

Multiple Streams of Writing Income: A 5-Step Plan to Leverage Your Writing.

By Marilyn Schwader, Writing Coach and Founder Clarity of Vision, Inc.

In the past 25 years, I've had quite the variety of experiences with all kinds of publishing. I've been a technical writer, project manager, editor, publisher, writing coach, and published author.

But it's been my one-on-one work the past four years with over 100 authors of the *Guide to Getting It* Life and Business Coaching book series that has given me incredible insights on creativity, planning, and promotion. As a result, I have developed a 5-step method to craft a strategic plan for your writing that incorporates aspects of creativity, technology, and commerce to help you move your concept from thought to form, and ultimately to your audience. In the process, you will increase your exposure to your writing and generate increased income.

Before we get started, I want to suggest that you have a pen and paper for notes. I will be giving you some questions to consider and encourage you to spend some time writing in a journal to answer to those questions. I've found that the writing process is one of the most effective ways to get clear about what you are experiencing in your life. Writing as you create your plan will help you before, during, and after you have written your actual product.

In this e-book, I am going to talk about why it's important to plan a strategy that will help you gain more exposure and create more income. I will share with you stories and exercises that will begin to stimulate your creativity. From there I will take you through the steps to create a vision, mission, and purpose for your writing. Once those are firmly in your mind, I will describe a number of strategies to consider for promoting, selling, and using the same writing in different ways.

We have a lot of ground to cover, so let's get started.

Step 1: Keep in mind, nothing turns out as you expect it to in the creative process.

Creating a strategic plan for your writing is just as important and uses the same creative energy as your actual writing. That's the fun and exciting part... if you let that process be free. Let go of expectations of how you are going to get to your goals and you will see more possibilities of how to accomplish them. When you get locked into one view, you might miss the easier or more direct way. Know that this plan can change, morph, and grow. You will refine it, add to it, remove items, and expand items. Nothing is written in stone. And remember, always have fun as you create!

Step 2. Create a clear, compelling vision to keep you on course.

This might seem to be in direct conflict with letting go of expectations in Step 1. However, there is a distinct difference between expectation and vision.

Expectations are beliefs that your process has to transpire in a certain way. Vision is what you want to accomplish, the big picture view that will keep you on target. Imagination is the basis of a vision. As you begin to implement the vision, systems and skills take over. A vision develops by becoming specific. When you take the first step, all the steps after that acknowledge and relate to that first step. The development of a vision into reality is a progression of decreasing possibilities. Each step toward the goal reduces future options by converting one—and only one—possibility into that reality.

If you limit yourself to an expectation of only one possibility, you will be limiting the way you can attain your vision. So dream your dreams and implant the vision in your mind. The more compelling it is, the more it will keep you on course through the obstacles that you will surely encounter.

Visions are realized in the connection between you and something, and both you and that something need to be free to move.

Creating Your Vision

Now that you have an understanding of the distinction between letting go of expectations in the creative process and what a vision is, let's get to creating that vision for your writing.

Definition of Vision

The first question to ask is, "Why do you need to define a vision for what you write?"

A clear vision keeps you on course; it keeps you on purpose. It forecasts the total journey you are about to take and gives you something to strive toward. It's your writing's higher purpose...something to which you and your writing aspire. Your vision needs to be so clear and focused that you will be proud to repeat it at will to every person you meet. Your vision charts your course and keeps you true to what you want to achieve.

"A vision is a picture of a preferred future state, a description of what it would be like to be some years from now. It is a dynamic picture of the future. It is more than a dream or set of hopes; it is a commitment. The vision provides the context for designing or managing the changes that will be necessary to reach those goals." – Cynthia D. Scott, Dennis T. Jeffe, and Glenn R. Tobe

For example, the vision for the *Guide to Getting It* Life and Business Coaching book series is: To help people integrate the values of wisdom, leadership, spirituality, mastery, creativity, and vitality to encourage transformation and healing through the writing of coaches.

Important Note: A vision will be in direct proportion to your belief about what you think you can accomplish or what you feel is possible for you. When creating your vision, you have to exercise "no-limit thinking," with the premise, "What would your writing look like if it were impossible for you to fail?" With this type of thinking, your vision will obviously be quite different. It's important to realize that your vision should be a "best case" scenario as opposed to something you know you can do.

The Four Components of Vision

Vision is comprised of four parts, which I will describe in this section:

1. Purpose
2. Mission
3. Values
4. Description

Purpose

The purpose is your ultimate intention. It is the “why your writing exists” statement; when others hear it, they have a sense of what you want your writing to be. The purpose statement is something you strive for, your aspirations.

For example, the purpose for the *Guide to Getting It* Life and Business Coaching book series is to present “Ideas and Tools from Life Coaches to help You Live Your Life’s Dreams.” The purpose of *The Traveler’s Gift* by Andy Andrews is for the reader to understand the “Seven Decisions That Determine Personal Success.”

Purpose can be the central theme of your writing, and can also be used as a brand to establish your writing in the intended audience’s thinking.

Exercise two: Write in your journal about what statement you want people to identify with to remember your writing. What is the reason why you are writing it in the first place?

Mission

The mission is comprised of the big initiatives that you are going to accomplish. This is the list of goals and strategic actions that you are striving to achieve. Your purpose drives your mission. Your mission is composed of goals and activities that you could check off when completed; it is not a destination.

Examples:

Best-seller status: To make Amazon.com, New York Times, and Barnes & Noble best-seller lists.

Number of books sold: To sell 30,000 copies of my book via the Internet.
 Exposure: To have 10 articles on other people's websites.

Values

Values speak to your true essence and represent who you are and what you stand for. Experts have pointed out that if a person were to lose one of their core values, he or she would be a totally different person. Others claim that we die for our values before we compromise them.

Here's an exercise to determine your values. First choose one value from the following list that you feel you could not live without:

Adventure	Risk	Thrill	Attractiveness
Exhilaration	Magnificence	Loveliness	Radiance
Danger	Stimulation	Influence	Serve
Beauty	Provide	Assist	Imagination
Grace	Inspire	Discover	Learn
Freedom	Spirituality	Accomplishment	Innovation
Achievement	Health	Power	Vitality
Creativity	Security	Advancement	Pride
Wisdom	Affection	Family	Integrity
Self-Respect	Honesty	Community	Learning
Peace	Intelligence	Cooperation	Wealth
Order	Recognition	Loyalty	Experience
Mastery	Excellence	Bliss	Sensuality
Fun	Pleasure	Connection	Tenderness
Touch	Compassion	Support	Empathy
Awareness	Acceptance	Devotion	Passion
Education	Accomplishment	Attraction	To Teach

Write that value here. Value 1. _____

Now choose a second value from the list that you would also feel you could not live without.

Value 2. _____

Do this until you have your top six values.

Value 3. _____

Value 4. _____

Value 5. _____

Value 6. _____

Aligning Your Vision With Your Values

Now that you know your top values, you are ready to align your vision with them. This is where you can look at what you'd like to accomplish in your writing to reflect what you honor in your life. Remember, don't adapt the value to the vision; create the vision to support the value. You are using the values as the reference point. The vision will drive your efforts, but is not what drives your life.

Description

The description is made up of three major components:

1. Words...that
2. Elicit Emotions ... that
3. Paint a vivid picture

The words you use to describe your vision should elicit emotions that then paint a vivid picture in your mind. The description will answer many questions, some of which are listed below:

- Why does your writing exist?
- What does your writing represent?
- Why you do the writing you do?
- What do you aspire to?
- What is the experience of your readers?
- What are your values?
- Who is your intended audience?

Inspirational Gap

When creating your vision, it's important that the vision is clear and concise—probably several paragraphs, at most. It also has to drive an

enormous amount of energy from where you are to where you want to be. The inspirational gap powers the energy to create your vision and propels you into action toward what you desire.

This gap is the bridge that spans the distance between where you are, who you are, and who you see yourself becoming. Like any bridge, if it is not engineered properly, it will never serve the purpose it was designed to serve.

Vision Recap

Let's recap what you've learned with respect to writing a vision statement:

- ❑ Your vision needs a purpose.
- ❑ Your vision needs a mission that is achievable and concise.
- ❑ Your vision needs a description that includes words that elicit emotion and paints a picture in your mind.
- ❑ Your vision needs to include and align with your values.
- ❑ Your vision needs to have an inspirational gap.
- ❑ Your vision needs to motivate and inspire.
- ❑ Your vision needs to provoke you to action.

The Vision Statement for *A Guide To Getting It* book series:

My vision is to help people integrate the values of wisdom, leadership, spirituality, mastery, creativity, and vitality to encourage personal and spiritual transformation and healing using the writing of coaches.

The book series creates a prosperous environment and provides mechanisms for change to help people step into their true power, using tools that support the roles of acceptance, belief, and choice in a balanced, loving, and embracing way. The information incorporates the following values: spirituality, wisdom, leadership, mastery, integrity, creativity, and vitality. When all of these are integrated, the result is transformation and ultimately healing.

The authors believe that every person has the ability to heal himself or herself and by doing so, to affect the healing of their families, their communities, and the earth. We feel strongly that the world is at a critical stage, that there is a need for transformational shifts on a cellular and universal level. The need for healers to step forward and become leaders

is essential for solving problems in all arenas of personal, professional, and global concerns.

Healers must begin to move from a place of individual work to a responsive, educational, and instructive level of leading. We challenge people to accept their own ability to heal and change—as we each have the power to do. This is promoted through creative work, tapping into universal truths, changing belief systems, and embracing new choices.

The writing in this series engages and challenges individuals to deepen their connections, to think in more abstract and complex ways, to apply what they learn, and most important, to work with colleagues and communities to foster healthy choices for all.

3. Leveraging Your Writing

Now that you have a clear vision with a purpose and mission aligned with your values, you can determine what strategy will best help you attain your vision. To do that, the first step is to look at how you might leverage your writing in different mediums and formats.

A frequent conversation I have with my writing clients is how to best utilize their writing to gain more exposure and to create more income. If there is one thing that will accomplish both of these objectives, it's learning how to leverage your writing.

I suggest that you write something once, then use it in various mediums. Let me give you an example. I was asked to present a teleclass for a Special Interest Group through CoachU called the e-publication SIG. I spent several days developing the content for that free offering. Around the same time, I was approached to participate in a book promotion for an author in my series who was launching her own book. Since I was already writing a course, I decided to offer that as a bonus gift for the promotion.

As I was developing the marketing content and web pages for the promotion, I saw that if I expanded the content, I could create an e-book to sell as a companion piece. I will eventually use the initial writing and combine it with other marketing material to use in a printed book, and will record that book for sale as a book on tape. I also use it as a tool with my writing clients. At this point, I have used one piece of writing five

times, some for direct income, others for marketing purposes, and always for learning by my readers and clients.

The next step is to submit portions of the content to magazines and online sites that are seeking guest columnists. And finally, I will be expanding the content to begin offering live workshops and retreats for potential writers.

My goal is to use any writing I create a minimum of five different ways, more if possible. From my example, here are the methods I am using:

- ❑ Teleclass Content
- ❑ Web logs (Blogs)
- ❑ Podcasts
- ❑ CDs
- ❑ MP3s
- ❑ Workbook
- ❑ e-courses
- ❑ e-books
- ❑ Articles for publication
- ❑ Book
- ❑ Book on tape
- ❑ Workshops/Speeches
- ❑ Retreats

Another form of leverage is to use parts of what you've written to create another completely new work. I save all my writing, regardless if I use it immediately or not. This week, as I was finalizing my chapter for the next book in my coaching book series, I used writing I had done several years ago titled, "Breaking the Pattern: The Seven C's of Transformation." Although it was not published at the time I wrote it, I've used various versions and parts of it in several other works that have subsequently been published.

Writing is like piecing together a quilt. Sometimes just one sentence from a work you've already written will fit nicely into a new piece. Other times, I've used an entire article and put it in a longer piece, such as a chapter in the series, or in the book I am writing for publication next year.

The content of the e-book you are currently reading is from at least six other sources I've written over the past three years. My task has been to organize the ideas and edit it to make the reading flow with the reader not realizing it was pieced together.

The creative process is like diving for pearls. You might write ten pages and only one sentence works well for your current use. Or you might write ten sentences and they are all pearls. Combining bits and pieces from different writing sessions has resulted in some of my best work.

There are also the times that I write something that doesn't seem very dazzling or pertinent at the time I wrote it. Then—sometimes years later—I will read it again and the message is completely apt and the writing is compelling. I'm sure you've had the experience of reading a book and getting a specific message from it, then reading it again a year or two later and another completely different message jumps out at you. It's the same with your own writing. So keep everything you work on, whether it's on the computer or in long-hand. You never know when you will be leveraging it in one way or another!

4. Developing Your Strategies and Tasks

Now that you have a clear vision and you know what mediums you will use your writing in, you can start to develop strategies to drive your exposure and your revenue. Each person's vision is different. As a result, their strategies and tasks will vary as well. I am going to give you examples of my own strategy. You can embellish, change, remove, or adjust any of these suggestions to fit your vision.

Strategies

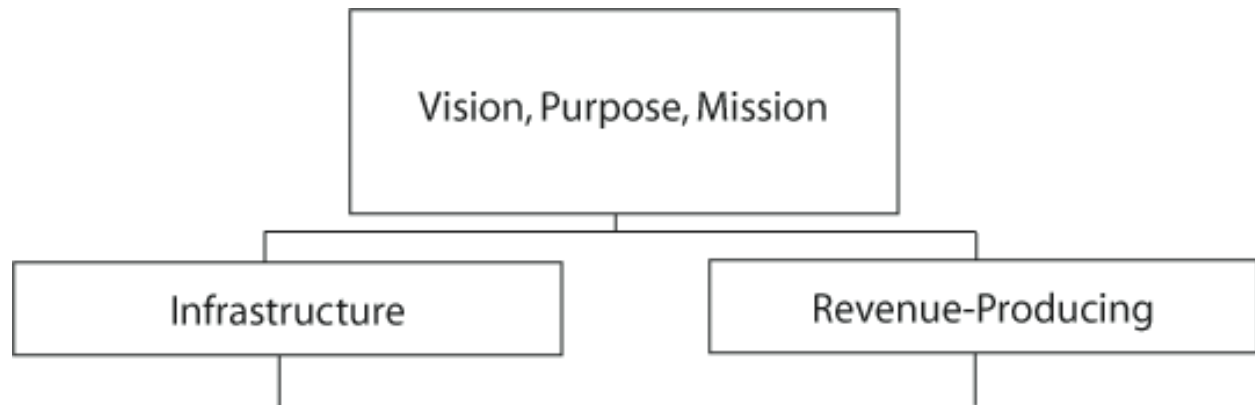
Strategies are the critical success factors that are driving your vision. There are two types of strategies we will look at here:

1. Infrastructure
2. Direct Revenue-Producing

At this point, I suggest that you get a large piece of paper, or even better a large white board with several different colored markers. You will be

making a flowchart, so turn the paper horizontally and at the top draw a box and then write your one sentence vision in the box.

Below that box, draw lines down to two boxes, and write Infrastructure and Direct Revenue-Producing in the boxes.



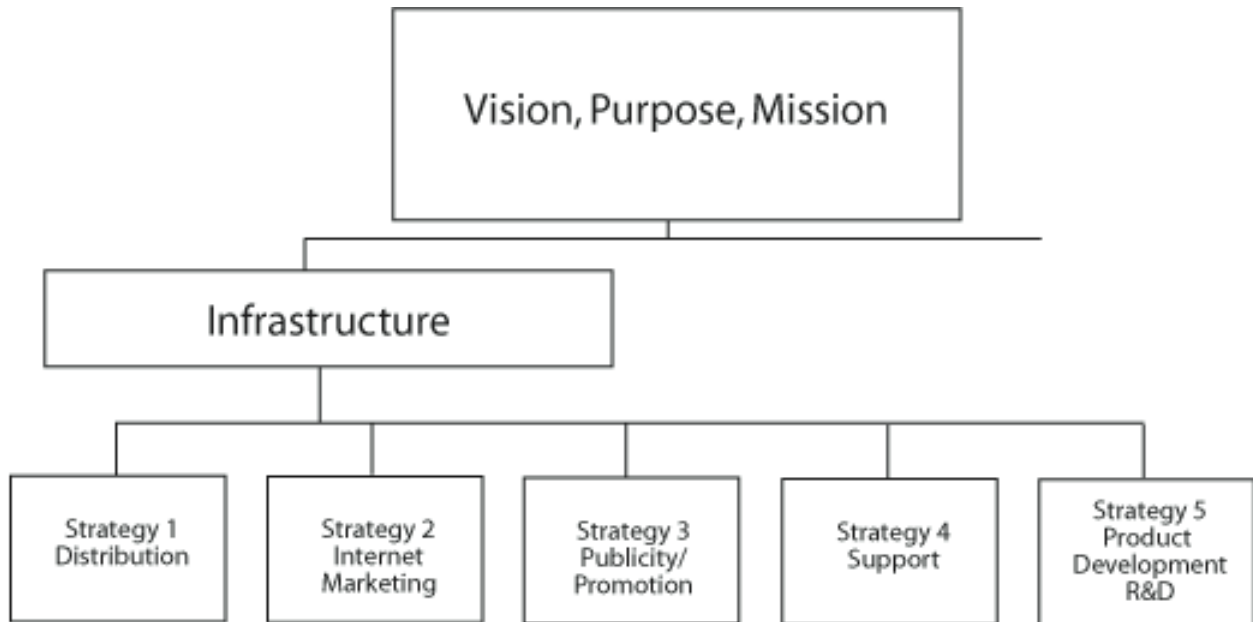
For purposes of illustration, I will use the examples from my own strategic plan. With an idea that I will eventually use all of the methods I talked about in the “Leveraging Your Writing” section above, the first thing I will consider is channels of distribution—how I will get the products to my audience. Let’s look again at the types of products I will be producing:

- ❑ Teleclass Content
 - ❑ Web logs (Blogs)
 - ❑ Podcasts
 - ❑ CDs
 - ❑ MP3s
 - ❑ Workbook
 - ❑ e-courses
 - ❑ e-books
 - ❑ Articles for publication
 - ❑ Book
 - ❑ Book on tape
 - ❑ Workshops/Speeches
 - ❑ Retreats
- The digital products (MP3s, e-courses, e-books, Blogs, podcasts) will be distributed via an Internet strategy.
 - Printed material, Cds, and Books on Tape will require a Physical Distribution strategy.

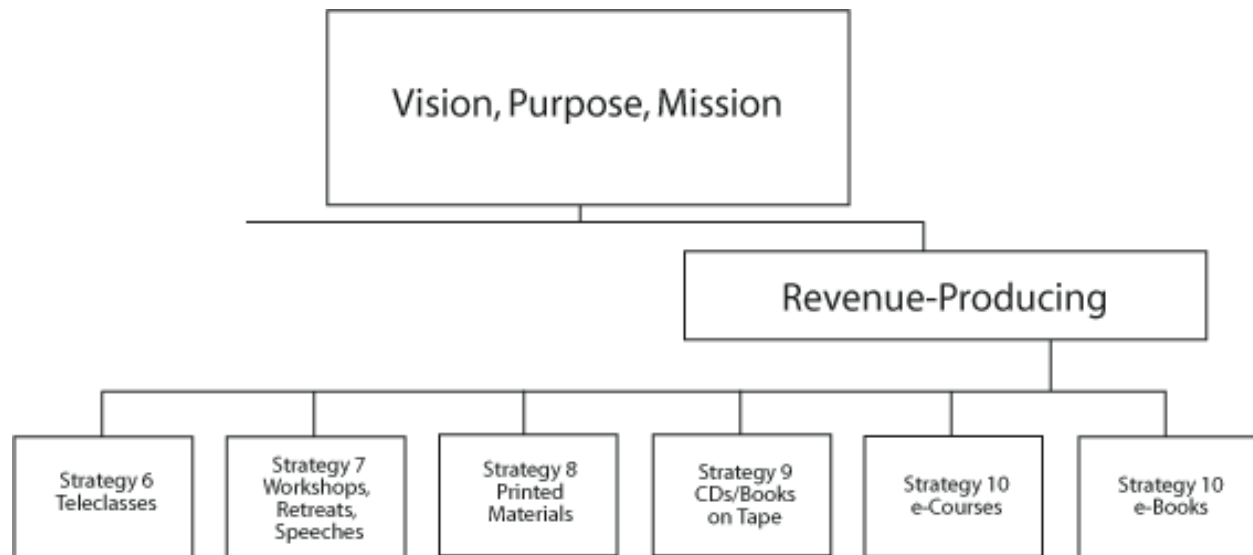
- Teleclasses, workshops and retreats require different approaches, and so are included as separate strategies.

The Physical Distribution and Internet are strategies themselves, and are also the foundation for several of the other strategies, so I consider them Infrastructure.

Publicity and Promotion, Support, and Product Development/R&D are also under Infrastructure. Draw five boxes under Infrastructure and add each of these strategies.



Under Revenue-Generation, draw six boxes and add Teleclasses, Workshops/Speeches/Retreats, Printed Material, Cds/Books on Tape, e-courses, e-books.



You have now identified your strategies. The next thing to do is to develop a list of tasks to accomplish those strategies.

Tasks

Tactics are the specific steps that need to be taken to accomplish the strategy and vision. I take each of the strategies and brainstorm what needs to be done to get them set up and operating. I will use my tactics to show you how this is done. This is not a definitive list. As you proceed, more will be added to the list. You will find that some will not be necessary and can be eliminated. As you develop your own list, you will begin to see what you might not want to take on as a strategy and eliminate that from your plan.

Important! Many people move into overwhelm and panic when they see the extent of this list. I am not suggesting that you take on all of the tasks at once! What this process does is give you the big picture of the possibilities. From there, take one or two strategies at a time and get started. As you progress, you will be able to look at all of the other strategies/tasks and see how your writing can be leveraged more easily for other strategies/tasks.

Remember, your vision is what keeps you on track. The extent of your list might seem like a big obstacle if you don't have that clear, compelling reason to tackle it. However, when you are moving toward a specific goal, the tasks become much less daunting.

Strategy: Physical Distribution

Tasks:

- ❑ Write Marketing Plan: This is necessary if you choose the route of Distributor or Wholesaler. If you choose a Fulfillment Center, they do not require a Marketing Plan.
- ❑ Write Cover Letter to accompany Marketing Plan
- ❑ Choose Distributors or Wholesalers to approach
- ❑ Send query letters to Distributors or Wholesalers
- ❑ Shipment from office/home: Many self-publishing authors will need to consider this task.
- ❑ Mailing and shipping methods (FedEx, UPS, USPS)

Strategy: Internet Marketing and Distribution

Tasks:

- ❑ Reserve domain name
- ❑ Choose Webhost
- ❑ Obtain Merchant Account
- ❑ Choose Shopping Cart
- ❑ Hire designer
- ❑ Set up Mailing List capture system
- ❑ Create Autoresponders
- ❑ Write marketing content
- ❑ Set up Affiliate Program
- ❑ Contact Affiliates
- ❑ Search Engine Optimization
- ❑ Create Blog page

Strategy: Publicity and Promotion

Tasks:

- ❑ Create Press Kit
- ❑ Create database of radio/tv stations
- ❑ Research contacts at stations
- ❑ Send press kits to station contacts
- ❑ Research newspaper/newsprint contacts
- ❑ Send press kits to newsprint contacts

- ❑ Alternate plan: Hire publicist

Strategy: Product Development and R&D

Tasks:

- ❑ Create online products
- ❑ Create Cds & Books on Tape
- ❑ Create class content
- ❑ Write blogs
- ❑ Create content for workshops
- ❑ Create content for speeches
- ❑ Create content for retreats
- ❑ Write book
- ❑ Research podcasts

Strategy: Support

Tasks:

- ❑ Hire Coach/Coaches
- ❑ Hire Assistant
- ❑ Hire Virtual Assistant
- ❑ Hire Bookkeeper/Accountant

Strategy: Teleclasses

Tactics:

- Take class on teleclass presentations
- Become a certified teleclass presenter
- Write Marketing content
- Refine database for marketing
- Send marketing material to database
- Judge response to marketing efforts
- Develop Content
- Choose recording technology (purchase recorder or online)
- Rent Bridgeline
- Choose telephone technology (headset, etc.)

Strategy: Workshops/Speeches/Retreats

Tasks:

- Write marketing content
- Refine database for marketing
- Send marketing material to database
- Judge response to marketing efforts

- Develop Content
- Reserve Location
- Find volunteers or staff for support
- Arrange food/drink
- Ship products to site for sale
- Set up payment system for sales

Strategy: Printed Material

Tasks:

- Write content
- Find editor
- Send review copies
- Find graphic designer for cover material
- Accumulate reviews for marketing purposes
- Design cover
- Get ISBN numbers
- Create bar code label
- Hire production/layout designer
- Get printing estimates

Strategy: Cds/Books on Tape

Tasks:

- Find recording studio
- Arrange recording of classes, speeches, etc.
- Review content
- Hire graphic designer for cover material
- Design cover
- Get ISBN number
- Create bar code label
- Get production estimates

Strategy: e-courses

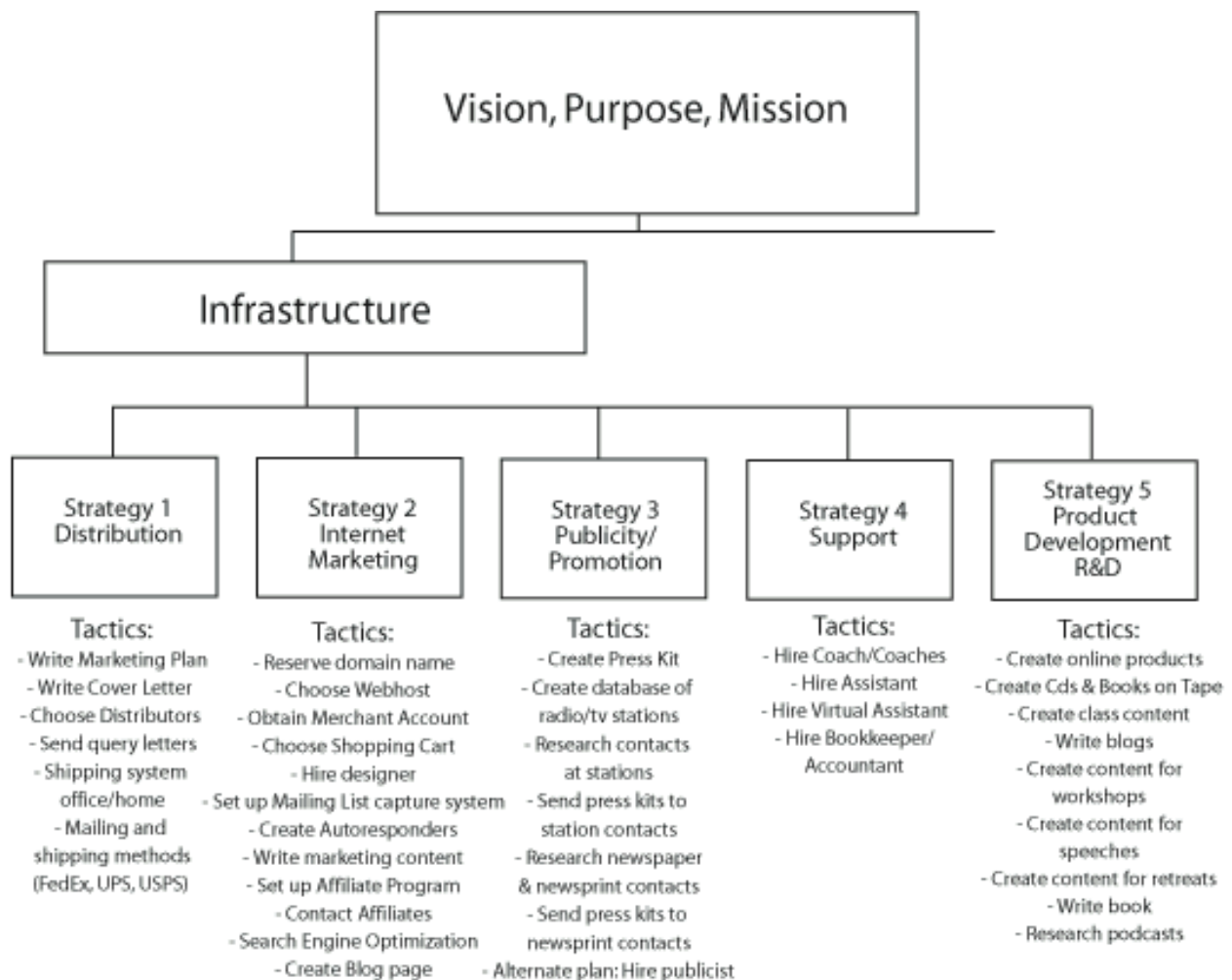
Tasks:

- Write content
- Hire Editor
- Set up broadcast system in shopping cart
- Refine database
- Market the e-course

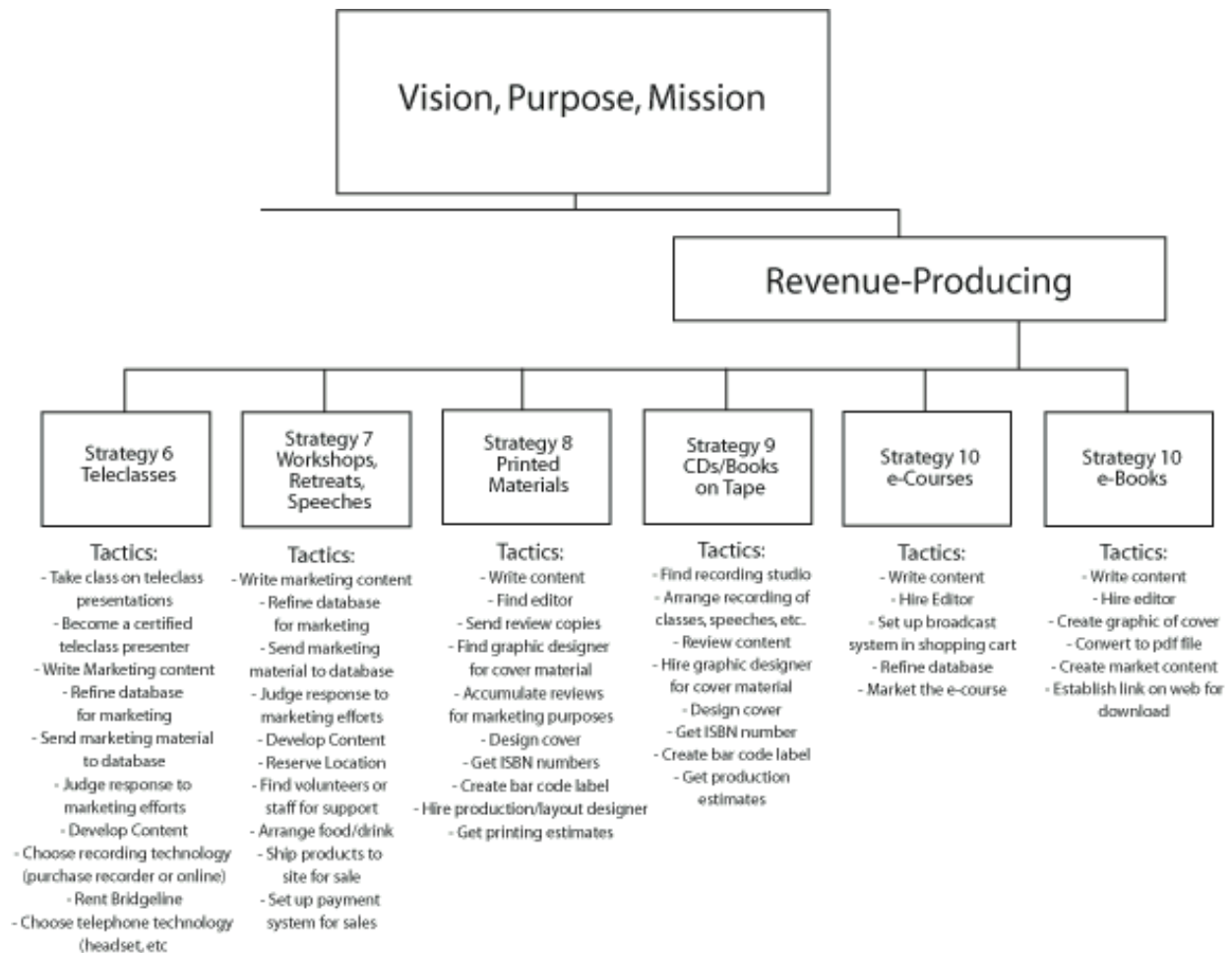
Strategy: e-books

Tasks:

- Write content
- Hire editor
- Create graphic of cover
- Convert to pdf file
- Create market content
- Establish link on web for download



All Strategies and Tactics will support your vision and how you are going to reach it.
 Strategies are the critical success factors that are driving revenue.
 Tactics are the specific steps that need to be taken to accomplish the strategy and vision.



All Strategies and Tactics will support your vision and how you are going to reach it.
 Strategies are the critical success factors that are driving revenue.
 Tactics are the specific steps that need to be taken to accomplish the strategy and vision.

Now that you have your task lists, you can begin. Choose your priority strategy, then build from there. What I saw clearly after doing this was that an Internet Marketing strategy was a crucial piece of the picture for all of the Revenue-Generating strategies. Distribution was also a key for the printed material I was producing. And of course, when I saw the extent of tasks, I immediately looked at where I would get Support. So I

focused on those three areas first. Teleclasses came next, with the rest of the strategies unfolding in their own time.

Like the creative process, your strategic plan will continually develop. That's why I like to have it drawn out on a large whiteboard. I can see how everything flows and can move things around, check off, add to, or take out of the plan. I keep a smaller, printed copy, too, so I can see my progress.

5. Holding On To Your Vision

Designer Charles Eames once said that he devoted only about one percent of his energy to conceiving a design; the remaining ninety-nine percent was spent holding onto the vision as the project developed. For a writer, holding on to the vision is the ability to work on what is directly in front of you—to develop the possible.

Self-awareness expands your understanding and provides more clarity to the vision process. From that awareness, you can begin to see your objective more clearly, which ultimately brings more enjoyment to each task and accomplishment. In holding onto a vision, allow room for all the parts to meld together authentically, both toward the vision, and through the material at hand.

Holding on to a vision, while letting go of the expectation of an outcome has risks. You might never get to the destination you imagined. There is no certainty in creating. What's really needed is no more than a broad sense of what you are looking for, an approach for finding it, and a willingness to embrace mistakes and surprises along the way.

No writer gets every composition right the first time. Nor will every strategy work on the first try. Get in the habit of being inquisitive and making observations. Remove expectations, become familiar with your materials, and hold on to your vision. When you truly understand and accept how this works, the power of your vision will be unleashed and the end result will be a work of art.

To contact Marilyn, email marilyn@clarityofvision.com or call 503-460-0014. For more information about Marilyn's coaching, the Guide to Getting It book series, or her other products and services, visit <http://www.clarityofvision.com>.