Why Create A Personal Charter Statement: Creating The Life You Intend To Live

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“Your actions are your only possessions.”
- Lao Tse

This is an excellent personal development statement to ponder as we watch the previous year dissolve into dust and we ponder the coming year. Most of us make traditional, personal, one sentence performance goals, annually, like “I want to lose weight” or “I vow to start going to the gym twice a week.” It is a tradition to start the New Year with things you want to achieve, but under the influence resolutions are often unrealistic.

It is time to take a personal inventory to make this year your most productive year ever. You may be asking yourself, “How am I going to do that?” You, my friends, are going to write your Personal Charter Statements. A large number of corporations use mission statements to define the purpose of the company’s existence. Sony wants to “become the company most known for changing the worldwide poor-quality image of Japanese products” and 3M wants “to solve unsolved problems innovatively”. A personal mission statement is different than a corporate mission statement, but the fundamentals are the same.

So why do you need one? A personal charter statement will help you identify your mission and core values and beliefs in one fluid tapestry of content that you can read anytime and anywhere to stay on task toward success. For example, Tom Cruise in Jerry Maguire came to the realization that he had lost track of what was important to him. After writing a personal mission statement, we saw him start his own business and he got the girl, Renee Zellweger. Not bad, wouldn’t you say? A personal mission statement will make sure that, through all the texting, emailing and constant bombardment of on-the-go activity, you won’t lose sight of what is most important to you.

Charter Statements can be simple and concise while others are longer and filled with detail. The length of your personal mission statement will not be determined until you follow this simple equation to create your motivational springboard for the future.

To begin your internal cleansing, you will need to jot down the required information in the following six steps:

1. What is my Mission/Purpose in life? A Personal Mission Statement describes the reason/purpose for an individual’s existence; the nature and scope of the life to be lived and/or the achievements (outcomes) to be realized. Your Personal Mission Statement communicates the following: This is my focus in life … this is my life’s passion … I believe this to be the basic reason I am here for.

2. What are your values? Values steer your actions and determine where you spend time, energy, and most importantly, money. Be specific and unique to yourself. Too much generalization will not be as effective. It is called a “personal” charter statement for a reason.
3. **What are three important goals you hope to achieve this year?** Keep your list of important goals small and give them a date. It is better to focus on the horizon and not the stars. Realistic goals are keys to ultimate success.

4. **What image do you hope to project to yourself?** How you see yourself is how the world will view you. Think about this carefully. Your image should encompass what you look like and feel after you have achieved your goals.

5. **Write down action statements from each value** describing how you will use those values to achieve your three goals. Start with “I will…”

6. **Rewrite your statement to include only your action statements.** Make portable copies for your wallet, car or office.

If you followed the steps above, congratulations! You have just written your first Personal Charter Statement. Your Personal Charter Statement will change over the years as your goals change. You can have more than one statement for the different compartments of your life such as your career, family, marriage, etc.

**Writing a Personal Charter Statement is an effective method to ensure your productivity is at its peak.** It is an ideal tradition to start so that when next year rolls around, the outdated practice of resolutions will be something you permanently left in the closing year.