

DO YOU HAVE A VISION?

By: Robert Sher

Everyone needs a vision statement; not everyone has one.

You can contemplate what you want in life, write it down in the form of your values, goals and visions, and the end product will be just that – a vision, or mission statement, that you can use as a compass to turn your ideas into real plans.

Recently, while enjoying a family vacation with my sons and grandchildren at Walt Disney World in Orlando, I took my 8-year-old granddaughter to the Magic Kingdom to watch the evening parade along Main Street. The park lit up and we inhaled the sweet smell of fresh fudge, caramel corn and cotton candy.

My granddaughter grinned broadly and said, “Papa, this place is awesome!”

“It sure is,” I agreed “and did you know it all began with one man’s big idea, his vision.”

Of course she asked what a vision was so I talked for a minute about Walt Disney’s big idea, something exciting, something he brought to life, like the park.

While your big vision does not need to be as large as a Disney theme park, it will require energy, focus and change in your life. You will need to think long and hard about what you value.

As Stephen R. Covey, author of the bestselling book, “The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People”, likes to say: “The key to the ability to change is a changeless sense of who you are, what you are about and what you value.”

Covey defines habit as an intersection of knowledge, skill and desire. Knowledge is his theoretical paradigm – what we do and why we do it. Skill is how to do it. Desire is the motivation, the want to do. To make something a habit, we must have all three paradigms.

His first habit is principles of a personal vision. What guides you? What inspires you? What is your purpose? What gets you out of bed every morning? Do you have an inner urge to pursue an activity or perform a service? This is your vision – the path to your success.

To find your vision, be proactive. Do you want balance between family and work to be more centered and live more positively? Write it down. Read it regularly.

Here is how you can get started on your vision statement: Make a list of the five most important goals, projects and activities in your business and personal life. Number them 1 to 5.

Make another list of where you actually spend your time. Do your lists match? Are they in order? Look at your second list and ask: “Is this goal or activity enhancing your life or

consuming it?" Are you excited and passionate about this or has your life become about "shoulds"?

Make a "yes" list to those things that truly are important to you and also that inspire you. Be committed to it. Create a story board by making yourself a collage of the goals that excite you and hang it on the wall in your office. If you look at them every day, they will soon be yours.

What you intend to do with your life must be big enough to change your world, your life, but it does not have to change the whole world.

Now you can start drafting your vision, your mission. You can work with a professional coach or try going it alone using the personal mission statement builder on the Franklin Covey Website.

Robert Sher, CPA, is a Certified Executive Coach. Formerly CFO and partner for Schostak Brothers & Company, he now serves on the West Bloomfield Township Board of Trustees and is Treasurer of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants Foundation. His Email address is: info@bobsher.com.