

Reflection Paper

This paper presents a reflection of the article *Building The Vision* that was core-written by James, Collins and Jerry. The word vision is one of those words that has been overused and least understood as deduced from the paper. The paper represents a perfect conceptual framework that defines and adds meaning to the process that organizations go through to establish a vision (Collins et al., 1997). According to the scholars, the conceptual framework states that a well-thought-out vision consists of a core ideology and an envisioned future. An effective vision is built on the interplay of the two forces that illustrates why a company exists and what it stands for. Further, a core ideology does not change. The envisioned future sets forth what a company aspires to become, to create or to attain and that needs changes and progress to achieve.

Core value according to this literature is a definition of the enduring feature of an organization—a company's self-identity that remains consistent through time and transcends market and product life cycles, management fads, technological changes and changes of management. The article adds that an effective vision consists of the core purpose and core value (Collins et al., 1997). It defines core values as an organization's guiding principles held by its stakeholders and further adds that it does not need adhering to any external justification. A great company should decide by itself the values that it holds core depending on the changing management styles, competition, and current environment. To identify an organization's core value, there is a need to cultivate core values based on self-honesty. When drafting a list of core values, one should ensure that the values stand the test of time and do not change. In case of any changes, then the values listed do not qualify to be core values (Collins et al., 1997). However, if the values being articulated cuts across cultures, then it is a valid value that can be core. If the value can be valid in 100 years, then it can be a core value.

The article *Building Vision* also has it that core purpose is another important component of core ideology in establishing a company's vision. The authors state that the core purpose is more important than core value when establishing an organization's vision and add that it is of more importance than the latter. An effective purpose shows the importance that organization stakeholders associate with the firm's work, instead of just focusing on its output to clients and beyond profit making.

Moving on, (Collins et al., 1997) opines that some organizations describe their customer segments or product lines as an organizational purpose hence, can never be a good purpose statement. One effective way of getting an organizational purpose is through the “Five Whys. It encompasses, ‘why’ a service or good is important that should be asked to different company stakeholders (employee, investor, partner, sponsor, supplier, and buyer) five times.

In regards to the envisioned future component of vision creation Collins et al. (1997), postulates that it consists of two different parts: a ten-to-thirty-year “Big Hairy Audacious Goal” and vivid descriptions and how it will be when the organization attains the BHAS. According to the scholars the phrase ‘envisioned future’ may be a paradox, but it conveys some concreteness and realism, that can be touched, felt and seen. It signifies a time not yet realized, a hope, dream or aspiration. And to create a vision-level BHAG the owner of a company should have a target, a common enemy, a role model and a sense of internal transformation. Following that, the vivid description component of the envisioned future describes what it is like to attain the BHAG. This involves the vision from writing to images that people can envision in their heads. Emotions, conviction, and passion are essential parts of that vivid description. Most importantly James et al. indicate that, after the creation of the vision, a company will need to align its stakeholders to the created vision, create strategies, processes, and mechanism for deep rooting the established vision.

References

Collins, J.C. & Porras J. I. (1997). Built to Last: Successful Habits of Visionary Companies. First Paperback Edition. New York: Harper-Collins.