

SACS Values Test White Paper

What are personal values and why are they important?

Personal values are fundamental beliefs that serve as guiding principles in a one's life (Schwartz, 1992). They guide and motivate our decisions, attitudes, and actions, and influence how we view the world. Although most values are not specifically considered good or bad, researchers have found that they can correlate to other traits in the workplace. For example, Eva *et al.* (2017) found a positive relationship between the value of self-direction and innovative behaviour, while Blickle *et al.* (2006) showed that those who highly valued hedonism were more likely to commit white collar crime. Certain values can also lend themselves to particular professions. Knafo and Sagiv (2004) found that universalism and benevolence were highly valued by healthcare workers, achievement was more highly valued by those in banking and finance, and tradition was more highly valued by administrators and bookkeepers.

What is the SACS Values Test and why is it important?

The most commonly used tool for measuring personal values is the Schwartz Personal Values Questionnaire (SPVQ) (Schwartz, 1992), which measures 10 distinct values and has been validated in over 80 countries. The SACS Values Test was created as an alternative to the SPVQ. It builds on the SPVQ by providing a work-specific context – asking about values in a workplace setting rather than just in everyday life – and then creating benchmarks based on a large sample of Australian workers.

The 11 values measured by the SACS Values Test (with Schwartz equivalents in brackets) are: Authority (Power), Ambition (Achievement), Enjoyment (Hedonism), Variety (Stimulation), Autonomy (Self-Direction), Social Justice (Universalism), Environmental Sustainability (Universalism), Helping and Supporting (Benevolence), Rule Respecting (Conformity), Traditional Values (Tradition), and Safety (Security).

Who was benchmarked for the SACS Values Test?

The SACS Values Test was developed as part of a SACS research project, conducted in 2015 in collaboration with Deakin University. The psychometric properties of the instrument were tested and validated on a sample of 2430 individuals from the Australian professional population, and a set of Australian norms were created.

How do we measure and present the values?

The SACS Values Test is a psychometric instrument measured using 52 Likert scale items that measure 11 dimensions of personal values. These items are rated on a seven-point scale (1=Extremely Unimportant to 7=Extremely Important).

The report provides results for each factor in the form of percentiles. Each percentile represents the position within the normed population for that factor, with higher percentiles representing a higher importance placed on that factor. The percentile scores are independent of one another, so a candidate can present with any combination of percentiles. Figure 1 shows the presentation of values in the form of a circular diagram.

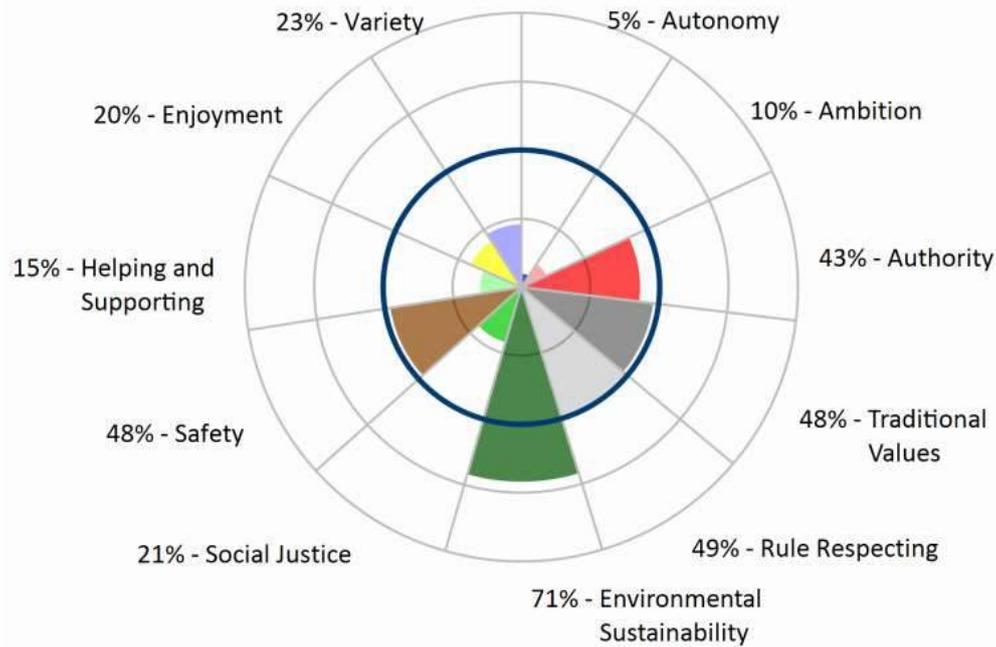


Figure 1: Circumplex of Personal Values

Technical details about the instrument

The confirmatory factor analysis had a generally acceptable fit: $\chi^2 = 4,670.989$, $df = 1219$, $p < 0.001$, $\chi^2/df = 3.832$, $TLI = .943$, $NFI = .931$, $CFI = .948$, and $RMSEA = .048$ (LO: .047, HI: .05). All factor loadings were significant and the standardized loadings ranged between .532 and .958. The Cronbach's alpha values for the factors ranged from .72 to .96 with nine of the eleven factors above .80. Each value had a significant positive correlation with the equivalent Schwartz factor.

References

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