

# The Code.

What we expect from each other:

1. **Understand before acting.** Seek sufficient context, recognize the limits of your knowledge, and involve others when necessary.
2. **Exercise judgment.** Don't substitute obedience, habit, or personal preference for thinking about what the situation requires.
3. **Consider the whole.** Recognize how your actions affect others, not just your immediate responsibilities.
4. **Make your reasoning accessible.** Be prepared to explain decisions, consider objections, and revise your position.
5. **Take responsibility.** Own your decisions and their consequences, including the responsibility to learn when things go wrong.
6. **Respect the judgment of others.** Understand their reasoning before challenging their conclusions.

# The fine print

The Code establishes six principles for how we think, act, and work with one another. They are expectations of conduct, not instructions for how to perform a particular job. They apply to everyone, regardless of role, seniority, or position in the organization.

The underlying idea is simple: organizations depend on people exercising good judgment, taking responsibility, and working together. These are things we should encourage and expect from one another.

Authority and responsibilities may differ. The expectations of conduct do not.

The Code is not a replacement for laws, policies, professional standards, safety procedures, or other obligations. Nor does it suggest that everyone has the same knowledge, experience, or authority to make decisions.

Exercising good judgment sometimes means making a decision yourself. Sometimes it means following an established procedure, seeking advice, questioning an instruction, or recognizing that someone else is better placed to decide.

The principles are not intended to eliminate rules or hierarchy. They are intended to encourage responsible judgment within them.

## How to use it

The Code is intended to be used, discussed, and adopted.

Individuals can use it to reflect on their own behavior and interactions with others. Teams can use it to establish shared expectations. Organizations can adopt it as a common standard of conduct.

Its value lies in how people apply it in everyday situations, particularly when opinions differ, decisions are difficult, or circumstances put pressure on established expectations.

The principles apply equally to everyone. They should guide how we behave toward others and provide a common basis for questioning how others behave toward us.

They are not something employees should be expected to follow while leaders are exempt.

## Attribution and reuse

The Code was developed by Niclas Norgren as part of the broader work Leaders Create the Environment. It is freely available under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) license.

You are welcome to copy, print, share, translate, adapt, and use it within your organization, including for commercial purposes. No permission or registration is required. Please provide appropriate attribution, indicate if changes have been made, and retain a reference to the original and its license.

Suggested attribution: *The Code — Six principles for exercising good judgment and responsibility.*  
Developed by Niclas Norgren. [niclasnorgren.com/code-of-conduct](https://niclasnorgren.com/code-of-conduct)

Original: <https://niclasnorgren.com/code-of-conduct>

License: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>