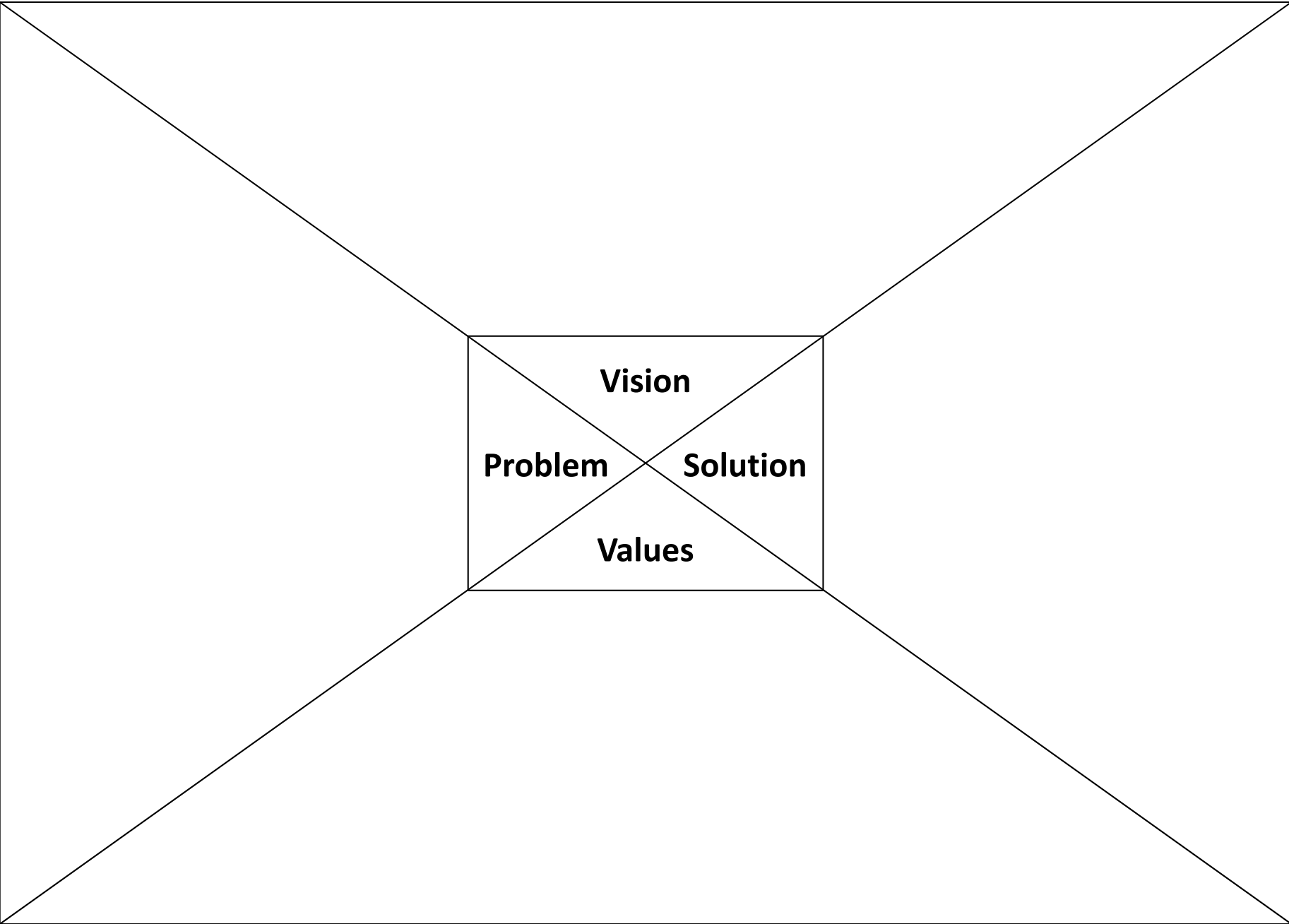


The Message Box

- A tool to keep you “on message”
- Helps distill your key arguments to the ones you need to repeat over and over.
- Keeps you focused on Level One Values and Solutions
- Gives you the “cheat sheet” for interviews and debates.
- The place you bridge and pivot back to from hard questions and damaging frames.

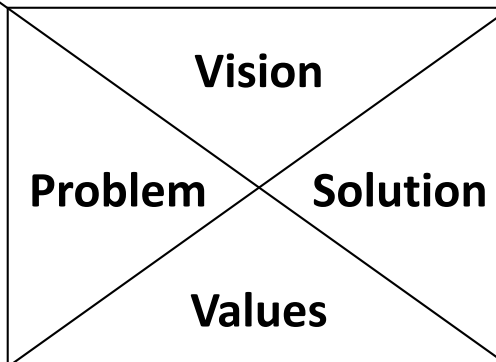


Your vision for the community, state, society. A sense of the purpose and goal that drives you to seek the change you are working for. Your aspiration and inspiration.

A clear statement of the problem you are trying to address in a way that everyone can see their stake in addressing the issue.

The solution you are proposing and the principles or outcomes it is designed to achieve.

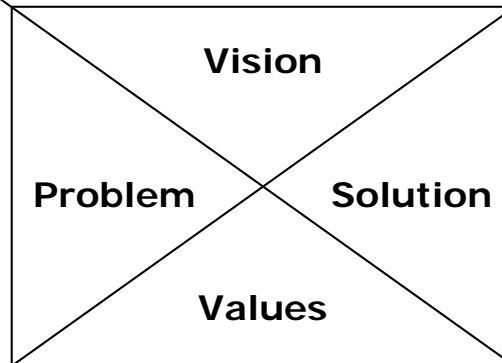
The Level One Values that underpin the challenge and your proposed solution. The answer to the “why does it matter” question.



We want communities that are safe and secure and offer opportunities for all people to live and work together peaceably.

Our criminal justice system focuses most of its energy and resources on locking up those who commit crimes and too little on helping them become productive citizens again and prepare them for returning to our communities.

Investing in re-entry services and supports is proven to actually make our communities safer. It costs less than locking people up and helps those who have committed crimes in the past to become productive members of our communities again.



Justice, redemption, security, opportunity

Justice means the fair and moral treatment of all people – both those who have been wronged by crimes and those who have paid their dues to society and seek the opportunity to return to community life.

Everyone deserves a safe place to call home. We believe in an Oregon where families and neighbors are supported in times of crisis, and given opportunities to contribute.

The economic downturn means that too many families and individuals can't afford to pay their rent and may experience homelessness. All families and individuals have critical moments of needing assistance, and too many Oregon families don't have personal safety nets to protect them during these times.

We need to continue our existing efforts to prevent and end homelessness for families and individuals throughout Oregon. We need to protect the Emergency Housing Account. This proven, effective and efficient program will help prevent and end homelessness for thousands of Oregonians.

Vision

Solution

Values

We believe in an Oregon where families and individuals live in healthy communities, have opportunities to succeed in life, and those most impacted by the economic downturn are protected from the worst of its impacts. We believe that housing provides children with an opportunity to succeed in life. We believe in an Oregon where we pull together as a community during hard times.

Bridging and Pivoting

One of the important uses of the message box is to help you stay off of the opponents turf and keep you from repeating damaging frames in the questions you receive.

A technique to help you do this is called bridging, or pivoting; as in bridging from one side of the argument to another.

Useful bridging and pivoting phrases:

- “Actually . . .”
- “That’s a good question. (pause) Here’s how I think about this issue . . .”
- “The real question is . . .”

Practice

Four steps:

- Fill out a message box on an issue or policy you work on.
- Share your message box with your partners for feedback and modify based on comments.
- Prepare three hard questions about each others' issues.
- Role play Q&A with the questions, using the message box to keep your answers “on message.”

Resources

- Wallack, Lawrence, Katie Woodruff, Lori Dorfman and Irene Diaz, *Using Pivot Phrases in News for A Change: An Advocate's Guide to Working With the Media*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1999.
- The FrameWorks Institute E-Zine on Bridging http://www.frameworksinstitute.org/assets/files/eZines/bridging_ezine.pdf