



Article

# Understanding your values

© David Clutterbuck, 2014

**Prof David Clutterbuck**  
Coaching and Mentoring International Ltd  
Woodlands, Tollgate,  
Maidenhead,  
Berks, UK. SL6 4LJ

[www.coachingandmentoringinternational.org](http://www.coachingandmentoringinternational.org)  
e-mail: [info@coachingandmentoringinternational.org](mailto:info@coachingandmentoringinternational.org)  
Company registration number : 08158710

## Understanding your values

You may never have really thought about the values you hold, but they will exert a strong influence on how you behave, the choices you make, who you feel comfortable being around and many other aspects of your daily life. Some (perhaps most) of these values you will have absorbed from family, friends and work colleagues. Being aware of our values and being able to question them helps us:

- Recognise when a value is something that we deeply believe in or is one we “ought” to hold
- Identify when our personal values clash with those of the organisation (or any other group of people we interact with)
- Make choices about the work we do, based on how well it fits our values
- Make better choices about how we behave, to be more consonant with our values

Our deepest values:

- Arise from strongly internalised feelings of “rightness”
- Reflect what we aspire to do, and how we aspire to behave, even if we don’t always live up to them

One simple way to gain a deeper understanding of your values is to identify three of them:

- One relating to how you treat other people
- One relating to how you expect other people to treat you
- One relating to the nature and quality of the work you do

Write these on the sides of a large triangle. Now discuss what connecting value links each side to the other. You will soon have a new triangle inside the first. Repeat the process until the same words or phrases keep repeating. These will usually be your deepest core values.