

A Good Mission Statement

In order for a mission statement to provide both philosophical and practical benefits to your institution, it must provide a specific, memorable, and clear answer to this question:

What is your core purpose?



Four Elements of a Good Mission Statement

- 1) A mission statement should be **brief**
- 2) It should be **clear** and **easily understood**
- 3) It can be **recited by memory**, even under stress
- 4) It is **inspiring, exciting, true**, and **engaging**

Evaluating the Mission Statement

Does your mission statement sound like this example?

“The mission of our institution is to provide excellence and quality in education for all of our constituents.”

There are a number of issues with this mission statement. Everyone expects excellence and quality, especially students and their parents. The words do not give constructive guidance in the day-to-day management and work of the administration, faculty, and staff. And a student reading such a statement on the institution’s website or in a student handbook has no idea what that will mean to their education. Overall, it is too nebulous to be useful.

When your mission statement is as nebulous as this one, the institution is off to a bad start. The administration has unknowingly handed out a map without roads. The end result is a lot of people becoming lost in attempting to reach a goal, with the map resembling more of a maze than a navigational device.

A stronger version (but there’s still work to be done!) of the previous mission statement might be:

“We provide those seeking to improve their lives, our community, and the world with the skills and knowledge to do so.”