



CHAPTER 2 TRY THIS: IDENTIFY YOUR LEADERSHIP VALUES



Step 1: Reflect on the Importance of Core Values

Why does identifying and leading with your core values matter?

Some reasons may include:

- You model them in every decision, word, and action.
- They build trust by ensuring alignment between beliefs, words, and actions.
- They drive what you celebrate, measure, and confront.
- They define your moral compass, shaping expectations and resource allocation.
- They provide clarity and courage in difficult situations.

Step 2: Identify and Prioritize Your Core Values

1. List 10 core values that resonate most with you. (Looking at various core values lists can help spark ideas.)
2. Narrow your list down to your top five values.
3. Rank the five values in order of priority.
4. Rate yourself (0–10) on how well you embody each value.

Step 3: Conduct an Integrity Inventory

To me, integrity is the alignment between what you *believe*, *say*, and *do*.

For each core value, complete the following:

- Believe: What does this value mean to you?
- Say: What language and phrases reinforce this value? What language and phrases contradict it?
- Do: What actions align with this value? What actions undermine it?

(Optional: Complete this exercise with a partner for deeper insights.)



► EXTENSION: SHARE YOUR VALUES AND LEADERSHIP STORY

- **Develop Your Leadership Introduction:** In many settings, leaders introduce themselves. Craft a brief introduction that shares your leadership story. Embed your values, so those you serve understand who you are.
- **Make Your Values Visible:** Share your values and leadership story with your school board, leadership team, staff, and community in your meetings, newsletters, and decision-making.
- **Embed Your Values in Your Work:** Regularly refer to your values in your decisions, conversations, and strategic actions.

By engaging in this process, you align your leadership with your core values, fostering authenticity, trust, and a strong foundation for a shared improvement culture.

► EXTENSION: WHAT WOULD YOUR TEAM SAY?

When you are ready to engage your team, ask them to identify their values. Knowing your personal values is half the battle. Identifying (then reinforcing) *shared* values and purpose is the other half.

Reflect on:

- How can you create space for your staff and community to explore their own core values?
- How can you facilitate connections between individual values and collective school/department/district values and goals?
- What steps can you take to ensure shared values are actively and explicitly shaping your school/department/district culture, strategies, and decisions?