

The Problem with Mission Statements

by Eric Douglas, CEO of [Leading Resources](#)

What is the problem with organizational mission statements? The problem is that most organizational mission statements try to say too much – and wind up saying nothing.

Consider the following hypothetical example:

“Synsios inc. supplies technically innovative software and hardware solutions to the OEM computer market that provide long-term benefits to our customers and our investors.”

This is a hodgepodge mixture of purpose and values, making it difficult to know what the organization is all about. Separating and clarifying purpose and core values may take more time. But doing so builds trust and enables companies to make the right plays, inning after inning after inning, because the right plays are ingrained. That’s a hallmark of a [light speed organization](#).

By the way, I like the idea of mission – of having a deep purpose. That’s clearly consistent with the [Six Rings Model](#). I also think mission statements have their place to describe a goal. “Our mission: increase market share 25%,” reads a sign in Volvo’s marketing department. “Our mission is to build home ownership,” reads a sign at Fannie Mae’s home loan division. Putting a man on the moon was NASA’s famous mission in the 1960s. Mission statements like these work fine if used to communicate specific priorities.

Contact Leading Resources, Inc.

info@leadingresources.com

(916) 325-1190

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