

This is my mission statement

by Marc Thaler

I knew exactly what I wanted to say from the moment I was invited to participate. And when the floor was finally mine, I'm sure I threw my co-workers a curveball. It came in the form of my answer to a question we were all asked to answer:

What is your mission statement?

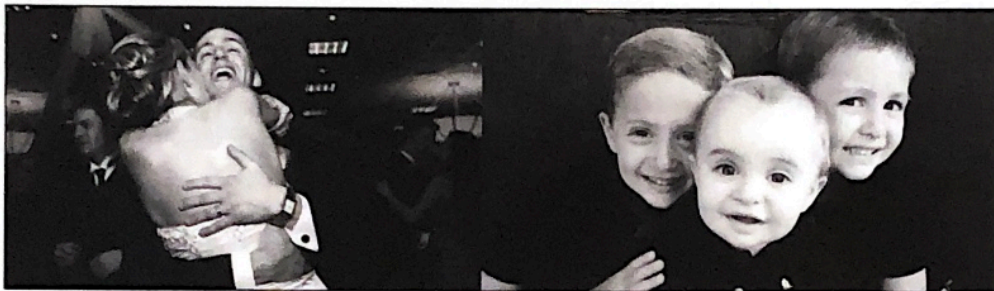
Welcome to the recurring meeting for Centerline strategists and me, the word nerd reppin' the company's writing department. These 30 minutes are among my favorite of the work week.

I love what we talk about. I love what we learn—about each other.

What do you want to achieve? How do you plan to get what you want? What are your strengths and weaknesses? Granted, we can only dig so deep in a half hour. But that time is enough to begin understanding the people we spend so much time with. That kind of knowledge is invaluable because it can only help us be better teammates. The beauty of this group exercise is there are no wrong answers. Points are not awarded for style or creativity. We're going for substance.

In no time, I realized a theme emerging in these presentations: The mission statements of my co-workers were all related to business and their careers. Every presentation was insightful and unique, but unquestionably tied together by that common thread of professional growth.

Then it was my turn. I'll share with you what I shared with them. This is my mission statement:



ACT IN A MANNER MY WIFE WILL BE PROUD OF AND MY BOYS WANT TO EMULATE

I wasn't trying to be different for the sake of it. Nor was I attempting to sound self-righteous. My mission statement is an honest explanation of how I measure my ability to meet goals, both professional and personal. Of course, sitting in a room surrounded by strategists, I felt compelled to go one step further. My gut told me I'd be asked for examples of how I apply my mission statement. So I beat 'em to the punch.

As I explained to the group, focusing on these principles helps me stay true to my mission statement:



**STAND UP FOR YOURSELF AND
THOSE AROUND YOU**

I have a tough time with people who bulldoze their way to the results they want. That's how a bully operates. Bullies really piss me off.

That said, it is important to pick your battles. But if it's a fight worth fighting, speak up—respectfully.

Man, I love that picture. It so clearly says, "I've got your back."



**BELIEVE YOU ARE THE BEST—
THEN GO OUT AND PROVE IT**

We all have weaknesses and moments of doubt. I am no exception. But if you lack confidence in your abilities, you are giving others permission to do the same.

My 5-year-old just picked up a lacrosse stick for the first time. He is competing with kids who are several years older.

I love that picture because it says, "I'll show you I deserve to be here."



**DON'T TAKE YOURSELF
TOO SERIOUSLY**

This one may be the most straight-forward. I just really enjoy people who can laugh at themselves in any setting. It tells me they can adapt.

Someone once told me, "That selfie looks like the poster for a sitcom." I love it because, on most days, I feel like I'm living in one.

Since sharing my mission statement, I thought a lot about why it's so important to me. I came to the following conclusion:

Surrounding myself with people who have the power to hold me accountable—even if they don't always know they're doing it—is everything.