WeMentor Personal and Business Values Exercise

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This exercise will help you clarify your personal and business values. The invisible forces that shape our decisions. Knowing what we value helps us navigate relationships, make decisions, and resolve life's dilemmas. Those who clarify and live their values can improve their leadership effectiveness and construct more fulfilling connections.

Directions: Complete the three stages below.

Stage One: Scan the list quickly and circle 20-25 values that immediately resonate with you. Don't overthink it. Trust your first instinct. The 216 values are organized alphabetically to make scanning easier.

Stage Two: Narrow to 10 values by grouping similar ones.

Stage Three: Choose 3 non-negotiable values and own them.

Personal Values Inventory

Alphabet Category	Personal Values				
A-B:	Accountability	Achievement	Adaptability	Adventure	Advocacy	Altruism
	Ambition	Authenticity	Appreciation	Authority	Autonomy	Balance
	Beauty	Being the best	Belonging	Bravery		
C:	Calm	Candor	Capability	Caring	Career	Certainty
	Citizenship	Challenge	Change	Charity	Cheerfulness	Collaboration
	Clarity	Commitment	Community	Compassion	Competence	Confidence
	Connection	Consistency	Contentment	Contribution	Control	Cooperation
	Courage	Courtesy	Craftsmanship	Credibility	Creativity	Curiosity
D:	Decisiveness	Dedication	Dependability	Depth	Determination	Devotion
	Dignity	Diligence	Discipline	Discovery	Diversity	Drive
	Duty					
E:	Education	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Elegance	Empathy	Empowerment
	Endurance	Energy	Enjoyment	Enthusiasm	Entrenovation	Environment

	Equality	Ethics	Excellence	Exploration	Expression

F: Fairness, Faith, Family, Financial stability, Flexibility, Focus
Forgiveness, Freedom, Friendship, Fun, Future generations

G: Generosity, Genuineness, Giving back, Grace, Gratitude, Growth

H: Happiness, Harmony, Health, Helpfulness, Home, Honesty
Hope, Humility, Humor

I: Impact, Imagination, Inclusion, Independence, Influence, Initiative
Insight, Inspiration, Integrity, Intentionality, Intranovation, Intuition

J-K: Job security, Joy, Justice, Kindness, Knowledge

L: Leadership, Learning, Legacy, Leisure, Liberty, Listening
Love, Loyalty

M-O: Making a difference, Mastery, Mindfulness, Moderation, Motivation
Nature, Novelty, Obedience, Openness, Optimism, Originality
Order

P: Parenting, Passion, Patriotism, Patience, Peace, Perseverance
Personal fulfillment, Perspective, Philanthropy, Playfulness, Positivity
Power, Practicality, Preparedness, Presence, Pride, Privacy
Productivity, Professionalism, Prosperity, Prudence, Quality

R: Recognition, Reflection, Reliability, Resilience, Respect, Resourcefulness
Responsibility, Restoration, Risk-taking

S: Safety, Security, Self-awareness, Self-direction, Self-discipline, Self-expression
Self-respect, Serenity, Service, Simplicity, Sincerity, Skill
Solidarity, Spirituality, Sportsmanship, Stability, Status, Strength
Stewardship, Success, Support, Sustainability

T: Time, Teamwork, Thankfulness, Thoroughness, Thoughtfulness, Thrift
Tradition, Travel, Trust, Truth, Tolerance

U-Z:	Understanding	Uniqueness	Unity	Usefulness	Vision	Vitality
	Vulnerability	Warmth	Wealth	Well-being	Wholeheartedness	
	Wisdom	Wonder				

Stage Two: Values are deeply held priorities; without them, we have no internal compass. After circling your top values in the alphabet categories, further pare the list down to ten by grouping similar values. For example, leadership, courage, bravery, and accountability could be grouped together to equal Courageous Leadership as a value. Trust, belonging, support, and respect could be grouped into Relational Trust.

Your Top Ten Personal Values

1.	6.
2.	7.
3.	8.
4.	9.
5.	10.

Complete the following two-word stem sentences to refine your personal values choices further:

1. *When this value is honored in my life, I feel When this value is violated, I feel*

    _____.

Stage Three: Once you have selected your ten values, further refine the list and choose two or three non-negotiable values. These values light your way like a beam in a forest. They help you get back on track when you lose your way. With these core values, you feel invested in life.

Your top three non-negotiable personal values are:

   1. _____   **2.** _____   **3.** _____

Owning your core values. Complete the following word stems.

o   *When these values are honored in my life, I feel* _____.
o   *When any of these values are violated, I feel* _____.
o   *When I live my core values, others would see me* _____.

Work and Family Values

Our ideas move through the world with our values integrated in them. Wherever we go, our values are with us, like our breath; sometimes we're more conscious of them than other times.

We develop values through culture, our upbringing, reflection, and experience. Psychologists Milton Rokeach and Shalom Schwartz studied how our internal priorities work like priority algorithms in the brain. When two options compete, the mind silently ranks them against internal values. Most of that computation happens beneath awareness. Think about your family of origin. How often did you talk about values and how to live with others who show different values?

Living our values means our words and actions align with what is most important to us. They provide guideposts for acceptable and unacceptable behavior and help us set boundaries for what is and is not okay. When someone lives their values, their behavior aligns with what they say and do. There is "authentic alignment".

Our values are on display in every relationship. We notice them most when we feel hurt or when our core values have not been honored. Often, we feel misaligned long before we can explain why. Our internal compass feels off, heightening our awareness that something is misaligned.

If core values are our internal compass, ethical behavior is the standard of right and wrong recognized by groups, organizations, and society. Ethical behavior is grounded in shared agreements to protect trust and fairness. It is a behavior we share. Peter Drucker and Warren Bennis describe ethics as the foundation of ethical leadership because it fosters predictable and trustworthy behavior.

Values guide authentic alignment. Ethics guide shared behavior.

A person can live their values, but still act unethically if core values conflict with widely accepted moral standards. Imagine a leader who strongly values loyalty. If that loyalty leads them to hide a colleague's wrongdoing, they may be honoring a personal value but violating ethical norms of transparency or fairness.

The opposite can also happen when someone might follow ethical rules without internalizing them as personal values. They may behave ethically as policies require, or laws enforce, or professional codes demand, but they don't have a moral connection to the behavior.

One way to think about living your values is this way. You live with authentic internal alignment, and ethical behavior is a shared moral standard. When living your values and ethical behavior overlap–a person's values include integrity, fairness, and responsibility–behavior becomes both authentic and ethical. The overlap is where leadership researchers like Stephen Covey and Jim Collins see as the heart of trustworthy leadership. Enduring leadership reflects the ability to close the gap between internal values and ethical expectations in the communities it serves.

Jim Collins and Stephen Covey, researchers and leadership thinkers, have observed that enduring organizations function best by focusing on three to five core values or principles rather than long lists. Three to five values are easy to remember and make operational.

Values answer the question, "What matters most to me?" ***Ethical behavior*** arises from the question, "What is right for all of us?" Healthy leadership, healthy families and relationships, and healthy societies live within the tension between those two questions.

Directions to identify family and work values**:** Complete the following four steps.

Step One: Write down your top three non-negotiable personal values below the Business Values Inventory.

Sep Two: Scan the Business Values Inventory quickly and circle the values that immediately resonate with you. Again, trust your first instinct. If there is a value important to you not on the list, add it.

Step Three: Pare down the list by grouping similar values under one main value.

Step Four: Choose <u>2</u> non-negotiable values and add them to your personal values.

Business Values Inventory

Accountability	Adaptability	Collaboration	Competent	Community impact	
Continuous improvement	Contribution	Courage	Creativity	Customer focus	Diligent
Efficiency	Empowerment	Entrenovation	Ethical	Excellence	Goal-oriented
Growth	Humility	Inclusive	Integrity	Intranovation	Leadership
Learner/Mentor	Planner	Positive attitude	Pro-active	Problem Solver	Professional
Quality	Relational/Emotional		Reliability	Respect	Responsibility
Results-oriented	Safe work environment		Service	Stewardship	Sustainability
Team Builder	Time management		Transparency	Trust	

Your top non-negotiable three personal values + two business values:

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

4. _____ 5. _____

Review your non-negotiable personal and business values. See if you can recognize a pattern by asking these three questions.

1. Which values relate to growth?
2. Which relate to connection?
3. Which relate to contribution?
4. What important decision in this moment could benefit from using your core values as a guide?

Make any adjustments as needed. Consider using this Values Exercise with a partner, family members, staff, or colleagues to understand your similarities and differences better. If you do this exercise with a work group or staff, try combining core values to create new company values. From there, you can develop a Code of Ethics.

Code of Ethics

When rules don't apply, we need a code of ethics to guide behavior. Once personal and business core values are set, develop a code of ethics for home and work environments to create congruency between the values you profess and how you implement them.

Many ethics codes have two components. First, an *inspirational* section, often in the preamble, that outlines what the organization aspires to, or the ideals it hopes to live up to, much like a mission statement. Second, an ethics code typically lists *rules or principles* that members of the organization are expected to adhere to.

A code of ethics outlines an organization's purpose, relevance, audience, and context. What is the *purpose* of your new code? Is it to regulate behavior? To inspire? Many codes fail because they suffer an identity crisis. It is unclear for whom they intended or what their purpose was. They are often not designed with their reader in mind, nor the context in which they are used.

For a refresher. Ethics is a system of values that people use to determine whether actions are right, wrong, or in a gray area.

An "ethical dilemma" is a situation in which a person's values conflict, making it unclear whether a particular decision is the right one. "Ethical planning" can help prepare our minds to live in authentic alignment with our core values.

Four key questions to consider in ethical planning:

1. Who will be hurt, and how badly?
2. Who will benefit, and how much?
3. What do you owe others, if anything?
4. What do others owe you, if anything?

Once you answer the four questions, create action options that support authentic alignment among your values, decisions, and actions. The purpose is to connect your personal values, leadership, and ethics.

What Am I Made For? It is a deceptively simple question emphasizing a path that unfolds as you become real. When people know what matters most, decision-making gets faster and more coherent, and inspiration and ideas flow naturally. The values usually chosen in businesses often fall into three archetypal categories:

- Growth Values: curiosity, learning, mastery, creativity

- Connection Values: community impact, compassion, collaboration, belonging, relational

- Contribution Values: service, impact, legacy, stewardship

Different innovation styles often emerge from different value constellations. Growth-oriented values tend to fuel exploration, while connection-oriented values tend to sustain systems and communities.

Entrenovators often score high in growth and contribution**.** Intranovators frequently emphasize connection, teamwork, and stewardship inside existing systems. Values are less like rules and more like gravitational fields. They quietly pull decisions, relationships, and ideas into orbit. You are detecting gravity wells within yourself, once you clearly see how your ideas tend to organize around.

You have uncovered the invisible forces that shape your decisions. Now, you can navigate relationships, make decisions, and resolve life's dilemmas more clearly. Living your values can improve your leadership effectiveness and help you construct more fulfilling connections. Plus, when you get off track, you can find a pathway back.

Sources

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