

A GUIDE TO

Change Management



THIS IS THE SECOND IN A SERIES OF ARTICLES about why and how independent pharmacists can adapt to the rapidly changing landscape around them, to ensure that we have a sustainable professional sector and viable businesses in the future. Deborah Evans and Michael Holden from Pharmacy Complete provide the context, a vision for change and a process to get there.

Module objectives:

As a result of reading this you will have a better understanding of:

- How to establish where you are now
- Why a clear vision and purpose is important
- The benefits of engaging and involving your team.

Preparing for change

Journeys normally start with a destination in mind, but the route you take or mode of transport can vary. Your business journey should be no different.

Your destination should be linked to your purpose, the reason that you and your team do what you do, and should be about four key elements (see Figure 1):

conviction is one of the key attributes of a leader.

Before you start planning your business journey, be really clear about where you want to get to, by when, and ask yourself a few questions:

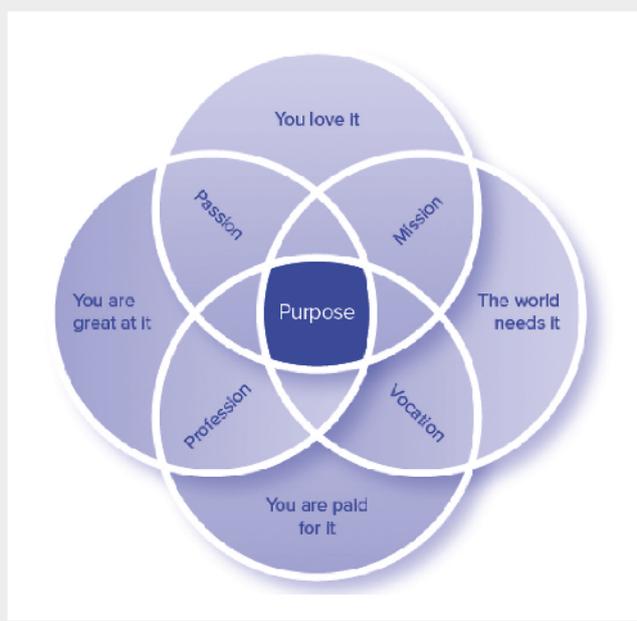
- What you love doing
- What you are great at
- What your community and health systems need
- You can be paid for it!

- What are your goals? – this or these (we suggest no more than three) should be as specific as possible and preferably measurable
- What do you want to have achieved in five years' time?
- Where do you need to be in one and three years' time in order to get there?
- What is your vision for your business that relates to your purpose and your team?

We recommend that you spend time thinking about this and are able to articulate it with your team so that they can share your passion. Being able to express your purpose passionately and with

Being clear about these will help you keep focused on the end in mind; anything that distracts you from that should be considered as irrelevant unless it impacts on your strategic goals.

Figure 1: Defining your purpose





Where are you now?

Understanding where you are now, your strengths and weaknesses within the business, and your external opportunities and threats, is often referred to as situational analysis, and the easiest way to do this is with a classic **SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis**.

You can get more from this exercise if you do it with your team, because they often see factors that you may not when running a business. It also makes them feel engaged and involved in the solution.

There is plenty of evidence* that an engaged team will take more ownership of the resultant plan and will be more productive as a result. This has never been more important than now, when we have to achieve more with less.

Strengths: examples may be your accessibility (location and hours of opening), quality of service, patient experience and trust in your advice. Be sure to test this.

Weaknesses: may lie in your lack of trained staff at the

right time of the day or week, or your investment in IT or premises. Your SWOT will very much be personal to you, but your strengths and weaknesses are about your business.

The **Opportunities and Threats** are about what's happening external to your business. Examples of your opportunities may be a growing local population who may have health and/or lifestyle challenges, growing your self-care market with a focus on P-medicines, flu vaccination services to local businesses, or travel health. Undoubted threats include existing funding streams and increased competition, but there will be more that you can identify locally.

Once you have understood your current situation, you can begin to consider how you can build on your strengths, minimise your weaknesses, and focus on your opportunities. The output of a comprehensive SWOT should be a number of 'key findings' – statements that articulate the insights you have in your business right now in the current environment.

Chasing the cheese

In the first module we drew parallels with 'Who Moved my Cheese?' (a book by Spencer Johnson) and how our future will be dependent on how we all respond to the need to change.

We discussed how the 'cheese' (medicines supply management) for community pharmacy is moving, and this is driven by: the financial, quality and demand challenges of the NHS; potential contractual reforms and funding cuts; digital and technological innovation; increased competition; and consumer expectations.

The mice in the story, Sniff and Scurry, realised that their supply of cheese was disappearing so they decided to change what they were doing and look elsewhere for future supplies.

The little people, Hem and Haw, assumed that the supply would continue, shouted "not fair" when it ran out, did not recognise the need to change, and had not prepared a plan B.

With the medicines supply system and funding streams shifting, are you considering all options for plan B or hoping that things remain as they are?



REFLECTIVE EXERCISE:
Complete a SWOT analysis of your pharmacy.

REMEMBER to use this article as part of your CPD and record at www.independentpharmacist.co.uk

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