

A Framework for Visioning in Social Change Organizations

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Introduction

Vision is "...an image of what needs to be achieved" (O'Connell et al., 2011). It is "...viewed as a fundamental attribute of effective leadership" (Kantabutra, 2009); yet, there is a "...disturbing disconnect between best practice and reality" (Gurley et al., 2015).

This project attempts to provide leaders of social change organizations with a framework for visioning that they can bring back to their organizations.

Methods

I conducted a review of the literature on organizational vision. I then used what I learned to create exercises that leaders can complete to further their understanding of vision to ultimately lead a visioning exercise in their organization.

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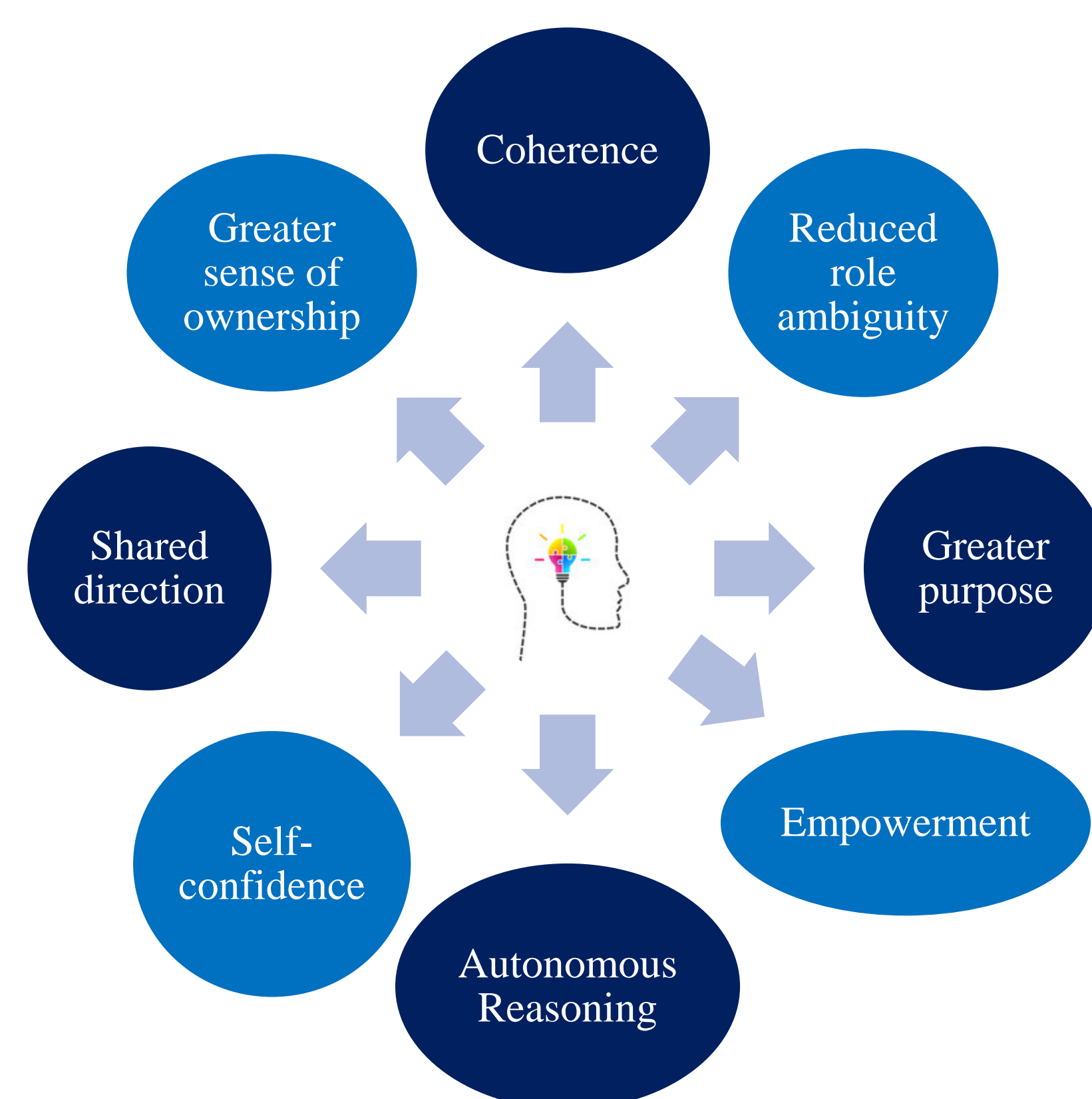
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Potential Benefits of an Organizational Vision

Individual Benefits



Organizational Benefits



Implementation Guide

Diagnosis

Is now the time for your organization to engage in visioning?

Identify Stakeholders

Write a list of stakeholders and the unique perspectives they bring to the table.

Decide on a Format

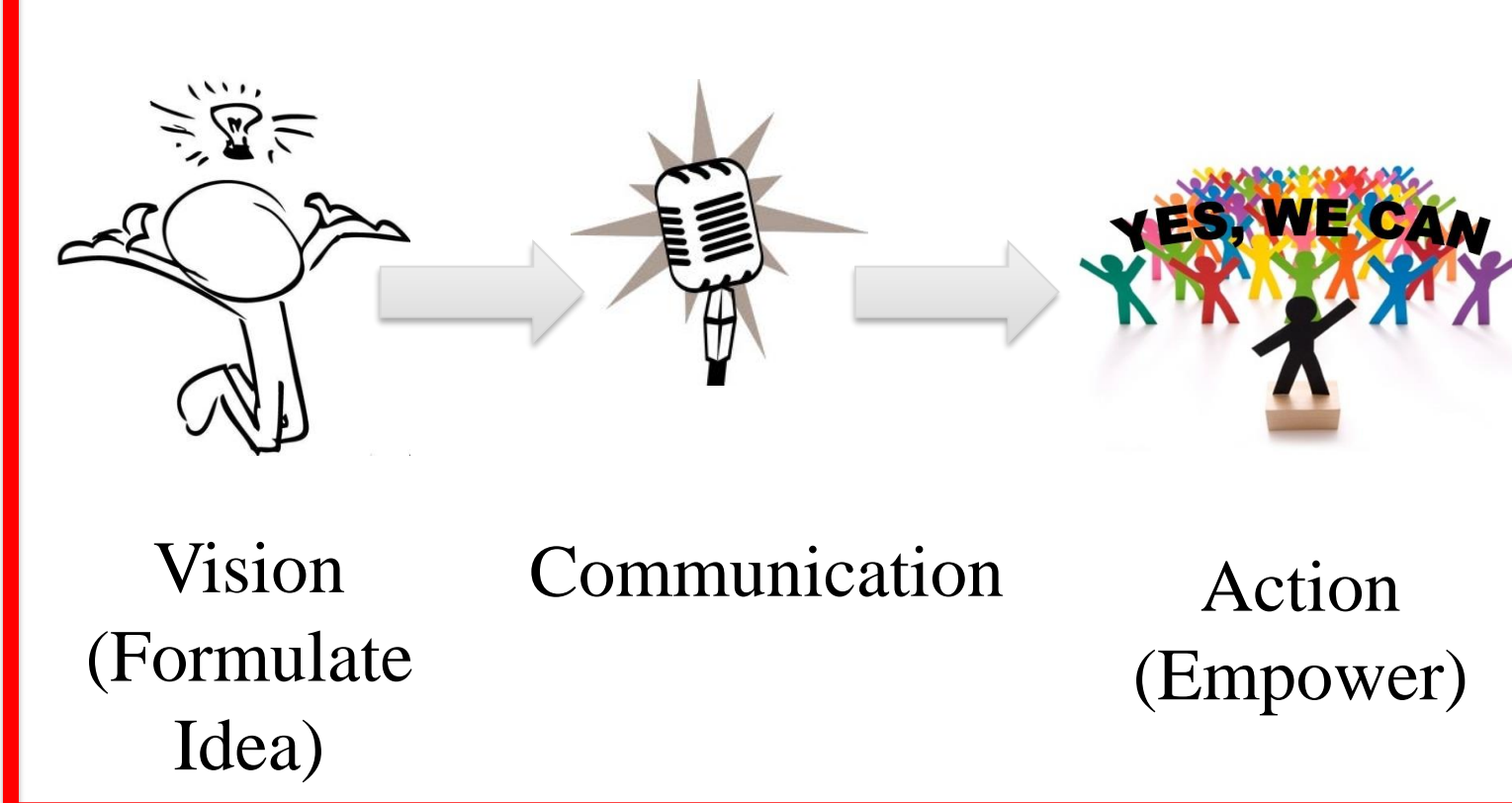
Day-long retreat? Separate focus groups? Discussion-based? Art? Storytelling?

Formulate Prompting Question

In 10 years, how would we know if [Insert Organization Name] had been successful? Tell a story about what you see.

Vision Process

Leader-Centric Approach



The leader-centric view describes a sequential process that separates the creation of the vision from the communication of it, thus affecting the transformative potential of the vision to empower. "Such separation of action from visioning is hierarchical and disempowering" (Stewart, 1993).

Participatory Approach



Employee involvement in the visioning process fosters "...the type of ownership that produces increased commitment, conscientiousness, and engagement" that transforms the vision "...from mere corporate rhetoric into a powerful force that both anchors and guides organizational members" (Riggio et al., 2008).

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