

# Tips for creating a clear mission statement

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The first action you need to take when working with AbductiveReason is to define your product mission. This mission will guide the problem areas that you explore and the solution objectives you aim to discover.

I have not encountered a [good] template for writing a product mission statement, however there are two key properties that a well crafted product mission statement must embody: **Aspirational & Compelling!**

## Aspirational

A good product mission statement, much like a company mission statement should be aspirational. These aspirations however should also be achievable. Generally speaking, product aspirations can be split into four categories:

1. **Productivity** - Productivity goals refer to the ability to consistently work to certain standards or deadlines. Productivity is often defined as the amount of work a person can complete over a specific period of time. The more your product increases your users productivity, the more things that are capable of getting done.
2. **Efficiency** - Similar to productivity, efficiency refers to your users ability to achieve results. The primary difference of efficiency is that it is crucial in progressing the business results that your product provides. Efficiency goals have to do with the speed, accuracy and consistency that your solution provides or enhances.
3. **Education** - In this context, education refers to your products ability to develop your users skills at specific task in the workplace. Keeping your users at the cutting edge of new ways to solve their problems can help to put them ahead of their competition.
4. **Augmentation** - Augmentation is often essential for your products success and as such you need to identify aspirations that fall under this category. These could be improving the ability of your users to communicate with other members of the team, or augmenting your users ability to make strategic decisions by helping them analyze data quicker than a human could in a spreadsheet.

## Compelling

A good product mission statement should convince your ideal customers that your product fits perfectly with their needs. To be compelling your product mission statement must be authentic, action-oriented, meaningful and clear.

1) **Authentic** - The product mission statement should be based on the true capabilities of your solution. Be mindful to not short change your product by using very narrow language that does not account for the fact that your product will provide the same benefit today that it does in the future, only improved. Let us look at Salesforce for example: *“to empower companies to connect with their customers in a whole new way.”* You can see how this mission might drive a product decision such as the acquisition of Slack as a means to connect with customers in a whole new way.

2) **Action-oriented** - A product mission statement should also tell your organization's people what to work toward. The statement should be the basis for goal setting and decision making. When a mission does not dictate action it will fail to guide people's behavior. This may mean that a product leader will need to adapt or translate the products purpose so that it clearly dictates action for their team. Sticking with the Salesforce statement we can see that “empowers companies to connect with their customers” signals to their product teams that their product decisions should help Salesforce customers connect with their own customers”.

3) **Meaningful** - A product mission statement should provide meaning for the work of building the product. The statement should be attractive to future employees that will be working on the product and motivate those currently tasked with executing the product strategy. When people find meaning in the product they are building they are more likely to be motivated and committed to solving their customer problems. This is the heart of your “Why”. Again, back to our example, if you were not in the least interested in helping companies connect with their customers then Salesforce may not be a good fit for you. The same is true for Salesforce customers, if you do not have a need to connect with your customers then you likely don't need the customer relationship management platform that Salesforce builds.

4) **Clear** - There is nothing compelling in vague statements! For your product's mission to be compelling it must be clearly understood by the people building your products and the people using your products. It should be simply stated and brief. It should highlight only that which is core to your product and avoid focusing on secondary benefits. When the product mission is clear to your product team they are more likely to understand how they can contribute to its success and customers can clearly understand the benefits they can derive from using your product. This time I will use AbductiveReason's product missions to illustrate: **To help product people make products people want.**

## Product missions statement examples

Here are a few product mission statement examples that are both Aspirational and Compelling.

**Google (search)** - "to organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful.""

**Tesla** - "to accelerate the world's transition to sustainable energy.""

**Honest Tea** - "to create and promote great-tasting, healthy, organic beverages"