



Loeb Center for Career Exploration and Planning

Your Values: A Self-Assessment Guide

Whether you realize it or not, every time you make a choice about doing one thing as opposed to another, you make a value decision. When you have a decision that involves two or more conflicting values that are of major importance to you, the decision can be extremely difficult to make (e.g., career values may conflict with family and friendship values). You can, however, make these decisions more effectively if you have some idea of what your most important values are and the priority that you give to each. If you can bring your actions more into harmony with your values, you will feel more satisfied with the decisions you make, including career decisions. Many people find that the most satisfying and meaningful work is highly compatible with their values. *Be sure to make your own copy! Go to **File > Make a copy** to save and start typing your responses.*

DO:

Values Assessment

The following exercises will help you to understand which work and personal values are important to you, and what priorities you give to them. Because some of our influences change throughout our lives, our values are bound to change as well. What you highly value now may become less of a priority later so it's important to reflect on your values frequently throughout your life.

Part I: Work Values

Rate each work value using the following scale:

1 = very important to have in my work

2 = somewhat important to have in my work

3 = unimportant to have in my work

I want work conditions that permit or require the following:

	Independence/Autonomy: Doing what you want to do without much direction from others.
	Time flexibility: Arranging your own hours, working according to your own time schedule.

	Change/Variety: Performing varying tasks in a number of different settings.
	Change/Risk: Performing new tasks or leading new programs that challenge the established order and may be initially resisted.
	Stability/Security: Working in a secure job that pays you reasonably well.
	Physical challenge: Performing dangerous tasks that challenge your physical capabilities.
	Physical demands: Performing physically strenuous but relatively safe activities.
	Mental challenge: Performing demanding tasks that challenge your intelligence and creativity.
	Pressure: Performing in a highly critical environment with constant deadlines.
	Precise work: Performing prescribed tasks that leave little room for error.
	Decision making: Making choices about what to do and how to do it.

I want to work for the following purposes:

	To pursue truth/knowledge.
	To acquire expertise/authority.
	To use creativity/innovativeness.
	To foster aesthetic appreciation.
	To make social contributions.
	To acquire material gain.
	To seek recognition.
	To promote ethics/morality.
	To seek spiritual/transpersonal gain.

I want my relationships at work to involve the following:

	Working alone doing assignments by yourself, with minimal contact with other people.
	Public contact interacting in predictable ways with a continuous flow of

	people.
	Developing close friendships with coworkers.
	Group membership belonging to a group with a common purpose and/or interest.
	Helping others
	Influencing others
	Supervising others
	Controlling others

List your three most important work values in each of the three categories.

Work Conditions	Work Purposes	Work Relationships
1	1	1
2	2	2
3	3	3

Part II: Personal Values

Rank your top five values, with #1 being the most important to you. Then put an “X” next to the five values that are least important to you.

	Good Health		Fulfilling careers for me and my spouse		A life with many changes
	Many close friendships		Contributing to my community		Opportunity to be a leader
	A large family		Abundance of leisure time		To make a major discovery that would save lives
	A fulfilling career		Ability to move from place to place		A good physical appearance
	A stable marriage		A stable life		Opportunity to establish roots in one place

	A financially comfortable life		A life without stress		Opportunity for physical activities
	Independence		Strong religious values		An exciting life
	Creativity		A chance to make social changes		A chance to get into politics
	Participating in an organized religion		To be remembered for my accomplishments		To live according to strong moral values
	Having children		Helping those in distress		Opportunity to teach others
	A variety of interests and activities		Freedom to live where I wish		To write something memorable
	Freedom to create my own lifestyle		Time to myself		A chance to become famous
	Owning a house		Enjoyment of arts, entertainment, and cultural activities		To help others solve problems
	A happy love relationship		A life with many challenges		To make lots of money

List five of your most important personal values.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

(Adapted for use from Training for Life: A Practical Guide to Career and Life Planning, Fifth Edition (1994), with permission from the authors, Bernadette M. Black and Fred J. Hecklinger.)

REFLECT:

- What was the process of deciding like for you? Was this easy or difficult?

- Our values change throughout our lifetime, but what observations can you make about your values right now?
 - How important is it to you to live out your personal values in your work life?
 - How have your most important personal values impacted your life choices thus far?
 - How do you think your most important work and personal values will affect your career choice(s)?
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Ready to complete your next reflection exercise? *Try to do as many of the exercises as you can; you may do them in any order, and they do not have to be done all at once.*

[Your interests](#)

[Your skills](#)

[Your family and cultural influences](#)

[Your personality](#)

[Summing It Up](#)