



Our Core Value interactive exercise creates a powerful foundation for [decision making](#), [team culture cohesion](#), and [the direction for your vision](#). For a business partnership, this is even more important to make sure all the owners are on the same page in the most foundational way.

Step 1. Read through the words and phrases below and pause to reflect on each. Circle 10 that you believe to be your top values. If one of yours is NOT on the list write it in and circle it! Take your time and select carefully.

- | | | |
|------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Authenticity | Faith | Peace |
| Achievement | Fame | Pleasure |
| Adventure | Fitness | Poise |
| Authority | Friendship | Popularity |
| Autonomy | Fun | Recognition |
| Balance | Growth | Religion |
| Beauty | Happiness | Reputation |
| Boldness | Health | Respect |
| Compassion | Honesty | Responsibility |
| Challenge | Humor | Science |
| Citizenship | Influence | Security |
| Community | Inner Harmony | Self-Respect |
| Competency | Innovation | Service |
| Contribution | Joy | Simplicity |
| Courage | Justice | Spirituality |
| Creativity | Kindness | Stability |
| Curiosity | Knowledge | Success |
| Customer Success | Leadership | Status |
| Dependability | Learning | Teamwork |
| Determination | Love | Trustworthiness |
| Empathy | Loyalty | Wealth |
| Equality | Openness | Wisdom |
| Excellence | Optimism | |
| Fairness | Passion | |



Step 2. Cross out 5 of the 10 values you chose and select ONLY your **top 5**.

Note: This will not be easy, but you **MUST** limit yourself to only 5 choices.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____



Step 3. Personally define each of your core values and your description of how you consistently embody them. What does the Core Value mean and what are the actions that demonstrate you are living them?

- 1. _____

- 2. _____

- 3. _____

- 4. _____

- 5. _____

Now go out and live your Core Values!

According to Harvard Business School, the *key attributes* of Core Values are to

Inspire People and
Guide tough decisions.

In addition, core values can

- Shape the vision.
- Influence behavior.
- Act as a cultural cornerstone.
- Differentiate your business.
- Aid in recruiting and retention.
- Clarify the primary interests of the organization.



Are you ready to articulate, define and operationalize your core values? We can help!

Operationalize Core Values



Dr. Jason Luchtefeld

Operationalizing Core Values goes beyond just naming the values. It is also a step beyond defining them. It involves taking the words and their definitions and then putting actions to those definitions for each area of the business. From there you can then tie in how to reward behavior that exemplifies core values.

Through simple, concise and consistent descriptions you can link core values to day-to-day work which connects directly to outcomes.

In order for this to work the leaders of the organization must lead by example.

Let's look at an example:

Salesforce, a software that manages customer relationships. Their core values + definitions are:

- **Trust** - We communicate openly with our customers and do what it takes to keep their data secure.
- **Growth** - We're obsessed with our customers' success and take pride in their achievements.
- **Innovation** - We pursue ideas that could change our company, our country – and maybe even the world.
- **Equality** - We respect and value employees from every background, and we thrive as a result.

Now, imagine how Salesforce could use those definitions to provide guidance and incentive to idealize customer relationships and success, pursue ideas beyond the day-to-day grind, and treat each other.

Does the order of how you publicize and share your core values matter?



Maybe...

Your Core Values Mixtape



Actions will always speak louder than words. With that in mind, your first objective is to **act** in accordance with your core values. However, the order of how you list your core values can reflect your priorities to the marketplace.

For example, Salesforce noticeably puts Customers first. C3.ai publicly shares their order of importance as Employees, Customers then Shareholders.

Southwest Airlines claims Employees are #1. Pfizer's statements and actions put Shareholders first.

The point here is that that is no right way to mix things up in how you list the core values. What matters is that you are consistent in your words and actions.

Henkel – a \$19 billion German chemical and consumer goods company uses their core values as the foundation for their mission:

“We put **customers** at the center. We value, challenge, and reward our **people**.

We drive excellent, sustainable **financial** performance. We are committed to leadership **sustainability**.

We build our future on our **family** business foundation.”

In a recent [MIT Sloan review article](#), the authors report a very low correlation with stated core values and actions. This would indicate companies are either simply aspiring towards the stated values or they are not behaving in accordance with their stated values.

“Values should be Actionable, Dinstinctive, and Linked to Results.” Sull et al., MIT, July 2020

We would love to hear how you have listed, defined and operationalized your Core Values. Let us know at Jason@Insperoteam.com