



## Strategic Focus January 2019

*Strategic Focus examines a specific governance topic to help you, your leadership team and your board in planning, strategic thinking, and execution as you seek to sustain and amplify your mission.*

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A crucial aspect of governance is being a guardian of the mission, vision and values of the organization. These statements are not simply fancy sentences in our annual reports, on websites or walls of our community. They are statements that guide decision making and should be included in regular board conversations.

We must be courageous enough to acknowledge that, from time to time, we may need to rearticulate our mission and vision depending upon where we are in the life cycle of our organization and what external factors might be affecting our business model. We must also remember that values are meant to be lived out and modeled both at the board and staff levels, not written and filed away. Leadership (and governance *is* leadership) requires setting an aspirational vision and using it to inspire and motivate staff in imagining a preferred future.

Can your individual board members recite your mission, vision or values? What about your staff leadership? Where do you articulate these foundational elements of your organization to ensure you are living into them? If you do not do this already, start placing your mission, vision and values on your regular board meeting agendas. How can we use mission in our deliberations if we don't know what the statement means?

### **Mission Driven**

*"Exceptional boards shape and uphold the mission, articulate a compelling vision, and ensure the congruence between decisions and core values."*

– BoardSource, *Twelve Principles of Governance that Power Exceptional Boards*

## Starting the Conversation

[The Source: Twelve Principles of Governance that Power Exceptional Boards](#) from BoardSource

[The Importance of Having a Mission Driven Company](#) by William Craig for *Forbes*

[Mission Matters Most](#) by Kim Jonker & William F. Meehan III for *Stanford Social Innovation Review*

[How to Guide your Nonprofit toward Mission-Friendly Growth](#) by Kevin Xu for *Forbes*

[5 Reasons Why Mission Driven Leaders are the Most Successful](#) from Trustologie

[Mission Statement](#) from BoardSource

[Strategic Planning and Redefining the Vision](#) from BoardSource

## Tools & Templates

[What Does it Mean to be Mission Driven?](#) from NESC

[Mind the Gap: Mission Accomplishment Measures](#) by Robert M. Sheehan, Jr. for BoardSource

[Tips for Developing a Mission Statement](#) from BoardSource

[9 Characteristics of a Mission Statement](#) from BoardSource

[Mission vs. Vision](#) from BoardSource

[30 Example Vision Statements](#) from TopNonprofits

[50 Example Mission Statements](#) from TopNonprofits

[8 Elements of an Effective Vision Statement](#) from The NonProfit Times

[Elements of a Vision Statement](#) from BoardSource

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