

Keys to Compelling Vision Communication

How compelling is the communication of your vision?

If your vision moves the people to take action, you are on the right track.

Having served alongside two incredible visionary leaders, first John Maxwell and now Kevin Myers, I've watched close up how they communicate vision so well.

We often think that vision-casting is largely a public endeavor and usually done on the primary stage. But the truth is, most vision-casting is done behind the scenes, over and over again, one to one and in small groups. Communicating vision is the never-ending responsibility of the primary leader.

Before you can cast your vision, you have to create it. It needs to be crystal clear and deep in your heart. That is something between you and God and also affirmed by your church board and/or key leaders. It takes time and prayer, and requires you hearing from God. Let God breathe the vision in you.

It is surprisingly often that senior pastors, and executive staff, tell me they are not clear on their vision. If you are one of those, don't panic. While you are waiting on clarity from God and confidence in your own mind, stay focused on Matthew 28:19-20. That universal mission for the church is your vision until you have clarity. Vision is "simply" your personal and unique version of the Great Commission. It's the expression that God gives you for your church that brings fire, flavor and fuel to the mission. Vision keeps the mission fresh.

Seven guidelines to help you communicate your vision better:

1) Commit to the vision yourself.

If you are the leader, settle the level of your conviction first.

- No one cares more than you.
- No one carries a great burden.
- No one prays more deeply.
- No one thinks and plans more.
- No one lies awake at night more than you.

Sometimes God doesn't make the vision clear because the leader isn't ready personally. Settle the issue in your own heart. It's not as if you have to pass a test before God or measure up in order to deserve a vision. It's more about your passion and commitment to be ready to lead the vision.

2) Clearly identify the current situation.

When casting vision, we as leaders need to start by making the present reality clear. This doesn't mean to paint an unfairly negative scenario in order to "sell" the vision. But comparison is needed so the congregation understands the why behind the vision.

Sometimes it's more obvious and therefore easier; such as you are out of room so you cast vision to start a second or third service. Other times, it may seem more subjective like changing the name of your church. You have to make it clear why the current name is no longer meeting the need.

3) Paint a picture of a preferred future.

A great vision always describes a better future. Keeping the core mission in mind (changed lives), the vision must always include at the core, reaching people and changing lives. Again, the vision is your unique expression of that mission.

So, how will your church be better? How will your church improve (or change) in a way so that it serves people better and others want to attend? How will the Kingdom of God be advanced?

4) Capture the hearts of the people.

If the vision comes from your heart, it will reach the hearts of the people you share it with. Some vision statements are mechanical efforts that come as a result of an academic endeavor and end up on your website. They rarely move anyone because they don't move you. Vision statements that sound great, perhaps even alliterate, are good as long as they are real, true and personal to you.

When you share vision, tell stories. Make it personal. Remain brief. Make it memorable. Tell it often, and again tell stories. Remind people why it's so important, and why it matters.

5) Deliver clear direction with a realistic plan.

This is where the rubber meets the road, and where some leaders lose traction with their vision. They hear from God, the vision is clear, and the people have bought in, but there is no realistic road map of how to get there.

You don't have to provide all the answers, but a clear and simple plan that provides direction is necessary. You will need to make course corrections, solve problems and deal with the unexpected, but as long as the people know the next step you are good!

6) Tell the people they are needed and how they can participate.

All good vision casting includes letting the people know how they can get involved.

When you get your congregation all fired up but don't give them an outlet to take action, it's a

mistake. Think through the options, such as prayer, serving, inviting, giving, etc. Whatever it may be, let them know how they can be part. **When an individual takes action on the vision, the vision becomes part of them and they share it with others.**

7) Keep your communication current.

Communicating vision is not a “once and done” proposition. In fact, it’s the opposite, the communication must continue. You can’t over communicate vision. You can make it too long, or boring because it’s always said the same way, or unprepared so it lacks connection. But when it’s brief, sincere, creative and well prepared, it’s difficult to do it too often. One of the best ways is to include a thirty to sixty second vision moment in a sermon, tell a story and keep going. And in one to one meetings, make it part of regular conversations.

Finally, **celebrate the victories!** The people are working hard, praying and full of hope. Celebrate the success God gives you along the way!

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