



A Tale of Two Stories: The “Do-Over”

Earlier in the module, you were asked to identify a time when you effectively enacted your values and a time when you failed to do so. You answered a set of questions about the things that motivate you; what made it easier (the “Enablers”) and what made it more difficult (the “Disablers”), and how you feel about your actions today. By responding to these questions, you were able to examine your own track record and realize that you have a choice (GVV Pillar #3) because you have exercised it. You also were able to identify some of your own strengths (GVV Pillar # 5) so you can try to frame values challenges in ways that will help you make use of them more often. And you identified the areas where you sometimes struggle so you can be sure to look for support or allies if you find yourself in such situations.

Assignment Description

In order to build the confidence and skills to choose to act on your values more often, go back to your story of NOT voicing/enacting your values from the Tale of Two Stories and re-write the ending by responding to the eight questions below. Given the tools and insights you now have after completing the first parts of this module, this is a chance for a “do-over.” If you ever encounter a similar situation, you will now have scripted and rehearsed more effective ways to be yourself and to effectively enact your values.

1. If you encounter such a situation again, what position and impact do you want to have and what are the values that guide you to that position?

What position do you want to take?	
What impact do you want to have?	

What values guide you to that position?	
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Example: If someone asked you to lie for them, you might want to be able to say “no” in a way that helps them see why integrity is important in this situation. You want to do so in a way that maintains your relationship with that person and that influences them to find an honest way to address this situation as well.

What position do you want to take?	If a team-mate asked me to lie to our professor for them, I might want to be able to say “no” without sacrificing my good working relationship with the team-mate.
What impact do you want to have?	To help them understand why lying is not an appropriate or useful approach and to hopefully help them see other ways to address the issue at hand. I also want them to understand that I have their best interest in mind, as well as your own, so I may want to help them figure out a constructive and honest way to communicate their difficult message with the professor.
What values guide you to that position?	Honesty, compassion.

2. What is at risk for each of the affected parties, including yourself?

Affected Parties	Risks
Yourself	

3. What are three Reasons and Rationalizations you might encounter when you try to enact your values? (Revisit the lecture “GVV Pillars: Reasons & Rationalizations” for some examples, but you may need to identify different ones, depending on the situation you are working on.)

4. What data do you need to gather?

Example: You can analyze the arguments that individuals are making to support unethical action, in order to find the flaws or the incomplete information they may be using.

5. What is one positive and one negative example you can draw upon?

Example: Are there examples of the positive impacts of acting ethically or the negative impacts of failing to do so that you can gather? Are there inspiring stories of ways that the organization or individuals have successfully acted on their values?

Positive example	
Negative example	

6. Will you do this alone, or will you try to enlist allies? Give at least one reason supporting the approach you have chosen.

Approach	
Supporting reason	

7. How could you respond to the Reasons & Rationalizations that you identified in Question #3?

Example: If someone said that this issue was not important enough to worry about, you might counter by saying that it is often much easier to address such a situation when it is smaller, before it leads to larger and riskier situations. Then, you could strengthen your position by providing an example.

Reasons & Rationalizations	Response to Reasons & Rationalizations

8. What are three levers you can use to strengthen your position? (Revisit the lecture “Levers for Influence/Impact: It Depends Where You Sit to review.)

This material has been adapted for the Online Ethics Center from the Giving Voice to Values content created by Dr. Mary Gentile.