

Values: The Key to Helping Your Clients Find a Satisfying Career

— by Donald Macnab Ph.D.

As a practitioner, it is part of your role to help the client discover and prioritize their values. This will be helpful to clients in a number of spheres: career counselling, retirement counselling, leisure counselling,



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team building, organizational planning and other activities in which this type of self-knowledge is important.

The concept of values is rooted in the theories of vocational behaviour which stress the concept of self (Super, 1976, 1980; Super and Sverko, 1995). In this theory, the self is defined as a set of perceptions of the person's characteristics. These are seen to be derived mainly from models tested through experience. Work and careers are one important opportunity to implement and further develop one's concept of the self. Within the context of work and career, the individual develops and implements a vocational self-concept. Fundamental to this is the attempt to fulfill one's work values. Values are a set of beliefs and attitudes about what is preferable, in life or in a career.

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The Career Values Scale is a well-researched tool, designed by psychologists, which will help your clients examine key aspects of their personal values system. The questions and reports have been designed to help them understand themselves, their values, their satisfactions and dissatisfaction in a clear and understandable way. This offers a quick, reliable and valid method of realizing what values are most important to them and how to use this information as they plan their career. In this process, assessment instruments can be used to:

- Explain that values are part of your personal make-up and are relatively stable goals that a person tries to obtain through work and careers.

- Explain that values are critical in the understanding of satisfaction and dissatisfaction that one realizes from a particular job.
- Guide the career development process by helping the client toward opportunities that will include as many important values as possible.
- Identify the values that the client wishes to see satisfied in his/her career.
- Prioritize the values that the client holds, that is, rank the importance of the values.
- Resolve internal conflicts between competing sets of values.
- Discover sources of satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

The Career Values Scale Subscales

The Career Values scale is subdivided into three factors: Working with Others, Self-Expression and Extrinsic Rewards.

Working with Others

Every career involves some interaction with people. Personal values strongly impact both the type and quality of interaction your clients prefer to have with others. Some individuals prefer an environment that is outgoing and warm, while others prefer a more formal and independent workplace. It includes such scales as Service Orientation, Teamwork, and Influence.

Self-Expression

Each individual approaches work in a unique way. Differences in self-expression can be attributed to how individuals value creativity, independence, excitement and personal development. Values in these areas will influence both the types of tasks and work environments that clients will find enjoyable and satisfying. It includes such scales as Creativity, Independence, Excitement and Personal Development.

Extrinsic Rewards

Every individual is motivated by external factors. It examines how the client values financial rewards, job security and prestige. Recognizing what motivates them is an important step in identifying ideal occupations and making career exploration and analysis easier.

The Manual for the Career Values is available at [www.psychometrics.com]. Click this link to go to the brief directly [www.psychometrics.com/docs/cvs_m.pdf]. Contact Point readers will be interested to know that the English and French language versions are now available on-line in Canada through [www.CareerID.com].

References

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Dr. Donald Macnab is Director of Development for Psychometrics Canada. His work includes the development of the Career Interest Profiler, Work Personality Index and Career Values Scale, and French versions of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and Strong Interest Inventory. He can be reached at dmacnab@psychometrics.com.