



# Winning Ways

A publication of

## Winning Ways

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### Winning Ways NewsBits

Betsy Hudson will be speaking at:  
-Ewomensnetwork, Nov.14, 4:30-6:30, Severna Park, MD  
-NAWBO, Dec 12, 4:30 -6:30, Tower Club, Tysons Corner, VA  
-Topic: "All Salespeople Please Stand Up!" (Both sessions)  
Every business owner is a salesperson, and generating clients is the top priority!

Joan Fletcher will be speaking at the Tower Club on Wednesday September 27th, 8-10am. Call 703-761-4250 for reservations.

Terry Nicholetti will be presenting "Making your Contacts Count" in DC and VA during October and November – check out [www.WinningWaysinc.com](http://www.WinningWaysinc.com) for dates and locations!

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## Vision and Values

In the running of your business, if vision is your destination, and your strategic plan is the route you've mapped out to get you there, then values are the car you're driving. They are the principles which guide your everyday operation. A clear values statement is an essential part of defining who you are as a business.

Everybody has values they operate under, whether they're defined or not. You might say, "But what about people who are ruthless and unscrupulous? Surely they're not operating under any sense of values." They are, though. Someone who cheats and fudges the truth, who gets to the top by taking unfair advantage of others, is making their values crystal-clear: they value their own gain, and not much else.

Most of us don't want to be this person, and most of us have an innate sense of what's important to us, what principles we hold on to. Even if we never think about it, our operating values will become apparent in each decision we make.

As a business owner, it is important to be deliberate and clear about your values, for two main reasons. First, until you've thought about them, written them down, and applied them in your decision-making process, you may not realize what your current operating values actually are. As an individual, you might think one of your highest values is to be open and candid with everyone you talk to, but your actions might reveal that you actually value the approval of others more than you value frankness. If you discover such a discord between the values you would like to hold and the values your actions show, then you have a wonderful opportunity to reassess what's important to you, and how to live that out in your everyday actions.

You may also find that simply articulating your values makes many decisions easier: simply thinking in each case, "How does each option here relate to *my* values?" can make it very clear what you need to do and why.

The second reason clearly defined values are important to a business is that they ensure that everybody is on the same page in terms of

priorities. Many conflicts over decisions in an organization can be put down to a difference in values: one person might be focused on getting the customer their results promptly, while another might be concerned with keeping employees from getting burned-out. To each person, the other looks unreasonable and wrong-headed. Only when each person realizes the values lying behind the other's point of view can they begin to work out a compromise.

A company values statement can simplify not only the decisions made, but the discussions behind them. If everybody involved knows and has agreed to the organization's values, it provides a clear platform of discussion on any area of conflict. Regardless of the individual viewpoints, everybody is committed, not only to a common goal (that's the vision) but to a common set of principles to use on the way to achieving it.

Of course, the values statement and the vision statement can and should influence one another, so that together they present a complete, unified picture of who you are and what you're trying to do. Your vision should reflect your most important values, and your values should support your vision. Here is one example of a vision and values statement that complement each other:

*Vision-* "To be the most trusted provider of our service in our area."

*Values-* "To be scrupulously fair, honest, and reliable in every interaction with the customer."

Together, vision and values should give a strong, concise answer to the question: Who are you, as a business, and what are you about? Your vision is what you will become known for; your values are what you *are* known for, today and every day that you are in business.

### Questions to ask in developing a values statement:

- What are our basic underlying values?
- What are the behaviors that would show we are living these values?
- What values are implied by our vision statement?
- What values would support our vision?
- How do we want to be perceived by:
  - our customers
  - our employees
  - our stockholders
  - our suppliers
  - our community