**Episode #43.wav**

**Speaker 1** [00:00:01] Welcome to the Cabrera Lab podcast.

**Speaker 2** [00:00:05] Hey.

**Speaker 1** [00:00:06] Howdy.

**Speaker 2** [00:00:06] How do you partner?

**Speaker 1** [00:00:08] What is that?

**Speaker 2** [00:00:09] Maybe it's the combination of the lumberjack shirt and the howdy Christmas present. How you doing?

**Speaker 1** [00:00:14] I'm doing awesome.

**Speaker 2** [00:00:15] I'm very excited because we're continuing on our focus with how do we how do we bring these ideas of systems thinking and and all those things up into groups of people and organizations?

**Speaker 1** [00:00:29] Yeah. And totally normally, I don't know what we're talking about, but this month I do it. But and I realize it doesn't make a difference because I just forget.

**Speaker 2** [00:00:38] That's the beauty of money. You're like me. Hey, look. Hey, look. Okay?

**Speaker 1** [00:00:43] Yeah. You're a little fish in a ball alley. There's a castle.

**Speaker 2** [00:00:47] So today we're going to start.

**Speaker 1** [00:00:49] This life very exciting because everything's new all the time.

**Speaker 2** [00:00:52] Yes, I would imagine that's true.

**Speaker 1** [00:00:54] You discover new castles every day.

**Speaker 2** [00:00:56] Well, it's the same castle. But you think.

**Speaker 1** [00:00:58] It's.

**Speaker 2** [00:00:59] Me. Okay, So, yes, we are continuing with thinking about organizations, but today we're going to focus in on vision, which is the V, a VMC. L Yes, Vision, mission, capacity and learning, which are the four inherent functions of any organization that we want to really be aware of.

**Speaker 1** [00:01:18] That's a mouthful. The four inherent Functions of any organization.

**Speaker 2** [00:01:22] This is my first need of you to translate.

**Speaker 1** [00:01:25] I'm getting the gist of it. Yeah. So, I mean, that's that's an important sentence because there's a lot packed in there, so we probably should unpack that.

**Speaker 2** [00:01:35] Okay.

**Speaker 1** [00:01:36] You know, just the idea that organizations or organisms have functions and these these are this isn't like a framework that where we think it's a good idea. This is like this is more like in order for an organism or an organization to function, it does these things and it does them whether you like it or not. Yes. And so if you know that it's doing these things, then as a leader, you can lead in such a way that brings out those natural functions in the on the vector that you want the organization to move or that you that that collectively you hope the organization will move.

**Speaker 2** [00:02:22] Yes. And the other thing I like about what you just said is that means the reality of your organization is it has these four things.

**Speaker 1** [00:02:28] Yeah. Whether you like it or not.

**Speaker 2** [00:02:29] So in order to be aligned with reality, you have to know that they're there and then use them to your advantage. Yeah. As a leader.

**Speaker 1** [00:02:36] So VMC is kind of the leaders love reality for organizations. It's like loving, loving the reality of your organization. Your organization is going to it's going to go towards a goal. Now, whether it's going towards the goal that you ostensibly have for the organization or not is up for question. Yes, but it is going to be goal oriented in its sort of statistical existence.

**Speaker 2** [00:03:03] Right.

**Speaker 1** [00:03:04] And it's going to do things repeatedly to get there. It's going to require capacity to do things just like we have to have energy to to metabolize in order to act. Yeah. And it's going to learn. And again, what it learns and how it learns is is up for grabs. As a leader, we want it to learn in particular vectors so that the capacity gets built, so that the mission gets done so that we attain a particular vision.

**Speaker 2** [00:03:34] Yes.

**Speaker 1** [00:03:35] Left to its own devices, it'll do those functions, just maybe not in the on the vector or on the path that you that you're hoping for.

**Speaker 2** [00:03:44] Yes. Meaning leadership is really about choosing that vector. Yeah, like seeing the path of the future where you want to go.

**Speaker 1** [00:03:56] Yeah. It's funny. Some one commenter talked about the river rafting guide example. And when I was a guide, it was. It was this idea that the old guides let you know, kind of move, let the river move the boat rather than, you know, constantly working their muscles to move the boat. Whereas the new younger guys are, you know, these big strapping guys that are working all over time, you know, that kind of thing. And think of it that way is like your organization is a boat and it's going to go down the river and it's going to function like a boat in the ways that boats function, whether or not it takes the path down the river that you want it to take or just straight over the rocks or straight into the, you know, rapids in the wrong way. That's up to you as the leader. Yeah. Paying attention to what the boat's doing and why. And the what the river's doing and why and. And what the relationship between the river and the boat is.

**Speaker 2** [00:04:57] One of the things I like about that is it puts. A lot of I don't want to say control, but a lot of influence on on the organization's success based on that leadership capability.

**Speaker 1** [00:05:08] Totally with huge, huge influence. But it also it also the reason it's such a powerful analogy or metaphor is it also tells you how little in control you are. Right. So you have tremendous influence, but almost no control.

**Speaker 2** [00:05:23] I love that. It's like parenthood.

**Speaker 1** [00:05:27] Yeah. Yeah, You have a lot of influence, but you are not in control. The river is much, much bigger and more powerful and more dynamic than. Than you are in the marketplaces. The same. That's the marketplaces. The river. Right. It's much more dynamic than you could ever hope to to control. Yes. As a leader, you can put that order in the water at the right time and turn the boat. Water hits the back of the boat. The boat turns because of the force of the water rather than the force of law or.

**Speaker 2** [00:05:57] Just as a as an aside. Sometimes when we travel, we we nerd out and we take pictures of people's mission statements and statements on the walls of different organizations. And I think over the years, you, you and I have been teaching very specific things about what a good vision is and and how you and we have these litmus tests on a good vision. So I want to start with those. Yeah. And I will read them what's just there coming from the book. We'll talk about the book later, but let's start one at a time. Yeah.

**Speaker 1** [00:06:31] And just kind of go through them.

**Speaker 2** [00:06:33] Go through them.

**Speaker 1** [00:06:34] So the litmus tests are the checks are the just to give a little background of what their purpose is. They are if you want to design a vision that is truly a well designed vision and you design a vision, you build a vision almost like you build a, you know, a car or anything that you build and you're going to get the job of the leader is to engineer the vision and engineer the mission and engineer the capacity and engineer the learning such that you can have one that that functions really well. And so the litmus tests or the checks, what we've found in the research on on visions and missions and capacity and learning, it's kind of a guidepost for design. You don't need the litmus test every day. You need the litmus test to design a good vision and design a good mission. Yes. And a lot of people may even really, really, you know, top notch people with big budgets make huge mistakes when it comes to vision and mission. The research shows that anecdotally, we see that. So the litmus test or the checks make it so that you can design a better vision and a better mission for your organization. And you can do it really simply, it's not as hard as we're actually making it harder than we need to.

**Speaker 2** [00:07:58] Well, yeah, that's pretty much the case for a lot of these days. Yeah. Well, I want to I want to stay on that for a minute. So you're, as you were just saying, talking about using these checks around vision to design a good vision. But there's also almost a diagnostic function for existing organizations who are maybe not getting the results they want or the the behavior they're hoping to get, you know, across their organization, moving towards a common vision. And so.

**Speaker 1** [00:08:27] Great point. Yeah.

**Speaker 2** [00:08:28] So you can use these checks both at the beginning of of sort of setting us forth an organization. But also they are great. Yes. For, you know, if you're not getting the.

**Speaker 1** [00:08:38] If you have a vision currently, you can use these checks to see how bad it is.

**Speaker 2** [00:08:42] And get a face. Yeah, exactly. Give your vision a vision. All right. So let's start with check one. Yeah. Our vision depicts a desired future state.

**Speaker 1** [00:08:50] So this is. This is really important. It's. It's sort of a priority or it's sort of like a you wouldn't think it would require explanation, but a vision is something that you that you see that is in the future. Right. It doesn't exist today. Right. Right. Because of it. If. If it existed today, then why would it be a goal? Right. It's sort of like saying I want to win the Super Bowl in 2022. Right. Right. Right. That's already in the past. So how could that possibly be the goal of the organization? Right. Or understanding that a vision is a future state that doesn't exist today is really important because it sets up fundamentally what we're going to design. We're designing a rich understanding, a deep understanding of what that future state looks like and how it's different from today. Right. And in fact, we use that that check as the first step in designing visions with organizations. Yes. Because we ask them what you know, what pisses you off, which actually brings in another check about emotion. But what what really pisses you off about the way the world is today And in your world, in your field, in your market, whatever. And and what we then do is sort of say, well, what pisses you off about how things are today and how should they be? Yeah. And that sort of sets up the, the kind of the deep emotional tie to why you're why you exist in the first place. We exist because we don't like the way things are today, and we want them to be somehow different. Yes. And that could be we don't like the way, you know, software is designed today. So we're going to design a new kind of software that looks different. It could be. We don't like that. There's so much homelessness, You know, it could be anything that you don't like. It could be that we don't like that.

**Speaker 2** [00:10:47] Well, you can take real world examples. It's it's hard to eat healthy.

**Speaker 1** [00:10:51] Yes.

**Speaker 2** [00:10:52] These are so living, you know, it's hard to live a healthy lifestyle. And that is a thing that myfitnesspal is worth.

**Speaker 1** [00:10:59] They came and did their decision with us. They that they were such an innovative organization. And really and we all experienced this every day. And just go to a restaurant and ask yourself, is it easier to order unhealthily or is it easier to order healthily?

**Speaker 2** [00:11:18] That and also one of the things that they talked a lot about is transparency of calories, fat levels, Mac, you know, all the sodium signals and all of that, but you don't know what you're ordering nutritionally. Yeah. And then also you think about we had one of our favorite very, very large school districts. They were struggling. Children were showing up and they weren't ready to learn. Right. Their stomachs were empty. They didn't have a dentist they were struggling with.

**Speaker 1** [00:11:44] Yeah, they couldn't even get to the learning because there were so much in the way.

**Speaker 2** [00:11:47] So their vision became every child ready to learn, which is what they wanted to change. So there was a condition.

**Speaker 1** [00:11:53] There was children are not ready to learn today. Yet in the future, every child will be ready to learn. And that is that's really getting at the litmus test of a future state. Your vision is a future state.

**Speaker 2** [00:12:05] Well, and I think it'd be important right here to just talk a minute about some of the pitfalls that a vision is not a verb.

**Speaker 1** [00:12:12] That's yeah, that's a great, great point. A lot of folks confuse mission and vision, and the research is pretty clear that there's tremendous confusion about vision and mission in the out in the world in general. Vision is a seeing statement and mission is a doing statement. So that's one of the clear distinctions between them. Mission is something you do repeatedly in the now, and vision is a future state that you're seeing. The old saying that, you know, leaders stand in the future and describe what they see. That's really a great reminder of what a vision is all about. Your your standing in the future and describing what you see and you can't just describe at once. You have to keep describing it to everybody in your organization. And once you've finished describing it, you start again and describe it again.

**Speaker 2** [00:13:01] And a vision, as you said, is a destination. It's you're either going to get there or you're not. It's not the ongoing process of going there.

**Speaker 1** [00:13:09] Yeah, it's not a verb, like you said. It's and people make verb like visions all the time. Yeah. And a verb like vision is a terrible vision.

**Speaker 2** [00:13:20] Yeah.

**Speaker 1** [00:13:21] Think of it this way. If. If. If we get a group of folks and we're like, Hey, we're going to. We're going to drive across country, that's our goal. You know, we're going to get a big bus or something. Yeah. And we're going to take turns and all that kind of stuff driving and we're going to drive across country and we all get in the bus and we're like, we're driving across country and the first guy takes their shift and they drive for, you know, four hours or something. And they're and their mental model is they're driving to, you know, Arizona. And then he goes to the back and the new one comes up and, you know, takes a nap and the new one comes up to do their shift. And their mental model is they're going to Seattle. So now both of those visions are, you know, like we're going west. Going is a verb.

**Speaker 2** [00:14:13] Yeah.

**Speaker 1** [00:14:13] Well, what's their path going to look like every time some new driver starts, You know, being in charge of the driving? Yeah. Which is the mission? Yes. Drive a mile. Repeat. Drive a mile. Repeat. And you'll eventually get there, right? Yeah. So what we want is a vision that's like San Francisco.

**Speaker 2** [00:14:33] Yeah.

**Speaker 1** [00:14:33] We're going to get to San Francisco because San Francisco is a Now we're going to know whether or not we're in San Francisco. We're going to see a sign that says Entering San Francisco City Limits. Yes. And then we know we accomplished our vision. So we say sometimes visions are future state and binary. Meaning we know when we're not there, we know how far away we are and we know when we are there. That's binary meaning. You're either there or you're not there.

**Speaker 2** [00:15:01] Yes, but that also reinforces something we talk about a lot, which is shared mental models. Yes. Right. And so part of what leadership is, is making sure people are sharing that mental model of the same vision.

**Speaker 1** [00:15:14] And I hope that's one of the most important. And, in fact, it's one of the litmus checks is visions exists in hearts and minds, not on walls and frames and websites. Yes. And what that means is a vision. A real vision is in the hearts and minds of people. They share a common mental model.

**Speaker 3** [00:15:40] Of.

**Speaker 1** [00:15:40] The destination. Yes. That's what a real vision is, that we share a common mental model of the destination. And that is not handled by text on a Web site. That's not that's not handled by text in a frame on a wall. That's not even really handled by words. It's handled by meaning. Yeah. That people are making. Right. Because you can imagine, like the example of Arizona versus Seattle. You could also imagine that we have two people that are part of the or the bus and we say San Francisco, but they have different understandings of San Francisco. One thinks maybe San Francisco in South America. And one thing. San Francisco in in California. Yeah. And so they're going to two they're going. They're both going to San Francisco, the words. But they have different mental models. Of which San Francisco.

**Speaker 2** [00:16:35] Yeah.

**Speaker 1** [00:16:35] Yeah. And that happens all the time in in corporate visions. Yes. People don't have the same shared mental model of what they're doing. So it's it behooves and is incumbent upon leadership. Their job isn't necessarily make it all happen, but their job. Job number one is to make sure everybody in the organization shares the same mental model. Yes. Of the vision.

**Speaker 2** [00:17:03] When we work with organizations and leaders, you can get to a really great statement of a vision, but then you have to do the work to make sure that the the way that people are defining and thinking about the words in that vision statement is the same. Yes. Right. So literally, you would say our vision is San Francisco and the mental model is San Francisco, California. Yeah. Everybody needs to think San Francisco, California.

**Speaker 1** [00:17:27] And show it to them on a map. Yes.

**Speaker 2** [00:17:29] Exactly.

**Speaker 1** [00:17:30] We share the same map and all that kind of stuff. Absolutely. That's critical.

**Speaker 2** [00:17:34] Yeah.

**Speaker 1** [00:17:35] And it's you know, when we're dealing with something geographical like San Francisco, it's a lot easier to get it right. But when we're dealing with something like, you know, put an end to a disease or put an end to homelessness or, you know, create a new economy based on subscriptions or whatever, well, those are those things are a lot more squishy. Than that. Cisco, San Francisco is a lot more, you know, tangible. Yes. And so the more squishy the the idea, the more work you have to make sure that everybody shares the same mental model about what those words mean.

**Speaker 2** [00:18:17] And communicate that shared mental model. I mean, you can imagine even every child ready to learn. What do we mean, every. Yeah. What child do you mean all of them? What grades? What is ready to sing? You know, so you have to actually have a shared understanding of every piece of that.

**Speaker 1** [00:18:32] That's right. And that's why we distinguish in in our work with designing visions. One of the key things we distinguishes the vision statement from the vision Mental model. The vision mental model is different than the vision statement. The vision statement is almost like a like a little thing. Like a little tag that causes you to think the vision mental model. Right. But the vision statement alone is not enough to get people to share the same meaning.

**Speaker 2** [00:19:02] A great example. Intel inside. Yeah. That's a very short vision statement. But everybody at Intel knew what that meant at the time. Inside what they knew, what it meant.

**Speaker 1** [00:19:12] Inside every computer. Yes. Right. An Intel chip inside every computer? Yes. And then and then when that was accomplished, you know, an Intel chip inside of every electronic appliance and things like that.

**Speaker 2** [00:19:25] So everywhere.

**Speaker 1** [00:19:26] Everywhere. Yeah.

**Speaker 2** [00:19:27] Okay. So that was check one. Our vision depicts a desired future state Check to our vision is intrinsically motivating.

**Speaker 1** [00:19:34] This is a really important part of vision. And it's it's it is so deep. It sounds like a very simple statement, but it's such a deep statement because it actually gets at what why we're motivated by things. We're motivated by. When things have an emotional connection. Right. That's what motivation in science we call it connection. But motivation is like a. What makes us move like the Mo in motivation is like, what? What will get us out of the inertia of sitting and do something right? So vision is the thing that gets us up in the morning. Yes. And I sometimes say I've never owned a alarm clock. I'm. Because it's true. The vision that I have for my life or my organization or whatever is always my alarm clock. Yes. And the day that it's not, I have to go tinker with my vision. Right? Yeah. Because your vision should be the thing that when, you know, in the morning when you can't get up and you're like. And. And you could go back to sleep or you could get up. Yeah. And there's like, that little moment.

**Speaker 2** [00:20:44] Yeah.

**Speaker 1** [00:20:45] That moment is when your vision goes, we get to work on that. Yeah. We get to work. We get to work on that. And then I'm out of that.

**Speaker 2** [00:20:55] Yeah.

**Speaker 1** [00:20:56] Right. Yeah. And so. My vision wakes me up every day. My vision is my alarm clock. And if your vision and the only way that that's going to happen is if you're, like, really deeply emotionally engaged with your vision. Now, the other part that's really important about this litmus test is we know a lot about employee engagement.

**Speaker 2** [00:21:19] Yes.

**Speaker 1** [00:21:20] And we know that if you have if you have a lackluster vision or a vision that doesn't emotionally connect or a vision that's poorly designed, it has dramatically negative effects on engagement.

**Speaker 2** [00:21:35] Yes. There was one study that the basic conclusion was which it shouldn't be surprising, is that that employees are something like three times more engaged if they find a sense of purpose with their work. That's right. And purpose comes from vision.

**Speaker 1** [00:21:50] Purpose is vision. Yes. Our purpose is to get to this place that we're all excited about bringing into the into that we're bringing the future into the present. So we're all excited about that, right? So all of that engagement happens in the vision that all of that passion that motivates that is that makes us motile. Right. That makes us move. Yeah, That is in the vision. And if your vision is like a barren wasteland, that isn't. There isn't something you can really be passionate about.

**Speaker 2** [00:22:26] Yeah.

**Speaker 1** [00:22:27] It's going to be hard to get people engaged.

**Speaker 2** [00:22:29] Yeah. I mean, if it lives on a.

**Speaker 1** [00:22:31] It's not.

**Speaker 2** [00:22:32] On the wall.

**Speaker 1** [00:22:32] Yeah.

**Speaker 2** [00:22:33] Then I can't even remember.

**Speaker 1** [00:22:34] To remember it. Yeah. And if your vision is a paragraph long, I don't even know. How do you engage with a paragraph? I can't even remember a paragraph.

**Speaker 2** [00:22:42] That's a great transition, because check three is the vision is short and simple.

**Speaker 1** [00:22:46] Short and simple. We call this the nine year old test. It should be short and simple. It is crazy to me how many really competent organizations and leaders have paragraph long or crazily multi paragraph visions, right? I mean, you know that that vision doesn't stand a chance of being useful. So why it's nobody can even remember what it is. Second of all, each word in there has it has so many potential. Just like the San Francisco example.

**Speaker 2** [00:23:20] Yes.

**Speaker 1** [00:23:21] You know, if we can mistake which San Francisco we're talking about, believe me, we can mistake all the bloviating terms of of a waxing poetic vision. Right. Yeah. That goes on for a paragraph.

**Speaker 2** [00:23:35] That's right.

**Speaker 1** [00:23:36] There's so much ambiguity in that that there's no way to get shared.

**Speaker 2** [00:23:41] I mean, there's so much that's subject to interpretation.

**Speaker 1** [00:23:44] There's a lot subject to interpretation. And again, if you if you were really hell bent on making a paragraph vision work, you could do it. But it's going to it's going to exhaust you as a leader because you're going to have to do so much extra work. In order to get everybody to share the same mental model, that you're better off doing the work on the front end by simplifying the mental model. Yes. And making it easily communicable. Simple. Short. Remember. Memorable. Those are the things that make a great vision.

**Speaker 2** [00:24:19] Tell me to read you some. I think we have some.

**Speaker 1** [00:24:21] Yeah, well, one of the great visions is, you know, like, the classic religious vision that most religious organizations have is whatever religion it is. The world being that religion. Yes. So that, you know, and then the mission for that is convert the unconverted. So it's very simple. Convert the unconverted, a Christian world or a Buddhist world or a Jewish.

**Speaker 2** [00:24:47] World or whatever, any of that. Yeah.

**Speaker 1** [00:24:50] Whatever it is.

**Speaker 2** [00:24:51] Well, so for example, you had Intel inside, which is a very short and simple.

**Speaker 1** [00:24:56] Short and simple.

**Speaker 2** [00:24:57] One of the companies had a thing was Yamaha like Kill Honda. Geelong was their vision.

**Speaker 1** [00:25:04] This episode is sponsored by Training Camp, the ultimate online spot for building the mental fitness that drives personal and professional change and success. At training camp, you'll have access to the science and practice of thinking with personalized thinking assessments, tiered training and best of all, practice that improves skill. Go to Cabrera lab.org to learn more. And now back to the episode. It's not really about whether you from the outside like the vision this we see this all the time people I'm going to say this and like when you maybe pass over it okay so listener.

**Speaker 2** [00:25:46] Brace ourselves.

**Speaker 1** [00:25:47] But I can't tell you how much time is wasted on on this one mistake. People confuse visions with taglines all the time. A tagline is a marketing thing. Used for the outside. A vision is. Is used for the inside. A vision is trying to get everybody that's on the bus to make it to the same location.

**Speaker 2** [00:26:13] Right.

**Speaker 1** [00:26:14] To work towards making it to the same location. So a vision is internal now. The best companies that make the best visions. Makes such remarkable visions. And we've we've experienced this with the companies we've worked with. The best ones makes take the time to make such a great vision that it's as applicable and exciting outside the organization as it is inside the organization. Yes. And then they end up naming their big annual conference based on the vision. And their marketing is driven by the vision and all kinds of other things. And it becomes almost like a tagline, although not quite. But but first and foremost, your vision is an internal statement. It's an internal mental model for your people.

**Speaker 2** [00:27:03] Meaning you have to start there. And if you do enough work, maybe eventually, or if you do it well, the beginning that becomes something that is as externally motivating to your customers, your clients, whoever. But that that will only happen if you design for inside the organization. And that's how you start. Right. Okay. So we did a short and simple check number four. This one is a little button.

**Speaker 1** [00:27:29] It's short and simple. I said it's the nine year old test. Yes. If you do a if you create a vision, one of the best ways is go find your nine year old or somebody like that and read it to them and see if they can make any sense of it.

**Speaker 2** [00:27:44] I think what you mean is find a young person in your family or your friend group. Yes. You said find a nine year old.

**Speaker 1** [00:27:53] So no, I don't mean like just go across my eyes. But yeah, find a young person that doesn't have all the technical language that you have and throw it by them and ask them what they think it means.

**Speaker 2** [00:28:04] And we have actually had people do that in groups that, you know, because we have an off site and then the next day the we come back and they say, hey, I talked to my son's cousin said, blah, blah, blah, you know, okay. So we did check three short and simple check four. And this one is a little, I would say, counterintuitive to people, which is we measure our vision.

**Speaker 1** [00:28:25] They're measurable. Yeah.

**Speaker 2** [00:28:26] Yes. And so let's talk about that. I mean, it ties back to the first one.

**Speaker 1** [00:28:30] Future state your ties to to all of them. I mean, all of these work together to build like they're they're really important design principles because if you lose any one of these, it really affects the other ones. So if you if you don't have measurability, then it's very difficult to know what you know, what the short and simple terms mean. Right. Because you can't you can't measure it. You can't understand it in that way. Now, it's also quite now I'm not saying measure ability itself is enough to be motivating, but having measure ability is a motivational factor because imagine if we're driving to San Francisco, but we can never know how far away we are. We can never know how much progress we've made towards it, right? At some point it would feel like you're driving to like, you know, Mars or something and you're like, we're never, you know, I don't know whether we're close or not. Like, it just it's meaning it becomes meaningless.

**Speaker 2** [00:29:31] You've got ten kids in the back. Are we there in area?

**Speaker 1** [00:29:34] Yeah, yeah, yeah, Right. So measure ability helps to make the meaning shareable. It helps with the motivation. And it helps with getting that short and simple statement to have teeth.

**Speaker 2** [00:29:49] Say what you mean by teeth.

**Speaker 1** [00:29:50] So the statement is both going to. It's going to hit us like, in the heart emotionally, but it's also going to hit us in the head because we're going to be able to have like, okay, it's 3000 miles to San Francisco. That's measurable. If if we if we've driven 2500 miles, we only have 500 to go. So there's feedback in the system that's telling you your progress. If you've ever, you know, tried a fitness goal or something, you know how much that little bit of feedback is so powerful, whether it's looking at the scale or, I went up in weight in dumbbells, or I can do more push ups in a row or, you know, whatever it is. That little bit of feedback is really important. And and a lot of that feedback tends to be quantitative.

**Speaker 2** [00:30:39] Well, and it gives you a gauge of how much more work you have in front of you. Right. It's like, you know, those United Way bulbs were like, they're trying to raise $1 million and they get to 10,020. And so they know we're getting there, but we've got more and more work to do. And yeah, so that sort of I see what you're saying about the motivation part. Are you ready for the the final check? We ensure that our vision lives in the hearts and minds.

**Speaker 1** [00:31:03] Hearts and minds of people.

**Speaker 2** [00:31:04] Which I guess is sort of cuts across all five. And a lot.

**Speaker 1** [00:31:08] Of it does. But I'm I'm telling you, it's as you know from our experience with organizations, so many people think that they have a vision and a mission when they have a vision statement.

**Speaker 2** [00:31:18] Right.

**Speaker 1** [00:31:19] Let's say for a moment that you use these five. Beautiful litmus checks to design the most beautiful vision. You know that you could possibly design. And it fits on a little Post-it note, and you write it down. Right.

**Speaker 2** [00:31:36] Yeah.

**Speaker 1** [00:31:36] And then you fold it up and you put it in your pocket. And then you go, Great. I've got a vision. My.

**Speaker 2** [00:31:45] God. A vision? Yeah. In your pocket.

**Speaker 1** [00:31:47] For my organization. My vision. My organization has a vision. No, it doesn't. And why doesn't it? It's because the check number five. Yes. The reason It doesn't have a vision. Is because that vision statement is not a mental model of meaning that is in the minds of the people who have to work towards bringing it about. Right. It's fantastic to go into organizations and you find, you know, executive VP and you find that you talk to the janitor and you talk to an administrator at the front desk and you ask them, Hey, what's the vision? What's the mission? Yeah. And see whether you get not only the same statement. But then when you kind of inquire a little bit deeper about that statement, they they tell you about it. And and most importantly, the way they tell you about it and what they tell you about it is the same for all three of those people.

**Speaker 2** [00:32:44] Yes.

**Speaker 1** [00:32:45] That's a 20 minute check you can do of an organization. And it tells you more about an organization than any other check.

**Speaker 2** [00:32:52] Yes. No.

**Speaker 1** [00:32:53] Yes. So that that is about that. Every person in the organization shares the meaning of the vision. And I'll go back to that story, that little metaphor that we talked about, I think in another podcast about the two guys on the lake in a boat.

**Speaker 2** [00:33:10] Yes.

**Speaker 1** [00:33:10] If they have different visions, then they're going to be paddling at odds to each other and that boat's going to go and spin in a circle or it's going to weave in a weird line or it's going to go forwards and backwards as they get tired and whatever. But what if both those guys know exactly where they're going and they also have their mission and their capacity systems and learning and play. They're just going to go straight line right to where they want to go.

**Speaker 2** [00:33:37] And I think what you're what you're also alluding to is often what you will find in in particularly in larger organizations, is almost competing visions.

**Speaker 1** [00:33:46] Yeah.

**Speaker 2** [00:33:47] Right. So, you know, that's why the leader needs to articulate a singular vision that is across the organization so that everybody is in the boat going the same direction. Yeah. And not working against each other, paddling one way and then the other way, doing circles and all of that.

**Speaker 1** [00:34:03] Yeah. And it's, it's super important because I think this one's a little hard to grasp. But if you have sort of an organismic view of your organization and a systemic view of your organization, you understand that even if you don't create a vision as a leader and even if you don't get it into the hearts and minds of your people, your vision, your organization has a vision. It has a vision because each one of those people in your organizations will ascribe a purpose to their work and to that organization, even if it's not provided for them and made meaningful. Right. And the statistical cloud that is all of those different meanings together, which could be going in like crazy, inefficient vectors. Like you could have ten going this way and ten going that way and ten going this way. And so. But your organization has a vision, meaning it's got a goal state. It's a wacky, chaotic, convoluted and ineffective and inefficient goal. State But it is based on the probabilities of the sort of statistical cloud that is created by the people and the meaning in your organization. It does have that vision. And what we want to do is try to affect its functional need for a vision with clear leadership and clarity of vision.

**Speaker 2** [00:35:36] Yes.

**Speaker 1** [00:35:36] That's critical.

**Speaker 2** [00:35:37] Meaning you want to make sure, as as we've said, all of all of those that that that statistical cloud of probability of all the different little micro visions actually becomes and coalesces into one, which is what we were talking about, that superorganism thing. Yes. All right. Lots of little fish that form into the shape of a shark and are all going in one place.

**Speaker 1** [00:35:57] Or we have the beach ball example. Right. Which is one of my favorite examples. So if you imagine your organization on the beach. As a as a sort of a transparent beach ball so that you can see inside of it. Right. Imagine all your people, like inside the beach ball. Right. And and some of them. And like, down. Down here is a lemonade stand. Right? I know. And it's a hot day, right? And over here is a taco stand. And, you know, here's the beach and here's the beach. So a bunch of people want to go swimming. And, you know, over here is a bar, right?

**Speaker 2** [00:36:40] Well, this is a problem because there's three things that you should do.

**Speaker 1** [00:36:44] This is so if different people are trying to have the goal of getting to different places, and you can imagine that they're all pushing on this ball to try to pushing on the outside of the ball. Yeah. To try to roll it towards those places. And everybody's got a different idea of what they want. Some want to go swimming, some want to go Taco, some want to go drink at the bar, some want to get lemonade and be refreshed or whatever. Then what's this ball going to do? It's it's going to go like this, right? But if as a leader, you say, hey, let's get lemonade first and then tacos next and then, you know, then we'll end up at the bar after we do a dip in the right, you know, see, or if we just take one of these as a it's all tacos, all the time.

**Speaker 2** [00:37:28] To go.

**Speaker 1** [00:37:29] To soccer Tuesday. Right. Then we're going to be able to. First of all, imagine that we could all arrive here. Number one, at this future state. But number two, it actually makes it very clear what your work is. All these people over here, we got we got ten people over here that are pushing towards Taco. And we got 12 people over here that are pushing towards lemonade.

**Speaker 2** [00:37:53] Yeah.

**Speaker 1** [00:37:54] I got to go talk to every one of those people. The lemonade people, lemonade people. And I got to I got to get them to understand and get them motivated, give them emotionally connected. Help them understand why tacos, why, why tacos are so important.

**Speaker 2** [00:38:11] Can we make our vision tacos or bust?

**Speaker 1** [00:38:13] Tacos or bust? Exactly. Tacos or bust. Right. Tacos for everyone. That goes for. All right. So the way that vision plays itself out beyond the vision statement, which I hold in my pocket, is I got to go talk to people and I've got to I've got to infect them with how cool this this statement is and all of the meaning that's in the statement and why we should do this statement.

**Speaker 2** [00:38:41] Yes.

**Speaker 1** [00:38:41] Right. And then I'm going to leave them with the statement as kind of like sometimes I call it a meat hook. Right? Because when you look at a meat hook, you can imagine a big side of beef on it, like in a, you know, in a factory or some. No.

**Speaker 2** [00:38:55] No. I'm just I'm getting hungry talking about tacos, sides of beef.

**Speaker 1** [00:38:58] And so you could imagine a meat hog. It's kind of like an indicator and it makes it causes you to imagine everything else. Well, the vision statement is just a hook.

**Speaker 2** [00:39:07] Right?

**Speaker 1** [00:39:07] That's all it is. It's the hook that. It's the thing that they use to remember. It's like the pneumonic device that causes them to remember all the meaning behind it and how it's measured and why it's important and why they're personally engaged in it. And if we do that, we're going to get not 12, you're not going to get 12 because one of them is going to be self-centered, not team oriented, and they're going to want lemonade. Yeah, but maybe and maybe three of them. But you'll get nine, Maybe you'll get seven. Okay. Now you have 17 people over here.

**Speaker 2** [00:39:38] Which is enough.

**Speaker 1** [00:39:39] They have 17 people over here, right? And that's going to change. So, yeah, it's going to go like this, but it's going to move in general more in this direction. Sometimes there's going to be a rock right here.

**Speaker 2** [00:39:53] An obstacle.

**Speaker 1** [00:39:54] Yeah, there's going to be a huge obstacle. Yeah. And everybody's going to be like, push, push, push. And they're going to have to solve this problem and they're going to realize we can't go over it. We have to go around it and they're going to say, we have to pivot. But when you pivot, you don't forget where the taco stand is. Right? Right. So, okay, we got to pivot this way. But then we remember that our vision is still the taco stand, right? So we don't get lost in the pivot. We we're pivoting because there's a block or two. The taco stand.

**Speaker 2** [00:40:29] Yeah.

**Speaker 1** [00:40:30] Even though it seems sort of simple, this. This gives us a really clear idea of how vision manifests into organizational functionality.

**Speaker 2** [00:40:41] And leadership on the ground.

**Speaker 1** [00:40:43] Leadership on the.

**Speaker 2** [00:40:44] Ground, literally inside the ball, talking to the lemonade people, talking to the bar people and shifting their mental model, too. And it's tacos.

**Speaker 1** [00:40:53] And it's important because the leaders have another little mistake they make sometimes, which is okay, I went and talked to everybody. I do an all hands. That's not enough. You got to be Bono. I would say, you know, I don't know Bono personally, but I'm guessing if we called him and said, are you, you know, sick of singing Sunday, Bloody Sunday, I'm I'm guessing he's pretty sick of singing it. But you know what? Everybody expects Sunday, Bloody Sunday when they go to a YouTube concert.

**Speaker 2** [00:41:23] I.

**Speaker 1** [00:41:23] Guess. Does that make sense? So he's got to keep singing it. Yeah. And and I think with leaders, you have to keep singing the tune. It's new to a lot of people, even if it feels like you've said it a thousand times. You have to keep singing it, keep singing it, sing it in a different way. Get a get a co you know, person. Get Taylor Swift to join you and sing it.

**Speaker 2** [00:41:50] So as long.

**Speaker 1** [00:41:51] As he's right. So you got to do it in different ways to get people excited. Right. Absolutely.

**Speaker 2** [00:41:57] Well, it was an amazing concert. Just amazing. I am not ashamed of my Taylor Swift, my love for Taylor Swift in this. You mentioned.

**Speaker 1** [00:42:05] Her. She's very talent. No, I'm saying, like Bono would bring Taylor Swift on stage there as well. Have they ever done a duet together? I don't know. You don't know something about Taylor Swift? That's the first time that's over.

**Speaker 2** [00:42:17] I do not believe that they have. Anyway, we digress.

**Speaker 1** [00:42:23] But we digress. But. But I'm saying that leader has to find new ways and creative ways to, you know, to be like, okay, I got seven of those folks to move over and I know those folks to move over. Maybe I maybe I'm going to spend way too much time getting the last three to move over. You know, okay, let's go over here and get these ones over. And eventually you're moving them over that into the vision. Yeah, exactly. Yeah. Your vision and in the movement towards your vision is a statistical property of your organization. Meaning you don't have to. You don't have to. Yeah. You don't have to have 100%. You just have to have enough to tip it towards collect that direction. Yeah.

**Speaker 2** [00:43:06] Well, what's interesting is you can imagine all kinds of obstacles. Changes in market forces change. It's like Covid, totally Covid changed everything. And we had to pivot.

**Speaker 1** [00:43:18] We we've done this all the time and map, you know, when you're when you're in the wilderness, right? Like, you know, where you're trying to get to your camp or wherever. Wherever you're trying to get to. And you run into a lake. All of a sudden, you know, camps that way. And I got to go that way, too, Miles. Yeah, unless I have a rowboat. Which adult? So I'm. You know, now I got to hike this way. Yeah, it's pretty long swim and cold, and I got a backpack and whatever. So now we're going to hike in a totally different direction for two miles, and then that way for a half a mile and then two miles back to get where we're trying to go.

**Speaker 2** [00:43:54] I would cry.

**Speaker 1** [00:43:55] But you can't forget where I was at. That's just that's just reality. So anyway, that's vision and that's going to get a beach ball, as you say, rather than. Yeah.

**Speaker 2** [00:44:07] So I think we've done it. But we did. Yes. Before we wrap, I want to you I love to give people gifts. This is the book for life not clock for 2025. For podcast listeners, I think we should give you 25% off the book in case you want to have the book which concretize this. All of this stuff talks about everything.

**Speaker 1** [00:44:28] Well, the vision and then the rest of the month's worth of stuff, admission.

**Speaker 2** [00:44:32] So everything.

**Speaker 1** [00:44:33] And learning.

**Speaker 2** [00:44:33] Everything we're covering is all in here.

**Speaker 1** [00:44:35] And this is a very accessible book. We use this book in our course set at Cornell University. And but it's very accessible and anybody can read it.

**Speaker 2** [00:44:45] Examples and pictures and maps and all kinds of fun stuff.

**Speaker 1** [00:44:50] Yeah. And while you're there, you can grab a T-shirt.

**Speaker 2** [00:44:53] Yes, there's all kinds of things or.

**Speaker 1** [00:44:55] Anything helps to support the podcast. We very much appreciate it.

**Speaker 2** [00:44:59] That's right.

**Speaker 1** [00:45:00] And I think. That is a wrap.

**Speaker 3** [00:45:06] For the first.