

# VALUES

## THE KEY TO MOTIVATING AND INFLUENCING

A **VALUE** is something that is important in a specific context; what might be important in someone's career may be different to what is important in their relationship. Values are usually intangible (for example, challenge, respect, variety or making a difference) and they usually mean different things to different people. Values determine how we spend our time or money, because generally we won't do things that aren't important to us or buy things we don't value.

### COACHING AND MANAGING PEOPLE

Use these 5 steps to find out what **really motivates** someone to come to work. As a manager you can use this knowledge to **tailor objectives** and **engage your team**; as a coach, you could help a client make the **right career choice**. The questions and tips below provide a summary for managers and coaches of how to use values (assume that 'career' is the right word, although 'job' or 'work' may be more suitable). If you'd like to find out more about how to elicit and work with values, please [get in touch](#).

1. Ask:  
**WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO YOU IN OR ABOUT YOUR CAREER?  
WHAT DO YOU LOOK FOR IN A CAREER?  
WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM A CAREER?**



Write down your colleague or client's words. **Keep quiet** whilst they are reflecting. Give them time to think quietly, and if there are pauses ask, "What else is important to you?" Typically there will be **5-10 values**. An additional way to find values is to ask, "Think of a time when you felt really happy or motivated at work, and what caused you to feel this way?" Add to your list any values that they have not previously mentioned.

2. Show them the list and ask:  
**IF YOU HAD ALL OF THESE VALUES IN YOUR CAREER...  
WOULD YOU WANT IT?  
IS THERE ANYTHING MISSING OR ANYTHING ELSE TO ADD?**



Often there is nothing to add, sometimes there is.

3. **HOW WOULD YOU RANK THE VALUES WE'VE DISCUSSED?  
WHICH ARE ESSENTIAL (A)? WHICH ARE IMPORTANT (B)?  
WHICH ARE THE ICING ON THE CAKE (C)?**



Ask your client or colleague to rank the values 'A', 'B' or 'C'. Sometimes there are no 'C's'.

4. Use your ranked list to create two career options – one with the most important values, and one with the remaining values. Then ask:  
**LET'S CONFIRM...  
WHICH OF THESE CAREERS WOULD YOU CHOOSE?**



If they choose the career with the lower values, re-rank the values. Finally, ask them if they would want a career with the A and B values (read them out). If they don't give you a very clear 'YES', then explore it further with them.

5. **EXPLORE THE VALUES IN MORE DEPTH.**  
Specific values can mean **different things to different people**, so it's important to find out exactly what they mean by, for example, *challenge* or *respect*. As a manager, you will **then know what to do and avoid doing** to keep your colleague **engaged** and **motivated**.

### SELLING OR INFLUENCING

When selling or influencing, whilst it may not be appropriate to ask exactly the questions mentioned in the 'Coaching and managing people' section, the principles are the same. Find out what the client wants/is looking for, mention your relevant products/services and show how they fulfil the client's criteria.

In addition to the key sales skills and approaches of building rapport, getting to know your client and asking open questions, you could use the values-based approach outlined here. To illustrate this, let's use an example of buying a car.

Ask: **"What's important to you about/what are you looking for from a car?"** (listen and note their answers, keep quiet while they are answering).

**"Have you seen a car that you really liked? If so, what did you like about it?"** (note any values they didn't previously mention).

**"If you saw a car with <values>, would you want it or is there anything missing you'd like to add?"** (note any new values).

Rank what you've heard: **"What are the really key points, and which points could you compromise on?"**

Check you're on the right track: **"If you saw a car with <key values> and also had <other values>, would you want it?"** Expect a very clear YES; if not, explore further.

Clarify what they mean by any non-obvious values, e.g. 'economical', 'family car' etc. Then show them cars which meet their criteria!

You can use your skills at 'eliciting values' to manage a more engaged and effective team, improve your sales performance, improve recruitment processes and by understanding your own values, you will improve your success at job interviews and make better career choices.

This technique is an integral part of Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP). To find out more about how NLP can help you to be more successful at work, sign up now for my 1-day '[NLP for Business Success](#)' course. For a deeper understanding of NLP techniques I run a 4-day [NLP Diploma](#). If you are interested in developing your coaching skills I also run ILM Recognised [Coaching and Mentoring training](#).