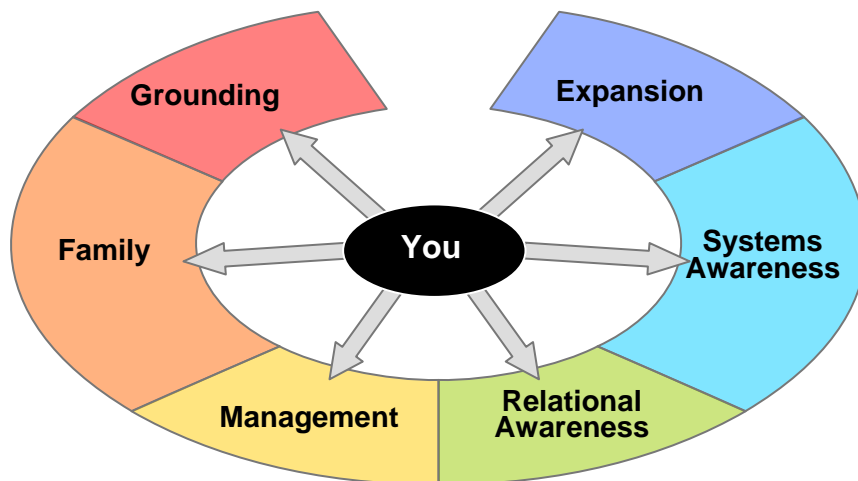# Looking for Work With Values

Looking for Work? Knowing What Your Values Are Can Help

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Looking for Work With Values

In the current economic turndown, many people are looking for work. Jobs are scarce. Having even a slight edge over competitors for a position can make all the difference. Knowing your values and how to present yourself as the most valuable choice to a prospective employer can make that difference.

The purpose of this booklet is to help you to make decisions about how to look for work using an awareness of your own values as well as those of the company or group you are thinking about joining. It will also help you when you are interviewing for a job.

What this booklet will give you:

- The basics for understanding how your values operate so that you can create a value statement that becomes part of your application to an organization.

- The basics for understanding the values of an organization you may be targeting for employment.

- Guidelines for planning your employment application based on a values match.

- Techniques to use in face-to-face interviewing.

We offer an online survey that will show you what your personal values are and how they fit into a perspective. Each person's values profile is unique, and knowing what it is helps you to approach your search for meaningful work in a conscious and organized way.

Even if you have not taken the Values Perspectives Survey, this booklet will provide you with information about how values work, information that you can use in interviewing successfully.

To get your own Values Perspective™ Report, go to: http://www.values-perspective.com

Looking for Work...?

Rob was about to sit down for a job interview. The appointment had been arranged through a friend, who had given him a recommendation. The position description was close to what he had done before so he was sure he could do the job, but he was anxious. He just wasn't confident about how he was going to come across in the interview. He didn't much like the idea of "presenting himself." It was as if he was supposed to be acting like something he was not, just to get the position. On the other hand, he needed the job. As he sat down, the interviewer started right in with direct questions about qualifications and experience.

Rob responded to all of the questions pretty well. Finally the interviewer looked at Rob and asked, "So what is important for you? What really motivates you, keeps you going when problems show up?" This one stopped Rob cold, but he made up something about wanting to get work done right, and on time. After that, the interviewer said he was finished with his questions, and then asked, "So Rob, do you have any questions for me?" Another blank moment. Rob didn't have any questions. The interview was over. The two shook hands and Rob left. He hated interviews like that.

So, Why Values?

Assuming that several people are technically qualified for a position, why does one get selected and the others not? While there is no single answer the real decision is often made on the strength of an intangible rapport, a sense that the person selected will fit in somehow better than those that were not selected. How does the interviewer know that? What is going on that gives one person an edge over the others?

Values provide a framework for those fundamental perceptions. Values tell us what is most important, how to make decisions, what is right and wrong, and importantly, help us form relationships with others. They account for what happens when we connect with someone or not, or when one person is selected for a job and others are not. We are not always conscious of our values or those of other people, and yet they are the driver behind many of the things that we do that have an influence on others, as well as things that others do that have an influence on us—like making decisions about whom to hire, or about what job and company we pursue as job-seekers and how we go about it. This is why we believe it will help you to know how values work.

There aren't any guarantees when it comes to landing a job, but knowing what you value most can help. Even when you think you can see a perfect match between your resume

and what is needed in the ideal candidate, a values approach can give you several advantages in this tricky process. First and foremost, identifying your values can strengthen your presentation of who you are at core. Second, it can give you an edge when you are evaluating what you are hearing and reading about the position and the company, giving you the opportunity to ask important questions before coming to conclusions. Third, it can give you the opportunity to share control of the interview process and turn it into a dialogue instead of an interrogation. And finally, when you make connections between your own values and the company's or business unit's or team's values, you now have a perfect opportunity to write a follow up letter that reinforces the message on that connection, rather than simply thanking the person for the interview.

Now, ask yourself: do you know what you value and why?

This information will enable you to make choices that best reflect your priorities, maximize your efforts to improve yourself and achieve your goals, and to align yourself with others and with organizations that see the world in ways similar to how you see things. Most people start with understanding their own motivations – what really moves them toward significant relationships and meaningful work. Your unique values profile can be described using two measurements: the values that represent your highest life priorities, and, perhaps even more importantly, your core values 'perspective'. We offer a survey that will pinpoint your values profile [*see sidebar*] but whether or not you choose to take it, the purpose of this booklet is to inform you about values so that you can make some informed surmises about your values, and those of a company, business unit or team you may be interested in joining.

Before we start, it is important to say that we will not tell you what your values should be. Our assumption is that you do not need anyone to tell you how you should believe or behave. However, you can learn how to more effectively leverage your values to your own advantage. With an awareness of your own values, unlike Rob in the example above, you will always know how to present yourself, and will be able to ask some good questions of your own, whether you are interviewing, working, or just having a personal conversation—especially with someone you care about.

As we explain how values work, and how to work with them, we'll give you plenty of ideas to think about and apply. We'll explain the two concepts we use to measure values: Priority and Perspective. Whether or not you take the Values Perspectives™ Survey, these concepts will help you understand how values work, for you and for others such as interviewers representing a company. The final section will give you some nuts and bolts things to work with when interviewing. If you understand the energy, behavioral, and perspective aspects of values, when you get to the actual, practical parts of getting a job, you will have some powerful concepts to turbo-charge the nuts and bolts tools. In today's challenging and competitive job market, having the values edge can make all the difference, in getting the job you want, and making it a success once you have it.

What Are Values?

Values Are Energy. Values operate like sources of energy, moving you toward situations, things, people, companies, jobs. Basically, your values motivate you and affect the choices you make and how you behave. We can understand this energy as mental, physical, emotional, or spiritual, or various combinations of all of these areas of life. In day-to-day life, the energy of values is frequently transmitted through language—energy wrapped up in a particular word or two that has the power to motivate or de-motivate you. Think of the last time someone you know—or don't know—said something, even one word, you had a strong reaction to, a 'charge', whether positive or negative. Do you have 'watchwords' that remind you to move toward or avoid a person or situation? Or something you say to yourself that gets you out of bed instead of slapping off the alarm on those difficult mornings? The energy of our values also accounts for our interest in learning new things, our ability to persist in mastering skills, and a host of other activities. Most of the time we simply take for granted, because this is what is natural for us. For all of us, the experience of energy is subjective and individual. Our individual values profile is unique, and represents what is most important to each of us. It describes how we look at the world and why we see it the way we do, and, since values drive our behavior whether we really think about it or not, it is also describes how the world sees us. Both of these things—how we see the world and how the world sees us—are useful to know when seeking our match in any relationship. And, of course, a job is a relationship with a company and the people in it. It is a very important relationship, and we spend most of our waking energy on it.

Values Are Drivers of Your Behavior. If values represent and trigger energy, that energy has to go somewhere so it makes common sense that our values are the driving forces behind what we do. The motivational connection between values and behavior has long been established and discussed, but if you understand what your values are, you will also know what motivates you, and what you need in order to sustain your efforts. If you are aware of your values, and how you apply them, it's also possible to make predictions about how motivated you will be in regard to a particular job, or set of responsibilities. You can also make some fairly safe assumptions about your willingness to learn new skills associated with a particular job. Of course, the opposite of this is also useful because it shows where you may have potential areas of resistance to change or lack of motivation to either learn or master certain skills if they are not associated with your own values.

Values Determine What Skills You Seek to Develop. We all have talents, things we can naturally do well and learn easily. We tend to both prioritize these and practice skills and behaviors associated with them. We also all tend to practice a fairly narrow range of

behaviors. People get into routines and ruts very quickly. So the first challenge for all of us is to expand the range of behaviors and skills that support our existing top values. For example, responsibility is a value often identified in organizations as a core value. A sense of responsibility often entails a feeling of ownership toward projects and people's roles in them. We want to see things done, and done right, and may feel it's our job to step in when things are not running smoothly. Those who hold responsibility as a personal top priority often get stymied by over-extension and lack of balance until they learn that two of the necessary supporting skills for responsibility are time management and delegation. Without this skill set, responsibility as a top value can create surprising stress and anxiety.

Sometimes people assume that having a value in high priority automatically leads to some sort of mastery in terms of the skills and behaviors associated with the value in question. That is a dangerous assumption, and here's why. It may be we have that value for exactly the opposite reason. That is, we have the value because we need the skills associated with it, and do not have them. For example, critical thinking is a value often identified in terms of professional situations. It has been our experience in working with many professionals, that when we ask them to explain or interpret this value, they indicate a need for better critical thinking skills. But just as often, others say that critical thinking is a high priority and have highly developed skills to support it.

A high priority that represents the need for skills is a normal state of affairs and does not indicate a lack of consistency. Most values that act as goals in our future, or those values that expand and develop us work in this way. It's also important to recognize we have a responsibility to ourselves to be genuine in recognizing our skills, and not pretend we have skills which we do not actually have. The important thing is for us to carefully examine our values to discover just what our supporting skills are, or that we need.

Values Are Relationship Glue. Values operate at the heart of relationships, and the energy of shared values acts like relationship glue. We are attracted to those people in whom we perceive our own values. This is called the attraction paradigm, and has been supported by psychological research for many years. It can be briefly stated like this: *When a person sees his or her own values reflected in another person, group or organization, the individual will automatically and immediately be drawn toward the other(s).*

Importantly, we don't have to share the same belief system, the same personality characteristics, or even similar life styles in order to share values. When you examine your own friends and acquaintances, you'll find that those people with whom you seem to share the best connections, the people with whom you just seem to click, don't necessarily share the job, experience, education, or even religion as you. They may not even share the same values you do. But those disagreements are not fundamental differences in how we see the world, they are usually differences based on specific situations. In fact, some of our best relationships are

with those with whom we can disagree. But they often seem to see the world, generally, like you do.

Perhaps there are only a few shared values that hold a relationship together, but as long as those values are essential, we will usually find ways to accept, manage, or at least tolerate differences that may exist between us and others. Of course, the more we do share essential values, the others will seem similar to us.

The sense of attraction works even if we don't know people personally, so leaders of political, religious, social or other organizations can seem familiar to us, and will engender our loyalty as long as we seem to share similar values. On a more immediate level, our face-to-face relationships, personal or professional, work the same way even though the behaviors we show can be quite different.

On the personal level our relationships have great range, from fleeting acquaintance to long term, committed intimacy. As we develop a relationship with someone based on shared values, it doesn't take long for us to find what we have in common. As we continue to find reinforcement for shared values, over time some relationships can deepen to remarkable levels of trust and closeness, and our commitment to them is associated with a profound sense of energy even though it may not be obvious to others.

But there is flip-side to the attraction principle which is just as important to understand, and is also driven by values. Since there will always be differences in any relationship, to the degree those differences are not well managed, they stimulate our awareness of unshared values. That awareness also triggers energy, but it works much differently: *To the degree that one's personal values are not reflected by a person or group, a mutual repulsion begins to occur between the individual and that person or group.* It is important to note that the reverse, "repulsion principle" has also been researched, and has been shown to be the more powerful of the two. If values both represent and trigger energy for people at an individual level, it makes sense to ask, what happens when values are shared by a group? A lot. Most importantly, the group members become a team and often experience high levels of creative and productive work.

In the workplace, it doesn't matter if you are a top level executive, a midlevel manager, a rank and file person that gets the work done, one thing still applies: "People join organizations. They leave managers." When we first accept a position, we usually do it thinking there is either a match between what we want of the organization, and what the organization wants from us. This is a match of priorities, which are always determined by values. But when we get into the daily routines of work, we usually find that the demands of the position are greater or they change, perhaps the situation changes, but most importantly, we find that the relationship we have with our immediate manager takes precedence over how we feel or think about the organization as a whole. If we are not able to find common or shared values with our manager, life soon becomes miserable, and we often start looking for a

way out. When we do share some common values with our immediate manager, it seems that even if tremendous problems emerge, we meet them together. Life is then good, why leave?

In short, values hold people together in relationships when they are shared, and values force and keep people apart when the values are not shared.

Values are Choices. Values are not like some personality characteristics, natural talents, cognitive preferences, or the particular physical characteristics with which you were born. We all can choose our behaviors and we can choose our values. Of course, there are some survival values we all seem to generally share, particularly in times of great stress, but we can sill choose how and when to activate those values. Also, it's important to recognize that we all were born into particular situations, and each of us learned some core values as children. While we may remember the events as a result of which we learned and may still hold some of those values as our most important. Nevertheless, you can choose both your values and the ways in which you actualize them.

Importantly, the Values Perspective understanding of what values someone selects is that one person's choice is not somehow better, more moral, or in any way an indication of what sort of person you are. This position is in contrast to some of the historically important values theory authors who have indicated that a person's selection of values is a measure of, or indicates his or her emotion or moral development. We, the authors, and others, strongly disagree.

The "Should" Factor: Cultural Values

When values are shared by a group, organization, institution, society or entire culture, they begin to exert more influence on us than we are usually aware of. Unrecognized, but shared group values then begin to indicate to us how we should be, how we should behave, and how we should understand things that go on around us. This is a normal state of affairs for all people, even for cultures that take great pride in values like Individuality and independence. This influence has both positive and limiting implications. On the one hand it allows for social safety and coordination, and literally accounts for a smooth running society. However, this powerful influence can act as a powerful voice of evaluation and can quickly dampen individual creative energy and efforts. So while we can choose our values, we often do not actually do so. Most of the time we let the choice of values be determined for us unless we are aware of what our values actually are.

Doing values work requires that we take the time to identify our values and perspectives so we can be responsible and accountable for our own values and behaviors, and when appropriate, we recognize the collective wisdom of the group(s) to which we belong and make conscious choices to support that wisdom.

Two Key Concepts for Describing Values

We describe and measure values using two concepts: priority and perspective. Basically, we use the term **priority** to refer to the values we hold most highly at any given time in life, and that energize us the most; for example duty, or self-development. We use the term **perspective** to describe the larger worldview that determines how each of us interprets reality, for example we may view most interactions with others as analogous to family relationships, or, perhaps, as a set of measurable conditions to be effectively managed. The priority-order of our individual values matters very much day-to-day, affecting what choices we make and how we live. The priority order of our values may change through life as different events occur, and if that happens, it usually reflects a healthy response to changing life conditions. Our perspective on the other hand, is like a generalized value lens, an attitude through which we see and make judgments about the things around us. It also acts like a sort of glue, subtly bonding us to people who share it. Our perspective affects how we individually define and use our priority values. It tends to stay more stable through life, though it too can, and sometimes must, change. We'll describe how priority and perspective work together to create a coherent and meaningful picture of your values and how they operate in your life.

Priority. First things first. You know the saying, and its meaning is obvious—isn't it? You do what's most important first. But how do we decide what's most important?

When we use the term priority in connection with values, that's exactly what we mean: at any given time, some values are more important to us than others. And what is most important to one person is not necessarily most important to another. It's a matter of values. In practice, this means we literally value some things—or some people—more than others. We feel more satisfaction, more accomplishment, more happiness, when doing certain things, or spending time with certain people, than others. Being in connection with the things we value gives us energy, like putting money in an account that we can draw on. When we hear or see something or that connects with a value that is important to us, we automatically perk up, and usually pay more attention, even if we have not consciously identified what the value is. For example, if I place a high priority in my life on the value of beauty, I feel good when I am surrounded by beauty, or when I am able to create something of beauty. It puts a deposit into my energy-account. If you are not conscious of what your values are, pay attention to what gives you a boost when you are engaged with it, whether physically, mentally or spiritually. The things that give you energy are the things you will want to give more of your life to. In other words, they motivate you.

There are also other reasons that a value may become a priority. For example, if you lose your job, security will probably become a very high-priority value, at least until you get another job or satisfy the need for you to spend energy on valuing security above other

priorities. Some values remain high priorities for us for a lifetime. Others can change in order of importance literally moment to moment, for a variety of reasons. We already gave the example of how losing your job may cause you to place more of a priority on security. If so, the security value may disappear from your priority list when the need is satisfied.

There are other ways that values can be added to your personal priority list. For example, have you ever taken a class, or perhaps heard someone speak about a subject that really moved or excited you, and has perhaps never really let go of your imagination? Maybe it was something about finance that turned on a light bulb for you that never turned off. Or, perhaps you experienced the benefits of really listening to someone else, or you came to a conscious and life-changing realization of how important it is to you to take care of other people. Values that elicited a sense of connection for you, or a strong emotional charge at some significant point in your life are likely to be values that remain on your personal priority list for most, perhaps all, of your life.

Perspectives. To introduce the concept of values perspectives we will invite you to think about what happens to your normal focus when you experience a significant trauma, like an accident, serious illness, or some other psychological or social important and stressful event. Whatever our normal outlook on life is, it changes. We all tend to focus more narrowly on issues of security, safety, or health depending on the specific nature of the stress. We all have a focus that that is normal for us, which is our worldview, and provides a framework through which we see the world. Since there are thousands of human values, it's important and useful to understand that our values are not simply thrown together in a random heap for each person. Both our experience and values theory tell us that values don't work haphazardly or randomly in our lives, but are organized and grouped into one of several worldviews, or what we call perspectives. We employ and rely on our values from that position or perspective.

In the Values Perspective model there are six basic perspectives, and we all find one more comfortable than the others. That one, for you, is your focus perspective.
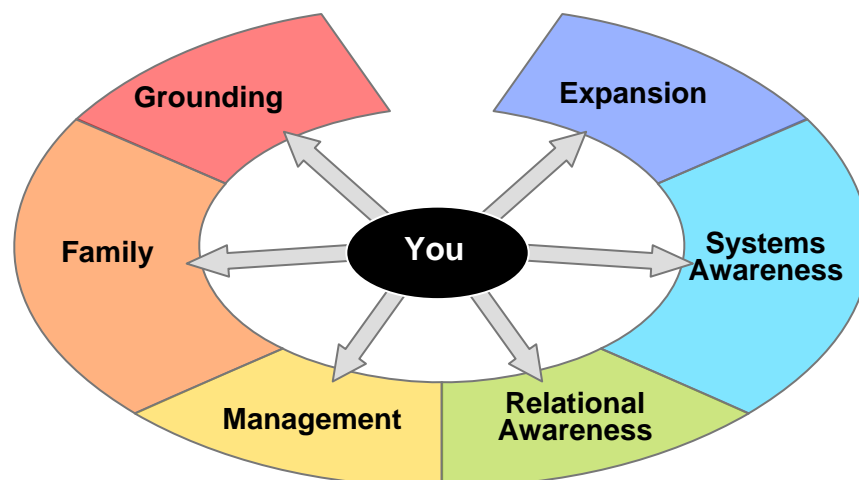
Each person understands his or her world through a core perspective, which can be thought of as a sort of "home base." Our core perspective tends to stay relatively stable after we are adults. It can change depending on what happens to us in life. However, while our attention may sometimes change quickly from value to value, this is not the case with values perspectives.

Here is a brief description of each of the perspectives. Read these to see which you think most closely describes who you are. As you do, bear in mind that no perspective is more valid or desirable than any other. That said, most people do not live in either the Grounding Perspective, or the Expansion Perspective for very much of the time. What matters is "reach"—the ability to project our perceptions, feelings and actions into any of the perspectives when appropriate. Our reach can be enhanced by paying attention, seeking education and skills, and sensitivity.

What is the Perspective of the Organization You Want to Join? When looking for work in organizations, You will need to discern which core perspective is held by the organization you wish to join, in order to 1) make the decision whether this is the best fit for you (i.e., assuming you get the job, you will actually be ready to get up in the morning to go to work); and if so, 2) target the message you want to give in your application and interview so that the decision makers will recognize you as a great fit. You may not need to share the core perspective of your target organization or work group, but you will need to be aware that nearly all organizations have either a Family or Organization core perspective.

Grounding Perspective. These values address the most basic needs for security and protection. This Perspective also characterizes our most fundamental or foundational view of the world. This is the perspective that supports all the others, so it has to do with basic security and survival values. As adults we do not operate from this perspective very often, however adults do often draw on values from this perspective even though we may draw on values from this perspective often. This is the view we take when we are experiencing significant stress or trauma like a significant illness or loss of a job. This is usually a temporary condition for adults because most of the time the needs of basic functioning are being met for us. So it is often the case that the values in this perspective often operate "in the background" without much attention or awareness. But when a crisis hits, it is extremely important that we have the ability to access these values because it's to these most foundational of values we go when we are in great need.

The Grounding Perspective is not necessarily negative. For example childbirth puts parents into this perspective for a while, especially with the birth of a first child. This is a good situation, but one that still requires the greatest attention to security and survival. The Grounding Perspective also encompasses childlike curiosity and a sense of wonder and awe,

and for adults these values may represent the roots of a renewed life perspective achieved through crisis. In times of great change, stress and crisis, the values in this viewpoint are those on which we depend as a first step in returning to a more stable, secure reality.

The outward signals: If a group or company openly shows signs of stress, for example, negative press, or when you arrive, signs of physical disorder or, for example, overhearing employees in a public space expressing negative opinions or fears—proceed with caution. Are you prepared to take the chance that the organization may not survive?

Values typical of the **Grounding** Perspective are:
Food and Shelter, Kindness, Obedience, Physical Functioning, Safety, and Wonder.

Family Perspective. This Perspective contains values that reflect fundamental self concepts and basic social interaction. These values affect our most basic relationships. The Family Perspective is characterized by your identification with a primary group, which includes your actual family, but at work this perspective can apply to your team or work group situation as well. This framework emphasizes the basic essentials of maintaining relationships with others and begins to exercise responsibility for daily actions. The Family perspective marks the importance of basic individual values like self worth, which is conditioned by affiliation, and interaction values like courtesy, loyalty, and respect.. So it makes sense that the people in your immediate personal, work and social sphere deserve most of your energy and attention. Belonging to the group is likely to be the way you receive recognition and respect, which affirm your worth as a person.

There are many organizations, and groups within larger organizations that successfully operate on a model that has strong family characteristics—for example, valuing loyalty and committing a large percentage of resources to looking after one's "own"—even though no real family ties are involved. Successful examples of this sort of leadership are often found where centralized information coordinating and decision making are required. At the center of he Family Perspective group we look for a single individual to act in a leadership role. These range from entrepreneurial start-up organizations, to construction crews, to medical teams. In all these a central leader provides stability for the group.

The outward signals: Being welcomed into the "family," stories that show respect for tradition, rewards for loyalty, people wearing clothing or using other personal items with an organizational logo, the central functioning of a special person who leads, as a parent, founding genius, or hero.

Values typical of the **Family** Perspective are:
Belonging, Caretaking, Discipline, Economic Security, Honesty, Legacy, Loyalty, Respect, and Tradition.

Management Perspective. These values are necessary for effective managing in life. Many opportunities for using these values occur within work related settings. As the scope of the perspectives continues to widen, the Management Perspective extends governing idea of establishing and maintaining stability that is characteristic of both Grounding and Family perspectives. This is the perspective that predominates in most larger corporate, governmental, educational, and other non-profit organizations. But the Management perspective is not limited to large organizations. This Perspective emphasizes responsibility, achievement, and control over one's own span of authority. Whether or not you work in an organizational situation, we all need to manage our lives through the creation and maintenance of rules and reliable structures.

Think institutionally defined authority and problem solving, and you will understand that Management Perspective values are concerned with the source of control over resources and authority, which for many of us, especially for purposes of this booklet, are found in organizations or institutions. In that context, legitimate authority is distributed and typically follows a hierarchy with articulated levels of responsibility and privilege. Responsibility is given to the individual who is assessed by those in higher authority as possessing sufficient technical competence, willingness, and readiness to assume it. This Perspective is the most typical perspective for medium sized and larger organizations to establish as a Core Perspective.

In the institutions and organizations in which we work, we rely on policies and regulated procedures to achieve productive outcomes. Problems are identified and defined through reliable conduits of information and delegated to members of the organization best equipped to solve them through analysis and rational effort. Whom we communicate with and when is regulated by hierarchal structures and roles. Rewards are achieved through professional merit. The Management Perspective is strongly emphasized in "First World" societies, and developing societies increasingly aspire to it. The Grounding, Family, and Organization Perspectives all strive to establish a stable, reliable, and manageable world. The values in the Organization Perspective are those that support the skills necessary to maintain

operations in arenas exceeding the scope of family connections in a predictable and controlled manner.

The outward signals: Descriptions and references to policy, and procedures, Descriptions of problem solving processes, concerns with issues of production and quality, emphasis on the responsibility and authority of management.

Values typical of the **Management** Perspective are:
Achievement, Competence, Financial Success, Management, Rationality, Productivity, and Responsibility.

Relational Awareness Perspective: These values emphasize individual responsibility for developing one's own potential, as well as the quality of one's relationships with others. This Perspective emphasizes values directed toward developing your own potential on one hand (through vocation values like creativity, courage, questioning, risk, and creativity), and forming relationships on the other hand (through values like empathy, listening, sharing, openness, and trust).

This perspective is quite different from the previous three (Grounding, Family, and Management), in that those perspectives are all concerned with security and stability. This is perspective is about development and growth, effective relationships and creative work.

A Special Note: Often the most obvious characteristic about the Relational Awareness perspective is that the individual, that is you, doesn't depend on any external source for authority or stability. It comes from within. So operating in this perspective can be uncomfortable, even feel threatening for some people who are not accustomed to this perspective. This is a common experience with many who find themselves looking for work where a person needs the security and stability of a job, but must rely on individual initiative at the same time. If this is your situation, you may feel torn between what seem like two competing orientations. Don't despair. It is perfectly possible to evoke and act on values from this perspective while actually holding a Grounding or Family or Organization perspective as your home base or core.

The outward signals: An emphasis on being a self-starter, self-directed development programs and processes, incentives for individual, creative contributions, interactive meetings marked by spontaneous questions, and discussion or learning groups.

Values typical of the **Relational Awareness** Perspective are:
Choice, Creativity, Independence, Listening, Using Analogy, Questioning, and Trust.

Systems Awareness Perspective: Values in this Perspective address how we deal with change, dynamic groups, networks and larger interrelated systems. This perspective is home base for those who emphasize the entire system. They tend to see the forest, rather than the trees that are in the forest. Being able to keep track of an entire system or systems requires a shift from individual perspectives to interdependence. The Systems Awareness Perspective necessarily deals with connections, and involves others in collaborative and mutually accountable ways. By definition, this perspective represents a worldview that fully accepts integrity, ethics, and partnership as keys to successful development and achievement.

While there may be a single designated authority in the Systems Awareness perspective, leadership is a collaboration among the network or group that may emerge and shift from person to person as situations change. The real power of the group lies in its ability to leverage the diversity and shared responsibility that exists among members. High-performing, successfully innovative teams often operate in this Perspective, but are supported by strong foundational values found in Family, Organization and Self and Other Perspectives. Those with Systems Awareness as a core perspective are often looking toward the future, and without a strong foundation those with a Systems Awareness perspective can easily be thought of as not operational enough, or even "blue sky" people, who in turn may not appreciate the contributions of those operating from within other perspectives. So one of the greatest challenges presented by the Systems Awareness perspective is communication with Family or the Organization Perspectives, and who hold a very different world view.

Much of the time the values in this perspective are a part of our vision values cluster, which means they are more aspirational than operational, and thus likely to lack fully or consistently operationalized behavioral skills to support them. But if this is one's core perspective, then one must also work to possess skills that will support values in the Family, Organization, and Self and Other Awareness Perspectives, providing the foundation for effectiveness in the Systems Awareness Perspective.

The outward signals: Complex ideas and challenge are embraced, problem solving emphasizes collaboration, strategic plans are regularly referred to and used, sustainability is part of the daily work discussion, internal and external partnerships characterize relationships, discussions ethical codes in terms of actual behavior, diversity through out the entire organization including top management.

Values typical of the **Systems Awareness** Perspective are:
Beauty, Collaboration, Ethics, Flexibility, Holism, Integrity, Organization Development, and Sustainability.

Expansion Perspective: These values act as guides to the future, our goals and aspirations. These values are the greatest in scope, and operate to "pull" us toward our vision of the future. Values in this perspective are always aspirational, meaning we never quite achieve them completely. This does not mean they are not important, but on a daily basis, it may mean that those with other core perspectives do not activate these values as often as values in other perspectives. As future goals, it is important that we appreciate the importance of how values in this perspective, even though they may include the entire planet, do have tremendous impact on daily life. For example, with the present crisis known as global warming or climate change, the value of planetary ecology is now understood in very pragmatic ways, and has energized people from around the world to engage in caretaking of the Earth, but in a global scope.

Values in the Expansion Perspective are not reserved for special people, those whom we revere as having had great historical importance like major religious and political leaders. Expansion values are accessible to everyone.

The outward signals: Evidence of making complex technologies or ideas simple and accessible, recognition of the need for balance in personal and professional life, descriptions and discussions of the organization's social, economic, and ecological global impact.

Values typical of the **Expansion** Perspective are:
Human Rights, Inspiring Others, Macroeconomics, Mind-Body Integration, Planetary Ecology, Simplification, and Spirituality.

No Perspective Better Than Another

Historically, there are lots of examples of the use of a model similar to the Values Perspective model. They all started in the past century, and have all suggested that values can be appropriately and usefully organized along some sort of continuum. Nearly every author and researcher also identifies these perspectives in terms of developmental stages, and associate them with stages of emotional and moral development, where one stage represents a more highly developed position than the previous one. We have found this use of values to mislead people into inappropriate and inaccurate comparisons and judgments, and to be counter-productive. In fact, people can get quite angry if they are told that someone else's values are more highly developed than their own, and who could blame them? So we will state categorically that no one perspective is better than another.

Why Are Perspectives Important?

Ok, so what? Why is it important to know about values perspectives? First, as we have shown above, each perspective has its own characteristics. But just as importantly is the understanding that each perspective is limited in some way or another. So each of us has

some particular strengths that should be recognized in regard to the values we put into operation from that point of view, and each of us has some potential blind spots and limitations that can be troublesome if they are not also recognized and managed.

Second, much of the time, the values we draw on are triggered by situational influences, but our core perspective stays relatively stable, and this is true for everyone. So the connection in a relationship, or the lack of one, often depends more on the perspectives of the people involved then on specific values they may share. If you listen carefully, or simply ask a person what is important, he or she will usually indicate a core perspective. This gives you, the listener, a tremendous advantage in communicating with that person, understanding how they are framing their world, and generally what sort of priorities they will be looking for and responding to.

In short, becoming familiar with the various perspectives will immediately pay off in your ability to appreciate what characterizes each one. Then it is relatively easy to learn to reach across what would normally be boundaries to communicating and relating to people who hold a different core perspective than your own. Importantly this does not mean we are suggesting you should change your own perspective or values in any way. Our assumption for each person is that he or she holds the correct perspective and values, but that we can extend the effort to understand others coming from positions that are different from our own if we are aware of those differences.

Time For Some Homework

Preparing for a job interview in terms of values needs to include two things. First, almost all interviewers ask for concrete examples of your experience. Since values are somewhat ambiguous without concrete behavioral examples, if you share a value of yours you can be sure to be asked for examples. So review your own resume and background to identify your own values and perspectives. If you have a Values Perspective report, you will already have some of this information. But you will also need to identify examples in your past experience that show your values so you can make the connection between what is needed in this position, who you are, and what you have done.

Second, review the position requirements and the organization description. Look for organizational internet sites that describe the mission, types of work, values, history, and leadership. Ask yourself what the overall values perspective for the organization might be. Most organizations have a core perspective of Family or Organization, although they may state values from other perspectives like collaboration and sustainability which are both Systems Awareness values. So Family perspective values like discipline, honesty, and loyalty are almost always important to recognize. And Organization values like achievement, economic success, problem solving, and responsibility will often trigger interest. Sometimes a single example can show the importance of several values at the same time.

Getting It Right: Using Values To Your Advantage

This is a common but very limiting assumption about interviewing for a job: It is the responsibility of the interviewee to persuade the interviewer that he or she should be hired or be recommended for the position. We are suggesting that this assumption puts limits on your opportunities to get the position by putting all the responsibility on your ability to persuade the interviewer. This often ends up with you trying too hard, and in the process missing good opportunities. This section will give you some tools to work with that will help you in the actual interviewing process, and then in getting settled into an organization that you can call home for some time to come. Remember, the process of getting a job is actually a two way process. You want the position, and the company wants the best person possible for that position. A values approach to this process can be straightforward, simple, genuine, and effective.

Use LACE: Listen-Ask-Connect-Effects

You never need to leave an interview thinking you have not done well. And you don't have to memorize some sorts of canned responses or try to be something other than what you already are. All you have to do is what you normally do in regular conversations. That is in normal conversations we listen, we ask questions, then we make connections between what we have heard and who we are, and we watch the other person respond to see what the effect we have had. In the interviewing situation we suggest you just do these same things. Here's the model:

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                     Ask

        Listen               Effects

                   Connect
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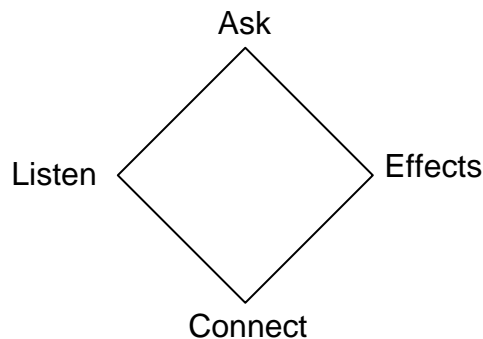
Listening immediately provides you opportunities to both ask questions for clarification and to probe deeper into specific information, but also opportunities for you to make connections between what is needed in the ideal candidate, and who you are. The more connections you can make, the more obvious it becomes that you are the best person for the job. (Remember, persuasion takes place when the other person's needs met, not when you "make" them accept your point of view.) Here are some recommendations, but there is no specific order for these. We are making the assumption that you know something about the position for which you are applying.

Listening

Listening is the process of paying attention to and making sense of everything you hear and see. Often in conversations we listen to evaluate or decide before we actually comprehend what is being shared completely or accurately. This usually leads to jumping to conclusions too quickly which has the effect of shutting down the interview rather than opening it up. If you have an opportunity to listen at length, you will find a great deal of information that is being presented to you that you can use to your advantage in the interview. Besides paying attention to the content of what is being said, here are two things that can indicate the values of the interviewer.

- Frequency and repetition. What shows up the most tends to be important. So if a particular word, especially a value type words like responsible, or dependable. You don't need to know what perspective those words represent. All you need to recognize is that they are a priority for this position. All you have to do is make a connection to your own experience using the same terms.

- Intensity or tone. We emphasize a particular word or phrase with the loudness, or emphasis of how we say it. Treat this the same way as frequency. If it seems to be important, make a connection to it.

Asking and Responding

Always respond. Don't feel obligated to agree or disagree. Asking questions keeps both you *and* the interviewer engaged in the interview process. That way you become more of an individual and less of a typical candidate. Asking questions allows you to share in the control of the interview without seeming like you are trying to dominate it. This is the interviewer's process, but careful questions let you share it. In addition, the answers you get are likely to give you valuable information about the position and the organization. Before your interview, talk to someone else about other questions that you might ask to get more ideas. Make sure the language you use is your own, and not a memorized script. Here are some suggestions.

- You can ask for clarification of terms, "What do you mean when you say...?"

- Ask for examples of ideas or concepts that seem to be of particular importance.

- Paraphrasing. One very useful and valuable technique is simply to paraphrase what you have heard as a response to the other person. "I've heard you mention several times that... so obviously this is a high priority for the job."

- Ask for priorities. Another useful question is something like, "From the job description it's obvious there's a lot to this position. What would you say is the highest priority right now?"

- Ask for the scope of work covered by this position. "What sorts of things does this position include in terms of regular responsibilities?"

- Ask about some specific responsibilities for this position, even if you think you know the answer. What you hear may be specific to this particular position or organization, and my surprise you.

- Ask for expectations about the person that gets this job. "Let's assume that I am successful with this position for a minute. What are the sorts of challenges and opportunities would I likely to be dealing with in a few years?"

No matter what your questions, or what the answers are, be sure and thank the interviewer for providing whatever information was shared.

Connecting

At any part of the process, here is where an awareness of values can give you an edge over the competition.

The initial part of the selection process is what we refer to as negative screening. It is a process of looking at the various candidates and deleting any of those that do not have the minimum requirements. So in your letter of application, make sure you make connections to what you can do, and what is required in the specific position for which you are applying. Don't ignore making connections to the larger, more general organizational values and culture, but these connections are secondary to those between you and the job.

Later in the process, during the positive screening parts, the best match or fit is what is being looked for. Since the negative screening has been completed, interviewers are looking for connections between what specific candidates bring and to the actual priorities operating at the present time as they understand them. Here is where asking a few questions about the specific priorities for this position come in to play, and begin to give you a real opportunity to make sure the interviewer is aware of how your priorities, supported by real examples, are aligned with the position and the larger group or organization.

Whenever you are asked for information about yourself, what you have done, or what you would do, that is an opportunity to also include in your response something about a value that is important to you. For example a common question has to do with past mistakes or difficult situations you my have faced. So when you have shared your selected example, be sure to include how this showed you how important (insert your value here) is in regard to doing this sort of work. In general you should

- Connect your own values to what you have heard or seen in regard to the position.

- Connect your values to the success of job, team, organization. And be prepared to some how say how you will use your values to positively impact the job.

To you, it may seem obvious that you can do the job, and that your values connect with the position and the organization, but don't assume this is obvious to the interviewer. If you are ready to make these connections, you will probably find a good opportunity to do just that. If the chance doesn't come up during the questions, then make these connections at the end. Making connections is a great way to finish an interview.

Effects

It may be obvious to you what the impact or effects of your values and behaviors are, but don't assume the interviewer can follow you without some help. Be prepared to support your explanations with specifics, and when possible document what you say in your resume, letters of recommendation, or other credentials materials.

- What success happened as a result of you applying one of your top values?
- What specific results do you expect to realize from applying your values in the position being discussed right now?
- What was the impact when your co-workers and you shared common group values and objectives?
- What supporting organizational or group value have you found to be particularly important? Why?

It is common to be asked what goals you might have if you get the job in question. Something like, "Where do you plan to be in five years?" This sort of question is a perfect opportunity to stress positive impacts you expect to have had in this position. Being able to respond to a future question may take some preparation on your part. There isn't any substitute for doing your homework, so if you cannot come up with a reasonable answer on your own, go out and talk to some other people who hold similar positions about what they are planning to accomplish. Look on the web for what sorts of effective results people in similar positions have had. Whatever you come up with, make sure you stress the positive effects you will have in this position with your own values and priorities.

A values approach to getting your next job keeps you authentic and motivated. Job searching can be a difficult and demoralizing process, so these are powerful characteristics that will get the attention of anyone you talk to. We wish you all the best in your efforts.

Looking for Work With Values

For a complete, individual and confidential Values Perspective survey report, go to www.values-perspective.com. Your report will be immediately available at the completion of the survey, and will provide you with an in-depth description of your core perspective and your top priority values along with substantial interpretive and developmental information for each of your top values.

Cheryl De Ciantis, Ph.D. has devoted her professional career to creating a safe vessel for personal and professional development through fostering sensitive awareness of self and other, of values, and of cultural context. As a Senior Faculty member of the Center for Creative Leadership, Director of its Brussels campus, and, more recently, co-founder of Kairios group, she has co-designed and delivered award-winning creative leadership development programs, in the U.S., Canada, and Europe.
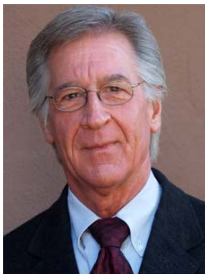
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Kairios