

# Vision Statement

The vision statement sets the direction for the project by specifying what will be accomplished. It defines the scope of the project. The main elements of a vision statement include:

- Project goals – Projects start with an idea to solve a problem or take advantage of an opportunity. The goals of the project should align with the problems and opportunities identified. Goals express the expected outcomes from a project. Goals should be SMART: Specific, Measurable, Action-oriented, Realistic, and Timely.
- Project scope – What is and is not included in the project?
- High-level features or requirements. Are some features more important than others? One way of prioritizing features is to divide them into two classes: essential and desirable.
- Major milestones and deliverables.

Two useful exercises for developing a vision statement are [Agile Project Management]:

- Pretend the software will be sold as a retail commercial product and then design the box in which the software will ship. The shrink-wrapped box for retail software lists the key features of the software from the user's perspective.
- Develop an elevator statement for the project. A good elevator statement answers the question "what" and "why" in a succinct and compelling way.

Here is a convenient template for developing an elevator statement for a product:

- For (target customer)
- Who (statement of need or opportunity)
- The (product name) is a (product category)
- That (key benefit, compelling reason to buy)
- Unlike (primary competitive alternative)
- Our product (statement of primary differentiation)

## *Example*

For computer users of all ages who want to socialize and keep in touch with family, friends and associates, the MultiFace web site is a social networking web site that allows users to maintain multiple personas. Unlike traditional social networking web sites such as Faceook and MySpace, our product allows users to maintain separate and distinct identifies for different groups of family, friends and associates.

A good vision statement helps you make decisions regarding priorities and what to include and exclude.