



# SHARED VALUES

- This is . . .** A sharing activity in which participants come to agreement on the most important shared values to the group.
- The purpose is . . .** Participants come to agreement on the most important values they share.
- Use this when . . .**
- A significant project or work effort is beginning.
  - Individuals feel like others are not listening with open minds.
  - Individuals need to bond together.
- Materials you'll need . . .**
- Paper and a pen for each participant.
  - One piece of flipchart paper for each team.
  - Colored markers.
- Here's how . . .**
1. Have each participant take 2 minutes to write down what he or she feels are the three most important values to your organization.
  2. Divide the group into teams of four to six participants.
  3. Have each participant share her three values within her team.
  4. From all the values shared, the team must agree on the top three most important values for your organization.
  5. Give each team a piece of flipchart paper and some colored markers.

6. Each team creates a poster with words, symbols, and/or pictures that reflects those three values.
7. After 10 minutes, have each team present their poster to the group.

**For example . . .** Values include things such as commitment to customers, integrity, teamwork, leadership, quality focus, innovation, efficiency, respect, creativity, learning, and so forth.

- Ask these questions . . .**
- What values seem to be common across teams?
  - How did you handle disagreements in the teams?
  - If someone new to the organization saw these lists of values, how do you think they would expect people to behave?
  - Do we behave like that?
  - What can cause us to lose sight of our values? (*Pressing deadlines, others acting differently, changes at work, etc.*) What can we do when that happens?
  - How would living these values help us meet our goals?
  - What implication does this have for us back on the job?

- Tips for success . . .**
- Encourage the teams to be creative in their representation of the values.
  - If your organization already has stated values, have the teams still try to identify the three most important for this part of the organization.
  - If a team does not finish, ask what prevented them from doing so. Others will learn from their difficulties. Then ask how those barriers could have been avoided or dealt with effectively.
  - In the coming days, periodically ask which values are being demonstrated on the job.

- Try these variations . . .**
- If your organization (or just your department) does not have a mission statement, have the teams make a poster to present what your mission statement should be. Remember, a mission statement explains why the organization exists, not its goals.
  - If your organization (or just your department) does not have a vision statement, have the teams make a poster to present what your vision should be. Remember, the vision statement tells where you hope to be in the future.