Your ‘why’

Your vision is a statement about your desired state (where you want to go) and is best stated in the future tense. If you had no fear about moving forward, what would you do in your life? What challenges might you be excited to overcome? What do you want to contribute to your own life and the lives of others? What do you want to give, create, be, feel or share?

Ask yourself why you do what you do?

Try this technique: Simon Sinek, in his book, Find your Why, provides a simple format to use:

**TO \_\_\_\_ SO THAT \_\_\_\_.**

The first blank represents your contribution — the contribution you make to the lives of others through your ‘why’. The second blank represents the impact of your contribution.

Going through this process will be helpful in getting your vision down on the page. It doesn’t have to take this format of course but it's helpful to have a starting point. An example of this format in action is Simon Sinek’s own ‘why’.

“To inspire people to do the things that inspire them so that, together, we can change our world.”

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Are you still struggling to work out your vision?**

Over time it will become clearer. Read others that you find and borrow statements that speak to you in the first instance. Remember, nothing is always original. In fact, your vision may be exactly the same as someone else's, but the detail in how you achieve it, your mission, will be different.

When it comes down to it, your vision needs to be something you’re proud to share. I have to admit that sharing your vision with someone may feel like baring your soul or just running down the main street naked but, believe me, you should share it and be proud of what it says about you. You need and want people to know what’s important to you, sharing your vision helps you to connect with people in a genuine and meaningful way.

Mission

*Defines the present state or purpose of an organization; Answers three questions about why your project exists -*

*WHAT it does;  
WHO it does it for; and  
HOW it does what it does.*

## **HOW and WHAT**

**Map your WHAT**

Write down ‘what’ you do, it doesn’t have to be perfect but on a day to day basis in your job, your life etc what do you do?

Sometimes this step can, in fact, be very scary as we start to realise that maybe what we do will not get us to our vision. If that is the case for you don’t panic, use this as an opportunity to assess what you do and where you want to be. Knowing and acknowledging it is the first step.

**Map your HOW**

Next, work on your ‘how’ if you are working on a research project or program vision and mission then this will be your outputs and activities that you will do to deliver, share and implement changes to make the difference that you plan to make.

In this regard, developing a vision and mission for a project is much like developing a knowledge translation plan, where your vision becomes the impact of your work.

**Your WHO**

Write out the ‘who’ for your mission. Remember to add detail to make it more specific.

Even my own ‘who’ had some detail, instead of just researchers and research administrators, I focus on forward-thinking professionals

If you have made it this far through the material, you are one of my people!

I work with…

I work to help …