

## **Sense of Purpose**

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To have a sense of purpose is to be forward looking with a clear sense of direction. It helps clarify what people want to become ; it will speak to them with power and conviction; and it will help bind their community together.

An effective leader needs a clear sense of purpose that others will support. Strong organizations are built on a strong sense of purpose. They know what they want to achieve, and how best to achieve it.

A clear sense of purpose will:

- allow concentration of effort;

Focused light has considerable power. Diffused light has little power. For example, when sunlight is focused through a magnifying glass, leaves can be set on fire. With focused effort, more effective action and greater impacts can be achieved.

- builds morale;

If the purpose is unclear, morale will be low. People working for a greater purpose are not inclined to argue over trivial issues. The most effective way to reinvigorate an organization is to help its members face its challenges and get on with the task at hand.

- attract cooperation;

People want to join an organization that knows where it is going. Everyone wants meaning and purpose in their lives. When people know where their organization is headed, it attracts their cooperation.

- assist evaluation.

An organization's purpose provides a standard and is a measure of its health and condition. It provides a way to determine when an organization is moving in the right direction.

A sense of purpose will not in itself improve performance, but it is a major part of an effective organization's capacity to achieve its desired outcomes and impacts. By testing the available forestry alternatives in advance of decision for ecological, economic and social sustainability, the most effective tool to achieve the intended purpose can be chosen.

A shared sense of purpose provides a common focus and will be the "lighthouse" to guide the way. It states, "who we are; what we stand for, and what we are all about." It provides a foundation upon which people can survive and succeed through good times and bad.