

The Three Levels of Leadership

Personal Mission-Vision Statement Exercise

This exercise is reprinted from chapter 9 of *The Three Levels of Leadership: How to Develop Your Leadership Presence, Knowhow and Skill* by James Scouller

For this exercise, you need to be clear on your values, which is why the Values Exercise is a precondition for working on a PMVS. Once you have a league table of values and you can see the main satisfaction gaps, you are ready to start reflecting and writing, using the questions below to uncover the insights you need to craft a PMVS that will motivate and guide you.

1. Looking at the top seven values and seeing where there is a significant satisfaction gap (score of 6 or below), which of these do you want your PMVS to have a positive effect on? For each of these values, write down what you could do to raise your satisfaction level to 8 or more.
2. Looking at where you experience high-satisfaction (a score of 8 or more) among the top seven values, which of these values *must* you preserve at that level in setting your personal direction? Could any of them be False Self values? What might that rule in or out?
3. What three character qualities would you most like to develop or strengthen in yourself as a leader? Why? What is important about them? What would they bring you? What would they bring to those you lead? What could you do to develop them?
4. Considering your role and development as a leader, what are the three things you would do if you *knew in advance that you could not fail*? (Note: some people unconsciously rule out certain endeavours they would love to pursue because they assume they will fail. This asks you to forget the idea of failure.)
5. Think of the person who knows you better than anyone. If you asked this person to list (a) your greatest strengths and (b) your greatest talents, what would he or she say? Reflecting on these strengths and talents, how could you draw on them more to become a better leader and serve your organisation, community or nation more effectively? What could you do to achieve this?
6. Imagine you have only three years to live. What more than anything else would you change in yourself? How would you spend your time as a leader? What leadership accomplishment(s) or contribution(s) would matter most to you? What sense of purpose and urgency emerges from your answers?

I suggest you take several weeks to reflect on these questions and jot down your answers. They are testing questions so don't expect to have ready answers. Take your time – this could be a life-changing exercise.

When you have enough material and have detected any themes running through your answers, try writing your first draft of a PMVS. Don't expect to finish it in one sitting. Expect instead to have to do several redrafts before it feels right to you. How will you know when it's done? When you look at it and you feel a mixture of excitement and freedom, when you can sense what your first practical steps will be and when you feel, "This is me and I will do this come what may or else a part of me will die."