

VMBA Office Culture & Operations Guide

Vision

Make the VMBA office a fun, collaborative, and fulfilling place to work while supporting strong work-life balance.

Communications

Use the right channel for the right message:

- **Google Chat** — quick, simple, or informal exchanges
- **Email** — detailed information or anything involving external parties
- **Text** — urgent matters only

Respect working hours. Do not expect responses before 9 am or after 5 pm. If something is truly urgent, call or text.

Allow a full business day for non-urgent requests. Urgent needs should be the exception, not the rule.

Respond in a timely manner:

- Internal emails — within two (2) business days
- Chats — within the same business day
- If you can't immediately fulfill a request, acknowledge it and provide a clear timeline for follow-up

Build a resilient communications structure:

- Use shared inboxes (e.g., info@, events@, marketing@) that route to the responsible team member
 - Reduce inbound volume by improving the FAQ section of the website and implementing automated responses such as a chatbot or auto-reply system
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Availability

- Weekly staff meetings are held in person unless rescheduled or circumstances require otherwise
 - Staff should communicate their work location — office or remote — at the weekly meeting or via Google Calendar
 - Core collaborative hours are **10 am–3 pm**; the remainder of the workday is flexible and up to the individual
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Time Off

Time off should be real time off. Avoid contacting staff when they're out of the office. If you do need something, consolidate your asks into a single message for when they return.

Before taking time off, shift or hand off responsibilities so you can fully unplug. Communicate planned absences early and keep your calendar updated so the full team has visibility.

Efficiency

Continuously look for tools and practices that make us more effective individually and as a team. Areas to explore include:

- **Communication tools** — internal (e.g., Slack) and external (e.g., AI-assisted responses)
 - **Project management** — tools like Monday.com to keep work organized and visible
 - **Reducing overlap** — be deliberate about who needs to be in a meeting or on a project; keep relevant staff informed without over-including
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Decision-Making

Our guiding principle: **do what is best for VMBA as an organization.**

Every team member is encouraged to weigh in on important decisions and raise concerns openly. We aim for consensus on major decisions and trust the collective wisdom of the team.

When consensus isn't clear, the person **Accountable** for the relevant project or area has the final say.

Once a decision is made, all team members are expected to support it fully and move forward together.