



Resource Guides

# Corporate Mission Statements



## Why Are Mission Statements Important?

[Iris](#) defines mission statements as a concise message that expresses how your company generates financial, social, and/or environmental value through its business activities.

A mission statement communicates the organization's reason for being, and how it aims to serve its key stakeholders. Customers, employees, and investors are the stakeholders most often emphasized, but other stakeholders like government or communities (i.e. in the form of social or environmental impact) may also be included.

Sometimes mission statements also include a summation of the company's values. Values are the beliefs of an individual or group, and in this case the organization, in which they are emotionally invested. A vision most often reflects the direction that a company foresees as the future outcome of the business they conduct with their values and mission in mind.

If a company's mission statement, values, or vision articulate a commitment to workers, communities, or the environment, then they are projecting to your stakeholders the importance of these factors, in addition to your bottom line.

A good mission statement:

- Is clear and concise
- Tells the story of the business
- Describes value
- Is specific
- Can be easily shared and understood by all of the company's stakeholders

## How to Create a Corporate Mission Statement

**Brainstorm with Your Team:** Whether it is a business partner, an investor, or your vested employees, building a mission statement does not have to be a one-person task. Different people notice different aspects of your business and this could be extraordinarily helpful when thinking about your company's strengths and goals. Consider formalizing the company's social and environmental values, good practices, commitments and goals into a brief, comprehensive, and clear mission statement that you make public.

**Begin by Asking Some Questions:**

- What image of your business do you want to convey?
- Why are you in business?
- What roles do you and your employees play?
- How will you use technology, capital, processes, products, and services to reach your goals?
- What underlying philosophies or values guided your responses to the previous questions?

**Start Writing:** At first, the numerous ideas you and your team brainstormed might be overwhelming. However, during the writing phase it is beneficial for you to have an abundance of material. This allows you to narrow down what you believe best describes your company’s mission. After all, mission statements don’t have to be lengthy, only substantive!

**Revise and Share:** Like any piece of skillful writing, a company’s mission statement usually requires multiple revisions. Upon successfully writing your first draft, spend some time away from it. Focus on the other needs of your business, but do revisit your mission statement once a day, for a week. The revision process is the perfect time to edit the mission statement with a clear and critical mind.

- Does it still align with your goals?
- Does it successfully reflect your company’s culture and values?
- Don’t forget to include your team in the revision process, as they will also have valuable feedback!

## Examples of Great Mission Statements

[Stonyfield Farm](#)

We’re committed to healthy food, healthy people, a healthy planet, and healthy business.

[GoLite](#)

To transform the outdoor athlete’s everyday trail experience with gear that’s light on the planet.

[Starbucks](#)

To inspire and nurture the human spirit – one person, one cup and one neighborhood at a time.

[Patagonia](#)

Build the best product, cause no unnecessary harm, use business to inspire and implement solutions to the environmental crisis.

[Honest Tea](#)

Honest Tea seeks to create and promote great-tasting, healthy, organic beverages. We strive to grow our business with the same honesty and integrity we use to craft our recipes, with sustainability and great taste for all.

[Life is Good](#)

Life is not perfect. Life is not easy. Life is good.

## Resources

- Forbes describes [4 Questions](#) that a good mission statement needs to answer
- Bplans provides a guide on [How to Write a Mission Statement in 5 Easy Steps](#)
- Boston College Center for Corporate Citizenship provides some guidance [on great corporate social responsibility statements](#)

## Associated Resource Guides

- Training Employees on Social & Environmental Aims
- Influencing Industry Social & Environmental Standards



[Best for Rhode Island](#) is an initiative of [Social Enterprise Greenhouse](#) in partnership with business and community organizations across the state.