

CHAPTER 8

VISIONING THE FUTURE

This section is contributed by Martin Tan, co-Founder and Executive Director of Halogen Foundation Singapore, a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to youth leadership development. Halogen seeks to build young leaders who will change the world.

INTRODUCTION

A vision is an ideal and unique image of the future for the common good.

- Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner, in *The Leadership Challenge*

Besides capturing memories of the past and present, you could also capture your vision and aspirations for Singapore in 20, 30 or even 50 years. The vision can be a personal one or one that relates to the wider community or even of Singapore as a nation.

There are various ways you can present the vision, in writing or using any one of the other documentation methods such as animation, illustration or documentary film.

WHAT YOU NEED

You need a pen or pencil and a notebook, your computer as well as the tools required for your chosen documentation method, which are described in the respective sections in this kit.





1 Choose a topic

The **focus of your vision can be your family, community, lifestyle** or specific themes relating to Singapore such as transport, housing, environment, entertainment and places.

You could start by thinking and writing down the people and issues that you care about, then pick a topic that matters to you most. For example, if you feel strongly about the environment, you can develop a vision relating to environmental responsibility in Singapore and express it in writing, a drawing or animation.

2 Look to the past

Spend some time revisiting the past and thinking about the present. You may need to conduct some background research at the library or on the internet.

Answer the questions in the green box (top right). This reflection exercise is essential as it allows you to understand how things were before and the lessons learnt.

Ask yourself the questions below; your answers should pertain to the topic you have chosen.

- What has been achieved?
- What has been done well?
- What are the important things that can be improved?
- What lessons have we learnt?
- Where are we at now?

3 Imagine the future

By understanding the past and the present, you will be able to **know what you want to keep, change or create for the future**, and answer the question “What do we want to be?” For example, if your observation is that people generally do not recycle, your vision can focus on inspiring the recycling mindset.

4 Describe your vision statement

With your answer to “Where do we want to be?”, you can then form and **write down your vision statement**. It should succinctly express an ideal, desired future. For example, your written vision statement could be “Singapore will be a nation of recyclers.”

5 Document and disseminate your vision

There is no limit to how you can document your vision. At the very least, the **vision and key actions should be documented in writing**.

Besides penning these down, you can use other creative documentation methods described in this memory kit, such as illustration, animation and filmmaking. For example, you can express your vision statement and the key actions visually, such as with a mind map and illustrations.

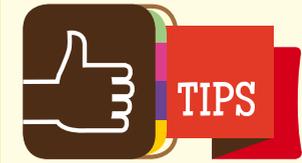
6 Determine the key actions

You can skip this step or choose to add value to this vision. Answer the question “How do we get there?” by **identifying the key actions that must be taken** to achieve the vision. For example, the key actions needed for your vision may be:

- Inspire Singaporeans to make recycling a part of their lives
- Teach Singaporeans to recycle easily
- Make recycling resources such as recycling bins and services readily available
- Reward and recognise Singaporeans who recycle

7 How to submit your vision

Follow the step-by-step instructions and **upload your vision directly onto the singaporememory.sg** portal.



- A vision must first and foremost be ideal. No one wants a vision of the future that is worse than today.
- Your vision statement should be positive. Focus on things you want to do or become rather than things that you do not want to do or become.

WHAT OTHERS ENVISION FOR SINGAPORE

Our Singapore Conversation

Challenge Magazine - What's Your Vision For Singapore in 2030?



SHARING OF PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

KUIK SHIAO-YIN

Kuik Shiao-Yin is a co-founder and the creative director of The Thought Collective. It comprises School of Thought; Thinktank; Food for Thought; Thinkscape; and Common Ground. Find out more at www.thethoughtcollective.com.sg

How did The Thought Collective begin?

When we started our first venture, School of Thought (SOT), in 2002, we were a group of young teachers who wanted to help youths see that education goes beyond exams, that it should benefit not just themselves but their communities as well. The other ventures of The Thought Collective, on the other hand, grew out of instinct and calculated whim.

What is The Thought Collective's vision?

As a group, we are here to build up Singapore's social and emotional capital. Anything that helps Singapore become more trusting, confident, creative, and better at relating - we'll give it a shot.

What was developing The Thought Collective vision like?

In 2012 when SOT turned 10, we developed The Thought Collective vision. We took 10 years of working hard, bumbling around, failing, succeeding, and, finally, weeks of sit-down sessions to get our vision out. We went back to our memories of our entrepreneurial journey, told our best stories, and talked it out as a team, carefully choosing the words that would best describe our company vision for the future.

How have you documented and shared your vision?

We have documented our story in a little booklet and made a short documentary about the vision forward. You can view the documentary at The Thought Collective website.

What is your vision for Singapore's future?

I want to see my city become renowned for cutting-edge thinking and outstanding achievements not just for herself, but for the good of the world. I want her to be a model of graciousness and kindness to her neighbours. I believe Singapore has everything within her to be a truly great city of creativity, compassion and character.

Going forward, how will The Thought Collective contribute to this vision?

We will do whatever our mission statement says we do: drive innovation, nurture thought leaders, transform community spaces, bring people together for good causes and more.

Stills from The Thought Collective's documentary.



Photos courtesy of The Thought Collective