

# Company's user manual

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To attract the right talent and make them thrive, it's key to make explicit the norms and behaviors you expect at your company. Right from the start.

Here are some questions to answer that can help you get started:

## Communication

- What are the tools and systems that you will use for communication? Are you going to use email and if so, which suite? How about video conferencing? Will you use a chat app, and if so, which one?
- On top of the tools, you need to figure out the norms and behaviors. Which are the use cases for using e-mail, chat, or video? When is it ok to call someone? What are some of the [norms you want to establish if using chat](#)? For example, how many channels will you have? Do you want people to reply immediately, or is waiting ok? When replying, do you use threads? Should everyone respond with an emoji to show they have read it? 🙄
- What is your operating rhythm for formal communication - 1:1s, all hands, team meetings?
- What's the voice of your company? Is it more informal or more formal/academic?

## Collaboration

- Similar to communication, you want to align on the tools, norms, and behaviors behind your team's collaboration.
- How do you define who does what at the outset of a project?
- Who makes the decisions?
- How much documentation and evidence is needed to make decisions, and does it depend on whether they are [one-way door or two-way door](#) decisions?
- Do you do brainstorming on a whiteboard and then document in a doc?
- Do you believe in having everything documented and for everyone to see?

- When do you do sync or async communication?
- How about working hours - do you think about having a norm where everyone is to be “online” from 10-2, for example?
- Do you expect to have certain things done in person, such as planning and brainstorming, while others can be done remotely?
- What do you think about your company’s hierarchy? Do you have a lot of levels and titles, and what do these mean?
- How do you give feedback to each other? In the early days at Stripe, for example, every external e-mail had to be cc’d to an alias that everyone had access to so you could get feedback on your writing

## Community

- We must also remember to focus on how you build bonds and get to know each other. When do you want to build moments of community?
- Do you want to start every meeting with some personal time? Or do you want to keep meetings to just work but build moments in your week, month, and quarter just to bond?
- What is your stance on what “bringing your whole self to work” means?
- Can people discuss politics at work, and does your company take a stance on external events? If so, which ones?
- Are we a company that hires in geographic pods, or do we hire people from all over the world?

Documenting these norms can help make the implicit explicit but this is just the start. Make sure you review and edit, communicate as you hire, onboard and reward folks at the company.