

# CAREER AND LIFE PLANNING EXERCISE



**AIM**

## Defining Your Values and Life Purpose Statement

Build a strong foundation by exploring your core values.

# Defining Your Values and Life Purpose Statement

Trying to make career and life decisions without discovering and prioritizing your values and purpose is comparable to you trying to pass your boards without a studying for them. Be prepared for the future with a thoughtful evaluation of your core values, mission and vision.

## Objectives:

In this exercise, the participant will complete a number of activities that will:

- Explore core values and concepts that guide them as individuals and professionals.



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## How to Use This Tool:

Review the information and complete each of the activities to focus on the fundamental elements that guide you and will serve as the foundation for your search activities.

## Related Resources

To view resource, click on the desired Title or go to [physiciancareerplanning.com](http://physiciancareerplanning.com) and type in the desired title or Resource No. into the "Enter Keyword" field and click search.

| TITLE   | RESOURCE NO. |
|---|--------------|
| <a href="#">Evaluating Your Needs, Wants and Dreams</a>             | E-14         |
| <a href="#">Life, Money, &amp; Career Priorities Survival Guide</a> | ST-04        |
| <a href="#">Personal Preferences Vs. Market Conditions</a>          | E-16         |



# Defining Your Values and Life Purpose Statement

## Instructions:

Since values represent core beliefs followed by thoughts and actions, first record your core values in the chart below. Use the list below as a starting point, and feel free to add your own. Be completely honest with yourself and don't worry about what someone else may think. Next, for each value, write down how it plays out in your life and in your career. If you feel comfortable, ask your spouse or significant other (if applicable) to complete this exercise themselves and see where your responses align or differ.

| Core Value                        | How it plays out in life  | How it plays out in your career              |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| <i>Example:<br/>Determination</i> | Overcame serious sports injury — went through six months of rehab | <i>Took MCAT three times – Never gave up</i> |
|                                   |   |  |
|                                   |   |  |
|                                   |   |  |
|                                   |   |  |

## Values:

|                     |                     |                     |                    |                  |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Achievement         | Contribution/giving | Flexibility         | Kindness           | Recognition      |
| Acknowledgement     | Control             | Focus               | Knowledge          | Resiliency       |
| Advancement         | Cooperation         | Freedom             | Leadership         | Respect          |
| Adventure           | Courage             | Friendship          | Listening          | Risk/risk-taking |
| Appreciation        | Creativity          | Fun                 | Love/loving        | Sacrifice        |
| Artistic expression | Decisiveness        | Generosity          | Loyalty            | Security         |
| Authenticity        | Determination       | Gratitude           | Mental stimulation | Self-confidence  |
| Autonomy            | Devotion            | Harmony             | Money/wealth       | Sensuality       |
| Balance             | Dignity             | Healing             | Openness           | Serenity         |
| Beauty              | Direct              | Health/well-being   | Optimistic         | Silence          |
| Belonging           | Discipline          | Helping             | Organization       | Spirituality     |
| Boldness            | Efficiency          | Honesty             | Originality        | Spontaneity      |
| Caring              | Energy              | Hope                | Participation      | Stability        |
| Challenging         | Enjoyment           | Humanitarianism     | Partnership        | Success          |
| Collaboration       | Enthusiasm          | Humility            | Passion            | Tolerance        |
| Commitment          | Equality            | Humor               | Peace              | Trustworthy      |
| Communication       | Excellence          | Independence        | Perseverance       | Truth            |
| Community           | Expertise           | Influence           | Power/authority    | Variety          |
| Compassion          | Exploration         | Integrity           | Precision          | Unity            |
| Competition         | Faith               | Intellectual status | Productivity       | Wholeness        |
| Contentment         | Fast-paced          | Justice             | Public service     | Winning          |

# Defining Your Values and Life Purpose Statement

## Reflection:

Why are these values important to you? List three to five reasons.:



# Defining Your Values and Life Purpose Statement

## Life Purpose Statement:

Some individuals wander around for years until they stumble upon a job or life circumstance that brings everything into focus. Many never find their voice or purpose on this earth, and as a result, much time and energy is wasted. You might be thinking that your life purpose has already been defined. For example: "My life purpose is to practice medicine." This is a simple, well-stated purpose but it doesn't describe the reason and results relative to practicing medicine. You won't need weeks or months to complete your life-purpose statement. In fact, follow three simple steps and you will be able to develop a strong, relevant statement in less than two hours. You may spend time tweaking your life-purpose statement over time; however, the heavy-thinking, time-consuming part should be behind you. An effective life-purpose statement is interchangeable for both your personal and professional life. Creating a life-purpose statement is one of the best ways to ensure that life and career decisions align with one another.

## What is a life-purpose statement?

A strong life-purpose statement contains a concise and clear explanation for an organization or individual that:

- Explains why you exist (core purpose)
- Provides a sense of direction
- Guides decision making
- Explains the value provided by your actions and/or services
- Identifies stakeholders, key customers
- Guides the actions of a company and/or individual
- Is not about money or something that you can buy

## Elements of a Life Purpose Statement

- Preferably one sentence in length, not more than two
- Simple language and easily understood by those who read it
- Contains words that you buy into
- Applicable for your personal and professional life
- Able to be recited from memory

## Examples of a Life Purpose Statement

As a primary care physician, my purpose is to heal the sick, influence healthy life styles, and serve the low income population in the inner city of Chicago that positively impacts the community where my patients live.

As a cardiologist, my life purpose is to eradicate heart disease through research and utilizing leading edge technologies and treatments which help my patients live long and productive lives.

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# Defining Your Values and Life Purpose Statement

## Life Purpose Exercise:

1. Identify two or three compelling action verbs (see list on opposite page for ideas) that describe the "what" of your mission. It answers the question: What do you do?
2. Describe the audience that you will be serving (e.g., patients, low-income, rural, terminally ill, etc.)
3. Describe the "why" of your actions. Complete the sentence that defines the outcomes of your actions in the context of your life and career.
4. Reread it and recite it out loud three times.
5. Share your life-purpose statement with your spouse, significant other, family members, friends or colleagues. Get their feedback on whether or not this purpose matches their perception and understanding of your interests, gifts and passions. 6. You may want to create your life-purpose statement together with your spouse or significant other.

## My Life Purpose:

My life purpose is to...(two or three verbs)

for (targeted audience)...

In order to / that will / by providing

## Sample Action Verbs:

|             |             |             |            |             |           |             |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|
| Acknowledge | Confer      | Confer      | Divide     | Influence   | Obtain    | Reconstruct |
| Administer  | Consolidate | Consolidate | Eradicate  | Inform      | Open      | Rectify     |
| Advise      | Construct   | Construct   | Establish  | Initiate    | Operate   | Register    |
| Affirm      | Consult     | Consult     | Evaluate   | Inspire     | Originate | Reject      |
| Align       | Contact     | Contact     | Examine    | Instruct    | Perform   | Remove      |
| Alleviate   | Control     | Control     | Expedite   | Integrate   | Persuade  | Report      |
| Analyze     | Convert     | Convert     | Explore    | Interpret   | Plan      | Represent   |
| Assemble    | Convince    | Convince    | Extend     | Investigate | Practice  | Research    |
| Assess      | Coordinate  | Coordinate  | Facilitate | Lead        | Present   | Review      |
| Classify    | Correct     | Correct     | Feed       | Measure     | Procure   | Revise      |
| Coach       | Create      | Create      | Formulate  | Mentor      | Produce   | Save        |
| Collaborate | Design      | Design      | Gather     | Monitor     | Project   | Scan        |
| Communicate | Determine   | Determine   | Give       | Motivate    | Prove     | Screen      |
| Compile     | Develop     | Develop     | Guide      | Multiply    | Quantify  | Serve       |
| Compose     | Direct      | Direct      | Heal       | Negotiate   | Recommend | Supply      |
| Conduct     | Discover    | Discover    | Implement  | Observe     | Reconcile | Support     |

# Defining Your Values and Life Purpose Statement

## Reflection:

On a scale from 1 to 10 (low to high), how would you rate the effectiveness of your life-purpose statement?

Low

|                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1                        | 2                        | 3                        | 4                        | 5                        | 6                        | 7                        | 8                        | 9                        | 10                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |

High

How does it feel when you say your life-purpose statement?