

**BOARDROOM STRATEGY****MIKE DESJARDINS**

*When it comes to company vision, get wildly courageous*

**M**otivation and inspiration are closely connected to doing meaningful work.

For most people, doing meaningful work translates into achieving something either on a personal, local or global level that makes a difference. As business leaders, part of our job is to provide a vision for what the long-term goal and benefit of being part of our company is.

Enter the concept of the wildly courageous decision (WCD). A WCD is a powerfully worded statement that describes the long-term goal, 10 to 25 years out, that your company is striving to achieve. It's bigger than revenue, bigger than profit, bigger than market share; it's what the company will stand for after years of hard work and dedication to its purpose.

As day-to-day challenges and opportunities get in the way of a clear picture of the future, your WCD acts like a lighthouse for your business, allowing you to stay on course in the roughest seas, knowing

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that any movement toward your long-term goal is far better than allowing the turbulent seas to decide your destination for you. In this way, the WCD acts as a strong filter for decision-making.

Your WCD is a destination,

and your corporate strategy and goals are what link your current reality to the WCD. Make it wild, so that you can easily create excitement about it. Make it courageous, something that requires some bravery to achieve. By taking the big risks your competitors aren't willing to achieve, you'll stand out from the crowd and attract positive attention.

And last but not least, make it a *decision*. A vision or a goal denotes the possibility of failure. A decision is just that – a decision that *will happen*.

Here is a step-by-step process for helping you discover your company's wildly courageous decision.

**Step 1: Choose your type of WCD**

Choose which of the five types of WCDs might work for your

company:

- compare to a company in another industry you admire: "The **Apple** of the consulting world." (this is our company's WCD);
- compare to overall company (as a division): "Most profitable division of **GE**";
- target or end state: "To become world famous.;"
- competitor driven: "We're going to beat **Nike**"; or
- internal transformation: "Transform this company from a technology distributor into the best diversified high-technology company in the world."

**Step 2: Brainstorm**

For each of the WCD types you've selected write down any ideas or phrases that come to mind and create a first draft list of potential WCDs.

You may end up with two or three different WCDs that might work for your business. That's OK, because the next step is to test out your draft statements.

**Step 3: Test each phrase**

Test each potential WCD using the following criteria (a "no" for any of the five criteria rules it out):

- Is it wild? Do you feel enthusiastic and excited when you read it out? Is it bold, and bordering on unattainable? Does the path to achieving it seem unclear right now (that's OK)?
- Is it courageous? Does thinking about the steps it will take to achieve it frighten you a little? Will bravery, a dauntless spirit and the ability to endure adversity be required to achieve it?
- Is it a decision? Are you willing to commit to this? Is it a concrete decision you can make to stay focused and on target until you achieve it?
- Are you thinking far enough into the future?
- Is it clear? Will people get it right away?

**Step 4: Select the most compelling statement**

Read through each of the po-

tential WCDs that passed the test to find the one that's most compelling.

Tweak the wording a bit if you think it needs work.

**Step 5: Get feedback**

Share your newly crafted wildly courageous decision with the other members of your leadership team to get their feedback.

Are they as inspired as you are?

How might they reword the statement?

What might the organization start doing differently today that will reflect your new WCD?

I'm interested to hear about your success developing your own WCD. Please post the WCD you come up with in a comment on my blog using this quick link: [www.tinyurl.com/wcdexamples](http://www.tinyurl.com/wcdexamples). ■

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