

Personal Values and Goals

DO YOU EVER WONDER about your purpose in life? Without determining your purpose, you may feel like you are not accomplishing anything. To avoid a thought similar to that, you must determine your values and set goals for yourself. After doing that, you need to consider business, work, and societal values. All of these values and goals work hand-in-hand in shaping a successful life.



Objectives:



1. Demonstrate the ability to identify personal values.
2. Identify three personal goals that support and reinforce personal values.

Key Terms:



business values
goals
personal values

S.M.A.R.T.
societal values
values

work values

Understanding Values and Goals

Determining values and goals in all aspects of your life is extremely important. To be successful, you must be aware of societal values and the goals of the business for which you work.

TYPES OF VALUES

Values are beliefs or viewpoints that guide the behavior of individuals as well as groups of people and organizations. Values are reflected in behaviors.



FURTHER EXPLORATION...

ONLINE CONNECTION: Steps for Determining Your Personal Values

How do you determine personal values? The given link provides the answer to these questions: http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTED_85.htm. A video is available. There are six steps to help you discover your personal values. After reading the article and watching the video, determine your personal values.

Personal Values

Personal values are viewpoints held by an individual that motivate him or her to engage in activities that support such viewpoints. If someone values truth, for instance, he or she is less likely to lie. If a person values non-violence, he or she is not likely to seek a job with a gun manufacturer. If someone believes that being actively involved in the community is important, he or she is more likely to volunteer to participate in community service projects.



FIGURE 1. An example of a personal value is performing community service.

Work Values

Work values are an extension of personal values as they reflect an individual's work ethic and, therefore, work behavior. If a person values promptness, he or she is likely to arrive to work on time. If a person values hard work, he or she is likely to be productive and efficient. It is important for an individual to list and reflect upon personal values. Understanding personal values provides energy and motivation to behave in a manner that supports those beliefs. In turn, setting and reaching personal goals becomes much easier because goals are based on a foundation of ideas believed to be important and true.

Personal values can be identified. Make a list of 10 (or more) values that reflect your personal beliefs and philosophies. Rely on your personal viewpoints and attitudes toward each value listed to prioritize the values in order of importance from most to least important. The list of values should serve as a guide in helping you establish your personal goals.

Business Values

Company or **business values** are beliefs held by an organization, reinforced throughout the staff, and reflected in most or all organizational activities. A company may value employee health and wellness. As a result, a company fitness room may be available to employees before work, after work, and during the lunch period. In addition, a company may value customer satisfaction. In support of that belief, the organization may allow customers to return any merchandise at any time for a full refund, without any questions.



FIGURE 2. This illustration shows several aspects that can be part of a business's value.

Societal Values

Societal values are beliefs held by the vast majority of a community of people. These values shape the laws of a society, and they are reflected in societal norms not dictated by law. For example, most cultures value life. Therefore, murder is against the law. Even if murder were not against written law, most members of a society in which life is valued would not commit murder.

Personal Goals

Setting meaningful goals can be accomplished by reviewing personal values, establishing goals, and evaluating the goals. Create, review, and prioritize a list of personal values before establishing goals.

GOALS

Goals are end results or outcomes that a person or a group of people hope to achieve. Goals should be established by following the accepted goal-setting guidelines (known as S.M.A.R.T.) believed to have been first expressed by Peter Drucker in 1954 in *The Practice of Management*. **S.M.A.R.T.** are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and timely goals to the person or people setting them. Goal statements do not need to indicate how the goals are to be accomplished. Finally, goal statements should be stated using positive, strong, and meaningful language. Therefore, they should begin with the phrase "I will" (rather than "I want to") fol-

lowed by the goal. For example, “I will get a B in geometry this semester” is a much more powerful statement than “I want to get a B in geometry this semester.”

Specific

A goal should specify exactly what is to be achieved and by whom. For instance, a goal written as “Do a better job at work” does not specify exactly what is to be achieved and by whom. This goal may be better written as “I will handle at least 20 case files each day.”

Measurable

If a goal is not measurable, it is nearly impossible to determine if it has been achieved. For example, if the goal is to “lose weight,” has the goal been achieved if one pound is lost? The goal should be written to indicate how much weight is to be lost so it is apparent when the goal has actually been met.

Achievable

Be sure that tools needed to attain a set goal are within reach. For instance, if a goal requires a large sum of money, but the goal setter cannot possibly obtain the money, then the goal is not attainable and should be revised.

Realistic

The goal setter should consider whether the goal is something that he or she really wants to obtain and if the goal is challenging, not impossible.

Time-Based

Every goal should have a deadline indicating when it is to be accomplished. For example, “I will lose 20 pounds by December 1” is a S.M.A.R.T. goal. “I will lose 20 pounds” is not a S.M.A.R.T. goal.

Evaluate the goal to determine if it is supported by personal values. If a goal is in conflict with your personal values, it is unlikely that you will accomplish it. If the goal is achieved, you are not likely to feel fulfilled. For example, if you value time with family more than anything else, setting a goal to be the CEO of a fast-growing game development company would be in direct conflict with your attitude that family time is important. If the goal is met, unhappiness and discontent may follow. A goal must align with your personal values for you to be motivated to engage in behaviors to achieve the goal.

Summary:



Personal values are viewpoints held by an individual that motivate him or her to engage in activities that support the viewpoints. Someone who values the experi-

ence and wisdom of older people is likely to engage in activities that involve spending time with this population. For example, a person may choose a career as an activity director in a retirement village. Also, someone who values peace and tranquility is not likely to live in a large, congested city. He or she is more likely to live somewhere that provides an escape from noise and intrusive neighbors.

A goal must align with personal values for an individual to be motivated to engage in behaviors to achieve the goal. When goals are not in line with personal values, there is less motivation to achieve the goals. Even if the goals are achieved, happiness and satisfaction rarely follow. S.M.A.R.T. stands for specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and timely.

Checking Your Knowledge:



1. What is a value?
2. What is one example of a personal value?
3. What does S.M.A.R.T. stand for?
4. What is one example of a business value?
5. What is a societal value?

Expanding Your Knowledge:



Research a business with which you are familiar. You may look at information on the Internet or visit the business in person. What are the business values? Share your findings with the class.

Web Links:



Creating Smart Goals

<http://topachievement.com/smart.html>

Business Values

<http://smallbusiness.chron.com/examples-values-important-business-19378.html>

Personal Values

http://humanresources.about.com/od/success/qt/values_s7.htm

Setting Smart Business Goals

<http://sbinformation.about.com/od/businessmanagemen1/a/businessgoals.htm>

Understanding Workplace Values

<http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/understanding-workplace-values.htm>