

Barton Community College
Proposed Mission and Vision Statements
June 2010

Introduction

Successful organizations have a vision statement that defines their future and a mission statement that defines their purpose and sets the course to achieve their vision. According to Radtke (1998), a good mission statement should accurately explain why your organization exists and what it hopes to achieve in the future (vision). The statement should articulate the organization's purpose, essential nature, its values, and its work. In addition, it is critical to engage your stakeholders in the process of defining the mission and vision, so these statements will resonate with the people working in and for the organization, as well as with other constituencies that the organization hopes to affect (Radtke, 1998). Developing an effective mission and vision statement that inspires commitment and innovation is one of the first essential steps in the strategic planning process.

Barton Community College (BCC) is preparing for a new accreditation cycle by initiating a process to review and update the institution's strategic plan. As part of this process, Barton Community College hosted a *Cougar Quest AQIP Conversation Day* at its campuses in Great Bend and Grandview Plaza. These facilitated sessions gave faculty and staff at both locations the opportunity to reflect upon and discuss key aspects and elements of the institution through a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis. Facilitators from Cowley College and the Office of Educational Innovation and Evaluation (OEIE) at K-State led these sessions. The summary report captured the core values of the organization in the form of key words from the voices of the administrators, faculty, and staff from BCC. These key words serve as the foundation for generating a proposed mission and vision statement for the college. Two visional representations in the form of a word cloud (wordle) were created capturing all the key words shared at the focus groups for the *Cougar Quest AQIP Conversation Day* (see attached).

The operational definitions for mission statements and vision statements are as follows (Allison and Kaye, 2005):

- A **Mission statement** tells you the fundamental purpose of the organization. It defines the customer and the critical processes. It informs you of the desired level of performance.
- A **Vision statement** outlines what the organization wants to be, or how it wants the world in which it operates to be. It concentrates on the future. It is a source of inspiration. It provides clear decision-making criteria.

In working with stakeholder to develop the mission and vision statement, BCC has made an important step for the future. These statements create a sense of direction and opportunity and are an essential part of the strategy-making process. After review of the summary report, it is recommended that BCC keep their current vision statement, as it supported in the voices from your institution.

The Vision

Barton Community College will be a premier educational institution, recognized for its innovative and outstanding people, programs and services.

In developing an effective mission statement for an organization, the mission statement should be able to answer three key questions (Radkte, 1998):

1. What are the opportunities or needs that we exist to address? (the purpose of the organization)
2. What are we doing to address these needs? (the business of the organization)
3. What principles or beliefs guide our work? (the value of the organization)

Based on campus feedback through the SWOT exercise, the following revised mission is suggested for review and discussion by the BCC stakeholders.

The Mission

The Mission of Barton Community College (BCC) is to provide quality educational opportunities that are accessible, innovative, affordable and responsive to all learners. BCC is driven to provide an educational delivery system that is student-centered, flexible and progressive.

BCC embraces a visionary approach that values diversity and emulates professionalism, open-mindedness, and compassion. BCC is committed to meeting the ever-changing needs of their growing population in a caring and friendly manner. BCC is dedicated to delivering educational opportunities that improve the lives of students, meet the workforce needs of the region, and strengthen its communities and beyond.

References:

Allison, M. and Kaye, J. (2005). *Strategic Planning for Nonprofit Organizations*. Second Edition. John Wiley and Sons.

Radtko, J. (1998). *How to Write a Mission Statement*. The Grantsmanship Center (TGCI), found at <http://www.tgci.com/magazine/How%20to%20Write%20a%20Mission%20Statement.pdf>