

The Values Identifier: A Data-Driven Approach to Values Alignment

The Values Identifier, built upon Valuegraphics' extensive global database of human values, offers a unique and personalized assessment experience. It is designed to uncover people's values and the distinct ways they align in various aspects of their lives. By providing insights into people's values and their specific combination of wants, needs, and expectations in life, along with potential blind spots, the Values Identifier empowers users to navigate their life journey with greater clarity and purpose.

Through real-world examples and practical suggestions, the Values Identifier enables people to better understand and utilize their values to drive positive transformations. Whether pursuing personal or professional endeavors, seeking to improve their health, or enriching their relationships, this tool equips people with insights to make informed decisions that align with their values. By leveraging this information, users can experience greater fulfillment, seize opportunities, and thrive in every aspect of life.

What sets the Values Identifier apart from other values-identification tools is its foundation in the Valuegraphics large-scale sociological database, which ensures the tool's comprehensive and objective analysis¹. This secures the perceptiveness and accuracy of Values Identifier reports, as the Valuegraphics database was created with careful consideration of diverse backgrounds, beliefs, and cultural perspectives. Values are the common ground that can unite people, and by fostering a shared understanding of values, the Values Identifier can help bridge divides.

¹ For further insights into Valuegraphics and the scientific underpinnings of its global values database, we recommend reading '*Introducing Valuegraphics*'.

Why learn about values?

Understanding personal values is crucial for navigating life's complexities with clarity and purpose. Values play a pivotal role in shaping every aspect of life, including:

- *Enhanced Clarity and Fulfillment:* Values act as a filter for evaluating choices, helping people prioritize what truly matters to them. People can experience greater satisfaction and a more profound sense of fulfillment by aligning their decisions and actions with their values.
- *Harnessing Purpose:* A deep awareness of personal values provides people with insight into what brings purpose and meaning to their lives. Recognizing and understanding the underlying motivations that drive them enables people to pursue goals and aspirations that resonate with their desires.
- *Improving Relationships:* Values play a crucial role in how people connect with others, forming the foundation of their interactions. By understanding their values and recognizing those of others, people can foster stronger, more harmonious relationships through mutual respect and effective communication.
- *Finding More Stability:* Knowing one's values can offer people stability and resilience during challenging times. Understanding what drives them supports people to make informed decisions that align with their key motivations in life, ensuring they remain grounded while pursuing the life they desire.
- *Taking More Responsibility:* By understanding their values and recognizing the influence they have on their actions, people can reliably fulfill their responsibilities in ways that align with their beliefs. This self-awareness empowers people to become the best version of themselves, leading a life marked by integrity and purpose.

A clear understanding of their values provides people with a sense of purpose and direction, guiding them toward the lives they desire. This clarity fosters self-awareness, enabling them to make intentional and authentic choices that lead to a greater sense of fulfillment. By knowing what truly matters to them, people can empower themselves to lead authentic, purposeful, and deeply fulfilling lives.

Validating the Values Identifier

The Values Identifier was developed by drawing on the Valuegraphics' comprehensive global database of human values. Launched in 2016, the Valuegraphics Database originates from an expansive multi-disciplinary research project comprising qualitative and quantitative elements. It represents the first global inventory of human values and is the most substantive and statistically reliable database of human values ever created.

The perceptiveness of the Values Identifier stems from the magnitude of the Valuegraphics Database. The extensive database captures insights from nearly one million voluntary survey respondents in 180 countries and across 152 languages. These surveys canvassed various facets of life, such as relationships, hobbies, and work, and aimed to gauge societal values and behaviors. Respondents answered 389 questions, including values-specific questions and more generalized questions related to the topic of each survey. In addition to these closed-ended multi-choice and rating questions, open-ended questions generated over 2.5 million unique comments on respondents' understanding, interpretation, and lived experiences of their values.

The 2.5 million open-ended comments were carefully analyzed and categorized into over 8,000 definitions of values. These definitions were refined through clustering and coding processes, which identified 56 universal human values. In addition, 281 distinct ways these values typically align for people were also uncovered. This highlights the sheer scale of the Valuegraphics database on a global level and underscores its significance in understanding the diverse ways values influence people worldwide. As a result of this thorough and robust analytical process, the Valuegraphics Database has a 95% level of confidence and a +/- 3.5% margin of error. This enables Valuegraphics to produce accurate, reliable, and verifiable results at individual, group, and audience levels.

The depth and breadth of the Valuegraphics Database mean that the Values Identifier has the unique ability to identify a person's values and the specific ways these values manifest for them when in alignment. This is crucial because the manifestation of values depends on the person's background, culture, and the spaces they move through. Therefore, a person's report will resonate more effectively with their perception and experiences, offering an effective means to apply the information provided. This fosters a deeper understanding, allowing people to better connect, align, and navigate the unique expressions of their values in various situations, contexts, or socio-cultural settings.

Enriching Self-Understanding through the Values Identifier

The Values Identifier stands out from other assessments with its unique data-driven focus on values. Unlike behavioral preferences or personality characteristics, which often change over time, values remain relatively stable throughout the lifespan. This provides a consistent framework for understanding the internal motivations that shape people's perceptions, behaviors, decision-making processes, and interactions. For instance, talent-based approaches often emphasize individual achievement, tapping into unique skills as a source of empowerment. This is a useful insight for any person, yet it can lead to misunderstandings and both internal and interpersonal tension if misaligned with that person's values. This is particularly pertinent in cross-cultural settings, where what one group sees as a positive trait might be viewed differently by another. Values, on the other hand, are the common ground. While shaped by culture, experiences, and unique life trajectories, values provide a shared foundation for understanding what drives people.

The Values Identifier leverages large-scale data analysis to provide ultra-personalized and actionable insights that enhance collective understanding and appreciation of values. Results are culturally and contextually relevant, setting it apart from other tools that may not fully account for the diverse ways values manifest across different backgrounds and life experiences. This broad-scale cultural, geographical, and temporal applicability ensures that biases are minimized, where no value or value definition is deemed superior or portrayed as more desirable than another. This approach acknowledges the complexity of human lives, recognizing and celebrating shared values while respecting personal differences. This inclusive and unbiased framework sets the stage for deeper, more meaningful engagement with people's values.

The Values Identifier offers profound benefits for deepening self-awareness and fueling personal growth. In understanding the significant influence of their values, users gain rich knowledge about the key motivations that underscore their behaviors and decision-making processes. This understanding enhances how people navigate personal and professional relationships, leading to more authentic and fulfilling lives. While other assessments like CliftonStrengths, the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), DiSC, or the Big Five personality traits provide valuable insights into talents, behaviors, and tendencies, the Values Identifier delves into the core motivations behind these traits. This integration of values with other assessments offers a more nuanced, multi-dimensional understanding of individuals within their social contexts. Incorporating the Values Identifier into self-development

journeys provides cohesive and integrated knowledge of oneself, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of other tools

By focusing on values, the Values Identifier promotes continuous growth and deeper self-awareness, empowering people to lead more purposeful and aligned lives. This holistic approach enriches personal and professional trajectories, creating a more empowered and fulfilling life experience.

Research Considerations and Utility Exclusions

Backed by the comprehensive Valuegraphics Database, the Values Identifier offers a dynamic approach to understanding the values shaping a person's life. However, despite its widespread applicability and potential for positive impact, some considerations must be factored into its use and interpretation.

Respondent Bias

Firstly, relying on self-reported data from a questionnaire introduces the potential for respondent bias. A person may not provide accurate or truthful responses, whether due to social desirability bias, misunderstanding of questions, or intentional misrepresentation.

Social desirability bias refers to the tendency to respond in a way that people believe will be viewed favorably by others or align with societal norms, rather than providing honest or authentic responses. People may modify their answers to present themselves in a more socially acceptable or desirable light, even if those answers do not reflect their true thoughts, feelings, or behaviors.

The Values Identifier requires respondents to rate their level of agreement with specific questions or situations. Respondents may view this as who they aspire to be rather than who they are at that moment. Mitigating respondent and social desirability bias is crucial for ensuring the accuracy and reliability of data collected through the Values Identifier, thereby enhancing the degree to which the resulting report resonates with the person.

To address this challenge, the Values Identifier has established clear guidelines and instructions for respondents that emphasize the importance of providing honest and genuine responses. This encourages respondents to trust themselves and their instincts while avoiding overthinking. These guidelines help reinforce to users that the Values Identifier is for their benefit: honesty will produce a more accurate report that the person can better connect with and put its suggestions into action. The benefit of intuitive responses thus becomes evident to respondents by way of the

report's utility. This approach reduces the tendency for people to conform to perceived societal norms or attempt to present themselves in a favorable light.

The Values Identifier also strategically uses indirect questioning techniques to reduce the potential for social desirability bias in users' interactions with the assessment. The tool ensures greater consistency and reliability in responses by framing the sentiment of specific questions in multiple ways. Furthermore, no single question dictates a user's overall results. Instead, the assessment relies on a comprehensive analysis of all responses, allowing for a more accurate identification of personal values. This thoughtful design enhances the assessment's reliability and validity, ensuring it accurately represents each user's values.

Database Considerations

By benchmarking against Valuegraphics' worldwide database of human values, which employs diverse sampling techniques to ensure representation from a wide range of demographic groups, the Values Identifier mitigates biases stemming from cultural specificity, homogeneity, and social trends within the respondent pool.

While the Valuegraphics Database utilizes a large sample size from diverse backgrounds, ages, socio-economic statuses, cultures, and languages, there may still be some sampling bias. The database's reliance on self-selected survey questionnaires and open-ended responses may inadvertently exclude people less inclined to participate in such activities or lack access to the necessary technology. Valuegraphics notes, however, that global internet penetration averages 66.2% (as of January 2024, with some regions as high as 97.6%; see [Statista 2024](#)).

Furthermore, despite the database's accuracy of 95% with a margin of error of +/- 3.5%, it's essential to recognize that no measurement tool is entirely error-free. Variability in interpretation, data processing, and statistical modeling could contribute to inaccuracies or inconsistencies in the results generated by the Values Identifier.

Exclusions of Use

A potential limitation of the Values Identifier is the static nature of the tool's assessment. A person's responses may be influenced by external factors that are time- or situation-specific, such as major life events occurring concurrently at the time of taking the Identifier: an unexpected redundancy, relationship break-up, death of a loved one, or other significant life events that may impact the state of

mind of a respondent. To mitigate this, it is recommended that users take the Identifier at a time characterized by more stability.

It's essential to recognize that Values Identifier is primarily designed as a personal assessment tool with the intent of helping people gain insights into their values. Each Values Identifier report is unique, reflecting the multitude of ways that values appear in people's lives. There is no 'better' set of values, nor can or should judgment be placed on values themselves. Accordingly, reports should not be used for ranking exercises or establishing hierarchical arrangements between or amongst people. Attempting to rank or compare people based on their values assessments could oversimplify complex human behavior and undermine the richness and diversity of individual experiences.

Additionally, it is not recommended that Values Identifier reports be used purely for employment purposes, as certain values may be unfairly favored or prioritized over others in particular contexts or by recruiters and human resources teams. Values alone may not fully capture a person's qualifications, skills, or suitability for a particular role or organization, and this could lead to discrimination or the reinforcement of stereotypes and biases. While the Values Identifier can provide helpful insights into a person's values and their likely resonance with company values, this information must be used responsibly and ethically.

Lastly, it is crucial to emphasize that the Values Identifier should not be used for mental health screening or diagnostic purposes. Using the Values Identifier as a substitute for professional mental health assessments could lead to the misinterpretation or oversimplification of people's psychological well-being, and ultimately result in ineffective or inadequate care.