



Career Values Diagnostic

Introduction

Understanding our values and what is important to us is a key process in helping to find a fulfilling and rewarding career. When our work is incongruent with our personal values then we are likely to find work more challenging or experience conflict.

One of the key areas of research related to how our personal values link to the work that we do is the work on 'Career Anchors' by Dr. Edgar Schein at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Sloan School of Management. This work identified EIGHT career anchors themes and his research showed that people identify primarily with one or two of these themes.

The career anchors can be useful in helping people to recognise their preferences for certain areas of work or types of roles. It is therefore particularly useful for people when considering different careers or transition points to help inform decisions about future directions.

For example, a person with a primary theme of 'Technical/Function' will seek to find opportunities where they can demonstrate and apply their technical skills. People are generally more fulfilled in their careers when they can satisfy their career anchors and seek roles that are aligned with these.

Career Values Diagnostic Tool

There are a number of diagnostic tools available to help identify your personal preferences around values or career anchors. As with other areas of personality or tools designed to enhance self-awareness, the real value in gaining this understanding is how you then use this information to inform considerations and decisions around future career planning.

The link below will take you to a free on-line version of a work values test which is based on career values similar to those in the theory of career anchors from Schein.

<https://www.123test.com/work-values-test/>

In contrast to the original eight anchors presented in Schein's research, this tool relates to nine career values: Wealth, Service/Dedication to a Cause, Entrepreneurial Creativity, Autonomy/Independence, Security/Stability, Power, Technical/Function Competence, Social Relationships, and Status.

Next Steps

Once you are aware of your preferences, this information can be used to inform future career thinking such as:

- Why did you make specific career choices?
- What would be a good career move for you?
- What are your talents?
- What work value suits you best?
- What work values will make you happy and successful?

Nine Career Values

1. Wealth

If your key Career Values are strongly linked to the area of 'wealth' then this suggests that you are likely to attach a high importance to material gain. Making money is a practical consideration for most people in work and can often be the most important reason for working. Would we all work if we didn't need to pay the bills? However, a high income and earning ever more money can be important career value and it determines a person's career choices. For such a person, a high or higher income is an important measure of success.

2. Service/Dedication to a Cause

If your key Career Values are strongly linked to the area of 'service' then this suggests that you are likely to demonstrate a desire to contribute to the 'greater good'. As a result, you might have a focus on wanting to "improve the world" and work choices are likely to provide opportunities to contribute to society in a meaningful way even if this means you have to put your own interests to one side. Service-oriented people are likely to be driven by how they can help others.

3. Entrepreneurial Creativity

If your key Career Values are strongly linked to the area of 'entrepreneurial creativity' then this suggests that your main goal is to come up with new ideas and products. Linked strongly to this value is being seen as innovative. As a result, working in a very process based or procedural work environment that leaves little room for personal initiatives would be considered restrictive by someone with this preference. There is also an association that creative people often prefer to work alone or in small teams.

4. Autonomy/Independence

If your key Career Values are strongly linked to the area of 'autonomy' then this suggests that you place importance on the need for independence and that you want to be able to make your own decisions. Finding a career where you can work autonomously and according to your own rules would be valued by people with this preference. Aligned to this, it is often found that people with this preference often seek roles where they can be their own boss. Their career choices are determined by the.

5. Security/Stability

If your key Career Values are strongly linked to the area of 'security' then this suggests that you place great importance on roles or work that offer long-term security. This is likely to be the reality for most of us who have mortgages to pay and expect a pensions when we retire. However for people with this preference, the salary and associated immediate 'perks' of a job are likely to be seen as less important than the security of an income and being able to hold on to the job. As a result, individuals with this preference will often look at how stable a company is when deciding on who to work for.

6. Power

If your key Career Values are strongly linked to the area of 'power' then this suggests that you are likely to place importance around holding power and influence within your career. This could be through a desire to control or influence others, the environment, or the situation within which you work. As a result, in making career choices you are likely to place importance on whether or not a job will give them the influence they desire. You are likely to enjoy networking and being in situations where you are 'pulling the strings'.

7. Technical/Functional Competence

If your key Career Values are strongly linked to the area of 'technical competence' then this suggests that you are likely to enjoy and gain self-esteem from being good at what you do. People with this preference are likely to be inquisitive in their roles and want to be perceived as an 'expert' in their field. Similar to people with a creative preference, those who place value on being a specialist may also often prefer to work on their own.

8. Social Relationships

If your key Career Values are strongly linked to the area of 'social relationships' then this suggests that you are likely to place significant value on the social interaction and relationships that your role provides. For many of us the social aspect of our work and the friendship that come with it are important aspects of our work and this is felt to an even greater extent by those with this preference. As a result, this may mean that your career choices are driven by the breadth and social interaction different roles provide as well as the opportunities to work with and meet other people.

9. Status

If your key Career Values are strongly linked to the area of 'status' then this suggests that you are likely to be motivated and interested in roles which provide you with prestige or offer opportunities to impress others. As a result, people with this preference are likely to seek roles and careers which may offer them formal recognition or where their accomplishments are likely to be overtly appreciated. People with this preference are likely to enjoy situations where they are looked up to or where they get to become a member of a privileged group such as a professional body.