

# MISSION possible



**Once you've gotten to know the staff and assessed the newsroom's culture, it's time to turn your attention to the changes that may be needed. How can you best develop and share your vision for the future?**

## **Be inclusive**

Develop the mission and vision with staff input. Find out what they think the mission currently is and what they think it ought to be. You might try asking each work group to develop its own mission statement—a list of what they expect from themselves every day and what others should expect from them. Incorporate the common themes from these statements into the overall vision for the newsroom.

## **Enlist the staff**

Involve as many members of the staff as possible in deciding how the new vision or mission can be implemented. "You can explain some new strategy to the staff, but putting it into action is much more demanding," says one news director. "Letting them help form the plan to execute that new vision or mission works wonders."

## **Explain clearly**

Make sure the goals you set are well understood. "I'm not sure when it became okay to keep as much information from your people as possible," says WDSU's Anzio Williams. "I believe in letting them know what we're trying to accomplish." Help employees understand how the mission can help them do their jobs better, and possibly further their careers, one news director says. "If the employees have a stake in what you're doing, they'll be more receptive."

## **Share widely**

Write up the vision, post it on the wall, send it out by email, mention it in meetings and personal conversations. Have a large group meeting and get the entire station involved, not just the newsroom. "From sales to accounting, everyone needs to be on board with the mission and know why it's important," one news director says.

“Let the staff know why you are making changes, get their involvement in creating the change so they have buy in.”

Joyce Reed • Vice President of Strategy • Griffin Communication

### Be consistent

Once you've set the vision, stick to it. Your priorities for the newscast must be exactly the same every day. It's easy to confuse or discourage the staff if you push "breaking news" on Monday and "in-depth investigations" on Thursday, one news director says.

### Reinforce often

Make a point of noting when the mission pays off in coverage or ratings. Share examples of success in every story meeting every day. If you don't talk about the vision or mission every day, none of the strategy you've worked so hard to develop will take hold.

