

Autonomy & Autonomy & Accountability

our culture (and life) @ Safe

v1.46 { Our culture deck has a version control because this is a living, breathing and evolving document:)



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OUIT VISION Our Why

To champion a Safer digital future.



OUIT MISSION Our What

To become the de-facto industry standard to measure, manage and transfer cyber risk.



That's a bold vision and mission, but as Peter Drucker puts it,



Culture eats strategy for breakfast!



Peter F Drucker

[The father of modern management thinking]





But we think differently, OUR CULTURE the strategy (to champion a safer digital future)

In other words, we want our culture to be the #1 differentiator that sets us apart

So, like a family of geeks and nerds and artists

and poets, dancers, jiu-jitsu fighters, dreamers and doers...

let's codify and compose what <u>our</u> culture means.

























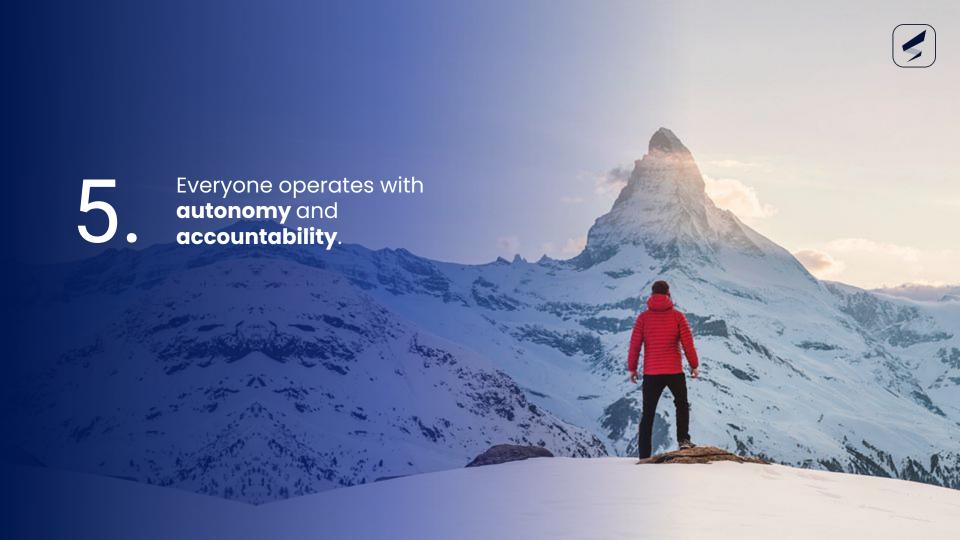














- Customer First
- 2. High Talent Density, Diversity & Inclusion
- 3. Always Candid
- 4. Uncomfortably Transparent
- 5. Autonomy & Accountability

These five core values determine who gets hired, rewarded, promoted, or let go from Safe.



For every decision we make, we first ask ourselves...

What's in it for the customer?







Codifying Customer First

- We build trust by setting clear expectations, via a Business Case
 Presentation(BCP) before we make a sale and then do whatever it takes to
 deliver promised business values
- · We focus intensely on our Customers and their success.
- · We deliver value beyond their expectations.
- · We are **always** going to be **available** for our Customers.
- · Our Customers are delighted by the experience of working with us
- When we fall short, we will listen with humility,
 and improve continuously



But, to serve the customer right, we need...

a great team.

























A startup is the **people it hires**, and **not the plans** it makes...



Vinod Khosla

[Co-Founder, Sun Microsystems & Khosla Ventures]





We strive for the highest talent density and diversity, ever!

Our decision is to hire the best person -



Fit for getting the job done.



In the fastest time



At the highest quality possible





The Rockstar Principle

According to the "Rockstar Principle," for creative roles such as engineering, PM, Customer Success, Sales, etc. The difference between an A and B Player is ~25x. These 25x Players are who we call "Rockstars," and we want to build a team of these rockstars only!

Rock · star: [noun]: A spirited problem solver who works smarter and faster to get (generally 25x) more done than any average employee. A result and team-oriented, self-motivated "go-getter."





The Rockstar Principle

It's easy to "compromise" on the quality of hires because of immediate requirements, but the long term impact of *less than stellar* hires can destroy everything that we stand for!

Hence, we **only*** hire 25x rockstars from diverse backgrounds – even if it takes 25x longer to find a rockstar!

But Rockstars **doesn't mean** "Brilliant Jerks" - more on that later!



We don't hire to delegate.

It's tempting to bring in people who will take on work we don't have time for.



We hire to elevate.

It's best to bring in people who challenge us to **think different** and make us better.





Great companies don't hire skilled people and motivate them, they hire already motivated people and inspire them.



Simon Sinek

[Optimist & Bestselling Author]





We strive for the highest talent density and diversity, ever!

Our decision is to hire them and tell them the **why** (always) and **what** (mostly), but not the **"how"** to make decisions.

The best people don't just "fit" our culture, **they live it** everyday.

They are the ones who will outgrow these slides and take the team above and beyond!























Our Value Compass

We have noticed, most people who work with us are naturally born with the same **value compass** but unfortunately, their instincts and expression were suppressed by "corporate bureaucracy".

This inevitably takes a toll on their wellbeing and creativity.

We think it's criminal!





Freedom & Responsibility

These **rockstars** thrive in a culture of **freedom and responsibility** – which is exactly what we offer them here at Safe.

As a result, most of our team feels alive in ways they have never felt before, in any of their past organizations.







We "swipe right" very rarely!

Only one of every 6,000 applicants make it through.

Many people love our culture and stay for a long time.

- They thrive on excellence, candor and change
- They would be disappointed if we ask them to leave but would always share mutual warmth and respect

We're getting better at attracting a lot more of the right candidates!





We "swipe left" very often!

Some people, however, value job security and stability over performance, and don't like our culture

- They feel intimidated by the high performance and candid culture
- They are sometimes bitter if let go, and feel that we are a political place to work

It's paramount for us to help them realize we are not right for them.



At Safe, we measure talent density on these **11** core sets of skills and behaviours:

] Judgement

7. Courage

2. Track Record

8. Team Player

3. Communication

9. Urgency

4. Passion

10. Inclusion

5. **Humility**

]]. Integrity

6. Curiosity

...meaning we hire and promote people who demonstrate these.





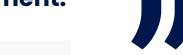
Judgement

We hire **extraordinarily smart** people capable of making the best **judgement in the interest of Safe**. What this means is:

- You are really, really smart!
- You can chart your way through bad judgements you have made in the past
- You own and learn from the mistakes you have made
- You make wise decisions in a speedy manner despite ambiguity
- You identify root causes, and go beyond treating just symptoms
- You think strategically, and can articulate what you are, and are not, trying to do
- You are good at using data to inform your intuition
- You make decisions based on the long term success of the company and the customer, not just immediate / near term



Good judgement is the result of experience... Experience is the result of bad judgement.



Mark twain

Samuel Langhorne Clemens aka Mark Twain

[The father of American Literature and the greatest humorist the US has produced]







Track Record

We want to disrupt the cyber world, in the shortest time possible. To do so, we need a team of leaders with **proven track record** (in any domain) in their past lives. What this means is:

- You have been a top performer, in any domain, in the recent past (last 3 years)
- You have a track record delivering, predictably
- Your track record of winning, as a team, speaks for itself
- You focus on results over process
- You demonstrate strong performance consistently so colleagues can rely on you





A proven leader has a proven track record.



Pastor John C. Maxwell

[Bestselling Author]







Communication

With an aligned family of rockstars, we think most conflicts can be resolved with sound communication skills. What this means is:

- You are concise and articulate in speech and writing
- You listen well and seek to understand before reacting
- You remain poised in stressful situations to draw out the clearest thinking
- You provide candid, helpful, timely feedback to colleagues, manager and reports
- You adapt your communication style to work well with people from around the world who may not share your native culture / language



The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place.

A Bornard Show

George Bernard Shaw

[Nobel prize winning dramatist and socialist propagandist]







Passion

We cannot explain passion to a person that hasn't experienced it just as it is not possible to explain the concept of color to the blind. At Safe we believe a passionate team can overcome any challenges. What this means is:

- You inspire others with your thirst for excellence on anything you work on
- You care intensely about our Customers and Safe Security's success
- You are tenacious and optimistic
- You are quietly confident and openly humble



Passion is energy!

Feel the power that comes from focusing on what excites you.

Gallingrey

Oprah Winfrey

[Television Presenter, Actress & Author]







Humility

We are closest to being great when we are great at humility. But the irony of humility is, it does not know it is humble - it's not by effort but by nature who we are. What this means is:

- When you win, you understand it's a team effort
- When you lose, you take personal responsibility
- You know the difference between confidence and pride/ego
- You admit / sunshine when you are wrong
- You understand that success often brings in ego
- You are grateful for what you have already
- You are kind to everyone around





True knowledge exists in knowing that you know nothing.



Socrates

[Greek Philosopher]







Curiosity

For us, an "old" person means someone whose curiosity has died. We are curious about anything and everything as we know all innovations comes from curiosity. What this means is:

- You learn rapidly and eagerly to outgrow yourself everyday
- You like deep diving into problem statements till you get to "first principles"
- You contribute effectively outside of your specialty
- You connect the dots that most people miss
- You seek to understand our customers around the world
- You seek alternate perspectives to innovate new ways of doing things



I have no special talents.
I am only
passionately curious

A Einstein

Albert Einstein

[Nobel Prize Winning Physicist]







Courage

With courage we will dare to take risks, have the strength to be compassionate, and the wisdom to be humble. Courage for us is the foundation of integrity. What this means is:

- You say what you think, when it's in the best interest of Safe, even if it is uncomfortable
- You make tough decisions without agonizing
- You take smart risks and are open to possible failure and to sunshine them
- You question actions inconsistent with our values
- You are able to be vulnerable, in search of truth
- You are able to see where your subordinates are misaligned with Safe's vision and are ready to take the tough call, to part ways



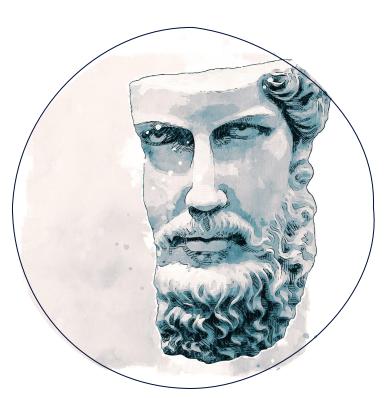


Courage is knowing what **not** to fear.



Plato

[the father of Western Philosophy]







Team Player

Teamwork is not about thinking less of yourself, it's about thinking of yourself less! What that means is:

- When things go well, we like sharing the credit with everyone who worked on it and beyond.
- When something goes wrong, we at Safe "sunshine" it (speak openly) and take personal ownership.
- You are open-minded in search of great ideas from your team and for your team. You trust your team!
- You callout and ask for help for areas of execution you are not confident about.
- You make time to help / coach other rockstars grow and learn in your team so that they can perform to their highest potential
- You seek what is in the best interest of Safe, rather than what is in the best interest of yourself



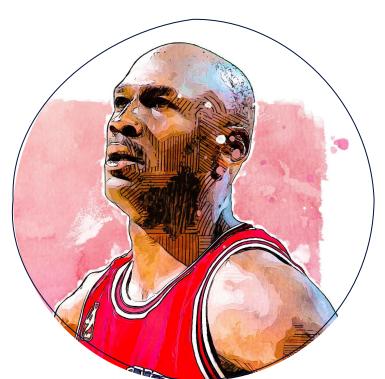


Talent wins games, but teamwork wins championships.



Michael Jordan

[Hall of Famer & 6 Time NBA Champion]







Urgency

There is an urgency to act in Safe as we are running against time. What this means is:

- While you want to take a long term view of things, there is an urgency to act now
- You like crisp, to the point meetings (we love 30 minute meetings @ Safe)
- We avoid "Yearly Plans" our "long term" plan is generally a 4 or 5 Quarter Plan
- Your choice of time unit consideration is minutes > hours > days > weeks
 (you will often see us setting timelines as 6 weeks, instead of 1.5 Months)





The trouble is, you think you have time.





Gautama Buddha

[Father of Buddhism]







Inclusion

At Safe, Diversity and Inclusion isn't just a talking point, but is key to our global hyper-growth plans. If we fail to address this from our very inception, we will fail in our mission. What this means for you is:

- You collaborate effectively with people of diverse backgrounds and cultures
- You nurture and embrace differing perspectives to make better decisions
- You recognize we all have biases, and work to grow past them
- You intervene and speak out if someone else is being marginalized
- You are curious about how our different backgrounds affect us at work, rather than pretending they don't affect us





A lot of **different flowers**, make a beautiful bouquet...



Old Islamic Proverb







Integrity

The strength of a successful organization is derived from the integrity of its team. Image is what people think we are. Integrity is what we really are. What this means is:

- You only do things when your heart, head, words and actions are aligned to each other
- You are known for candor, authenticity, transparency and being open to different perspectives
- You only say things about fellow employees that you say to their face
- You treat people with respect regardless of their status or if they have had any disagreements with you
- You always share relevant information, even when worrisome to do so
- You acknowledge mistakes freely and openly





The strength of a nation derives from the integrity of the home.





Confucius

[Philosopher & Paragon of the Chinese Sages]





It is easy to write admirable values; it's harder to live them...

1.	Judgement	7.	Courage
1.	Judgement	/.	Courag

- 2. Track Record 8. Team Player
- 3. Curiosity 9. Urgency
- 4. Passion 10. Inclusion
- 5. Humility | | | | Integrity
- 6. **Communication** In these past slides, we have highlighted the subsections of our values that are the most difficult to adapt to



The circumstances of "letting go"

High talent density isn't just about hiring and retaining amazing people.

It is also about **letting go** of them when one of two things happen.

- 1. They do mediocre work *(consistently)*. We only expect great performance most of the time.
- 2. They are no longer required to accomplish our near-term objectives (4-6 quarters).



Transition....

In the aforementioned circumstances, we help transition those individuals from our "immediate" family to "extended" family with a generous severance package.

We believe in helping them find more suitable positions for their unique skill sets and we always want them to think of us as **a great place to have been from**.



Which brings us to the big question,

are we a family, or a professional sports team?

We use terms like "team" and "family" interchangeably at Safe when referring to our group of people who are collectively aligned to a joint vision and common values. They both, afterall, come from the primeval concept of staying together as a "tribe"!



Which brings us to the big question,

are we a family, or a professional sports team?

But, in our journey, if we had to choose between a high performing close knit family OR a cut-throat superstar sports team,

At Safe, we choose: FAMILY!



Love for the whole family



Love for one family member

A star-studded family that is very picky of who is let "in" and smartly transitions a member out when they are no longer a fit, as it's in the greater interest of the larger family!

But just like all families, there are layers...







In a high performing family...

- Everyone trusts each other by default and has each other's back
- There is care, empathy and mutual respect for each other
- You go over and beyond to ensure the family succeeds (Safe Family > Self)
- You have higher expectations from your family members
- In most cases, the size of the family can be as large as the parents want (you can adopt too!)
- We can help each other do amazing things together!
- If the family wins, it's a different gratifying feeling much beyond just a "team" winning
- If a member does not fit into the current setting of where the family is heading towards, you transition them into your "extended" alumni family. This is in the best interest of the other family members





Unlike in a professional sports team, where roster spots are limited – so you have many players always competing for the same spot. That isn't the case for our family.

And there's data to back that up:

- Sports Teams that have survived for decades "reinventing" and winning championships consistently? Very few!
- But the number of families that have not only survived but thrived financially (while making an impact) for decades... many!



To keep the family focused, agile and aligned to the overall mission and vision of Safe - we use the **Keeper's Test**





"which of my people, if they told me they were leaving for a similar job at a peer company, would I fight hard to keep at Safe?"



Whoever fails, should get a generous severance now, so that we can open a slot to try to **find a rockstar** for that role.



But this should not come as a surprise.

Every Manager, you are expected to provide feedback – candidly and frequently.

However, candor isn't just a leader's responsibility. We encourage everyone to periodically ask their managers,

"if I told you I was leaving, how hard would you work to change my mind?"







The five A's of Candid Feedback

Giving Feedback:

1. Adapt to Cultural, Personal and Professional Sensitivity

Our family today has members from over 11 ethnicities and we should be culturally sensitive about our feedback. Also understanding where one is coming from - personally and professionally will also help contextualize the feedback.

2. Aim to Assist by showing the delta

Feedback is always given with positive Intent and not to vent.

Explain how the feedback will help Safe (and our customers) and how the actions were not in line with our culture.

3. Actionable

Feedback must focus on what the recipient can do differently. If possible, present them with multiple options so that they can see different views but this should not be done in a "prescriptive" way because that would take away our "Autonomous and Accountable" value



The five A's of Candid Feedback

Receiving Feedback:

4. **Appreciate**

Against natural instincts, receive feedback with an open mind without getting defensive/angry
Appreciate the feedback

5. Accept / Discard

In an environment of candor, there will always be overwhelming feedback So you should listen and consider the feedback but the end, the decision to act on it or not is yours only

We have a dedicated deck for our 5A Feedback Framework as we take this framework quiet sincerely. You can check the deck <u>here</u>.







Loyalty is good!

Loyalty is a good stabilizer.

People who have been rockstars for us, and hit a bad patch, get a near term pass because we think they are likely to become rockstars for us again

We at Safe want the same: If Safe were to hit a bad patch, we still want our Rockstar Team to stick around

But **unlimited loyalty** to a shrinking firm, or to an ineffective employee, **is not what we are about**!





And hard workers? Wrong Question!

We don't measure Talent by how many hours they work or how many [Zoom] meetings they take

We do care about accomplishing great work and creating an impact!

Sustained B-level performance, despite "A for effort", generates a generous severance package, with respect!
Sustained A-level performance, despite minimal effort, is rewarded with more responsibility and great pay!





And the brilliant jerk?

Some companies tolerate them, not us.

For us, the cost to effective teamwork is too high!

Diverse styles are fine – as long as the individual embodies our 5 values.



We are uncomfortably transparent...

Everyone has access to everyone else throughout the organization.

It's not an "open door" policy, It's a "no door" policy





We are uncomfortably transparent...

Some Examples...

- Everyone's calendar is open to the entire company
- Everyone's cell phone # is available on their Slack profile
- All channels on Slack are "public" by default
- Everyone's OKR's (including past performances) are visible to the whole company





We are uncomfortably transparent

As Safe's mission is to bring transparency, it becomes a core part of our culture where we are uncomfortably transparent.

Truth and candor are key elements of the way we work.

No games, no stories, just the facts!

Especially if it's a hard one – At Safe, bad news travels faster than good news.



Firepower to Change the World!

With an exceptionally high talent density, transparency empowers our team to move faster, towards a common goal.

"Knowledge is power" and when you give so much "power" to a team of rockstars... that's a lot of firepower going after changing the world.





By Default: Share Everything with Everyone in the team!

We share everything* with everyone!

- Quarterly Business Reviews (QBRs) with the whole company we discuss our financials
- Our Fortnightly Customer Pulse Calls accessible anyone who wants to know how our customers are responding to our product
- Weekly Town Halls Weekly 45 minute check in with the whole company to discuss what's on "top of mind"
- All staff channels (like estaff_saket) are open for everyone to see what's top of mind of every leader with their weekly Red, Amber, Green Updates every Monday
- Docs on Google drive: (Plans, OKRs, AMA Session Answers and more)

^{*} that's legally sharable and does not intrude on the privacy of any of our team members.





We are a meritocracy!

In this way, everyone has equal access to data and context on why we do what we do...

At Safe, we believe that **debates should be won with better insights, not bigger job titles or louder decibels**.

We are a meritocracy where we celebrate our wins and sunshine our failures (although we really don't like failing!)





We Measure What Matters!

Measurement and Quantification is our bread and butter,
We try and quantify what success means (wherever possible)

- Customer Happiness (NPS and NRR)
- Employee Happiness (ESAT and voluntary attrition)
- General Happiness (We are "Great Place to Work" Certified!) :)



But, Transparency is not equal to Democracy

It's about **being open and accepting** of all inputs

At Safe, we believe in **farming for dissent.**

It's not about "decision by consensus".

Indecision is far worse than a bad decision (for reversible decisions - which amount to majority of decisions one makes)

If you're in the SAFE family anywhere in the world, trust comes by default.



We are uncomfortably transparent

... but we are also a **cyber security and data science** company.

There are some "non-negotiables" with it comes to the way we transparently work internally

The most important of these is the **privacy of our customer data!**



High Talent Density



Leads to a team of leaders, **autonomous and accountable**for their decisions



Framework to make autonomous decisions

It's quite simple...
ensuring your **heart**, **head**, **words and actions** are aligned.

We trust your judgement!

We like hiring leaders <u>across</u> the organization.





Autonomy & Accountability

While most organizations "aspire" to get there, they often don't live up because of every "approval" and "policy" they have in place for decision making.

Most organizations have a LOT of rules in place to handle "exceptions", especially where the talent density is low.

We understand the difference between an "exception" and a "rule"

Why curtail everyone for "one" person's bad behaviour?



We Avoid Rules!

Hence, there are hardly any "rules" to constrain you when you are working with us...

Social media policy

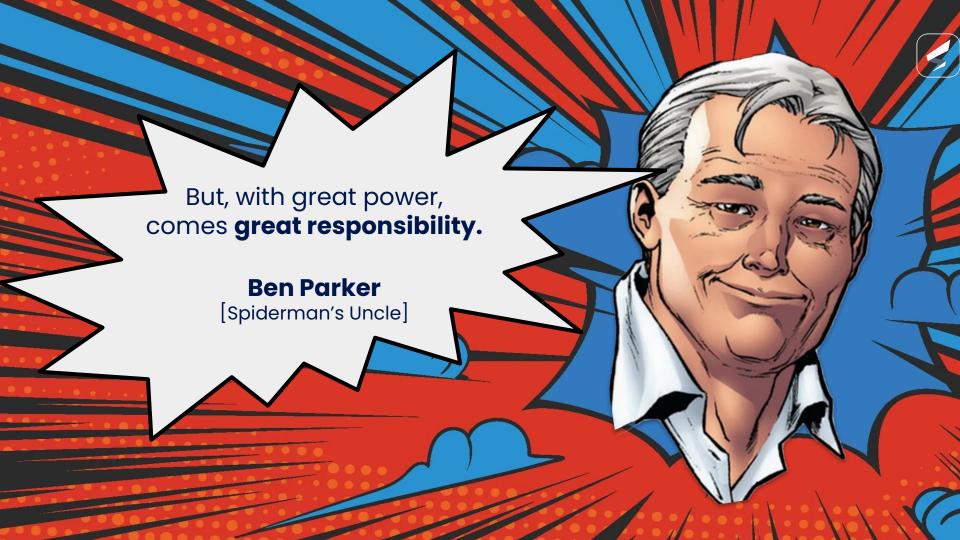
Vacation policy

Travel policy

Lunch policy

Expense policy

There is a simple one line policy for each of these:
"Using your judgement, act in the best interest of Safe"







Flexible Workplace, Beach or Building, Teams Decide!

Results matter more than "where" you work from, but collaboration and socialization also matter.

** Safe supports a **flexible Work From Home/Hybrid policy**, with the opportunity to work from an office to ensure positive team dynamics and collaboration. We empower leaders to make the right decision for their team.





Connection and Collaboration

We are a global team of Rockstars with a desire to create an insanely great product and delight our customers.

We believe that time spent together increases our ability to bond and build trust. In India, we have offices in Delhi and Bangalore where our team works in-person 3 days a week (more if you want to!). In the US, we have offices in Santa Clara, CA, Austin, TX, and New York. Our team members can join together as much as they would like, but we get together in small groups at least once a month.

It is important to take the time, in every day interactions, to solidify the bond and trust across all team members regardless of location.





Unlimited Vacation Policy!

Results matter more than how much vacation we take

- * Safe has an **unlimited vacation policy**
- ** As an example, our CEO takes a minimum of 6 weeks vacation each year :)





No "Time Tracking"

We don't want to become glorified scorekeepers of "activity" hence we don't keep a track of the number of hours we spend on work!

(Tip: People who keep singing songs of how "hard working" they are the number of "all nighters" they pulled don't make it too far with us)

What matters are "results"!

** Safe **never** tracks **how many hours** you put into work



At Safe, Work and Fun Are <u>Not</u> Mutually Exclusive!

Work for us is a Verb - not Noun.

Work isn't a place we go, but a passion lead activity we love doing!

If you ask any of your personal role models about work and fun, they will tell you how they had "fun" working for days and nights because they were **passionate** about what they were doing.



Nobody ever figures out what life is all about, and it doesn't matter.

Fall in love with some activity, and do it!

Nearly everything is equally interesting if you go into it deep enough.

Ruhard P. Feguman

Prof. Richard P Feynman

[Nobel prize winning Theoretical Physicist]







We Love Diving Deep!

People who can drown themselves, get to the bottom of the problem statement they are solving for.

Here's a **5 steps challenge for autonomous decision making** that you are welcome to try:

- 1. Put your views on the problem and the solution together
- 2. See through the edge cases
- 3. Evangelize with at least 3 other rockstars
- 4. Farm for Dissent
- 5. Execute quickly (as long as it's a reversible decision) outlining the risk clearly

But we hate indecisiveness!

Indecision *(for reversible decisions)* is far worse than the Wrong Decision

We like to fail fast, adapt with the learnings to keep making small, iterative changes in our decision till we get to "decision" - "affected stakeholder" fit

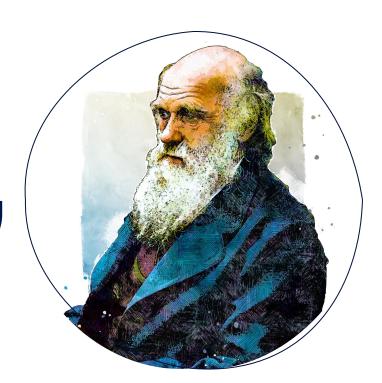




It is not the most intellectual of the species that survives; nor the strongest... but **the one that is able best to adapt and adjust** to the changing environment.

(harles Denvin

Charles Darwin[Founder of Modern Evolutionary Science]







Context! Not Control!

Our decisions are driven by context set by our Quarterly Business Reviews

These are Quarterly Company Wide meetings where we discuss our journey till now, how was the last quarter and our plans for the following few quarters. **This sets the context for everyone** on where we are heading.

Each team is expected to **align to the context set** and calibrate their sails so that in our hybrid work environment, **we are all rowing in the same direction**.



This creates a culture of winning...





Neither is necessarily a better or more valuable oarsman than the other; both the long arms and the strong back are assets to the boat. But if they are to row well together, each of these oarsmen must adjust to the needs and capabilities of the other. Each must be prepared to compromise something in the way of optimizing his stroke for the overall benefit of the boat...Only in this way can the capabilities that come with diversity...be turned to advantage rather than disadvantage.

He had never let himself dream of standing in a place like this, surrounded by people like these. It startled him but at the same time it also filled him with gratitude, and as he stood at the front of the room that day acknowledging the applause, he felt a sudden surge of something unfamiliar—a sense of pride that was deeper and more heartfelt than any he had ever felt before.

They were now representatives of something much larger than themselves—a way of life, a shared set of values. Liberty was perhaps the most fundamental of those values. But the things that held them together—trust in one another, mutual respect, humility, fair play, watching out for one another—those were also part of what America meant to all of them.

<u>The Boys in the Boat: Nine Americans and their epic quest for Gold at the 1936 Berlin Olympics</u> by Daniel James Brown



This is what happens when you win The GOLD, with a family of rockstars...

THE RESERVE OF THE PARTY OF THE

A band of brothers and sisters.



HERE'S TO THE

THE ROUND TROUBLEMAKERS
the ones who see things differently

WHILE SOME MAY SEE THEM AS



WE SEE GENIUS

BECAUSE THE ONES WHO ARE CRAZY ENOUGH TO THINK THEY CAN CHANGE THE WORLD

ARE THE ONES THAT DO



Our Vision

To be the **Champions of a Safer Digital Future**

To be the **Champions** of **Change**







Good artists borrow, **Great artists steal!**



Picano



[Painter, Sculptor and Artist Extraordinaire]





To build our culture deck, we have taken inspiration from:

The Netflix Culture Deck by Reed Hastings and Patty McCord

The HubSpot Culture Code by Dharmesh Shah

Google's Work Rules by Laszlo Bock

The Culture Code by Daniel Coyle

Amazon's Invent & Wander by Jeff Bezos

Start with Why by Simon Sinek

Blackstone's What it Takes by Stephen Schwarzman

From Good to Great by Jim Collins

And our very own, **John Chambers**

Why reinvent the wheel when there have been such amazing companies to learn from:)