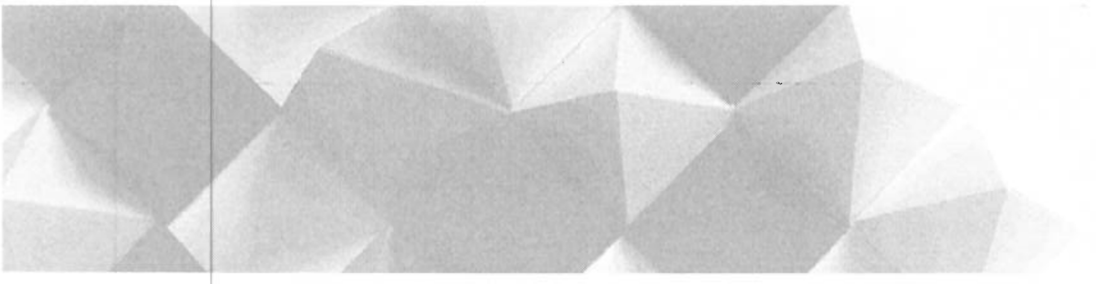

CHAPTER 6

Defining the Future Direction of the Organization

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading and studying this chapter, you should be able to:

- Explain the concept of "strategic direction" and why it is the first step in the delineation of an organization's strategic intentions.
- Distinguish between strategic direction at the level of the corporation and within its individual strategic business units (SBUs).
- Describe the mission statement and the purpose it serves in the strategic planning process.
- List the characteristics and benefits of a good mission statement.
- Describe the vision statement and the purpose it serves in the strategic planning process.
- List the characteristics and benefits of a good vision statement.
- Describe the values of an organization and the purpose they serve in its operational and strategic activities.
- Describe the substance of an organization's strategic objectives and the contribution they make to the strategic planning process.
- Distinguish between strategic objectives at the corporate and SBU levels.

With a good sense of what it is capable of, in terms of resources and competencies, and what it faces in the outside world, in terms of markets and customers, competitors, and general environmental factors, an organization is in a good position to begin plotting a course into the future. An organization's future is virtually limitless; there is an infinity of directions in which it can choose to steer itself. The decision needs to be reached in a thoughtful, systematic manner. Over several decades of strategic management practice by many organizations in many industries, there has developed a set of four documents that define an organization's future direction. These are a **mission** statement, a **vision** portrayal, a **code of values**, and a set of **strategic objectives**. They

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are usually prepared in that order. The introspective and ongoing process that creates these documents is often the first time that an organization consciously expresses its strategic intentions.

Responsibility for Defining Strategic Direction

Strategic direction can be defined at the corporate, SBU, functional area, and other appropriate levels within a large organization, as shown in FIGURE 6-1. The direction is necessary for the strategies that are implemented at each of those levels.

The mission and vision statements created by the corporate center describe the strategic direction for the total organization. Because the corporation is often the sole legal entity capable of raising debt and equity capital for use by its various components, the essence of that direction and how well it is followed is watched closely by external stakeholders in the financial community. However, the direction of the corporation is concerned mainly with the types of businesses that will be contained in its portfolio. It is at the SBU level that the direction statements focus on the markets in which each business intends to compete and how it will gain sustainable competitive advantages there. If the entire organization consists of a single business, these will be its only direction statements; there is no portfolio strategy to explain.

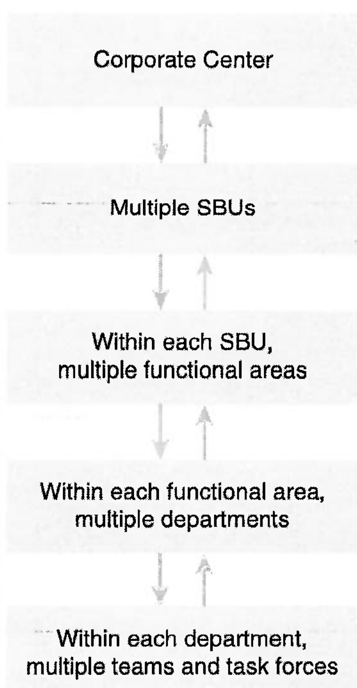

FIGURE 6-1 Hierarchy of Strategy-Making Levels in an Organization

The identities of the organization personnel who will be involved in defining its strategic direction are not a trivial matter. When a company is first formed, as in the case of a biotechnology start-up, the founders determine that direction. They may not do it consciously; they may not think of it in terms of a "strategic direction." It often starts with the promising results of a university-based research project that shows some commercial potential. The lead researchers create an organization to begin that commercialization process. In another example, a group of three physicians who recently completed residencies decide to set up a practice together. Whatever direction the practice has will come from the three doctors.

If the business succeeds and grows, it usually becomes necessary eventually to formalize the strategy-making process, including making a clearer statement of strategic direction. At this point, the founders or chief executives of the business still take lead roles in the process, though they are likely to begin consulting other managers and staff within the organization.

The historical model of delegating all strategy-making responsibility to a vice president of strategic planning and his staff now seems archaic and insular. The movement is definitely in the direction of making the process much more inclusive. A key step in that direction was the use of "strategic planning retreats" to which a few more managers were invited. Now, in some organizations, almost every employee is given an opportunity to provide some input to the strategy-making process. It seems especially useful to include those people who are likely to participate in the implementation of the strategies. Occasionally, even external stakeholders are consulted.

In the midst of this democratization of strategic management, the organization's leaders remain the catalysts and guides. Their particular strategy preferences may not always dominate, but they are primarily responsible for making sure that the necessary systems are in place, the process occurs, the steps are followed, and concrete results are achieved. In the end, the top executives are responsible to the board of directors, and the board of directors in turn is responsible to the organization's owners or other external stakeholders.

ROLE OF LEADERSHIP IN STRATEGIC PLANNING

The employees in most organizations are focused on performing operational activities that keep things running on a day-to-day basis. If time and resources are going to be spent on strategic planning, the impetus is going to have to come from a person in authority. That person is the organization's leader, who may be the head of a strategic business unit, a functional area manager, the chief executive officer of a multi-SBU corporation, or occasionally the chairperson of the board of directors. Leaders will not carry out all strategy planning tasks themselves, but they make sure that they get done by someone. These are the leader's responsibilities throughout the strategic planning process.

She must ensure that the organization develops a clear description of the purpose for its existence (its mission) and what it aspires to be in the future (its vision). It is commonly argued that the leader should define the vision for the organization, announce it to the workforce, and get them to "buy in" to it. That is a classic example of top-down management. The problem with that approach is that it is difficult to know whether employees have truly accepted the leader's vision. They are unlikely to tell her that they reject it. And experience has shown that employees not fully committed to a vision may be less energetic about implementing strategies designed to achieve it. Still, a vision created in this way is better than no vision at all.

There is a contrarian view that asks the leader to involve as many employees as possible in the visioning process. This does not require that there be a vote on vision alternatives. However, consulting with employees, listening to their thoughts on where the organization might be headed, can have a powerful effect on their work motivation and desire to realize the shared vision. The leader has the final responsibility for settling on the vision that will guide the organization.

The leader next asserts herself in the planning process when it comes time to define a modest number (five to seven) of strategic objectives that point toward the agreed-upon vision. Because these goals are more specific and practical, functional area managers will have significant input to the choice of these objectives. In the end, the leader may express her strong preferences and even overrule the managers' conclusions. The objectives must be stated in measurable terms and accompanied by appropriate employee incentives to accomplish them.

The objectives must be translated into specific, actionable strategies that, when implemented, will move the organization closer to its vision. The leader's job at this stage is not necessarily to propose strategies but rather to orchestrate a team of people who will conceive the best possible courses of action for the organization's future. In selecting and inspiring the team members, the leader is looking for a variety of choices, reflecting groundbreaking thinking but also showing discipline because not everything is possible or affordable. She will receive their recommendations and make the final decisions, recognizing that accepting some strategies means rejecting other strategies. This is a critical point: the leader is agreeing that the chosen strategies are suitable for the organization and that the organization has the assets to implement them.

The implementation of the chosen strategies will be spread over months and years. The leader cannot oversee the details of this stage, so she must rely on surrogates in the front ranks of the organization to guide a motivated staff in bringing the strategies to life. Before beginning the planning process, the leader should assure herself that the organization has appropriate leadership capabilities to manage these kinds of activities, as well as a culture that is amenable to change. In other words, a good leader has already built an organization that can carry out innovative strategy.

Although implementation has been delegated, the leader still must monitor the progress being made and evaluate her managers' performance. If an adjustment to changed circumstances (environmental, competitive, financial) becomes necessary, she is the one who will have to authorize it.

Mission

An organization's mission is the current purpose for the organization's existence. The mission statement is a concise explanation of what the firm is, what it does, and what it does not do. It describes the "business" of the firm, the domain of the firm, the areas in which it has chosen to operate, and the means by which it competes in those areas. It is a practical summary of the activities and operations of the firm, often expressed in terms of the products that it intends to manufacture and sell and the markets/customers it intends to serve. The mission is concerned mainly with the activities of the firm, and with things that it does in the present or near future.

The mission statement is the starting point for an organization's strategic decisions. It is quite difficult to plot a course into the distant future without having a good sense of where a business stands in the present.

Mission statements are prepared by parent corporations, their constituent SBUs, and independent freestanding business entities. Such statements might also serve a useful purpose for functional areas and even departments within businesses and corporations. The mission statements of individual SBUs should fit with the statements of their parents and vice versa.

A good mission statement defines a manageable number of substantial spheres within which the company will operate and compete. Those spheres are defined in terms of industries, points along the industrial value chain, products or services, technologies and competencies deployed, customers and market segments, distribution channels, and geographic areas.

Industry. Many firms operate in only one industry. Others, particularly multi-SBU corporations, are more likely to be active in several industries. When a corporation is operating in several disparate, unrelated industries, it raises the question of whether it possesses the diversity of resources and competencies necessary to compete effectively in such different areas.

Industrial value chain. Every business must make a decision about the points along the industrial value chain at which it will operate. Will it be a supplier to other companies? Will it purchase raw materials from suppliers and manufacture products? Will it serve as a distributor between the manufacturers and retail outlets? Or will it sell directly to end users at the retail level?

Products or services. There is an infinity of products or services that a business can offer. It cannot create and sell them all. On what select group will it focus its resources and competencies?

Technologies and competencies. Some organizations are distinguished by the technologies and other competencies that they employ in their operations. This part of the mission statement specifies which of those qualities a business will emphasize.

Customers and market segments. This is a description of to whom and where an organization intends to promote its products/services and earn its revenues. It cannot be all things to all people and therefore must make choices about whose product preferences it will attempt to serve.

Distribution channels. In many cases, the same products may be offered to customers through different distribution channels. A business may prefer to become adept at reaching its customers only through selected channels.

Geographic areas. This feature of a mission statement defines the physical locations in which a business will operate, at which it will sell its products and services, or in which its customers will reside.

Some statements may also include a commitment to growth and financial soundness; an intention to be responsive to social, community, and environmental concerns; and an expression of the organization's beliefs, values, and ethical priorities.

In making these choices, a business's leaders will try to concentrate its energies on a limited number of opportunity areas. Companies succeed when they do not try to do too many things at once and instead apply their core competencies where they will have the greatest impact.

The primary purpose of a mission statement is to circumscribe the strategic decision making of a business's leaders. It sends the message, "Within the limits of this defined mission, use your imagination to the fullest and compete as aggressively as you can. Do not stray outside the mission at the risk of squandering resources and competencies." It is an open question to what extent the leaders actually heed their mission statements.

Developing a Mission Statement

There are no firm guidelines on how to create a mission statement. The process certainly should involve as many employees and stakeholders as possible, in order to benefit from their knowledge of the possibilities and to encourage their commitment to the mission that emerges. They might start by reading a few selected articles on mission statements and reviewing examples of mission statements from all organizations. It probably is not a good idea to look at the statements from those firms that are similar or directly identical. The managers themselves could be assigned to prepare drafts of a statement, or they could be asked relevant questions, the answers to which would be used to compose a mission statement. The managers, other employees, and outside stakeholders might then provide their inputs before a final version is created. The critical final step in the process is communicating the statement to all relevant constituencies in a way that persuades them that the firm intends to operate fully within the terms of its mission.

Good Reasons for a Mission Statement

A well-drafted mission statement benefits an organization in several ways. It is a tool for mobilizing a unanimity of purpose throughout the organization. It offers a focal point for individual employees and stakeholders to identify with the organization's purpose and direction. It serves as a framework for translating broad strategic objectives into action plans leading to the assignment of specific tasks to individual employees. It becomes a basis for allocating organizational resources, designating where they may be committed and where they may not. The mission statement is a vehicle for an organization to present itself favorably to existing and potential stakeholders, such as suppliers who might sell to the organization, doctors who might join the medical staff, providers who might contract with a managed care organization, or employees who might take jobs with the organization. It provides motivation, general direction, an image, a tone, and a philosophy to guide the enterprise.

Changing a Mission Statement

A mission statement is not forever. If it no longer seems appropriate to the firm's circumstances, it can be modified. If the firm is having no long-term success in pursuing its existing mission, an entirely or partially new one can be selected. Frequently, when a new management team takes over a business, it wants to make adjustments to the mission. When a business feels that it has exploited all the growth opportunities available in its current areas of operation, it may choose to expand any of its mission parameters—additional market segments, products, distribution channels, or geographic areas. In contrast, a business may find itself overextended, spreading its limited resources and competencies across too many products and markets, resulting in below-average financial returns. The answer might be to narrow the scope of its mission.

It must be kept in mind that changes in missions usually lead to changes in objectives, strategies, organizational structure, activities, and behaviors. Sometimes the pressure is in the opposite direction; the overwhelming imperative to modify existing objectives and pursue different strategies compels a rethinking and restatement of the mission.

Rather than proactively managing mission statements, most companies tend to forget about them when times are good (spending the excess cash on new activities and acquisitions that depart substantially from the mission) and worry about them when they get into difficulty (and then divest the superfluous activities and businesses to return to their core competencies).

The renowned management consultant and guru Peter F. Drucker wrote an excellent article discussing the need to pay constant attention to the corporate mission and be willing to change it when necessary.[1] He used the term "theory of the business," which clearly encompasses the concept of mission, and laid out a few general rules about that theory. The assumptions behind the theory must fit reality, the theory must be known and understood throughout the organization, and the theory must be tested constantly. In the article, Drucker noted that mission statements are most likely to be revised when an organization is facing difficult times. He pointed out that it also sometimes makes sense to adjust the mission when the company is doing well.

Characteristics of a Good Mission Statement

A good mission statement has the following characteristics:

- It should be short, about 200 to 300 words, definitely no more than a single page. Drafting a concise mission statement can pose a challenge for many executive teams that are inclined to describe at length the premise of the organization.
- It should be memorable (one reason for the brevity). Key stakeholders, certainly the managers and employees, should be able to remember it, almost verbatim, and explain it to someone else without hesitating.
- It should be stated in broad enough terms to allow for the generation and consideration of feasible alternative objectives and strategies without unduly stifling management creativity. The generality of language gives the firm flexibility in adapting to changing external environments and internal operations.
- It should be expansive in a way that reconciles differences among, and still appeals to, an organization's diverse stakeholders (employees, managers, shareholders, board of directors, customers, suppliers, distributors, creditors, government regulators and payers, labor unions, competitors, public interest groups, community groups, media, and the general public). All stakeholders' claims on an organization cannot be satisfied with equal emphasis. A good mission statement indicates the relative attention that an organization will give to the interests of different stakeholders.
- It suggests where managers should be looking for future opportunity and steers them away from other areas. It provides a basis for generating and screening strategic options, and selecting specific strategies to implement.
- It highlights the points of differentiation with other businesses, particularly competitors, and sets forth the basis for the firm's competitive advantage.
- It arouses positive feelings and emotions about the organization and an individual's role within it. It attracts and deters potential staff. It gives the impression that the firm is successful, knows what it is doing, is professionally managed, has direction, and is worthy of time, support, and investment.
- It is communicated to, understood by, and embraced by all members of the organization.
- It is more pragmatic, with a more immediate purpose, than a vision statement.

The faster the external environment is changing, the more frequently the mission should be reviewed. A successful organization will inevitably outgrow its original mission. As time passes and its operations expand, the organization will develop new competencies and a more perceptive view of available opportunities. Mission changes will seem to make sense.

Even if they are not overly concerned about their social obligations, for-profit corporate executives still have to reconcile an inevitable duality in their missions. One mission is to maximize the return to the owners of the business, the shareholders, on the investments that they have made in the business.

The other mission concerns the substance of the organization's operations—the products and services that it creates and the customers to

[1]Drucker PF. The Theory of Business. *Harvard Business Review*. September–October 1994.

ROLE OF SOCIAL OBLIGATION IN MISSION STATEMENTS

A major argument in the debate about the future of the U.S. healthcare system concerns the obligations of healthcare-related businesses and organizations to meet societal needs for clinical treatment of physical and mental suffering. The issue has become even more salient with the widespread movement of for-profit businesses into the health care industry. There is no better place than the mission statement for an organization to explain how it intends to balance the desire of shareholders for maximum financial performance against the demand for this basic human necessity, often under dire circumstances and with no assurance of an ability to pay. Few attempt it.

How a health care organization cares for the sick and uninsured is just one of a number of "social policies" that it must wrestle with. Other social policies may concern the religious beliefs of patients and employees, and medical treatment at the end of life. How an organization handles these policies directly affects its customers, products and services, technology, profitability, self-concept, public image, reputation, and brand identity. It is not easy to ignore these issues, especially with so much attention being focused on the delivery of health care.

Not-for-profit organizations and public agencies do not face the same stark challenge as for-profit businesses in the health care industry. Their mission statements can express an unreserved commitment to providing health care for all. In practical terms, however, they still must deal with the financial realities of that commitment.

One way of approaching this issue is to define the social obligation, whatever it is, in terms of the potential costs and benefits to the organization. Many of them will be subjective and unquantifiable. They still provide a rational basis for examining the trade-offs that have to be made. For instance, the mission statement of a community health center may include a phrase promising to "within the limits of fiscal responsibility, meet the health care needs of everyone who visits the health center."

whom it offers them. Many, perhaps most, for-profit business shareholders do not care about the substantive mission of the organizations in which they invest. Tobacco companies have never lacked for shareholders—as long as their financial performance has been above average. It is true that some investors will buy shares only in "socially responsible" businesses, although that term itself has different meanings for different people. Other investors place their money with companies whose industries they understand particularly well or whose products, leaders, management style, or geographic location they prefer.

The mission concerns felt by shareholders and the overall capital market is diffused among the individual SBUs of a multi-business corporation. Shareholders invest in, and banks lend to, the overall corporation whose management then reallocates the funds to the SBUs in its portfolio. One of corporate management's primary tasks is regularly assessing its capacity to raise additional capital and taking steps to satisfy the demands of the investors and banks providing that capital.

Guidelines for Defining an Organization's Mission

An organizational mission will be more successful if it embodies the following principles.

- It provides a cogent rationale for the organization's existence.
- It acknowledges its primary stakeholders and assures them about the focus of its operations.
- It clarifies how the organization differs from all others.
- It provides compelling reasons for an employee to work for the organization, for a customer to buy from it, and for an investor to invest in it.
- It delineates the product or services that it will provide and the customers it will serve.
- It is written in clear, coherent terms, free of trite language.
- It is expressed in specific, practical phrases that inform employee behaviors.

It uses words of action and movement that propel the organization forward.
It is so succinct and memorable that employees can repeat it.
It has value to the organization that will last for years.

Most mission statements do not measure up to all these standards, but satisfying most of them is a good start. Read the sample statements at the end of this chapter and see how they measure up to these guidelines.

Vision

Once an organization has established the parameters of its current existence in its mission statement, it is ready to begin thinking about where it wants to head in the future. Strategies are about moving an organization to a place different from where it is now. If it is content with all the dimensions of its mission and perceives no threats to it in the near or medium-term future, there is no need for strategies. It is doubtful that a single business in the health care industry would be content to continue operating the way it is now for the next three to five years.

One of the best ways to think about the future is to imagine the most desirable, ideal future state of the organization. If the organization, its leaders, and its employees could operate in the best possible world five years from now, what would it look like? The conditions of that world are captured in a vision statement. The firm then dedicates itself to implementing strategies in order to create that future for itself.

This vision is a critical, empowering concept. Many businesses allow themselves to be controlled by the world around them, virtually giving up on any sort of serious strategic management. Their attitude seems to be that the external environment is too complex and the future too unpredictable to warrant any attempts to shape it to the business's advantage. Most organizations are not quite so passive. They engage in systematic strategic planning designed to influence selected forces in their environments, or at least position their organizations to take greatest advantage of future trends. However, the ultimate step is to commit all the organization's resources and competencies literally to create—that is, to make a reality—exactly the future that the organization wants. What are the odds that a single organization can truly create all the elements of a future set of conditions? Perhaps not great. What is true is that this kind of long-term focus, this strategic clarity and passion, is likely to motivate the organization to achieve more of its desired future than a competitor taking a less ambitious approach.

Peter Senge explains a number of useful and practical guidelines on creating vision in his seminal book on learning organizations, *The Fifth Discipline*. Indeed, one of the five disciplines is "shared vision." The "shared" element adds the important dimension of participation by all organizational members in the description of the vision and, as a result, commitment to its fulfillment.

Another revolutionary approach to working out an organization's vision is an exercise called a "future search."[2] Under the guidance of skilled facilitators, an organization identifies all its primary internal and external stakeholder groups and invites sixty to eighty representatives of those groups to a three-day session at which they discover common ground and plot future scenarios for the organization. The plans that emerge have the support of not only the firm's employees but also its suppliers, customers, and other members of the local community.

Like the mission statement, the description of a vision can be prepared at any level within an organization—from the highest levels of a multi-SBU corporation to individual employees within each SBU. Indeed, a primary prerequisite of the shared vision described in *The Fifth Discipline* is that each member of the organization have a clear idea of his or her personal vision.

In the absence of a deliberate, well-thought-out organization-wide vision statement, most members of the workforce (and many other stakeholders) will devise their own versions of a vision. They are likely to be unspoken, below the level of

[2]Future Search website. http://www.futuresearch.net.

consciousness. Employees may not be aware of their subconscious visions but they will be guided by them in subtle ways. By tolerating this state of affairs, the organization creates strategic problems for itself.

Such a vague, undefined vision is not useful to the employee or the employer in such an amorphous state. Furthermore, every employee's separate vision will differ from those of his or her workmates, leading them in some cases to work at cross purposes with each other. That problem is compounded by the way that the visions change over time without the employee or anyone else being aware of it. It definitely is worth the effort to create a vision broadcast to the entire organization.

Even better is a vision that is truly "shared" by all the employees. As mentioned previously, this is a concept popularized by the book *The Fifth Discipline.* The book describes a time-consuming, yet energizing process for generating such a vision. The outcome is a vision with two characteristics—it is embraced by every member of the organization and that vision is tied to the personal life vision of each one of them. The resulting motivating effect is powerful.

Characteristics of a Good Vision Statement

To perform its function of propelling the organization toward an identified point in the future, the vision statement should have certain qualities.

- A vision could be viewed as a kind of "dream" that motivates and drives the organization. It is definitely different from what the organization has now and appears to be a significant improvement. The difference between the current reality described in the mission statement and the idealized future described in the vision statement represents a significant stretch for the organization. The vision is bold and there is some uncertainty about whether it can be achieved.
- However, the vision statement is grounded in reality and it is possible. It reflects a solid understanding of the organization's resources and competencies, in the context of the opportunities and threats that exist in the external environment.
- It will be challenging for employees to accomplish the vision. They will have to develop new abilities, dedicate themselves passionately to the effort, and perform at their very highest levels. A truly shared vision gets employees excited, makes them feel proud to be part of the organization that is pursuing it. They want to tell their friends what they are doing.
- All the firm's stakeholders find something appealing about the vision, an aspect of it that serves their interests. It is flexible and adaptable enough to allow managers and employees to display individual initiative in pursuing it. It is capable of being communicated to all interested parties.

Guidelines for Describing an Organization's Vision

A few other maxims will enhance the effectiveness of the vision:

- It is stated in clear language comprehensible to all stakeholders.
- It describes a future that is unique to the organization and especially appealing to its stakeholders, particularly its customers.
- It sets a specific chronological time deadline for its realization.
- It describes a vivid, compelling picture of the organization's future that excites its employees, inspiring them to desire it and make it happen.
- It incorporates features that are, if not quantitatively measurable, so concrete and objective that there will be no mistaking when the vision has been reached.
- It is realistic and achievable, yet stretches the organization, asking its people to accomplish more than perhaps they think they can.
- It builds on and grows out of the mission.
- Like the mission, it is concise and memorable.

Values

Most strategy-related documents aim to describe what the organization is doing or would like to be doing in purely business-related terms concerning matters like resources, competencies, markets, customers, competitors, opportunities, and threats. Values attempt to lay out guidelines for the behavior of employees as they go about conducting the organization's business, whether operational or strategic. Values say more than, "We will not violate antitrust laws or acquire competitive intelligence by hacking into our rivals' computer networks," although they will include such prohibitions.

Values address the beliefs and attitudes of all members of an organization. It is appropriate to say that they "dictate" how employees will conduct themselves as they go about their day-to-day activities, striving to achieve the firm's vision. Such guidelines take on greater importance when employees are operating under conditions of rapid change, heightened competition, constant deadlines, and intense job stress—all of which are prevalent within the health care industry.

Traditionally, values in a corporate setting have tended to be more implicit than explicit. The recent spate of scandals in health care and other industries, and the resulting legislation, is one of the reasons why more organizations are publishing explicit statements of values. The implicit values have not gone away, though. They are still found in the organization's culture. The culture is sometimes seen as an amorphous, mysterious force by many managers, but it can be influenced and shaped. Explicitly stating management's expectations for employee behavior is a good way to start. It helps, too, if ethics and values are taken into consideration during the hiring stage, and if managers themselves model the behavior they would like to see in their subordinates.

When values are written and published, they typically address issues like this:

- Zero tolerance for even minor legal violations
- Integrity, honesty, and ethics both within and outside the firm
- Attitudes toward and treatment of coworkers
- Attitudes toward and treatment of customers/patients
- Attitudes toward and treatment of suppliers and independent contractors
- Acceptance of risk taking and failure
- Attitudes toward innovation and the future
- Tolerance for change within the organization
- Commitment by both the organization and its employees to the development of those employees

The delivery of health care services in the United States presents some unique value challenges for top management. Some of the issues that employees must wrestle with, and that might be addressed in a statement of values, include:

- The time spent with patients, under pressures to improve productivity and patient throughput
- The dominant role of physicians giving way to professional egalitarianism and multidisciplinary teams
- The shift in health care organizations from the treatment of existing diseases to the outright prevention of diseases
- The shift in organizational emphasis and priorities from the provider to the patient-consumer
- Ideology-driven issues like abortion procedures and stem cell therapy

An organization's values are more likely to be practiced if they match the values of employees who joined the firm. This requires raising the issue of values during the hiring process, when it might be a good idea to show all applicants the mission, vision, and values statements. If an organization is attempting to make adjustments in its values, it may have to fire some existing employees. That contingency can be minimized and workforce buy-in maximized by involving employees in the process of developing new values.

Guidelines for Articulating an Organization's Values

It is not as easy to put into words an organization's system of values. It will take persistent efforts, through repeated meetings and drafts, to produce a document that satisfies everyone, or almost everyone. Here is how to get started.

- Keep in mind that these values must endure; they will not change readily, if ever. (However, it must be acknowledged that, particularly in the field of health care, the actions considered by society to have worth can evolve over time and so must an organization's values.)
- Keep also in mind that values may vary from unit to unit (emergency room vs. outpatient clinic vs. billing), or profession to profession (nursing vs. lab technician) within an organization.
- It is especially important that the written values are comprehensible to the people who must conform to them.
- It should be relatively easy to interpret the values and apply them to the action situations regularly faced by employees.
- The values should be memorable and repeatable.
- The values should be consistent with the organization's mission and vision.

Complications with Values

Explicitly stating and enforcing values sounds like a win – win proposition for any organization, but complications can arise.

A big problem area is the variations in values throughout an organization. Quite different values may be accepted within divisions of the same business or within departments of the same division. There frequently are value differences among different functional specialties (marketing versus finance), medical specialties (surgery versus internal medicine), or medical professions (physicians versus nurses). In a large, multi-SBU corporation, it would not be surprising to find variations in values among the different businesses.

These dissimilarities in values create difficulties in several ways. Employees in different parts of the organization, different professions, or different specialties may feel that their behavior is being judged in a discriminatory manner. Even if they are not individually upset by the disparate standards, complications may result as the business attempts to coordinate the implementation of strategies or other forms of significant change. Sometimes the values conflicts extend beyond the organization, creating barriers when it attempts to integrate with, merge with, or acquire other organizations.

Strategic Objectives

The next step in the strategy-making process is a move toward slightly greater specificity and practicality in describing the business's strategic direction. Strategic objectives are long-term strategic thrusts that will bring the organization closer to realizing its vision. They are a more explicit and workable statement of the broad, almost generic strategic impulses that the organization would like to follow over the next several years. Management believes that these objectives must be attained if the organization is to fulfill its mission and achieve its vision. They offer guidelines for the types of specific strategies that will be considered appropriate at this point in the organization's life. Strategies of those types are then designed and implemented to achieve the objectives.

Strategic objectives can be set at both the corporate and SBU levels. Within individual SBUs, it may also make sense to establish such objectives for each service line, market segment, or functional area. The objectives at all of these levels and in all of these areas must be consistent and aligned with each other.

Setting the objectives is normally the result of negotiations that involve consultation among units and their managers throughout the entire firm. It is an iterative, political process, with bargaining and conflict coupled with rational analysis. The process should involve both the top executives looking to create focused strategic momentum and managers lower within the organization who will be responsible for implementing the strategies intended to meet the objectives.

In setting strategic objectives, there is a particular tension between the top-down pressures of capital markets (debt and equity) and the bottom-up pressures of competitive business markets. A firm's financial managers will want to make sure to maintain creditworthiness and access to capital markets while marketing and operations managers will be thinking mainly about how to acquire and sustain competitive advantage over rivals. It is possible to maximize short-term financial objectives in a way that harms long-term strategic objectives, and vice versa. Clearly the two groups need each other; their strategic interests are not incompatible. Nonetheless, difficult tradeoffs must be made in defining the objectives for which they will be held accountable at designated times in the future.

To be useful, an objective should satisfy several criteria:

- It should describe an attribute that can be measured.
- It should designate a unit of measurement for that attribute.
- It should specify an exact level of that attribute that is to be achieved.
- It should state a time by which that level is to be reached.
- It should identify a person who will have primary responsibility for reaching that level by that time.

The measurement feature of the objective is essential. Without it, the objective loses most of its motivating power. For instance, if a hospital organization sets an objective of "increasing the occupancy rate" over the next three years, and the rate actually goes up from 83.1 percent to 84.7 percent, it can say that it met its objective. However, if it had set a specific target of 87.0 percent, it might have found that it could reach that level quite easily. Setting a precise numerical goal is a way of driving organizational performance to higher levels. The objectives can be financial or nonfinancial, whatever suits the organization's strategic desires.

Many firms tend to set the objectives and measure performance benchmarked against what has been achieved in previous periods. That is an insular, myopic approach. In a competitive marketplace, every business should be measuring itself against what similar, competing firms are doing. To go back to the hospital occupancy rate example, an improvement to the 87.0 percent rate may be quite unsatisfactory if the average for other hospitals in the local area is 91.0 percent.

A timeline for achievement of the objectives is just as important. Otherwise, employees may feel, even subconsciously, that they can take forever to reach the goal.

Assigning a named individual the primary responsibility for organizing the firm's efforts to reach the objective ensures that formal accountability lies somewhere within the organization. That one person is not likely to do all the work herself, or even most of it. She will mobilize the necessary resources—human, financial, and otherwise—and do the necessary action planning. She knows that when the time deadline is reached, top management will be looking to her to see whether the objective has been achieved.

Different types of generic strategic objectives will be set at the corporate and SBU levels. Remember, corporate management is primarily concerned with managing its portfolio of SBUs and meeting the demands of its shareholders and creditors. Top executives in the SBUs are focused on issues like market share, customer satisfaction, and costs of production. To be more specific, these are examples of strategic objectives that might be set at these two levels:

Corporate Strategic Objectives

- Improve shareholder return, as measured by the corporation's stock price.
- Increase the economic profit from the entire portfolio.
- Grow total revenues from the portfolio at a specific annual rate over the next three years. Alternatively, allow revenues to stabilize for a short period while corporate management reconfigures the portfolio, replaces the management of some SBUs, and renews operational efficiency and productivity throughout the portfolio.
- Increase the overall portfolio cash flow to a level that is able to subsidize the rapid-growth SBUs in the portfolio.
- Diversify the makeup of the portfolio into new, related industries. (This may be difficult to measure.) Alternatively, divest the portfolio of SBUs that no longer match the corporation's core competencies.

- Increase the level of sharing of resources and competencies among the SBUs. (This also will not be easy to measure.)

SBU Strategic Objectives

- Conduct a "turnaround" of the business, laying off employees, reducing the number of product lines, and enforcing cost-cutting measures throughout the organization.
- Improve the business's share of its market from 31 percent to 36 percent by four years from now.
- Develop, acquire, and deploy specific new technologies within the next three years.
- Reduce error rates in the creation of products or services from 4.2 percent to 3.8 percent in the next year, and to 3.1 percent in the following year.
- Improve the quality of the business's products or services to a specified level, as measured by an independent assessment organization or by customer surveys.
- Develop, acquire, and deploy employee knowledge/competence in narrowly defined areas that will be the basis for future strategies.

Problems to Avoid in Setting Objectives

Even when it is possible to reach a consensus within the organization on strategic objectives, there still are things that can go wrong with the objectives themselves.

Good objectives "stretch" the people assigned to achieve them. Very ambitious goals can sometimes motivate people to achieve at much higher levels than anyone thought possible—under appropriate conditions. If supporting resources, like money, space, equipment, and people, are not available for the effort, no amount of motivation will be able to reach the goal. If the steps required to reach the goal call for higher levels of risk taking by employees or new approaches to traditional tasks, their managers must be willing to allow that risk and those new approaches, as well as the failure that may come with them. Sometimes objectives are simply set at levels that cannot be achieved by any means. When employees realize this, they are likely to lose interest and motivation, reduce their work effort, and withdraw from or avoid the assignment. Little will be achieved.

An organization may agree on objectives that end up motivating the wrong employee behavior. Particularly when the objectives are accompanied by powerful incentives, employees will often concentrate their performance on meeting those objectives and give less attention to other responsibilities. In order to earn those incentives, employees may engage in practices like "gaming the system" or "manipulating the numbers." One way to minimize these distortions is to avoid emphasizing any single measure by balancing performance priorities and providing for some measurement redundancy. These kinds of employee behaviors also are less likely when they have had a chance to participate in negotiating the objectives, and understand their context and the ultimate strategic aim (the vision).

Examples of Real-World Strategic Direction Documents

This is a somewhat random selection of strategic direction documents for a variety of health care-related organizations, including full-service tertiary care hospitals, a specialty care hospital, a hospital network, a public health care system, drug companies, an integrated delivery system, a managed care organization, a health care management consulting firm, and a public health school. They represent both good and bad examples of these kinds of documents. There is much to be learned by scrutinizing them and noticing the differences among them.

Quorum Health Group

The Quorum Health Group, a network of hospitals, ceased to exist as an independent entity when it was acquired in 2000 by Triad Hospitals. Prior to that time, however, Quorum published two consecutive mission statements that illustrate how a business's mission can expand and evolve.

This is the initial mission statement:

> Quorum Health Group, Inc., is a hospital company committed to meeting the needs of clients as an owner, manager, consultant or partner through innovative services that enhance the delivery of high-quality health care.

This is the subsequent mission statement:

> Quorum Health Group, Inc., owns and manages healthcare systems and is committed to meeting the needs of consumers and providers through innovative services that enhance the delivery of high-quality health care.[3]

What differences do you notice between the two statements? In the later version, Quorum is no longer simply "a hospital company." It is dealing in "healthcare systems." Note the use of the action verbs "owns" and "manages." It moved from meeting the needs of "clients" (a somewhat sterile all-purpose word) to those of "consumers" and "providers." Which version do you think reflects best on the company? In your opinion, is this truly a mission statement? Or are there elements of the system's vision included within it?

Province of Ontario's Health Services System

This is a description of the vision of the health services system for the Canadian province of Ontario. It is an interesting example of an attempt by a public health care system to explain what it is trying to do.

> Our vision is of a publicly administered health services system that provides universally available, comprehensive, accessible and portable services that meet or exceed internationally derived performance benchmarks. A provincial system organized to foster diversity among its elements and decision-making by the people affected, it is constituted of sectors that together provide the full spectrum of health services needed to promote health and provide health care for Ontario's population.We see a health services system in which regions, the sectors and their component institutions and organizations are distinctive, but committed to purposes in common. The contributions of each region, sector, institution, and organization are integrated, and complement those of all others to meet the provincially set policies, goals, objectives, and priorities necessary to achieve Ontario's vision of health.

Since this Vision statement was issued a decade ago, the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care has committed itself to a distinctly different vision. This is the language that it uses now:

> The ministry has changed its focus and has embraced a new direction. As staff continue to work towards better health care for Ontarians, stewardship has become the ministry's mission and mandate. This new stewardship role will mean that the ministry will provide overall direction and leadership for the system, focusing on planning, and on guiding resources to bring value to the health system. The ministry will be less involved when it comes to the actual delivery of health care and more involved in:
>
> Establishing overall strategic direction and provincial priorities for the health system;
>
> Developing legislation, regulations, standards, policies, and directives to support those strategic directions;
>
> Monitoring and reporting on the performance of the health system and the health of Ontarians;

[3]Quorum Health website. http://www.quorumhealth.com /HomePg4.nsf. Accessed July 6, 2007.

Planning for and establishing funding models and levels of funding for the health care system;

Ensuring that ministry and system strategic directions and expectations are fulfilled.[4]

This is a clear statement of a dramatic shift in the ministry's strategic direction. From an assertive, commanding role in managing the delivery and financing of the province's health care services, the ministry has moved to a "stewardship" role in which it sets overall strategic direction, provides funding, and monitors performance. In some ways, it is functioning like a corporate center overseeing a portfolio of SBUs.

Rockcastle Hospital and Respiratory Care Center

These are the basic strategic direction documents of the Rockcastle Hospital and Respiratory Care Center in Mt. Vernon, Kentucky. They are simple and succinct, refreshing for their clarity in contrast with the sometimes overly long statements of other organizations. Are they too concise? Do they say enough about the organization and what distinguishes it from its competitors? The description of the organization as a "family-oriented team" is unique and may appeal to certain patients and other stakeholders. Delivering the "highest quality of care" seems to be a worthwhile commitment, but how many of Rockcastle's competitors make the same assertion? Is the goal of making Rockcastle the "hospital of choice" in a county in Kentucky a sufficiently inspiring vision? In contrast, is the intention to become "the facility of choice nationwide for ventilator care" overly ambitious? The statement of values seems quite satisfying, encompassing qualities that perhaps carry some weight in Kentucky.

Mission Statement
Rockcastle Hospital and Respiratory Care Center, Inc. is a family-oriented team of healthcare professionals dedicated to delivering the highest quality of care to those we serve.

Vision Statement
Rockcastle Hospital and Respiratory Care Center, Inc.'s vision is to be the hospital of choice for health care in Rockcastle County and surrounding areas and to be the facility of choice nationwide for ventilator care.

Values
We value excellence, friendliness, compassion, cleanliness, and our commitment to our community.[5]

Pfizer Pharmaceutical

These are the strategic direction documents for Pfizer, one of the leading international pharmaceutical companies. Is the first sentence really a "mission" statement? The use of the future-directed term "will" makes it read more like a vision statement. In contrast, the next section, "Our Purpose," has the ring of a mission statement. Looking back on what has been said in this chapter about the purposes of mission and vision statements, do you think that the "Our Mission" and "Our Purpose" language here is detailed and specific enough to serve those purposes? Look at the list of values that Pfizer claims to practice. Are they unique? Are they inspirational? How do you imagine this list might alter the behavior of Pfizer's workforce?

Our Mission
We will become the world's most valued company to patients, customers, colleagues, investors, business partners, and the communities where we work and live.

Our Purpose
We dedicate ourselves to humanity's quest for longer, healthier, happier lives

[4]Ontario's Health Services System website. http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/common/ministry/default.aspx. Accessed October 28, 2016.

[5]Rockcastle Hospital and Respiratory Care, Inc., website. http://rockcastleregional.org/about-us/mission/ Accessed October 28, 2016.

through innovation in pharmaceutical, consumer, and animal health products.

Values
To achieve our Purpose and Mission, we affirm our values of Integrity, Respect for People, Customer Focus, Community, Innovation, Teamwork, Performance, Leadership, and Quality.

Pfizer has made modest adjustments to these strategic direction statements, as follows.[6] Do these changes make a difference in the motivational usefulness of these statements?

Our Purpose
Innovate to bring therapies to patients that significantly improve their lives.

Our Mission
To be the premier innovative biopharmaceutical company.

Our Values
Customer Focus, Community, Respect for People, Performance, Collaboration, Leadership, Integrity, Quality, and Innovation.

Johnson & Johnson

Johnson & Johnson is another pharmaceutical company whose strategic direction language contrasts sharply with that of Pfizer. This is the language exactly as it appears on the Johnson & Johnson website.

At Johnson & Johnson there is no mission statement that hangs on the wall. Instead, for more than 60 years, a simple, one-page document—Our Credo—has guided our actions in fulfilling our responsibilities to our customers, our employees, the community and our stockholders.

Our Credo
We believe our first responsibility is to the doctors, nurses and patients, to mothers and fathers and all others who use our products and services.

In meeting their needs everything we do must be of high quality.

We must constantly strive to reduce our costs in order to maintain reasonable prices.

Customers' orders must be serviced promptly and accurately.

Our suppliers and distributors must have an opportunity to make a fair profit.

We are responsible to our employees, the men and women who work with us throughout the world.

Everyone must be considered as an individual.

We must respect their dignity and recognize their merit.

They must have a sense of security in their jobs.

Compensation must be fair and adequate, and working conditions clean, orderly and safe.

We must be mindful of ways to help our employees fulfill their family responsibilities.

Employees must feel free to make suggestions and complaints.

There must be equal opportunity for employment, development and advancement for those qualified.

We must provide competent management, and their actions must be just and ethical.

We are responsible to the communities in which we live and work and to the world community as well.

[6]"Our Purpose," "Our Mission," "Our Values," and "Strategic Imperatives" from a 2016 Pfizer proxy statement. From Pfizer, Inc., website. http://www.pfizer.com/files/investors/proxy/2016/HTML1/mission.htm Accessed October 28, 2016.

> We must be good citizens—support good works and charities and bear our fair share of taxes.
>
> We must encourage civic improvements and better health and education.
>
> We must maintain in good order the property we are privileged to use, protecting the environment and natural resources.
>
> Our final responsibility is to our stockholders.
>
> Business must make a sound profit.
>
> We must experiment with new ideas.
>
> Research must be carried on, innovative programs developed and mistakes paid for.
>
> New equipment must be purchased, new facilities provided and new products launched.
>
> Reserves must be created to provide for adverse times.
>
> When we operate according to these principles, the stockholders should realize a fair return.[7]

This is clearly a statement of mission, and an especially comprehensive and thoughtful one. Is this too much to be included in what should be a relatively memorable description of what the organization is trying to be? Several of the points in the Credo could have a profound impact on the stakeholders to whom they are directed. With regard to employees, the promises regarding the making of complaints, job security, and adequate compensation could almost be interpreted as contracts with them regarding their terms of employment. The Credo also does not shy away from the financial performance of the business, including the desire of its owners for a "fair return" on their investments.

Massachusetts General Hospital

The following mission statement for Boston's venerable teaching hospital, Massachusetts General Hospital, succinctly highlights three primary purposes: care delivery, medical research and education, and community service. However, this statement would apply, without modification, to dozens of other teaching hospitals around the country. If that is true, what is its strategic value to this particular hospital? Try to imagine the ways in which Massachusetts General could employ this document in its strategic planning processes. Does this statement effectively delimit the domains in which the hospital will conduct operations and initiate strategies?

> Guided by the needs of our patients and their families, Massachusetts General Hospital aims to deliver the very best health care in a safe, compassionate environment, to advance that care through innovative research and education, and to improve the health and well-being of the diverse communities we serve.[8]

Brigham and Women's Hospital

Located four miles from Massachusetts General Hospital, Brigham and Women's is a teaching hospital of comparable international reputation, and a direct competitor of Mass General. Compare the mission statements of the two hospitals. Is there anything in their language that differentiates one from the other, and that might serve as a basis for competition between them?

> Brigham and Women's Hospital is dedicated to:
>
> - serving the needs of our local and global community,
> - providing the highest quality health to patients and their families,
> - expanding the boundaries of medicine through research,
> - educating the next generation of health care professionals.[9]

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[7] Johnson & Johnson website. From http://www.jnj.com/sites/default/files/pdf/jnj_ourcredo_english_us_8.5x11_cmyk.pdf Accessed October 28, 2016.

[8] Massachusetts General Hospital website. http://www.massgeneral.org/about/overview.aspx Accessed October 28, 2016.

[9] Brigham and Women's Hospital website. http://www.brighamandwomens.org/about_bwh/mission.aspx. Accessed October 28, 2016.

DoctorsManagement

This was the mission statement in 2007 of this a modest-size physician practice management consulting firm. It does a rather good job of covering several key elements in the practice of management consulting—continual learning, client orientation, unstinting objectivity, and high ethics. These guidelines would appear to be useful in the conduct of the firm's everyday business.

> To strive daily to learn more about all aspects of medical management for the continuing benefit of our clients.
>
> To apply our knowledge and experience in a conscientious manner to enable our clients to achieve their goals.
>
> To be totally objective in all advice, even when that advice may be contrary to our clients' opinions.
>
> To adhere to the highest standards of business ethics.

By 2016, the mission had been modified slightly as follows:

> Adhere to the highest standards of business ethics.
>
> Apply our leading edge knowledge and experience in a conscientious manner to enable our clients to achieve their goals.
>
> Be completely objective in all advice.
>
> Continue to explore and develop new and better programs and services for the benefit of our clients.[10]

It might be worth speculating on the reasons for the additions and deletions to the statement.

Blue Care Network of Michigan

These are the strategic direction documents of the Blue Cross/Blue Shield organization in Michigan, taken directly from its 2015 Annual Report. There are several points worth noting about the language here. The vision statement is placed before the mission statement, not normally the order in which they are created and employed. Both the statements sound like mission statements. They both use the present tense. The vision statement implies that the organization already has achieved the status of the "premier managed care plan in Michigan." Perhaps there is nothing left for the organization to achieve and a true vision seems unnecessary. Does the language of the two statements provide the organization's top management with direction for their strategic decision-making? Do the values offer guidance to the firm's employees in their work behaviors?

> Vision
> As the premier managed care plan in Michigan, Blue Care Network's purchasers, members, physicians, unions and employees are partners in maintaining and improving health.
>
> Mission
> People helping people to promote health and peace of mind through high quality care and service.
>
> Values
> Integrity and honesty
> Family and personal life
> Personal accountability
> Helping and caring
> Quality and excellence
> Diversity and inclusiveness
> Community involvement[11]

Partners HealthCare System

Partners HealthCare System is a large, well-managed integrated delivery system composed of several major hospitals in the Boston market, including the Massachusetts General Hospital mentioned previously. Its mission statement is

[10] DoctorsManagement website. http://www.doctors-management.com/about-us/about-dm/mission-statement/ Accessed October 28, 2016.

[11] Blue Care Network of Michigan website. http://www.mibcn.com/content/dam/public/Consumer/Documents/about-us/bcn-annual-report-2015.pdf. Accessed October 28, 2016.

rather abstract and imprecise. The phrases "serving the community", "enhancing patient care", and "taking a leadership role" do not describe specific activities that Partners is performing now. On the other hand, the vision statement provides a comprehensive list of actionable characteristics of the future organization that Partners aims to become.

Our Mission
Partners is committed to serving the community. We are dedicated to enhancing patient care, teaching and research, and to taking a leadership role as an integrated health care system. We recognize that increasing value and continuously improving quality are essential to maintaining excellence.

Our Vision
To dedicate ourselves to the delivery of superior care that is patient- and family-centered, accessible, and equitable.

To provide a coordinated, cost-efficient, and transparent care model that will benefit patients across the continuum from prevention to long-term.

To touch communities we serve, local or global, with sustainable improvements in the care we provide with a keen focus on underserved populations.

To lead in research that fosters collaboration, bringing discovery to the patient's bedside, and sharing those successes with the world so future generations may benefit.

To invest in education and training to nurture the next generation of leaders who can carry forward the lessons learned.

To promote the development of our workforce by creating opportunities for achievement and advancement.

To seek ways to deliver the highest quality health care to all.[12]

[12]Partners HealthCare System, Inc., website. http://www.partners.org/About/Mission-Vision/ Accessed October 28, 2016.

University of South Florida Health

USF Health is a small group of health-related colleges at the University of South Florida (USF). Each college operates under its own set of mission, vision, and value statements. The following are the statements from the colleges of medicine, public health, and nursing. Notice the differences in the tone, length, and substance of comparable statements among the three colleges. The missions and visions of the nursing and public health schools are brief; the medical college's are significantly longer. The values of all three are fairly concise. The nursing college's webpage for the three basic strategic statements is entitled "Mission, Vision, Values & Goals", and does indeed include five "goals". They are not specific enough to be considered true strategic goals, so their purpose is unclear. They are accompanied by a list of five "core pillars", whose meaning also is unexplained. What could be the strategic usefulness of the goals and pillars?

College of Medicine

Mission
The mission of the Morsani College of Medicine at the University of South Florida is to provide for the education of students and professionals of the health and biomedical sciences through the creation of a scholarly environment that fosters excellence in the lifelong goals of education, research activity and compassionate patient care.

Vision
We promise aspiring, passionate students an open culture of accessibility to faculty, patients and technology through a challenging curriculum with diverse educational experiences. Transcending old paradigms, we are empowered by a fresh perspective on learning. We foster an environment where students realize their own creativity and innovation to make a difference in the lives of patient and their community. Upon graduation, our students will possess the skills and confidence as

leaders in the ever-changing business of healthcare without ever sacrificing their initial inspiration to care for patients.

Values
The faculty and staff of the MD program commit to these values as guides for our decisions and behaviors: (1) High Standards, (2) Respect for Individuals, (3) Advancing Knowledge, (4) Personal Development and Leadership, and (5) Commitment to Health.[13]

College of Public Health

Mission
Our mission is to improve the public's health through advancing discovery, learning, and service.

Vision
Our College of Public Health community will use its unique strengths and collective efforts to achieve prominence in advancing public health.

Values
The COPH core values are: community engagement, global perspective, diversity, leadership, the professional environment.[14]

College of Nursing

Mission
Transforming Healthcare, transforming lives. Creating the nursing leaders of tomorrow and the research that improves health.

Vision
USF College of Nursing will be nationally recognized for cutting-edge educational programs and innovative research in partnership with communities and interprofessional colleagues.

Values
Creativity, Innovation, Partnerships, Integrity, and Engagement

Goals
Improve the health of individuals, families and communities through creative educational, research, and clinical practice initiatives.

Provide state, national and global leadership in nursing and interprofessional initiatives that improve health.

Ensure academic and professional student success with rigorous educational programs and services addressing the needs of today's diverse learners.

Establish and sustain research programs, including Centers of Excellence, addressing critical health needs of society.

Embrace a culture of integrity and engagement that sustains an environment making USF College of Nursing the best place to learn and work.

Core Pillars
Educational Excellence
Research & Innovation
College Culture
Partnerships
Infrastructure Optimization[15]

[13]USF Health – College of Medicine website. http://health.usf.edu/medicine/mdprogram/mission Accessed October 28, 2016.

[14]USF Health – College of Public Health website. http://health.usf.edu/publichealth/overviewcoph/mission-vision. Accessed October 28, 2016.

[15]USF Health – College of Nursing website. http://health.usf.edu/nursing/college-overview/mission-vision-values-goals. Accessed October 28, 2016.