

## TEACHING NOTE THE SUBJECTIVE VALUE INVENTORY (SVI)<sup>1</sup>

### Objectives

The Subjective Value Inventory (SVI) is a questionnaire designed to measure social psychological outcomes of a negotiation, such as satisfaction, interpersonal rapport, and impressions of oneself. The questionnaire can be used in conjunction with a negotiation simulation in class or with a real-life negotiation conducted outside of class. These are the learning objectives associated with using the SVI:

1. To help students learn to conceptualize their performance in a negotiation along multiple dimensions;
2. To help students compare their own perspectives following negotiations to those perspectives held by others;
3. To provide students with individualized feedback concerning the impressions that their negotiation counterparts hold about them.

### Operational Needs

**Group Size:** No restrictions.

**Time Required:** For Option 1—approximately 5-10 minutes immediately following each negotiation with which the questionnaire is used, plus 10-20 minutes for class discussion, with the further option to allow students to share their feedback with their respective counterparts. For Option 2—approximately 5-10 minutes following each negotiation with which the questionnaire is used, plus 30 minutes to discuss the results in class.

**Special Materials:** The SVI questionnaire appears in the book. The scoring key is provided at the end of this teaching note. If using Option 2, a computerized spreadsheet is necessary to calculate averages and percentile scores for each student in the class (a sample feedback table is provided at the end of this note as a model for what the spreadsheet might look like).

**Physical Requirements:** No special requirements.

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<sup>1</sup> Developed by Jared R. Curhan and Hillary Anger Elfenbein. Used here with permission. All rights reserved. For more information, see [www.subjectivevalue.com](http://www.subjectivevalue.com).

## **Advance Preparation**

None required. If using this questionnaire to provide feedback (objective #3), instructors might consider arranging for the administration of the questionnaire online.

## **Operating Procedure**

There are two different methods for using this questionnaire. The first method is simpler and can work with a single negotiation simulation or multiple simulations. The second method requires at least two negotiation simulations, and involves some additional work on the part of the instructor, but allows students to receive more candid, anonymous individualized feedback from their classmates. In past administrations, students have reported that they found this feedback to be informative and helpful.

### ***OPTION 1***

1. Select one or more negotiation simulations from your class with which to use this questionnaire. Ideally you should select at least one negotiation occurring during the early part of your class so that your students will have the opportunity to act upon their learning and experiment with changing their behavior during subsequent simulations.
2. For each selected negotiation simulation, explain to your students that you would like them to complete a 5-10-minute questionnaire immediately following their negotiation. PLEASE NOTE that every student is to complete this questionnaire *individually*, so you will need to make enough copies of the questionnaire for everyone.
3. Students should be asked to hand the instrument to the instructor, who may compile class averages and then hand the questionnaires back.
4. Photocopy the SCORING KEY at the end of this teaching note and distribute to students so that they can score their own negotiation. This key aggregates the items into four dimensions:
  - a) Feelings about the Instrumental Outcome
  - b) Feelings about Oneself
  - c) Feelings about the Process
  - d) Feelings about the Relationship

The four dimensions emerged from cluster analysis, multidimensional scaling, and factor analysis of data from a broad spectrum of lay people, negotiation practitioners, and negotiation theorists about what they value in a negotiation (Curhan, Elfenbein, & Xu, 2006).

5. Discussion (10-20 minutes): Show students the class averages so that they can compare their own “subjective value” with the class average on each of the four dimensions. It will often be the case that subjective value differs from objective or economic value. For example, if you are using a transactional negotiation involving

the purchase and sale of a product, students can compare the dollar value of the deal to their subjective value. Whereas students may tend to prioritize dollar value over subjective value, neither is more important. Although objective value is indisputably a more concrete indicator of performance in negotiation, subjective value has been shown to matter *more* than objective value in predicting desire for future relationships (Curhan et al., 2006). This typically leads to a rich discussion about the broad range of interests and goals held by negotiators, and how those goals might shift depending upon the context of the negotiation.

6. (Optional) After you debrief the negotiation simulation in class, you might consider having your students meet with their respective counterparts to share and discuss their ratings of subjective value. However, if this step is to be undertaken, instructors should warn students upfront that they may be asked to share their ratings with their counterparts. Furthermore, instructors are strongly encouraged to teach their students how to provide *constructive* feedback and how to *accept* feedback from another student. When giving feedback, students should speak about their subjective value as their own *perceptions* as opposed to some kind of objective truth about the counterpart. Also, feedback can be softened when it is made concerning the counterpart *in role* as opposed to the counterpart in real life. When receiving feedback, students should remember that feedback is based on individually held subjective perceptions. Don't try to argue with the feedback; rather accept it as how your counterparts *feels*, and spend your energy trying to learn from that subjective perception.

## **OPTION 2**

1. Select two or more negotiation simulations from your class with which to use this questionnaire. The more negotiation simulations you use, the more anonymous and candid your students can be with their feedback. Ideally you should select negotiations occurring during the early part of your class so that the feedback (step 4) will take place prior to the end of the course, and your students will have the opportunity to act upon their learning and experiment with changing their behavior during subsequent simulations. Negotiations involving two parties work better than negotiations involving three or more parties.
2. Follow the procedure described above to administer the questionnaire immediately after each of the selected negotiation simulations in your course. Encourage students to be as candid as possible in their ratings, as all feedback will occur in aggregate, preserving students' anonymity.
3. Students should be asked to put their own name and their counterpart's name on the instrument and hand it in to the instructor, who may compile class averages, return them to students, and conduct a discussion, following a procedure similar to the one outlined in Steps 4-5 of Option 1.
4. At a certain point in the class, when the instructor has collected student data from at least two negotiation simulations, the instructor can use a computerized spreadsheet to calculate for each student in the class a CUMULATIVE FEEDBACK TABLE similar to the sample table provided at the end of this exercise.

5. Discussion (30 minutes): Provide each student with his or her CUMULATIVE FEEDBACK TABLE and show students the class averages so that they can compare their own “subjective value” and their counterparts’ “subjective value” with the class average on each of the four dimensions. In addition to having a discussion similar to the one outlined in Step 5 of Option 1, you might consider discussing students’ responses to this new information. For those who had lower subjective value among their counterparts, what might be the implications for reputations and future negotiations? How might students *change* their behavior so as to enhance their own and their counterparts’ subjective value? This can lead to a good discussion about empathy, listening, and other forms of relationship building in negotiation.

## **Reference**

Curhan, J. R., Elfenbein, H. A., & Xu, H. (2006). What do people value when they negotiate? Mapping the domain of subjective value in negotiation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *91*, 493-512.

## **FOUR DIMENSIONS OF SUBJECTIVE VALUE**

- 1. Feelings about the Instrumental Outcome**
- 2. Feelings about Oneself**
- 3. Feelings about the Process**
- 4. Feelings about the Relationship**

# SUBJECTIVE VALUE INVENTORY SCORING KEY

(Based on Curhan, Elfenbein, and Xu, 2006)

## Feelings about the Instrumental Outcome

Item 1 \_\_\_\_\_  
Item 2 \_\_\_\_\_  
8 minus Item 3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Item 4 \_\_\_\_\_  
Total \_\_\_\_\_  
Average (T/4) \_\_\_\_\_ (a)

## Feelings about the Process

Item 9 \_\_\_\_\_  
Item 10 \_\_\_\_\_  
Item 11 \_\_\_\_\_  
Item 12 \_\_\_\_\_  
Total \_\_\_\_\_  
Average (T/4) \_\_\_\_\_ (c)

## Feelings about Oneself

8 minus Item 5 \_\_\_\_\_  
Item 6 \_\_\_\_\_  
Item 7 \_\_\_\_\_  
Item 8 \_\_\_\_\_  
Total \_\_\_\_\_  
Average (T/4) \_\_\_\_\_ (b)

## Feelings about the Relationship

Item 13 \_\_\_\_\_  
Item 14 \_\_\_\_\_  
Item 15 \_\_\_\_\_  
Item 16 \_\_\_\_\_  
Total \_\_\_\_\_  
Average (T/4) \_\_\_\_\_ (d)

## Global Subjective Value

Total lines a through d \_\_\_\_\_  
Average lines a through d (T/4) \_\_\_\_\_

**SUBJECTIVE VALUE INVENTORY  
CUMULATIVE FEEDBACK TABLE**

[SAMPLE]

**Personalized feedback for: Jane Doe**

	<b>How you felt in your negotiations</b>	<b>How others felt when negotiating with you</b>
<b>Instrumental</b>	<b>6.25 [85]</b>	<b>3.50 [10]</b>
<b>Self</b>	<b>5.50 [50]</b>	<b>5.05 [32]</b>
<b>Process</b>	<b>4.87 [33]</b>	<b>4.00 [28]</b>
<b>Relationship</b>	<b>4.60 [42]</b>	<b>4.23 [32]</b>
<b>Global</b>	<b>5.30 [56]</b>	<b>4.20 [23]</b>

[percentiles in brackets]

Higher numbers = more positive