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Quick guide: vision & mission



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“A personal or company vision gives you a sense of how things could be. It’s your ideal future, it says what you, or even the world, could become.”

Mel Larsen

CultureHive Small Scale Development Programme Trainer



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Vision

an ideal future caused by you

Your vision is the driving force behind your organisation. It's the thing that gets you up in the morning and keeps you awake at night.

It's the ultimate aspiration that unites your team and inspires donors to give.

Your vision is the difference you want to make in the world. It is your version of an ideal future.

Some of the strongest visions you will ever read are ten words or less. Those words may be the hardest you'll ever have to write.

Once written, your vision will enhance everything you do. It will give people a reason to believe in you.



Vision exercise #1

find three visions that move you

- Search the internet for examples of charity visions
- Read as many as you have time for
- Write down three, in the boxes below, that particularly moved you or stayed in your mind
- Spend 10 minutes thinking about why they grabbed your attention

"A just world without poverty"

Oxfam

"A society that enables everyone to flourish"

Chickenshed

"A society that invests in its children's creativity"

Creative Kids

"People will experience the story of England where it really happened"

English Heritage

"Fewer people die by suicide"

Samaritans

Vision exercise #2

think about your ideal future

- Get your team or a few colleagues together
- Imagine you could not fail
- Ask yourself the following questions and note down some thoughts

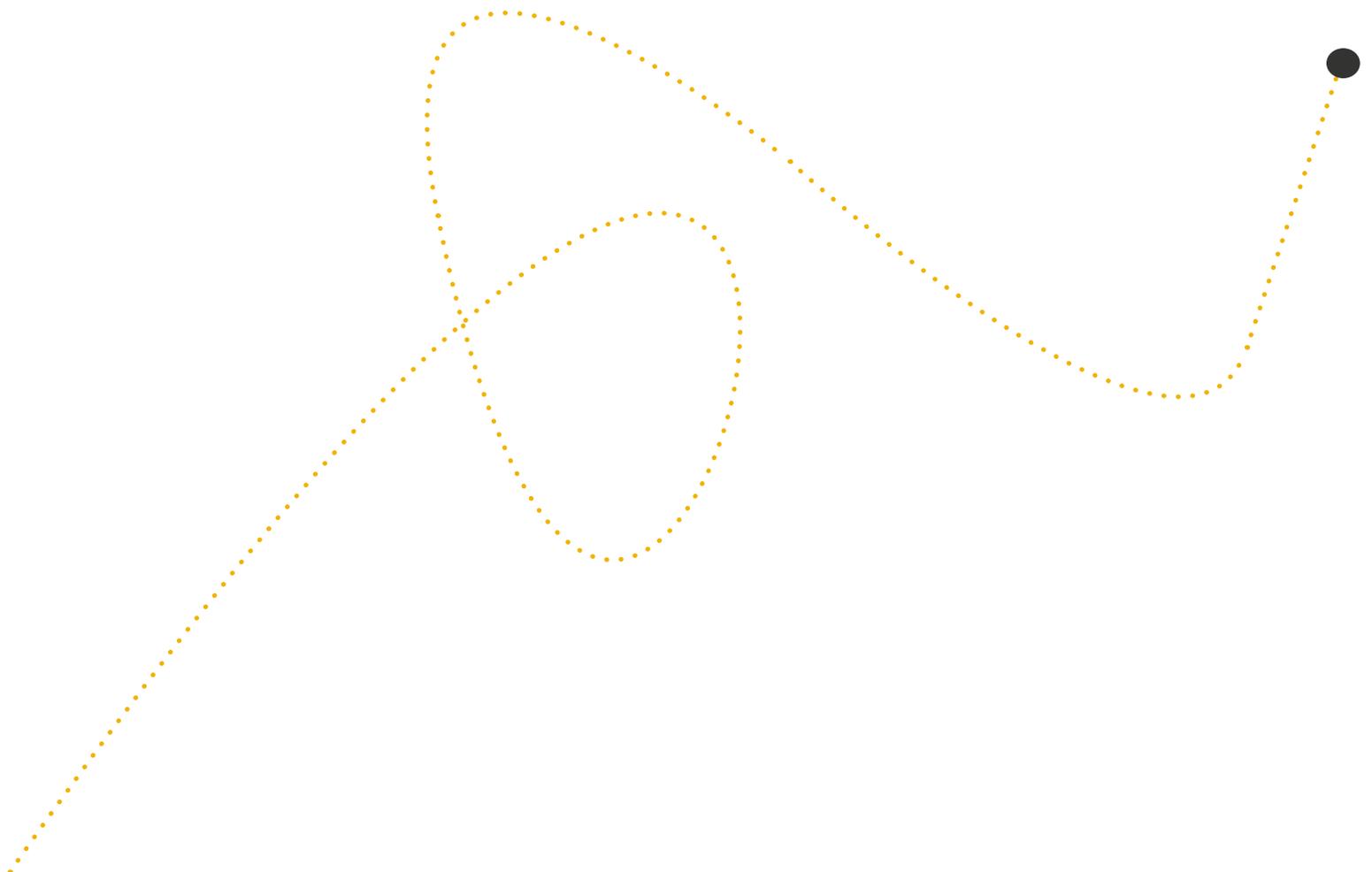
What is our ideal future/world/society?

What is the biggest difference we could cause?
(Remember that you're imagining you could not fail)

Vision exercise #3

write, re-write and hone your vision

- Invite each member of your team to write a vision for the organisation (remember that short is memorable)
- Share your visions and group them into like-minded statements
- Make a note of any words that keep cropping up
- Work together to create a single vision that incorporates those words
- Ask why - why is that important? Why do we want to achieve that?
- When nobody needs to ask why anymore then you'll know you've cracked it
- Be brutal - cross out any words that don't matter
- Finally, do the memory test; leave your vision for a few days - can you still remember it?



Mission

your ideal future action statement

Your mission keeps you on track. It explains what you do, who you do it for and why you do it.

It's your mini master plan of how you'll achieve your lofty vision.

Your mission talks to people. It says this is what we plan to do for you and why.

If you want it to have impact, your mission needs to be memorable. If your team can't remember it then it's time for an edit; only keep the words that count.

Once memorised, your mission will inform everything you do.



Mission exercise #1

think about how you will realise
your vision

- Ask yourself the following questions and note down some thoughts

What do we do and how?

Who do we do it for?

Why do we do it?

Mission exercise #2

stitch it together

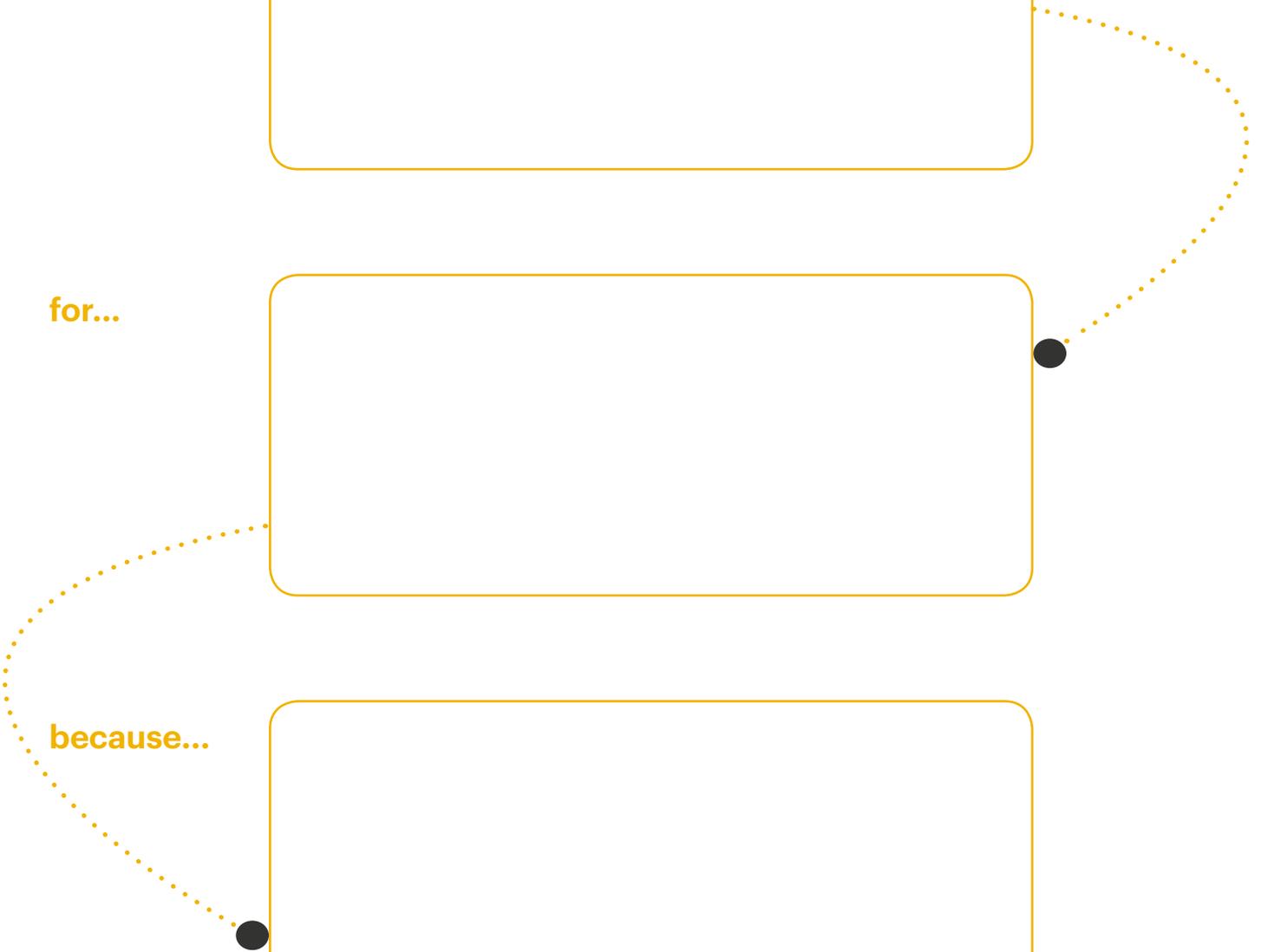
We...

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for...

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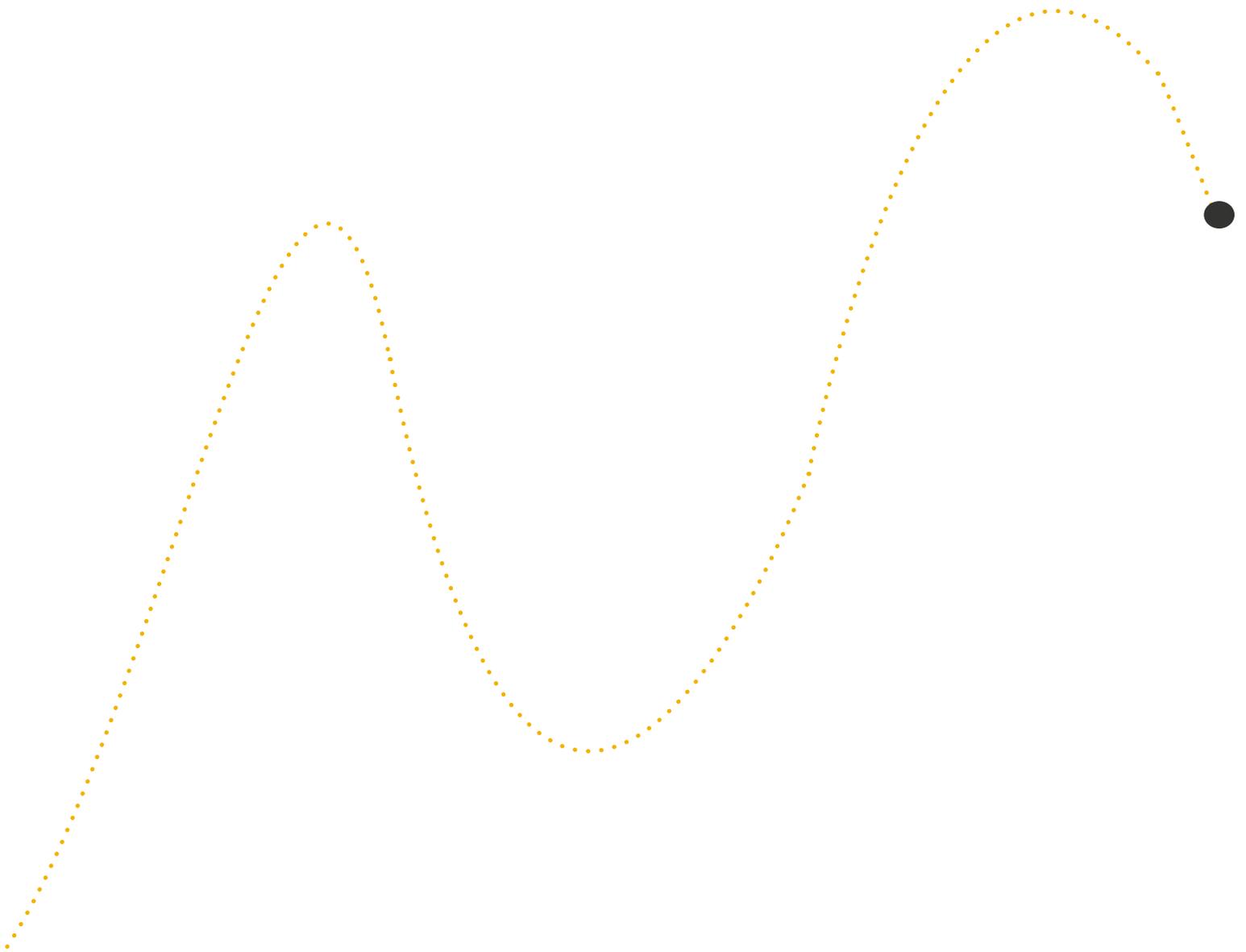
because...

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Mission exercise #3

refine your mission

- Now you know you've got all the key components, play around with the order and phrasing until it works for you
- Edit ruthlessly until you're left with a short and punchy statement
- Test your mission with someone outside your organisation
- Is it clear what you do, who you do it for and why you do it?
- Do your vision and mission work together? Does your mission feel like a credible plan for achieving your vision?
- If the answer to all of these questions is 'yes' then your work here is done



Communicating your vision and mission

drawing people into your ideal future

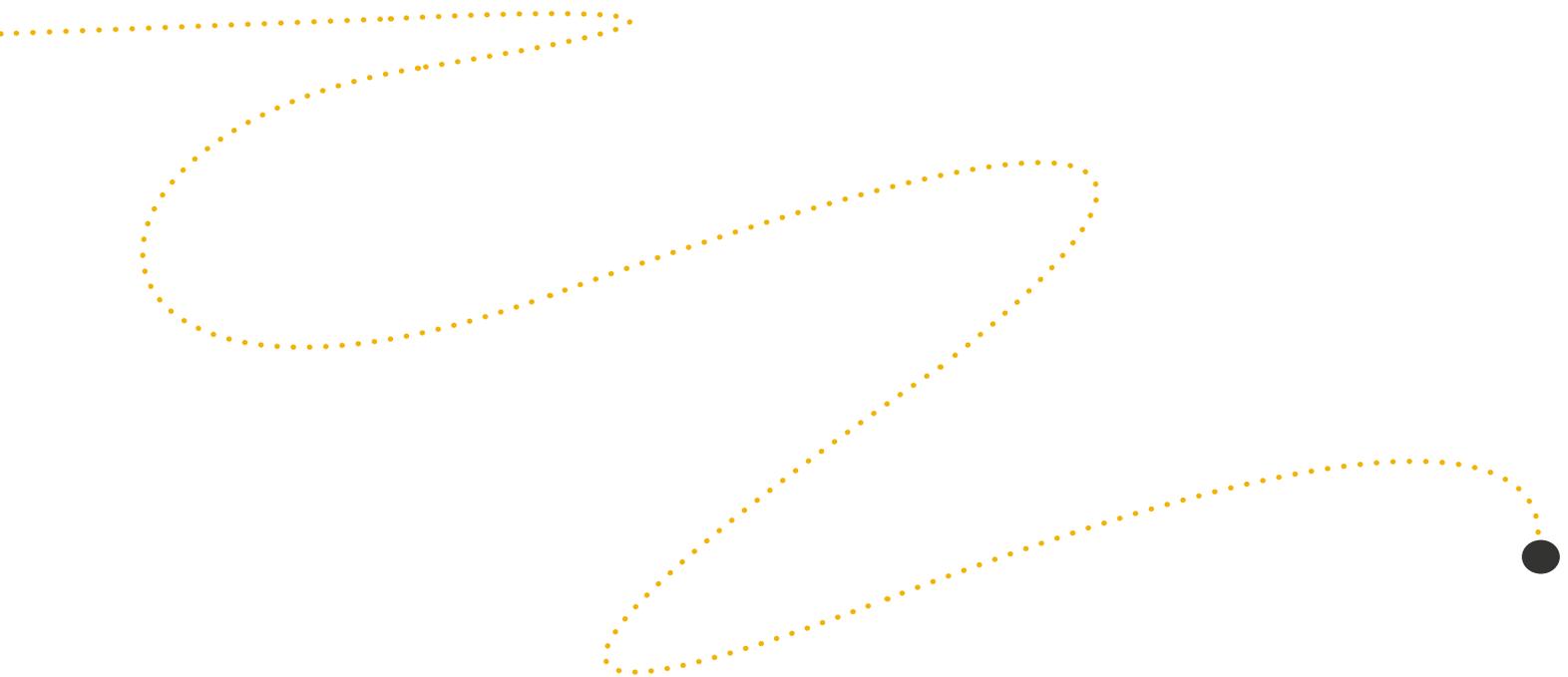
Look to the wider charity sector for inspiration on how to share your vision and mission.

The RNLI, for example, begins every job description with how that role contributes to the organisation's purpose and vision. Every member of the team joins knowing "My job saves lives at sea by..."

Embedding your vision and mission in the mind of every team member is a great way to keep everyone on track, working towards your ultimate aspiration.

Sharing them with the rest of the world will show people what you stand for and why they should give you the time of day.

Be succinct, be memorable and be proud of your vision and mission.





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