

## VISION STATEMENT

The most important thing to have *before* you can do any strategic planning for the EPA Region 8 P2 Roundtable (Roundtable) is a VISION. How can you have a strategic plan without knowing what you are planning for? The vision will provide a way of conceiving what the Roundtable can achieve through collaborative efforts. Your vision must be a simple, honest statement that describes the purpose of the Roundtable. Roundtable members must believe in the vision and live it in their own programs. It must be consistent with the core values of the state programs. Once agreed upon, the vision can't just be talked about – it has to be practiced. It will become the launching platform for the Roundtable's mission statement.

Vision defines what we want to be. Envisioning the future is not the same as predicting what will occur. A vision statement is a statement that defines what we want to be. A well-written statement can provide a stable sense of direction to guide the Roundtable through numerous changes. The vision statement should be:

- Brief
- Inspiring
- Challenging
- Descriptive of an ideal condition
- Appealing to members and stakeholders
- Provide future direction for the Roundtable

Consider a vision as a “target that beckons.” If the Roundtable could achieve its ideal collaborative goals, what sort of organization would it be? What does ultimate collaborative success look like? The vision is a description of the Roundtable's ideal image of the future. The vision is intentionally inspirational and motivational. It looks beyond day-to-day realities.

Pretend that reporters from *The Wall Street Journal* are interviewing you (as a member of the Roundtable) five years from now. Try to write the lead paragraph for the article. What can they say about the Roundtable? What does it do? Who are its stakeholders? Write down the major themes to be represented in the article and craft a vision statement with these ideas. Think in terms of headings, and subheadings as an aid in organizing your thoughts to develop a vision that everyone can buy into. This document is not designed to “nail everything down” and some vagueness is desirable. Concentrate on developing a general direction, image, and philosophy to guide the Roundtable.

I am tempted to provide you with some examples, but will resist the opportunity to do so. You can “cheat” a bit and look some up. Please try creating a vision statement and send it to **Laura Estes by August 18, 2000**. We will make a collection of your thoughts and send them to you (along with other vision statements we've found) prior to the Roundtable. Enter more than one if you really get into this vision statement thing!! As a group, we will seek to construct a vision statement for the Roundtable with the best “sound bites” during our strategic planning session in Jackson Hole, Wyoming.