

Purpose, Mission, Vision, Goals

According to Susan Robison, psychologist and professor at the College of Notre Dame in Maryland, in order to be our most productive, authentic, and best selves, we need to identify our fundamental motivations, strengths, and passions. Once we know why we are here, doing what we are doing, then we can find the intrinsic motivation to set achievable goals and meet them. So, we are going to use her model of reflection to create what she calls a “power pyramid.” She tells us that pyramids are the most stable structure, and we need our power pyramids to anchor our successes. *(This activity is based on the techniques from Susan Robison’s The Peak Performing Professor, San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2013)*

1. Purpose: The first tier of the pyramid is purpose. Each of us needs to reflect upon and construct a 1 or 2 sentence explanation that answers the question: why am I here on this earth? What am I here to do? This may seem hard. We all have so many talents and passions, but if we really boil it all down, what essentially is our purpose? Please try to write a draft of an answer to what is your purpose?

2. Mission: The second section is mission. This one is easier, and changes often over time, while our purpose usually stays pretty constant. This is more closely related to what we are doing right now and who we are doing it for. Robison puts it in these terms: so, if I am here for "x" purpose, what am I doing about it? So, to write a mission statement, try the following:

a. write down three verbs that describe what you are good at (the via should help you here) _____,

_____ , _____

b. write down three people or groups of people that you serve

_____ , _____,

c. write down three values that you hold (via might help here too)

_____ , _____,

d. Now put it together: My mission is to (verb, verb, verb), that are my strengths, for, to, or with (people, people, people), who want (value, value, value).

e. Now let's make one for academics:

i. write down 3 words that describe your

strengths _____ , _____,

ii. write down 3 difficulties you have academically

_____ , _____,

iii. write down what academic success you want to achieve

iv. Now put it together: My Academic mission is to use my strengths of (3 strengths) to help me over come my difficulties with (3 difficulties) because I want to achieve (success)

3. Vision: Your vision statement is the outcome of your mission. Robison tells us that A vision statement answers the question: "If I work on my mission, "What will result?" It represents outcomes hoped for, dreams conceptualized. We are going to have 3 overall life visions, and 3 academic visions.

1. Life vision:

2. Life vision

3. Life vision

4. Academic vision

5. Academic vision

6. Academic vision

4. Goals: Now we are finally to the goals that will allow us to actualize our visions, which are tied to our mission, which allows us to live out our purpose in life. There are two different ways to define goals. We are going to do the first today, and the second next week. So, under each of your vision statements, please list all the goals (big and small, wild and mundane, difficult and easy) that will help you to achieve your vision.