

How the Libertarian Party Can Stop Infighting and Save the Country

A White Paper on Vision & Strategy

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A Party Without Vision

Libertarians are fighting. We fight about messaging. We fight about our mission. We fight about our personality conflicts. We fight by joining caucuses to fight people we disagree with, and then we start a civil war within our caucuses.

While we fight, our party loses ballot access, we lose good volunteers and activists, we miss opportunities to grow, and we burn ourselves out and the Libertarian Party to the ground.

The solution to the infighting is not to purge other factions. It is not to destroy other caucuses. And it most certainly is not to rant on social media.

The solution to solving the infighting is to rally and inspire libertarians. It is to get us fighting for the same cause. It is to have a clear vision and strategy.

We have let tactics drive our entire party for far too long while ignoring our purpose, our mission, and establishing a long-term strategy for success. We respond to crises instead of seizing any opportunity.

Simply put, we have no big goal to get our members behind. Because we have no big goal, they waste time-fighting amongst themselves in the most unproductive way imaginable.

Fortunately, there is a way out of this. Great companies and organizations are built by first having a great vision and then dictating a great strategy. Companies and organizations fail when they let tactics, instead of vision and strategy, drive decision-making.

By having a solid vision and a big inspiring goal to work towards, we will stop the infighting. We will retain and obtain the right people. We will save our party. And maybe our nation.

Sell Dreams and Benefits, Not Plans

Think about the revolutionary political and social movements throughout history. The successful ones were the movements that inspired people to act.

Martin Luther King Jr. did not loudly proclaim that he had a 20-point plan. No. Martin Luther King Jr. *HAD A DREAM*. While there is nothing wrong with having plans, few people care. They do care when they see suffering around them, and someone boldly stands up to stop it.

The Libertarian Party needs to be the party that boldly stands up to stop the wars and protects innocent people from the police state. The Libertarian Party must proudly support and defend the right of free people everywhere to live their lives however they choose so long as they are not harming others.

Plans are internal and help us get where we are going. Inspiring is external. Our vision is our foundation, and without foundation, we have no reason to exist. Vision is why we have plans. No one

joined the Libertarian Party because we are superior at planning or executing our projects. They likely joined because the state has harmed them or someone they loved.

Libertarians must sell the features of how our ideas help people. Posting platform positions verbatim on websites, social media, and brochures are selling features and not benefits. It is our job to paint the picture of how our ideas help people. If not, opponents will paint an entirely different image that will be distorted and inaccurate.

“Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it.” Dwight D. Eisenhower

What is the Vision?

The vision needs to come from an inspiring leader like a Presidential candidate, a national party chair, or simply someone that stands up and inspires others to act.

The vision should be a message that is Libertarian and not conservative, progressive, or moderate. It must be simple, inspirational, and touch people emotionally.

We often rely too heavily on facts and figures and forget the stories that connect. We forget our own stories of why we chose to join the Libertarian Party. We fail to communicate how our ideas could help in a practical sense.

Libertarians support each person's right to live their lives as they see fit so long as they are not harming anyone else. We do not need the state to dictate their morality on us when the state has maimed, enslaved, and abused to hold onto power throughout history.

Libertarians did not participate in this overreach. We oppose needless wars and hate government spying. We are disgusted at the state giving benefits and bailouts to large corporations. We will never oppose the rights of racial or religious minorities. We will never oppress anyone for their sexual orientation or gender.

Our message should be this: do not trust those that made these mistakes to undo them or fix them with the same policies.



Communicate the Vision

Candidates, county affiliates, state parties, and the national party all can share the plan. We are the ambassadors of libertarian philosophy.

Preaching to the choir is not communicating the vision, nor is discussing it at the local county party meeting with people who have already converted. It is not just going on podcasts and talking to fellow libertarians. It is taking the message to people who have never heard it before.

Not Everything Happens on Facebook

Communicating the message requires work. Posting memes on social media is not a substitute for writing Op-Eds that influence current policymakers. It is not a substitute for going on TV. It is not a substitute for going door-to-door or working the table at the downtown farmers market.

Candidate and party websites MUST have a call-to-action and meet commercial website general standards. We're selling ideas. Test for yourself. Visit your campaign or affiliate page as if it were your first introduction to anything libertarian. Would you join?

“Good business leaders create a vision, articulate the vision, passionately own the vision, and relentlessly drive it to completion.”

Jack Welch-Former CEO of General Electric

Setting an Inspiring Goal

While a vision can be inspiring, a big goal for everyone to get behind brings it all together. While specific plans are outside of the scope of this white paper, we believe that every candidate, every county affiliate, every state party, and the Libertarian National Party should create what Jim Collins calls a BHAG (Big Hairy Audacious Goal).

This goal gives the candidate or party something big and long-term to work towards. It needs to be measurable, long-term, challenging, but possible, inspiring your members and supporters. When everyone is working towards something positive, they are not fighting.

Your BHAG should be straightforward and easy to understand. For example, General Electric had a BHAG of becoming number 1 or number 2 in every market they served. This goal was measurable, long-term, and challenging.

What are some potential BHAG's for parties to have?

- Gaining official party status
- Electing a state legislator
- A specific percentage of the state's registered voters

Many different goals fit the criteria. Each county will be different. Each state is different. The important thing is that this is a goal most everyone can get behind and work hard to achieve.

A BHAG will get most everyone on the same page and stop the infighting.

When you reach your goal, create a new one. Remember to keep moving. Always remain focused on the goal. From the goal, we can set a strategy.

Let Vision Drive Strategy

It is easy to get caught up in fads. Will a podcast win an election? If we get invited to Joe Rogan's show, will we get invited to debates? If we do more on Facebook, will we finally win? The truth is that these tactics, while some are helpful, they do not make or break the organization. They also do not in and of themselves inspire people. If you go on national television with a horrible message, you are going to get awful results.

The Libertarian Party should have a strong vision and a BHAG first and then use that vision and BHAG to create a strategy for accomplishing this critical goal.

When we don't act with purpose, we end up doing a lot of conflicting things. We waste resources, spin our wheels, burnout, and become jaded. When we focus on our shared vision, we can plot out exactly step-by-step how to get to our goal. We can better

allocate our resources. We will inspire and not bicker.

Most companies (we believe that most organizations do indeed lack clarity of vision) let crises, firefights, and tactile decisions drive the company. We refer to this as the "tactic-driven strategy". Vision should drive strategy and strategy, in turn, should drive tactics, and not the other way around.

JIM COLLINS, BE 2.0

About Jake Porter Consulting



Jake Porter Consulting does small-business, political, and non-profit consulting from Council Bluffs, Iowa, helping companies and organizations reach the right people at the right time with the right message.

Jake Porter has served the Libertarian Party in various roles since 2004, including managing and volunteering for presidential campaigns, National Committee Alternate (2008-2010), LPIA Executive Director (2017). He is a three-time candidate for statewide office in Iowa. Currently, Porter serves on the Iowa Health Facilities Council appointed by Governor Kim Reynolds in 2020.



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