

The Wisdom Orchard

Leadership Development Worksheets



Where Are We Going — and Why Does It Matter?

Developing an Inspiring Vision Your People Can Actually Follow

Most vision statements are written for walls, not for people. This worksheet helps you build one that actually orients your team — grounded in what's real, pointed toward what matters, and clear enough to act on.

A Word About Vision (Before We Start)

Vision gets a bad reputation — and usually deserves it. Too much of what passes for 'visionary leadership' is either so grand it floats away, or so vague it means nothing. "We will be the best in class, world-class provider of transformative solutions" tells your people exactly nothing about where they're headed or why it matters.

The Kouzes and Posner research is clear: the most inspiring leaders don't start with a vision statement. They start with deep listening — to the people they serve, to the problems that need solving, and to their own honest sense of what could be. Vision that inspires is almost always discovered, not declared.

So this worksheet works backwards from the usual approach. We earn the draft statement at the end. First, you dig.

Part One: Look Back Before You Look Forward

The best visions are rooted in real experience. Begin here.

STEP 1 — What is already working? What are you most proud of in what this team or organization does?

(Don't skip this. Leaders who start with the future often miss the foundation they're already standing on.)

What we're already doing well:

STEP 2 — What do the people you serve — customers, constituents, community — most need from you that they aren't fully getting yet?

The unmet need I keep seeing:

STEP 3 — What would change for those people if your team was operating at its absolute best?

What 'our best' looks like for the people we serve:

Part Two: What Your People Already Want

Inspiring a shared vision means the word shared has to mean something. A vision you impose is a goal. A vision you co-discover is a movement. Before you craft language, you need to know what your people already hope for.

STEP 4 — Think about the people on your team. What do they come to work hoping to do, build, or contribute? What lights them up?

Person / Role / Group	What they seem to care most about

STEP 5 — What themes do you notice across those answers? Where is there natural alignment?

Themes I'm seeing:

Part Three: The Future You See

Now — with your feet on the ground — look ahead.

STEP 6 — Imagine it's 3–5 years from now and things have gone genuinely well. Not perfectly — well. What is different? What has changed?

(Be specific. "We are a better organization" is not a vision. "Our frontline supervisors mentor new hires in their first 60 days" is.)

In 3–5 years, what specifically looks different:

STEP 7 — Why does that future matter? Who benefits, and how?

It matters because:

STEP 8 — What is the one sentence that names the destination — specific enough to navigate by, compelling enough to move toward?

(Try a few. Cross out the ones that feel borrowed or generic. Keep the one that sounds like you.)

Draft attempt 1:

Draft attempt 2:

Draft attempt 3:

Part Four: The Stakeholder Test

A vision that only makes sense to you isn't shared yet. Before you finalize language, run it through these questions.

Test Question	Your Notes
Could someone new to the team read this and understand where we're headed?	
Does it connect to what my people already care about?	
Does it say something specific enough to disagree with?	
Does it feel true to who we actually are — not who we wish we were?	

Would I be comfortable saying this out loud to my team, my boss, and our customers?	
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Your Draft Vision Statement

Using everything above, write your best current draft below. Aim for 1–3 sentences. It should name a compelling destination, say why it matters, and feel like something your team can actually move toward — not a slogan, but a direction.

My Draft Vision Statement

Note what to refine, and who you want to test this with:

A young orchard doesn't look like much at first. But the farmer plants it with a clear picture in mind — what it will produce, who it will feed, what the harvest will mean. That forward-looking clarity is what makes all the daily tending worth it. Your people deserve to know what they're tending toward.

— The Wisdom Orchard

Name: _____ Date: _____ Role: _____