



STRENGTHENING ORGANISATIONAL VALUES

A Resource for Leaders, HR and OD Practitioners

Acknowledgements

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Introduction



“Beyond systems and processes, it is values that define our system and how public officers carry out their duties.”

*Deputy Prime Minister and Minister-in-Charge of Civil Service, Teo Chee Hean
Committee of Supply (COS) 2014*

Why Read This?

39% of employees in organisations that don’t communicate and support values are dissatisfied with their organisation, as compared to 7% of employees in organisations that do support values.

Source: Corporate Leadership Council

As individuals, our personal values are what we *value*, as being important to us. They determine how we behave and act in various situations. For example, “I hold dearly to ‘Honesty’, and I would tell the truth even if it means awkward moments with my boss that might jeopardise my career.”

Organisational values are no different. They define what an organisation believes in, and contribute to its survival and success (see The Value of Values below). They support our mission and goals; they also determine our culture, our processes and everyday decisions and actions of everyone in the organisation. How far do we go to deliver services to citizens? When a fellow colleague needs help at work, do we offer assistance? The answers to these questions depend on what values we stand for.

In any organisation, leaders set the direction and make critical decisions. That is why leaders are ultimately responsible for organisational values. They need to always live out these values and at the same time, bring staff along with them in living out the values.

But you needn’t walk on this journey alone. Whether you are a leader or staff looking to strengthen your organisational values, this guide outlines some basic building blocks to do so.

There is no universally accepted definition of what values are. Nonetheless, as a starting point, this toolkit defines values as “the individual principles or qualities that guide judgement and behaviour”, with organisational values defined as the “beliefs and ideas about the appropriate kinds or standards of behaviours members of an organisation should use to achieve their organisation’s strategic goals.”¹

Following OECD definitions of public sector values,² it is also important to note that public sector values provide the basis for an environment where citizens know about the mission and the vision of public organisations and they give overall guidance for daily public service operations.



1 Charles Hill and Gareth Jones, *Strategic Management Theory: An Integrated Approach* (Canada: South-Western Cengage Learning, 2009).
 2 Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development, *Trust in Government: Ethics Measures in OECD Countries*, accessed February 1, 2016, <http://www.oecd.org/gov/ethics/48994450.pdf>.

The Value of Values

For Your Organisation

High performance and long-term success:

- Support mission, vision and goals.
- Companies with a strong commitment to their values significantly outperform others, with higher revenues and profits.³
- In the public sector, high-performing government organisations articulate a set of values and the public sector employees continuously use value systems to make decisions on the ground.⁴

Reduced costs:

- Reduction in staff turnover and fewer staff absences.
- Reduced recruitment and staffing costs.

Improved reputation:

- Recruitment advantage, with increased ability to attract, recruit and retain staff.
- Distinguishing factor that gives advantage over competitors.
- In the Public Service, this translates to greater public trust and confidence in the quality of services and policies.

For Your Staff

Happier, more engaged staff:

- Staff wellbeing improves with staff feeling more satisfied, supported and engaged in their work.⁵
- Staff less likely to entertain thoughts of leaving.
- Better able to attract talented like-minded new staff as people make positive choices about where they want to work due to the culture of the workplace.
- Staff are better equipped to navigate difficult situations, manage trade-offs and make difficult decisions.

Shared identity, pride and purpose:

- Enables staff to work across silos and job functions for the greater good.
- Improved ability to unite and cope when faced with challenges and uncertainties.

3 In *Corporate Culture and Performance* (1992), Kotter and Heskett show that companies with strong adaptive cultures based on values significantly outperformed other companies. They also found that these companies had job creation rates seven times higher, had stock prices that grew twelve times faster, and profit performance that was 750 times higher than companies that did not have shared values and adaptive cultures. In *Built to Last* (2005), Collins and Porras (2005) show that companies that consistently focused on building strong corporate cultures over a period of several decades outperformed companies that did not by a factor of six and outperformed the general stock market by a factor of 15.
 4 Laurie Paarlberg and James Perry, “Values Management: Aligning Employee Values and Organization Goals”, *The American Review of Public Administration* 37, no. 4 (2007): 387–408.
 5 In Korn Ferry’s 2015 survey of 350 executives, 47% responded that working for a company whose culture was aligned with their values would most dramatically improve feelings about their work. See “Korn Ferry Executive Survey Reveals Top Job Frustrations, Fulfillments”, February 17, 2015, accessed February 1, 2016, <http://www.kornferry.com/press/korn-ferry-executive-survey-reveals-top-job-frustrations>. See also Adam Bradshaw, “Putting Values Alignment to Work to Drive Positive Organizational Outcomes”, DeGarmo Group, 2012, accessed February 1, 2016, http://www.degarmogroup.com/wp-content/themes/toolbox/pdf/Putting_Value_Alignment_to_Work_to%20Drive_Positive_Organizational_Outcomes.pdf.

Where to Start?

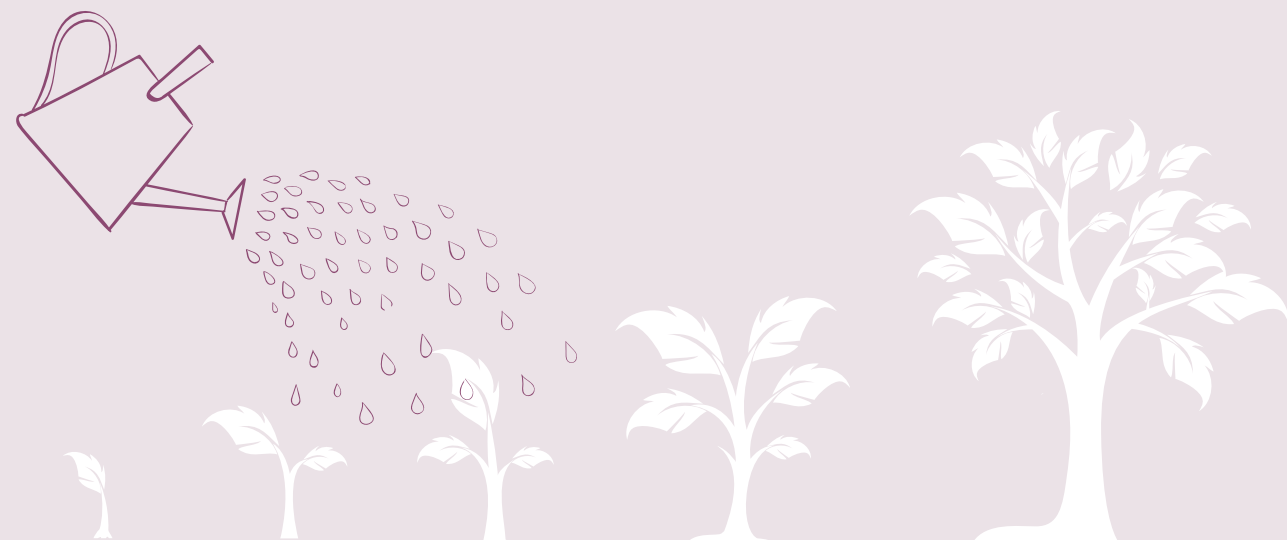
We may already have ideas on how we can best strengthen our organisation's values. But where should we start first? The answer would depend on why our organisations are undertaking work on values in the first place. It could be for any of the following reasons:

- Support organisation's mission, goals and outcomes
- Improve staff engagement and performance levels
- Bring together the organisation following restructuring

Whatever the reasons, identify what you want to achieve. This will help clarify priorities and approaches. For example, if the aim is to bring together the organisation, a bottom-up approach might be more useful. Consider the following questions to help you assess new ideas:

- What are existing issues your organisation is grappling with and how can these ideas help to solve them?
- What existing initiatives can be synergised with these ideas?
- What aspects of work on values will excite people within the organisation?
- How can you deliver early successes to create more momentum and energy?

Lastly, remember to figure out a way to track progress so that you are able to assess if the work is making a difference.



“Values serve as the compass for the organisation as it transverses new ground for which maps have not been drawn. Values are the essential expression of the nature of the evolving organisation; they are both aspirational and essential.”

Lim Siong Guan, former Head of Civil Service

Want to Get Going Now?

I am convinced, what next?

If you are convinced of the benefits of values, but want to know how best to plan and focus your efforts, start with the simple self-assessment diagnostic in the next section to work out your next steps.

Do you want to know more about the specific things you could do on your values journey?

We have 5 building blocks that will guide you on your values journey.

To find out more about each of them, best practices, hints, tips and case studies of how other organisations have done it, go to the relevant sections.



Note: This resource guide and the materials that have been used to develop it will be made available on PSD's HR portal too.

Self-Assessment Checklist

Self-Assessment Checklist

Most organisations that effectively promote their values have simple best practices. To help your work in driving values, we have come up with a simple self-assessment checklist of these practices. Use this checklist to spark off conversations within your teams, and between your teams and management.

It should take your team 10–15 minutes to complete the self-assessment.

Who should use this tool?

Staff from Human Resources, Organisational Development and Leadership teams

How?

We recommend you use it every quarter, to:

- Identify areas of strength;
- Identify areas for improvement;
- Create an action plan for the next 6 to 12 months to strengthen values;
- Have a conversation with your leaders on what to prioritise.

This can complement your existing tools and data which can include: surveys (e.g., EES, VAS), HR data (e.g., staff retention rates), and other organisational health indicators.



Quick
Tips

If helpful, think about these questions in the context of the past 12–24 months.

Define & Articulate Values

● Unsure ● Not at all ● Somewhat ● Definitely

Define, refine and articulate values with staff.
How do we build staff ownership and agreement for values through dialogue and conversation?

1. We have organisational values that support our mission and goals. ● ● ● ●

As a team or leader, what can we do to sustain or improve this rating?

2. Staff were:
- a. involved in coming up with the values; or
 - b. consulted in a refresh of the values, vision, mission of your organisation.

● ● ● ●

As a team or leader, what can we do to sustain or improve this rating?

3. We make staff aware of our values.

● ● ● ●

As a team or leader, what can we do to sustain or improve this rating?

Translate Values into Expected Behaviours and Actions

● Unsure ● Not at all ● Somewhat ● Definitely

How can we make values “come alive” i.e., translate values into specific behaviours, and communicate them effectively to staff?

1. We have described and documented what our values look like so that staff have guidance, e.g., through behavioural statements. ● ● ● ●

As a team or leader, what can we do to sustain or improve this rating?

2. We communicate the behaviours and actions in ways that staff can relate to in their daily work. ● ● ● ●

As a team or leader, what can we do to sustain or improve this rating?

3. We encourage supervisors at all levels to help staff relate to our organisational values. ● ● ● ●

As a team or leader, what can we do to sustain or improve this rating?

Embed Values into Organisational Processes

● Unsure ● Not at all ● Somewhat ● Definitely

How can we reinforce our organisational values with staff, by integrating them into organisational processes like recruitment, on-boarding/induction and performance management?

1. Our recruitment processes factor in potential new hire's values, e.g., job descriptions, interview questions and assessment.

● ● ● ●

As a team or leader, what can we do to sustain or improve this rating?

2. Our induction and other training and development programmes make new staff aware of our values, and how they should behave and act.

● ● ● ●

As a team or leader, what can we do to sustain or improve this rating?

3. Our staff assessment and development processes take into account staff's values when we evaluate them for promotion to higher appointments, particularly supervisory and leadership positions.

● ● ● ●

As a team or leader, what can we do to sustain or improve this rating?

Sustain Values Implementation

● Unsure ● Not at all ● Somewhat ● Definitely

How can we develop and/or use processes and tools to assess values alignment and identify areas for improvement and intervention when necessary?

1. We use feedback, tools, surveys and data to understand if staff are upholding our values, e.g., Employee Engagement Surveys.

● ● ● ●

As a team or leader, what can we do to sustain or improve this rating?

2. We regularly use feedback tools and data to monitor if values are understood and upheld by staff.

● ● ● ●

As a team or leader, what can we do to sustain or improve this rating?

3. We take follow-up actions based on feedback and data.

● ● ● ●

As a team or leader, what can we do to sustain or improve this rating?

4. We assess the effectiveness of our follow-up actions.

● ● ● ●

As a team or leader, what can we do to sustain or improve this rating?

Supportive Leadership

● Unsure ● Not at all ● Somewhat ● Definitely

Do we have supportive leaders at all levels to have sufficient role-models at all levels to consistently model values through their behaviours and decisions, and develop appropriate behaviours in their staff?

1. Leaders and managers display the right values, behaviour and conduct to a large extent.

● ● ● ●

As a team or leader, what can we do to sustain or improve this rating?

2. Staff in our organisation believe that some of our leaders and managers do not behave in accordance with our values.

● ● ● ●

As a team or leader, what can we do to sustain or improve this rating?

3. Leaders and managers are actively encouraged to listen to, and act on feedback and ideas on how we live out our values.



As a team or leader, what can we do to sustain or improve this rating?

4. Leaders and managers are equipped with practical skills to mediate discussions and have conversations with staff on values objectively and sensitively.



As a team or leader, what can we do to sustain or improve this rating?

CHAPTER 1

Define and Articulate Values

“Values, for us, aren’t soft. They are the basis of what we do, our mission as a company.”

Sam Palmisano, CEO, IBM (2002–2012)

Define and Articulate Values

Research shows that successful high-performing companies like 3M, IBM and General Electric have well-defined core values that i) support their overall goals and vision, and ii) enjoy staff support because they have been developed together with them. Engaging staff in the process of defining organisational values ensures that they are more likely to share them, giving them added meaning and relevance. It also brings about many positive benefits for staff engagement and satisfaction, as the very process of discussing values would make staff feel like they have a stake in the organisation.



How to Get Started?

1. Gather feedback from staff on the current state of existing values and gaps, if any, before deciding if a values review and refresh is necessary. A values review and refresh requires resourcing!



Quick
Tips

Use data from existing surveys (e.g., Employee Engagement Survey, Values & Attitudes Survey) or create new ones to get as many views as possible.

Think out of the box to allow staff to contribute. Some examples:

- Anonymous suggestion boxes
- Dedicated email address for staff to provide their inputs on values
- “Values” wall for staff to leave comments

2. If a review or refresh is necessary, plan conversations with staff. There is no one right way to do this, but consider:
 - a. Existing staff engagement platforms, including online forums
 - b. Mix of group sizes, comprising large, small and one-to-one conversations
 - c. Involving diverse range of staff across job functions and job grades
 - d. Involving leaders at right times to facilitate conversations



Quick
Tips

Good conversations about values need not necessarily make direct use of the word “values”. This is likely to produce textbook responses that staff do not feel emotionally connected to. Use questions that tease out what they truly think and feel for:

- What are the things that you really care about in your job?
- What makes you come to work?
- What makes you proud of being a part of our agency and the work that you do?
- When did you last go the extra mile? Why did you do so?
- What were difficult decisions you had to make? How did you make your decision?

Use stories to get people to open up and explore behaviours they have experienced around them.

- If staff are not ready for such conversations, use techniques to make them feel safe, e.g., asking them to draw and describe the “ideal officer” and the “undesirable officer”.



Quick
Tips

Different approaches offer different advantages:

- **Large group:** Creates buzz and touches more staff, but interaction is less deep and participation might not be 100%.
- **Small group:** Fosters greater interactions, but more dependent on facilitator's skills.
- **One-to-one:** More in-depth inputs, but could lose out from benefits of discussion

3. Remember values are more than just words on a wall. How the values are lived out are more important than the words themselves. This means two things:

- Design the process so that staff can share examples and stories about how they have lived out values. This will come in very handy in the communications thereafter.
- Do not spend time word-smithing, e.g., debating whether “Integrity” or “Honesty” is the right word to describe what staff value. The team can always refine the words later.

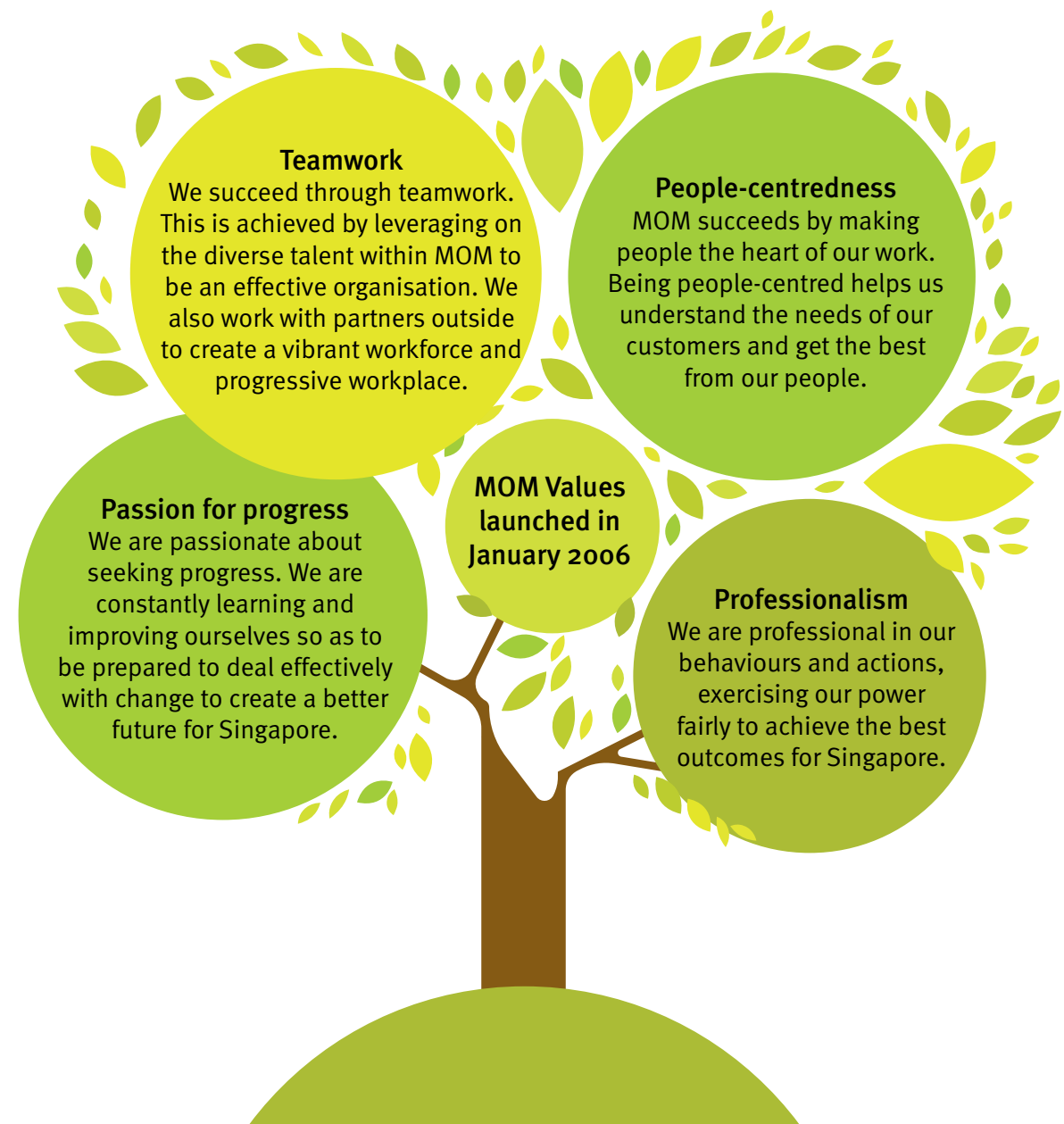
What have others done?

General Electric (GE) refreshed its values as it re-aligned its culture to support its growth strategy. In 2003, an executive team was formed to revisit its existing set of values. The first step of this process involved intensive interviews and focus groups with senior leaders. Results were collected and reviewed, put into the context of GE's growth strategy, distilled, and finally edited by then-CEO Jeff Immelt in 2005 before they were rolled out as Growth Values. The Growth Values serve as GE's expectations for all employees: External Focus, Clear Thinker, Imagination & Courage, Inclusiveness, and Expertise.¹

MOM conducted a values revisioning exercise in 2005/6 after it completed its vision and mission refresh. As part of this exercise, MOM conducted organisation-wide workshops across various levels to co-create its new shared values.

What have others done?

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Source: Ministry of Manpower

¹ For more information, see "The Growth Values: How GE Aligned Its Culture with Its Growth Strategy", accessed June 7, 2016, <http://www.cbi.org.uk/media/1925640/GE%20Capital%20growth%20values.pdf>.

Developing, reviewing and refreshing values

While our values should support our overall mission and goals, bring staff along to give them a sense of ownership over them. Here are 3 simple ways to do so. They have been developed from research on best practices used by other organisations. They are catered for organisations that are:

- a. Developing new values from scratch
- b. Reviewing existing values
- c. Reviewing and refreshing existing values

Adapt and use what works for your organisation!

#1 Develop and Build Consensus around Values

For organisations that are developing new values from scratch

Objectives

Engage staff on values
Identify values
Build consensus

Who's involved

8-15 staffs across all levels

Duration

90-120 mins,
depending on group size

Materials

Markers
Post-its
Flipcharts

- 01 | Invite a range of staff from different parts of the organisation to participate in a short informal workshop session. Repeat sessions to gather more perspectives. When to stop? When responses start converging!
- 02 | Divide the group into small teams. Provide each team with a stack of cards listing commonly used values (eg., Teamwork, Honesty) printed on them. Alternatively, you could download a listing of values from sites like The Ethics Resource Centre (<http://ethics.org/resource/definitions-values>). Consider providing short definitions, especially for values that seem similar.
- 03 | Give each team 15–20 mins :

 - Choose 8–10 values they think the organisation upholds or should strive to uphold in the future and;
 - Describe specific examples of how staff are living out the values in their daily work through their actions and behaviours.
- 04 | Spend 20–25 mins getting each of the teams to share their list of values. Look out and record the values that keep coming up, along with the associated behaviours and actions on a flipchart.
- 05 | Use the next 15–20 mins to narrow down the list of values on the flipchart to a final list of core values. It could be something that majority of the group agree on.

Source: Convercent, "5 Exercises to Help Define Your Company's Core Values", <http://www.convercent.com/resource/convercent-ebook-5-exercises-to-help-define-your-companys-core-values.pdf>.



Quick Tips

- This simple exercise can be adapted to blend both top-down and bottom-up approaches. Simply run your first session with management, then use the values identified as the basis for other sessions with staff.
- Consider providing some empty cards or free space in print-outs for staff at Step 2, for them to indicate any values that are not listed.
- The conversations at Step 4 and 5 should focus on the actions and behaviours that are not consistent with those values. If the group struggles to cite any behaviours for a particular value, that value probably does not belong to your list.
- Consider voting on the values outlined at Step 5.
- It is important to align expectations at the start: Will the list of values from the session be “the” values? Be upfront, e.g., letting participants know that the list will require the final endorsement from your senior management.
- Remember to thank your participants and let them know about key follow-ups arising from the sessions, e.g., how will the organisers process these lists across different sessions.

#2 Create a Values Wall to Revisit Values
For organisations that are reviewing existing values

Objectives
Get staff inputs on existing values

Who's involved
Staff across all levels

Duration
Own time, own target!

Materials
Butcher paper
Markers
Post-its

Tip: Do this to know what staff think about your current values.

01

Put up a large attention grabbing poster or picture of your existing organisational values and what they stand for on a “Values Wall”. It can be as simple as drawing on a large piece of butcher paper.

02

Put up as many copies as you can around the office for staff to read.

03

Invite staff to pen down their thoughts using 2–3 of the following guiding questions. Make sure writing materials are within reach.

- Which values are important to me?
- What do the values mean to me in my work?
- What makes it easy for me to live out the values?
- What suggestions do you have to remove the obstacles in living out the values?
- Tell us stories about how your colleagues are living out the values.

04

Gather all the staff inputs after sufficient time has passed and assess them for your next course of action, particularly if there is a need to revisit values. In which case you might find #1: Develop and Build Consensus Around Values useful.

Whatever the situation, remember to keep staff informed of key findings and follow-ups so that they don’t go away thinking that it was a mere “paper” exercise.

Source: United Kingdom National Health Service Institute for Innovation and Improvement, "Living Our Local Values", 2009.



Quick
Tips

- While nothing beats interactive conversations on values, this exercise is a fuss free way to go about collecting staff views on existing values if you have limited resources.
- Use the feedback to assess if existing values need to be reviewed and refreshed.
- Be prepared that staff will use this opportunity to surface frustrations and dissatisfaction, which in itself is a useful data point for you in your values journey.
- Consider having staff write down their names along with their comments, so that you can go back to them for further inputs and encourage a culture of responsible feedback. You may however get greater honesty with anonymous notes, so aim to strike a balance.

#3 Discuss What Values Look Like
For organisations that are reviewing and refreshing existing values

Objectives
See if existing values still hold meaning for staff.

Develop common understanding of values.

Who's involved
10–20 staff across all levels

Duration
90–120 mins, depending on group size

Materials
Markers
Flipcharts
Post-its

Tip: Do this to find out what values mean to staff.

01

Gather about 10–20 staff from across the organisation and at all levels. It might be easier to get mindshare and participation if a senior leader sends out the invitation to staff.

02

Set up the room for small-group discussions, with 5–8 staff in each group. Display your existing values around the room to prepare staff for discussion.

03

Conduct a short 10 min ice-breaker exercise. Within their teams, ask staff to share stories of how they or their colleagues demonstrated any one of the organisational values in their daily work.

This will get staff to think about the behaviours and actions associated with each value too. Get the teams to share some of their stories after, and identify common behaviours and actions.

04

Let the teams know that they will need to discuss 2 questions, and then share them with the large group. Ask them to record their discussion on flipcharts provided.

Introduce one question at a time, giving about 20–25 mins for discussion. Once time is up, facilitate a short 15 min discussion capturing and summarising feedback. It is important to acknowledge issues raised without commenting or responding to them at this point.

Some possible questions to pick from:

- How does [value, for example, Integrity] show up in our day-to-day work?
- If you were conducting orientation for new colleagues, what stories would you tell them that best represent what your organisation stands for?
- Why do you think [value, for example, Teamwork] is important in our daily work, and what encourages us to live it out? What impedes this value?
- Are there any other values that are important in our daily work?

05

Finish by getting staff to reflect on their personal roles in living out the values and ask them to write down a personal action that they will take to better live out the values.

06

Summarise and close the session with what will happen next, e.g., how you will be using the information gathered and how you will be continuing to engage staff on values.

Source: United Kingdom National Health Service Institute for Innovation and Improvement, "Living Our Local Values", 2009.



Quick Tips

- To get staff to open up, reassure them that their comments and thoughts will not be attributed to them.
- Schedule more sessions involving a diverse range of staff, including management, from different functions to find out how and why staff view values as they do.
- Values can be abstract, so get staff to really focus on how they would be behaving if they were demonstrating the values at Step 3. The magic question is “How would it look like?”.
- There will be different stories that represent different facets of the values. When processing these stories, group them into the various facets. For example, for Integrity, there might be stories from these categories – “Honesty”, “Accountability”, “Incorruptibility”. Use the information gathered from the sessions to decide if any of the values are poorly understood, irrelevant or if anything is missing. Then assess if a review and refresh of values is necessary.
- Keep these stories! They will be very useful for future communications.



Case Study

Ministry of Communications and Information (MCI)

Background

After the Cabinet reshuffle in 2012, the Ministry of Communications and the Arts (MICA) became the Ministry of Communications and Information (MCI) while the Ministry for Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY), a new ministry, took over the arts, heritage and national resilience portfolios previously under MICA.

MCI's Vision: Informed Society, Creative Economy, Connected People

MCI's Mission: To build a nation of connected people and to achieve a better quality of life by:

- developing vibrant infocomm, media and design sectors
- cultivating learning communities
- fostering an engaged public

With the new vision and mission of MCI, the senior management team wanted to ascertain if the core values of Professionalism, Passion, Connectedness and Creativity were still relevant. More importantly, they wanted a set of core values that could guide officers in their behaviours and daily interactions with peers, supervisors, officers and other stakeholders.

“...we should give ourselves more time to deliberate and arrive at a set of core values. It has always been clear to me that process is not an intellectual exercise, or one to craft inspiring words or ideas. What is important is whether the values are practised daily in our teams and in our workplace.”

Aubeck Kam, PS (Communications and Information), MCI Townhall, 17 Feb 2014

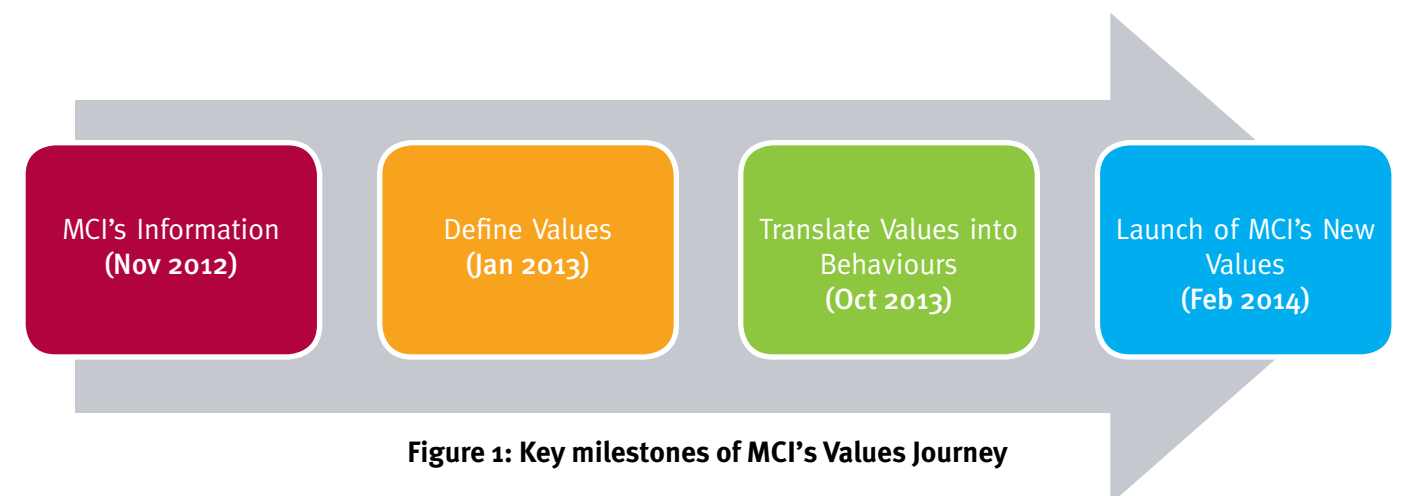


Figure 1: Key milestones of MCI's Values Journey

In January 2013, they started a series of dialogue sessions with officers at all levels to find out how the existing core values were perceived. Some officers could not relate to them and suggested other values instead. At the end of the dialogue sessions, eight potential values were shortlisted from an organisation-wide voting exercise and escalated to the senior management for consideration. Officers also discussed the optimal number of core values that MCI should have. Most officers felt that three fundamental core values should suffice as it would be difficult to remember the values if there were more. The three core values of Respect, Professionalism, and Teamwork were selected.

Examples of questions during discussion sessions with officers:

- What values should an MCI officer have?
- Can you list 2 or 3 positive and negative work behaviours that you have encountered?
- Can you list 2 or 3 examples of what can be said or done when negative behaviours are observed?



MCI officers at a workshop

In October 2013, these three core values were discussed during divisional retreats. Officers brainstormed about the definitions and desired behaviours represented by each of the three values. Supervisors and their officers were grouped differently to enable everyone to express their thoughts and opinions freely. The senior management also participated in a survey on what each of the values meant to them in action.

Ministry of Communications and Information

Our Core Values

RESPECT

We treat each other as individuals and value each other's strengths, experiences and views.

Behaviour:

- Shows appreciation in his/her interactions with others and acknowledges other's contributions
- Considers others' opinions and engages in constructive discussions
- Considers stakeholders before making decisions that will affect them

PROFESSIONALISM

We are committed to excel in our work and take responsibility for our actions.

Behaviour:

- Continuously improve his/her capabilities and knowledge
- Learns from his/her mistakes
- Holds himself/herself accountable for his/her actions
- Exemplifies the core values of the public service: Integrity, Service & Excellence
- Exercises objectivity in decision-making and when dealing with others

TEAMWORK

We complement and support each other to pursue our shared vision and goals.

Behaviour:

- Takes initiative and offers help to colleagues readily
- Shares information and resources readily
- Inspires and motivates others through his/her actions
- Cooperates with others throughout organisational structures for greater synergy and impact

How do the Core Values look like in action to you?

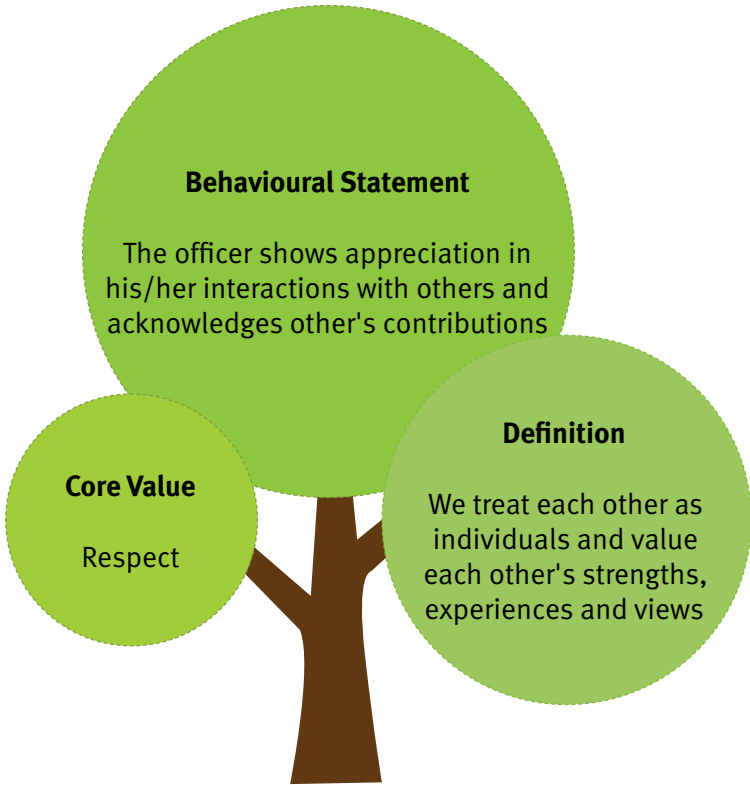
Division/Dept: _____

Designation: Division 1: Exec / AM / M / SM / AD / SAD / DD / D

(Please circle) Division: 2 / 3 / 4

Core Values Reflection Card

In February 2014, the new core values and a set of behavioural statements were finally launched at a townhall to guide officers in their roles.



How MCI did it

The OD Team decided to adopt a people-centric approach right from the start. The team was convinced that involving officers in conversations to shape MCI's values would increase ownership of the final output. At the same time, they were also mindful of the importance of senior management's sponsorship in the entire process. For example, when the senior management was deliberating on how the definition of Core Values and behavioural statements should be worded, the Permanent Secretary himself helped to re-focus attention on the meaning behind the values and how they should help officers to internalise the espoused values in their daily work. This helped to steer the values project in a meaningful and productive direction.

To keep values conversations going after the launch of the core values, the OD team continued to engage officers through workshops to deepen their understanding of desired behaviours and how to demonstrate them in their daily interactions with others. The workshops were conducted using a variety of training methodologies (e.g. videos, discussions, behavioural cards) to support learning and practice.

Key Takeaways

- Involve officers at all levels to increase buy-in of the values defined.
- Identify both positive and negative work behaviours to make values real in everyday life.
- Continue to engage officers after the values definition exercise to increase adoption and sustain interest.
- Support from the leaders is crucial throughout the entire process.

CHAPTER 2

Translate Values into Expected Behaviours and Actions



“It is far more important for a values team to arrive at a statement that works than to reach a decision it may regret later.”

Patrick M. Lencioni, Writer

Translate Values into Expected Behaviours and Actions

It is our behaviours and actions that make our values real. Values only matter when staff believe in and reflect them in their behaviours and actions. To do so, staff need to know what living out the values day to day looks like. For example, Excellence is exemplified when we think out of the box to improve work processes. This requires consistently publicising and maintaining awareness of values in *all* our organisational communications. The more staff are reminded about how they should behave and act, the more likely they are to do so. Stories of staff who are role models for our values are useful in getting the message across too.



How to Get Started?

1. Use behavioural statements to highlight what values mean. Remember to keep them short and simple so that it is easy for staff to remember. For instance, Netflix's behavioural statements are:

Honesty:

You are quick to admit mistakes

Innovation:

You create new ideas that prove useful



Quick
Tips

Seeing is the first step to awareness!
Display your values and behavioural
statements prominently around the office.

2. Use the most appropriate and effective communication tools for your organisation. Some of these could include:

- Behavioural statements
- Videos
- Stories
- Games
- Role-playing



Quick
Tips

Stories are a great way to get the message across. Share stories of role models in your organisation:

- Design forms for staff to submit stories of their fellow colleagues.
- Publish the stories on the intranet and staff newsletters.

Communicate values consistently, but keep staff's attention by using fresh new approaches. For example, create monthly themes around values, like *Integrity January*, and centre discussions around the month's featured value across all staff communications.

What do our Public Service Values look like in daily work?

Our public service officers have told us what our Public Service Values of Integrity, Service and Excellence look like. About 300 officers from various agencies, across job functions and divisional status, participated in Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) conducted by PSD and CSC from November 2013 to August 2014. Key themes and behaviours were then identified, resulting in the following draft set of behavioural statements.

Some of the questions that we asked at the FGDs are:

- What does (i) Integrity, (ii) Service, and (iii) Excellence mean to you?
- How do you know if your colleagues (peers, subordinates and leaders) possess any of these values? Please provide specific examples when describing.
- What are some of the key behaviours that you would associate with these values?

Behavioural Statements of the Public Service Values – Integrity, Service, and Excellence

Integrity	Accountability Takes responsibility for own words and actions, and upholds reputation of the organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is accountable for own words and actions and takes responsibility for own mistakes • Actions and behaviours are transparent, stands up to public scrutiny and maintains the good name of the organisation • Provides accurate information while showing sensitivity in protecting confidential information
	Moral Courage Shows courage to stand up for what is right	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaks up when the popular view is not aligned with own moral beliefs • Stands firm on doing things the right way despite external pressure • Is truthful and honest when sharing information despite it having negative impact on self
	Fairness and Impartiality Is impartial and incorruptible when fulfilling job responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treats people fairly and equally without discrimination or favouritism • Maintains incorruptibility and uprightness despite opportunity for personal gain or for exchange of preferential treatment • Differentiates official dealings from personal dealings and does not seek to gain personal advantage from them
Service	Dedication to Nation Has desire to serve the public and puts national interests before personal interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has desire to serve the needs of the public and nation • Goes the extra mile to help and contribute to the betterment of the nation and its people • Places public interests before personal interests
	Empathy Shows empathy and genuine concern towards others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puts themselves in customers' shoes to understand their needs and feelings • Goes beyond being transactional or task-focused in making the effort to establish rapport • Is warm and understanding when interacting with others
	Professionalism Conscientious and helpful in resolving issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaves aside personal considerations and feelings to be polite and helpful to others • Is always sensitive, respectful and tactful towards others, even when dealing with unreasonable requests or customers • Takes initiative to provide others with useful and relevant information to enhance or help clarify their understanding of the situation
Excellence	Quality Orientation Is driven to provide timely, efficient and high quality service and outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures competence in one's area of expertise and work • Strives for service excellence and does one's best to deliver high quality outcomes • Is timely and responsive in delivering services and outcomes
	Teamwork Collaborates, shares resources, and supports others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborates and fosters cooperation among individuals and agencies • Facilitates the achievement of common goals by sharing resources and information with relevant others • Provides guidance and supports others in their development
	Continuous Improvement Seeks progress and pushes new boundaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes measured risks, challenges norms, and tries new and innovative ideas to bring about improvements • Shows openness to change and seeks alternative viewpoints and feedback • Learns new skills to improve oneself

Background

The mission of the Ministry of Law (MinLaw) is to advance the access to justice, the rule of law, the economy and society through policy, law and services. To support this mission, the Ministry is made up of 450 officers in its Legal Group, Community Legal Services Group, Corporate Services Group and five Policy Divisions.

The corporate values of MinLaw are similar to those of the Public Service, i.e., Integrity, Service, and Excellence. However, due to the diverse work functions in the Ministry, different values are deemed more important in various departments. For example, officers in the Legal Aid Division identify more with the value of Service, emphasising compassion and passion in their role to help the underprivileged. This value may not resonate as strongly with policy divisions.

What MinLaw did

As part of their vision and mission review exercise in 2014, the Permanent Secretary (PS) saw a need to have a common set of values shared by all departments and to create a strong corporate identity in MinLaw. A key initiative was to determine how the values of Integrity, Service, and Excellence should be demonstrated in terms of work behaviours and actions across departments since the roles and responsibilities in each department were different.

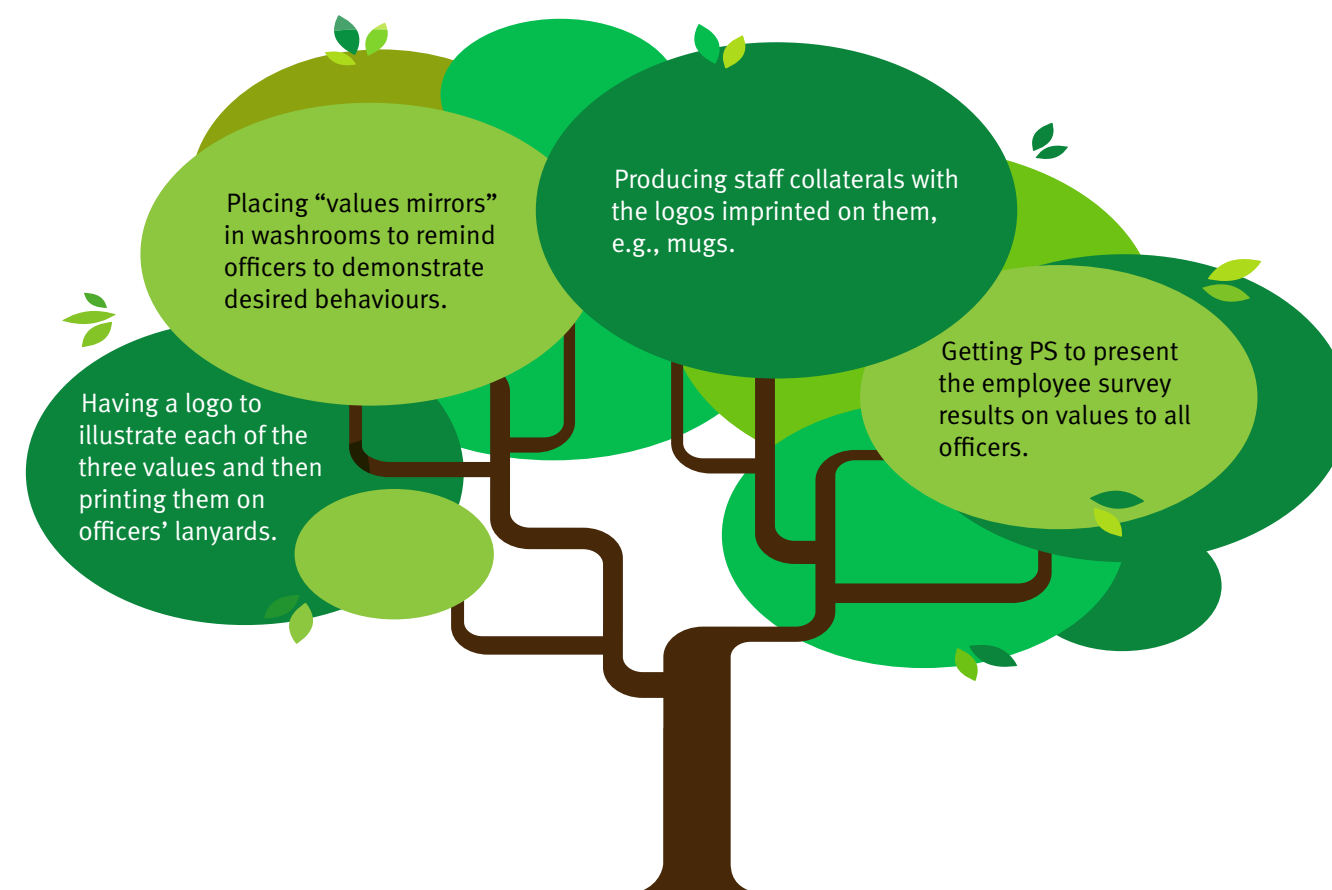
With the management’s approval, the Learning and Engagement (L&E) team carried out an engagement exercise, asking officers from different departments to reflect on how the values of Integrity, Service, and Excellence could be translated into behaviours and standards relevant to MinLaw’s context. As a result of this exercise, a common set of behavioural statements at all levels was developed (see Table 1).

Table 1: Behavioural Statements for MinLaw’s Corporate Values

Values	Behavioural Statements
Integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We act with honesty and impartiality. • We take responsibility for our decisions and actions. • We do the right thing, in the right way.
Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We treat everyone with respect and courtesy. • We seek to understand the needs of the people we serve. • We are ready to go the extra mile.
Excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We take pride in what we do and deliver quality and timely work. • We work together for the best results, and to bring out the best in one another. • We learn and innovate to do things better.

Source: <https://www.mlaw.gov.sg/content/minlaw/en/about-us/our-mission-and-core-values.html>

The L&E team also came up with ways to communicate these behavioural statements and encourage officers to live out MinLaw’s values. For example:



MinLAW’s “values mirrors” in toilets

How MinLaw did it

At a corporate event setting, the L&E team requested officers from different departments to:

- craft 3 behavioural statements that best reflected the department’s views of how the value(s) could be manifested in their daily work; and
- share stories on values exhibited by colleagues and write them down.

The team then compiled all the statements and stories that officers came up with. They analysed the inputs and categorised them into broad themes and categories. Key words were extracted to form behavioural statements. These statements were eventually surfaced to the management for further deliberation and approval. To ensure that the proposed values statements resonated with the staff, the values statements were revisited at their mid-year review sessions and senior management engagement platforms to ask staff for feedback, if any.

Further to translating values into behavioural statements, MinLaw also embedded their corporate values and behavioural statements into various organisational processes such as awards nomination criteria, recruitment processes, the 360 degree feedback questionnaire and MinLaw’s Competency Framework.



Participants at MinLAW’s values conversations

Results of their efforts

One of the fruits of their labour was seen in MinLaw’s 2014 Employee Engagement Survey (EES) results. The team felt rewarded as the questions on values were amongst the top ten improved items compared to the EES results in 2012. For example:

- The statement “Regarding MinLaw’s values [Integrity, Service, Excellence], I believe management behaviours are consistent with the values.” saw a 6% increase.
- The statement “Regarding MinLaw’s values [Integrity, Service, Excellence], I believe the values have been clearly communicated.” saw a 5% increase.
- The statement “MinLaw’s values [Integrity, Service and Excellence] are demonstrated through clear and visible actions by the employees.” saw a 4% increase.



Key Takeaways

- Use a mix of both bottom-up (staff engagement) and top-down (senior management and leaders) approaches to come up with behaviours and actions associated with values.
- Use stories to help tease out the behaviours.
- Reinforce values through regular communication.
- Measure the results to assess success of efforts.

CHAPTER 3
Embed Values into
Organisational Processes



“The real company values, as opposed to the nice-sounding values, are shown by who gets rewarded, promoted or let go.”

Netflix Reference Guide on Freedom Responsibility Culture

Embed Values into Organisational Processes

For values to really stick, they need to be embedded into organisational processes, particularly HR processes. In shaping how staff are recruited and welcomed, and how staff are assessed, HR processes guide the way staff approach their work. If these HR processes are informed by our values, then they can help reinforce and encourage expected behaviours amongst our staff. Many of our organisations already do so to varying degrees. Doing so consistently, and across all organisational processes, from the first interview to the last day of work, will send a signal to staff that enhances their likelihood of living out the values. We focus on approaches to embed values in 3 HR processes that impact staff at various points in their careers:

- A. Selection and Recruitment
- B. Induction & Training and Development
- C. Performance Management

HR Processes to Reinforce Values at Every Stage



How to Get Started?

Considering the values of potential new staff along with the skills and qualifications they bring, would ensure that we proactively recruit staff who already share our organisation’s values and are likely to live by them. Taking the time to ensure values-fit and job-fit (skills and qualifications) during the selection and recruitment process is also likely to positively impact staff retention.

A. Selection and Recruitment

1. Apart from skills, highlight organisational values in job advertisements and descriptions. Employees select employers too, and being explicit about what your organisation stands for at the outset is a great way to attract staff who are more likely to be a good fit.



Quick
Tips

- There are a number of ways to incorporate values into job descriptions:
- Describing the values of the workplace as a separate section in the job description.
 - Incorporating values into the key responsibilities section of the job description.
 - Detailing the values as a separate requirement within the key responsibilities.

Describing the values of the workplace as a separate section in the job description.

Job Description
Duties and Responsibilities: "To provide assistance to citizens who call in with enquiries to the customer service hotline." "Collaborate and co-ordinate with colleagues in other agencies and/or departments to provide timely responses to more complex public enquiries."
Workplace values: The post holder will be expected to operate in line with our workplace values which are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teamwork• Care• Respect

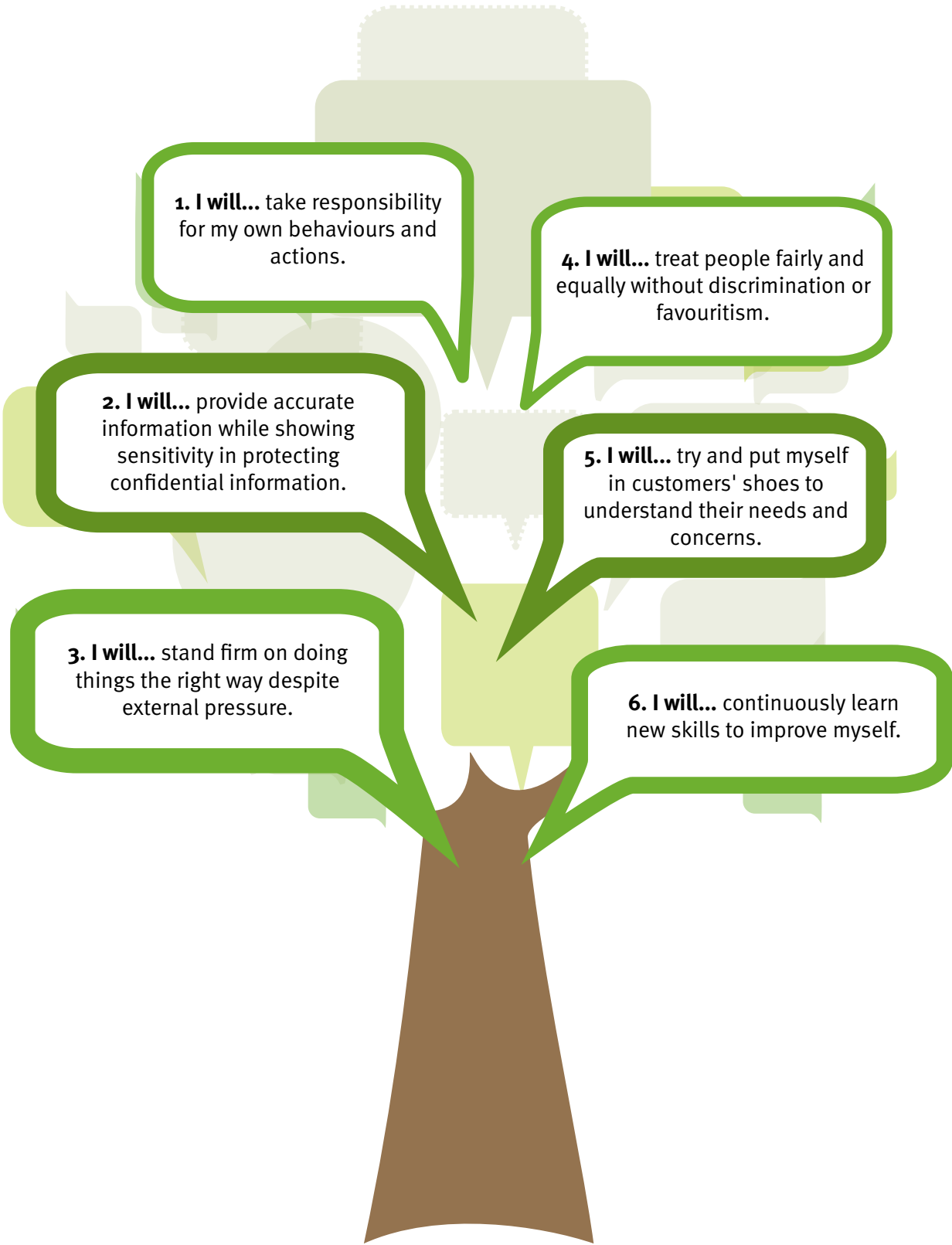
Incorporating values into the key responsibilities section of the job description. In this example, teamwork and respect have been embedded.

Job Description
Duties and Responsibilities: "To provide assistance to citizens who call in with enquiries to the customer service hotline while ensuring respect is maintained at all times." "Demonstrate teamwork in collaborating and co-ordinating with colleagues in other agencies and/or departments to provide timely responses to more complex public enquiries."

Detailing as a separate requirement within the key responsibilities

Job Description
Duties and Responsibilities: "To provide assistance to citizens who call in with enquiries to the customer service hotline." "Collaborate and co-ordinate with colleagues in other agencies and/or departments to provide timely responses to more complex public enquiries." "To promote and demonstrate the workplace values of Teamwork, Care and Respect."

2. Get staff to commit and “sign up” to the values when they accept job offers, so that they understand that by accepting the job offer, they agree to abide by your organisational values. To be truly meaningful, this should not be a mere checklist.



UK Department of Health initiative for the social care sector

3. Use scenario-based interview questions, along with traditional competency-based questions, to suss out candidates’ values and ensure a good fit. Refer to the next section for reference examples that you could draw upon to craft your interview questions.



Quick
Tips

- There are 2 types of scenario-based interview questions that can be used:
 - **Situational questions:** Use such questions to find out what a candidate might do in difficult or ambiguous situations, especially if he/she has no work experience. Candidates are asked to imagine a set of circumstances, and asked to indicate how they would respond in that situation. These tend to be more future-oriented. E.g. “What would you do if ...”
 - **Behavioural questions:** Use these questions to find out past behaviours. Candidates are asked to discuss examples from previous instances. These tend to be more past-oriented. E.g. “Tell me about a time when ...”
- Use the specific positive and negative behavioural indicators associated with the values to frame questions and evaluate responses.
E.g., "Tell us about a time when you felt compelled to express an unpopular viewpoint because it was the right thing to do." (This evaluates Integrity — shows courage to stand up for what is right).
- Probe with further questions to find out why a candidate makes particular choices, and what he/she considers to be important.
- Guide interviewers on what to listen for. Remember it is not about looking for right answers, but about understanding how candidates go about handling trade-offs, tensions and ambiguous situations.

B. Induction & Training and Development

Whilst it is essential to recruit staff who have the right values, is also necessary to continually reinforce values at various stages throughout staff’s careers. This ranges from day one at induction, where staff come to understand what it means to be part of your organisation, to milestone training and development programmes, as staff progress further within the organisation and take on leadership roles.

1. If you are serious about using induction & training and development programmes to engage staff on values at various stages of their careers, review your existing avenues to do so, before working out a coherent plan. You might need different approaches for different groups of officers.



Quick
Tips

- We all have existing established induction processes. Here are a few other approaches that can be used to bring out values:
- Videos of right and wrong ways to deal with situations in daily work.
 - Interactive games, role-playing around ambiguous scenarios.
 - Structured intranet-based induction packages which new staff have to work through within their first few weeks, incorporating information on values and/or scenarios that staff may encounter at work.
- Here are some Civil Service College Programmes that might be of interest. They either include values components or are centred on values:
- Public Service Induction Programme [for new public officers]
 - Leading by Example: A Values & Ethics Workshop [for middle managers]
 - Masterclass in Driving Financial Integrity and Ethics [for directors and deputy directors]
 - HR Leadership Programme [for DOPs]

What have others done?

The UK National Health Service has come up with the following interview template as reference for its agencies:

Criteria/ Value	Integrity (mapped to the NHS Constitution value ‘Commitment to quality of care’).
Criteria/ Value definition	Is open, honest and transparent in all actions. Takes responsibility for challenging inappropriate behaviour and is receptive to feedback from others.
Lead question	Tell me about a time when you had to address a difficult situation with a colleague...
Probing questions to elicit further evidence	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Why was it important to address the situation?• What was the outcome?• How did you feel about addressing the situation and the outcome?• How did you perceive your colleague’s reaction?	
Behavioural indicators: What would you expect to see in someone demonstrating this criteria/ value?	
Positive indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is proactive in identifying and addressing issues• Is sensitive and tactful when raising difficult issues• Is aware of the risks associated with inaction	Negative indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Defers responsibility to others• Jumps to conclusions• Seeks to blame others

Source: United Kingdom National Health Education England, "Values-based Recruitment — How to Design and Deliver Structured Interviews", 2014.

What have others done?

MOE has incorporated briefings and sharings on its Code of Conduct and Ethos in all of its induction programmes for new teachers, such as its Teacher Preparatory Programme (TPP), Pre-Service Programme and the Beginning Teachers’ Orientation Programme (BTOP).

C. Performance Management

Performance management practices and processes can reinforce values when used to assess staff not only for results, but also for behaviours and actions. We are much more likely to see staff living out the values when they know that positive behaviours are rewarded and bad behaviours are penalised.

1. Embedding values in performance management processes is not new to us in the Public Service. The AIM performance management tool, currently used by Ministries and some Statutory Boards, includes assessment for personal integrity, commitment to the values of Public Service and sense of national interest.

Recruiting for values fit

Recruiting for values fit can be just as important as recruiting for job fit. It is more likely to ensure that staff already share your organisation’s values from day one. We recognise that it is not always easy to also assess for values at the recruitment stage.

Here are some interview questions that PSD has developed around our Public Service Values. They have been developed using the behaviours that have been identified at Chapter 2. Use them as examples as you craft recruitment interview questions around your own organisational values.

For Integrity		
Questions		Behavioural Indicators
1.	<p>Tell us about a time when you felt compelled to express an unpopular viewpoint because it was the right thing to do.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why did you do it? How did you do it? How did you feel about it? What was the outcome? 	<p>If officer was upfront and honest about the tension or simply giving politically correct answers.</p> <p>Listen out for answers that show that the officer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Had self-awareness Demonstrated an understanding of the significance of work and ethical standards and willingness to make difficult decisions that prioritise integrity
2.	<p>Have you ever seen someone at work stretch or bend the rules and it made you uncomfortable?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did you do and why? What was the consequence of taking action/ not taking action? What was the outcome? 	

For Service		
Questions		Behavioural Indicators
1.	<p>Have you had any encounters with difficult customers or stakeholders? What did you do in such a situation?</p>	<p>Listen out for answers that show that the officer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Took time to listen to others Was observant of others’ needs Went the extra mile
2.	<p>Can you tell me about a time when you did something outside of the routine activities assigned to you for the benefit of the customer? What was their reaction?</p>	



Quick Tips

Review your current performance management processes to see if they meet your organisation’s needs, and reinforce the values component in them as required.

Complement existing performance management processes without integrating them into the formal appraisal process. For example:

- 360 degree feedback assessments that include values can also be used to provide a more holistic picture when staff are being assessed for promotion.
- Confirmation and emplacement processes might also include an assessment for values.

- Other organisations that have successfully embedded values assessment as part of the performance process have done so either by (i) embedding the vales in the competency framework, which then forms the basis of the performance management process, or (ii) defining the values into clear behavioural statements and using those to underpin performance management.

What have others done?

At Dell, employees are held accountable for acting according to the values codified in the “Soul of Dell”. Under this system, half of the employees’ performance for the year is based on the financial targets they achieved, while the other half is based on how they do in 360 degree feedback assessments.

- Find ways to reward, recognise and celebrate staff who role model the values outside of the formal performance management process. Awards are a great way to do so.



Quick Tips

- As much as we reward role models of our values, it is also important to find ways to challenge bad behaviour. Otherwise, we risk bad behaviour becoming the norm. This is best done informally, and it is important to equip managers to conduct such difficult conversations, with sensitivity.

What have others done?

SPRING Singapore gives out annual awards to individuals and teams who display and exemplify their core values. Nominations are usually done by fellow colleagues and bosses, with cash awards attached to each of the awards.

For Excellence		
Questions		Behavioural Indicators
1.	Describe a situation in which you had to arrive at a compromise as part of a team in order to accomplish a project on time. How did you overcome challenges? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was there a time when you missed the deadlines / failed to deliver an assignment on time? What was the situation? What was the outcome? What would you do differently if you encountered the same situation again? 	Listen out for answers that show that the officer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was passionate about his work Was proactive in seeking out available resources Was prepared to take considered risk Took ownership of tasks assigned Challenged norms and pushed boundaries
2.	Was there a time when you failed to deliver an assignment on time? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What was the situation? What was the outcome? What would you do differently if you encountered the same situation again? 	

Discussing values at induction

Once recruited, ensure staff are clear about your organisational values and what is expected of them. Reinforcing and communicating your organisational values to new staff as part of their induction will help to achieve this.

Here is an excerpt of the facilitation guide used at the Civil Service College for the Public Service Induction Programme (PSIP). It is used to get new public officers to reflect on their personal, workplace, and Public Service values of Integrity, Service and Excellence. Adapt accordingly to fit the needs of your organisation.

	Facilitation Guide	Facilitator Notes	Duration (Total = 60 mins)
1.	<p>Introduction to Values</p> <p>Who we are – i.e., our values and belief system – is influenced by so many factors, and in varying degrees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Religion Culture Parents Education Friends Age <p>If I were to ask you to only consider your “work values” – i.e., what is important to you when it comes to the work you do as a public officer – what would they be? On your own, consider the 3 most important personal work values you have.</p> <p>Does anyone know what the Public Service values are? [Integrity, Service, and Excellence]</p> <p>While we can all understand the words, for each of us, the values may mean slightly (or maybe radically) different things. We’re going to do a little exercise to see how differently we consider what each value means to us.</p>	Give 2 minutes for each person to write down their 3 values.	10–15 mins
2.	<p>A Picture Speaks a 1000 words – Our Public Service Values</p> <p>Choose 3 pictures that best describe what Integrity, Service, and Excellence each means to you at your workplace. So, that is — 1 photo for Integrity, 1 for Service and 1 for Excellence.</p> <p>For those of you who cannot find a picture from the set provided to you, you may think of your own image.</p> <p>Share with the person next to you why you chose the particular picture to describe each value.</p>	<p>To prepare for this next segment, prepare a few pictures that could be associated with each of your organisational values, and make them available to participants. They could be in the form of physical cards or even placed online for easy access through smartphones and laptops.</p> <p>If possible, get a few participants to share their choice of pictures.</p>	15 mins

3.	<p>Values-in-Practice</p> <p>Individually, think back to a time where you had practised or demonstrated any one of the 3 values – Integrity, Service, or Excellence – in the workplace (or at school, for those of you who have not been in your jobs very long).</p> <p>Share your story with a partner.</p> <p>For some of you who are extremely new to the service, i.e., less than a month and this is your first job, and you have absolutely no such story to share, or are perhaps too humble to share, you can share an instance where you saw someone else practising or demonstrating the values.</p>		15 mins												
4.	<p>Aligning Personal and Organisational Values</p> <p>While we should not expect ourselves to be the same — i.e., our personal values are identical to our organisation’s values — we should consider how aligned or not our personal values are to the Public Service values.</p> <p>Now I will like you to map your 3 personal work values to the Public Service values. Where there is a strong relationship between them, use a solid line to show connection; where there is a loose relationship, use a dotted line. You could draw multiple lines as you see fit.</p> <p>An example is shown here.</p> <p>Share with a partner your mapping.</p>	<p>Prepare a worksheet for participants to do a mapping as shown below.</p> <p>Mapping of Personal Values to PS Values</p> <table><tr><th>My Personal Work Values</th><th></th><th>Public Service Values</th></tr><tr><td>Respect</td><td>—</td><td>Integrity</td></tr><tr><td>Professionalism</td><td>—</td><td>Service</td></tr><tr><td>Empathy</td><td>—</td><td>Excellence</td></tr></table> <p>Facilitator to give 2 mins for each person to complete mapping.</p>	My Personal Work Values		Public Service Values	Respect	—	Integrity	Professionalism	—	Service	Empathy	—	Excellence	10 mins
My Personal Work Values		Public Service Values													
Respect	—	Integrity													
Professionalism	—	Service													
Empathy	—	Excellence													
5.	<p>Conclusion</p> <p>Facilitator to conclude with the following:</p> <p>All of us join our agencies with our own personal values. Some of us may find a high degree of connection between our values and those of the Public Service. Even though there may be some differences, I am sure all of us can discern sufficient commonalities that give meaning to what we do.</p> <p>After all, it is our Public Service values that bind us together with a common sense of purpose and mission, and give us the heart to serve — to make it better for our people, friends and family.</p>		5 mins												

Including values in confirmation and emplacement

It can be useful to incorporate a simple values assessment as part of the performance management process for new officers during their confirmation and emplacement. Assessing for values can be difficult, but a good start can be made using clear, observable behaviours as criteria for evaluation. Additionally, such evaluations can be a used to initiate conversations with staff around their behaviours and values too.

PSD has included the following values component into the confirmation and emplacement form that supervisors are required to fill out. They are built around our Public Service values and PSD’s core values (People Our Pride, Service Our Pledge, Integrity Our Core). Consider if a similar approach might also work for your organisation.

Excerpt of PSD’s Confirmation and Emplacement Form:

Any Conduct or Discipline Issues	Yes/No	If Yes, pls elaborate:	
Values Demonstrates belief and acts in accordance to Values, Principles and Objectives of Public Service	Please rate the extent to which the following Public Service values are observed in the officer’s course of work. See below for the behaviours associated with each of the values.		
	Integrity:	Regularly observed/ Observed/Not observed	If observed, please elaborate:
	Service:	Regularly observed/ Observed/Not observed	If observed, please elaborate:
	Excellence:	Regularly observed/ Observed/Not observed	If observed, please elaborate:
	People:	Regularly observed/ Observed/Not observed	If observed, please elaborate:
Recommendation for Emplacement You may wish to highlight: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Capabilities of the officer that make him/her particularly suitable to assume the roleAny other qualities demonstrated by the officer	[Name of officer] is recommended for emplacement because:		

Framework for PSD values:

Integrity	Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Take responsibility for own words and actions; Willing to admit to mistakes- Do not over-promise outcomes that are not within own capabilities and resources
	Moral Courage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Upholds reputation of the organisation- Speak up and make a stand when things are wrong
	Incorruptible	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Do not compromise on doing things the right way despite pressure
	Fairness and Impartiality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Challenge norms and question assumptions
	Observant of Regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Maintain uprightness despite opportunity for personal gain
	Transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Give credit to others where it is due- No setting of double standards- Observe and adhere to organisation’s protocol and regulations- Forthcoming about actual situation and provide accurate and honest information- Show sensitivity to not sharing confidential information
Service	Civic Mindedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Work with elected government to serve needs of public and nation- Willing to go the extra mile to contribute to betterment of others and the nation
	Empathy and Compassion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Demonstrate human touch in service instead of being cold and clinical- Show empathy and genuine care and concern towards others
	Customer Orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Respectful and professional in interactions with others- Flexible to do what is necessary to provide good service, bearing in mind what is right and reasonable- Focus on engaging with and understanding customers to ensure their requirements are met

Excellence	Intrinsic Motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Take ownership for assignment completion and service delivery- Demonstrate pride in work; talk about work with passion
	Quality Orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Deliver high-quality work and outcomes- Go beyond call of duty to meet customers’ needs and achieve service excellence
	Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Ensure timeliness of service delivery or work outputs- Responsive to issues and quick to rectify them
	Continuous Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Seek continuous improvement- Take risks to try new and innovative ideas- Challenge norms and push boundaries
People	Building Capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Lead by example- Encourage and motivate others to achieve goals- Provide guidance and support
	Teamwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Cooperate and share resources with others

Background

The Public Service Division (PSD) is the central people agency in the Public Service. Besides overseeing human resource (HR) policies and developing leaders in the Public Service, it serves as the guardian of Public Service values and ethos.

In January 2013, PSD embarked on efforts to reaffirm the commitment of public officers to the core values of Integrity, Service, and Excellence, as part of wider public sector transformation efforts. A key priority was to encourage a more systematic approach to strengthen values so that public officers across agencies are reminded to live out values in their daily work.

“Values, like skills, can be forgotten if not reinforced regularly... They cannot be mere statements, slogans or words on a wall, to be remembered once or twice a year at events. We need to actively strengthen our values-based culture within the Public Service – one where officers are aware of our values, believe in our values and live them out in our daily work and interactions.”

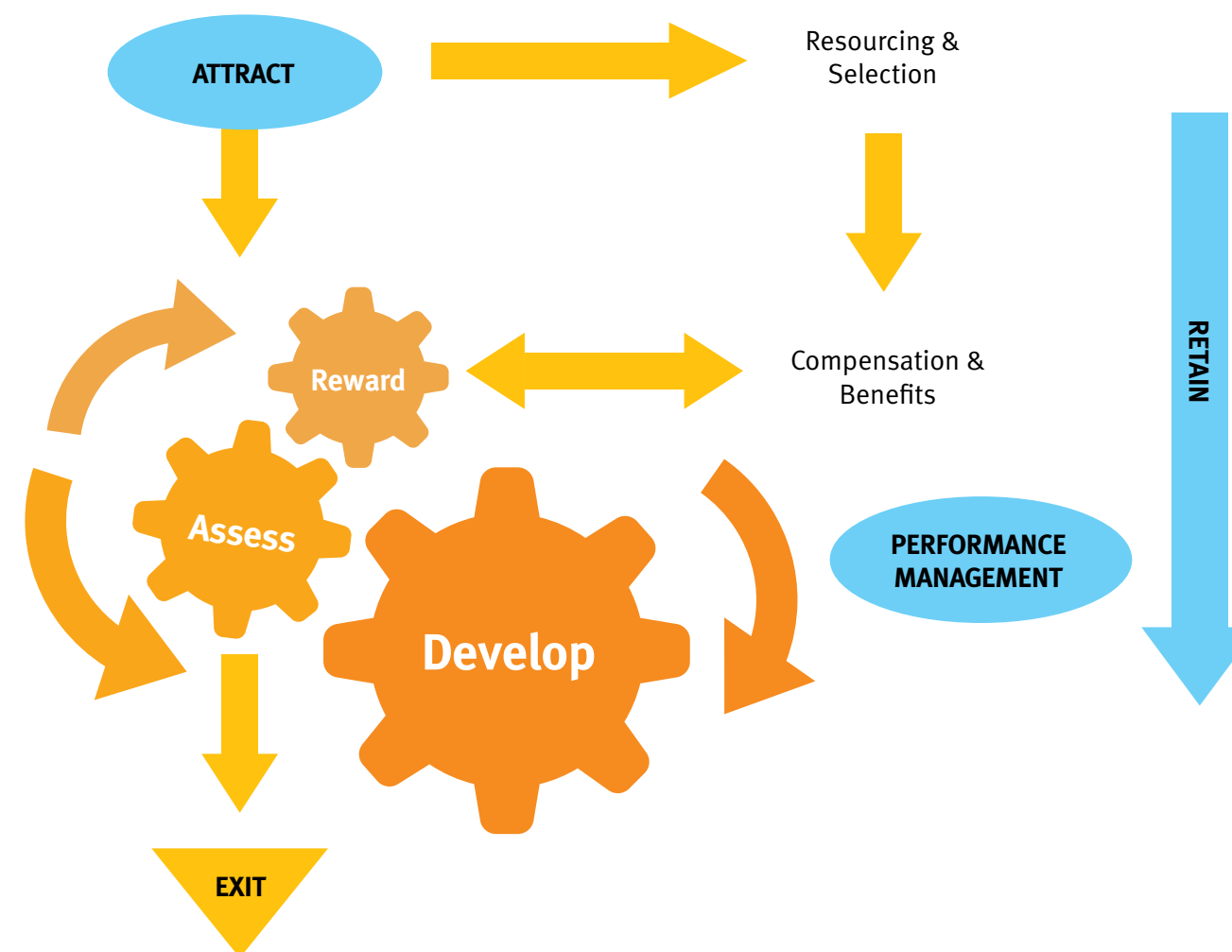
James Wong, Deputy Secretary (Policy), Values Seminar, Civil Service College, 10 Jan 2014

What PSD did

A values project team was set up in PSD to look at ways to strengthen values in the Public Service. As part of the project team, the Human Capital Cluster (HC) which oversees HR and manpower needs for PSD, decided to pilot values-based HR processes within PSD, based on research insights gained during the project. In doing so, the project team hoped to be able to share implementation experiences gathered during the pilot with the HR community in other government agencies.

Among all the HR activities (see Figure 1), resourcing and selection processes were implemented first as PSD saw the importance of hiring people whose values are aligned to the organisation. Resourcing and selection processes which included activities on recruitment, confirmation and emplacement, could also be implemented immediately compared to other processes like performance management, compensation and benefits, which would require more deliberation from the HR Policy Cluster in PSD as well as change management amongst PSD staff.

Figure 1: HR Processes in an Organisation



Source: HR Flow of Talent, Human Resource Foundation Programme, Civil Service College

Recruitment

Previously, candidates’ alignment to Public Service and PSD’s values were not overtly assessed during the recruitment process. Since July 2014, interview panels for all positions in PSD were required to assess how candidates’ values were aligned to those of the Public Service and PSD on Integrity, Service, Excellence and people, together with other selection criteria such as job-fit and AIM qualities. In designing the new process, HC incorporated a new section into the interview process to assess candidates for their “Alignment to PSD’s and Public Service Values”.

In support of this process, HC developed an interviewer’s guide for “competency-based and values-based interview questions”. The values-based interview questions are deliberately made open-ended so that interviewers could also supplement them with their own questions to assess values alignment. Each of the values was also explained in greater detail in the guide. As far as possible, HC tried to include some behavioural indicators within the description. Figure 2 shows the example of how the value of “Excellence” was further defined.

Figure 2: Description on Excellence as a Public Service Value

Public Service Value: Excellence

- Taking ownership for assignment and service delivery.
- Demonstrates pride in work.
- Talks about work with passion.
- Demonstrates personal drive and determination to deliver results.
- Related qualities: Quality orientation, teamwork, continuous improvement, building capabilities.

To document the interview panel’s assessment of the candidates’ alignment to PSD’s and Public Service values, qualitative comments are now incorporated into the Interview Assessment Form and included in the approval submission for appointment.

One of the difficulties encountered was how the interview panel should arrive at an assessment of the candidates’ values based on their responses. At first, the team tried to incorporate scores from 1 to 5 (1 being less exhibited and 5 being most exhibited) to enable interviewers to make an assessment of the degree to which the values were manifested during the interview in a consistent manner. After some consideration, HC decided that it would be difficult for the panel to provide a specific score since the responses from candidates vary in content. Without guiding behavioural indicators, it is difficult to arrive at a final score on the candidates’ alignment to Public Service/PSD’s values. Eventually, taking into account feedback from interview panels during the pilot phase, HC decided that it would be more meaningful for the interview panel to provide qualitative comments in the interview assessment form instead.

Another difficulty was the number of questions on job-related and AIM qualities which interviewers were already required to ask candidates within the interview. Often, the values-based interview questions may be left out. In such cases, the HR representative present at the interview will moderate the interview session and ask the relevant values questions, thereby ensuring that the candidate’s values alignment to the Public Service and PSD could ultimately be discussed among the panel members before any candidate was recommended for appointment.

Confirmation and emplacement

After candidates were appointed into service, they would be assessed for confirmation or emplacement onto the permanent establishment, before reaching the end of their contracted period of service in PSD. Besides having a career conversation with their reporting and countersigning officers, officers were also required to attend a confirmation and emplacement interview with one of the Deputy Secretaries (DS) and Director (HC).

The confirmation and emplacement interview guide, designed by HC, outlined how the interviews could be structured. Besides having a discussion on the officer’s work experience and career aspirations, the interview also opened up a platform for a conversation on values. The interview guide included sample questions that could be posed to officers to sensitise them to how values might be manifested in the course of their work. Alternatively, DS or D(HC) could also share their personal experiences and stories on values with the officer. Table 1 shows a sample description of Integrity and a related emplacement interview question.



Confirmation and emplacement Interview

Table 1: Sample Definition of Accountability and Emplacement Interview Question

Integrity	Definition
Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Take responsibility for own words and actions; willing to admit to mistakes• Do not over-promise outcomes that are not within own capabilities and resources• Uphold reputation of organisation
Sample Question:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tell us about a time where you made a mistake at work.<ul style="list-style-type: none">- What was the situation?- How did you handle it and what was the outcome?- What did you learn from the situation?	

The interview questions for recruitment and emplacement were different as questions on recruitment tended to be more general and focused on past work experiences while questions on emplacement were targeted at candidates' experiences within PSD.



Conclusion

During the initial phase of implementation, HR Business Partners briefed the interview panel on the rationale of new values-based processes and the changes in the recruitment process. The HR representative who is part of the interview panel also reinforced the importance of values to the interview panel when interviews were carried out. A post-pilot review was also held to engage interview panels for their feedback on the ease of implementation so that the framework could be tweaked.

Apart from ensuring that we bring in candidates with the right skills and values, the implementation of values-based HR has also encouraged line managers to be more mindful of demonstrating these core values in the course of their work, as good role models to their new staff.



Key Takeaways

- Define values in behavioural terms first so that they can be easily integrated into HR processes.
- Encourage buy-in from line managers through HR business partners.
- Develop supporting materials, such as guides and templates to help line managers and interviewers in the implementation of values-based processes.

CHAPTER 4 Sustain Values Implementation

“The secret to winning is constant, consistent management.”

Tom Landry, football coach

Sustain Values Implementation

Now that we have started on our values journey, how do we know if they are being lived out by staff? How can we tell if our initiatives are working? If your organisation is serious about sustaining efforts, it is important to continually monitor and sense-make if values are understood and upheld by staff. Doing so will not only provide a status check on the continued relevance of values to staff, but will also enable us to stay in touch with the impact of our work and identify areas for improvement. Otherwise, we risk doing work that is not meaningful. Many organisations use staff surveys to continuously monitor results, listen to feedback and act to address gaps and reinforce values. Remember that your organisation’s values journey is an on-going one, with no end date.

How to Get Started?

1. Monitoring for values need not be difficult, or involve additional new processes and surveys. Rather, draw on availability of existing information, and pull them together to get a sense on the state of values within your organisation.



Quick
Tips

Existing information could include:

- Staff surveys like the Employee Engagement Survey, or the PSD-led Values & Attitudes Survey.
- HR metrics like staff attrition rates, incidents of misconduct and exit interviews.

A full picture of the state of values could also be formed from:

- Quantitative and qualitative data, like customer complaints and compliments.
- Positive and negative indicators, like staff engagement levels and disciplinary incidents.

2. Consider reviewing existing staff surveys, and including additional questions specific to values for more in-depth feedback.

What have others done?

Novo Nordisk, an international pharmaceutical company headquartered in Denmark designated values facilitators to conduct “values audits” of various business units, with the head of the values facilitation team reporting semi-annually to the CEO on the state of values across the company so that appropriate corrective actions may be undertaken where necessary.



Quick
Tips

If you ask questions specific to values, build them around the specific behaviours associated with the values. Some examples:

- **For Integrity:** In general, people in my organisation will do what is right even if it means having a negative impact on them.
- **For Service:** In general, people in my organisation put in extra effort in their work to serve the public and contribute to Singapore.

3. If resources permit, assigning clear responsibility for monitoring values can also help. Some organisations do this by designating teams or individuals to monitor and “audit” values through staff discussions and identify gaps.

What have others done?

MOE uses feedback from its induction and milestone programmes as well as school-based divisional conversations on values with educators to surface queries and concerns that could be subsequently addressed.

4. There is no point gathering feedback, monitoring and tracking for values, if it is not acted upon. Work with your senior management team to use the information to identify gaps, get support for priority areas of improvement, and draw up an action plan for possible interventions.



Quick
Tips

If possible, share findings openly with staff. Doing so, by explaining or defending them, will allow you to find out more, and even inspire staff to come up with their own suggestions and solutions.

Tools and Resources

Crafting survey questions for values

Here are a few tips to follow when including survey questions specific to values.

Open-ended versus closed questions

Open-ended

An open-ended question allows respondents to freely write/type any response.

Closed

A closed question only allows respondents to select one answer, out of a limited number of response categories.

1. Ask closed questions:

Open-ended questions require time to interpret and code. Another team member may be required to provide a second interpretation of the responses, in order to corroborate the first interpretation. Thus, this makes it difficult to scale open-ended questions to a large number of respondents.

E.g., Please indicate your agreement on the following statement:

In general, people in my organisation take responsibility for their actions:

- a) Completely Disagree
- b) Generally Disagree
- c) Neither Disagree nor Agree
- d) Generally Agree
- e) Completely Agree

2. Some simple rules to follow:

DOs

- Ask respondents to rate a third party (e.g., people in my organisation are honest) or reduce the need to look good (e.g., having any anonymous survey).
- Ask at least 3 times for each particular value to ensure the survey captures the different aspects of that value.
- Pre-test the items to ensure that they are easy to understand, and to provide an opinion. This could be done internally, or via a pilot test.
- Use simple terms, keeping the language understandable. Ask yourself if the “target audience” will be able to understand the level of English used.
- Get the respondents to rate the importance of each value separately.

DON'Ts

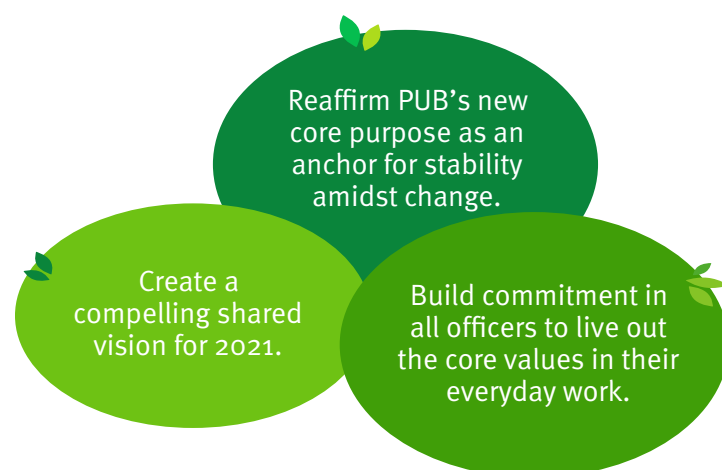
- Ask respondents to rate themselves. Respondents may respond in a way that makes them look good.
- Ask items on respondents' endorsement of values (e.g., I should be a honest person).
- Use the word “and” in questions. Double-barelled items introduce ambiguity.
- Use “Don't Know” as a possible response category. This allows respondents an easy way out of answering their question.

Background¹

PUB is the national water agency in Singapore responsible for the collection, production, distribution and reclamation of water in Singapore. In 2011, the agency embarked on a transformation journey in response to challenges in an increasingly complex operating environment which included urbanisation, population growth, rising cost of energy and public expectations.

In December 2011, the transformation journey began with a series of senior management conversations. The senior management team had discussions on clarifying the current reality, impetus for change, core purpose, strategic goals and core values. PUB believed that core values represented who they were and what they stood for. Core values were crucial in guiding behaviours and decisions in officers' daily interactions with colleagues and external stakeholders to improve collaborations and outcomes.

The conversations were then extended to the next level of 100 leaders. At the end of the consultations, PUB revisited its purpose and came up with a vision for 2021 and a set of core values for the next 10 years. (see Appendix 1). Project 117 (which stood for 1 core purpose, 1 vision and 7 values) was then launched to engage officers at all levels to:



Close to 800 officers shared their hopes for a values-based workplace and personal stories of how colleagues have lived out values. The photos, visual recordings and discussion points were uploaded onto the PUB intranet for sharing.

The conversations in Project 117 were also designed to inspire change in mindsets and behaviours to prepare for structural and process transformations that would take place in PUB progressively. An example was the PUB-wide job redesign. With the challenge of replacing older officers when they retire and rising career aspirations among the young people, there was a need to review existing jobs. Work processes needed to embrace advancements in technology and jobholders had to be equipped with better tools and new skills. These changes were necessary to ensure a sustainable structure and system for PUB to achieve its vision.

Project 117 was a good starting point to ignite officers' commitment to the core values as PUB worked towards its vision for 2021. The Organisation Development (OD) team pondered over how they should sustain the values efforts, following the success of Project 117.

What PUB did

A key decision was to hold a Values Week every 6 months so that officers could reaffirm their commitment to PUB's values on a regular basis. The key objective of the semi-yearly Values Week was to appreciate officers who put core values into action and to encourage officers to tell positive stories that would inspire others during the PUB transformation journey. PUB believed that officers were already exhibiting the 7 values in their everyday work. The Values Week was an opportunity to affirm this and encourage more officers to put values in practice.

“We wanted to design ways for staff to see, feel and live the values as more than just statements we hang on our walls; they are real actions and behaviours that impact all of us and the culture and workplace we create together in PUB.”

Chloe Lim, Senior Assistant Director, PUB

During the Values Week, officers were empowered to send thank you messages to fellow colleagues who manifested PUB's core values via the intranet. With each thank you message, they could also share a story of how the values were exhibited. A token of appreciation would then be sent to the recipients of these messages.

From the stories received, some were selected and published on the “What's Your Story?” blog on the intranet. The intent was to continue engaging officers on PUB's values after Values Week ended. Based on the stories, an overall values champion was also selected at the end of the Values Week by the Corporate Development Department.

The Values Week was well-received by officers. During the inaugural Values Week, 1531 thank you messages were sent from 21 to 31 July 2014. Of these, 666 were unique recipients of thank you messages and 260 were unique senders. During the second Values Week in February 2015, thank you messages increased by 96%, and the number of unique recipients and senders increased by 61% and 103% respectively.

¹ Information for this case study was taken from:

- www.pub.gov.sg.
- PUB's Nomination Form for Best Practice Award 2015: Values Week: Appreciating Each Other for Living Our Values by Ms Chloe Lim, Senior Assistant Director, March 2015.
- PUB's Nomination Form for Best Practice Award 2014: Project 117: 1 Core Purpose, 1 Vision, 7 Values by Ms Chloe Lim, Senior Assistant Director, January 2014.

The survey conducted after the inaugural Values Week also showed that:



The *qualitative* information shared in the form of thank you messages and positive stories allowed the OD team to understand how and to what extent the 7 core values were manifested across the organisation in behavioural terms. The *quantitative* responses from the Values Week survey provided a glimpse of the usefulness of the Values Week as an ongoing values tool and officers' level of commitment to the values. Both indicators were important to understand the state of values across PUB at a given time and over time.



Quick
Tips

Officers' Comments on the Values Week

"Most people in PUB are reserved by nature. Although we are appreciative of our colleagues, we may not always show it. This is a good initiative and hopefully it will continue to grow a culture of gratefulness and graciousness in PUB."

"It feels good that someone notices and appreciates your effort by reciprocating in a positive way. After so many years of working experience, this is the first time, I feel really valued and appreciated."

"The Values Week is really a good platform to show our appreciation for the people. It is really very well-liked by the staff as proven by the number of thank you messages sent out within such a short period."

The results provided a quick litmus test for the OD team to analyse the work climate within every department. For example, departments with very low participation rates could be identified. The OD team could then discuss how practices and behaviours of leaders and members in those departments could be influenced to align with the larger corporate culture. These indicators were also combined with existing measures such as the employee engagement surveys to form a more complete picture of the values-based culture in PUB.

To ensure that work processes and systems support the desired culture, Values Discover and Action (DNA) sessions were conducted to complement Values Week. During these sessions, teams of about 20 people gathered to discuss a particular value. Depending on the value chosen, participants would identify gaps in their work processes and systems, and brainstormed ways to close the gaps. The session would end with follow-up actions to ensure that the ideas were implemented.

How PUB did it

With a staff strength of approximately 3400, the Values Week had to be carefully planned to maximise the participation of officers at the PUB headquarters as well as its external installation sites across the island (e.g., PUB Waterworks). Just 2 weeks before the event, the OD team provided information on the Values Week through various platforms (e.g., teaser banners, onsite banners, values postcards).

The design of the Values Week was built upon PUB's emphasis on people and positive affirmation. It was decided that officers be empowered to nominate and thank those whom they felt were living out PUB's values on a day-to-day basis. Tokens of appreciations were given to recipients of thank you messages instead of the nominators, which increased ownership and were in line with PUB's core value to "respect and care for people". Using this method, the team saw that the participation rate for the Values Week was significantly higher compared to participation rates in campaigns where participants won something for themselves. The tokens of appreciation for the recipients also included the core values, which further reminded and raised awareness of the core values.

During the Values Week, officers were also encouraged to submit positive stories of how their colleagues exemplified core values. This helped the OD team to harvest many stories which they could feature on its communication platforms regularly to sustain values efforts. The nominator of the values champion would also receive \$500 worth of celebratory funds. The planning of the celebration created much excitement and enhanced teamwork amongst officers.

Throughout the week, a thank you counter was set up in the intranet to show the number of online messages submitted by everyone. Web-based solutions helped to create excitement amongst officers on the Values Week and increased the chances for more robust and spontaneous participation from officers.

By encouraging positive stories on values, the OD team wanted officers to be reminded that everyone could play a part in constructing the desired organisational culture through everyday interactions with one another. This helped to sustain the positive energy needed for PUB officers to work hard towards bridging current realities and PUB's vision.



Key Takeaways

- Encourage positive stories from officers regularly to sustain a values-based culture.
- Include both qualitative and quantitative measures to understand the state of values.
- Reinforce values by improving organisational systems and processes.

Core Purpose

To ensure clean, safe and sustainable water supply for the people and well-being of Singapore.

PUB Vision 2021

There is a growing sense of national pride over PUB as an institution looking after and meeting Singapore's water needs.

Against a backdrop of imminent expiry of Singapore's water agreement with Malaysia, more extreme weather patterns arising from climate change and a growing population and economy, we have instilled greater confidence in water security.

We continue to ensure a clean, safe and sustainable supply of water for all, using almost all of our land as catchment, pushing for greater water reuse and conservation, and desalinating seawater. Our water and used water treatment plants are highly automated and efficient, use advanced technologies, and consume low amounts of energy. These have helped keep a lid on rising costs and keep water affordable.

As urbanisation continues, water bodies in Singapore have become a vital feature of a highly liveable environment. Singaporeans are enjoying recreational spaces next to beautiful and clean streams, rivers and lakes, all well integrated with surrounding parks and urban landscape. They have also become more confident of our flood mitigation infrastructure and efforts. Major floods are infrequent if not rare, even as weather extremities continue with more intense rainfall on occasions.

Public trust in PUB and community stewardship is high. The community and stakeholders participate actively when we engage them in policy design and service delivery. Many individuals and organisations of various backgrounds are helping to champion and organise activities that advocate for prudent use of water and keeping waterways clean. Our service delivery is synonymous with professionalism and empathy, and our officers receive regular compliments in the traditional and social media.

Students, graduates and water professionals have consistently rated PUB as one of Singapore's Top Employers of Choice. Our officers appreciate the ample opportunities available to strengthen their own knowledge base and skill sets to realise their full potential in PUB. They also appreciate the equitable reward and recognition for their contributions, and wear their corporate apparel with pride. Staff-management relationship is strong, and we all work closely to continue to deliver PUB's mission and serve Singapore with integrity and pride.

7 Core Values

1. Do Our Best

- When we do our work, we believe in doing our best. We take pride in our work and continuously seek to improve the way we do our work, and deliver service. We set ourselves clear goals and stretch ourselves to reach as far as we can.
- We come from a proud tradition of innovating in the face of seemingly insurmountable challenges. NEWater is just one example of how we are open to new ideas, not afraid to try new things and persevere to bring it to life. Today, this attitude and culture continue to be the engine that drives innovation at every level. At the heart of innovation is a belief that everyone can make a difference through the contribution of ideas, however big or small.

2. Do the Right Thing and Do Things Right

- In all things that we do, we are guided by our core purpose to do the right thing and our *integrity* to do things right. Our words, actions and decisions reflect who we are and we make sure that what we do and how we do it is transparent and can stand up to scrutiny.
- We pride ourselves as the authority on all water issues in Singapore. In our dealings with external stakeholders and colleagues, we behave *professionally* by relying on our expertise and knowledge to lend objectivity.

3. Respect and Care for People

- We put great stock in an open culture where we can have generative conversations and build quality relationships. In working with one another, we treat each other with respect, regardless of rank and position.
- We may not agree with each other all the time but we strive to give everyone a voice. We recognise that every individual has his or her own strengths and can contribute positively to the team. We value everyone’s contributions so that we can work as a whole system and move forward as One PUB.
- We are a people-centric organisation and everyone is an asset to PUB. We believe that the best way to care for staff is to ensure that they are well-equipped in every way to perform their job and develop to their fullest potential. Every one of us commits to creating a positive environment for learning and expressing appreciation for individual and team achievements.

4. Serve to Build Trust and Confidence

- Working in PUB is a calling to serve and to fulfil a higher purpose of ensuring water supply for the people and well-being of Singapore. In serving the public and working with our external stakeholders, we exercise empathy to better anticipate and understand their needs.
- Coupled with professionalism and the use of technology, we aim to deliver policies and service that exceeds their expectations. Service is not just the work of frontline staff. It is also about serving each other internally. We work across departments as one PUB, engaging in excellence together.

5. *We Don't Merely Represent PUB, We are PUB*

- We own the outcome as One PUB. Everything we own and do today is inter-related and requires us to think and act beyond our direct work boundaries, units or departments. We think of the whole system and strive to achieve system-wide outcomes using the least resources.
- Regardless of where we work, we own all water issues together. We are proud to say that all of us own the water from taps, every drain, every pipe and every plant and commit to taking care of them.

6. *Safety is Paramount*

- Everyone has a personal responsibility to make our workplaces safer by adopting an attitude of zero tolerance towards any unsafe act or condition, be it at our plants, installations or at public places where we work.
- We step up to our responsibility of reporting near misses and help remove safety hazards that can potentially hurt ourselves, our colleagues, our contractors and stakeholders.

7. *Value Every Dollar*

- As stewards of public resources, we must be very careful about its use and be seen to be so. With the challenge of the rising cost of production and supply of water, we work to keep water affordable for Singaporeans. Valuing every dollar is not about cutting cost but it is about finding the best way to optimise cost and create the best value from every dollar like it is our own money.
- Collectively as a team, we can rethink, redesign and rework our systems and processes innovatively to achieve ever increasing cost efficiency.

CHAPTER 5 Supportive Leadership



“Leaders at all levels must set the tone and build the right culture to inculcate the Public Service values of Integrity, Service, and Excellence. These values are at the core of maintaining a high quality Public Service which is honest and capable to serve Singapore and Singaporeans.”

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister-in-Charge of Civil Service, Teo Chee Hean, President’s Addendum 2016

“The most effective way of undermining the values is for senior managers to silently contradict them through their personal behaviour.”

Australian Public Service

Supportive Leadership

Research indicates that for values to truly take hold, leaders at all levels — the top leader, senior management team and middle managers – must support and model the values. An international survey of 365 companies found 85% of respondents highlighting that their companies relied on strong leadership support to reinforce values, and 77% listed such support as one of the most effective practices for reinforcing the company’s ability to act on its values.¹

Leaders are best placed to set the tone and create the conditions for staff to live the values by:



So leaders at all levels need to be involved, engaged and committed to your organisational values. Whether you are a leader — top leader, senior management team or middle manager — or a HR and/or OD practitioner looking to get buy-in from your leaders, here are a few things you can get started on.

¹ Allen Hamilton/The Aspen Institute conducted a survey of major executives in 365 companies across 30 countries. Reggie Van Lee, Lisa Fabish, and Nancy McGaw, *The Value of Corporate Values: Strategy and Business Issues* (Booz Allen Hamilton/Aspen Institute, 2006). Also see Reggie Van Lee, Lisa Fabish, and Nancy McGaw. "The Value of Corporate Values." *strategy+ business*, no. 39 (2005): 1-14.

A. If you are a leader, whether top leader, senior management team or manager...

1. Reflect on your personal values and how they relate your organisational values to:
 - a. Get clarity on what your organisational values actually mean to you;
 - b. Identify personal qualities and behaviours that you can role-model to illustrate the organisational values to staff; and
 - c. Check the signals your current behaviours and actions send to staff.



Quick
Tips

Use these questions to guide reflection of your personal values.

- What are my personal values?
- What do I value most?
- What do I prize in others?

When thinking about your personal and organisation values, consider:

- What are the similarities?
- Which organisational values, if any, conflict with your personal values?
- Why do they conflict? Is this an area of concern? Can I resolve it?
- How would my team/staff deal with such conflicts between their personal and organisational values?

Make it easy for staff and colleagues to give feedback openly. Feedback will help you review your actions and behaviours.

- Build it into existing avenues, like staff discussions.
 - Ask staff and colleagues to provide feedback anonymously by writing it down.
- Most people usually find it difficult to provide face-to-face feedback.

2. We learn about someone's values only when we listen to their experiences and stories. And we all have stories to tell. Use personal stories of challenges and dilemmas to make values come alive for staff. You can also create a safe space for staff to share their own stories.



Quick
Tips

The power of storytelling comes from the emotional connection it creates with listeners. To be most effective, stories need to be first-person accounts that contain specific details that cover both feelings and facts, so that listeners feel like they are a part of the story. Here are some other storytelling dos and don'ts:

Don'ts:

- ✗ Never start a story by naming the values that you are addressing (e.g., "Let me tell you a story about courage").
- ✗ Don't end your story with "So you must do this too".

Dos:

- ✓ End the story with "This is what it means to me", "This is what I learnt from that" or "These are the decisions I've made because of that".
- ✓ Make sure that you are authentic if you expect staff to tune in.

3. Talk frequently about values to staff in both informal and formal settings, while praising and rewarding good behaviour and dealing with bad behaviour objectively and transparently.



Quick
Tips

You could do so in these ways:

- Set expectations when initiating new staff on their first day of work
- Awards and celebration events (e.g., promotion ceremonies)
- Speeches and intranet posts
- Staff meetings

4. Recognise that promulgating values requires a systemic approach that includes interventions in process, structure and system. To do this, you will need the support of your HR and/or OD team to support and implement necessary values interventions, communications, and initiatives like embedding values in HR processes, and engaging staff at all levels. You need to pull together consistently and continually to make positive change happen!

B. If you are a HR and/or OD practitioner...

5. Work together with leaders at all levels if you want to effect real change. Values work is a continual process that requires "buy-in" from everyone, especially your leaders. Your leaders are influential agents for values. Here are a few things you could take note of:

a. With your top leader

If you have been commissioned by the leader of your organisation to strengthen values, then do the necessary contracting with him/her to establish specific goals, deliverables and resourcing required. Keep your leader involved in the process regularly and at key milestones, report progress or obstacles encountered.

If you are looking to convince your top leader to support your values initiatives, use data and evidence to bolster your case.

b. With senior management team

Give the senior management team a stake. Consider asking the senior management team to be your values ambassadors, perhaps for each value. This can be an effective way for the senior management to have ownership over the values, and keep values on the agenda even as new priorities emerge.

c. With middle managers

Middle managers can make or break efforts to strengthen values, as managers' day-to-day behaviours are often more visible to rank and file staff than that of senior leaders. Managers can also often be squeezed between the demands to deliver results and model the right behaviours.

It is therefore critical to engage and equip middle managers to support your values initiatives. For example, equip managers to have conversations with staff around values.

To manage the competition for attention, frame values work around middle managers' own priorities. We cannot expect everyone to see the value of values from the same perspective — but shaping the case around existing programmes or work can be persuasive.

Storytelling for leaders

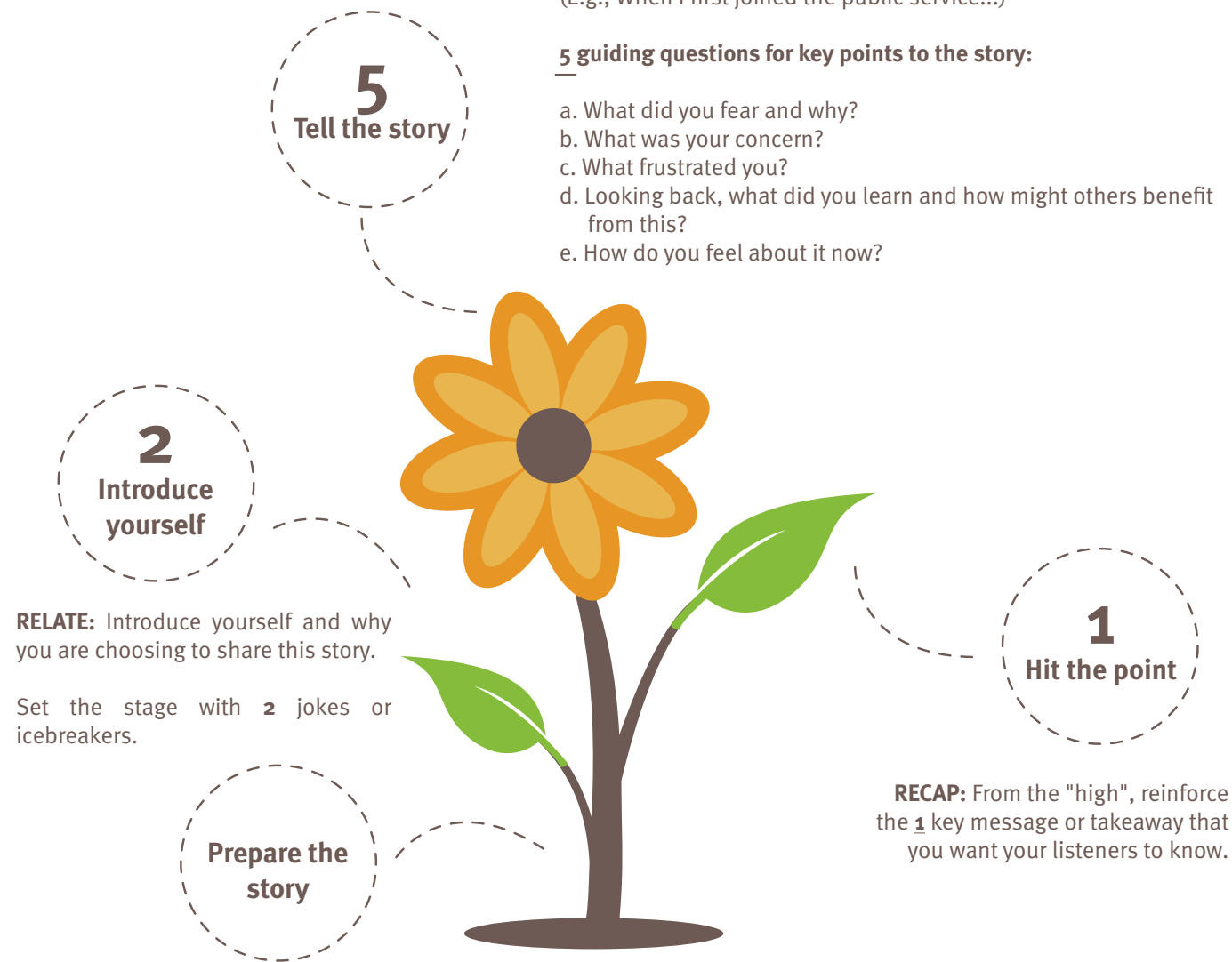
Storytelling is a great entry into discussions and conversations about values. The 2-5-1 model of storytelling, also known as Organisational Storytelling, is an effective method for leaders to deliver important messages within 2–5 minutes. Using the 2-5-1, stories can be built in quickly over a few minutes or over several days. The SAF uses it as part of its leadership development. Here's how it works:

RECOUNT: Start as "low" as possible in seeking to connect with the audience and end on a "high".

(E.g., When I first joined the public service...)

5 guiding questions for key points to the story:

- What did you fear and why?
- What was your concern?
- What frustrated you?
- Looking back, what did you learn and how might others benefit from this?
- How do you feel about it now?



Before applying the 2-5-1:

RECALL: An incident/experience in the past that you were personally involved, and that challenged you.

REFLECT: Be as specific as you can with the date/time, location, person(s) involved, what you experienced and what you took away and/or learnt as a result.

Consider the following too:

MESSAGE: What message is being conveyed? Is this message clearly understood?

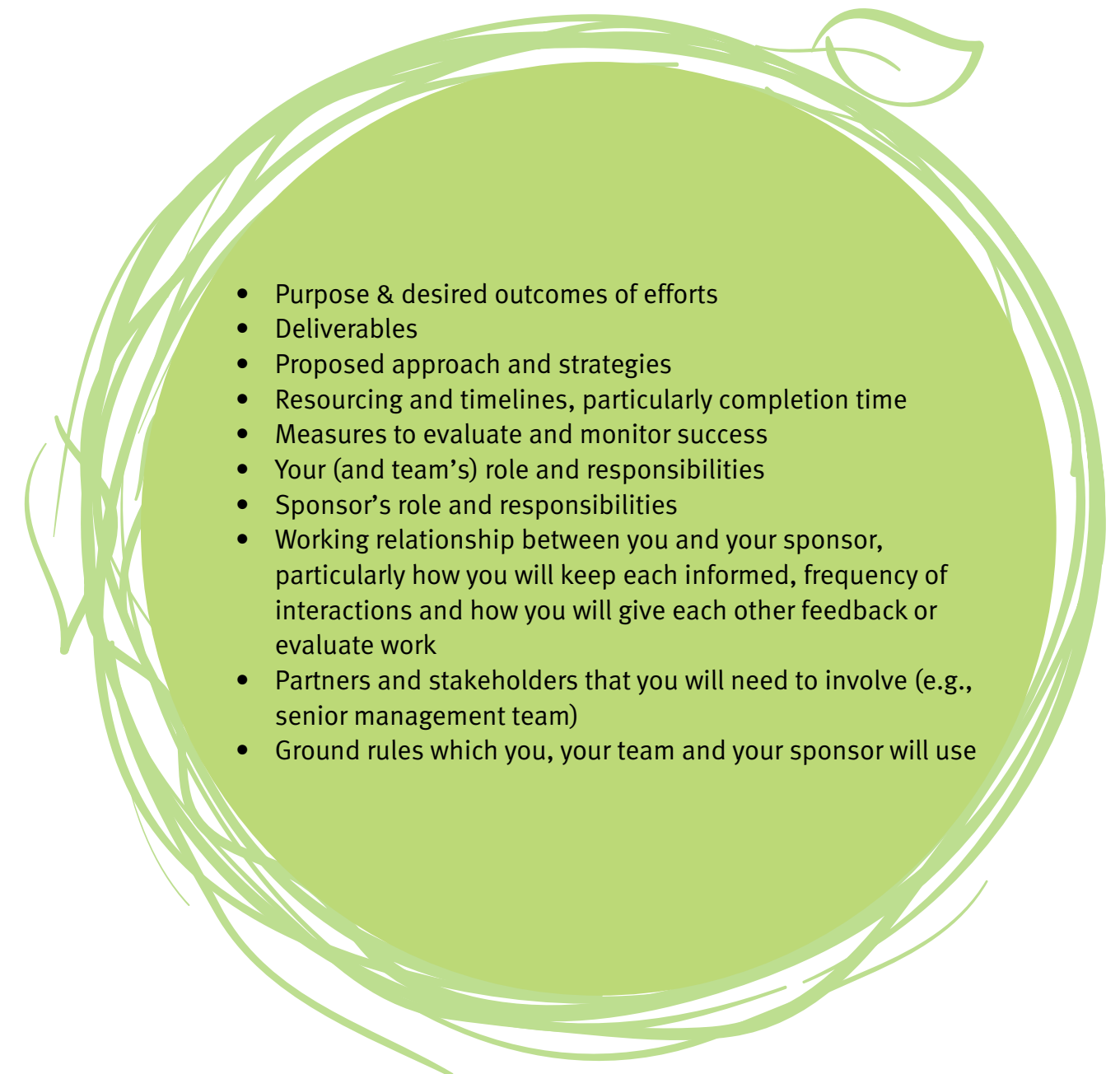
AUDIENCE: Who will be listening to the story? What do you want them to understand? Will they be able to make sense of the story?

PURPOSE: What is the specific objective of the story?

Contracting for HR and/or OD practitioners

If you are a HR and/or OD practitioner who has been tasked to work on strengthening your organisational values, it is useful to begin with a contracting discussion with your chief sponsor — likely to be, but not necessarily your top leader — who has decision-making authority. Contracting with your chief sponsor is an iterative process which involves a preliminary exploration of your organisation's values efforts and gaps, agreement on the scope and nature of the work, as well as how the work is to be done.

Going through this contracting process will allow you to get clarity on expectations, and is therefore key to setting you up for maximum success. A contracting discussion on values work could be used to get clarity on:



Here are some general guidelines on how you can go about it:

Prepare for the meeting with your sponsor:

- a. Think about what you want out of the meeting
- b. Ask some preliminary info from your sponsor

At the meeting

1. Prepare for the meeting by thinking about what you want out of the meeting.

Consider:

- What does your sponsor want? List possibilities.
- What do you want from your sponsor? What do you need? What do you desire?
- What can you and your team offer the sponsor?
- Who else needs to be at your meeting with the sponsor? What are their roles and what can they offer?
- What problems do you foresee?

2. Ask the following from your sponsor to get a sense of how the sponsor perceives the situation:

- What do you want to discuss?
- Who else needs to be at the meeting?
- How much time do we have?

Use the meeting to:

- Establish rapport with your sponsor.
- Ask the sponsor to explain the issue.
- Communicate your understanding of the issue.
- Acknowledge the unique aspects of the situation, if any.
- State the problem you think the sponsor has.
- Reassure the sponsor that you can help.
- Get the sponsor to state what he/she wants from the project and from you.
- Surface any constraints or possible obstacles.
- Confirm what you can do.
- Explain how you will work for them.
- Restate actions that need to be taken.
- Seek agreement to confirm what he/she wants and what you want.
- Ask for feedback and commitment.
- Close with immediate next steps.



Quick
Tips

Do note the following as you go through the contracting process:

- It is important to remember that apart from the chief sponsor, there could be other partners and stakeholders that you will need to engage. These could be people surrounding your principal sponsor (e.g., senior management team) to whom he/she must defer to for critical decisions, as well as others who will have an impact on your efforts, or who may be impacted by your efforts.
- Be aware of these potential red flags:
 - Insufficient or ambiguous level of commitment to see things through, as well as resourcing.
 - Unrealistic and/or unclear deliverables and goals.
 - No clear delineation of roles and responsibilities.
 - Resistance or opposition by your sponsor and/or other partners and stakeholders.



Case Study
International Business Machines (IBM)

Background²

In 2001, after the International Business Machines (IBM) Corporation shifted its focus from being a computer mainframe manufacturer to an Internet solutions provider, its net income rose to \$7.7 billion, reversing losses since 1993. When the new CEO, Samuel J. Palmisano, joined IBM in 2002, he further realised that companies needed more than web-enabled information technology systems to compete. He was convinced that integrated systems that were linked to business activities and the whole value chain, from suppliers to customers, was crucial for the survival of businesses in the next era.

Palmisano knew that IBM's vast experience and global staff strength of 47,000 had the potential to benefit from this business opportunity. However, he did not think that IBM's values encouraged employees to collaborate across units sufficiently. Since 1914, IBM's corporate values had been centred on a set of basic beliefs on respect for the individual, customer service and the pursuit of excellence. With IBM's financial troubles in the 1990s, long serving employees could hardly remember these beliefs except the need to drive profits to keep jobs. Also, about 50% of the employees joined IBM in the last five years, bringing with them different work practices and values.

What and how IBM did it

Palmisano saw an immediate need to unite IBM's global workforce through a common set of values. He believed that this would keep IBM focused, encourage values-based decision making and build an organisation that employees can be proud to work for. However, he felt strongly that taking a top-down approach to determine IBM's corporate values would not work. He believed that employees had strong feelings about their work and the kind of place that they wanted to work in. These feelings affected their commitment to their work and the organisation. He decided that IBM's values should be driven by employees themselves.

Palmisano and his senior management team decided to organise an online discussion forum called ValuesJam to allow employees from all levels and geographical locations to freely contribute ideas, experiences and opinions on values. He also formed a committee involving senior executives from the human resources, marketing and communications teams to plan for ValuesJam. After intense discussions on what IBM's values should address and conducting focus group sessions with more than 1,000 employees, the committee drafted three values phrases to initiate discussions at ValuesJam:



² The material in this caselet has been sourced and adapted from the following sources:

- a. Lynda M. Applegate, Elizabeth Collins, Charles Heckscher, and Boniface Michael, "IBM's Decade of Transformation: Uniting Vision and Values", Harvard Business School Supplement, 807-030, September 2006. (Revised April 2008.)
- b. Paul Hemp and Thomas A. Stewart, "Leading Change When Business Is Good: The HBR Interview—Samuel J. Palmisano", Harvard Business Review, December 2004.
- c. International Business Machines Corporation, "Our Values at Work on Being a IBMer", accessed May 27, 2015, <http://www.ibm.com/ibm/values/us/>.



Reviewing of all comments regarding the proposed values

On 21 July 2003, Palmisano launched ValuesJam on the IBM intranet and invited participation from IBMers around the globe. Over a period of three days, 10,000 comments were posted and 50,000 IBMers followed the ValuesJam discussion. Many of the comments were whether IBM was willing and able to live up to its values, rather than the wording and substance of the values. As the committee studied the online discussions, they found that comments posted on the first twelve hours were overtly negative and dominated by a small group of IBMers. IBM senior management and the committee decided to let the ValuesJam discussions continue without intervention. Gradually, the rest of the IBMers participated and provided more balanced views and inputs to the discussions.

After ValuesJam, Palmisano printed the stack of feedback which came up to three feet high. He read every comment over the weekend. Together with his management team, they analysed and debated the meaning behind IBMers' comments. In November 2003, Palmisano announced IBM's new corporate values and values-in-action statements. Although the new corporate values were posted on the intranet and received positive responses and support from employees, there remained concern that management and employees would not be able to live out these values.

IBM's Corporate Values

IBMers value:

- Dedication to every client's success
- Innovations that matter for our company and the world
- Trust and personal responsibility in all relationships

IBM's values in action statements can be found at <http://www.ibm.com/ibm/values/us/>



In view of these concerns, Palmisano commissioned a "WorldJam" in October 2004 which focused on the practice and implementation of the shared values. More than 17,000 comments were posted in the first 26 hours. While some discussion threads focused on venting frustrations, many suggested practical solutions and improvements to current work processes and behaviours that would support the new values. Senior executives were asked to respond to online discussions regarding the day-to-day execution of behaviours and practices that were in line with the new corporate values.

Following WorldJam, Palmisano commissioned a Phase II values effort which lasted for almost a year. The effort included a range of initiatives such as:





Discussion of values from IBMers all over the globe

Throughout Phase II, Palmisano continued to engage his senior management team on how IBM's values should guide employees and teams in their day-to-day work. He also introduced a "Manager Value Fund" to empower supervisors to spend up to \$5,000 annually on extraordinary situations with clients and employees.

“ **Values inject balance in the company's culture and management system: balance between the short-term transaction and long-term relationship; balance between the interests of shareholders, employees, and clients... Values help you make those decisions, not on an ad hoc basis, but in a way that is consistent with your culture and brand, with who you are as a company.** ”

Samuel J. Palmisano, Harvard Business Review Interview, 2004



Key Takeaways

Leaders:

- believe in the role of corporate values to support organisational goals and customer needs.
- lead and lend support to tackle ground issues on translating values to daily work.
- actively seek employees' participation and feedback during the ongoing values journey.

Conclusion

What Now?

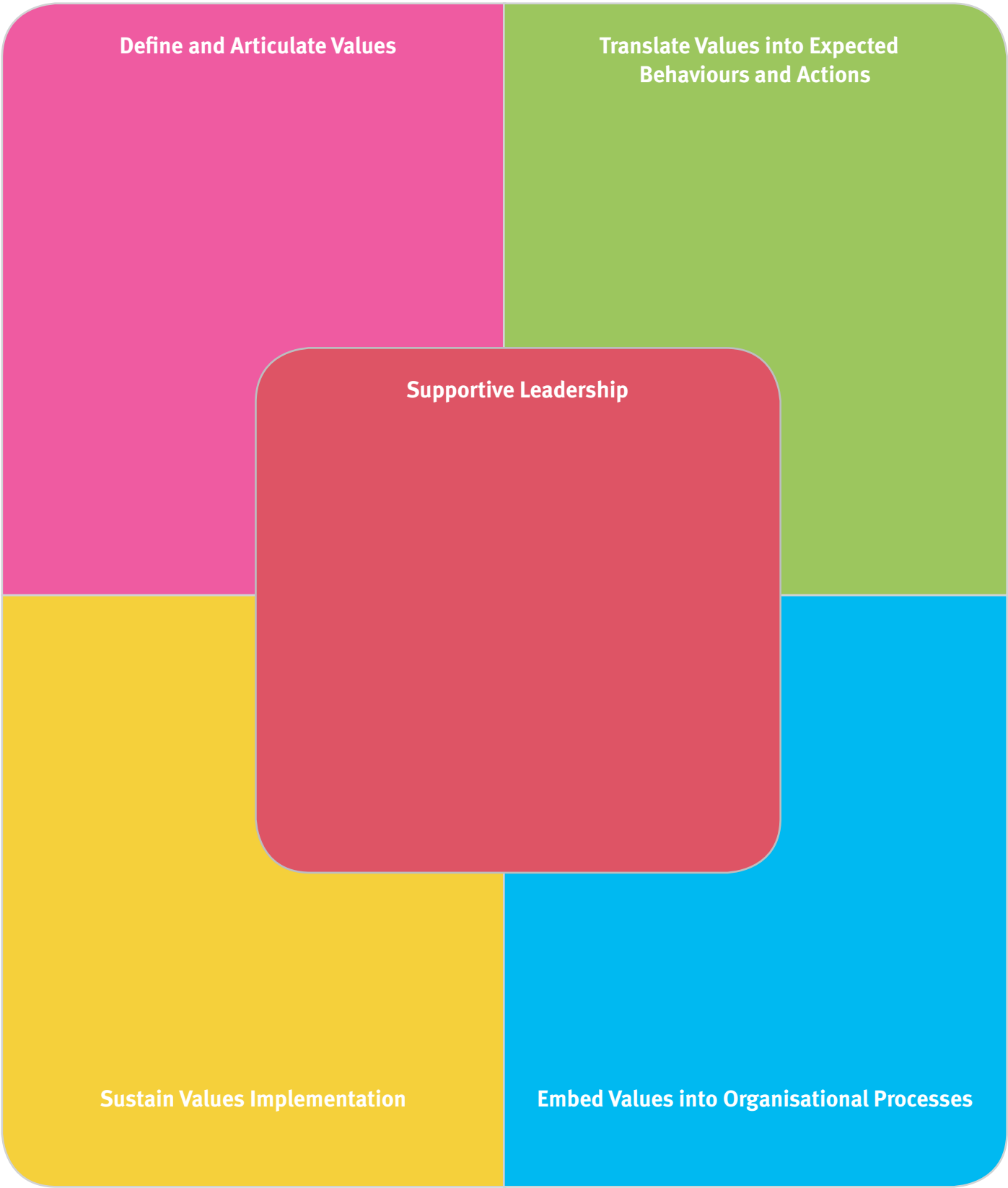
Storytelling for leaders

Whether you are starting from scratch, or already have a strategy to strengthen your organisational values, we hope the framework, best practices and case studies found in this starter guide have gotten you thinking about the next few steps your organisation could take.

Look out for new material made available here from time to time. If you have further queries or feedback, feel free to contact the PS21 Office.

In the meantime, use the Reflections page to pen down how you can apply some of the learnings from the starter guide, and chart your values journey.

Reflections



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