

THE _____ MISSION STATEMENT

The _____ (the organization)

supports (1st) _____

in their desire to (2nd) _____

by means of (3rd) _____

The first blank identifies your customers. These could be internal or external customers. If they are internal, name the department, division or functions within the large organization that are the people to whom you try to directly deliver your services. Otherwise, describe your customers. If you are a nonprofit, who does the organization serve?

The second blank is the real heart and soul of the statement; it will contain what is called “the benefit”, which is shorthand for “what they want that you help them get.” What is their problem you can help them solve? What are their needs, wants and desires? State it in terms your customers might say it.

The third blank is where you specify the actual services you perform which result in the benefit. What do you do to solve your customer’s problems? How do you help them deal with their difficulties? How do you satisfy their needs, wants and desires?

Some have suggested that the third blank – the “how” – should not be included in the final articulation of the Mission Statement, leaving that for management to figure out the execution of the mission. While there may be merit in this thinking, it is helpful to have it handy as a way of wrestling with the realism of the mission. In other words, if you can’t figure out HOW you are going to execute, you may have not a realistic mission statement.

When you tell somebody what you do, you want to do it in words they already understand accurately. If you have to educate them even a bit to get them to understand what you have said, you have failed to communicate clearly to them what you do and how you can help them.

Tell your prospective clients what you do, not how you do it. Avoid all jargon and technical terms. State the valued outcome to your customer, not a valuable feature you designed for them. Do not assume your customer values the same things you do in terms of technical prowess or uniqueness.