



Leveraging valuegraphics for personalised medical aid advice

As a financial adviser, you know each client has unique needs and financial challenges. Personalised advice builds trust and loyalty and is crucial for ensuring client satisfaction and forging lasting relationships. This is especially true for healthcare advice, as the purchase of medical cover will most likely be for the medium to long term, unlike fast-moving consumer goods and one-off services. Learn how valuegraphics can take you to the next level as an adviser.

The evolution of client personas

Developing client personas is a common strategy for matching clients to specific products like medical aid plans. In the past, these personas relied greatly on demographic factors (such as age, health status, family situation, and income).

Take Danny as an example. He is a 32-year-old single Zulu IT specialist who leads a healthy lifestyle and lives in Pretoria, Gauteng. Based purely on demographics, his client persona may suggest a basic medical aid plan like [Medihelp's MedVital Elect](#) or a savings plan like [MedAdd Elect](#), which covers emergency and hospital expenses at an affordable monthly rate.

Although [demographics might be a good starting point](#) to establish Danny's client persona and match him with the right medical aid plan, this data or information is predominantly based on quantitative factors which may result in stereotyping and ineffective advice. In other words, the wrong cover. Two individuals of the same age, gender, and population group may not prioritise the same medical aid benefits. Factors like age and family situations are also subject to change.

Medihelp's Head of Marketing, Lien Potgieter, explains, "Adding [psychographic factors](#) (such as cognitive aspects, activities, attitude, interests, and opinions) to your client personas can provide a much more holistic view. But these factors can also change and may vary across contexts, making them less ideal as deciding factors for long-term purchases like medical aid cover."



Why values matter in healthcare advice

From worldwide research and Medihelp's own experience, it is evident that consumers are more motivated and driven by their values today [than by demographics and psychographics combined](#).

[Values](#) are fundamental and non-negotiable principles that guide people's behaviour and decision-making. Values act as a compass, influencing clients' choices. According to the [Barrett Value Centre](#), values arise from our inherent human needs and what we deem important and essential for our well-being.

[Studies show](#) that people are more likely to do business with companies that give back to the community and align with their values. Medihelp's employees actively participate in making a positive impact in our communities through our [corporate social investment \(CSI\) programme](#).

In the article [Making marketing better: How values are disrupting demographics](#), Sheila Callahan says, "People base their decisions on something other than what they are. They base decisions on what they value."

Understanding your clients' values allows you to create a more accurate picture of who they are, their preferences, experiences, behaviours, goals, and needs. This knowledge can help you customise your sales approach effectively, crafting persuasive, human-centred arguments that will resonate with your clients' beliefs and motivations, enhancing your ability to influence their decisions in a positive way.

Valuegraphics: An imperative approach

David Allison, author of [The death of demographics](#) and [We are all the same age now](#), founded the [Valuegraphics Research Company](#). This organisation built a database from over a million surveys across 180 countries, identifying 56 core human values influencing behaviour. Valuegraphics provide a great new way to gain vital insights into target audiences, moving beyond traditional demographics.

Common values and their importance

[Allison's research](#) suggests that family, relationships, financial security, belonging, and community are universally important. Recognising regional and cultural differences in value systems is also crucial. For example, in Africa, prominent values include religion/spirituality and patience. This highlights the importance of developing client personas with values at its core. Here are some practical examples of how values may influence clients' choice of medical aid cover.



- Clients who prioritise **financial stability** may prefer plans with emergency funds/cover and protection against unexpected expenses.
- Those who value the **well-being of their family** may consider plans that also support their loved ones' health needs.
- Individuals who are **health-conscious** might invest in cover that provides preventive care benefits and access to wellness programmes.
- People who seek **independence** may, in turn, favour savings plans that allow them flexibility in managing their finances.

Four tips to determine your clients' values

Clients appreciate it when you genuinely put their well-being first. Here are four tips:

1. Advisers can determine client values through **active listening** and **asking open-ended questions**.
2. Engaging in conversations about **clients' values, interests, and life goals** helps advisors adopt a client-centred approach, where each client's uniqueness is celebrated instead of just being a number on a spreadsheet.
3. Advisers should be **authentic, genuine, and transparent** about their personal values. Sharing stories or experiences that align with their values can help clients connect on a deeper level.
4. **Trust, empathy, and rapport** are crucial in building strong, successful, and long-term client-adviser relationships.

Three key questions

Lien suggests following David Allison's lead in asking three specific questions to identify client values:

1. Why do you go to work every day?
2. Why would you give away half of your lottery winnings?
3. What advice would you give to yourself from ten years ago and why?

Patterns in the answers to these questions reveal prominent values that drive clients' decisions

At Medihelp, it is extremely important to empower our business partners with knowledge so that they can serve our members with informed, compassionate, and human-centred advice.

Applying values to medical aid plans

Understanding a client's values allows you to provide more relevant and accurate recommendations and highlight plan features that will resonate with them on a personal level. Let's look at the example of Danny again.

During your conversation with Danny, you learned that he values family and financial security. He also cares for his elderly grandmother in rural KwaZulu-Natal. From his demographic profile, you know his budget allows for more healthcare expenses. This might lead you to reconsider the basic or savings plan in favour of a more comprehensive plan like [Medihelp's MedPrime](#), with unlimited private hospitalisation benefits for his grandmother and ample protection against unexpected expenses, including dental and optometry cover.

Integrating valuegraphics with demographics

As illustrated by the example above, while demographics remain relevant, valuegraphics provide an essential extra layer of information for more effective marketing and personalised service. Understanding clients' core values can help advisers tailor recommendations, highlight plan features that resonate with clients' priorities, and ultimately build trust and enhance relationships to drive business success.