

RULES FOR PLAYING THE VALUES GAME

The intention of this game is to have you discuss values and group norms. As a result of this you will not only become more aware of what you aspire to, but you will also get to appreciate another person more. Furthermore this game is an aid to reaching consensus in your group, team or organisation, on the values and norms that you all consider to be important. The game may play a part in the process of discussing values and norms, but it should not direct or impose any particular value or norm!

The Values Game consists of 140 cards, divided in three groups. There is a blank card added per group, in case you or your fellow participants have an addition to make. The groups are:

1. **Values.** (symbol: compass; 63 cards). A value is something that you find important to aspire to, that directs your actions. The classifications of values that we have made are as follows:
 - a. *General values.* These are values that apply to individuals as well as to organisations. We also made a subdivision between relational and non-relational values. Relational values (nrs. 1 - 43) are those values that primarily relate to association with others. Some examples are: servitude, respect and justice. Often relational values also make up moral values: they relate to 'right' or 'wrong' behaviour in contact with others. The remaining values we labelled non-relational (nrs. 44 - 48). For example: competence, personal development and success.
 - b. *Values applying mainly to organisations.* (nrs. 49 - 58) Some examples: quality, profit and efficiency. Most of these values are non-relational.
 - c. *Values applying mainly to individuals.* (nrs. 59 - 63). Some examples: convenience, relaxation and health. These values are non-relational.Of course you are free to deviate from our classifications and make your own.
2. **Group norms** (symbol: roundabout – the various directions you can choose; 38 cards). These are the rules that dictate what kind of behaviour is good or bad, wished for or unwanted, allowed or forbidden. They are about obligations or agreements that you conform to. Norms are derived from or based on essential values. For example, the norm 'you must always speak the truth' is a concrete outcome of the value 'honesty'. When the connection between the norm (rule for behaviour) and value does not exist anymore, the norm literally becomes valueless.

The norms that we selected are mostly related to working or living together in groups, i.e. a team, an organisation, a family or a society.

Norms simplify teamwork because they indicate what you may expect from others and what others may expect from you. People are often not aware of the norms that are in force in a specific group, but still act according to them. Often these norms are useful, but sometimes they are not. By discussing the current norms it becomes possible to trace the non-functional norms and then change them (refer to method of play entitled 'pleasant and unpleasant group norms').

3. **Subjects** (symbol: coloured figures; 39 cards). These are used to narrow down the discussion on values, to make it even more concrete. Our starting point for selecting the subjects was that they had to be provoking so that they would challenge you to discuss them with each other. When using these cards pre-select the most appropriate for the situation you are discussing.

There are several possible approaches when using this game. You may for example choose to just apply the values, or to combine these with the themes. Or you may decide to only use the norms, or to combine these with the values.

The following methods of play can be applied both for work or private situations. More methods of play are contained in the Values Games Manual, which is available separately.

METHODS OF PLAY

1. PERSONAL VALUES PROFILE

Purposes

1. Becoming aware of those values that are important to you.
2. Gaining insight into the mutual connection of these values.

Prior conditions

1. The participants need not know each other. However, if they do it will make for a more interesting play of the game.
2. Number of participants: 2.
3. Requirements: the value cards, except numbers 49 through 58; pen and paper.
4. Estimated playing time: 60-90 minutes.

Method

1. Spread all cards face up on the table.
2. The first participant starts. Select a minimum of 8 and a maximum of 10 values that are important in your life. Lay out the selected cards in front of you and discard the other cards. Rank the values in order of importance, starting with the most essential one. Make a note of the result.
3. You will now make your personal values profile by exploring the connections between the various values. The other player helps by asking questions or giving feedback. The following questions may be an aid:
 - a. Do any of the values relate to each other? If so, which ones? Place these together.
 - b. Do any of the values clash? If so, which ones? State an example of a situation where values clashed.
 - c. Are any of the values difficult for you to adhere to? If so, which ones and why?
4. Record the result of step 3 in the following way:
 - a. Copy the values in exactly the same way as the cards are placed.
 - b. Join clashing values by an arrow.
 - c. Encircle values you have a hard time adhering to.
5. Switch roles and repeat steps 1 through 4.
6. Exchange your views on using this method and state what was most striking about each other's values profile.

Note

You could save time by working with two sets of cards whereby each player uses his or her own set.

2. ORGANISATIONAL VALUES

Purpose

Reaching mutual consensus on the most important values of the organisation.

Prior conditions

1. Participants work for the same organisation.
2. Number of participants: 3 - 10.
3. Requirements: the 'value' cards, numbers 1 through 58; pen and paper.
4. Estimated playing time: 45 – 75 min.

Method

1. Spread out the cards face up on the table. Answer yourself the following question: which of these values are important to me within our organisation? Make a list of seven values in rank order.
2. Each participant receives a few Post-It notes. These notes are stuck onto the selected value cards. Write down your name on the Post-Its plus the ranking you have given the respective value. In case another participant has already attached a note to a particular value, add your name and ranking. Discard any cards that have no notes attached.
3. By means of an in-depth discussion the aim is to reach a consensus on 8 values that are considered important for the organisation.
4. Have a look at the result and discuss the following questions:
 - a. Are there any values that relate to each other? If so, which ones?
 - b. Are there any values that could possibly clash? If so, which ones? Give an example of a situation where values clashed.
5. In rounding off, each participant answers the question: from the ultimate list, which value is easy for you to apply and which one difficult? Why?

3. VALUES AND THEME DISCUSSION

Purposes

1. Principal theme discussion viewed in the light of values.
2. Getting to know one another better.

Prior conditions

1. Participants need not know each other.
2. Number of participants: 2 – 8.
3. Requirements: the 'value' cards numbers 1 through 43 as well as the blank card; the 'theme' cards; pen and paper.
4. Estimated playing time: 30 – 60 minutes.

Method

1. Place the 'value' cards (numbers 1 through 43 and the blank card) as well as the 'theme' cards separately face up on the table.
2. Each participant selects a theme he would like to exchange views on with his fellow participants.

3. The first player starts and shows the selected 'theme' card. Each participant next selects a value that is considered of great importance in relation to the selected theme.
4. In turn offer explanations. The player who selected the theme may begin. Explain in what way this value determines your thoughts and actions respecting the selected theme. The others may ask questions.
5. When all participants have had their turn, return the selected values to the rest of the cards. What conclusion can you draw from the discussion?
6. Repeat steps 3 through 5 for the themes the other participants have selected.
7. If so desired, repeat steps 2 through 6 by having each participant select a new theme.
8. Share with each other what was most striking to you in the discussion as a whole or in what was said individually.

4. PLEASANT AND UNPLEASANT GROUP NORMS

Purpose

Discussing the way individual team members experience group norms.

Prior conditions

1. Participants make up a group or team.
2. Number of participants: 3 - 10.
3. Requirements: the 'norm' cards; 3 flip-chart sheets and a marker.
4. Estimated playing time: 40 – 80 minutes.

Method

1. The cards are spread out face up on the table.
2. Each participant makes a mental selection of two cards: one norm that is being applied in your team that you are pleased with and one norm also being applied that you are not pleased with.
3. One at a time, pick up the cards you have selected and explain your choice. Also state the reasons why you think these norms apply to your team and what effect they have on you. The others may ask for clarification. Put the norms together on the table in groups, in the following manner:
 - Group 1: norms one or more of the participants experience as pleasant.
 - Group 2: norms experienced as pleasant by some and unpleasant by others.
 - Group 3: norms one or more of the participants experience as unpleasant.
4. Discuss the outcome. What conclusions can you draw from the three groups of norms?

THE VALUES GAMES MANUAL

To get the most from The Values Game in working situations, please study the Values Games Manual, which is available separately. This manual contains 20 ways of using the Values Game, including applications for: the drawing up of a values profile for yourself, your team or your organisation; comparison of the wished for with the current real situation: theoretical and vivid values; discussion about the norms within a team; making acquaintance in groups using values; tracing conflicting values and moral dilemmas.

The manual also contains useful theory about Values and Norms and many suggestions to improve your use of the game.

OTHER GAMES

The Feelings Game, The Feedback Game, The Development Game, The Motivation Game and *The Values Game* form a series and are aids to finding answers to five essential questions:

- Who am I? (The Feedback Game)
- What is valuable to me? (The Values Game)
- What am I good at? (The Development Game)
- What do I want? (The Motivation Game)
- What do I feel? (The Feelings Game)

These games can be applied individually or in combination.

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