

Plastering the Mission Statement
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Mission Statements - We've seen them used in nearly every format. They appear on pop-up banners next to a registration desk, painted on office walls, or recited at the start of a board meeting.

But there are some chambers that don't fully understand the power of using it beyond promotional purposes. The mission statement is the purpose or reason for existence. It should frame nearly every discussion, program, action and decision by boards and committees.

In a 2008 IRS [white paper](#), entitled Good Governance Practices, the agency addresses this statement of purpose and its importance.

The Internal Revenue Service encourages charities to establish and review regularly the organization's mission. A clearly articulated mission, adopted by the board of directors, serves to explain and popularize the purpose and guide its work. It also addresses why the [organization] exists, what it hopes to accomplish, and what activities it will undertake, where, and for whom. Organizations required to file Form 990 may describe their mission in Part I, Line 1 and are required to describe their mission in Part III, Line 1.

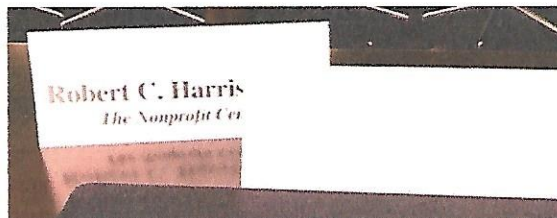
On IRS Form 990, required to be filed annually by most chambers, the first question focuses on the mission:

"Describe the organization's mission or its most significant activities for the year, whichever the organization wishes to highlight, on the summary page."

Keeping it in front of the board, and hoping they know it well enough to communicate, is a charge for the chamber's CEO. The CEO is the executor of the strategic plan. By not having the mission in front of the board, it is difficult, if not impossible, to execute on the plan by staff.

Try these tips and tricks for elevating its importance to the volunteers:

- **Website** – Be sure it is easy to find.
- **Tent card** – Print attendee names on one side and the mission on the other.
- **Agenda** – Include it at the top or bottom of every board and committee meeting agenda.
- **Conference Room Wall** – Frame and display it on the wall.



- **Staff Business Cards** – Consider printing the mission on the back side of business cards.
- **Publications** – Be sure it is included in the editorial masthead.
- **Mission Moment** – Share a brief story about how the chamber has helped members or the community.
- **Return on Mission** – Take a different perspective from just measuring return on investment by [measuring its return](#) to members.
- **Mission Town Halls** – Share the mission openly during town halls to apprise members and leaders.
- **Orientation** – Discuss the purpose of the mission at board and member orientation.
- **Individual Staff Performance** – Tie the mission to staff performance evaluations.
- **Social Media** – Promote the mission of the chamber on social media regularly.
- **Brand** – Ensure that your mission is closely assigned to your chamber’s brand and position.

The mission statement is the top of the hierarchy of your chamber’s governing documents and deservedly so. It is what drives the leaders, staff, members and other stakeholders as they serve. “Plastering the Mission Statement” is one way to ensure that the focus and decisions made by leaders is firmly centered on the chamber’s purpose.

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