

# Values-based Indicator of Motivation (VbIM)

## User's Guide



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Team Focus Limited

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## Introduction

“Musicians must make music, artists must paint, poets must write if they are to be ultimately at peace with themselves. What human beings can be, they must be. They must be true to their own nature. This need we may call self-actualization... It refers to man’s desire for self-fulfilment, namely to the tendency for him to become actually in what he is potentially: to become everything one is capable of becoming.”

Abraham Maslow from *Motivation and Personality*

“Everyone has his own specific vocation or mission in life; everyone must carry out a concrete assignment that demands fulfilment. Therein he cannot be replaced, nor can his life be repeated, thus, everyone's task is unique as his specific opportunity.”

“Those who have a 'why' to live, can bear with almost any 'how.'”

Victor Frankl

A friend of mine woke up in the middle of the night with a sense of unease. He then drove fifty miles to make sure that his mother was OK – and he still went to work that day. Why? Another friend works for very little pay and yet is willing to work very long hours without complaining – usually. Why? Someone I met many years ago whilst working as a Community Service Supervisor was known to his gang as “The General.” He would put in hours of preparation to get his supporters in the right place at the right time to fight with rival gangs. Why? The Values-based Indicator of Motivation tries to shine a light on many such issues. At its heart it addresses the basic question “Why do we get out of bed in the morning?”

Many questionnaires have been developed to measure people and their personality. However, we do not understand the situations described above any better when we are told that a person is inclined to be more extraverted than introverted. We may be tempted to believe that the person described above who drove fifty miles had an anxious personality – but in fact he had a particularly calm temperament! Personality tells us more about HOW someone will go about doing something than WHY they do it. If we really want to understand others we need to explore their fundamental motives and values.

Values are the key to understanding people’s energy and motivation. Explore people’s values and you can unlock the “what, where, when and why” of people’s actions. However, this area is remarkably uncharted. When we began exploring this area, many of the models and questionnaires appeared locked in a time-warp.

Fundamental values such as tradition and security, whilst important, reflect the pre-occupations of people living through the turbulence of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Our own investigations about what mattered most to people today indicated a far greater emphasis on relational and spiritual values.

These are poorly represented in mainstream questionnaires which appear locked into psychological models that are themselves rooted in the past.

VbIM has therefore been developed to provide a more up-to-date and detailed map of values and motivations that reflects what is important in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Our purpose was to provide a tool that would enable us to discover things like what drives people at work and outside to commit time and energy beyond the absolute minimum. In the work context one thing is certain – motivation does not come solely from financial reward. Twenty years ago Tom Peter's highly influential book, *In Search of Excellence*, drew attention to the importance of a range of values in the workplace...etc. These days we need to recognise an even broader range and VbIM was developed to map out this relatively uncharted terrain.

### **Why was VbIM developed?**

All that matters requires energy. Finding, releasing and channelling energy is arguably the biggest challenge we face. This is certainly true for employers and managers. It is also for all those who deal with others – parents, teachers, social workers to name but a few. However, values are also fundamentally important for our own personal life and goals. They provide meaning and satisfaction. They influence the intensity and flow of our psychological energy. They guide us; direct us; enable us to take the next step; provide the criteria for guiding our actions; and much more. They provide the fuel that drives the car and the pipes that direct the flow. Talent without energy is unrealised potential that needs igniting. Energy without talent is dangerous and needs harnessing and redirecting in new and more fruitful directions.

Given how important this area is, it is surprising that there is such a paucity of tools to help navigate this terrain. VbIM has been developed to provide a new and comprehensive framework of values assessed in a fresh way. It has incorporated the best of the models developed last century where the concerns of the times involved greater emphasis on tradition, security, excitement etc. It has embedded these within the wider range of issues that are fundamentally important to people today – relationships, ideas, spirituality etc. It may well be that these have always been important and so we hope that VbIM provides a much needed detailed and comprehensive map for the new territory.

### **What does the PFS Values Based indicator of Motivation offer?**

- **Up-to-date and comprehensive** – the model identifies 24 possible motives and values thus filling the gaps left by other questionnaires.
- **Simplicity with complexity** – by structuring the scales into 4 key areas the interpretation and feedback can be made more understandable and impactful.
- **The potential for surprising insight** – by combining both normative and ipsative approaches, it allows not only comparisons with different norm groups but also a challenge to the person's consciously expressed views (by highlighting potential inconsistencies in the responses made) – and uniquely, the VbIM uses innovative psychometric methodologies to overcome perennial difficulties associated with the assessment of values.
- **A common language** – for describing a person's identity and for enabling people who live or work together to appreciate their similarities and differences.
- **Ease of use** – available online and accessible anywhere anytime.
- **Speeds of interpretation** – the comprehensive reports are available by e-mail to either the respondent or the facilitator, or both.





# Section One: The Concept of Values

## Background

To begin, it should be appreciated that an understanding of human values and the development of 'systems' of values is nothing new. In Confucian, Buddhist, Sikh and Christian philosophies, to name but a few, it is possible to identify lists of values, or virtues, which are designed to guide behaviour. Indeed famously the work of the great renaissance artist, Giotto, depicts the seven classical virtues: prudence, fortitude, temperance, justice, faith, charity and hope. Moving forward we find these same themes appearing in contemporary models of values, and in the emerging field of 'strengths' psychology with the re-discovery of themes like justice and temperance (Linley & Harrington, 2006).

But what is a value? Arguably it was not until the 1970's that a truly scientific framework for looking at values emerged, and the central figure was Milton Rokeach. He stated that values are a belief that 'a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence' (Rokeach 1973). What this means is that values have a subjective component and include a judgement about what is or is not important and what is or is not an acceptable way of behaving. Statements such as 'people should be free to act as they like as long as they do not break the law' or 'it is important that we can all develop to our full potential' are thus markers to core values, in this case the valuing of 'accountability' and 'personal growth' respectively.

In addition, as Rokeach reflected, values are probably learnt early in life through socialisation and interactions with parents, teachers, friends and peers (Rokeach 1973; Feather 1985). Some researchers also claim that, as with other psychological attributes, there is an inherited component (Meglino & Ravlin, 1998).

Bringing all of this together, a clearer definition of a value might be that it is:

*'a guiding and motivating principle in which we have an emotional or cognitive investment, that we find it important and preferable to adopt for personal, social or cultural reasons'.*

Values then can be thought of as the elements of our identity that give meaning, mission and purpose to our lives – they also energise and motivate us to do things.

However what is obvious from the new definition is that we need to attend to the concept of 'importance'. In particular as Robbins & Coulter (2004) point out, there is a difference between the nature of a value, which determines whether it features in our view of the world, and its intensity, which influences *how* important we feel it is. Obviously if we were to put these two things together it would be possible to construct a hierarchy of values for a person, but one in which the order of the values might change as a result of circumstances. The last point is an important one because it suggests that values may be ordered by their importance *relative* to other values. So while a person's values *per se* may be relatively fixed, different values may be more or less important at different times. This point has been ably made by Shalom Schwartz (1987, 1992), another key figure in this area, and the author of one of the most influential values questionnaires, the Schwartz Value Survey.

In a similar vein it is useful to make a distinction between so-called 'espoused' values and those that are 'in-use'. The crux of a useful distinction made by Argyris & Schon (1978) in their book on organisational learning, and by Schein (2004), which points to the difference between paying lip-service to organisational values – or those values that a person wants other people to think they hold – and the in-use values that actually drive their behaviour. Of course this dichotomy is important because it is useful to know what sort of values are influencing a person's decision making. The match between personal (in-use) values, and espoused or actual organisational values, can also have a profound effect on someone's motivation. So for example if an employee believes that their values are in line with those of the organisation in which they work they likely to be more content and productive (Feather & Rauter, 2004).

## Historical typologies

In psychology there have been many influences on values research and the typologies that have been produced to describe and map them. For example most values typologies draw on the early work on psychological needs, and concepts such as **self-actualisation** (Maslow 1954; Herzberg 1959). Many will be familiar with Maslow's concept of the 'hierarchy of needs', an ordering of needs from those that are physiological (eg: hunger) through to self-actualisation (the need to fulfil one's potential); and Herzberg's work on what affects people's attitude to work. The latter including 'hygiene' factors such as working conditions and salary, as opposed to motivational factors like achievement, recognition and advancement. Readers may also be familiar with the terms '**extrinsic**' and '**intrinsic**' motivation.

And as with Herzberg's factors these refer to external (extrinsic) motivators like salary – or the valuing of money or material reward, versus internal (intrinsic) motivators such as the valuing of being part of a group or team.

Another strand of influence comes from theories concerned with quality of working life and level of aspiration (Lawler 1982), and the effect that '**well-being**' can have on productivity and GNP (Worrall and Cooper, 2006). A low level of 'well-being' being variously estimated as costing 5-10% of GNP per annum. Thus one can see that health and wellbeing may well be important values, although interestingly they are not often found in values questionnaires.

There is also a great body of work relating to **achievement**. This is built on the seminal work of Murray (1938) who produced an extensive model of needs and motivational processes, aspects of which were popularised by McClelland (1961) in his book on the 'Achieving Society'. Indeed many values systems now include his three needs: **need for achievement**, **need for affiliation**, and **need for power**. And these needs can equally be expressed as **values**: the valuing of achievement or advancement, the valuing of affiliation or connection, and the valuing of power or influence.

More generally there are links between motivation, values and interests research through people like Schein (1993) and his notion of **career anchors**. These include values such as autonomy/independence, security/stability and service/dedication. Indeed Schein (1996) defines the concept of the career anchor as 'a person's self-concept, consisting of talents and abilities, basic values and, most important, the evolved sense of motives and needs as they pertain to the career.' Other researchers such as Hogan (1996) also make an explicit association between values and career interests, and there is evidence that personality can be drawn into the picture as well. Furnham (1984), for example, has demonstrated a clear relationship between introversion and freedom and self-respect, and neuroticism and harmony.

Finally there is a **cross-cultural dimension** to values measurement which is perhaps best characterised by the contribution of Geert Hofstede (2001), his work over many years having identified five common dimensions that can be used to understand differences in national cultural values. For instance, he has highlighted the importance of looking at '**individualism**' or the strength of the ties that people have to others in their community; and the importance of **power/distance**, or the degree to which inequality exists and is accepted by people with and without power.

The remaining three dimensions are **masculinity** (the degree to which a society adheres to traditional male and female roles, **uncertainty/avoidance** (the way in which society treats ambiguity, or conversely, seeks rules and order) and **long term orientation** (the degree to which a society values long-standing as opposed to short-term traditions and values).

Over the years much of the research described has been combined to produce **psychometric measures** of individual and/or cultural values. The Schwartz Value Survey – SVS (Littrell & Schwartz, 2007) had already been mentioned, but there are others, notably the Rokeach Value Survey – RVS (Rokeach 1973), Allport-Vernon-Lindzey Scale - AVLS (Allport et al, 1960), Super's Work Values Inventory – SWVI (Super 1964, Zytowski 2006), the revised versions of Gordon's Surveys of Personal and Interpersonal Values – GSPV, GSIV (Gordon 1992, 1993), Schein Careers Anchors Questionnaire – SCAQ (Schein 1993), Hogan Motives, Values and Preferences Inventory – HMVPI (Hogan & Hogan, 1996), and to tie in with Hofstede's cultural dimensions, the Hofstede Value Survey – HVS (Hofstede 1994). There have also been a **small number of other values/motivation** questionnaires produced by the major UK psychometric test publishers.

What all of these questionnaires have in common is that they tend to map onto a set of values that reflect the spirit of the time. Thus whilst the SVS and its associated values 'Circumplex' (model) covers 11 value domains, including a recently added '**spirituality**', it **misses** some of the more **relationally orientated** (e.g.: inclusion, trust) and 'ego' centred (e.g.: desire for fame, legacy) values. By comparison the RVS measures 18 terminal and 18 instrumental values. The former are 'desirable end-states of existence' such as salvation, peace of mind and friendship; and the latter, 'desirable modes of conduct' such as being ambitious, honest and loving. However whilst the RVS has been important in values research, it was not specifically designed to measure work values.

The **AVLS** was designed to measure basic interests and motives but covers only six areas - theoretical, economic, aesthetic, social, political and religious; and in a similar vein the GSPV, GSIV, SCAQ and HVS all measure between five and eight values, which whilst of some interest at the individual level, tend to lack sufficient depth to be used for anything other than general development purposes. Indeed the HVS is designed as a cross-cultural survey tool rather than a person-centred questionnaire.

The **two exceptions** are the revised version of the SWVI and the HMVPI. These provide broader coverage than the other questionnaires, although it should be noted that the SWVI is still based on a 1960's view of values, and the HMVPI has its roots in the psychology of values *and* interests. Thus like some of the other earlier questionnaires, values such as affiliation and recognition sit alongside interests like commercial and scientific.

What is also the case is that the questionnaires available on the market tend to look back to a time when the important distinction was thought to be between **extrinsic and intrinsic factors**, and again they tend to **overlook or minimise** the importance of more contemporary issues such as the value that many place on relationships and relationship building.

## The VbIM Model

The VbIM model sits on the shoulders of existing research and is also based on an analysis of the breadth of coverage provided by current questionnaires. It has been developed to provide a comprehensive map of values and motivations, and to reflect what is important to individuals in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. That is not to say that it does not include core values such as **tradition** and **security**, rather it **adds important new values**. It also brings back in **character 'strengths'** – the old virtues – through the explicit inclusion of concepts like integrity and transcendence.

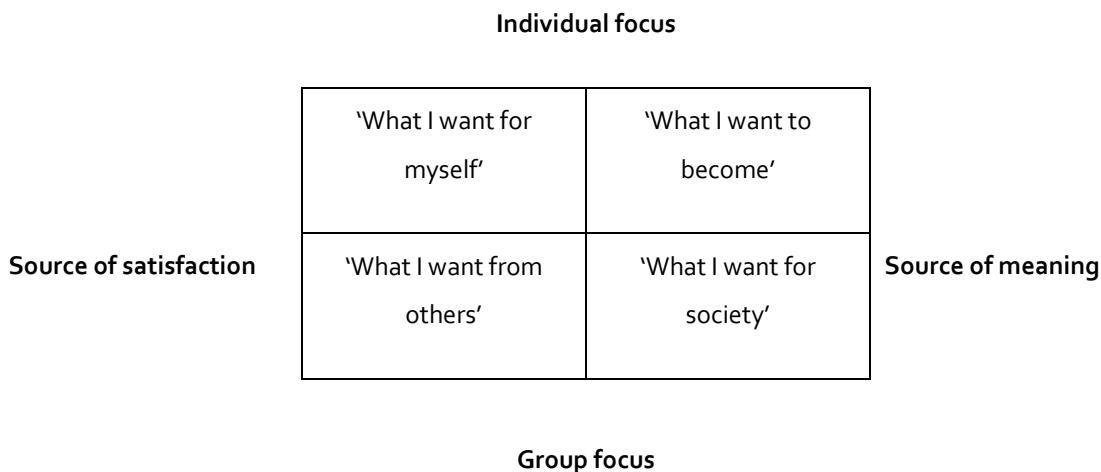
Additionally it reflects advances in evolutionary psychology, and for example the four basic 'drives' that appear to be hardwired into the human brain: **Acquire** (essential resources as well as psychological 'assets' that improve social status); **Bond** (to develop relationships with individuals and groups as a way of improving security and excitement); **Learn** (to acquire beliefs that make the world more predictable); and **Defend** (to protect against threats to ourselves, our values and relationships) – Laurence & Nohria, 2002.

The process of considering and testing values took place over five years and included the production of various prototype questionnaires. These included varying numbers of values and were based on three different rational or factorial models. However at the end of the process **24 values were identified** and are included in the current version of the VbIM questionnaire

For example a review of existing questionnaires illustrates the fact that there are **many ways of organising and structuring values**. Thus it is possible to look specifically at work-based values, and then at personal values, to see how these interact and affect motivation. Likewise the emphasis can be on values that are rooted in the past (stability), or the future (change), and of course on self-enhancement versus a concern for others. This last approach is the one used in the SVS.

However there is an even more fundamental way of considering values. This is to make a distinction between those that are essentially **individual (personal)** or **group focussed (interpersonal)**, and those that are concerned with sources of satisfaction or sources of **meaning**. Values that lead to satisfaction are generally those that are more 'visible' in a work or social context, like material reward or excitement. In contrast, those that encompass meaning are more often to do with personal growth or mastery. Meaning is also derived from values that are related to the 'common good', such as altruism, or with independence and individual expression such as libertarianism. It is in this way that the VbIM model encapsulates the difference between the individual and the group, and between sources of satisfaction and sources of meaning.

The model allows the 24 values to be placed into four groups\*:



Combining the values and the groups produces a map of values which is presented in Table I, overleaf. It should also be noted that more information on the construction of the questionnaire can be found in the next section

\*See Appendix 1 for VbIM Summary Profile Sheet

**Table I : VbIM Rational Model**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Scale name</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Key concept</b>
<b>What I want for myself</b> (Individual satisfaction)	Reward	Materialistic v Non-materialistic. Seeks wealth and the symbols of success.	Reward
	Fame	Visibility v Anonymity. Seeks 'visibility' and wants to be in the public eye.	Visibility
	Wellbeing	Health v Indulgence. Seeks health and mental wellbeing.	Wellbeing
	Excitement	Immediacy v Delay. Seeks fun, pleasure, spontaneity and immediate reward.	Spontaneity
	Change	Risk v Security. Seeks change and progress and willing to take risks.	Risk
	Conceptual	Ideas v Actions. Seeks the opportunity to make an intellectual/creative difference.	Intellectual
<b>What I want to become</b> (Individual meaning)	Personal growth	Learning v Consolidating. Values personal development, growth & being up-to-date.	Development
	Career progression	Ambition v Acceptance. Values careers orientation and is ambitious to achieve.	Ambition
	Influence	Power v Accommodation. Values leading, influencing and providing direction.	Directing
	Legacy	Impact v Passivity. Values prestige or meaningful recognition for work well done.	Impact
	Wisdom	Humility v Pride. Values experience bringing new perspective with acceptance & humility.	Forgiveness
	Transcendence	Spiritual v Physical. Values non-material and spiritual things.	Spirituality
<b>What I want from others</b> (Group satisfaction)	Social contact	Contact v Independence. Seeks the company and support of others.	Affiliation
	Integrity	Principles v Expediency. Seeks fair, honest and authentic interactions based on principles.	Principles
	Connection	Intimacy v Distance. Seeks to share emotional life and values in close 1-2-1 relationships.	Sharing
	Openness	Discourse v Privacy. Seeks to develop trust through openness and honesty.	Authenticity
	Collaboration	Consensus v Direction. Seeks participation based on agreement & joint decision making.	Consensus
	Inclusion	Belonging v Moving on. Seeks to join, be included, grow roots and build community.	Belonging
<b>What I want for society</b> (Group meaning)	Altruism	Communitarian v Individualism. Values a caring, relational and 'giving' society.	Selfless
	Tradition	Continuity v Break with past. Values the contribution, sacrifice & rituals of the past.	Continuity
	Culture	Aesthetics v Functionality. Values cultural expression in diverse forms	Aesthetics
	Harmony	Tolerance v Challenge. Values group cohesion and avoids conflict.	Tolerance
	Libertarian	Freedom v Conformity. Values free will and the rights of people to express themselves	Freedom
	Accountability	Responsibilities v Rights. Values a society where people are responsible for their choices.	Ownership

**Table II : A Comparison of various Values Systems**

VbIM	SVS	HMVPI	SCAQ	WIS	GSPV/SIV	SWVI	AVLS
Reward		Commercial		Comfort - money		Income	Economic
Fame							
Wellbeing				Comfort - stress avoidance			
Excitement	Hedonism, Stimulation	Hedonistic			Variety	Lifestyle	
Change	Security	Security	Security, tradition	Job structure - risk avoidance	Orderliness	Security	
Conceptual		Scientific	Entrepreneurial, creative			Creativity, variety	Theoretical
Personal growth	Self-direction		Autonomy, independence	Self-fulfilment – personal growth, autonomy	Independence	Independence	
Career progression	Achievement				Achievement	Achievement, challenge	
Influence	Power	Power	Managerial competence	Power - influence	Leadership	Supervision	
Legacy		Recognition		Recognition – respect/status	Recognition	Prestige	Political
Wisdom							
Transcendence	Spirituality						Religious
Social contact		Affiliation		Relationships - team belong		Co-workers	
Integrity							
Connection				Relationships – avoid alone	Support		
Openness							
Collaboration							
Inclusion							
Altruism	Benevolence	Altruistic	Service, dedication		Benevolence		Social
Tradition	Tradition	Tradition					
Culture		Aesthetic					Aesthetic
Harmony							
Libertarian	Conformity				Conformity		
Accountability	Universalism						

VbIM = Values-based Indicator of Motivation

SVS = Schwartz Value Survey

HMVPI = Hogan Motives, Values & Preferences Inventory

SCAQ = Schein Career Anchors Questionnaire

WIS = Work Interest Schedule

GSPV/SIV = Gordon's Survey of Personal & Interpersonal Values

SWVI = Super's Work Values Inventory

AVLS = Allport, Vernon & Lindzey Scale.



## Applications

An understanding of values can play a significant role in many areas. Some of the areas in which it is most commonly applied are introduced below, though this should not be seen as an exhaustive list and users of the VbIM questionnaire are encouraged to adapt and build on these examples.

**Personal and career development** – The VbIM is best viewed as part of a process that allows a respondent to reflect on their core values. The individual values and the model on which VbIM is based provide a method of structuring a review of results and, importantly, provides a common language for the respondent and a facilitator to work with.

Development will be most effective when questionnaire results are integrated with the respondent's personal experiences. Respondents may be encouraged to recall specific experiences, analyse the value-related elements of these experiences and relate them to their VbIM results.

**Team development** – Organisations increasingly rely on team performance for their overall success, though these teams may be loosely structured, exist only for the duration of a specific project and may not be co-located ('virtual' teams). Diversity in teams is widely recognised as being a strength, but with diversity come differences that can be the source of conflict and impair the co-operation and collaboration.

Without a constructive appreciation of the diversity of values that exist within a team problems can arise and success 'derailed'. VbIM provides a powerful way of looking at the values that are held within a team and bringing them to the surface. Team members can then start to appreciate the different perspectives that different values bring and how these can affect trust, cooperation and individual decision making.

**Recruitment** – The values assessed by the VbIM questionnaire will have a significant impact on performance in a wide variety of job roles, giving it obvious appeal as a 'selection' instrument. However it should be appreciated that if it is used in this context it must not be employed to select a candidate 'in' or 'out', rather it can provide background information on values and motives that can be used within the interview process.

VbIM is a behavioural measure so the items are relatively transparent and open to faking or deliberate distortion. To reduce distortion, careful administration is important, as is exploration of results with the respondent to obtain evidence to support or challenge the obtained profile – hence the use of the results within an interview. As with any selection technique, it is important that use of the VbIM questionnaire is based on a thorough job analysis and its effectiveness subsequently validated.

VbIM User Guide pages 1-18 ....

We hope you have enjoyed exploring this free introductory version of the VbIM (Values-based Indicator of Motivation) User's Guide. We would be delighted to get your feedback and to discuss your thoughts and reactions.

In addition, we hope that you have got a flavour of what the VbIM is all about. We realise that not all the features that make this approach innovative and practical have been explained, but you will get some idea by referring to the Table of Contents and the full version will give you more detail about:

1. how VbIM was developed and why it fills a gap
2. a unique approach combining normative with ipsative methodology (enabling a person's conscious beliefs to be challenged at a deeper level)
3. detailed descriptions of the 4 themes and 24 values
4. the practicalities of administering in order to engage the person in the process
5. requirements for both the software and/or the paper versions
6. ideas about conducting a review (feedback) session
7. the technical psychometric details related to construction, reliability and validity
8. details of the normative samples

If you are interested in the complete version, (normally provided to our affiliated partners and clients as part of our training courses) or in discussing your interest further, we welcome you to get in touch by filling in the [Contact Form](#)