



EXPLORING VISION AND VALUE ALIGNMENT TO ENHANCE LEADERSHIP EFFECTIVENESS

The field of leadership development has been moving in a direction over the past several years that point to a new perspective – a perspective that defines leadership more and more as an insight-driven state of awareness. This state of awareness and being is grounded in knowing the essence of who you are, what you aspire to be in your life, and aligning actions that are consistent with that aspiration. While technical skills and abilities remain an important element of the leadership equation, self-insight is increasingly becoming the mantra for helping executives to discover lasting insights that lead to more effective behaviors and more meaningful lives. Executives are demanding and struggling mightily with how to embrace a more holistic approach to leadership. An approach that is centered in first examining your own leadership agenda – your vision and values – as the basis for gaining the wisdom required to manage in times of ambiguity and uncertainty.

While coaching executives within a large American manufacturing organization to higher levels of self-insight and development, it came as a reality that vision and values were the cornerstone for defining how rich lives might be on both the personal and professional front. While the literature on leadership development and self help is loaded with books and articles on the importance of vision and values, there was very little written on the subject of vision and value alignment. Therefore an extensive research on vision and values was undertaken to the organizational personnel and understanding how it applies in a coaching context.

Therefore, this paper will:

1. Provide background on the importance of vision and value alignment
2. Define what is meant by vision, value, and alignment
3. Introduce the vision and value alignment instrument and how it was used in the organization
4. Discuss implications of the research findings from an organization and coaching perspective

Why Vision and Value Alignment

The beginning of the new millennium was a time of economic disturbance for many industries. From a corporate perspective, companies began to embrace a philosophy of “back to basics” in terms of stopping the bleeding and getting operations back on track. As they moved through these times of correction, it has become clear for companies that a deeper connection to what they want to be and how they get there is a fundamental piece of the long-term strategy required for achieving lasting results. Companies with a strong sense of what they are about and how they achieve their results (IBM, Dell, GE, Johnson & Johnson to name a few) rebounded from the economic downturn quickly or were hardly effected by it. In the automotive industry, there is no better example of the power of vision and value alignment than Toyota Motor Company. The “Toyota Way” (meeting the challenges of the long term vision, continuous improvement, organizational learning, respect, teamwork and partnership) is an enduring set of corporate values and principles that they have adhered to despite changes in business conditions or leadership. The results indicate that Toyota has increased market share steadily since 1965 to become the second largest automotive company in the world today. They are benchmarked for their manufacturing efficiencies, quality levels, asset utilization and people systems.

The business case for vision and value alignment is linked strongly to the topic of employee engagement. In a study conducted by the Gallup organization in 2001, high employee engagement could increase employee retention by 44%; safety by 50%; productivity by 50% and profitability by 50%. The study further pointed out that it was the relationship that an employee has with his/her supervisor that had the most influence on how engaged the employee was. Strong relationships are built on trust, and trust is generated when people do what they say they will do (vision and value alignment) and have intentions that are not seen as just self-serving (Fleming et al, 2005 p.4)

There is a consistency about people you trust. You know what they want and why they want it. It is not that these folks are predictable in terms of what they will do; rather, it is their predictability on how they go about deciding which actions will be the right ones to take. The trust they gain from others comes from their internally-driven perspective of what makes them who they are. Peter Drucker summed it up best when he said that “trust is the currency of business – it is the people who trust each other who get the real work done in the organization.” (DeLuca, 2000).



However, vision and value alignment is broader in scope than just building trusting relationships. The importance of vision and value alignment plays out for us each day at a more tactical level. Our ability to prioritize our daily goals, tasks and activities is one of the key determinants of personal effectiveness. Brian Tracy (2004, p 12) writes that to set proper priorities you start with your values: what is most important to you, what you believe in, and what you stand for. Tracy further goes on to explain that people who are clear on what they believe in and value, and who refuse to compromise their values, like and respect themselves (high self esteem) far more than people who are unclear about what matters to them. Self-esteem is the foundation of a healthy personality – it is critical for success and happiness.

The flip side of self-esteem is called self-efficacy -- how effectively you feel you are doing a task. There is a clear connection between self-esteem and self-efficacy. Tracy points out that the more you like yourself, the better you do, and the better you do the more you like yourself. Peak performance and high self-esteem only occur together when your activities and your values are congruent with each other. It is only when what you believe and what you are doing are in alignment that you feel truly happy. Conversely, when there is a lack of alignment between our values and our activities, we experience unhealthy stress, unhappiness and dissatisfaction. With the skyrocketing cost of stress related issues (absenteeism, poor quality, depression, alcohol and drug abuse) perhaps providing more insight on vision and value alignment to employees and family members is a potential way forward to reducing this costly problem.

Last but not least, vision and value alignment plays a key role in our ability to influence people and truly be impact players. In his book *Political Savvy: Systematic Approaches to Leadership behind the Scenes*, Joel DeLuca provides the findings of an extensive study he did on determining the attributes of people who were considered to be impact players and admired by their peers. The two main attributes that distinguished impact players were that they worked in an active and ethical manner to build support for big ideas (vision) that they cared deeply about (values). These political savvy people fostered a sense of alignment with their vision and values by working in the best interest of the organization, playing above board, and legitimizing the tasks to be accomplished. While these attributes don't guarantee success in every situation, it was shown that they increased the odds for success some two to three fold. And while political savvy people tend to see career as an outcome rather than a goal, they experienced promotion rates two to three times the average. Clearly, aligning vision and values pays off at many levels. Let's explore what we mean by vision, values and their alignment.

Understanding Vision and Values

Vision is defined in the American Heritage Dictionary (1976) as “the manner in which one sees or conceives of something.” A vision conveys a sense of possibilities and hope; it should inspire and motivate while also having an air of grounded reality. Further, it should serve as a beacon for guiding your decisions and the changes required for continuous growth. Some questions to consider around calibrating a meaningful vision are:

1. Does it describe a future more attractive than the present?
2. Are you passionate about it?
3. Will it challenge you?
4. Can you articulate it to yourself and others?
5. Will it serve as the framework for keeping decision making in context?

The implication of living life without a clear vision is summed up nicely by the following quote from Henry Mintzberg (1994), a noted scholar in the field of management development opines that if there is no vision but only formal plans, then unpredicted change in the environment makes people feel like the sky is falling. Conversely, the power of vision is captured in the following quote by Viktor Frankl (1962), a WW II concentration camp survivor, speaks of people who survived had a common thread, a trait essential to their survival. All of those who made it through had something significant yet to do in their future. Vision provides the motivation to keep going. It enables us to move from living lives that are comfort-centered to lives that are purpose-centered – lives that bring honor to our existence through the creation of new and better possibilities.

Values, as defined by the American Heritage Dictionary, are principles, standards or qualities considered

worthwhile or desirable. Values are the drivers for our vision; they are the means we use to achieve an end state. Our values are the compass that we use to guide us to our destiny. Clear values stabilize us and allow us to confront the issues that make us feel confused and fearful.

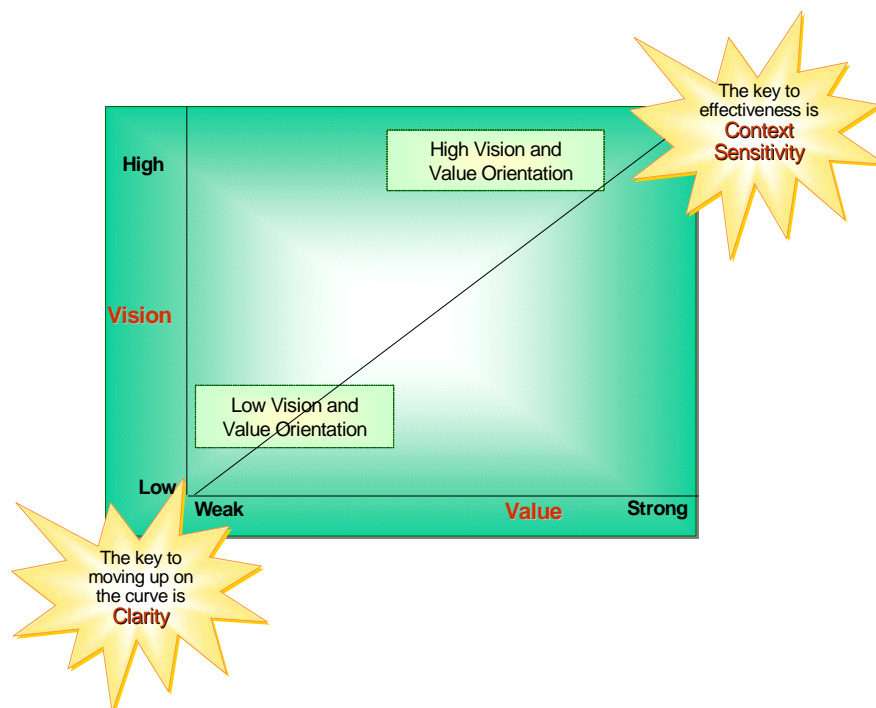
While the American Heritage definition of values is technically accurate, after working with over 20000 people from various parts of the world, a more holistic definition of values would be, values are those beliefs that we hold within us that govern our behavior in any given context. Some of these beliefs are known to us while others are not (Sampath, 1999). For us to identify and discover our values we need to do so within the framework of a particular context. Discovering our values is an inward journey requiring introspection and self-awareness. Taking time to identify and understand our values is difficult but enormously important work. Values guide our every decision and therefore our destiny. To the extent we lack clarity about our values we risk becoming derailed as we move forward in life.

Vision and Value Alignment

How we provide meaning to vision and values is the key to understanding the process for how best to strengthen and align the two. Vision without values can lead to moral and ethical dilemmas. Values without vision can cause us to get stuck in a reactive lifestyle. When we have both clear vision and values, we are in control of our destiny -- we act appropriate to the present and create our future. The journey of vision and value alignment therefore requires us to focus on the following critical questions.

1. What do I want to achieve? (Vision)
2. In what matter/way do I want to achieve my vision?(Values)
3. Why do I want to achieve the vision, and why in this way? (Clarity)
4. Considering the situation, what actions are most appropriate? (Context)

The response to the first two questions provides clarity on the overall goal or outcome one is trying to reach and the means one will use to achieve that end. The response to the third question provides a deeper understanding of the goal and the appropriate means for achieving the goal. When there is a lack of clarity on what one wants to achieve and how one wants to achieve it, value conflicts and wasted efforts arise. The response to the fourth question will give an insight into the given context of the situation. This is critical since the context is the environment or situation that we take action within.



The importance of the four areas is depicted in the visual to the right. The following simple example highlights

how they come together. Let's say my vision is to go to New York. If I value time, I would fly there. However, if I value adventure and relaxation, I might drive a scenic route, take a train or go by bus. Why I'm going to New York will influence how I prepare for the trip. A trip to attend a business conference, go sight-seeing or to do a bit of both will influence how I prepare, what clothes I pack, and how I will spend my time. Clarity on these points will determine how successful an experience I will have in various activities that I find myself engaging in while in New York. This example illustrates the central theme in vision and value alignment: the key to our effectiveness in life is driven by our ability to be context sensitive. The strength of our context sensitivity is determined by the presence of and alignment between a high vision, strong values and clarity on why and how we pursue our goals. Let's now examine what varying degrees of alignment might look like from a behavioral standpoint.

Vision and Value Alignment Leadership Styles

After working with various Leadership groups, four kinds of Leadership styles have been identified as follows:

1. High Vision Orientation: individuals who work in their own best interests versus that of the organization. These are people who know what they want, and use their power and influence to advance their personal agenda.
2. High Value Orientation: individuals who see their beliefs as the way of life. These people are highly attuned to their external environment, and place great value on image and protocol.
3. Low Vision and Value Orientation: individuals who "follow the pack". These people are often individuals who thrive on predictability and stability as a means for managing their own shortcomings and lack of self-esteem.
4. High Vision and Value Orientation: impact players who take an enterprise perspective. These people embrace change and view the world through a variety of lenses. They are comfortable with ambiguity, live in the moment, and are excellent learners.

The table below provides a high level summary of the characteristics of each of these leadership styles. Each of the quadrants has characteristics that represent the style in the absolute sense. While some people will be closer to the absolute characteristics, others will be somewhere between the styles moving toward one orientation or another depending on their level of clarity and engagement.

Characteristics of Vision and Value Leadership Styles

<p>High Vision Orientation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power & Authority Driven • Driven Primarily by Self-Interest • Clear about the opportunities they wish to pursue • Inclusive only to the extent it serves their agenda -- Manipulation is a necessary way of Accomplishing Their Agenda 	<p>High Vision and Value Orientation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driven by working for something bigger than themselves – being impact players • Driven by an enterprise perspective • Collaboration centered -- highly adaptive and energized by change • Inclusive and plays above board
<p>Low Vision and Value Orientation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doesn't stand out or "make waves" • Low self esteem -- easily swayed by external environment • Most comfortable with highly stable and predictable environment • Lives day-to-day -- indifferent to inclusion 	<p>High Value Orientation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek recognition from what they stand for • Driven by a self righteous viewpoint • Image is everything -- highly sensitive to how the external environment views them • Inclusive with other people who share their perspective

Vision and Value Instrument

Based on the characteristics of people who show degrees of vision and value alignment, the point is how does one gain insight into the degree of strength and relationship between these two variables.

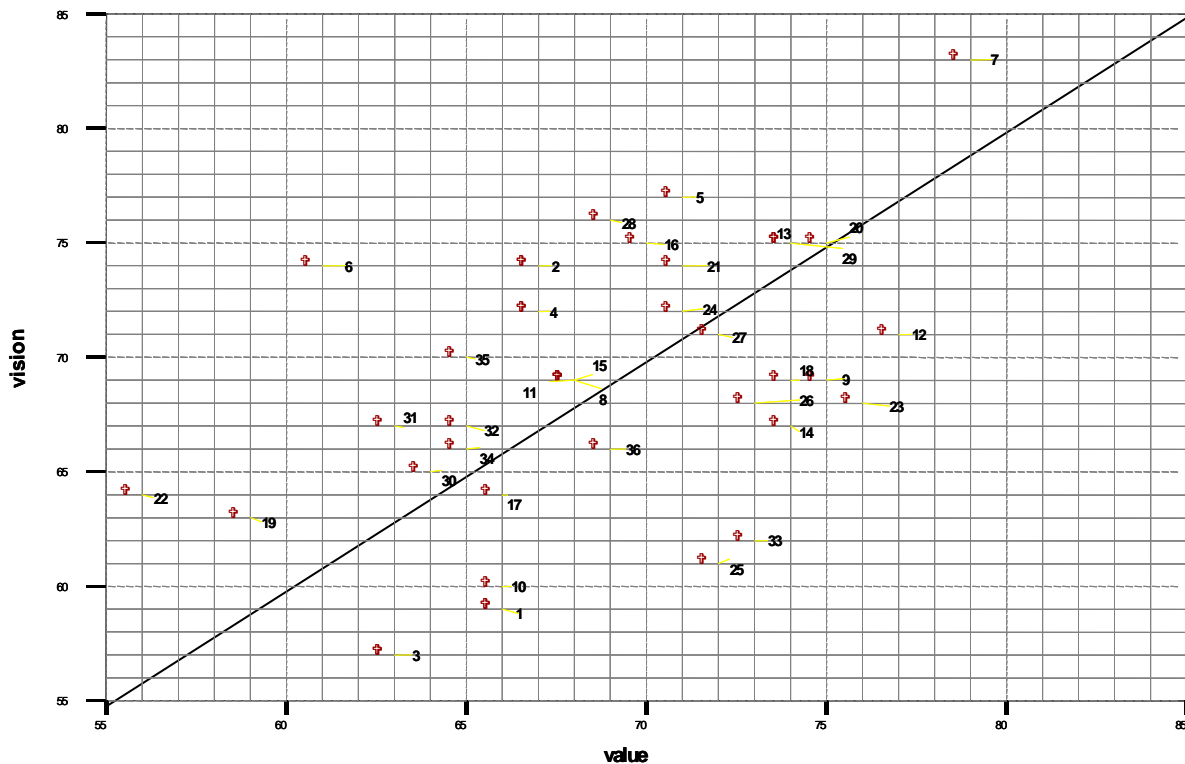
The VVI – Vision-Values Instrument provides a clear picture of where a person is with regard to strength and alignment of his/her vision and values. An abstract of the vision and value questionnaire is available in the appendix of this paper. Here is a brief description of the instrument.

The questionnaire is a two-factor instrument measuring vision and values and is comprised of thirty-two statements -- half measure the Vision Orientation and half measure the Value Orientation of the respondents. The instrument uses a 5 point Likert Scale and has been developed and tested with over 500 people. It has high reliability scores (using Spearman Brown and Guttman) and high validity based on Known Values and Behavioral Manifestation testing. The output of the instrument is shown on a grid that indicates where an individual presently stands in terms of strength of vision, values and the alignment between the two.

Sl.No	Measures	Alpha	Split-Half
1	Vision	.84	.8958
2	Values	.78	.8267

A pilot of the instrument was conducted at the American Manufacturing Organization. The sample included Forty-five mid-level managers from a variety of line and staff organizations within the United States were invited to participate in completing the instrument – thirty-seven people responded. Each of the participant's results is shown on the graph below. A diagonal line has been inserted on the grid to make it easier to view the dispersion of results around vision and value alignment. Because all respondents scored in the top 70%, the graph represents the top quartile of results.

Figure 1: Vision-Value Instrument Results



The data show the following results:

1. All respondents scored in the top 70% with a mean score of 68.9 for vision and 69.1 for value
2. About 25% of the respondents were aligned at different intensity along the diagonal
3. The majority of respondents experienced a moderate degree of non-alignment with about an equal number split

- between either a vision or value orientation
4. The limited sample size does not allow for a broader interpretation of the data as it relates to organizational insights. However, the data suggests that there is a clear coaching opportunity for improving the strength and level of vision and value alignment for the participants.

For example, looking at the data, individuals who scored below and toward the bottom of the diagonal line might be coached to:

- Look at their vision much more closely
- Be encouraged to explore some of the following questions:
 - Where do you experience conflicts and how do you deal with them?
 - What motivates you to do what you are doing?
 - What is that you would like to see yourself accomplishing at professional and personal level?
 - How do you deal with obstacles that come in the way of accomplishing the set goals?
 - What role do values play when one is not clear about one's vision?

Similarly Individuals who are aligned with vision over values or above the diagonal line might be coached to explore some of the following questions:

- Where do you experience conflicts and how do you deal with them?
- What are the values I stand by in my life?
- What role do values play in building oneself and the organization?
- Why do I value the end more than the means?
- What do I want to be known for?

Individuals who scored close to the diagonal line and were more aligned in the graph might be coached to explore these questions:

- What things in life are you pursuing and why?
- What beliefs govern how you approach your decisions and actions?
- What about your future? Does it provide a sense of challenge for you?
- What areas of your life are in sync? What are the signs that things are working or not working for you?
- What feedback have you received from others that is consistent (or inconsistent) with your intentions?

An example of a participant's feedback report is included in the appendix of this paper. While these reports will provide insight on vision and values, there is no substitute for the deeper reflective thinking that is required for richer and more meaningful insights. It is essential to further explore some coaching moves and considerations that one might follow when working with someone on the topic of vision and value alignment. While the advice has a coaching context around it, it is still highly relevant for people interested in doing their own exploration regarding further application.

Vision & Values – A Coaching Context

Earlier in the paper a definition for values that we have explored has been cited. It goes as follows: values are those beliefs that we hold within us that govern our behavior in any given context. Some of those beliefs are known to us while others are not. The ability to understand what beliefs are at play in any given context requires patience, discipline and the willingness to probe for understanding. It requires the ability to see things for how they really are and suspend judgment until clarity unfolds. With clarity comes insight, and with insight comes wisdom. With wisdom about others and ourselves, we become more aware of how our values and vision align.

Given the intensity and depth that often accompanies the process of self-insight and discovery; it is helpful to engage the services of a coach to assist in the process. While coaches are often asked to give advice and provide clients with insights, the overall approach in working with vision and values is to be more non-directive or to “lead from behind” when helping a client to discover his/her own insights. Depending on the nature of the coaching intervention, there are many potential discovery questions that a coach might work through with a client.



Listed below are some suggested relevant questions that might be explored with a client:

1. Have you thought about your life's meaning?
2. What do you hold near and dear?
3. What things in life are you pursuing and why?
4. What beliefs govern how you approach life?
5. What about your future provides a sense of challenge and wonder for you?
6. What areas of your life have you feeling conflicted? What is behind your feelings of conflict?
7. What areas of your life are in sync? What are the signs that things are working or not working for you?
8. Do you see patterns of behavior that support (or block) you're realizing what you want in life? What's going on?
9. What feedback have you received from others that is consistent (or inconsistent) with your intentions?

These questions are coaching moves that are intended to provide the opening for a deeper and richer conversation with your client. Of course, the quality and caliber of insight gained by your client will be influenced by many factors. Factors that are within the control of a coach and warrant attention include:

1. As a coach, are you clear about your own vision and values? If so, are they aligned?
2. As a coach, can you recognize and contain your own vision and values biases so that you can genuinely engage?
3. When working on vision and values, how do you prioritize areas so that efforts are focused and not diluted?
4. When working on vision and values, what are the "safe places" you can go for honest and honorable feedback?
5. How will you know you are making progress? What will success look like?

As with any coaching situation, there are many considerations that drive a successful engagement. The ones mentioned here are intended to raise awareness of key factors that impact a coach's ability to move the client forward.

Summary

The field of leadership development has been moving in a direction over the past several years that embraces self-insight as the foundation for sustained long term development and personal effectiveness. The framework for this self-insight is our vision and values. A vision conveys a sense of possibilities and hope; it inspires and motivates us while also having an air of grounded reality. Our values are the compass that we use to guide us to our destiny. Clear values stabilize us and allow us to confront the issues that make us feel confused and fearful. When we have both clear vision and values, we are in control of our destiny -- we act appropriate to the present and create our future. How we provide meaning to vision and values is the key to understanding the process for how best to strengthen and align the two.

The journey of vision and value alignment requires us to focus on the following critical questions.

1. What do I want to achieve? (Vision)
2. In what matter/way do I want to achieve my vision? (Values)
3. Why do I want to achieve the vision, and why in this way? (Clarity)
4. Considering the situation, what actions are most appropriate? (Context)

The strength and alignment of our vision and values influences our style of leadership. Clarity of vision and values drives their strength and alignment. Strong and aligned vision and values allows us to be appropriate in a wide range of circumstances (context sensitive). Our ability to be context sensitive allows us to learn and be highly productive in situations where ambiguity and change are present.

In coaching people to work through vision, value, clarity and context, it is important to start with a series of discovery questions – examples provided in this paper -- and be mindful of coaching biases. The role of the coach is to "lead from behind" in a non-directive manner – probing with the right questions and summarizing when appropriate the key insights and discoveries that are clients unfold.

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Appendix 1

VISION - VALUE INSTRUMENT - Abstract

Version 10.4

By - J.M.Sampath, PhD

Each of the following statements describes a certain choice made by the individual with regard to his/her Vision and Values. There are five alternatives available. Read each statement carefully, and indicate which of the five alternatives describes you the most. It will be to your benefit if you give a candid response. Put a check mark (x) in the box for each statement in accordance to the alternatives given.

Sl.No.	Statements	Always	Most of the times	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
1.	I am clear on why I want to achieve the goals I have set for my life.					
2.	I set goals that challenge me to achieve more in my life.					
4.	All my important goals are connected to my vision in life.					
6.	I am clear on the values I want to stand by in life.					
7.	I adapt my values to suit the environment I live in.					
8.	I go with the majority though I don't believe in what they do.					
12.	My values drive the way I live my life.					
13.	How I achieve my goals is as important as the goal itself.					
17.	I keep my vision in mind while making important decisions in life.					
18.	It is reasonable for me to abandon my values in a crisis situation.					
30.	I find different ways to do what I need to do without having to compromise my values.					
31.	I find ways to overcome the constraints I face in achieving my goals.					
32.	I do not plan, as the future is uncertain.					

Appendix 2

A sample report for participant no. 13

Vision Values Orientation Profile of Respondent 13

This report provides a very high level summary of your results from completing the Vision and Value Instrument. It provides directional insight about your vision and value orientation along with some recommendations for areas you may wish to probe further to gain richer insights about yourself. The output of the instrument is shown on a grid that indicates where you presently stand in terms of strength of vision and values, and the alignment between the two. A diagonal line has been inserted on the grid to make it easier to view the dispersion of results around vision and value alignment.

The report also will give you information on other dimensions that are relevant for managers and employees at all levels. While many of these terms are self-evident, here is a brief summary of what each means:

- Vision & Value Orientation -- strength and clarity of your vision and values
- Context Sensitivity – how aware you are of the appropriate actions you should take in any given circumstance
- Change Sensitivity – how aware you are to the changes that are or should be happening around you
- Systems and Process Sensitivity – how aware you are to the necessary systems and processes that are required or need to be changed for you to excel
- Action Orientation – how strongly you are biased in your actions
- Conflict Orientation – how comfortable you are with addressing discord or tension
- Leadership Role -- how your vision and values orientation impact you as a leader

Examining how and why we engage and interact in our individual, unique ways is the key to being effective and achieving desired results. Oftentimes, one's vision and values are primary forces that influence and drive how we think, make decisions, and take action. Therefore, it is important to understand what is meant by vision and values, and the importance of vision and value alignment, as described below.

Vision is defined in the American Heritage Dictionary as “the manner in which one sees or conceives of something.” It is imaginative insight and the ability to think or plan the future powerfully, with great wisdom. A vision conveys a sense of possibilities and hope; it should inspire and motivate while also having an air of grounded reality. Further, it should serve as a beacon for guiding your decisions and the changes required for continuous growth. Your vision should have the potential to bring out the best in you so that you grow to become who you are capable of being than just what you want to be,. Some questions to consider around calibrating a meaningful vision are:

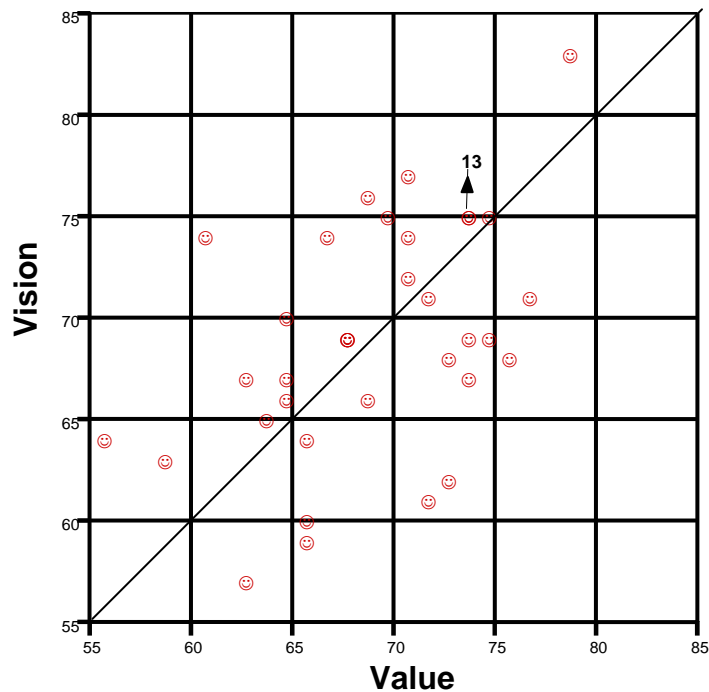
- Does it describe a future more attractive than the present?
- Are you passionate about it?
- Will it challenge you?
- Can you articulate it to yourself and others?

Values, as defined by the American Heritage Dictionary, are principles, standards or qualities considered worthwhile or desirable. Values are the drivers for our vision; they are the means we use to achieve an end state. Our values are the compass that we use to guide us to our destiny. Further, values are those beliefs that we hold within us that govern our behavior in any given context. While some of these beliefs are know to us while others are not, yet they govern our behavior.

How we provide meaning to vision and values is the key to understanding the process for how best to strengthen and **align** the two. Vision without values can lead to moral and ethical dilemmas. Values without vision can cause us to get stuck in a reactive lifestyle. When we have both clear vision and values, we are in control of our destiny -- we act appropriate to the present and create our future.

Please turn to the following page to discover the degree of your vision and value orientation, then information on the other dimensions described above. Then, you will be provided with thoughts for future action regarding how to strengthen the alignment between your vision and values that will positively impact your personal and leadership effectiveness.

Vision Values Grid



Respondent 13 - Vision Value Score

Vision Score –
Value Score –

The above scores are derived from your responses to the Vision Value Instrument. Based on these scores, a vision and value orientation description is provided below, along with information on other relevant dimensions.

Vision Value Orientation

- You are to a very great extent focused on your vision or purpose -- you have a great deal of clarity on what you need to achieve and where you want to head in your life
- You are almost equally focused on the values you stand by and have strong clarity as to why you have the values you do
- There is good alignment between your vision and values which indicates you are operating both externally and internally with a lot of satisfaction and strong results



Context Sensitivity

- In most situations or circumstances, your actions are appropriate for what is demanded at the time
- One note of caution with your score. Under stress and extreme pressure, you may be prone to a slight bias toward what needs to get accomplished versus how it gets accomplished
- While this is not a significant issue at this point, the stronger your vision and values becomes, even minor imbalances can have a significant impact

Change Sensitivity

- You would be receptive to change as long as it enables you to achieve your goals and doesn't call for compromise of your values to a very great extent

System and Process Sensitivity

- You would be highly sensitive to both the task at hand and the people who work with you
- You have a strong tendency to work towards enhancing the efficiency of any given system or process
- You would be continuously looking for improving systems and processes to ensure that goals are achieved without having to compromise your values

Action Orientation

- You are highly action oriented and quick to take advantage of opportunities that are aligned with your vision and values

Conflict Orientation

- When confronted with conflict, you examine all dimensions of the issue and to a large extent, act appropriate to the situation
- Under very serious pressure, you are inclined to compromise to a small degree, your values

Leadership Orientation

- Your strength and alignment of your vision and values allows you to be very effective in influencing people and obtaining results – you are gifted with the skills of doing the right things at the right time in the right way
- Your actions match your words and those around you see you as fair, respectful, and demanding -- people trust you
- Your ability to focus on improving business processes and driving results that are consistent with your values gives you tremendous credibility
- While not an issue at this point, you favor slightly competence in people versus character – however both are very important to you

Thoughts for Future Action

With a score of approximately 75%, you are fairly balanced in your vision and values. There is potential for enhancing your threshold. However, please be aware not to lose the alignment as you raise the bar of performance. It may be worthwhile for you to be aware of your value dilemmas and do all that you can to keep the values along with performance.

We all have the potential for achieving great alignment between vision and values. Doing so requires us to focus on the following critical questions.



1. What do I want to achieve? (**Vision**)
2. In what matter/way do I want to achieve my vision? (**Values**)
3. Why do I want to achieve the vision, and why in this way? (**Clarity**)
4. Considering the situation, what actions are most appropriate? (**Context**)

The response to the first two questions provides clarity on the overall goal or outcome one is trying to reach and the means one will use to achieve that end. The response to the third question provides a deeper understanding of the goal and the appropriate means for achieving the goal. When there is a lack of clarity on what one wants to achieve and how one wants to achieve it, value conflicts and wasted efforts arise. The response to the fourth question will give an insight into the given context of the situation. This is critical since the context is the environment or situation that we take action within.

Other relevant questions that you may want to consider include:

- What things in life are you pursuing and why?
- What beliefs govern how you approach your decisions and actions?
- What about your future? Does it provide a sense of challenge for you?
- What areas of your life are in sync? What are the signs that things are working or not working for you?
- What feedback have you received from others that is consistent (or inconsistent) with your intentions?