

# VISION WORKSHEET



CLARIFY YOUR DESIRED LIFESTYLE AND LEGACY  
TO ALIGN YOUR BUSINESS AND BRAND

---

Jason Van Orden

# Vision (Your Desired Future)

First let's check in with your vision for the future. I also call this your Desired Future State. Strategy is ultimately about defining where you want to go and how you will get there.

I'm willing to bet this isn't the first time you've created a vision of the future in one format or another. The very nature of entrepreneurship and thought leadership is to think about what's possible in the future.

At the same time, it's important to revisit and your vision on a regular basis. After all, things change. You change. The world and the marketplace change. New opportunities and goals give rise to new possibilities.

*Vision* helps you preserve the core purpose and values of your business while you grow, innovate, and respond to the daily forces that act upon your business.

Your *Vision* serves as both the compass and fuel that drive your business to your desired objectives by doing the following:

- Guiding your decisions
- Filtering ideas, opportunities, and strategies to make it abundantly clear what must remain and what must be let go of
- Focusing your actions and resources
- Providing motivation
- Strengthening resilience
- Inspiring creativity and innovation

A compelling *Vision* makes you a stronger leader for your team, customers, community, and industry. Research by Kouzes and Posner shows that second to honesty, the most important thing people want in a leader is that they be *forward-looking*.

Finally, a clear vision communicates to the marketplace (and the world) the reason why your business must continue to exist and operate. When your vision inspires your customers and community into action, you have what you need to create effective action in and lasting change in the world.

# Legacy Design

Let's start with the long-term vision. I find it's helpful to think of this in terms of the Legacy you want to create. Your business is ultimately a vehicle to help you realize your legacy.

Consider the question(s) for each of the following six areas of your legacy. Write a few bullet points to answer each one. If you find yourself getting stuck, think of someone whose word you admire or envy. Write down what it is about their work that you would love to emulate.

**Recognition:** What do you want to be known for?

**Opportunities:** What kinds of opportunities and experiences do you want to enjoy?

**Achievements:** What accomplishments, awards, or other milestones do you want to realize?

**Collaboration:** Who do you want to partner or work with?

**Body of Work:** What do you want to create? What ideas or value do you want to leave behind?

**Change:** What change(s) do you want to create in the world (or your community or industry)? Are there behaviors, best practices, or ways of thinking that you want to transform?

# Lifestyle Design

Your thought leadership brand and business are a powerful way to have an impact in the world. And at the same time, I'm sure there are things you want to realize in your personal life. Your brand and business are also an amazing vehicle for generating freedom, resources, and opportunities that establish and support your ideal lifestyle. As such, it's important to keep your ideal lifestyle in mind as we grow your business.

Even if you've created a thorough understanding of your desired lifestyle at some point in the past, the nature of life and business are such that we easily drift from our vision or our vision changes over time making it necessary to update and refine the vision you have for your lifestyle.

As you design (or refine) your ideal lifestyle, keep in mind that this part is about you. Don't worry about the practicalities of whether you can build or evolve a business that will align with your desired lifestyle. Try to set aside external expectations and focus on intrinsic motivation.

There are a number of ways to tap into and capture your ideal lifestyle. One very popular tool is the vision board -- a collage of images that represent what we want our life to ideally look like in the future.

One of my favorite tools for brainstorming and designing is the mind map. Mind maps have been proven to engage your brain in a way that is conducive to enhanced memory and imagination and closely matches the way our brain stores and organizes information.

If you're not familiar with mind mapping, [take a look at the short explanation here](#).

## Lifestyle Mind Map Exercise

1. **Start your mindmap with central word or concept** that feels meaningful to you. You can simply write the word *lifestyle*. A word that I sometimes suggest is freedom *freedom* because it's often a primary motivator for entrepreneurs.
2. **Add six to eight secondary nodes** that represent parts of your lifestyle that are important to you. If you feel stuck here, you can use all or some of the following common lifestyle categories: physical health, finances, relationships, spirituality, fun, personal development, and creativity.

If you used the word freedom, some possible secondary nodes include the following: location, relationships, money, physical, mental/emotional/spiritual, and time.

Note that I haven't mentioned *purpose* or *contribution* yet. We address this

area of your vision in the next section where we'll design your legacy.

Before moving on to the next step you might consider setting a timer. For some people the “race against time” helps to avoid prematurely editing or discounting thoughts and ideas. When something comes to mind you quickly write it down and move on.

3. **Add words or phrases** that describe your ideal lifestyle as branches from each area you listed as secondary nodes. Here are a few questions that are helpful to ask with relation to each of your lifestyle categories if you need some prompts.
  - a. Who do you want to be?
  - b. What do you want to do?
  - c. What do you want to do differently?
  - d. What do you want to have?
  - e. What do you want more of?
  - f. What do you want less of or to let go?
  - g. What inspires and energizes you?

Here's an example mind map from my own lifestyle design.



2. At the top of each section, **list the name of someone you admire or envy**. I include “envy” because jealousy is often a feeling that often arises when we see someone doing something that we wish we would do, but have perhaps shied away from. You don’t need to admire everything about them, just some aspect(s) of their work, lifestyle, personality, etc. Keep in mind this could be someone living, dead, or even fictional.
3. In each section, **list three to four bullet-points describing what you admire or envy** about that person. This might be something about their body of work, the way they live, the opportunities they have, the kind of recognition they get, the type of contributions they’ve made, the people they associate with or any other aspect of their life or work. It’s up to you if you want to write a sentence for each bullet or just a word or two.
4. (Optional) Repeat this process for more names on another sheet of paper.
5. **Draw a line through each name and write your name** next to it instead. The things you have written are in fact things you value or aspire to. Each of the bullet points is an ingredient for you to include in your vision.

[Here’s a link to a blog post by Ayse Birsel](#) if you’d like to see her explain her version of this exercise.

Here’s an example page from my own Hero Inspiration exercise.

# MY VISION MANIFESTO

## HERO INSPIRATION

### 1) MARIA POPOVA OF BRAIN PICKINGS

- Prolific
- Non-obvious sources
- Smart content
- Combinatorial creativity
- Distinct Voice
- Thought leaders follow her

### 2) STRATEGIC COACH / DAN SULLIVAN

- Scaled thought leadership
- VISUAL TOOLS / Frameworks
- Certified coaches teach his ideas
- Offices all over the world

### 3) SETH GODIN

- Prolific
- Well-respected
- Seminal body of work