

# EXERCISE: STANDING IN THE FUTURE... VISIONS OF 2010

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The following exercise is the next best thing to actual time travel. It's called "STANDING IN THE FUTURE" and it requires your group's vision of the future start with a journey into the future. The group starts with the end in mind...and, through their five senses, works backwards. It helps to use storyboarding techniques with index cards (Post-It Notes) and markers to gather data. Use the Affinity Diagram technique to organize the data into clusters of usable information. By the end of the exercise the group will have developed a clear, common vision of how they define success.

**Step #1** - Ask the group to quietly consider the statement that you are about to read. They will have thoughts they will want to share with the group, so encourage participants to record what they "sense" on data cards (Post-It Notes). Read the following statements and questions in a slow, quiet, methodic manner.

"You are now standing in the future. The year is ("X" years from today). You're at a special meeting called of all the people who participated in the (today's date) planning meeting. The group has worked hard and been successful in achieving all the objectives established. Take a minute to silently consider what the world, in terms of the (organization) now looks like, feels like, sounds like, and even smells or tastes like. Let your senses soak in this new and successful condition. **How has your success been demonstrated?**

You're still standing in the future. Now, turn around and take a look back to (today's date). **What changed between then and now? What did you have to do to gain this success? What were the milestone events? What was accomplished along the way? Who made those events happen? When did these accomplishments occur?**

Now, let's come back to the present.

**Step #2** - Have the group place their data cards (Post-It Notes) describing the future on storyboards or other suitable surface under the preprinted titles highlighted in the instructions, above. Ask the group to discuss and define any comments that they don't fully understand.

**Step #3** - Proceed to create affinity diagrams. Place the data cards (Post-It Notes) into groupings or clusters. Give each cluster a name. Analyze and decide what is illustrated in each of the clusters.

**Step #4** - Have participants study the information they've developed, and create narrative stories describing success and how that success is obtained through the group's actions.