘Bring inspiration and innovation to every athlete in the world. If you have a body, you are an athlete’
19. Asda – ‘To be Britain’s best-value retailer exceeding customer needs always’
20. Patagonia – ‘Build the best product, cause no unnecessary harm, use business to inspire and implement solutions to the environmental crisis’



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