**The Ethics Unwrapped “Giving Voice To Values” Video Series**

The Giving Voice To Values (GVV) video series summarizes the introductory points of *Giving Voice to Values: How To Speak Your Mind When You Know What's Right*, developed by Mary C. Gentile with support from the Aspen Institute and the Yale School of Management.

The GVV videos can be watched individually or collectively, although they will be most useful if used together and viewed with the introductory video. This series can serve as a springboard for further classroom discussion of ethics and values as they pertain to students’ personal and professional lives.

Although GVV was created for business ethics programs, the lessons in GVV are broad and applicable to a variety of fields including education, fine arts, liberal arts, communication studies, engineering and the sciences, and professional schools. GVV case studies, curriculum and teaching pedagogy are available at [http://www.babson.edu/academics/teaching-research/gvv/Pages/home.aspx](http://www.babson.edu/academics/teaching-research/gvv/Pages/home.aspx)

**The G.V.V. Approach**

Giving Voice to Values (GVV) is an innovative approach to values-driven leadership development. GVV identifies the many ways that individuals can – and do – voice their values in the workplace and provides opportunities to build the “moral muscles” necessary to do so.

Most people want to bring their whole selves to work. Yet, experience and research demonstrate that values conflicts will occur during the course of a person’s life and career – those times when what we believe and want to accomplish seem to be in opposition to the demands of others, including peers, supervisors, organizations, etc. The GVV curriculum helps people build and practice the skills individuals need to recognize, speak and act on their values when these conflicts arise.

GVV identifies and builds upon SEVEN PILLARS or principles that represent ways of thinking about values and our own capabilities and identities in order to enhance our ability to voice and enact our values effectively. The SEVEN PILLARS are: Values, Choice, Normalization, Purpose, Self-Knowledge & Alignment, Voice, and Reasons & Rationalizations. Each video in this series introduces a GVV PILLAR.
The GVV approach includes:

* A focus on how a leader or manager raises values-based issues in an effective manner—what he/she needs to do to be heard and how to correct an existing course of action when necessary;

* Positive examples of times when people have found ways to voice and thereby implement their values in the workplace;

* An emphasis upon self-assessment and a focus on individual strengths when looking for a way to align one’s individual sense of purpose with that of the organization;

* Opportunities to construct and practice responses to frequently heard reasons and rationalizations for not acting on one’s values;

* Practice in providing peer feedback and coaching.

**Video: G.V.V. Pillar 1 – Values**

Citing research, Gentile suggests that there is a small set of values, or hyper-norms, that are almost universally shared, such as “honesty, respect, responsibility, fairness, and compassion” (*Giving Voice to Values*, p. 30). Framing values conflicts in the workplace and in our wider lives in terms of hyper-norms can help people find common ground. When analyzed through the lens of hyper-norms, we see that many conflicts actually arise from differences of opinion about how to uphold shared values, especially in diverse and challenging contexts, rather than about what values ought to be upheld. When enacting our values, it is important not to assume too little – or too much – commonality with the viewpoints of others.
Discussion questions: G.V.V. Pillar 1 - Values

1. BEFORE viewing the video, you may wish to poll students with the following questions:

   *When it comes to values conflicts, most folks share the same values.*
   - Strongly Agree
   - Somewhat Agree
   - Not Sure
   - Somewhat Disagree
   - Strongly Disagree

   *Everyone has a different set of values so it is very difficult to communicate about them.*
   - Strongly Agree
   - Somewhat Agree
   - Not Sure
   - Somewhat Disagree
   - Strongly Disagree

   *It doesn’t matter what others think, because I know I’m right and I will stand up for my values.*
   - Strongly Agree
   - Somewhat Agree
   - Not Sure
   - Somewhat Disagree
   - Strongly Disagree

2. AFTER viewing the video, you may wish to re-visit the polling questions above and discuss whether participants have any new insights.

3. Is agreeing on a set of shared values enough to resolve differences in cultural understandings of those values?

4. What are some examples of cases in which appealing to common values can help smooth over differences of opinion?

5. Think of someone whom you think of as VERY different from yourself. When have you agreed with them about something significant? What values do you share with them? What made it possible/easier for you to find agreement with them in this instance?

6. Have you ever worked across cultures, or lived in a culture different from the one you were raised in? If so, have you encountered significant differences or conflicts? If so, what were they based upon? (e.g., actual differences in individual “values?” Differences in the enabling context, such as the level of legal enforcement or regulatory oversight? Other causes?) Have you seen examples of workable approaches for addressing these differences? For a video example of this issue, see: http://itunes.apple.com/WebObjects/MZStore.woa/wa/viewPodcast?id=48267765
   For a written case example of this phenomenon, see “Not an Option Even To Consider (A)” or several of the other GVV cases at www.GivingVoiceToValues.org
Additional G.V.V. Resources

http://www.givingvoicetovaluesthebook.com/

For a discussion of the “Values” pillar, see Chapter Two of Giving Voice To Values, “Values: What They Are and What They Are Not.”

For a discussion of the “GVV Starting Assumptions,” see Chapter One of Giving Voice to Values, “Giving Voice to Our Values: The Thought Experiment.”

For a summary of the Giving Voice To Values Seven Pillars download An Action Framework for Giving Voice To Values— “The To-Do List.”
http://www.babson.edu/Academics/teaching-research/gvv/Pages/curriculum.aspx

http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15416518.2012.708854

Transcript of Narration
Written and Narrated by Mary C. Gentile

When the subject of “values” is raised, we will often hear two conflicting response. On the one hand, some folks will say: “Well, values are entirely relative. It depends on your family, your religion, your culture, your politics, etc. There is no clear right or wrong because everyone sees the issues differently.” On the other hand, some folks will say: “Of course, there are clear values and I know what they are and it really doesn’t matter what you say or think.”

Both of these positions – the entirely relativistic and the entirely absolutist perspective – make it difficult to have a real, meaningful and constructive conversation about how to enact values in our careers and our wider lives.

The First Pillar of GVV acknowledges that while cultural, political and religious differences do exist, research suggests that there still are a set of widely shared, universal “hyper-norms” -- values that seem to be espoused by most people, across time and culture. This is good news! A conversation about values is POSSIBLE – because we all share common ground.
On the other hand, this list of universal values is a really, really short list – things like honesty, respect, fairness, compassion - and therefore we should not assume too much commonality.

When we encounter a values conflict, first ask if it rises to the level of one of these core values to make sure that the conflict is not just a matter of personal style or preference or comfort...but rather that a true ethical principle is at stake. And then if the challenge DOES raise a core value, we can frame our approach to appeal to the core values that most others are likely to share.¹

So, rather than framing a business ethics issue in terms that are likely to only be meaningful to ourselves, or to those who share our particular cultural or industry norms, we can talk, for example, about the potential impacts of the decision on others – customers, employees, the community – and in this way implicitly appeal to shared values.

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This material is based upon the Giving Voice To Values curriculum (www.GivingVoiceToValues.org). The Aspen Institute was founding partner, along with the Yale School of Management, and incubator for Giving Voice To Values (GVV). Now based and supported at Babson College.

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