

H1: What is a Mission Statement and Does Your Company Need One?

Every business needs a mission but that doesn't necessarily mean that every business needs a mission statement. A mission statement is a brief overview of how a company operates. Mission statements cover everything from a company's reason of existences to its goals and core values. Although they are a popular way of introducing businesses to clients, some business managers are beginning to wonder just how effective mission statements can be. In this article, we will discuss what a mission statement is and whether or not they are the right choice for your company.

H2: What is a Mission Statement and why is it controversial?

A mission statement is usually 1-2 sentences that express the driving force, or the purpose, of a business. For example, JetBlue's mission statement is: "To inspire humanity –both in the air and on the ground." This mission statement is well-fitting since JetBlue has been granted several awards for their economy and business class flight experiences. A well-written mission statement can work wonders for a company by establishing credibility and solidifying their philosophy. On the other hand, an ill-written mission statement can be extremely dangerous to a company by deceiving its customers and being more performative than operational.

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H2: Pros of a Mission Statement

Here are some arguments for mission statements and why it is a good idea for a company to have one:

H3: Pro: They establish a company's character

Mission statements emphasize an organization's mission in the world and highlight the causes the organization cares most about. By putting a company's philosophy in writing, a mission statement solidifies the company's character and sets its foundation of reputation. This is a great opportunity for the company or organization to prove that they're contributing to a greater good by simply existing. TOM's, for example, lives by their statement that "for every pair of TOMS shoes purchased online or at retail, the company will provide a pair to a child in need." For TOMS, economic inequality is a cause they care most about. TOMS mission statement emphasizes their goal to not only create quality shoes for their consumers but to also share their wealth and to assist in clothing the lesser fortunate.

H3: Pro: It can be a motivating factor for employees and customers

Everyone likes to be personally moved by a company or product. People are more likely to be drawn to companies with similar beliefs and values. Having a mission statement that is attractive to both prospective customers and employees can be a huge indicator in whether or not a company can efficiently serve its target consumers. Customers and employees are often times looking for institutions that have a greater purpose than just making money. Some

businesses work to bring focus on social inequalities, some businesses work towards sustainability. Tesla, for example, motivates their employees and customers “To accelerate the world’s transition to sustainable energy.” Individuals who are passionate about finding alternative sources of energy might find themselves heavily influenced in investing in or purchasing or even being employed by Tesla.

H3: Pro: They serve as guidelines

A perfectly formed mission statement can easily replace any handbook or manual an employee is expected to know. Mission statements clearly summarize everything that is expected of an employee. They also make it easier for supervisors to motivate their employees by providing a solid foundation of ethics and goals. A great example of a mission statement serving as a guideline for operational services is Nordstrom’s, which promises “To give customers the most compelling shopping experience possible.” Nordstrom’s mission statement sets an expectation on their manufacturers, stores and employees to provide each customer with such a positive experience that the customer would choose to refuse service from anywhere else.

Related: [Why Is a Company Mission Statement Important?](#)

H2: Cons of a Mission Statement

Here are some arguments against mission statements and why your company should avoid the hassle:

H3: Con: They’re not always realistic

Mission statements can be grandiose ideas that are great to look at but are not easily upheld. By the pressure of meeting every goal and standing by every value written out by the mission statement, it’s easy for a business to set itself up for failure. Businesses often fail to live by their own philosophies when those philosophies become intangible or unrealistic in practice. Going against one’s own philosophy is never a good look for a company and quickly reduces its integrity. For example, if a company’s mission statement speaks highly of its leadership abilities but struggles with employee relations, that company cannot live up to its own glamorous idea of itself and consumers will question its competency.

H3: Con: They can seem braggy

No one wants to read about how great a company thinks they are, especially when they’re not half as amazing as their mission statement makes them out to be. When the values spelled out in mission statements become lost in practice, a mission statement no longer acts as an operational guide for employees and becomes just another tool in the company’s marketing tool belt. A company has complete control over how it markets itself but, in some cases, it’s best if they let their work speak for itself. After all, the best form of marketing comes from the mouths of others.

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H3: Con: They can be redundant

Not everyone memorizes a company's mission statement. Mission statements are not always the most memorable aspect of a company. Many managers are forgoing the mission statement because they feel that the time and energy of their creative teams could be better spent in other affairs. A company is not guaranteed to turn a profit based solely on a mission statement; however, profits are much easier promised in marketing or ad campaigns, which do become much more memorable to the consumer and have more of a chance of reaching a larger audience. Unless creatively and expertly crafted, each mission statement will sound just like the mission statement of every other organization and will become a heavily overlooked aspect of the organization's brand.

Related: [How To Write an Effective Mission Statement](#)