

Visioning Exercise Instructions

You can use the following exercise to help a group of people begin to see what they want to accomplish together.

- **Time:** About one hour, depending on the number of people
 - **Materials:** Props for the sculptures, such as hats or items connected with the issue
 - **Roles:** Overall facilitator and facilitator for each group
 - **Room set-up:** Movable chairs to small groups can gather. Enough wall space to tape the headlines to the wall of floor space for the sculpture.
1. Facilitator puts participants into small groups of at least five and not more than seven people and asks someone to facilitate in each small group, possibly having prepared them in advance.
 2. Facilitator describes the goal: to create a vision of what we hope to do together to address the problem or issue we have identified.
 3. Facilitator describes the basic exercise: participants will depict a vision of what the group will have accomplished in one year, in three years and in ten years.

There are two versions of this exercise:

You can use “headline features”, in which each small group writes a headline that the largest daily newspaper will write about the work of those who are gathered in one, three and ten years. One advantage of this method is that you can post the headlines and really compare and dissect them. Alternatively, you can use a more active exercise where the small groups use themselves and a few props to create living sculptures of what they will have accomplished in one, three and ten years. In a living sculpture, the participants arrange themselves in some formation, usually with one person serving to direct and place people in positions.

- Participants develop their headlines or sculptures; at the end of thirty minutes, each group posts and talks about its headlines or sculptures with the larger group for about three to four minutes.
- Debrief the exercise: The facilitator guides participants to go into what each headline or sculpture says and what it indicates more deeply. It can help people to see common issues or approaches. If people develop products that are just about winning the issue and less about continued work, this could give them a sense that they want to focus on a campaign, and not on building an organization. The facilitator uses what people create to ask pointed and clarifying questions such as, does this word or gesture mean you see an organization forming out of the campaign? Why or why not? If you see an organization, what will keep this group working together into the future?