

# PERSONAL VALUES & HOT BUTTONS



## Session Leader Preparation Sheet

The purpose of this preparation exercise is to help participants reach a better understanding of their own most significant personal values. The exercise does not only help you understand yourself better, it also offers the team the opportunity to voice their beliefs and values which is a critical part of building a stronger social capital and connection within a team.

When it comes to personal commitment and motivation, understanding your own personal values is more important than understanding your company core values. So it is recommended that you start with this exercise before you take the journey to identify and define your wanted team core values.

### PURPOSE

To help participants reach a better understanding of their most significant personal values and to create a forum where a team can share these values in an atmosphere of understanding and acceptance. It serves as a foundation for alignment exercises.

### OBJECTIVE

Identify your team's personal values and recognize what the team shares in common.

### TIME

The estimated time for this exercise is approx. 1 – 2 hours.

### BEFORE THE SESSION

1. Anchor the decision to do the exercise in your team.
2. Select participants and book a meeting room.
3. Decide whether you intend to use a guest speaker to introduce the workshop and/or create the right atmosphere.
4. Send out an invitation at least two weeks before your meeting and include the 'PREWORK' material. Communicate purpose and objective, when, where, and who.
5. Select the slides you intend to use. Look for ideas and select the supporting slides at [www.valuecentre.com/getconnected](http://www.valuecentre.com/getconnected).
6. Make sure the meeting room is ready with all the material needed.
7. If you intend to use a meeting evaluation or reflection, have it prepared in advance (see page 172).
8. Try to come at least 20 minutes before everyone else.
9. Write the Purpose, Objective and Agenda on a flipchart so that everyone can see it during your whole session.

**DURING THE SESSION**

1. Present the Purpose, Objective and Agenda of the meeting. Highlight when you intend to end the meeting. Ask if everyone will be able to stay for the whole meeting.
2. Ask the manager to express his/her personal view on how important it is for each participant to clearly understand and articulate their personal values as one of the starting points in our values journey.
3. Introduce the exercise by sharing the steps to be taken. Make sure everyone understands the exercise. Allow time for questions and concerns.

## Steps to take (alt. 1):

- Bring up your prepared Personal Values & Hot Buttons.
- Everyone share their top 3 personal values and descriptions (approx. 10 - 15 min per person). If it is a large group divide into groups of 2 - 4 persons.  
NB: Emphasise that the dialogue and explanations are the main goals of the exercise, not merely stating what your values are.
- When everyone has shared their Personal Values, repeat the process with your Hot Buttons.
- When everyone is finished sharing, ask for reflections; How did it feel? What did you think? What have you learned? Are there any concerns or questions?

## Steps to take if the team members have known each other for some time. (alt. 2)

- Follow a similar procedure to Alternative 1. above, but with the difference that everyone has to guess what their team members have written as their Personal Values, based on the behaviours they have observed when working with them.
  - Depending on time available you could either guess or just share your Hot Buttons.
4. Explain the importance of understanding and being in contact with your own personal values and how this is linked to your company values.
  5. Make sure everyone gets the opportunity to voice his or her view. Be assertive and probe for questions. Remember, the process is as important as the outcome.
  6. Conclude the exercise by a reflection followed by what you expect to be the next step on your culture build-up journey.

**AFTER THE SESSION**

1. How do you intend to reinforce your team's reflections and conclusions (if any), and make your progress visible, that is, visual aids, questions, recognition, etc.?
2. Now that you have started to create a shared understanding of personal values and hot buttons, make sure your behaviour and priorities are aligned e.g. do we walk our talk?

## Agenda

(proposal and facilitator notes)

- |  |             |
|--|-------------|
| <b>1. Introduction</b>   | 15 min      |
| Go through Purpose, Objective and Agenda. Be open for questions.   |             |
| <b>2. Individual reflection of Prework</b>   | 10 min      |
| Ask the participants to bring up their Prework notes and take some minutes to reflect individually.  |             |
| <b>3. Small Group Dialogue</b>   | 30 – 60 min |
| Form groups of 2 – 4 persons and ask the participants to share their personal values and descriptions. Point out that it is the dialogue itself that is most important. (Use alt. 1 or alt. 2) |             |
| <b>4. Whole Group Reflection</b>   | 15 min      |
| Have the group reflect on what was the major thing they learned and took away from this exercise?  |             |

## Reflection on Personal Values

It is very important that you create a foundation for your own personal values. The following exercises will help you focus on this.

### I. A LIFE VALUES EXERCISE

Other people have a great influence on our lives. John Donne said, "No man is an island." Martin Luther King spoke of the "web of mutuality."

Identify three people who have had the deepest impact on your life (at least one outside your family). What specific advice, philosophy, or value has stayed with you?

Name	Value

List three books, tapes, movies, poems, or sayings that have contributed to your own values. What insight has stayed with you?

Resource	Insight

Tennyson in Ulysses says, "I am part of all I have met." List three peak experiences that have profoundly shaped your life and/or career direction.

Experience	Value

*NB! This part of the PREWORK is personal, and will not be shared with someone else, unless you want to.*

### II. PERSONAL VALUES SELECTION

The purpose of this preparation exercise is to help you reach a better understanding of your own most significant personal values. It is beneficial to do this exercise every one or two years.

#### **What values do I truly and passionately hold?**

Values are deeply held views of what we find worthwhile. They come from many sources: parents, religion, schools, peers, people we admire, and culture. Many go back to childhood. There are others we learn as adults. As with all mental models, there's a distinction between our "espoused" values, which we profess to believe in, and our "values in action" which actually guide our behaviours. These latter values are coded into our brains at such a fundamental level that we can't easily see them. We rarely bring them to the surface or question them. That's why they can create dissonance for us.

- Step 1.** From the enclosed list of personal values, select the ten that are most important to you - as guides for how to behave, or as components of a valued way of life. Feel free to add any values of your own to this list.
- Step 2.** Now that you have identified ten, imagine that you are only permitted to have five values. Which five would you give up? Cross them off. Now imagine that you are only permitted four. Which would you give up? Cross it off. Now cross off another, to bring your list down to three. Then, do it again to bring your list down to two. Finally, cross out one of your two values. Which is the one item on this list that you care most about?
- Step 3.** Now that you have identified your three values, complete the exercise on page 87.

### List of Values

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> accountability          | <input type="checkbox"/> experience          | <input type="checkbox"/> patience             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> achievement             | <input type="checkbox"/> fairness            | <input type="checkbox"/> performance          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> adaptability            | <input type="checkbox"/> family              | <input type="checkbox"/> perseverance         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> balance                 | <input type="checkbox"/> financial stability | <input type="checkbox"/> personal fulfillment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> being liked             | <input type="checkbox"/> forgiveness         | <input type="checkbox"/> personal growth      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> being the best          | <input type="checkbox"/> friendship          | <input type="checkbox"/> philanthropy         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> caring                  | <input type="checkbox"/> future generations  | <input type="checkbox"/> power                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> caution                 | <input type="checkbox"/> generosity          | <input type="checkbox"/> pride                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> challenge               | <input type="checkbox"/> health              | <input type="checkbox"/> professional growth  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> clarity                 | <input type="checkbox"/> honesty             | <input type="checkbox"/> quality              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> commitment              | <input type="checkbox"/> humility            | <input type="checkbox"/> reliability          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> community involvement   | <input type="checkbox"/> humor/fun           | <input type="checkbox"/> respect              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> compassion              | <input type="checkbox"/> image               | <input type="checkbox"/> responsibility       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> conflict resolution     | <input type="checkbox"/> independence        | <input type="checkbox"/> reward               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> continuous learning     | <input type="checkbox"/> initiative          | <input type="checkbox"/> risk-averse          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> control                 | <input type="checkbox"/> innovation          | <input type="checkbox"/> risk-taking          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> cooperation             | <input type="checkbox"/> integrity           | <input type="checkbox"/> safety               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> courage                 | <input type="checkbox"/> interdependence     | <input type="checkbox"/> self-discipline      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> creativity              | <input type="checkbox"/> job security        | <input type="checkbox"/> spirit               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> dialogue                | <input type="checkbox"/> listening           | <input type="checkbox"/> success              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> diversity               | <input type="checkbox"/> logic               | <input type="checkbox"/> trust                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ease with uncertainty   | <input type="checkbox"/> making a difference | <input type="checkbox"/> vision               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> efficiency              | <input type="checkbox"/> mentoring           | <input type="checkbox"/> wealth               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> enthusiasm              | <input type="checkbox"/> mission focus       | <input type="checkbox"/> wisdom               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> environmental awareness | <input type="checkbox"/> open communication  | <input type="checkbox"/> work/life balance    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ethics                  | <input type="checkbox"/> openness            |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> excellence              | <input type="checkbox"/> optimism            |   |

**If you cannot find your preferred values above,  
please list your own below**

\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_

Source: Barrett Values Centre

### III. Personal Values Statement

Based on the two previous exercises, list your top three values and describe what each value means to you.

Value	Personal Description
1.	
2.	
3.	

### IV. Hot Buttons

Next, define your “hot buttons.” A hot button has a deep root in one of your personal values. It is a behaviour or a situation that can make you feel very strongly because it crosses or goes against one of your personal values. For example, if one of my core values is honesty, then a hot button for me might be that I can feel deeply affronted if I discover that people are acting on hidden agendas. If one of my personal values is respect, my hot button might be when I see unfair public criticism by a manager of one of their employees. Even though we might share the value, we might still have different hot buttons. They are unique to each of us.

Describe at least one hot button for each of your personal values.

Value	Hot Button
1.	
2.	
3.	