

# RQ Dimension – Personal Vision

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## About this Dimension

What is *Personal Vision* as a component of resilience?

This dimension involves a person knowing what they believe in and having a clear idea of what they want to accomplish or create in their life. Those with a strong personal vision have a larger life-purpose that pulls them forward and gives them guidance in the midst of uncertainty, stress, and crisis. Resilient people, with this compelling sense of purpose, approach adversity and stress with a sense of opportunity and hope.

Personal Vision is evident in someone when they bring clarity and focus into every decision and action. When faced with a difficult challenge, a person with a strong personal vision leans upon this vision for insight into how to respond. A vision enables an individual to filter out the unimportant and unessential and to focus on what is most important. With this clarity of purpose, someone with a strong personal vision finds it easier to know what to do in any given situation. A strong personal vision can help center an individual and give them a sense of calm even in the midst of chaos.

## Why is this Dimension Important to Resilience?

A strong Personal Vision strengthens a person's resilience by enabling the person to approach any setback or crisis with an overarching purpose. Their vision enables them to see their way through the current situation by staying focused on what is most important and enduring. Without a vision, individuals may be unsure about what is most important to them and therefore unsure of how to respond in difficult situations. While a vision may not forestall or prevent a crisis or challenging situation, it can be instrumental in enabling someone to come out of these situations in a healthier place than if they had no "guiding light" to help them chart their course.

For most of us, life is not a clear unobstructed path leading to success. We inevitably face difficulties, setbacks, losses, and challenges that appear overwhelming. While a vision may not prevent us from experiencing these speed bumps (which, in reality, actually enrich our lives), it can give us strength and conviction in rising to meet these challenges.

Without a clear Personal Vision we can easily become lost and overwhelmed by life's challenges. With a vision, we become stronger as we learn from and adapt to hardships and struggles and move closer to fulfilling our life's purpose.

## Personal Vision Quotes

*In the presence of a great dream, pettiness disappears. In the absence of a dream, pettiness prevails.*

– Anonymous

*It's not enough to be industrious; so are the ants. What are you industrious about?*

– Henry David Thoreau, American essayist and philosopher (b. 1817, d. 1862)

*Life is what happens to you while you're busy making other plans.*

– John Lennon, British musician (b. 1940, d. 1980)

*Sometimes I go about pitying myself,  
and all along, my soul is being blown by great winds across the sky.*

– Ojibway saying

*Control your destiny . . . or somebody else will!*

– Jack Welch, American business executive and author (b. 1935)

*To accomplish great things, we must not only act, but also dream, not only to plan, but also to believe.*

– Anatole France, French poet, journalist, and novelist (b. 1844, d. 1924)

*If you don't know where you're going . . . any road will get you there.*

– Lewis Carroll, British author, *Through the Looking Glass* (b. 1832, d. 1898)

*Chance favors the prepared mind.*

– Louis Pasteur, French scientist (b. 1822, d. 1895)

*Destiny is no matter of chance. It is a matter of choice: It is not a thing to be waited for, it is a thing to be achieved.*

– William Jennings Bryan, American statesman, politician, and essayist  
(b. 1860, d. 1925)

*When we know what is true, we will behave impeccably.*

– Sylvia Boorstein, American psychologist, Zen teacher, and author, *The Courage to be Happy* (b. 1936)

*Where there is no vision, the people perish.*

– Proverbs 29:18

*I arise in the morning torn between a desire to improve (or save) the world and a desire to enjoy (or savor) the world. This makes it hard to plan the day.*

– E. B. White, American writer (b. 1899, d. 1985)

*The greatest use of life is to spend it for something that will outlast it.*

– William James, American author (b. 1842, d. 1910)

## Strategies for Developing the Personal Vision Dimension

Establishing a Personal Vision is, by definition, an *individual* process – a process that can only happen within the mind and experience of the person. An organization's leaders, coaches, and mentors can, however, support and enable individuals in the creative process of exploring and crafting their personal vision. Some ideas to encourage people to discover and define their personal vision include:

On a personal, one-on-one basis . . .

- Ask the person what is most important to them in his or her work and life.
- Encourage the person to develop a personal and professional development plan that guides them in thinking through his or her longer-term life and career objectives.

- Encourage the person to identify what he or she values most about the work that he or she does for the company.
- Encourage the person to develop a personal vision statement utilizing a format similar to RCI's *Personal Vision Statement and Guiding Values* process and worksheet.
- Refer the person to a career coach or counselor to explore life/career options.
- Encourage the person to read books such as *What Color is Your Parachute* by Richard Bolles - a book that explores career and life planning by first examining what is most important to the person and his or her life.
- Refer the person to the career counseling office of the local technical college. Such offices have a variety of assessment tools to help individuals sort out the things that are most important to them.

Either on a one-on-one basis or when facilitating a group discussion . . .

- Ask people to partner up with another person in the workshop and to "interview" each other about each other's values, accomplishments, proud moments, and so forth. Give each person a set of interview questions (see RCI's example set of questions). After their respective interviews are completed, ask participants to give their interview "notes" to their partner and then have individuals work by themselves to develop their personal vision and values statement.
- Give everyone a copy of RCI's "Three Verbs and a Noun" handout. Talk people through this handout and share some examples of personal vision statements that follow the Three Verbs and a Noun format. Ask people to work by themselves to write a personal vision statement following the suggested format. Encourage individuals to be inventive and creative as they write their vision statement and not to feel too constrained by the three verbs and a noun format (they might, for example, prefer to use two nouns and two verbs).
- Ask people to identify something about themselves that they are most proud and then to share this with someone else. As they share that which they are most proud ask them to discuss why this makes them proud.