

* Discounted Cash Flow is a method of valuation which is used to arrive at the value of an investment or an asset based on its expected future cash flows

*In simple terms we aim to arrive at the value today based on the cash flows of tomorrow

- *The model can be applied to a range of cash flows:
 - * Dividends
 - * Earnings
 - *Operating Cash Flow
 - *Free Cash Flow (the most common)

- *Dividend Discount Model
- *Discounted Asset Model
- *Discounted Residual Income
- *Discounted FCF

*In all cases the model required a "rate of return" or discount with which to discount the future cash flows to present day values

- *This takes account of the time value of money
- *The basis of which is a dollar or a pound in your pocket today is more valuable to you than a dollar or a pound in your pocket in 12 months time.

*The following steps are required to arrive at a DCF Valuation

- *Project unlevered FCFs
- *Calculate the Terminal Value
- *Establish the Discount Rate or Rate of Return
- *Calculate the Enterprise value by discounting the projected unlevered FCFs and Terminal Value to Present Value
- *Calculate the Equity Value by subtracting net debt from Enterprise Value

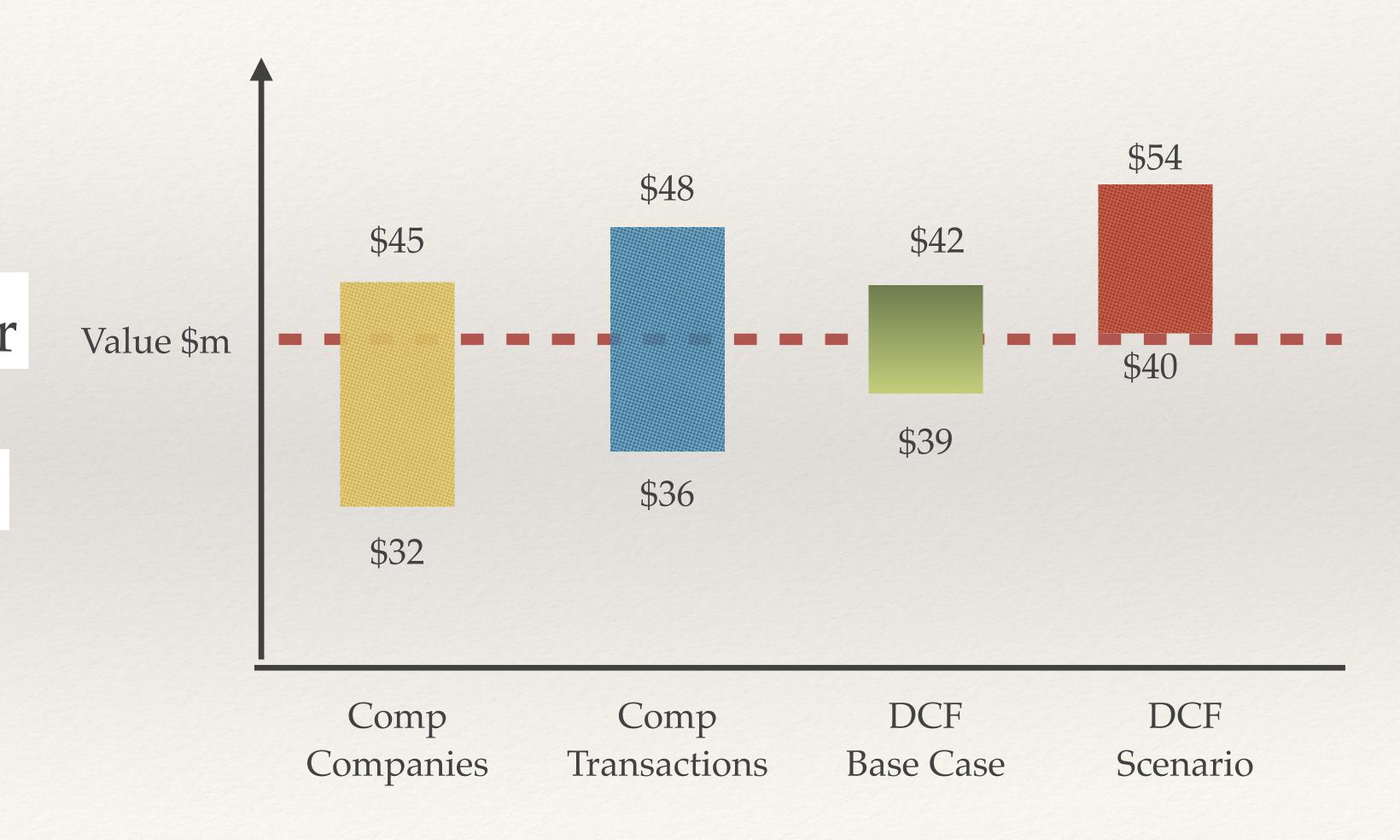
*If you are calculating the value of a company, the DCF will give you an "absolute" value based on your initial assumptions

*If you are using the method to evaluate an investment, the investment will be profitable if the DCF value exceeds the initial cost of the investment

*If you are evaluating a listed company, the DCF valuation can be compared to the company's current stock price to understand whether the company is undervalued or overvalued in the market

- *A DCF valuation should seldom be used on a standalone basis
- *It is advisable to balance this approach with market based methods such as Comparable Companies and Comparable Transactions

- *This enables you to arrive at a range of values for your asset
- *You can then adjust your modelling assumptions to test different scenario outcomes to evaluate their impact on the valuation



*A DCF valuation is not without its challenges and we will examine this method in detail to gain a better understanding of its advantages and disadvantages, as well at the implications of the assumptions and decisions made in its preparation

