

Visioning Activity Slides

The PowerPoint slides shown below were used to stimulate a group's creative thinking about the future success of the same non-profit organisation that was used to illustrate the current profile slides. Once the group completed this activity and agreed on what success looked like, it was easy to convert the image of success into a shared vision statement.

Slide 1

Creative Initiatives

Breakout Activity

- Imagine it's 2007.
- This morning, Attorney General John Ashcroft announced that Restored Lives was to be recognized as the Nation's most successful nonprofit organization to serve the needs of convicted drug offenders.
- Along with a bronze plaque commemorating its achievement, RL will be receiving a grant in the amount of 1 Million dollars to continue its good work and expand its programs as it sees fit.
- The New York Times plans to carry the story on the front cover of its evening edition.

Slide 2

Creative Initiatives

Breakout Activity

Small team tasks:

- Get into teams according to the color of your nametag.
- Go to the room assigned to your team and complete the assignments on the flip chart or white board.
- When you've completed the assignment, copy your answers onto a transparency.
- Elect a member of the team to report your team's answers to the whole group.
- Return here by _____.

Slide 3

Creative Initiatives

Breakout Activity

Individual team tasks:

- Create a headline (5-8 words) for the New York Times story.
- Write an opening paragraph that briefly describes why Restored Lives won the award in the face of some incredibly strong competition.
- List out 6-10 characteristics the organization must possess in order to win the plaque and the 1 million in 2007.
- Write your answers on a transparency and report back at _____

The teams should be given 40-60 minutes to complete their assignment, take a break and report back to the main workshop venue. Each team is permitted to present its ideas to the whole group, which is allowed to add to and build upon each team's ideas. During the reporting out session, brainstorming rules still apply. Criticism and judgement are not allowed. The facilitator encourages team members to elaborate on the team's ideas, and everyone else is encouraged to build on the ideas of the presenting team.

After all of the teams have reported out, the facilitator asks everyone to combine all of the ideas into a headline and the contents of the opening paragraph.

The following headline and paragraph are fictional, but fairly represent the shared vision this group of workshop participants developed as a result of thinking creatively about the future success of their organisation.

Attorney General Praises Restored Lives

This morning, the US Attorney General announced that Restored Lives will receive a 1 million dollar government grant as a result of its being named the nation's most successful rehabilitator of criminal drug offenders. In his speech to the Association of Prison Wardens, John Ashcroft praised Restored Lives for reducing the recidivism rate of drug offenders in California by 67 percent. Recidivism is the tendency of released prisoners to be sent back to jail for committing another crime. John Smith, Restored Lives' founder and president credits the organisation's success on the ability of its staff and volunteers to meet the spiritual needs of released drug offenders. This is accomplished, he says, by surrounding each newly released drug offender with a network of Christian role models who help keep the ex-convict away from negative influences. Mr. Smith was proud to point out that 95 percent of ex convicts who accept Jesus as their personal saviour do not return to prison. The organisation was also credited with finding jobs, housing, and transportation for the previous drug offenders.

Once the group agreed on what success looked like, it became a lot easier to convert that image into a shared vision.

It isn't critical for the group to agree on the exact wording of the vision in order to start describing the characteristics, attributes and programs that the organisation must possess before it will be able to bring the shared vision to reality.