

Personal Values and Hot Buttons

PURPOSE

When it comes to personal commitment and motivation, understanding your own personal values is more important than understanding your company core values. The purpose of this exercise is to help you reach a better understanding of what these significant personal values are.

OUTCOMES

The exercise does not only **help you understand yourself better**, it can also start to give you an insight into the **degree of alignment** between your own personal values, and the values of the current culture of your team and/or organisation.

When we work in a team whose culture aligns with our personal values, we feel liberated. We are able to bring our full selves to work. We not only bring our energy, our creativity, and our enthusiasm, we also bring our commitment to the well-being of our associates and the success of the wider organisation.

A Life Values Exercise

Other people have a great influence on our lives. John Donne said, “No man is an island.” Martin Luther King spoke of the “web of mutuality.” Identify three people who have had the deepest impact on your life (at least one outside your family). What specific advice, philosophy, or value has stayed with you?

Name	Value

List three books, tapes, movies, poems, or sayings that have contributed to your own values. What insight has stayed with you?

Resource	Insight

Tennyson in Ulysses says, "I am part of all I have met." List three peak experiences that have profoundly shaped your life and/or career direction.

Experience	Value

Personal Values Selection

What values do I truly and passionately hold?

Values are deeply held views of what we find worthwhile. They come from many sources: parents, religion, schools, peers, people we admire, and culture. Many go back to childhood. There are others we learn as adults. As with all mental models, there's a distinction between our "espoused" values, which we profess to believe in, and our "values in action" which actually guide our behaviours. These latter values are coded into our brains at such a fundamental level that we can't easily see them. We rarely bring them to the surface or question them. That's why they can create dissonance for us.

Step 1. From the 'List of Values' at the bottom of this sheet, select the ten that are most important to you - as guides for how to behave, or as components of a valued way of life. Feel free to add any values of your own to this list.

Step 2. Now that you have identified ten, imagine that you are only permitted to have five values. Which five would you give up? Cross them off. Now imagine that you are only permitted four. Which would you give up? Cross it off. Now cross off another, to bring your list down to three. Then, do it again to bring your list down to two. Finally, cross out one of your two values. Which is the one item on this list that you care most about?

□ Personal Values Statement

Value	Personal Description

□ Hot Buttons

Next, define your “hot buttons.” A hot button has a deep root in one of your personal values. It is a behaviour or a situation that can make you feel very strongly because it crosses or goes against one of your personal values. For example, if one of my core values is honesty, then a hot button for me might be that I can feel deeply affronted if I discover that people are acting on hidden agendas. If one of my personal values is respect, my hot button might be when I see unfair public criticism by a manager of one of their employees. Even though we might share the value, we might still have different hot buttons. They are unique to each of us.

Describe at least one hot button for each of your personal values.

Value	Hot Button

List of Values

<ul style="list-style-type: none">● accountability● achievement● adaptability● balance● being liked● being the best● caring● caution● challenge● clarity● commitment● community involvement● compassion● conflict resolution● continuous learning● control● cooperation● courage● creativity● dialogue● diversity● ease with uncertainty● efficiency● enthusiasm● environmental awareness● ethics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● excellence● experience● fairness● family● financial stability● forgiveness● friendship● future generations● generosity● health● honesty● humility● humour/fun● image● independence● initiative● innovation● integrity● interdependence● job security● listening● logic● making a difference● mentoring● mission focus● open communication● openness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● optimism● patience● performance● perseverance● personal fulfilment● personal growth● philanthropy● power● pride● professional growth● quality● reliability● respect● responsibility● reward● risk-averse● risk-taking● safety● self-discipline● spirit● success● trust● vision● wealth● wisdom● work/life balance
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Source: *Barrett Values Centre*

