



How to Write an Effective Operations Policy or Commitment Statement

Considerations, design, and examples



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IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS FOR AN OPERATIONS POLICY OR COMMITMENT STATEMENT

When designing and implementing a new Operations Policy or Commitment Statement (Policy), consider the following factors:

- **Leadership Commitment** – The policy should include words straight from top-level leadership such as the CEO or Executive team directing and empowering the organization to implement their operational vision. It should be signed by the CEO, Executive Team or a sub-set of CEO and Operational Executives to make it clear that it is non-optional and that the executives back it and are committed to it.
- **Title should be focused on outcomes** – An outcome-based policy drives successful operations as it shifts the focus from task completion to achieving measurable outcomes that align with the organization's objectives. By establishing clear outcomes and measuring progress towards them, an outcome-based policy can help identify areas for improvement and drive continuous improvement.
- **The policy sets out key outcomes for the organization** - The policy should document key outcomes that align to leadership expectations. The policy should also define the framework for defining key outcomes, executing operations and committing to continuous improvement.
- **Typical commitments you will see in policies** – Focus on critical commitments to support business functions. Typical commitments for organizations often include protecting its people, the public and communities, meeting compliance obligations, health and safety culture, preventing major incidents, maximizing efficiency, performance and continuous improvement.
- **Consider your current commitments and stakeholder requirements** – Speak loudly and consistently to your stakeholders through the commitments you make in the policy. If you have previously made commitments to your stakeholders, employees, and communities, use the same tone and commitment to them in your policy to reinforce the messaging.
- **Keep it short** – The policy should be maximum one page and easily communicable. Anything longer should be considered a strategy or supporting document. In addition to electronic posting, physically posting printed copies of the policy in offices and facilities sends a powerful message to the organization and helps with reinforcement.





DESIGN STEPS FOR A POLICY OR COMMITMENT STATEMENT

The process below details the typical steps for designing an operations policy or commitment statement (policy). Consider your organizational maturity and approach to creating policies during the design process.

- 1 Define the purpose of the policy including the issue it will address, and the intended outcomes.
- 2 Gather information on the topic to ensure that the policy is based on facts and is informed by relevant regulations and best practices.
- 3 Define the scope of the policy, including who it applies to and under what circumstances.
- 4 Consult with stakeholders to get input and feedback.
- 5 Draft the policy making sure it is clear, concise, and easy to understand. Use simple language and avoid jargon or technical terms that may be difficult for some people to understand.
- 6 Have key stakeholders review the draft policy to ensure that it accurately reflects their needs and concerns. Make revisions based on feedback, as required.
- 7 Once the policy is finalized, obtain approval from top-level leadership.
- 8 Communicate the finalized policy to all affected stakeholders.
- 9 Develop an implementation plan, including how the policy will be enforced and any training or education that may be required.
- 10 Monitor the implementation of the policy and evaluate its effectiveness over time. Adjust as needed to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of stakeholders and achieves the desired outcomes.





Example of a Policy

A typical one-page policy from the CEO binds the organization to the operational vision and management system.

Policy Statement

Provide exceptional service to our customers while ensuring the safety and well-being of our employees, contractors, and the environment. We strive to conduct our operations in an efficient and effective manner while complying with all relevant laws, regulations, and industry standards.

Commitment

We are committed to:

- The safety and well-being of our employees, contractors, and the environment in all our operations.
- Continuously improving our operations to achieve excellence in quality, efficiency, and sustainability.
- Empowering our employees to take ownership of their work and to identify and report any potential hazards or incidents.
- Providing adequate training, resources, and support to enable our employees to perform their duties safely and efficiently.

Implementation and Continuous Improvement

We will meet our commitment by implementing and maintaining an effective management system that incorporates best practices and industry standards. We will continuously improve our operations through regular review, analysis, and performance measurement. We will also:

- Conduct regular risk assessments and implement appropriate control measures to manage risks.
- Provide ongoing training and development opportunities to our employees to improve their skills and knowledge.
- Promote open communication and collaboration across all levels of the organization.
- Regularly review and update our operations policies and procedures to ensure they remain relevant and effective.

This policy applies to all our operations, facilities, and employees. We expect all employees, contractors, and visitors to comply with this policy and support our commitment to safety, quality, and sustainability.

<Name>

<Position>, <Company>





Example of a Commitment Statement

A leadership Commitment Statement is more of a “letter to the people” style document motivating the organization to rally behind a shared commitment.

At ACME, we understand that effective management and continuous improvement are key to the success of any organization. Our mission is to operate with integrity, accountability, and social responsibility, while delivering exceptional value to our stakeholders through efficient and effective operations. Our mission aligns with our common purpose, which highlights the importance of working together for the benefit of our future.

We have developed a comprehensive management system that outlines our expectations and requirements for working together to achieve our mission. Our management system ensures that we continually assess our performance and identify areas for improvement and risk reduction. By fostering a culture of operational discipline, we can execute this system effectively.

Our operating principles, highlight the key ingredients of operational discipline, including:

- Conduct all our operations with the highest degree of integrity and ethical behavior, complying with all relevant laws, regulations, and ethical standards,
- Foster a culture of collaboration, open communication, and teamwork across all levels and functions of the organization,
- Prioritize the safety of our employees and customers, and take proactive steps to identify and mitigate potential hazards,
- Optimize our operations to achieve maximum efficiency and productivity, while minimizing waste, errors, and delays.

We believe that the combination of a robust management system and a culture of operational discipline will give us a significant competitive advantage, enabling us not only to survive, but to thrive. We ask that you join us in committing to this approach and making it a part of the way we operate.

Sincerely,

<Name>

<Position>, <Company>



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We'll help you build the systems, behaviours and operational muscle needed to become a self-sustaining, continuously improving organization. We believe that every company can thrive—and we're here to help you do just that.