

YOUR ORGANIZATION MISSION STATEMENT

What's the purpose of a mission statement?

A mission statement sums up your organization's reason for being. It explains your intentions, priorities, and values to people both inside and outside the group. It can guide you and help you stay focused on the things that are most important to you. If you ever question whether to take on a project or choose a particular course of action, you can look back on your mission statement and see if the proposal is consistent with it.

How do we create a mission statement?

Start by brainstorming among the members of your group. Write down everything people suggest at first, without debating the ideas. Think about:

- Why does the group exist?
- What does the group want to accomplish?
- What do individuals want to get out of the group?
- What are values, standards, and goals critical to the success of the organization?

When you've run out of new thoughts, see if you can find some that are similar or have common themes. Try to come up with statements summarizing these concepts. Let people discuss and make adjustments until everyone can agree with, or at least not object to, what you've written.

Have someone put together a draft based on what you've agreed on, and bring it back to the group for final adjustments and approval.

Then what do we do with it?

Your mission statement should be communicated to new members of your group, and to anyone who wants to know what you're all about. You may want to publish it in a brochure, or put it on a web site, or otherwise make it available for people to read. It's a good idea for all members to look back at it occasionally, to remind yourselves of what you're doing there.

Your mission statement doesn't need to be set in stone. In time, your group's experiences, or the input of new members, may cause you to want to revise it. Changing your mission statement should be done with careful consideration, making sure that all your members can have their say about it, and finalized using the group's usual method of making important decisions.

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Sample Mission Statements

Sample #1:

CU Students against Modern Day Slavery is a group of abolitionists who aspire to combat all forms of modern-day slavery, both internationally and domestically. These forms of slavery include human trafficking, sexual slavery/trafficking of women and children, debt bondage, forced labor, child soldiers, etc. We achieve our goal by educating and raising awareness about the issue on CU campus and in Boulder, by fundraising, and by promoting local and national political action. We seek to mobilize CU students and the wider Boulder community to join the modern abolitionist movement.

Sample #2

The Afghan Student Union is a culture-based group dedicated to preserving the Afghan culture. We are not a political group. Membership is open to anyone with an interest in and a respect for Afghan culture, Afghanistan, and its people. We hold events, general meetings, fundraisers, etc. throughout the year. Promoting a positive and true image of Afghan Culture and Afghanistan is an advantage to both the university community and the student group. Both sides will have the advantage of gaining a "true" understanding and image of Afghan culture.

Sample #3

The Fashion Design Student Association provides a niche for those interested in fashion on the CU at Boulder campus by giving our members opportunities to learn and to demonstrate their talents in fashion design. We produce fashion shows that give our members an opportunity to express themselves through fashion as well as to learn more about the industry and to provide a unique artistic experience for others in the community and at the university. We also provide workshops to further our members' skills and to encourage diversity and positive body image. Our goal is to present fashion as an art and to change the negative body image created by the industry today.