



Inspire a Shared Vision

*Vision comes from **relationships** with others. Leadership is not only about what you want for yourself but about what others want for themselves too. Leaders understand the hopes and dreams of their constituents; they forge a unity of common aspirations.*

1. Envision the future by imaging exciting and ennobling possibilities

Visions are reflections of your fundamental beliefs and assumptions about the world; your vision is a broad message you want to convey. What is your vision? Is it something you're passionate about?

You are much more likely to step forward when you feel **passionate** about the legacy you want to leave and about the kind of world you want for others. Envisioning the future begins with passion, feeling, concern, or an inspiration that something is worth doing.

You need to know your constituents. By knowing your constituents, listening to them, and finding out what's meaningful to them, leaders are able to give voice to their feelings and make their shared vision a cause for commitment. Once you know your constituents, you can help them understand your passion

Develop a sense of belonging—it's the key to gaining commitment.

2. Enlist others in a common vision by appealing to shared aspirations

A **shared vision** is an ideal; a unique image of the future for the common good.

As a leader, you want to help others see that what they are doing is bigger than themselves; it is something that lifts their moral and motivational levels. This is what it means to enlist others. You want to be able to communicate what makes their group or organization and your product or service unique.

One of the most effective things you can do to enlist others in a shared vision is to animate it. **Breathe life** into your vision!

To enlist others, you have to help them see and feel how their own interests and aspirations are aligned with the vision. Paint a compelling picture of the future, one that enables constituents to experience viscerally what it would be like to actually experience and participate in an exciting and uplifting future.

You attract others to engage with you and join you in a cause when you demonstrate an enthusiastic and genuine belief in the capacity of others; when you strengthen people's will, supply the means to achieve and express optimism for the future.

Kouzes, J., & Posner, B. (2008). *The student leadership challenge: Five practices for exemplary leaders*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Inc.