**Fictional Discussion Board Assignment:**

In module 1, we discussed mission statements and vision statements.    Find a company's mission and vision statements and post a critique.  Identify what you like about these statements, what concerns you have, and what suggestions you would make to improve it.  After you have posted, you need to reply to at least 2 other posts.

**Instructor Notes:**

The students are being asked to grade the 5 fictional students. The rubric for the discussion board participation is as follows:

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| **Original post by deadline** | 5:  Explores several aspects of material, offers meaningful connections, and shows critical thinking | 4:  Shows understanding of material and offers meaningful connections | 3:  Summarizes material | 2:  Post addresses some of question | 0:  No post by deadline |
| **Conversation Enabler** | 1:  Original post by Friday (11:59 Eastern time) OR another student replies before deadline | | | 0:  Original post after Friday AND no other student replies | | |
| **Replies** | 4:  Replies to at least 2 other students with meaningful discussion | 3:  Replies to at least 2 other students | | 2:  Replies to 1 other student | 0:  No replies by deadline | |

From the current lecture material and accompanying video, the following definitions are offered:

*A mission statement is a statement of the purpose of a* [*company*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Company)*,* [*organization*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Organization) *or* [*person*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Person)*, its reason for existing. It defines the company's business, its objectives and its approach to reach those objectives.*

*The mission statement should guide the actions of the organization, spell out its overall goal, provide a path, and guide decision-making. It provides "the framework or context within which the company's strategies are formulated." It's like a goal for what the company wants to do for the world.*

*A Vision Statement describes the desired future position of the company.*

**Student #1 (Donald Duck) Original Post (Before Friday):**

**Toyota Mission Statement**: “Create vehicles that are popular with consumers.”

**Toyota Vision Statement**: “Toyota will lead the way to the future of mobility, enriching lives around the world with the safest and most responsible ways of moving people. Through our commitment to quality, constant innovation and respect for the planet, we aim to exceed expectations and be rewarded with a smile. We will meet our challenging goals by engaging the talent and passion of people, who believe there is always a better way.”

**Likes:** The mission statement is concise and meaningful as a business goal. As we learned in the lecture, the purpose of a company is to make money. If Toyota is successful in creating “vehicles that are popular with consumers,” then they are likely to make money, be successful, and remain viable as a company.

The vision statement is also concise and is meaningful as a statement of what the company will be in the future. The reference to “the future of mobility” implies that the future range of products may include innovative approaches to “mobility.” Both the mission statement (“vehicles”) and vision statement (“ways of moving people”) use words that do not limit the company products to be automobiles.

**Concerns:** As written, the last 2 sentences in the vision statement seem unnecessary. While it is nice to “be rewarded with a smile,” this does not necessarily reflect a future state of a business. It feels to me as if there was a group of people involved in writing this statement and the resulting vision statement was a compromise to make sure that the words quality, innovation, respect for the planet, talent, and people were included.

**Suggestions**: The vision statement would be more compelling if it were shorter and better reflected a future state. The last 2 sentences could be combined as follows:

Our talented workforce will find innovative ways to grow the company portfolio of quality products to increase shareholder value while showing respect for the planet.

**Instructor Notes:** Student #1 (Donald Duck) should get full credit (10 points).

The original post deserves 5 points (Explores several aspects of material, offers meaningful connections, and shows critical thinking). All aspects of the assignment are shown (mission and vision statement, likes, concerns, suggestions), there are connections made to the lecture (definitions from the lecture), and there is critical thinking (products not limited, offering suggested revision). This post uses bold text to show where the different parts of the requested material are to make it easier to grade.

The original post should be the first to appear and before the Friday, so gets the “conversation enabler” point. The replies deserve 4 points (Replies to at least 2 other students with meaningful discussion) with meaningful replies to students #2 and #4.

**Student #2 (Hermione Granger) Reply:**

Toyota’s vision statement indicates the long-term direction of the business. Toyota’s mission statement focuses on products. The mission statement is aligned to its vision statement.

**Student #3 (Luke Skywalker) Reply:**

I agree that the vision statement is too long.

**Student #2 (Hermione Granger) Original Post (Before Friday):**

Starbuck’s mission statement is:

To inspire and nurture the human spirit – one person, one cup and one neighborhood at a time.

Starbuck’s vision statement is:

To establish Starbucks as the premier purveyor of the finest coffee in the world while maintaining our uncompromising principles while we grow.

Starbucks Coffee’s mission statement and vision statement reflect the company’s emphasis on leadership in the coffeehouse industry. The firm’s mission statement serves as an indicator of what the company wants to do at the core of its business. On the other hand, Starbucks Coffee’s vision statement shows what the company wants to achieve in the future. In this regard, through the mission statement and vision statement, the firm guides the activities of employees, and shows customers what the business is capable of doing. In particular, the Starbucks Coffee mission statement shows customers the benefit that they can get from the company.

There is concern about satisfying the finest coffee in the world component of this vision statement. While Starbucks has one of the finest coffees in the world, the company must continue evolving to improve its products. The company’s mission statement is simplistic. It does not present approaches that Starbucks Coffee uses in its business.

The company should change its vision statement to reflect the growing array of products it now offers, such as Starbucks merchandise sold at grocery stores. Starbucks Coffee can improve its mission statement by adding more details to show how the company inspires and nurtures the human spirit.

**Instructor Notes:** Student #2 (Hermione Granger) should get no credit (0 points).

The entire assignment should get 0 points due to plagiarism. The critique in the original post is stolen 100% from the website:

<http://panmore.com/starbucks-coffee-vision-statement-mission-statement>

The original post is before Friday, but the plagiarism makes this irrelevant. There are 2 replies (students #1 and #3). I pulled those responses from the panmore.com website, too, so they are also plagiarized.

**Student #1 (Donald Duck) Reply:**

The Starbucks team could benefit from the approach I described for Toyota. The Toyota vision statement describes “the future of mobility” which means more than just cars. Since Starbucks if offering more products than coffee and offering it in grocery stores in addition to their stores, the vision statement should include this expansion strategy.

**Student #3 (Luke Skywalker) Reply:**

I agree that it would be hard to be the finest coffee in the world.

**Student #3 (Luke Skywalker) Original Post (Before Friday):**

Nike’s mission statement is "To bring inspiration and innovation to every athlete\* in the world." The asterisk leads to a quote that from the Nike co-founder that reads: “"If you have a body, you are an athlete” implying that the mission statement applies to everyone.

I like the way the company wants to bring inspiration with its products. The innovation is clear in the way new products are introduced each year.

**Instructor Notes:** Student #3 (Luke Skywalker) should get 6 points.

The original post deserves 2 points (Post addresses some of question). The critique only addresses the mission statement and not the vision statement. It addresses the “likes” part of the assignment, but not the concerns or suggestions.

The original post should appear before the Friday, so gets the “conversation enabler” point.

The replies deserve 3 points (Replies to at least 2 other students) with minimal replies to students #1 and #2.

**Student #2 (Hermione Granger) Reply:**

Nike’s mission statement has evolved over time to accurately represent the company’s business situation.

**Student #4 (Leslie Knope) Original Post (On Saturday or Sunday):**

I have selected the Coca Cola Company to critique the mission and vision statements.

Coca Cola Mission: “Our Roadmap starts with our mission, which is enduring. It declares our purpose as a company and serves as the standard against which we weigh our actions and decisions.

To refresh the world...

To inspire moments of optimism and happiness...

To create value and make a difference.”

Coca Cola Vision: “Our vision serves as the framework for our Roadmap and guides every aspect of our business by describing what we need to accomplish in order to continue achieving sustainable, quality growth.

People: Be a great place to work where people are inspired to be the best they can be.

Portfolio: Bring to the world a portfolio of quality beverage brands that anticipate and satisfy people's desires and needs.

Partners: Nurture a winning network of customers and suppliers, together we create mutual, enduring value.

Planet: Be a responsible citizen that makes a difference by helping build and support sustainable communities.

Profit: Maximize long-term return to shareowners while being mindful of our overall responsibilities.

Productivity: Be a highly effective, lean and fast-moving organization.”

I like how the mission statement talks about refreshing the world and providing inspiration. The company uses the mission statement as a means to declare the company’s purpose. They use the mission statement to influence business decisions.

The vision statement talks about being a great place to work and being a responsible citizen. It expands on this to focus on people, portfolio, partners, planet, profit, and productivity. The company uses the vision statement as a roadmap to guide every aspect of the business.

I’m concerned that value is discussed in both the mission and vision statement. The mission is to create value and make a difference. The vision for partners is to create mutual, enduring value. These seem very similar.

I suggest that the vision statement be shorter and not duplicate the value creation part of the mission statement.

**Instructor Notes:** Student #4 (Leslie Knope) should get 7 points**.**

The original post deserves 3 points (Summarizes material). It covers the mission and vision statements, provides likes, concerns, and suggestions, but simply summarizes the statements in these categories.

While being long, it doesn’t really show understanding of the concepts because it misses that the vision statement opening sentence is the definition from the lecture of a mission statement. Suggestions should include ways to make the statements shorter and more compelling and to make the vision statement reflect a future state of the company.

The original post is after Friday, but Students #1 and #5 reply, so earns the “conversation enabler” point.

This should be the student that has long winded replies that only deserve 3 points (Replies to at least 2 other students) because they don’t constitute a meaningful discussion.

**Student #1 (Donald Duck) Reply:**

I agree that the vision and mission statement have similar themes. In fact, the Coca Cola vision statement seems more like a mission statement. According to the lecture material, "a mission statement should guide the actions of the organization." The beginning of the Coca Cola vision reads "serves as the framework for our Roadmap and guides every aspect of our business..." That sounds like mission and not vision.

**Student #5 (Tyrion Lannister) Reply:**

The vision statement is too long. I’m not sure that a soft drink can “inspire moments of optimism and happiness.” I picked McDonalds and they want to be “a favorite place and way to eat and drink” so maybe if they serve inspirational Coca Cola products they can be successful.

**Student #5 (Tyrion Lannister) Original Post (On Saturday or Sunday):**

McDonald’s mission statement: “Our mission is to be our customers’ favorite place and way to eat & drink. We’re dedicated to being a great place for our people to work; to being a strong, positive presence in your community; and to delivering the quality, service, cleanliness and value our customers have come to expect from the Golden Arches – a symbol that’s trusted around the world.”

A mission statement is a statement of purpose for the company. The McDonald’s mission statement describes a favorite place and way to eat and drink. The symbol trusted around the world means that the food is predictable no matter where you buy it. The mission statement doesn’t mention fast food or low price, so that might be a way to improve the statement.

McDonald’s vision statement: “Our overall vision is for McDonald’s to become a modern, progressive burger company delivering a contemporary customer experience. Modern is about getting the brand to where we need to be today and progressive is about doing what it takes to be the McDonald’s our customers will expect tomorrow. To realize this commitment, we are focused on delivering great tasting, high-quality food to our customers and providing a world-class experience that makes them feel welcome and valued.”

A vision statement describes the future position of the company. The McDonald’s vision statement focuses on what customers will expect tomorrow. I’m not sure “great tasting, high-quality food” applies to McDonalds. An improvement would be to delete the last sentence.

**Instructor Notes:** Student #5 (Tyrion Lannister) should get 6 points**.**

The original post deserves 4 points (Shows understanding of material and offers meaningful connections). It addresses all aspects requested and makes some connections to the lecture, but does not show any critical thinking.

The post is after Friday and has no replies, so does not get the “conversation enabler” point.

The one reply to student #4 deserves 2 points (Replies to 1 other student).