Working with Jason

September 19, 2026

First of all, I am really glad to be working with you. I keep a long written set of operating principles, and this is the short version: how I work, what I need from you, and what you can expect from me. Read it before your first meeting, your first email, and your first ask. If something here turns out to be wrong in practice, tell me, and we will fix the document rather than work around it.

Writing this was an exercise in self-awareness, and some of it describes the person I am trying to be on my better days. Hold me to it.

Operating approach

1:1s

- Weekly, at a consistent time so you can plan around it. We keep one shared 1:1 document for agendas, decisions, actions, and goals, and it is the record, not either of our memories.
- Use 1:1s for things better said out loud and things that can wait for the week. Anything urgent does not wait for the 1:1.
- Early on we will do a longer career conversation: where you have been, the choices you made, and where you want to go. I cannot help you get somewhere I do not know you want to go.

Team meetings and standups

- The daily standup is not a status report. It is a learning session: what did we learn, what is the lesson, and what are we doing differently. Come with a lesson, not just a task list.
- Team meetings exist to resolve things, not to transmit status. Status goes in writing before the meeting; the room is for the disagreement, the tradeoff, or the decision.

Planning

- Quarterly, with real pre-work. Before the quarter starts I want to know the one or two things your team will move at full force, and what you are deliberately not doing. You can have anything you want; you just cannot want everything.

When to catch me

- **Morning.** Mornings are deep work and protected. Not the time for meetings or casual conversation.
- **Midday.** Management time. Check-ins, decisions, reviews. This is when I am most available for structured conversations.
- **Evening.** Longer conversations: strategy, brainstorming, vision. I do my best thinking on hard problems then.

Management style

Hands-off, until it is not

- I expect you to make most decisions without me. If you bring me one, I will usually ask what you want to do, and I would rather you had already written it down: the decision, the options, and your recommendation.
- I will not sweat your details unless I think something is off track. If I do, I will say so plainly and we will work out together how to fix it. When I am new to a project, I will get into the details early so I know how to help later. Consider yourself warned.
- If you think I am in the weeds, tell me. I would rather hear it than have you work around it.

Flag this for me

- I want to do too much. Given the choice, I will add one more initiative, one more feature, one more market. If you see me piling on, say so. Starting simple is almost always best, and the best thing you can do for a plan of mine is cut it down to the smallest version that proves the point.
- I sometimes over-engineer, which is the same weakness wearing different clothes. If I am designing the perfect system before the simple one has been tried, ask me what the simplest version is and whether we have tested it yet. Help keep me honest.

Principles over rules

- Almost everything I care about is written down in my operating principles, and my AI twin carries them. If you want to know how I would think about something, ask it first, then bring me what it said and whether you agree.
- I give you the frame, you deliver inside it. For anything substantial I will try to hand you the end result I am looking for and the key sources it should be built from. Work that comes back in that shape gets read fast. Work that comes back as a pile of fluent AI output does not.

Ownership and done

- Done means the loop is closed with the customer. Not I sent the email, not I finished my part, not it is in review. If the customer has not confirmed, it is not done.
- Take action items seriously. It is fine to renegotiate a deadline before it passes; it is not fine to tell me the day after. Anticipate the big efforts so we get ahead of them together.
- Taste the soup before you serve it. Before anything goes to a customer, a partner, or me, sit in the recipient’s chair and experience it the way they will, on their device and from their starting point. If it does not make sense, fix it. If it is not as easy as it can be, warm it up.

Triage

- When everything feels urgent, the problem is usually the sort, not the effort. Tell me what you think the catastrophic error is, and sort against it. I would rather you consciously drop something small than quietly miss something big.

Data and judgment

- I like numbers that tell the truth and dashboards with one owner per metric. I dislike torturing the data to avoid making a call. When I go with my gut, argue with me; I hold my instincts loosely and a good argument will move me.

Communication

The context rule

I have a lot running at once across several businesses. The most common mistake is a message without context. What do you think about this? with no background is unanswerable. Every message should say what you are working on, what you need, and what decision or action you want.

- **Good:** I am working on X. The decision I need is Y. My recommendation is Z. Do you agree?
- **Good:** Quick update on the project: two sentences of context. No action needed, just FYI.
- **Good:** Bad news on this topic: what happened, and how I am handling it. Wanted you to know immediately.
- **Not helpful:** Following up on our conversation, with no recap of what the conversation was.

Channels

Each channel has one job. Using the wrong one is the fastest way to slow something down.

What you have	How to send it	What I will do
Genuinely urgent	Call, then text immediately if I do not pick up. A clear text often beats a missed call.	Respond as fast as I physically can.
Bad news	Call or text, right away. Never bury bad news in email.	Thank you for it. The worse the news, the faster I want it.
A decision you need	Email, with the decision in the first sentence, the options, and your recommendation.	Decide, or tell you what I need to decide.
FYI	Email, short, one topic, with FYI in the subject.	Read it. FYI means no response required.
Complex or nuanced work	A shared document with structure and visuals, not a long email. Send the link.	Comment in the document; decisions get written into it.
Brainstorm or thinking out loud	Email or the shared doc, labeled as such so I know no decision is needed.	React, riff, and push.

What you have	How to send it	What I will do
Slack	Coordination: quick logistics, handoffs, and who is doing what next. Decisions made in Slack move into the document.	Respond when I can between meetings. For anything urgent, call or text.

Documents and review

- If you own the document, edit it. If you are reviewing, suggest; do not rewrite someone else's work in place. If you disagree with the premise, leave one comment at the top and stop line-editing.
- When I send something for review with a deadline, silence past the deadline is consent. I will do the same for you, so name me as a reviewer and give me a date.
- I like plans that are written down. Slides, docs, or spreadsheets, I do not care which, but I expect the detailed work to have been done when it is needed.

Before you ask me

Run every question through three filters first: can Claude answer it, can my AI twin at jasondiaz.com answer it, and does this document answer it. The fastest route to my attention on anything strategic is: I asked your AI twin, it suggested X, does that match your current thinking? Treat the twin's output as a draft of my view, not the final word, and verify anything consequential.

Meetings

- Do not schedule a meeting for something a message or a document could settle. If you do meet, send the context and your proposed answer in advance and use the time to decide.
- Every meeting needs an agenda and an outcome. If we are drifting, say so; I appreciate directness about process.
- If two people need to resolve something, resolve it first and then report back. Do not bring a two-person problem to a group meeting.

More about working with me

Feedback

- I like it, in both directions. I will be direct and specific, usually sooner rather than later, and I expect the same from you. Do not let it sit.
- Pushback is part of the job. Bring your view and your reasoning, and ask for mine. If you think I am wrong, the worst outcome is that you were right and did not say so.
- If someone vents to me about you, I will help them tell you directly. I will not carry messages.

What great looks like

- **Ownership.** You act as if the outcome is yours. You do not wait to be asked, and you do not hand things off without a clean handoff.

- **Customer focus.** The customer's experience is the final arbiter, not internal consensus or anyone's opinion, including mine.
- **Growth mindset.** This is the one that matters most over time. Try things, fail, learn, come back sharper. Without it, the relationship has a ceiling.

Time off

- If you are going to be out, send me a calendar invite, not a message. It makes your absence visible and lets me plan around it. Take the time; just do not surprise me with it.

Having fun

- I love a good laugh. We spend a lot of our waking hours at work, and those hours should be fun.
- I also love to hear about anything important in your life: the new baby, the marathon, the move, the hard month. Tell me. It is not a distraction from the work; it is how I get to know the people I work with, and it helps me support you when something difficult is going on.

I hope this helps, and I am looking forward to working together. You are all welcome to add to this document and make it a little more authorized.

Jason

Quick reference card

Situation	What to do
Urgent	Call. Then text.
Bad news	Call or text. Immediately.
Decision needed	Email. Decision in sentence one, with your recommendation.
FYI	Email. Short. FYI in the subject. No reply needed.
Complex topic	Shared doc with structure, not a long email.
Coordination	Slack. Decisions move into the doc.
If I am piling on	Tell me. Start simple.
Before any question	Ask Claude or jasondiaz.com first.
Reviewing a doc	Suggest, do not edit. Premise objections go at the top.
Review deadline passes	Silence is consent.
Best time for strategy	Evening.
Best time for decisions	Midday.
Done means	Closed and confirmed with the customer.
Out of office	Send a calendar invite.

Situation	What to do
Great team member	Ownership. Customer focus. Growth mindset.