

The Offy Handbook

A practical guidebook to a more fulfilling Offy life!

Welcome to Officience! Whether you're a new member of our tribe, someone hoping to join us or a long time Offy, you'll find everything you need to understand our why in this Handbook. More importantly you'll also discover *how* we do what we do. From performance management to leave requests, and going through our internal social network, this how life happens at Officience!

Last but not least, this is a continuous work in progress, we adjust our way of working to better fit our purpose every day. Should you have questions, comment or concerns, we're here to help.

Have a nice read!

So what is in there?

The Offy Life

Officience - Offsharing in Vietnam

Our culture, causes and values you shall understand, live by and promote

The right attitude you shall have

As a sensor you shall act

Google+ you shall use

On your own you shall decide

A few words you shall unlearn. And a few more you shall learn.

Customer confidentiality you shall ensure

Your own time you shall manage

Your influencers you shall identify

Your own salary you shall decide

Your roles you shall choose and regularly update

Your contribution - and your peers' - you shall monitor

The Offy Communities

OffiRead

AperOffy

GreenOffy

oTOD

VIVO

A few books you may want to read

Useful resources

The Offy Life

Officiency - Offshoring in Vietnam

Our purpose is to make sure that Vietnam skips the age of mass consumerism and leapfrogs to the new global sharing and connection economy.



Our culture, causes and values you shall understand, live by and promote

First things first. That should come as obvious, but if you decided to join us, and if we identified you as a member of our tribe, it means you fit the following portrait:

You embrace [our causes](#).



You live by [our values](#).

Commitment: Do what you Say

No action is engaged without a definition of the expected final results. We only have one word and managing the proper expectation from our interlocutors is a daily concern.

Open & Sincere: Say what you Think

We believe that the world is better when we can openly and constructively share our feelings, thoughts, and doubts. It implies an environment of trust where constructive criticisms are encouraged.

Merit: Lead by Example

Justice is important to us, and we strive to maintain a permanent state of awareness so that each of us gives and receives its fair share of returns.

Innovation: Think out of the Box

We encourage creativity and innovation and are willing to accept the risks that come with it. This attitude is at the root of the continuous improvement that is part of our promise.

Caring: I Know therefore I Care

We empathize with the men and women we interact with daily, living in their shoes and caring with passion about solving the problems that prevents them to be happy. We get our satisfaction from seeing them smiling.

The right attitude you shall have

Functioning without managers requires self-responsibility from each Offy, that translates into the following attitude. Keep in mind these are not simply best practices. It's *part of your responsibility* as an Offy.

Self-Managing

You are the actor of your life. Note that we did not use the word “career” here. Your life happens within Officience, but also outside of Officience. And our objective as an organization is not to drive you through the ladder of success. It is simply to accompany you in whatever life goal you have, whether they are within the organization, or outside.

As you will read in this handbook, we put in place a few processes such as salary reviews, performance evaluation, or identifying influencers. Don't consider these as “processes” that you “have to” apply. They are simply guidelines to help you better manage your life. And you should maximize any opportunity to exchange with your influencers about your life.

Knowing when you don't know

Letting anyone in the organization make any kind of decision has its side effect: It can lead to “bad” decisions for the organization.

There are two ways to ensure this does not happen:

- The first one, that you will discover a bit later, is the advice process. You cannot make any decision without having followed this advice process.
- The second one is related: you need to know when you don't know. You have to understand which are the situations where you are a bit short, and should look for advice.

Acting as a sensor

A very common question of the organization is: If I don't have a manager, who makes sure I gets things done and bring value to the company? The answer is simple: every single one of your peers.

As a consequence, it is part of your responsibility to address any situation that makes you feel uncomfortable through one-on-one, open talks. [Here](#) are a few pieces of advice to raise this type of concerns. Acting as a sensor is not a way to “create troubles”. It is simply to ensure fairness, balance and that everyone is working towards the same goal.

If you read the above carefully, you also understood that there is a kind of attitude that we should absolutely avoid: complaining about a situation, and doing nothing to address it.

As a sensor you shall act

“Be the change you want to see in the world” - Gandhi

Wait, we just covered that part... Why do we need to talk about it again?

The reason is simple: it is the most critical attitude that will make our organization thrive. It is the glue that will ensure we are moving forward every single day.

Now, one interesting thing about “acting as a sensor” is that its principles go against the “natural” culture that we can often notice here in Vietnam. Yes, it is a blunt statement. Most people don’t want to be seen as troublemaker. They will prefer to avoid addressing a sensitive point rather than taking it as a chance to improve the organization.

If you tend to complain about things without taking action, don’t even think about working at Officience. It is the most unproductive attitude: it creates bad feelings, not only for you but for everyone around you.

So, how to act as a sensor? “Be the change you want to see at Officience”.
Keep that motto in mind, and everything will be fine.

No complaining

Complaining is not productive. It creates bad feelings. So how to turn a complaint into a positive action?

Two solutions:

- If you start complaining about something, stop and think: “What can I do to address that?”
- If you hear someone complain about something, tell him/her: “Ok, enough complaining! What can you do to change that?”

Sharing bad feelings is natural. We all do this. The trick is to be aware when you (or someone around you) start doing it, and turning it into *an opportunity to change things*.

What kind of concerns should you share? As soon as it becomes too hard to keep for yourself, share it. By practicing it, you will notice that the question is less WHAT to share, and more HOW to share it. We all have things that annoy us on a daily basis. What we need to learn is how to make the most of these small annoying things.

You may think that constantly sharing concerns and annoying things makes for a very stressful working environment. It doesn’t. Sharing (and more important, *solving*) these small daily issues is what makes Officience a better place to work day after day.

Google+ you shall use

“By changing the way we communicate, we change society” - Clay Shirky

So how do we communicate? You may hear a lot about autonomy during recruitment, and autonomy doesn't come without transparency. How do we ensure this transparency? By communicating publicly as much as possible on a platform shared to everyone in the company, Google+. Heard about it yet? If the answer is “no”, you're off to a bad start, but it's not too late. Create an account. Go check it.

Google+ is now becoming your mailbox. Your main communication channel.

- Within the first hour of your life at Officience, create a Google+ Account.
- Check it every day. How much do you check your mails? Well, that much.
- Be open, share your activities, your feelings, your life in the company.
- Before sending a mail, stop and think: “Can I put it on Google+ instead?”.
- It is now your mailbox. No more mails. Just Google+.

You may forget to add Offy in your circle, but don't forget adding [Offyspace community](#). A place to meet other Offies, know what's going on in Officience, share your latest project updates or simply your feelings!

On your own you shall decide

A very important principle of our organization is that each of us can make any decision as he or she sees necessary to the pursuit of Officience's success.

There are a few simple rules to ensure consistency and harmony, we call that this the Advice Process:

1) Before taking your decision you should take advice from all the people who will be impacted by your decision. It's up to you to identify them.

2) Before taking your decision you should also take advice from all the people who are experts in the subject matter of your decision. It's also up to you to identify them.

Taking advice means listening actively and with consideration. However it does not mean you need to do as they say, neither that you have to reach a consensus before moving on.

Remember that it's YOUR decision. You make it, you are fully responsible for it. For a few specific decisions that we have to take routinely, this Advice Process principle has been implemented into Dinh (*) to help us run them (salary review, purchases...). But in case no custom tool has been designed, the process shall still be hold and you can use generic tools like Google+ or Hangout as platform for your decision.

() Dinh is our OpenERP-based ERP system used mostly to allow individual time & skills management, opportunity and invoice tracking, people profiles update and purchase follow-up. The best way to learn how to use it is to ask your fellow Offies!*

A few words you shall unlearn. And a few more you shall learn.

We are proud to say Officiance is a learning environment, and funnily, part of the learning process can also involve “unlearning” a few things.

These are a few words and expressions that you want to stop using. Why? These sentences go against our values, our vision, whether it is by breaking the commitment idea or by going against the autonomy and no manager idea. So stop using them. Today.

- “I will try my best”
- “Can you validate/approve/review?”
- Manager. Boss. Staff.
- “I will reply/do it as soon as possible”

In return, at Officiance we welcome every individual as a whole, with its moods, its feelings, its doubts... As such, you will hear and you are invited to make extensive use of terms like:

- “I feel that ...”
- “I am happy / unhappy because ...”
- “I like / i dislike ...”
- “I sense that you are not satisfied.”
- “I think I made a mistake when I...”

Customer confidentiality you shall ensure

As an open organisation, we strive to be as transparent as possible. However, we do not practice "radical transparency" (i.e. full and complete transparency at any cost).

In particular:

- We respect the desire of our clients not to be transparent. As such, we sign and honor our NDA commitments, and even if no NDA has been signed, we treat any customer information as confidential by default.
- An incomplete view on a situation can be much more harmful than no information at all.

Henceforth, we strive to communicate information comprehensively, with the proper context to let the receiver properly capture and interpret the facts. For that reason, information that can leave way to erroneous misinterpretations are not published bluntly. In these situations, access shall be requested to any person identified as subject matter expert.

Your own time you shall manage

Daily Work

Self-management starts with the possibility to manage your own time. And we don't look at how many hours you work. At the end of the day, what matters is that you do what you love, and that it contributes to our overall cause.

Have a project deadline for tomorrow, and you're late? You may have to work until midnight (and review your way to manage your time)/

You're done with your job for the day, and it's only 4:30pm? Go home (and think about what more you could do to help Officience the next day).

True, there is a check-in / check-out machine at the entrance, and it's here only for the sake of security. We are not going to check your time. But please, check-in and check-out.

Lastly, to help you manage your own time even better, we put a timesheet system in place. Go check it, it happens [here](#).

Vacation

What is true for a working day is also true for vacation. You know what you have to do, you set your own deadlines. So you are the best judge of when you can (or cannot) take a leave. And believe me, you don't want to abandon your peers in times of heavy workload.

Remote Working

Whether it is in the office or outside, what matters is what you deliver. Again, you are the only judge of whether you need to be in the office to work on projects you decided to join.

Your influencers you shall identify

So if you read this far, you most probably understood by now that we have a pretty unique take on what “management” means. Basically, you are owner of your work, and nobody will be on your back to check what you do. It’s your responsibility.

That said, in traditional organizations, managers (when they are not too busy giving orders or controlling what you do) will also play the role of coach, leader, and sometimes even both.

These roles are critical, and we believe that nobody else but you should pick who will lead you throughout your projects and life.

Choosing such people will be super important for your life in the company (and by the way, these people can change over time), so choose wisely.



We do not expect you to choose them during your first day, or even the first week. It takes time to build relationships. But you will have to make sure that your influencers fill the following roles:

- Life coach(es): he/they will guide you towards your Element
- Skills coach(es): he/they will support you on building up your skills (no kidding)
- Project coach(es): he/they will be the ones leading you on the project you choose
- Vision leader(s): he/they will constantly keep you on the right company vision track

To choose your Spiritual Influencers, very simple, it happens [here](#).

Aside from these chosen influencers you are under the *de facto* influence of the people you spend most time with. Through your daily interactions on projects and at the coffee machine, you will be naturally exposed to their worldview, which will in turn become a part of your worldview. They know you better than anyone else in the organization, as much as you know them as well. These people are your Proximity Influencers, and you also need to nominate them into Dinh.

Once you have identified them, you shall create a Hangout room with all your influencers, so that you can maintain a continuous conversation with them. Last but not least, whether proximity or spiritual influencers, the keywords of these relationships should be mutual trust, benevolence and respect.

Your own salary you shall decide

Decisions on compensation and benefits follow the Advice process. The impacted and experts people from whom you should take advice are your Influencers :

- The Proximity Influencers are the ones who know you best, who know what you delivered, what's your potential, what are your ambitions, and how far from your Element you are.

- The Spiritual Influencers are the ones who know best who you want to be, but also through their seniority and broad perspective on the organization, who will know the other compensations packages in the company, to ensure fairness across the board.

Every Offy is invited to discuss at least once a year with his Influencers about his compensation and take their advice when he wants to change it.

At Officience, salaries ranges of everyone are available in Dinh. Why? We believe it's part of the information you need to have at hand when deciding (with your influencers) on your next salary.



Your roles you shall choose and regularly update

We strive to hire people based on a set of attitude and skills, and for that reason, it's not always clear at first what your "job" will be at Officience. Like most companies we do have specific projects which require a given expertise, but it can also happen we hire people because... we like them (read: their attitude fits with our culture, and they share our purpose).

As soon as you join us, and whether you were hired for a given project or not, your responsibility will be to define your mission within the company, through the form of roles. There are actually no limits to the number of roles you can have, as long as you follow a few ground rules.

What is a role? It is a mix of a scope of work and accountabilities. Yes, you read it well, even though you are self-managing, it doesn't mean you have no accountabilities (or ownership). The main difference is that these accountabilities are not towards a manager: they are towards the people you interact with in your scope of work. In that sense, engaging in a role becomes a commitment to your colleagues for that role.

Another interesting point regarding roles: they can evolve over time. Unlike traditional companies, you are not stuck to a "position", and no one will be here to assign you to another role. You assign yourself. You decide what role suits best with your expertise, and with what the company currently needs. Similarly, it can happen that at a given time you have no role in the company. It's not a shame, be open about it. It will be the first step that allows you to find your next role(s). Also, you will find regular calls for support on Google+, or in the specific [Project Market Place](#) section.

That's the space you will find your next project - or even call for help on the projects you want to launch!

Your contribution - and your peers' - you shall monitor

What you may wonder after reading about self-management and choosing your roles is: “ok nice, but who is going to make sure I do my job?”. Here again, the answer lies within the principles of both “self-management” and “every Offy is a sensor”.

And actually, from that point, the “evaluation” flows naturally. No manager will be here to tell you that you are “performing” well or not. However, for a specific role that you chose, your colleagues will hold the responsibility to give you regular feedbacks on what you deliver (or don’t). The same way, you will have to give regular feedbacks to them on what *they* deliver.

These feedbacks do not have to happen every 1, 2 or 6 months. The more instantaneous the better. And it’s actually very important to make sure they are regular, whether they are positive or negative. It avoids letting bad feelings build up when they are negative, and it keeps a good spirit and a feeling of respecting each others’ work when they are positive.

The Offy Communities

Get a Life, Not a Job. You only have one, live it to the fullest.

Here are a few of many initiatives launched by our Offies over the past few years. Join them. Or launch your own!

OffiRead

"The right book in the right hands at the right time can change the world." – Goodreads.

OffiRead was launched with the aim to help Offy find and share books we love. Are you a book lover? What is your favorite book? [Choose one](#) as a welcome gift for newcomers!

AperOffy

AperOffy is a Meetup between passionate people around our causes in an intimate setting at Officience. It is being held once or twice a month. It's a chance for Offies to meet new interesting people and expand their knowledge. [Join us today!](#)

GreenOffy

With GreenOffy community, we try to make our workplace "greener". Three main causes: LEARN to have a strong knowledge base in sustainability, SHARE information and ideas to create link between Offies, and BUILD to become a green-maker. [Here is our community!](#)

oTOD

A training center on demand for all Offies to improve their knowledge and experiences. Trainers could be any Offy who is senior, expert on the required domain, or external experts if necessary. With only five raised hands for a same training course, oTOD will do the rest. Time to spread the knowledge!

VIVO

It's not only company trip, it's team building.

The success of a company depends on more than just the skills and abilities of each individual team member — we need to learn how to function as a cohesive whole. That doesn't happen by accident. It takes team building. ***"Many of our VIVO games are very interesting, inspired from Agile games and some of them were probably taking place for the very first time in Vietnam." - Duc Ha Duong.***

Vivo games will teach you time management, encourage leadership, improve relationships, increases efficiency, build trust, and encourage teamwork. But for now, keep calm and wait for Vivo 2015.

More about VIVO:

- [The Video](#)
- [The Pictures](#)

A few books you may want to read

About our organizational vision

Reinventing Organizations - *Frédéric Laloux*

Rework - *Jason Fried*

About the connection economy & the new leadership

Tribes - *Seth Godin*

Here Comes Everybody - *Clay Shirky*

Leaders Eat Last - *Simon Sinek*

About self-management & purpose

The Element - *Ken Robinson*

Drive - *Dan Pink*

Start With Why - *Simon Sinek*

Linchpin - *Seth Godin*

Useful resources

What is your concern	Link
Our values	https://docs.google.com/a/officiance.com/document/d/1wlp0MT4m252NRdcMi28WO5MNdj5emAZLbn-IFJO1OAE/edit?usp=sharing
Salary review	Know your influencers ! https://plus.google.com/u/2/+DucHADUONG/posts/e91XC1bXjQr The secrets to become a strong influencer ? https://plus.google.com/u/2/+DucHADUONG/posts/5AKH123KtVn
Self-evaluation for performance review	
Officiance 3.0 - Cluster / no-manager organisation	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=diQX9vWJfi4
Timesheets	https://plus.google.com/113778377186885193963/posts/aWeVq7E2nAs https://plus.google.com/113778377186885193963/posts/as121GcyV8B https://plus.google.com/113778377186885193963/posts/Fa1fQdx2hFB
Offy profile photo	https://www.flickr.com/photos/128262481@N03/sets/72157648625243879/ https://www.flickr.com/photos/128503232@N05/sets/72157648413951389/
Marketing / Engagement Materials	https://sites.google.com/a/officiance.com/engagement/?pli=1 https://sites.google.com/a/officiance.com/marketing/?pli=1
VIVO	2014: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gNCtgbf53gQ&feature=youtu.be
Offy signature	https://plus.google.com/u/2/+AiNhiDANG/posts/gbWRkEurYen