

# Personal Leadership: Basis for Success

**By Magdy Mahmoud**

Would you give up a one million dollar deal to take your mother to the hospital for pressing medical issue? Or would you drop your weekly spiritual lesson at your house of worship if it conflicted with your scheduled personal trainer session? If two educational sessions are held at the same time; one with the top-world expert in building up and marketing your business and the other with the expert of dieting and fitness, which session would you go to? Would you donate your \$1,000 charity to research leading to finding a cure for autistic children, homeless people, orphans or widows?

These questions are stimulants to our minds of what is important to us, or actually, what are our life priorities.

## What Is a Value?

A value is simply an important thing to us – tangible or non-tangible. For instance, a spouse, children, parents, honesty, integrity, sacrifice, helping people, money, power, educations, and connecting with God are all legitimate personal values. There are personal, as well as business, organizational, and even country values. "In God We Trust" is a value to the USA. Customer satisfaction, quality of products, seamless process, and integrity may qualify as business values. Values have five certain characteristics:

- **Personal:** Values are a unique set for each one of us. People may share small or big set of values, but they are never identical for two people.
- **Hidden:** Values are internal, within our hearts and brains.
- **Evolving:** Our values change with age, family, society, education, and experience.
- **Abstract:** Values must not be time-bound or situation-bound. That is what makes a value everlasting for us. Value is not a goal or objective.
- **Subset or Superset of our religious values:** Our personal values cannot contradict our religious values.

## Putting Values into Categories Scholars divide personal values into six categories:

- *Mental and Educational* – • Skills • Degrees • Certifications
- *Family and Home* – • Marriage • Parenting • Childhood
- *Social and Cultural* – • Non-profit volunteering • Club and union memberships • Visiting family and friends

- *Career and Financial* – • Investments • Benefits and retirement • Promotions
- *Spiritual and Ethical* – • Connection to God • Rituals and meditations • Morality
- *Physical and Health* – • Exercise • Diet • Rest and relaxation



## What is a Value System?

A Value System is a set of consistent and priority ordered values. Individuals, groups, organizations, businesses, countries must have a Value System.

**The Value System elements (values) must fulfill two conditions:**

- **Consistent:** No contradictions between any two values within the system.
- **Priority-Ordered:** According to their importance. The latter is especially important in case one has to choose one of two actions relevant to two values. Please refer to questions similar to those in the beginning of this article.

Most people are typically struggling between what they want to do and what they are actually doing. We are normally driven away from what is important to us, our values, by others' values. Peer pressure, culture, and the media are few external drivers. It is a continuous battle between the internal and the external motives.

## What is Success in Life?

Success in life happens when actions and values are aligned. Success is a journey, not a destination. Of course, we know what are doing, our action, our profession, our current path, but do we really know our values, or our value system? Bringing out hidden and internal values is not an easy job; however, the process of discovering your personal values can prove to be a success.

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