

Ch1 | *Vivid Vision*

Turning Ideas Into Action

Here are several suggestions on how you can take some of the main ideas of this chapter and begin to implement them immediately. Some of them might work perfectly for you; others will need some adjustment and customization. Read them carefully and start thinking about how you can make them work for you in your organization.

- 1.** If you do not already have them, create mission/vision/values statements. This can be done independently by the leader of the organization, by a committee of key people who are enthusiastic about working on this project, or you can solicit feedback from the entire organization. Typically, it is best to get as much feedback as possible from various stakeholders and then have two or three key people create a draft document that can be circulated for feedback. It is important to let people have a say in the process so that they feel that they have some ownership in the final document and will therefore be much more committed to the mission/vision/values.
- 2.** If you do have mission/vision/values statements in place, survey your employees to see if they know/understand the statements and if they see them as relevant and resonant with the current organization. The only way these statements can be effective is if people honestly believe in them and strive every day to live them.
- 3.** Survey your customers to gather their feelings and attitudes about your mission/vision/values. Do they resonate with your customers as the kind of business they want to support and believe that you are? In your customers' eyes, is your organization living your stated mission/vision/values?
- 4.** Develop a specific, measurable, and comprehensive communications plan for ensuring that the mission/vision/values are effectively communicated throughout all levels of the organization and to key stakeholders. Measure the success of this program, through surveys and one-on-one meetings, at least twice a year.
- 5.** Create a formal reward/recognition program for employees who live the values and support the mission and vision. These can be things like: employee of the month award, employee of the year award, a special parking space, a day off, a cash bonus, a small gift certificate, flex time, a donation to the employee's favorite charity, a plaque or award, a handwritten note from the CEO thanking the employee for their dedication and commitment to the mission/vision/values... the options are endless. The idea is to reward the employees with something they value, and do so publicly and sincerely.
- 6.** Find innovative ways to tie your mission/vision/values with community outreach, charitable support, and sustainable business practices.
- 7.** Refuse to tolerate any violation of the values. Make it clear that prudent business risk-taking or failing at something new or challenging is absolutely acceptable... it is even rewarded. But violating one of the core values will result in immediate termination.