

The Mission: Improve These Mission Statements

Robert C. Harris, CAE, an author and consultant on non-profit organizational management, says a mission statement “is the framework for all of the chamber’s endeavors [and] the single most important declaration” a chamber makes. He also notes that “if a 5th grader doesn’t understand the statement, it needs work.”

In addition to telling the public what you do, your mission statement fulfills an IRS requirement for exemption from federal income tax by formally explaining your chamber’s purpose. Harris says the mission statement should be prominent, “printed at the bottom of meeting agendas, on the back of business cards and displayed at the chamber.”

You should review or update your mission statement “at the board’s retreat,” says Harris, “although I don’t think any board has ever faulted a chamber president for suggesting improvements to the mission in advance of the retreat.”

Chamber Executive asked Harris to comment on the quality of these actual mission statements from chambers of various sizes. Identifying information has been deleted to preserve anonymity. Following each statement are Harris’ comments, which are underlined.

To improve the overall business climate and quality of life for _____ through sponsorships of programs which promote, facilitate, and stimulate economic growth, civic participation and development, business advocacy, and education. Seems self-serving to reference sponsorships. Is it a call for funds? Is there a difference in improving overall business climate” or would “business climate and quality of life” suffice?

To promote the economic well-being of _____’s citizens, to improve the quality of life for the entire community, and to communicate the view of the business community on major issues of public policy. This chamber tackles “major issues of public policy.” Rewrite as, Promoting the economy, improving quality of life, and representing business.

By being the voice of business, helping its members grow and promoting collaboration, the ____ Chamber of Commerce seeks full prosperity for the ____ region. As a trustee for the current and future welfare of the region, the _____ Chamber of Commerce champions economic prosperity and quality of life. Try not to repeat the word region;” nice active mission.

To serve as the voice for business to create and grow quality job opportunities while enhancing the community’s quality of life. Change to active tense. “Serving as the voice...”

The _____ Chamber of Commerce offers the metro ____ business community opportunities for growth while working with regional partners to collaborate on economic and community development initiatives in _____. With core objectives to create quality jobs and wealth, strengthen the community and grow your business, the _____ Chamber services over ____ members in metro ____ while delivering solid programs and potential to connect your business regionally and globally. “Offer” is a vague, soft word. Consider replacing with “promotes” or “advances.” “Potential” is also too soft. Drop it.

To advance economic vitality by providing advocacy, information and services to our members and communities. Stress action by changing “To advance” to “advancing.”

To pursue excellence and economic growth in the ____ Region through strong leadership and community partnerships, by acting as a catalyst for an innovative business environment, and enhancing the vitality of the community we serve. Drop the adjective “strong” before leadership since it is assumed all leadership is strong. Or maybe your chamber has a combination of weak, medium and strong leaders?

Serve, represent, and enhance business growth and success. Rewrite: “Serving, representing and enhancing business growth and success.” Nice—gives reason to join, collaborate and seek sponsorships in eight words.

To be the Champions of Free Enterprise. A tag line?

To enhance economic growth of the ____ trade area by focusing on education, promotion, and development of the business community, and those areas of the community affecting business. “Trade area” is limiting; OK to delete because it is implied.

To strengthen member businesses and stimulate regional prosperity. Another A+ for 8 words. While short isn’t always better, it is more likely the leadership and community will understand the purpose of the chamber.



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We exist to create opportunities for members to build successful businesses and enhance the quality of life. "We exist" is not necessary and distracting. Change to "Creating opportunities for member..."

To lead our community, drive commerce in our region, and advance community and regional collaborations, thereby enhancing the quality of where we live, learn, work, and play. Needs simplifying. With some work the elements, which are all excellent, should flow. Maybe something like this: To lead our community, drive regional commerce and collaboration, and make a better place to live, learn, work and play.

Is a visible, proactive advocate and resource for its member employers and the (region). It is committed to advancing our region's economic vitality and quality of life through the provision of strong leadership and through the formation of dynamic organizational and community partnerships. Being an advocate implies "visible, proactive;" similarly, serving as a leader does not need the adjective "strong." Goal here is to keep the message but reduce the 43 words by half.

To promote the well-being and growth of commerce, business and industry, while striving to maintain a high quality of life in _____. Sometimes you have to yield to the culture of the community, but I wonder if "commerce, business and industry" could be stated with one word. I'd change "maintain" quality of life to "improving" or "enhancing."

Develop a strong business climate and vibrant economy by serving the community in a leadership role thereby enhancing the quality of life. Strong start then peters out with five concepts. Try "Developing a vibrant business climate and economy, and enhancing quality of life by being a respected community leader."

We Mean Business. Tagline?

Our chamber is a voluntary membership organization of businesses and professional leaders dedicated to enhancing the economic well-being and quality of life in _____. This is a common mistake, explaining the chamber is a "voluntary membership organization." We knew that.

To be recognized as the premier business organization serving _____ and its business members by providing quality products, programs, and services while influencing issues that enhance the economic prosperity and the sustainable development of our community. Rewrite: "The premier organization serving business and its members by providing products, programs and services that improve economic prosperity and sustainability."

To preserve, protect and promote a business friendly environment free of obstacles to growth and development. It works. Sounds like a statement by the leader of the Minutemen back in 1776.

To promote business, enhance economic and community development, and serve as a catalyst for improving the overall quality of life in the community and region. Excellent

As the leading _____ area business advocate, we represent our members by advancing and promoting the economic health and quality of life of the region. Start with strong word, dropping "as" and beginning with "The leading..."

Is dedicated to shaping policy and events, so that decisions by business and government result in an improved _____ economy and quality of life. A+. Short and sweet.

To be a catalyst for economic growth for our members and the community. Works perfectly, though could be clarified by addingthrough advocacy, education and community enhancement.

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