



# CAREER EXPLORATION

## LESSON PLANS & ACTIVITIES

### ***TOPIC: VALUES AND CAREER DECISIONS***

#### **Learning Objectives**

- Help students understand the role of values in choosing a career. They will identify which values are important to them, and which they may be willing to sacrifice for their career.
- Use the value descriptions to introduce students to different career-related values. We will also help the students prioritize these career-related values.

#### **Core Concepts**

**Dysfunctional Belief:** Happiness is having it all.

**Reframe:** Happiness is letting go of what you don't need.

\*Values clarification has been found to be a critical ingredient in career interventions that help individuals with career decision-making (Whiston, Li, Mitts, & Wright, 2017).

#### **Instructor Resources**

- Values Activity Instructions
- Values Activity Bidding Sheet (Short & Long Version)
- Values Activity Chance Cards
- Values Free Write

#### **Instructor Notes**

- For the Values Activity, spend no more than 1 minute on each value's bidding. This will ensure you have time at the end of the Values Activity for discussion. Additionally, be sure to explain the purpose of the activity before beginning. Students will benefit from this activity more if we put time into explaining it and putting it in context.

#### **Suggested Agenda**

- Discuss the importance of values to career. Personal examples always help. Introduce values in relation to career.
- Hold the Values Activity! *Do I hear ten dolla, ten dolla?*
- Discuss Values Activity. See possible discussion questions below.

## Possible Activities

- **Values Activity Instructions:** Go through the following necessary steps to play Values Activity!
  - **Explain the purpose:** A major/career decision is a big one. Many times, there is a lot of pressure to choose something, but many times it is based solely on academic subjects and you might feel influences from many places. Thinking about values of a job/work environment is one piece a career decision making, which also includes the field (interest) in and the role (strengths) you would play. **Thinking about values that are important to you gives you an additional and different angle to consider.**
  - **Explain the rules:** There are values up for auction and the students bid on the workplace values they want. We want this to be fun, so here's how it works:
    - *Points:* You have **5,000 energy points** (not money) to bid with. **Bid in increments of 100** (1400, 2900, NOT 1450)
    - *Demonstrate:* You and a partner might do a sample before you start. First partner: "The first value is Benefits," then reads the definition of Benefits on the values card. Second partner: "I'll bid 1000." Then they understand they are determining where bidding starts.
    - *Values:* Facilitator will present each value and read the description. **Don't start bidding until the reading is done.**
    - *Process:* **Just yell out, don't raise your hand.** Be appropriate and respectful to your classmates. The facilitator has final say if any conflicts arise ☺
    - *Track:* **Keep track of what you bid.** Once your energy points are gone, they are gone so use them wisely. No begging, borrowing, stealing, alliances, donations, joint purchases, or cheating. Keep track of each other's purchases.
    - *Finish:* We want **everyone to end up with a value by the end**, so fight for what you want!
  - **Play the Activity:**
    - **Before Bidding Starts:** Have students **prioritize the values** on the bid sheet (usually their top 5) according to what they believe is most important. Then have them budget what they will bid out of 5000. See student handouts for bid sheets.
    - As the facilitator, mix up the presented order of the values. Read the value (make each one sound really great, be persuasive, give examples.) Then manage the bidding as it begins. To manage, determine where bids are coming from and repeat amounts. Once it gets down to two, then one, then say "Going once, going twice, SOLD." Do this quickly so the game moves along at a good pace. **Spend no more than 1 minute on each card's bidding. This will ensure you have time at the end of the Values Activity for discussion.**
  - **Start with the first value and go!** Have them start with whatever increment they want. You might have someone yell out 5000, in which case they get the value without further bidding. Continue until all values are gone.
  - **Values Scenarios (Chance cards) If time allows (see Appendix for chance cards)**
    - Ask students to budget points for their top three values. Then, pose the following scenarios to your students. See if students would reevaluate their values when placed in particular situations. The point of the exercise is that as your realities change, so can your values. For example:

- You fall in love with a person from a different ethnic/racial background. Then, how important does diversity become? What are you willing to give up?
- You have a special needs child. Now, how important does an easy commute become? Or health insurance? What are you willing to give up? Redo budget.
- **Post Activity:** Free Write
  - **Free Write Instructions:** Take 5 minutes now to collect and capture your thoughts about today's class in a journal/free write. Really give yourself the full 5 minutes. Write, then pause when it seems like you have no more to say. Revisit the questions and see what else you think about them.
    - Think about what values you ended up with at Values Activity. Who in your family shares those values? Are those values common to your gender? In your culture?
    - Which of your values could reasonably be met in your future career? Which can you satisfy in your leisure time?
    - Are there any of your values that conflict with each other in terms of your career goals (e.g., you want freedom of being a freelancer, but you want the security of a regular income)? What are your thoughts about how to resolve them?
    - What other insights occurred to you in class today that you want to write down?

## Discussion Questions

### Individual Reflections/Responses

- Go around the room and have each person explain the values they originally chose as their top three or five (and why they were important to them), and the values they ended up with and why.
- You can also have everyone raise their hand if they got their top choice...one of their top three choices...more than one of their top choices....
- Which values would you be willing to compromise, and which are "non-negotiable"?
- What did they compromise? How would that affect their work life day to day?
- Ask "How does this relate to real life?" This should spawn conversations about having to compromise sometimes, knowing themselves, competing with others for jobs, etc.
- Ask them if they are thinking about a major/career and see if that relates to the values they chose/obtained. If they have not chosen a major/career path, ask if this might help them to think about that decision a different way and/or perhaps suggest a few careers that you think may have those values.

### Evaluate the Game/Process

- Who was bidding against you?
- See who ended up with the most values and who ended up with the least. Why? Ask about their strategy in the game.
- How much energy did you have left over?
- Why do you think certain values bid higher than others?

### Values

- Which values encompassed other values for you?
- Which values became more important to you as the game went on?
- Are there "right" or "best" values? Are there certain ones more acceptable than others are?

- Are there any stereotypes associated with certain values?
- Are there values that you think are ideal but that are “too hard” to uphold in reality?
- Have everyone talk about a value that they got that they really like.
- How do values play a part in your personal life here on campus?
- How might your values change as you get older?
- How might values change if unexpected situations came up in your life? Consider the death of a loved one, a relocation of a spouse, the birth of children, etc.

## Appendix

### Chance Cards

Pass out these chance cards a third or halfway through the Values Activity (if time allows). Wait until after you pass them out to auction off Easy Commute, Family Values, Benefits, Leisure Time, and High Salary.

<p>You have a child with a disability. Reevaluate your priorities.</p>	<p>Your life partner is of a different race or ethnicity. Reevaluate your priorities.</p>	<p>You are now in a situation where you have to use a wheelchair. Reevaluate your priorities.</p>
<p>Your life partner got a promotion and you have to move to Europe. Reevaluate your priorities.</p>	<p>You invest in a passion of yours and you lose your life savings. Reevaluate your priorities.</p>	<p>You declare a major your parents don't approve of, and they cut you off completely. Reevaluate your priorities.</p>
<p>You have won the lottery-- \$1,000,000! Reevaluate your priorities.</p>	<p>You have inherited \$500,000! Reevaluate your priorities.</p>	<p>You find out you can't have children. Reevaluate your priorities.</p>
<p>Your parent gets early-onset Alzheimer's and you are now their caretaker. Reevaluate your priorities.</p>	<p>The price of gasoline soars— over \$8 per gallon. Reevaluate your priorities.</p>	<p>A hobby you enjoy becomes a passion. Your success leads you to travel frequently. Reevaluate your priorities.</p>

**Values Auction Bid Sheet (Short)**

<b>PRIORITIZE</b>	<b>VALUE</b>	<b>UNITS BUDGETED</b>	<b>HIGHEST I BID</b>	<b>TOP BID</b>
	Advancement			
	Benefits			
	Challenge			
	Choice of Environment			
	Compatible Co-workers			
	Competition			
	Contribution to Society			
	Creativity			
	Diversity			
	Easy Commute			
	Excitement			
	Family Life			
	Flexible Hours			
	High Earnings			
	Independence			
	Leadership			
	Leisure Time			
	Moral Fulfillment			
	On the Job Training			
	Power and Influence			
	Prestige and Status			
	Rewards			
	Security			
	Travel			
	Variety			

## Values Auction Bid Sheet (Long)

PRIORITIZE	VALUE	UNITS BUDGETED	HIGHEST I BID	TOP BID
	Advancement			
	Airline Miles			
	Benefits			
	Bonuses			
	Challenge			
	Childcare Provided			
	Choice of Environment			
	Company Car			
	Compatible Co-workers			
	Compatible Supervisor			
	Competition			
	Contribution to Society			
	Creativity			
	Diversity			
	Easy Commute			
	Excitement			
	Family Life			
	Flexible Hours			
	Formalized Training			
	Geographic Location			
	High Earnings			
	Independence			
	Leadership			
	Leisure Time			
	Money for Graduate School			
	Moral Fulfillment			

	Non-Smoking environment			
	On the Job Training			
	Power and Influence			
	Prestige and Status			
	Public Contact			
	Rewards			
	Security			
	Travel			
	Variety			
	Working Inside			
	Working Outdoors			