

How to Write a Mission Statement

Adapted from: *Strategic Communications for Nonprofit Organizations Seven Steps to Creating a Successful Plan*,
by Janel M. Radtke

The mission statement:

- Quickly and accurately communicates why your organization or program exists, who it serves, and what it plans to do in the future; and
- Describes your program's or organization's core values and priorities.
- Inspires commitment and support from the community
- Should be convincing, memorable, and easily "repeat-able"

Your mission statement reveals essential information about:

- The needs and opportunities you address
- What you do to address those needs and opportunities
- The principles or beliefs that guide your work

Begin by responding to these essential information pieces with staff, volunteer, and client input. You can hold a brainstorming session with staff, volunteers, and clients to come up with words or phrases that respond to the key points of your mission statement.

Once you have input from staff, volunteers, and clients, you can draft a mission statement for editing and finalization by the Board. The Board should review the mission statement at least every 5 years.

The mission statement format is:

- A concise, yet comprehensive, paragraph;
- Free from "internal" language or jargon a person outside of your field of expertise would not understand; and
- Designed to communicate the same message to a variety of audiences.



Sample Mission Statement

“The mission of Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America is to make a positive difference in the lives of children and youth, primarily through a professionally-supported, one-to-one relationship with a caring adult, and to assist them in achieving their highest potential as they grow to become confident, competent, and caring individuals, by providing committed volunteers, national leadership and standards of excellence.”

WHAT PURPOSE IS DESCRIBED?

WHAT BUSINESS OR SERVICE IS DESCRIBED?

WHAT VALUES ARE DESCRIBED?

GIVEN WHAT YOU KNOW, WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THIS MISSION STATEMENT?

