

Appendix 3

Values-Sort Activity

A values-sort activity is meant to help you clarify your most important values and communicate those values with those with whom you work. Understanding our values provides clarity in decision-making and helps others understand why we do what we do. Our values guide our behaviors. The following values-sort activity is simply one of many that you could facilitate to facilitate greater understanding of self and others.

EXPLORATION OF SELF

Who am I? What roles do I have? What identities are most important to me?
(E.g. parent, partner, student, employee, athlete, African American, lesbian)

There are three different kinds of life values, with each playing an important role in who you are as a person. These three types of values are defined below so that you can better understand and appreciate how they operate in your life.



CULTURAL VALUES

Cultural values are those principles that you have learned throughout your life. These standards often come from parents, family, and friends who surround you as you develop. Because society is made up of many different cultures, there are many different cultural values.

Exercise 1 List the principles you feel you received from your parents, teachers, and friends that reflect your cultural values and guide your behavior. List at least five.

PERSONAL VALUES

Personal values are often very similar to cultural values because they can be learned from and shared with family and friends. However, these standards constantly evolving as you grow and change as a person, sometimes differing from what others value.

Exercise 2 The following is a list of personal values. Add values that may be missing and then check the ten that are most important to you.

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| • Achievement | • Morality |
| • Adventure | • Meaningful work |
| • Altruism | • Recognition |
| • Autonomy | • Self-respect |
| • Creativity | • Skill |
| • Citizenship | • Social justice |
| • Community | • Stability |
| • Emotional well-being | • Physical appearance |
| • Balance | • Wealth |
| • Happiness | • Pleasure/Fulfillment |
| • Health | • Time |
| • Honesty/Integrity | • Wisdom/Insight |
| • Humor | • Other (list) |
| • Knowledge | _____ |
| • Love | |
| • Loyalty | |

ORGANIZATION/WORKPLACE VALUES

Every organization operates from organizational values which influence the behaviors, decision-making, reward structures, hiring, performance, evaluation, and the day-to-day interactions of people within the organization. It is important for us to consider our desired organizational values and ensure we are in a place where we enthusiastically share the values of our organization. Only the active participation of all members of the organization will ensure a truly organization-wide, value-based, shared culture.

Exercise 3 Below is a list of possible organizational values. Add anything that might be missing and then circle your top ten desired organizational values.

- | | | |
|------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| • Ambition | • Innovation | • Challenge |
| • Competency | • Teamwork | • Influence |
| • Individuality | • Excellence | • Learning |
| • Equality | • Accountability | • Compassion |
| • Integrity | • Empowerment | • Friendliness |
| • Service | • Quality | • Discipline/order |
| • Responsibility | • Eciency | • Generosity |
| • Accuracy | • Dignity | • Persistence |
| • Respect | • Collaboration | • Optimism |
| • Dedication | • Stewardship | • Dependability |
| • Diversity | • Empathy | • flexibility |
| • Improvement | • Accomplishment | • professionalism |
| • Enjoyment/fun | • Courage | • authenticity |
| • Loyalty | • Wisdom | • inclusiveness |
| • Credibility | • Independence | _____ |
| • Honesty | • Security | _____ |

Exercise 4 In the final exercise, you are asked to review the lists above and then identify your top five cultural, personal, and organizational values you have determined from the previous exercises.

Cultural:

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



Personal:

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

Organizational:

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

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Review the lists above and reflect on the following questions. If you have done this activity with your staff, you may ask for each staff to share their final lists and their reflections on the following:

1. What themes or similarities do you see across your three lists?
2. Based on the identities you identified in the beginning exercise, is there one aspect of your identity that has had a more significant influence on your values over time? How about in this current moment? How has it evolved?
3. If you had to summarize your values in one word (value) that would guide your life, what would it be?
4. Has your organization developed a list of shared values for the organization? If so, in what ways do your organizational values align? In what ways might they differ?
5. How well is the organization performing according to its values? In what ways could the organization improve or align its operations with its values?
6. Reflecting upon yourself, in what ways might your alignment be off? In what ways might you be able to adjust to live more in line with your values?