

Values Activity

Model Answer

Please note that this model answer is designed to help you understand why the correct answer is most representative of our values. It does not matter if you didn't select the correct answer first time, but we encourage you to reflect on why you chose that answer compared to the rationale provided. If you got them all correct, well done!

Demonstrating respect, integrity and accountability are values we can all work and live by. Think about how you demonstrate these behaviours in your personal and professional life. What more could you do to live these values, so they become part of your personal brand attributes? How does it make you feel when you show respect towards others, act with integrity and be accountable for your behaviour and outcomes? I bet it feels good and people respond more positively towards you! This is why these values are an integral part of working at Microsoft.

Respect

Scenario 1

You are in a team meeting and a new idea is presented by a colleague for improving efficiency. You don't believe it will work, as it directly negatively impacts on one of the key processes that is needed to ensure outcomes happen on time and to budget. You feel uncomfortable as they begin to explain all the great reasons why this new process should be implemented, and the rest of the team seem interested in learning more and seem to be on board with the idea. You want to tell them why you don't think the idea will work. How do you share your views whilst demonstrating the value of **Respect**?

- a. Say nothing, as it's not fair to interrupt and shut the idea down. You don't want to discourage them as continuous improvement is important. They will find out at some point why it won't work.
- b. Suggest they talk to other colleagues to get their input on the idea.
- c. Tell them directly why the idea won't work. This will save time and mean everyone can focus on other important issues that require addressing.
- d. Listen to their idea fully to learn more about the benefits and to see if your concerns have been addressed. Ask them probing questions to help them identify where they may need to direct their efforts to ensure the benefits they intend to achieve are realized.

This is the best answer to demonstrate Respect, as you are showing curiosity for their idea, not shutting them down early and really seeking to understand their thinking and also encourage them to think more deeply about what they are proposing. If they haven't considered all the impacts of their idea, you are treating them with dignity by asking questions to help them identify areas they may need to consider further. If you outline your concerns in a way that recognizes the value of their intended purpose i.e., creating efficiency, you will demonstrate a respectful and supportive approach.

Respect

Scenario 2

You are working in a small project group and are getting very frustrated with one of the team members as every idea you present, they counter it with something that is totally different. It's getting harder to work with them as your ideas, thinking and personalities seem to be polar opposites. Other people in the team are starting to notice it and it is becoming a distraction and sense of tension among the team. You need to do something about it. What would you do that demonstrates the value of **Respect**?

- a. Request a one-on-one meeting with them for the purposes of working together to build a better relationship.

This demonstrates Respect for several reasons. Firstly, you are setting up a private meeting which should contribute to a more open and honest discussion. It also gives them time to prepare for the meeting. Secondly, you are positioning the meeting as being future focused – building a better relationship. In the meeting, you would demonstrate respect by seeking to understand who they are, what drives them, what frustrates them and what they value in working with other team members, so you can understand their perspective and needs. Throughout the meeting, you would demonstrate respect by listening actively and without judgement and not getting defensive. You would be focused on looking for common ground and finding a way to work together to ensure both of your needs are being met in your working relationship.

- b. Send an email to them outlining all of your concerns about them and asking them to respond.
- c. You want the team to see you are addressing the issue, so in the next team meeting you call out that it's obvious you and the team member have different views on everything but would like to ensure you can work better together in the future.
- d. Approach them at the end of the next team meeting to 'catch them in the moment' and speak to them about how they are making you feel.

Integrity

Scenario 1

Two of your colleagues were discussing another team member's failure to perform. They talked critically about the team member's lack of skill and imagination. They criticized his follow-through efforts and the quality of his work. They said that he was a nice guy but just wasn't very good at his job. You enter the room in the midst of the gossip and discussion, listen for a minute, and then interrupt. What would you say that demonstrates the most **integrity** in this situation?

a. You suggest to your colleagues that they raise their concerns with Human Resources.

b. You ask your colleagues if they have specific examples of the issues they are concerned about and the impacts, and suggest they discuss these directly with the team member.

This is the better option for demonstrating integrity because you are encouraging your colleagues to raise their concerns directly with the team member. By suggesting they use an evidence-based approach (with examples of their concerns and the impacts), they are using facts to help their team member understand their behaviour. This can also support the team member in responding to the feedback and giving them an opportunity to address their behaviour. Acting with integrity means being open and honest when communicating with others and encouraging others to do so. You should always be aiming to set a positive example and resolve challenges and conflicts in a respectful way. You want to build trust and effective interpersonal relationships with your colleagues at work. Being involved in gossip undermines trust. Integrity means confronting gossip and acting in a principled way.

c. You ask if you can join the discussion because the team member is really frustrating you also.

d. You raise your colleagues' concerns with your manager as you know they won't feel confident speaking up.

Integrity

Scenario 2

You are facing two very tight deadlines with work projects and are starting to feel quite stressed about being able to meet the deadlines. You don't want to let anyone down, but you don't see how this work can be done in time to your usual high standard. You are aware of some previous research that has been carried out by another organization in relation to one of your projects. You know that most people are not familiar with this research, so you could easily meet your deadline if you just included this research and submitted it as your own. What action would demonstrate **Integrity**?

- a. You work through the night and weekend to try and get both projects done on time without using the other research.
- b. You take small parts of the research and integrate it with your own work as this seems a reasonable compromise.
- c. You speak to your manager to explain the pressure you are under to meet both deadlines and what the options could be to manage this.

This would be the preferred action to demonstrate integrity, as you are focused on pursuing the right outcomes but wanting to ensure you are seeking support and guidance in managing your work and outputs most effectively. It is important you are truthful and proactive in discussing concerns or challenges and seeking guidance. Raising issues with a solution focused approach is also highly valued. It is very important you remain committed to not violating any policies or laws and in this case, using research without recognizing the source in your work. We must always hold ourselves to the highest possible integrity standards in every aspect of our work and behaviour.

- d. You speak to someone you trust to get their opinion on using some elements of the existing research as part of your own work.

Accountability

Scenario 1

You have submitted a piece of work to your senior manager that will be circulated among the leadership team. You have been working on it for a month and you were really pleased with what you produced. You are excited as this is the chance for you to get noticed by more senior people. You quickly re-read the work before going to a meeting about it with the leadership team and you find that there is a mistake in it, where you have referenced the wrong source which impacts one of your key arguments. You don't know what to do about this, as you've already sent the work off. What would be the best action to demonstrate **accountability**?

- a. Call the senior manager immediately and admit your error and tell them you can get an updated version to them straightaway and suggest that the updated version is distributed in the meeting with an apology from you.

This would be the best way to demonstrate accountability as you are being responsible for your results and you are taking the initiative to identify an appropriate solution. It is likely that you will gain respect from the senior manager for being honest and upfront about what has happened. We are all human and we make mistakes. How we deal with our mistakes and learn from them, is what is most important. Remember to always take accountability for what you have done and from learning and improving your behaviour for next time.

- b. Email your senior manager and ask them to help you divert attention from this in the meeting until you can fix it up later.
- c. Do nothing – it's already been sent, so no point bringing it up now, you can always tailor your viewpoint in the meeting to reflect the work referenced. It will take too much time to fix it now and you have other urgent priorities.
- d. Speak to a trusted colleague to get their point of view and ask for any advice from them.

Accountability

Scenario 2

You are really busy at work and one of your close colleagues comes to you with a work problem. You usually would stop to help them, but you are currently working to a really tight deadline and could do without the interruption. In fact, the interruption is starting to frustrate you. Which of the following responses most demonstrates **accountability**?

- a. Explain politely that you are very busy with a tight deadline so can't help them today but suggest someone who may be able to help instead or suggest an alternative time to meet tomorrow.

This demonstrates accountability the most as you are focused on achieving the outcomes expected of you. It is also recognizing your colleague needs support and suggesting options to help them get their needs met. Your colleague will feel supported even if you are not able to help them straightaway.

- b. Apologize that you are busy but say that if they are really quick you may be able to give them 1 minute of your time.
- c. Ask them to come back tomorrow so that you can take time to really listen to them and offer the help and support that they need.
- d. Stop what you are doing and offer to go for a quick drink to talk about what is happening for them.