Solution Analysts
ANALYSING NEEDS, DELIVERING SOLUTIONS

The Culture Playbook

❝ Culture is a way of coping with the world by defining it in detail. ❞

– Malcolm Bradbury.

The Culture Playbook

All About This Playbook

Great organisations are designed around people, not just business.

Every organisation has a long-term vision that can be realized only if, the people who work for it believe in it as passionately as the people who own it. At *Solution Analysts* (SA), we understand that you, our employees, are the engine of this company. That you lead our brand from the front. That everything you do – and think, speak, believe – feeds back into our brand. That every ANALYST is a brand ambassador of this company, carrying our legacy in your thoughts, words and actions. And this is why it is important to define who exactly we are, and what sort of culture we represent.

In the 11 years that *Solution Analysts* has been in existence, many wonderful people have come on board. Together, we have built an organisation rooted in a set of common core values. This playbook has the purpose of describing those values for all our employees.

To be clear, this playbook is not an instruction manual. It is not designed to be prescriptive. It is, however, an articulation of our common goals and the mindset that will help us achieve those goals. This playbook is a tool designed to fast-track your success at SA and integrate you into our culture in no time.

So, read along. Maybe pick up a pencil to <u>underline</u> the parts you find most interesting. Make notes, if that is your style. Check out our CEO's interesting trivia. Take a look at how we've spelt out our values. Basically, give yourself the time to not just read but also absorb our values, and understand what makes an ANALYST.

In the end, if the vibe of this playbook excites you, congratulations! Because, as they say in the dating world – we are a match!

The Cricket Analogy

Before you look at our values, let's talk about cricket.

We all love watching cricket, don't we? Especially when it is a match between two teams who are both on top of their game. Think about batsmen who're hitting one boundary after another, and bowlers who're struggling to stop them. Think about the wicketkeeper whose eyes are a picture of deep concentration. And then, there is the adrenaline rush of knowing that your favourite team – the one you were rooting for – has won!

Managing a team of successful co-workers is not very different from building a winning cricket team.

Think about it.

Just for a moment, imagine a cricket team where:
- the captain is an autocratic figure who decides player order without consulting the players.

- all players focus only on their personal scores, without caring about run rate.

- each player who walks off the pitch simply packs up and returns home, instead of staying back to cheer for the others.

- senior players routinely make fun of juniors, the vice-captain is always undercutting the captain, and the locker room is always full of damaging, lowbrow humour.

- Virat Kohli performs minus the batting intensity, Jasprit Bumrah is devoid of his quick-arm action, and Rahul Dravid bats minus his solid consistency.

Would you spend money and time to watch a match played by this team?

The things that make a cricket teamwork are equally important for other kinds of teams. A team is not just a group of individuals. It is a compilation of their strengths and best offerings. A team is as strong as its strongest player, but also as weak as its weakest player. No team can succeed unless all the players put their best foot forward and work in harmony.

At *Solution Analysts,* we understood this pretty early in our journey. And that is why we take pride in being an inclusive and a collaborative workplace. We measure success not in profits and turnover but in terms of the upward march of the people who power us. We want our employees to be happy working with us, and with each other. We believe that a growth-oriented workforce will propel SA to greater heights than any business development strategies ever can.

Long story short: at SA, our people are our nucleus.

They are the ones who bowl, bat, keep wickets and bring home the laurels.

Therefore, it is only natural that we want our people — all of them superstars — to also make a fantastic team together.
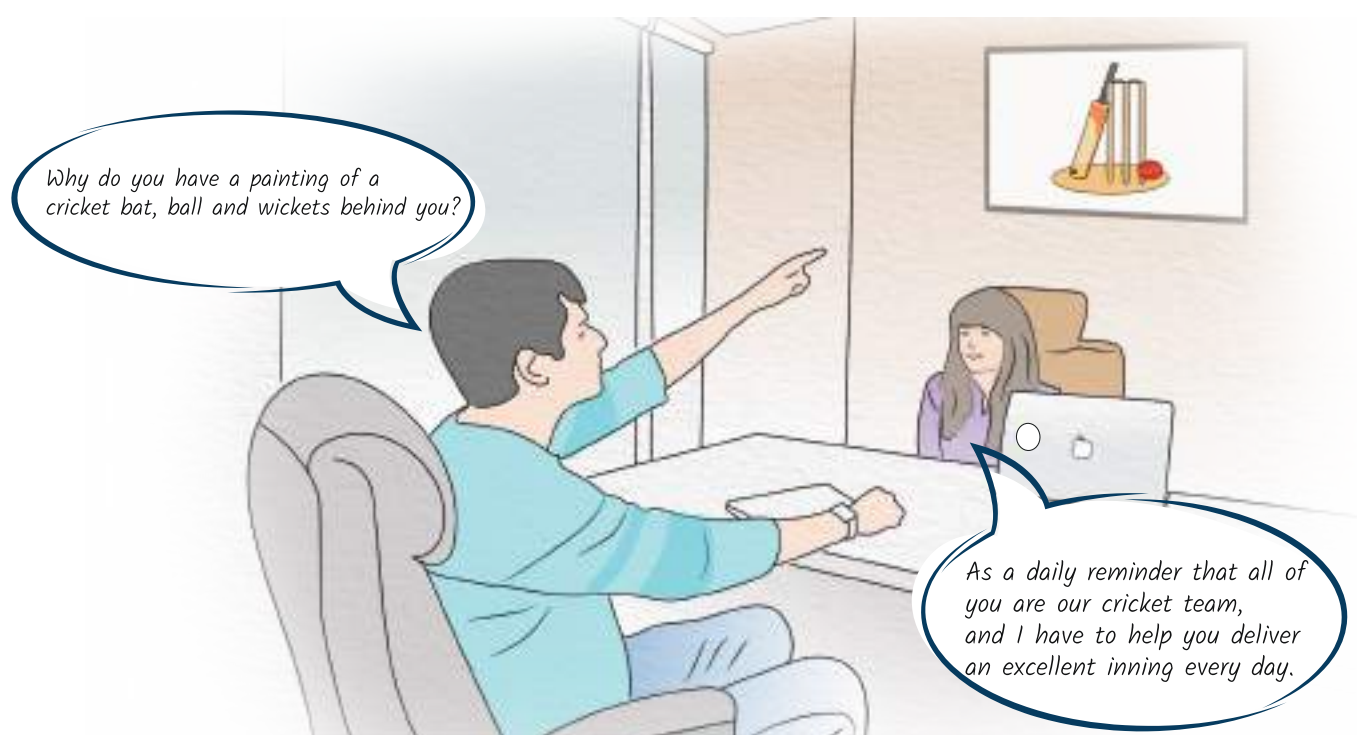
Solution Analysts: Our Story

Solution Analysts was conceived by our CEO **Kalpesh Patel** (KP) in 2011, in response to an astonishing piece of data he read in a news article. The article stated that approximately 85% of investment in the IT sector goes towards redeveloping an existing product and/or rectifying mistakes. This statistic made KP wonder – if so much money is spent on reworking projects that have gone wrong, why not harness analytics to design the 'right' kind of solutions that are worth their cost?

Thus was born *Solution Analysts* – with the aim to reduce redevelopment costs by at least 10%, and help the industry free up money for new ideas using analytics.

As a fledgling venture, we faced our fair share of challenges. The biggest of them was during the recession of 2011 – when, for the first (and only) time, we found ourselves unable to pay salaries one month. This happened as a result of pending dues that our clients were unable to clear, given that they were grappling with tough times themselves. To address the situation, KP decided to borrow from a friend. However, when our employees found out, they came forward to return their paycheques. "We trust you enough to wait until next month," they said in one voice.

Tides turned. We survived and went on to thrive. Today, compensations work like clockwork at SA. Never again have employees had to wait for salaries. But what is truly important here is the heartening realisation that our ANALYSTs believe in their leader. Their conviction in KP is one of the driving forces behind our ascent as an organisation.

Many people wonder why our name is akin to a designation. This is because we want the world to know us exactly for what we do! We are *Solution Analysts* because we analyse problems and design solutions. Not only is this a job profile for our employees, but this is also our end-goal as a company.

SA Highlights

60,000

Training Hours in 2022

99.5%

Websites still up and running

83 Years

Experience of top management put together

150 Years

Total senior leadership experience

Our First Client

Our First Client continues to be still with us

100%

Employer who has your back and won't let you down

Here are some interesting facts and figures straight from KP's desk:

- As a student-intern in 2001, KP designed a tool (which one of these words should we keep?) in response to a college assignment. The product he designed was *patented by a Californian university in 2007.*

- Back in 2006, KP had predicted the *creation and meteoric rise of cab services* akin to Uber. He was convinced that this was a sector waiting to be discovered. With this kind of intuitive leadership in place filtered at all levels, we are constantly innovating   technologies and processes in each and every area at SA.

- The first employee who joined *Solution Analysts* in 2011 *remained with the company for* a whole decade.

- We have worked with some of the best companies in the world like *United Nations – ITU, LG, Sony – Bend Studio, nVIDIA, Intel, Cisco, GTBank, Yaskawa, TEVA, THQ and JSL,* and delivered successful solutions to them.

- *The first line of the code that we wrote was in SVN* - which shows the maturity level and focus we have for processes.

- In only 11 months of starting Soultion Analysts, we had our own *QMS (Quality management system) defined and implemented.*

Solution Analysts would be nothing without its people. The heights we have climbed, are all thanks to our employees who have led us to the top. Profits and revenue are important, of course, but it is our people who make those numbers possible. We never lose sight of this truth. Our gratitude for our team impacts all the decisions we make and everything we do.

You are one of us. You are at the centre of all our plans. You are valued. You matter.

So, who exactly is an
ANALYST?

ANALYST is the acronym that summarizes the culture at *Solution Analysts.*

In seven simple points, it describes the values that we hold dearest. This acronym is the lens through which we view our work, our clients, our co-workers, and our deliverables.

Let's have a look at what it represents and expects us to do.
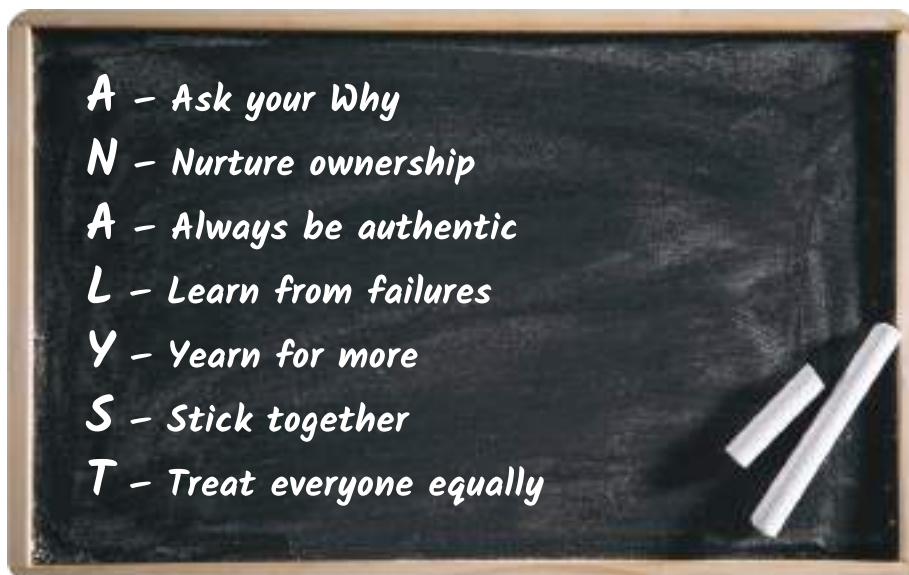
There. That wasn't tough, was it?

At SA, the ANALYST framework is much more than just a compilation of words. The seven points mentioned above are, in fact, the principles that we work and live by.

So, as simple as this framework is, let's take some time to understand what each of these values stands for, and why they collectively matter so much to us.
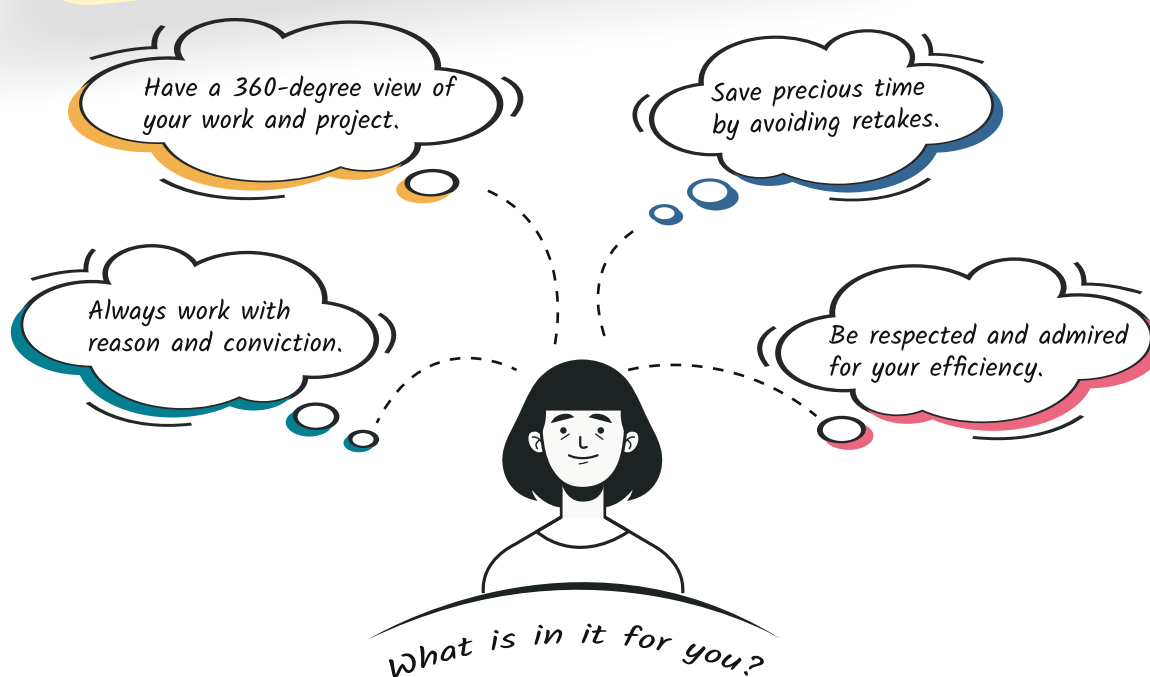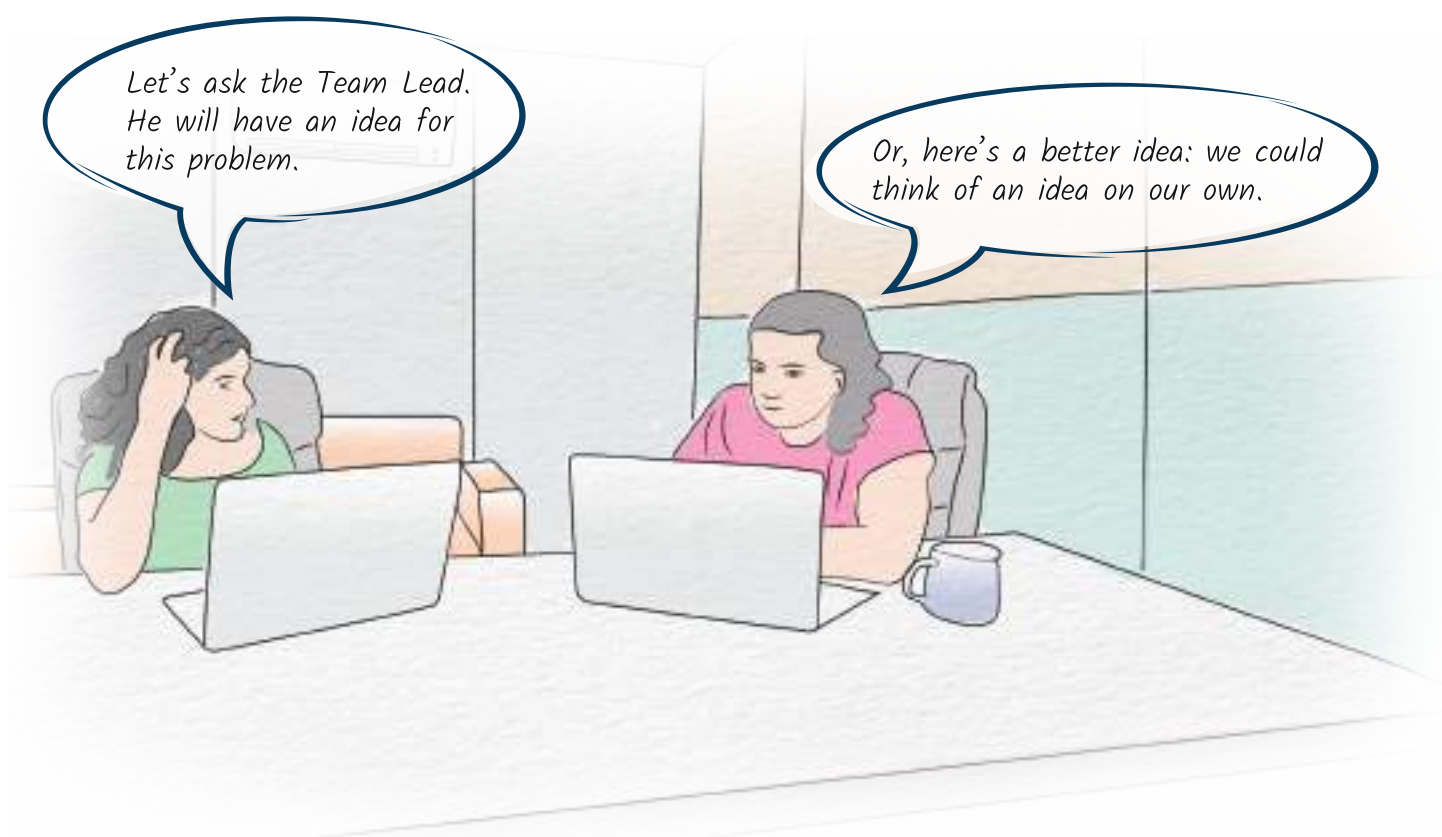
A Ask your Why

At *Solution Analysts,* questions are always welcome, because anybody who works without clarity is likely to create a product that does not match expectations. The product will then have to be re-worked, leading to a waste of resources. To avoid such a scenario, we encourage our ANALYSTs to ask their why and investigate the purpose of what they are asked to do. Even in the midst of deadlines and delivery, we believe in seeking clarity. We do not shy away from asking questions out of fear that this will upset our seniors or make us look ignorant. We understand that questions are not a sign of weakness but an indication that we take keen interest in our work and want a holistic view of the project.

So, how many of these are true for you?

- ☐ You are curious to know the why for "any" task.
- ☐ You are courageous enough to ask for clarity.
- ☐ You challenge prevailing assumptions when warranted, and suggest alternative approaches.
- ☐ You question actions inconsistent with our values.

Have a 360-degree view of your work and project.

Save precious time by avoiding retakes.

Always work with reason and conviction.

Be respected and admired for your efficiency.

What is in it for you?

N Nurture Ownership

At *Solution Analysts,* we are co-owners of our success story and fully cognizant of the role we play in it. We see ourselves not merely as employees but as team members with an active stake in the organisation. We do not work for the company but with it. We are invested in SA's pursuit of excellence and proud of how we're helping to achieve it. When we come to work, it is not merely out of a sense of duty but with a sense of excitement and the hunger to make things happen. Our thought process is that of a proactive thinker, not a passive follower. The question of "What would I do if I were the CEO?" underlines the decisions we take and the attitude we bring into the workplace.

So, how many of these are true for you?

☐ You care immensely about the success of Solution Analysts.

☐ You do the right thing even when no one is watching you.

☐ You go the extra mile to make a difference for clients and colleagues.

☐ You hold yourself and others accountable for everything you/they do.

Evolve from an employee mindset to an ownership mindset.

Develop a sense of belonging. Feel more comfortable at work.

Sharpen your decision-making skills amidst difficult situations.

Spend less time and energy on follow-ups.
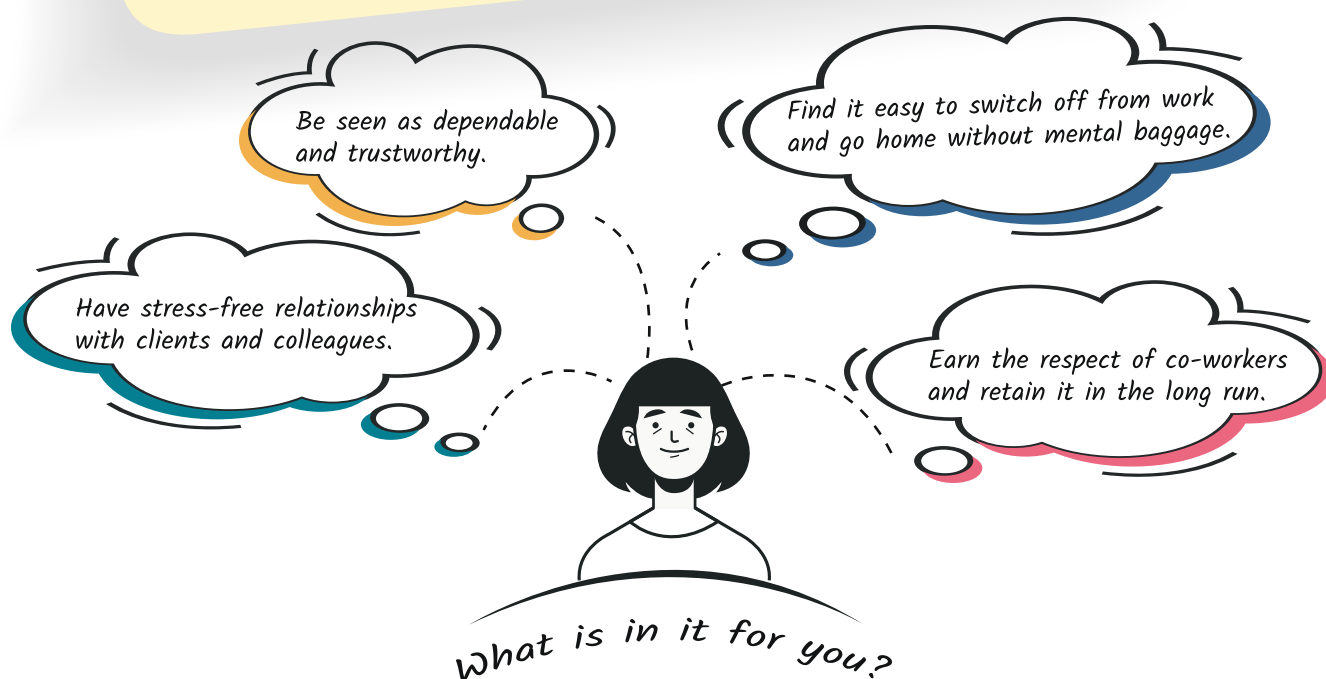
What is in it for you?

A Always be authentic

Integrity is our backbone. At SA, we believe in bringing not just the best but also the most honest version of ourselves to work. By maintaining transparency about our intentions and actions, we make it possible for ourselves and others to work together with complete clarity. We also believe that by being truthful and upfront, we free up a lot of time and energy for productive work that would otherwise be spent on maintaining a façade. In the long run, this policy of authenticity leads to employees that trust one another, share credit more readily, are more harmonious and dependable, and ultimately keep clients happy.

So, how many of these are true for you?

☐ You are known for being honest and direct, though polite.

☐ You value transparency over diplomacy during discussions/disagreements.

☐ When you're unable to deliver, you own your gaps without making excuses.

☐ You admit mistakes readily, without getting defensive or passing the buck.

Be seen as dependable and trustworthy.

Find it easy to switch off from work and go home without mental baggage.

Have stress-free relationships with clients and colleagues.

Earn the respect of co-workers and retain it in the long run.

What is in it for you?

L Learn from failures

Failure feels terrible, embarrassing and demoralizing. But it is humane. At SA, we don't expect to fail, but we are prepared to accept it. We have conditioned ourselves to see failures as mere stepping stones rather than a setback. We are not defined by them; instead, we use them as an opportunity to try out newer methods and approaches until we find a solution. We understand that the real meaning of failure is that it helps us become better – not only by learning from our own mistakes but also from others'.

So, how many of these are true for you?

☐ You learn rapidly and eagerly – not just for the organisation's sake but also your own.

☐ When you fail at a task, you pursue it doggedly until you finally have a solution.

☐ You take smart risks. You can think out of the box when needed.

☐ You evolve and adapt. You become a better version of yourself every day.

Develop an objective view of people & not define them by their missteps.

Grow persistent and resilient with time.

Learn to bounce back faster from mistakes.

Learn to focus on the big picture and not fret over the little things.

What is in it for you?

Y Yearn for more

The world is spinning faster every day. It has no room for those who are unwilling to adapt. At SA, we understand that the only way we can keep our place in this ever- evolving world is by being open to develop ourselves at a proportional speed. We consciously seek out opportunities to hone our skills at work. We learn from everyone – not just seniors and peers but also subordinates. We see value in consuming media/-content that, even if not immediately relevant to our scope of work, is still informative and beneficial. We use our time judiciously and spend a substantial portion of it on preparing ourselves for the future.

So, how many of these are true for you?

☐ You believe that knowledge is unlimited, and you have boundless potential.

☐ You make a conscious effort to understand our organisation, clients, target market and our services.

☐ You always strive for excellence.

☐ You inspire others with your thirst for learning. Your co-workers see you as a "seeker"

Stand out from the crowd and make a mark, in your present as also future roles.

Gain a reputation as a "problem solver" among your clients.

Gain a rich bank of skills and experiences.

Be trusted and appreciated. Ultimately, be rewarded for your growth orientation.
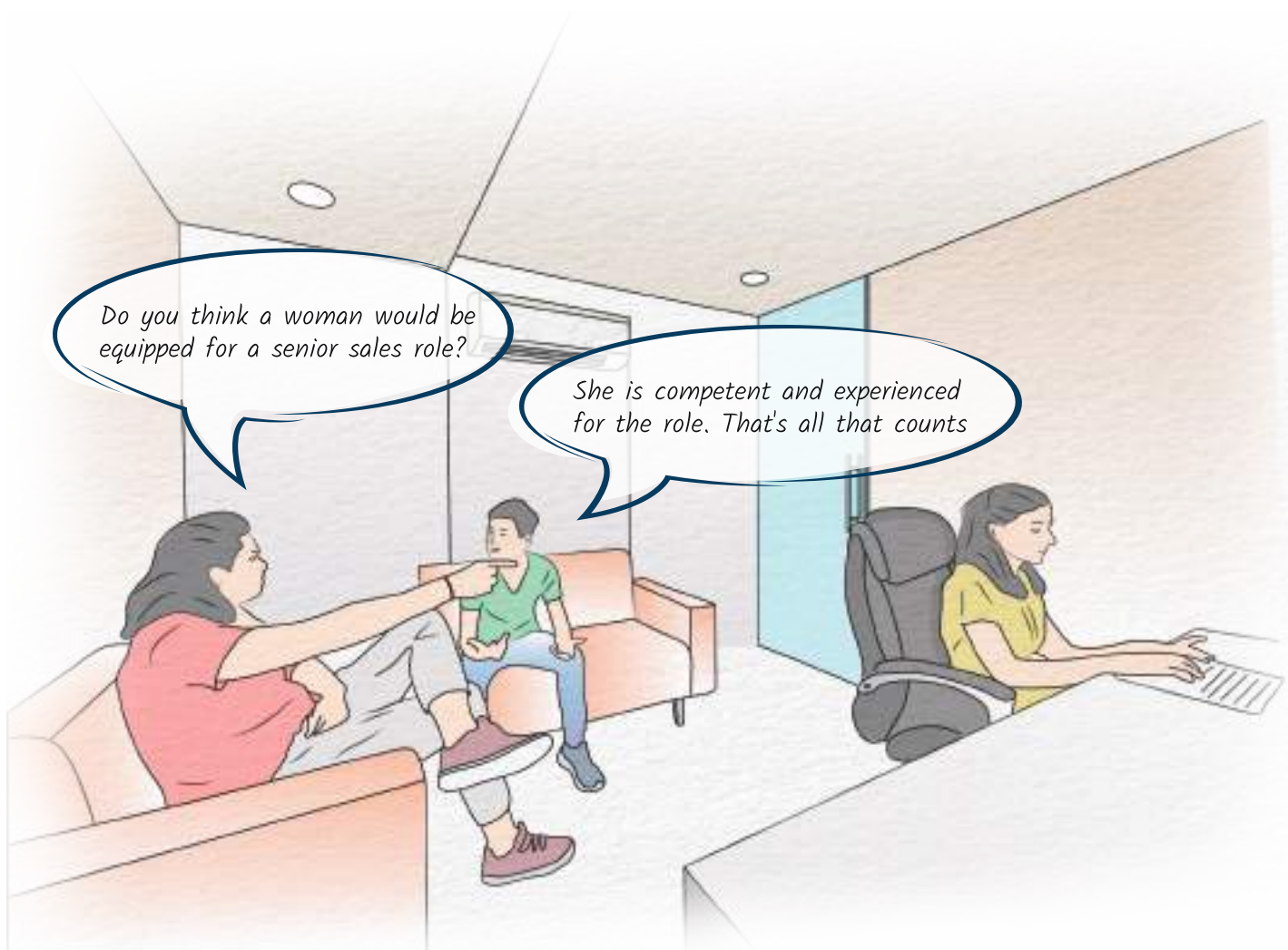
What is in it for you?

ANALYST

S Stick together

It is fantastic to be a high performer, but not enough if you are not a great team player. While we expect our ANALYSTs to have the talent, knowledge and skills needed to excel at their job, we also believe that their brilliance must not remain limited to a solo performance. At SA, none of us is as good as all of us. When each of us brings his/her own expertise to the table, the output of the collaboration is much superior to a solo effort. When we put our differences and insecurities aside to work together, we create an environment that is not only conducive to work but also greatly enriched by our different perspectives.

So, how many of these are true for you?

☐ You listen attentively, delegate responsibilities efficiently, and collaborate easily.

☐ You are secure in your abilities. You can co-work without competing.

☐ You firmly believe that no individual is bigger than the team.

☐ You share information generously and are always ready to help your co-workers.

Freedom to focus on the exact type of work you excel at.

No chance of suffering burnout or being over-burdened.

Increase productivity & accomplish your goals effectively.

Learn people management & conflict resolution skills.
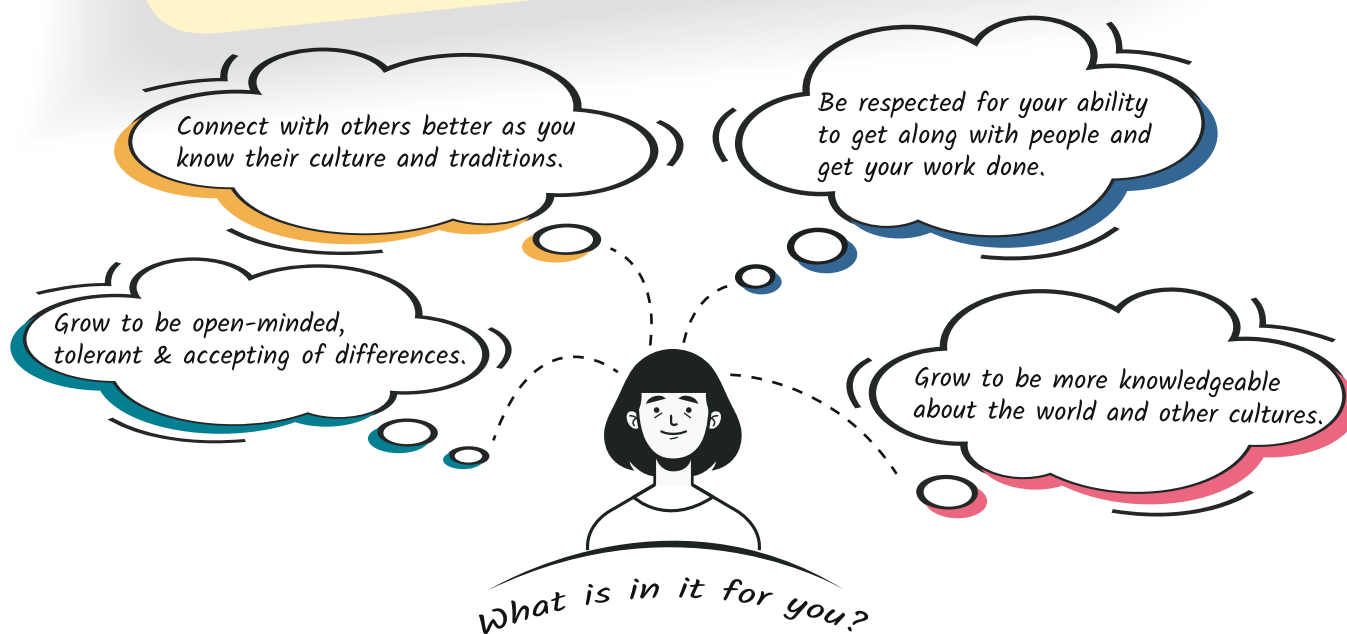
What is in it for you?

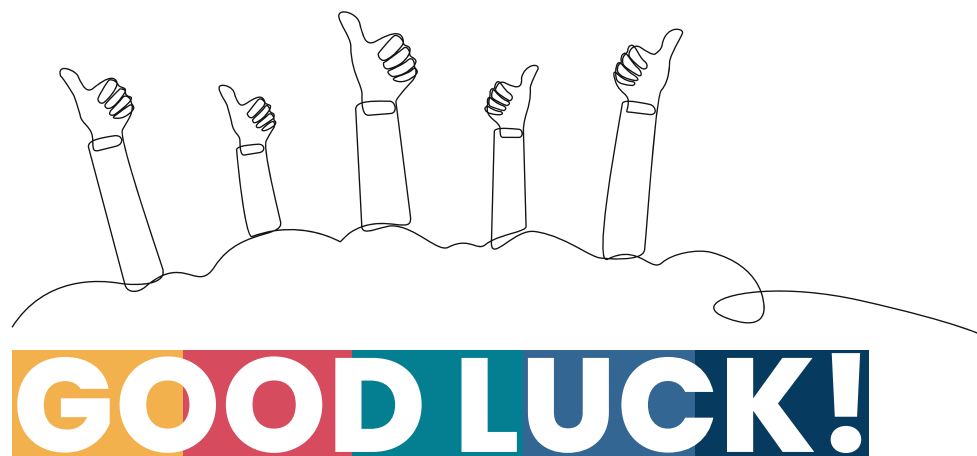ANALYST

T Treat everyone equally

SA is an inclusive organisation. We take pride in the diversity we have in the workplace and value our people irrespective of age, gender, class, origin, faith and personal choices. We believe that everyone has a seat at the table and equal talk time. SA is strictly against discrimination and prejudice of any kind. We also encourage our employees to treat all their co-workers with uniform respect and dignity, no matter the differences in rank or designation. KP often says "Each person is the CEO of their own life" – meaning that no matter what level an employee operates at, his/her contribution to the company matters as much as anyone else's.

So, how many of these are true for you?

- ☐ You enjoy working with people from diverse backgrounds.
- ☐ You do not view any particular community, class, gender or role as being superior or inferior to others.
- ☐ You believe that all your colleagues are equally deserving of your respect, no matter what their standing.
- ☐ You see workplace diversity as an opportunity to learn about other lifestyles and cultures.

Connect with others better as you know their culture and traditions.

Be respected for your ability to get along with people and get your work done.

Grow to be open-minded, tolerant & accepting of differences.

Grow to be more knowledgeable about the world and other cultures.

What is in it for you?

ANALYST

GOOD LUCK!

Now that you have understood our values and how we work, the only thing left for you is to start growing your career with us.

We will be here for you anytime you get stuck or even for just a chat.

So, lets's take the next steps of our journey together.

We hope you have a good time working at Solution Analysts.

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Notes

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