



CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTER

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Division of Student Affairs

Identifying Your Values

Why is it important to understand your values?

Before you can achieve any goals in your life you need to know how to establish those goals. Before you can set your goals you need to decide what is important to you, what your values are. Values are a set of standards that determine attitudes, choices and actions. Values provide answers to important questions such as: What do I really care about? What are the factors that I will need to consider to find the job I want?

Understanding your values will help you focus on career objectives that are important to both you and your employer. There are no right or wrong values, they can be anything that you consider important or maybe something that you couldn't imagine living without. Just make sure that the values you choose to define yourself are truly your own values and not someone else's.

Identifying your values will help you to:

- ◆ Identify the kinds of activities, people, and environments that you most desire in your work.
- ◆ Determine which work environments best fit your personal and professional needs and the skills you would like to develop there.
- ◆ Focus on career objectives that are important to both you and potential employers.
- ◆ Identify the motivators that provide the drive to accomplish the important goals in your life.

Conflict between the work we actually do and the work we value is often at the root of our decisions to change careers. Knowing your values firsthand will ensure that your career is starting off with the right focus.

On the following page is a list of values that can be satisfied through work. Read the descriptions of each value carefully and rate its degree of importance to you, using the scale below. You can add additional values that are important to you and rank them also.

1. Not at all important in my career
2. Not very important in my career
3. Moderately important in my career
4. Very important in my career
5. Essential in my career

After reviewing all of the values you rated 5, rank them by selecting the 5 highest work-related values that you want to incorporate in your future. If you listed some "other" values that were not in your top five prioritized values for work, think about how you want to incorporate them into your life.

Discussing your values in an appointment with a career counselor can help you focus and choose work environments and positions that will be the best fit for you.

Rank Your Values

- ___ Help Society: Doing something to contribute to the betterment of the world I live in
- ___ Help Others: Helping people in a direct way, either individually or in groups
- ___ Public Contact: Have a lot of day-to-day contact with people
- ___ Creativity: Create new ideas, programs, products, organizational structures or anything else not following a format previously developed by others
- ___ Work Alone: Do projects by myself, without any significant amount of contact with others
- ___ Affiliation: Being recognized as a member of a particular organization
- ___ Autonomy: Ability to determine the nature of my work without much direction
- ___ Team Work: Working closely with co-workers to reach common goals
- ___ Influence: Be in a position to change attitudes or opinions of other people
- ___ Balance: Experiencing balance among family, work and play aspects of life
- ___ Power: Controlling the work activities of others
- ___ Status: Being regarded as an expert in my field
- ___ Friendships: Develop close personal relationships with people as a result of my work activities
- ___ Feedback: Receiving frequent feedback from others about my work
- ___ Competition: Engage in activities that pit my abilities against others where there are clear “win” and “lose” outcomes.
- ___ Moral: Significantly contributing to a set of moral standards, which I feel, is important
- ___ Advancement: The opportunity to work hard and make rapid career advancement
- ___ Stability: Have a work routine and job duties that are not likely to change over time
- ___ Variety: Having responsibilities that frequently change in content or setting
- ___ Excitement: Experience a high degree of excitement and energy in my work
- ___ Aesthetics: Make beautiful things and contribute to the beauty of the world
- ___ Order: Working in a structured orderly environment
- ___ Fast Pace: Work in circumstances where there is a high pace of activity
- ___ Profit: Have a strong likelihood of accumulating large amounts of money
- ___ Free Time: Adequate time for leisure activities and interests outside of work
- ___ Responsibility: Taking a high level of responsibility, in whatever form
- ___ Physical: Having a job that makes physical demands I would find rewarding
- ___ Setting: Working in a comfortable or pleasant setting
- ___ Other Value: _____
- ___ Other Value: _____
- ___ Other Value: _____