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Annette Estes, Columnist

## Values drive our passions

Successful business people and companies have learned that an understanding of values is no longer just the concern of the home or church. Your interests and values determine your passions in life, and if they're thwarted or unfulfilled at work you won't be happy with your job or career.

This begins a series of columns looking at values and how they determine what we do and why.

In 1928, psychologist Eduard Spranger wrote a book entitled, "The Types of Men." If written today, he'd probably call it "The Types of People," so we can forgive him for his "ignore-ance" of women. Spranger identified six worldviews or attitudes that determine what people believe is important in life.

Since the 1980's Bill Bonnstetter, President of Target Training International, has developed, validated and improved the Personal Interests, Attitudes, and Values assessment used in business – based on Spranger's work. He says Spranger's research "is some of the most powerful information on the understanding of humans that has ever been done."

Steven Covey says, "We see the world not as it is, but as we are." Our attitudes determine how we value (positive) or judge (negative) the issues and people in our lives.

At Coach U, we believe that when you're feeling satisfied your needs are being met and when you're feeling fulfilled your values are being met.

So what are your values? What are the passions that lead you to action and determine what you do with your life?

The six attitudes developed by Spranger and Bonnstetter are: Theoretical, Utilitarian, Aesthetic, Social, Individualistic, and Traditional.

Your top two are your passions, numbers three and four are situational, and you will tend to have an indifferent or negative attitude toward people who are high in those you rank as numbers five and six.

I believe our most serious conflicts between people are the result of values differences. Just look at the rancor between those who identify themselves as liberal or conservative, for example. A deep understanding of values can most definitely improve our relationships with the people we work, live, and associate with if we're willing to gain that understanding and show unconditional positive regard for others.

### The Six Attitudes

Here's a brief explanation of the six attitudes. We'll look at each in more depth in future columns.

●**Theoretical.** If this is your highest value, you have a passion for knowledge – knowledge for its own sake. Your goal is discovery of truth and you believe

everything must be rationally justified. The inability to know, learn, and discover will be stressful for you.

●**Utilitarian.** Your goal is utility and what is useful. You are practical and will maximize your assets. Your passion is a return on investment of your time, talent, or resources. Not getting that ROI will stress you.

●**Aesthetic.** Your goal is to experience your inner vision. Your passions are beauty, balance, form, and harmony in all aspects of life. Anything that disturbs that balance will cause you stress.

●**Social.** This means humanitarian, not sociable. You believe service to others is the highest calling in life. You are compassionate and want to eliminate conflict in the world. Insensitive and individualistic behavior in others is stressful for you.

●**Individualistic.** You are driven to use power and position to achieve your goals and advance your causes. Your passion is to control your own destiny and the destiny of others. Therefore, loss of power or position is stressful for you.

●**Traditional.** Your goal is to search for and find the highest meaning in life. Your quest is a system for living. You believe in a higher order of life and consider yourself highly religious or spiritual. Opposition to your beliefs is a stressor for you.

We may differ widely with the values of the people in our homes and workplaces. Of these six values, my brother and I are close in only two. One of my highest is his lowest and vice versa. These values differences do cause us some conflict at times, but since we love and respect each other, we can usually avoid serious differences. That and the fact he's presently living in India!

Imagine people with opposite values as business partners. Their differences will inevitably cause conflict for the company and its employees. An understanding of values can explain why the members of an executive team are at odds when making decisions and can help them develop more tolerance for each other's views. That can lead to more harmonious and effective decision-making.

Next time we'll examine the High Theoretical value to better understand and appreciate those who are always buried in a book.

For a free report that can help you determine your highest values, send an email with the words "Values Report" in the subject line.

Annette Estes is a Certified Professional Behavioral and Values Analyst, Coach, and Consultant. She helps companies hire, keep, and develop the best people. She is also a professional speaker, columnist, and author of the book, *Why Can't You See it MY Way? Resolving Values Conflicts at Work and Home*. Contact her at [Annette@CoachAnnette.com](mailto:Annette@CoachAnnette.com) or call The Estes Group at 864-244-1156.

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## Understanding the High Theoretical value

Many of our conflicts between the people we work and live with are caused by differences in values – opposing worldviews. It's important to know your values because if they're unfulfilled in the work you've chosen, you will be unhappy with your job or career. If you want to have a fulfilling life, your values must be realized and your goals based on them.

The six values or attitudes we're going to examine in this series of columns were first defined by psychologist Eduard Spranger in his book *The Types of People*, written in 1928.

Your top two are your passions. They are what drive you; they explain much about the way you feel about life and why you take the actions you do. Indeed, the career you've chosen may be a result of your highest values.

In this column, we'll gain an understanding of the High Theoretical value. If you're high in this value much of this will resonate with you. If you're low in the Theoretical value, you will better understand why you may have trouble understanding those who seem to be obsessed with knowledge and learning – the "perpetual students" in your life. The ones you can never beat at Trivial Pursuit.

The passion of those whose highest value is the Theoretical is knowledge, knowledge for its own sake. Their motto could be as Francis Bacon said, "Knowledge is power." Their primary drive is the discovery of truth and they believe as Alexander Pope did that "a little learning is a dangerous thing."

Very High Theoretical people are left-brained, believing strongly in the cognitive process. They are excellent at solving problems, asking pertinent questions, and formulating theories. They usually have a broad range of interests and read both fiction and non-fiction voraciously. They have an insatiable intellectual curiosity and they value the orderly systematization of acquired knowledge.

They tend to be uncomfortable around people who make decisions based on their feelings and intuition, as they believe everything must be rationally justified. Situations that don't allow them to learn, know, or discover will be stressful.

Those who are low in the Theoretical value don't shun knowledge. The main difference between the two is that those low in the Theoretical value will want to gain as much knowledge as they can about subjects in which they are vitally interested, knowledge they can use rather than just have. Those high in this value are curious about virtually everything.

So, while those with a high Theoretical value are intellectual and often have above average intelligence, they also have some limiting tendencies. If you're high in this value you may tend to be impractical, the stereotypical "absent-minded professor" type. You may appear to be an intellectual snob to those who are low in this value. And you'll be likely to conflict with those whose nature is emotional.

So how do you manage and motivate those with the High Theoretical value? Give them research projects, involve them in problem-solving discussions, let them

solve a mystery. Be content to let them discover truth and have someone with a more practical nature apply it.

To communicate powerfully with those who have this value:

- β Focus on the discovery of knowledge
- β Focus on problem solving
- β Focus on facts and research, not application

Next time we'll look at the High Utilitarian value to better understand and appreciate these practical people who focus on getting results in the most expedient way.

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## Understanding the High Utilitarian value

A deep understanding of values can resolve conflict and build alliances among co-workers. I've seen values conflicts in the workplace cause any number of problems from low morale to the dissolution of business partnerships.

The six values or attitudes we're examining in this series of columns were first defined in 1928 by psychologist Eduard Spranger in his book *The Types of Men*. (Sorry, last time I wrote *The Types of People*. My bias is showing.)

Your top two are your passions. They are what drive you; they explain much about the way you feel about life and why you take the actions you do. The career and activities you choose may be a result of your highest values.

In this column, we'll gain an understanding of the High Utilitarian value. If you're high in this attitude, you are practical and have a passion for getting results. If you're low in the Utilitarian value, you will better understand why you may have conflict with those who always seem to you to have a string attached to their actions.

The passion of those high in this value is getting a return on investment of their time, talents, or resources. Not being able to get results from their actions is stressful for them. For example, if they loan someone money and don't get paid back, they are likely to be resentful; whereas someone low in this value might just say "Oh, well," and not be upset by it. If people with a High Utilitarian value mentor someone who doesn't take their advice or succeed, they will feel their time and effort were wasted and that's a big stressor.

The overriding factor for High Utilitarian people is utility in all areas of life. They take the most expedient ways to get results. They're big picture thinkers. Their motto could be "a diamond is a lump of coal that didn't quit." They are very practical people and will hold you accountable to doing what you say you will do. They also have a strong desire to make money and may measure their success in terms of how much they earn. Woody Allen expressed the High Utilitarian attitude when he said, "Money is better than poverty, if only for financial reasons."

People with a High Utilitarian value tend to be uncomfortable around dreamers and intellectuals. Their attitude is don't dream or think unless you plan to use your knowledge to reach your goals. Those who are low in this value often see the High Utilitarian attitude as being materialistic and self-serving.

The qualities of those with a High Utilitarian value include the ability to have a strong vision and achieve high goals. They're movers and shakers who get things done. What they often lack is balance because they tend to be workaholics. They would benefit from coaching around serving others and slowing down to enjoy life

just for the fun of it without expecting so much from themselves or others. If they can learn to take action without being attached to the results, they will be happier and healthier.

## **How to Manage and Motivate**

So how do you manage and motivate those with the High Utilitarian value? Give them bonuses, promotions, and rewards for their results. Recognize their accomplishments and thank them for helping you to succeed. Provide them an opportunity to excel and be paid.

To relate powerfully with those who have this value:

- β Focus on return of investment;
- β Focus on getting results;
- β Don't waste their time;
- β Say, "Well done!"

Next time we'll look at those who have a High Aesthetic value to better understand and appreciate these creative people who desire beauty, balance, form, and harmony.

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Annette Estes, Columnist

## **Understanding the High Aesthetic value**

We continue our look at workplace attitudes, focusing on people who have a High Aesthetic value. Our values explain our attitudes, our worldview, the way we see things. Understanding values explains why we take action. Align your goals with your values and you will feel much more satisfied with your life and career. Managers who understand their subordinates values will be much more successful.

The six values or attitudes we're examining in this series of columns were first defined in 1928 by psychologist Eduard Spranger in his book *The Types of Men*. (But it includes women, too.)

Your top two values are your passions. They are what drive you.

If you're high in the Aesthetic attitude, you are creative and have a passion for achieving balance and harmony in life. If you're low in this value, you will better understand why you may have conflict with those who seem to you to be sensitive and often unrealistic or idealistic.

The chief aim of those high in this value is achieving balance, harmony, form, and beauty in all areas of life. Being without these qualities is stressful for them. They must have balance between work, play, and rest and they want harmony in all areas of life, including work and relationships. The High Aesthetic person likes to be surrounded by beauty, appreciates art and nature, and gets annoyed by sounds, smells, or sights that are unpleasant to them. Think of the story of the Princess and the Pea. That's the person with the High Aesthetic value.

The overriding factor for High Aesthetic people is to experience their inner vision. They focus on the subjective experience and may have trouble dealing with adversity because they want life to run smoothly. The passion of the High Aesthetic is probably best summed up by the poet John Keats in Ode on a Grecian Urn, "Beauty is truth, truth beauty; that is all ye know and all ye need to know."

People with a High Aesthetic value tend to be uncomfortable around those who take an intellectual, practical, objective view of things. They will oppose progress if it is harmful to the environment or the beauty of their surroundings. They'll be unhappy living in a subdivision that has been stripped of trees. They will be dissatisfied if they have to work in a noisy, drab environment without open space and light. Those who are low in this value often see those with the High Aesthetic attitude as being unrealistic and perhaps lacking in ambition.

The qualities of those with a High Aesthetic value include creativity, empathy, Self-actualization. They bring beauty and artistic expression into our lives. What they often lack is practicality and an objective view. They would benefit from coaching around getting organized, time management, and tackling tough problems instead of trying to avoid them. If they can learn to be a little less sensitive, they will be happier and healthier.

## How to Manage and Motivate

So how do we manage and motivate these creative people? Let them surround themselves with what's beautiful to them. Give them the chance to create and provide form and harmony in their working environment. Give them some time to dream; don't pressure them to labor continuously. Yet don't let them dream too much. Find the balance.

To relate powerfully with those who have this value:

- β Focus on subjective experience;
- β Focus on their feelings, help them avoid pain and discomfort;
- β Don't expect them to be driven to succeed;
- β Say, "Beautifully done!"

Next time we'll look at those who have a High Social value to better understand and appreciate these selfless people who often put others' needs above their own.

For a free report that can help you determine your highest values in these and other areas, send an email with the words "Values Program" in the subject line.

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Annette Estes, Columnist

## **Understanding the High Social value**

Are you the kind of person who is always giving to others, doing charitable work, or serving humanity in some way? Do you have trouble saying no when asked to make a monetary contribution? Do you have six dogs living with you that were strays before you took them in?

If so, you are probably high in the Social value.

The Social, or Humanitarian, value is the fourth in our series on values and attitudes that were first defined in 1928 by psychologist Eduard Spranger in his book *Types of Men*. Our values explain our attitudes, our worldview, the way we see things. Understanding values explains why we get out of bed in the morning and take action. Align your goals with your values and you will be much more satisfied with your life and career. If your values are not being met in your work, it may be a cause of dissatisfaction.

Your top two values are your passions. They are what drive you.

If you're high in the Social attitude, you are giving - perhaps to a fault. You would give your last ten dollars to a homeless person if asked. One person high in this value told me she once gave her coat to a fellow grade school classmate who didn't have one. Needless to say, her mother wasn't particularly happy with her about that.

The chief aim of those high in this value is expressing love and selflessness, always looking for the best in others. Their goal is eliminating hate and conflict in their environment and in the world. Their passion is investing themselves in others with no strings attached. They believe in the Jamaican proverb that "the best passion is compassion." They are generous with their time, talents and resources.

The overriding factor for High Social people is seeing and developing potential in others and championing worthy causes. The passion of the High Social person is probably best summed up by Abigail Adams who wrote in a letter to John Thaxter in 1778, "If we do not lay out ourselves in the service of mankind whom should we serve?"

People with a High Social value tend to be uncomfortable around those who are highly individualistic whom they see as self-serving. The High Social person has no patience for insensitivity. What they may do, however, is give to the point that they neglect themselves to help strangers. They have a hard time saying no to anyone and over time this can cause stress to themselves and their families. They would benefit from coaching around taking time out for themselves, developing assertiveness, and learning to say no. They can suffer burnout from giving to so many and thereby limiting their helpfulness.

So how do we manage and motivate these selfless people? Give them opportunities to serve. If you manage High Social people, put them in charge of your charity drive, let them tutor or mentor others, and appreciate their need to give. Managers should be aware of their tendency to give too much, however, so help them

find balance. The supervisor and peers of one of my clients found out during group coaching that she was under extreme pressure because everyone in the company asked her to do things for them because they knew she would. Being also high in the Steadiness behavioral factor, this woman couldn't say no and it was taking a toll on her health and emotional well-being. Bosses, be sensitive to this kind of person and help them not to let others take advantage of their good nature.

To relate powerfully with those who have a High Social value:

- β Focus on how your ideas and projects will benefit others;
- β Don't focus on yourself or profit;
- β Let them know you appreciate them;
- β Say, "Thank you!"

Next time we'll look at those who have a High Individualistic value to better understand and appreciate these people who move and shake us to succeed.

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## **Understanding the High Individualistic value**

Are you the kind of person who wants to be in control, to run the show, to command others? Are you good at forming strategic alliances? Do you love to win and, conversely, hate to lose?

If so, you are probably high in the Individualistic value, which is the fifth in our series on values and attitudes first defined in 1928 by psychologist Eduard Spranger in his book *Types of Men*. Society expects men to have this value, yet many don't and some women do. Let me point out that there is no good or bad among the six values we're discussing, except in our perception and judgment. It's our judging of each other's values that causes much of the conflict in the world.

Our values explain our attitudes, our worldview, the way we see things. Understanding values explains why we take action. If your values are not being met in your work, it may be a cause of dissatisfaction. A deep understanding of these values will reduce many of the conflicts we have with others.

Your top two values are your passions. They are what drive you.

If you're high in the Individualistic attitude, you are driven by a desire to advance your position in your work, your personal life, and in any endeavor about which you are passionate.

The chief aim of those high in this value is using power or position to advance and achieve goals. They will use their power and influence to accomplish good or evil. Their passion is leading others; they want to control others' destinies as well as their own.

The overriding factor for High Individualistic people is attaining and using power to accomplish purpose. They invented the motto, "My way or the highway!" The passion of the High Individualistic person is championed in the poem "The Game of Life," by John Godfrey Saxe:

"In battle or business, whatever the game,  
In law or in love, it is ever the same;  
In the struggle for power, or the scramble for pelf,  
Let this be your motto – Rely on yourself!"

People with a High Individualistic value are in their element when leading and directing others. The High Individualistic person experiences stress and dissatisfaction when threatened (actual or perceived) with diminished power or loss of position. They will be unhappy if faced with the inability or lack of opportunity to advance themselves and their causes. They would benefit from coaching around letting others on the team contribute equally, controlling their tendency to overpower and intimidate others, developing compassion and patience, and letting go of their attachment to the outcome of their actions.

So how do we manage and motivate these movers and shakers? And how do we handle working for them, which is often the case? Understand their need to be in charge and give them authority equal to their responsibility. Give them opportunities to advance. Put them in a competitive position and watch them win. Managers must

be aware of their effect on others and help them tone it down with people who are uncomfortable being pushed or pressured.

To relate powerfully with those who have a High Individualistic value:

- β Focus on how your ideas and projects will increase power and get results;
- β Focus on the advancement of the person's or company's position;
- β Let them know you admire their ability to achieve;
- β Say, "You're the boss!"

It's interesting to note that the Individualistic attitude usually expresses itself through one of the other values. For example, an artistic director may have the Aesthetic as his or her highest value yet will demand perfect performances and unquestioned obedience from actors.

Those who are low in the Individualistic drive tend to see these people as self-serving; and if their power is overused it can lead to disaster for individuals, companies, and countries. However, if these people use their power to do good, we can and do admire them. Mother Teresa was high in this value, as was Adolph Hitler. The value itself is neither good nor bad, but how the person chooses to use his/her power that determines whether it advances or harms humankind.

Next time we'll look at those who have a High Traditional value to better understand and appreciate these people who pursue the divine in life and live by a strong belief system.

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Annette Estes, Columnist

## **Understanding the High Traditional value**

Are you the kind of person who wants to find the highest meaning in life and live by a strong belief system? Do you consider yourself highly religious or spiritual? Do you desire to understand the totality of life and live in harmony with others and Nature?

If so, you are high in the Traditional value, which is the sixth in our series on values and attitudes first defined in 1928 by psychologist Eduard Spranger in his book, *The Types of Men*. In fact, Spranger's original word for this value was "Religious." However, it encompasses more than religion alone. Those high in this attitude are on a quest to find a system for living their highest and best.

If you're high in the Traditional attitude, you are driven by a desire to search for and find the highest value in life. You likely champion a cause or causes; and if extremely high in this value, might even be willing to die for them as many in history did; Joan of Arc is just one example.

The chief aim of those high in this value is pursuing the divine in life. We can find many quotes expressing the beliefs of those high in this value. Confucius revealed his High Traditional attitude when he said, "Without an acquaintance with the rules of propriety, it is impossible for the character to be established."

The overriding factor for High Traditional people is living by a strong belief system which includes the desire that "not my will, but Thine be done." People with a High Traditional value live consistently according to their belief system and some may feel the duty to convert others to their beliefs.

High Traditional people experience stress and dissatisfaction when faced with opposition to their beliefs. One of my clients is challenged in her relationship with her daughter because her top value is the Traditional, which is her daughter's lowest value. In fact my client's values profile shows she is so far above the mainstream in this attitude she is said to be "passionate" about it. Her daughter is so far below the mainstream, she is considered "extreme" in her negative attitude toward those high in this value. So we can see why there is conflict between these two people who love each other, yet differ greatly in this area of life.

Those high in the Traditional value may tend to be self-sacrificing which, though considered a virtue, can eventually cause them to neglect their own needs. They would benefit from coaching around being less judgmental of others, and respecting others' right to have different religious beliefs or even none at all. They must guard against being moralistic, self-righteous, or rigid.

How do we manage and motivate these devout and generous people? Allow them to provide service to others and follow their dreams. Managers would be wise not to let their desire to "save" others be a point of conflict. Being non-judgmental on both sides is the key to successful relationships.

To relate powerfully with those who have a High Traditional value:

- β Focus on the meaning of life;
- β Understand their desire for order and unity;

- β Let them know you admire them for living up to their strong convictions;
- β Say, "I appreciate your honesty and integrity."

Next time we'll examine some reasons why it's helpful to understand the different values and look at how they relate; which ones are compatible and which are not. For a free report that can help you determine your highest values in these and other areas, send an email with the words "Values Program" in the subject line.

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## **Resolving values conflicts: Theoretical, Utilitarian, Aesthetic**

There are two men who live in different towns and are CEOs of two different kinds of small companies. They're both clients of mine. Once I was coaching Mr. P. on his values profile and how his attitudes reflected how he ran the company. He was high in the Utilitarian value and low in the Social value. During the conversation, he told me his greatest accomplishment as president of the company was that he never let employees borrow money from the company.

The following week I was coaching the other company president, Mr. B. on his values profile. He was the opposite - high Social and low Utilitarian. He told me the accomplishment he is proudest of is that he set up a credit union so employees could borrow money from the company during times of need.

Can you imagine these two men as business partners?

There are businesses and executive teams all over the country that are struggling to make important decisions for the company. They disagree on what direction the company should take. They get frustrated with one another because they just don't "get" where others on the team are "coming from."

Understanding their different attitudes and passions goes a long way in resolving the conflicts. So, in this column we'll look at the first three values we've been discussing and see how they relate to one another.

Again, the six attitudes are: Theoretical, Utilitarian, Aesthetic, Social, Individualistic, and Traditional.

**HIGH THEORETICAL** – the search for knowledge and truth.

**Theoretical-Theoretical.** This person will enjoy intellectual discussions and pursuits with those also high in this value.

**Theoretical-Utilitarian.** The Theoretical is not concerned with utility and application of knowledge, so there can be conflict with one who believes knowledge is only as good as its usefulness.

**Theoretical-Aesthetic.** Definite conflict here. The Theoretical is concerned with objective truth; the Aesthetic takes a more subjective, emotional view that doesn't need rational justification.

**Theoretical-Social.** High Theoreticals are concerned about gaining knowledge for their own benefit. This may clash with the high Social other-oriented viewpoint.

**Theoretical-Individualistic.** Not much conflict. Those who seek power appreciate that discovery of truth can help them establish position. "Knowledge is power," reflects both of these attitudes.

**Theoretical-Traditional.** Theoretical believes everything must be rationally explained and may reject faith because it is unprovable.

**HIGH UTILITARIAN** – Practicality, utility, and getting return on investment.

**Utilitarian-Theoretical.** See above. Conflict over the importance of application of knowledge versus knowledge for knowledge's sake.

**Utilitarian-Utilitarian.** These two agree on the importance of utility in all areas of life. They may be competitive in pursuit of gain.

Utilitarian-Aesthetic. Conflict between what is useful and what is beautiful when the useful harms the environment. Form and harmony may oppose utility.

Utilitarian-Social. The Utilitarian is concerned with preservation of the self first. This conflicts with the Social's viewpoint that compassion for others should come first.

Utilitarian-Individualistic. Compatible in the belief that wealth is power and that utility can lead to control.

Utilitarian-Traditional. This can go either way, depending on the Traditional's view that the Utilitarian focus is good or evil.

HIGH AESTHETIC – Desire for beauty, balance, form and harmony in all areas of life.

Aesthetic-Theoretical. See above. Conflict with the Aesthetic subjective versus the Theoretical objective views.

Aesthetic-Utilitarian. See above. When an object is seen as both useful and beautiful there's a powerful harmony here.

Aesthetic-Aesthetic. These two people will enjoy pursuing beauty and harmony together. Both are focused on self-growth and improvement.

Aesthetic-Social. Conflict between the Aesthetic's focus on individual fulfillment versus the Social's focus on others' well being.

Aesthetic-Individualistic. Harmony may conflict with the Individualistic desire for control. However, owning beautiful things can enhance position.

Aesthetic-Traditional. Compatible in that both embrace the beauty of the totality of life. However, the Aesthetic will reject the negative aspects of many religions.

If you are high in the Theoretical, Utilitarian, or Aesthetic values, think about the people who cause you the most difficulty. Think of the arguments you have and see if one or more of these conflicting values could be the root cause.

The more you understand these different attitudes and resolve to stop judging others who have a different world view, the more harmonious your relationships at work and at home will be. Or, if harmony is not important to you, then realize this understanding will make you more effective in influencing others on your team.

Next time we'll look at the remaining values - Social, Individualistic and Traditional and see how they relate with all the others.

For a free report that can help you determine your highest values, send an email with the words "Values Report" in the subject line.

Annette Estes is a Certified Professional Behavioral and Values Analyst, Coach, and Consultant. She helps companies hire, keep, and develop the best people. She is also a professional speaker, columnist, and author of the book, *Why Can't You See it MY Way? Resolving Values Conflicts at Work and Home*. Contact her at [Annette@CoachAnnette.com](mailto:Annette@CoachAnnette.com) or call The Estes Group at 864-244-1156.

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## **Resolving values conflicts: Social, Individualistic, Traditional**

Are there people in your life with whom you have serious disagreements? Do you fight over money, politics, religion, or other issues? These arguments likely stem from your differing values. You'll probably never change the other person's mind, but understanding where you're both coming from can help tremendously in resolving these conflicts.

A failure to understand each other's values causes business teams unnecessary frustration and failure to reach consensus on important issues.

In this column, we'll look at the remaining three values or attitudes and examine how they either compliment or oppose one another.

Again, the six attitudes are: Theoretical, Utilitarian, Aesthetic, Social, Individualistic, and Traditional.

**HIGH SOCIAL** – the desire to serve humankind, humanitarianism.

**Social-Theoretical.** Strong conflict. The high Social is most concerned with others' needs, which conflicts with the high Theoretical desire to gain knowledge for oneself.

**Social-Utilitarian.** Strong conflict. The high Utilitarian's desire for preservation of the self first opposes the Social other-oriented viewpoint.

**Social-Aesthetic.** Again, the Social's focus is on others; the high Aesthetic is focused more on individual fulfillment, leading to negative attitudes towards one another.

**Social-Social.** Compatible in their belief that others' needs come first.

**Social-Individualistic.** These two have the strongest conflicting views. Social believes focus on others is the correct attitude, opposing the high Individualistic focus on self-positioning.

**Social-Traditional.** Compatible. Both are other-oriented and desire to serve humankind.

**HIGH INDIVIDUALISTIC** – The desire for power and position.

**Individualistic-Theoretical.** Compatible. Individualistic appreciates that knowledge and truth can be vital in establishing position.

**Individualistic-Utilitarian.** Compatible in the belief that wealth is power.

**Individualistic-Aesthetic.** Aesthetic desires harmony, which conflicts with Individualistic's desire for control. Owning beautiful things can advance position.

**Individualistic-Social.** See above. Strong conflict on attitude toward self vs. other orientation.

**Individualistic-Individualistic.** Respect one another's beliefs yet will be competitive in gaining position.

**Individualistic-Traditional.** Conflicting. Focus on personal power versus spiritual power.

**HIGH TRADITIONAL** – Desire to search for and find the highest meaning in life.

Traditional-Theoretical. Conflicting. Traditional's faith in the unseen opposes the attitude of one to whom everything must be rationally explained.

Traditional-Utilitarian. May be conflicting if the Traditional sees the Utilitarian attitude as evil. Can go either way. Self versus other orientation.

Traditional-Aesthetic. Both appreciate the essence of the totality of life. The high Aesthetic may reject the negative aspect of many religions.

Traditional-Social. See above. Compatible, other-oriented viewpoint.

Traditional-Individualistic. See above. Traditional may see Individualistic as too self-serving. Compatible when power is used to achieve service to others.

Traditional-Traditional. Compatible when both have the same religious beliefs. When different, can cause strong conflict.

If you are high in the Social, Individualistic, or Traditional values, think about the problems you have with others and see if one or more of these conflicting values could be the reason.

Resolving conflict is just one of a myriad of reasons why it's important for us to understand our own and each other's values. Self-discovery is essential in order for us to grow and become the person we each want to be. A deeper understanding of others is the next step in that growth.

Judy Suiter, President of Competitive Edge, Inc. in Atlanta and author of the book *Exploring Values – The Power of Attitudes*, advises, "Remember what is essential may be invisible. Take time to explore beneath the surface - yourself and others."

I believe our judging of one another's behavior, values, and beliefs causes most of our problems. Understanding is the first step toward becoming non-judgmental. If we stop feeling that our values are "good" and other's are "bad," we can eliminate the us-versus-them mentality that divides us as individuals and as a society.

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