

# **RMIT International University Vietnam Bachelor of Commerce Program**

## **Assignment Cover Page**

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|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
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| <b>Subject Name:</b>                                      | <b>Organizational Behavior</b>             |
| <b>Location &amp; Campus (SGS or HN) where you study:</b> | <b>RMIT Vietnam</b>                        |
| <b>Title of Assignment:</b>                               | <b>Individual Paper Part 1</b>             |
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## Preface

I have been different from some friends, got conflicts in relationships with certain peers since junior high school and could not understand why my parents always seem to be “too safe”.

Recent study about values starts to reveal the rationales behind my behaviors and conflicts. According to Schwartz (1992, cited in Schwartz 2007), people worldwide have 57 values categorized into 10 broad groups, and organized into a circular model with 4 value domains: openness to change (self-direction, stimulation, hedonism), self-enhancement (hedonism, achievement, power), conservation (security, tradition and conformity) and self-transcendence (universalism and benevolence).

### My values and behaviors

Based on Schwartz’s (1992, cited in Schwartz 2007) values circumplex, I would categorize my values as self-direction, achievement and benevolence.

McShane (2010, p. 60) stated that personal values “guide our decisions and actions to some extent”, especially for habitual behaviors. To me, this is true in many cases. For instance, as I value achievement, I feel rewarded when maintaining a good academic performance and receiving proper credit for my work, and feel disappointed when failing to achieve my 'standard'. I also have a special interest in public speaking and performing where I can get recognized.

I value self-direction, and am therefore not easily influenced by others without a good reasoning. It was during my high school time that one of my classmates cheated in a test and got caught. The captain tried to protect her by asking the teacher to ignore the case, as the penalty is very strong. He persuaded the class (of almost 50 students) to stand up against the teacher, saying: 'whoever does not stand up does not belong to this class'. I was among the two students who remained seated until the very end of that session, feeling sorry for the justice being violated. This value is also reflected in my leading style, where everyone in the group has the chance to speak their mind and to be listened to, and I, as a leader, stay objective to the discussion to provide optimal decisions, rather than being influenced by certain individuals in the group.

As I value stimulation and love challenges, I enjoy discovering the unknown. When I first came to HCMC, I challenged myself by riding my bicycle for 40km without a map or any further information. When I was in primary school, I tried to walk home on my own and got lost before being found by a neighbor. Also due to this value, I had a conflict with

my mother regarding my career path as I prefer trying out in new fields whereas my mother who values security, suggested I stick to my current technical strengths as “It pays the bills”.

Though personal values are important in predicting one's behaviors, they are not the only defining factor. McShane (2010) also pointed out the possible inconsistencies between the values and the behaviors, also known as value congruence. Last semester, I got relatively low score in one course where I did not pay the proper amount of effort. In spite of me being achievement oriented, I was distracted by other businesses outside studying, such as club work, and thus received a non-desirable result. Such inconsistency made me upset. Under such scenario, the link between personal values and behaviors is simply broken. According to Maio et al. (2001), proper reasoning is necessary for individuals to apply their values into everyday behaviors. This applied to the above situation where the reason is missing and thus I failed to live up to the value.

### **Points for improvement**

Real achievements require real efforts; learning about values alone is not enough to bring about positive impact in the lives of others and myself. According to Johnson (2003, p. 11 - 14), constructive conflict resolving and controversy are among essential elements for success of teamwork. Due to major differences between opposite value groups, I feel that conflicts may occur when people with opposite values work together without respecting each other's values. Being aware of difference in values, I will not only respect the values of others but also encourage them to do the same. For example, I can spend some time sharing information about the value systems with my teammates personally so that they are aware of the differences too. As a result, conflicts can be resolved in a more constructive way and team cohesiveness will be enhanced. When it comes to discussion, I will encourage everyone to speak up their mind and thus promote creative decision making and problem solving as people with different values tend to hold various perspectives toward a problem (Maznevski & Jonsen, 2006). This can be achieved by applying a “token” system where only whoever holds the token can speak and thus avoid the discussion being dominant by any of the group, especially by ones with “power” value. When it comes to task delegation, I will consider the characteristic of the particular person so that they can do what they enjoy (and they may do it better). For instance, I would delegate a new, challenging task to a competent member who values stimulation; and delegate difficult, recognized tasks to achievement-oriented members so that they can prove themselves. From a personal perspective, I will review my values on a regular basis so as to stay consistent, and live happily. I have started writing out the values, and goals to remind myself and align my behaviors to my values.

## REFERENCES

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