

Your Company Scope

By Susan Schilke; October 2, 2017

A long-range rifle is equipped with a scope to bring the target into clear focus for more effective aim. Leaders need to provide the same clarity. At the top performing companies, leaders invest time in developing a clear picture of the company's mission, vision and values; use these guideposts to create goals and strategies; and communicate effectively to every team member to inspire achievement.

This month, we introduce the Company Scope, designed to help your companies identify the answers to a few critical questions, and capture this in one-page as a springboard to developing effective action plans. It brings your company's targets into clear focus so your entire team can take aim! Let's go through the worksheet.

Like Simon Sinek explained so well a few years ago, you need to start with why.

"We follow those who lead, not because we have to, but because we want to. We follow those who lead, not for them, but for ourselves. And it's those who start with "why" that have the ability to inspire those around them..."

Why do you exist? The best **mission** statements are idealistic and reflect how your company makes people's lives better. Check out our examples to see some inspirational mission statements from TeamStrength members and some other leading organizations.

Next is the **vision** – what do you want to be known for? What does your company strive to do best, first, fastest, cheapest or most? Clearly defining your vision motivates the team and helps drive strategic initiatives and decision-making. If you want to be most admired, there's a constant focus on doing the right thing. If you want to lead through innovation, you'll create systems for developing and testing new ideas and programs consistently.

Company's core **values** answer the question how do our best team members behave? These offers clarity on what's most important in the way team members act every day. In each of your organizations, there are a few behaviors that are most valued and reinforced. Identifying these makes it easier to recruit for a cultural fit and drives consistent performance.

Mission, Vision and Values are relatively unchanging, and once identified and established, they provide inspiration and direction for the organization.

Which takes us to **strategy**. How do you compete and win? The few key answers to this question define your positioning in the market. Clearly articulating what you do better than your competitors keeps the edge you need for growth and market share gain. This focus can provide clarity on whether new opportunities align with your strengths. Dramatic industry change can sometimes dictate strategic shifts, but your strategic anchors become more effective over time. Changing how you compete and win requires careful consideration.

With the top half of the scope defined, the focus shifts to goal setting. **Long-term goals** define what you want to achieve in terms of quantitative measures – revenue, number of locations or customers, profitability, revenue per employee or other clear-cut numbers. Long-term goals are usually created by senior leadership and shareholders – and can instill a relentless drive for progress.

Current key goals address what's most important right now. These are sometimes qualitative in nature like implementing a structure change, focusing on training and development, working on process or technology solutions. These can be measurable as well – including short-term revenue initiatives, opening new locations, or selecting, hiring and onboarding a specific number of employees to support growth. Most companies have too many priorities. Organizations that clearly identify the most critical current initiative – and limit them to one or two at any given time – more effectively hit these targets. Action plans for every team member should start with a focus on current key goals.

Finally, it's about **alignment** throughout the organization. Deciding what's most important now leads directly to focus for each level, with metrics to track progress and rewards for success.

This fall I'll be encouraging TeamStrength CEO and Key Executive members to complete the Scope for their company, working with their leadership teams. It's designed to be tailored for your company – you could have four core values, but just one long-term goal. That works. Your company may use different team member groups for the alignment section. All ok.

Clearly define the scope of your company, and use it to drive clarity throughout the organization. Mission, vision and values are a constant to inspire and guide decisions. Strategy and long-term goals may shift over time. Current key goals and alignment are revisited by leadership on a regular basis to drive action and communication plans for the entire organization. But keep the whole scope in front of the leadership team on a regular basis, and develop action plans to communicate it effectively.

Imagine every employee in your company with a clear picture of the way your company makes people's lives better and what you want to be known for. Each person on your team understands the key behaviors embodied by the best employees and how your company beats the competition. Everyone knows the long-term objectives, along with the current key focus. And most importantly, team members understand what they need to focus on every day to get there.

With the target clearly in sight and your entire team taking aim, how can you miss?