Values

For your work to be satisfying, it must be compatible with your values. The following exercises contain lists of work and personal values that could form the basis of your career-planning decisions.

Part I—Work Values

*Rate each work value using the following scale:*

1 = very important to have in my work  
2 = somewhat important to have in my work  
3 = unimportant to have in my work.

A. **Work conditions may permit or require the following:**

___ Independence/Autonomy—doing what you want to do without much direction from others.  
___ Time flexibility—arranging your own hours, working according to your own time schedule.  
___ Change/ Variety—performing varying tasks in a number of different settings.  
___ Change/ Risk—performing new tasks or leading new programs that challenge the established order and may be initially resisted.  
___ Stability/Security—working in a secure job that pays you reasonably well.  
___ Physical challenge—performing dangerous tasks that challenge your physical capabilities.  
___ Physical demands—performing physically strenuous but relatively safe activities.  
___ Mental challenge—performing demanding tasks that challenge your intelligence and creativity.  
___ Pressure—performing in a highly critical environment with constant deadlines.  
___ Precise work—performing prescribed tasks that leave little room for error.  
___ Decision making—making choices about what to do and how to do it.

B. **Individuals work for the following purposes:**

___ To pursue truth/knowledge.  
___ To acquire expertise/authority.  
___ To use creativity/innovativeness.  
___ To foster aesthetic appreciation.  
___ To make social contributions.  
___ To acquire material gain.  
___ To seek recognition.  
___ To promote ethics/morality.  
___ To seek spiritual/transpersonal gain.

C. **Relationships at work may involve the following:**

___ Working alone—doing assignments by yourself, with minimal contact with other people.  
___ Public contact—interacting in predictable ways with a continuous flow of people.  
___ Developing close friendships with coworkers.  
___ Group membership—belonging to a group with a common purpose and/or interest.  
___ Helping others  
___ Influencing others  
___ Supervising others  
___ Controlling others

List below your three most important work values in each of the three categories.

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<th>Work Conditions</th>
<th>Work Purposes</th>
<th>Work Relationships</th>
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Part II - Personal Values

Whether you realize it or not, every time you make a choice about doing one thing as opposed to another, you make a value decision. When you have a decision that involves two or more conflicting values that are of major importance to you, the decision can be extremely difficult to make (e.g., career values may conflict with family and friendship values). You can, however, make these decisions more effectively if you have some idea of what your most important values are and the priority that you give to each.

The following exercise will help you to understand what personal values are, which personal values are important to you, and what priorities you give to them. In reality, your values are expressed through your actions. If you can bring your actions more into harmony with your values, you will feel more in control of your life and more satisfied with the decisions you make. A list of personal values is provided below.

Using the following scale, rank each value according to its importance to you:
1 = very important
2 = somewhat important
3 = not important

Place the number that corresponds to your rating in the appropriate space to the left of each personal value.

___ Good Health
___ Many close friendships
___ A large family
___ A fulfilling career
___ A stable marriage
___ A financially comfortable life
___ Independence
___ Creativity
___ Participating in an organized religion
___ Having children
___ A variety of interests and activities
___ Freedom to create my own lifestyle
___ Owning a house
___ A happy love relationship
___ Fulfilling careers for me and my spouse
___ Contributing to my community
___ Abundance of leisure time
___ Ability to move from place to place
___ A stable life
___ A life without stress
___ Strong religious values
___ A chance to make social changes

___ To be remembered for my accomplishments
___ Helping those in distress
___ Freedom to live where I wish
___ Time to myself
___ Enjoyment of arts, entertainment, and cultural activities
___ A life with many challenges
___ A life with many changes
___ Opportunity to be a leader
___ To make a major discovery that would save lives
___ A good physical appearance
___ Opportunity to establish roots in one place
___ Opportunity for physical activities
___ An exciting life
___ A chance to get into politics
___ To live according to strong moral values
___ Opportunity to teach others
___ To write something memorable
___ A chance to become famous
___ To help others solve problems
___ To make lots of money

List five of your most important personal values.
1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 

Now ask yourself the following questions and note your answers.

1. Does your life right now reflect your values? Is the way you spend your time consistent with your priorities?

2. If the way you spend your time is not consistent with your priorities, how can you make it so?

3. Are there some parts of your life that you would like to change but cannot right now? If so, what is your timetable for bringing your lifestyle more into harmony with your values?

4. How do you think your most important personal values will affect your career choice?