

---

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Welcome to this lesson. In this lesson, we'll be discussing the following topics-- values, vision, mission, and strategy. Now understanding your own values is vital in order to create and drive the business vision, mission, and strategies. And when I say values, I'm talking about those qualities that are most important to you and embody what you want in your practice.

So for example, one of my values regarding my practice is flexibility-- meaning that not being solely reliant on my practice for my income is super important to me-- and being able to see clients based on a schedule that best fits my needs. So it's essential that your values be the driving force that guides the business vision, mission, and business strategies. And it's essential that these elements align. Each area-- the vision, mission, and business strategies-- is a representation of your thoughts, ideas, hopes, and dreams for your private practice business.

You've got to first be able to understand and articulate your own values, as they will shape the approach to your private practice, as well as help determine whether private practice is a good fit for you. Be aware that your values are the driving force behind the energy invested in behaviors for setting up and running a private practice. Values can be thought of as the moral compass of a business.

So for example, if a counselor values aesthetics while another counselor values education, it makes sense that the first counselor will spend more money on office furnishings, while the second counselor will spend more money on client materials. So for me, use of latest technology and research is a value of mine, so I just purchased an upgrade and additional training for biofeedback software that I use with clients.

Vision is how you see your business. A vision statement is a statement describing an image of what you want your business to be. Effective vision statements should be aspirational, inspirational, and challenging. A vision statement helps the counselor to set a course for the business and stay on that course when times may be difficult.

A vision statement can be used to remind the counselor of why he or she is doing work that may seem tedious or difficult at the moment. It instills hope and reflects ambition. It sparks mental stimulation and creativity, but it's also demanding of one's best efforts.

So here's an example of a vision statement from the Smithsonian Institution-- "shaping the future by preserving our heritage, discovering new knowledge, and sharing our resources with the world." Uh, mm, oh, that's aspirational, inspirational, and challenging. It's just beautiful. OK, all right.

So anyone who has ever been to the Smithsonian will attest to the fact that they truly live this vision statement. So will your clients be able to say the same after a visit to your counseling practice? So let's continue digging in to see if we can make that happen.

Mission is what you're going to achieve in your business. A mission statement is an articulation of the current purpose of the business. An effective mission statement will state the following-- what the business does, what it does it for, where it does it, why it does it. An effective mission statement will be a clear and concise. So here's an example of a clear, concise, and well-developed mission statement. "Our business provides effective, evidence-based mental and behavioral health services to children, adolescents, and adults in Sunriver, Oregon."

Your strategy is how you get to the places you want to go. A business strategy is the plan to meet consumer demand and to be competitive while achieving the business goals, mission, and vision. So business strategies that are sometimes written as paragraphs and sometimes written as individual statements. For ease of developing, you can use the S-M-A-R-T method to help develop business strategies. Each strategy should be specific, measurable, actionable, realistic, and timely.

So business strategies also consider strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats-- or better known as SWOT. Identifying strengths and weaknesses within a business and understanding opportunities and threats is partly how strategies are written. So for example, leaving some blanks here-- I understand that I have blank strength to combat blank threat and thus the strategy I will use is blank. Now to fill in the blanks, here's an example. I have financial backing, which places me ahead of the competition who does not. So, I can advertise aggressively.

Consider the following questions as prompts to be answered when further developing a business strategy. Why am I in business? What makes me unique? Who do I serve? What do I provide?

What will I not do? Why is this the best direction? How will success be measured? How quickly can I achieve these goals?

Answers to the above questions are utilized to create short-term goals and time frames for completion of different aspects of the strategy. So here's what we covered in this lesson. We talked about values, vision, mission, and strategy.

[MUSIC PLAYING]