



Visualize the Values

Purpose

To create a group discussion about the Values and their “symbolism.” To uncover similarities and differences in personal perception of the Values.

Time

- 15 minutes of individual work
- 30-45 minutes of team work
- 30 minutes to debrief and discuss

Materials

- Multiple magazines, catalogs, etc., scissors, tape or glue, flip charts, multi-colored flip chart pens. (Begin collecting the magazines and catalogs a couple of weeks before the session so that you have plenty to choose from; the more variety the easier the process.)

Process

Introduction

Break the team into groups (3-5 people in a group is ideal). Tell the groups they are create a "Values story" on the flip charts. They will be using words, pictures, colors, symbols, etc. that they have cut out of the magazines. The story can be literal, symbolic, or abstract, but should represent how they think about the Values and Attributes. For example, one group might cut out a white dove to represent Integrity, with words and other pictures cut out which describe the dove. Another group might find a box and light bulbs to depict Innovation (thinking outside the box).

Individual Work

Each team member begins by working individually with the magazines and catalogs, cutting out things they are interested in using. This allows each person to first establish their own symbolism without influence from their colleagues.



Team Work

Team members then share with each other what they have found and come up with the collective story. Next they paste the story together by taping/gluing their cut-outs on the flip charts and using colored markers to connect parts of the picture. Give the teams 45 minutes; check in at 20 minutes to see how they are doing.

Discussion and De-Brief

After they have finished, ask each group to present their story to the other group. Encourage discussion, questions, and clarification. The purpose here is to understand their thought process. Lead a discussion, drawing from the following questions as appropriate:

- Each person first established their own symbolism, and then discussed it with their team members – did they get any comments on their individual symbols?
- Did they benefit from the discussion(s)?
- Did they make changes in how they viewed the Values and Attributes?
- How did they reach consensus?
- Why did they choose this Values story?
- What are the important points they want to make?
- How do these symbols represent the Values and Attributes?

Note: If you don't have access to magazines and catalogs, the teams can "draw" the story, but encourage them to use symbols, pictures, etc. (i.e., not just a story with words).

Process Notes

Depending on the size of the group, you may choose to focus on one specific Attribute, several Attributes, and/or all the Attributes. If you assign one or two Attributes at a time, it's best not to assign the groups different, but to give them the same Attribute. This way, they can compare their symbolism and can discuss the differences and similarities.

For a small group (2-3) you can "assign" them a specific Attribute. You can continue the process over several meetings to cover all the Attributes. For a group size of 4 or 5, you can leave it open-ended and see how many Attributes they cover on their own in the time allotted. It is interesting to see which ones are most easily covered and which are more difficult. You can assign any Attribute not covered during the initial meeting at a subsequent session.

Some groups may have trouble getting started so you might want to have a sample or two of your own story to show them what they can create. The value of this exercise is the conversation, rather than the end product. It is getting individuals to explain the things they cut out, coming to a team consensus and then creating something they can share with the other group(s). Once people get going, they usually have fun with it and get quite engaged.

The purpose of the debrief discussion is ensure the team has a clear understanding of the Values and to have consensus on their meaning and importance.