# Engineering Team Manifesto

1. **Pecking Order of Culture**

When in doubt, consult the IT’s culture and values. These are global guidelines, and all guiding principles should stem from the kind of culture we want to create. In the event that the actions guided by IT’s culture and values are not optimal to the circumstances, either the values need to be updated, expounded upon or changed; or you have misinterpreted the values. Either way, there is a learning point and it keeps culture at the forefront.

1. **What It’s All About**

The purpose of the other 8 rules are to guide us towards excellence, and as an explicit promise of the engineering team to uphold these rules. My wish is that our engineering team truly becomes a force to reckon with, and come to pride ourselves on both excellence and our emphasis on culture, values and how we treat each other. In the event that they contradict the end goal, then they should be called out, discussed, edited or removed. We should keep the end in mind from the start, and march towards the future whilst maintaining a sense of focus and flexibility.

1. **Pride**

Great software companies are built around strong engineering teams. That shouldn’t tempt you to feel a sense of superiority over the other functions. Pride is earned, and the focus on strong engineering teams only puts the engineers under greater scrutiny. Inability to earn that sense of pride will force us to forcibly remove you.

1. **Expectations, Excellence and Meritocracy**

Great work is *expected*. Reward is earned through **excellent** work and meted in meritocratic fashion. If you feel that you have not been duly rewarded for **excellent** work, it is the responsibility of the engineer to surface it in an unambiguous and empirical fashion. To reiterate, great work is *expected,* anything less satisfactory than great work is poor by our culture of excellence.

1. **Consistency**

You are only as good as your latest contribution. Excellent work is rewarded but its merits will not be immortalized. We pride ourselves on consistency of great work, not sheer luck. Failure for reproducible excellence will be construed as dumb luck, and one will be treated as such.

1. **Processes**

A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds. Undue importance on processes cast software engineering teams into stone and robs them of agility. That being said, teams left to their own devices and without guidance tend to go astray. Our engineering teams will have minimal processes and instead guide ourselves through principles. The guiding principles will be formalized in a simple document for every endeavor the engineering teams embark on. Principles should be adaptive and agreed upon by all members involved in the project; and change in form and shape as the project evolves.

1. **Niches**

Nobody should be pigeon-holed into one specific function. We will not have ‘testing engineers’ or ‘code monkeys’. Everyone should have an understanding of the project, and pride themselves for overall strength in their engineering. Your specific function will be whatever the project and team requires of you in that instance, and in the event that the function is foreign to you; you should pride yourself on being able to learn, grow and adapt yourself to be useful. Beyond breadth, it is no excuse an engineer not to discover a niche which he can apply himself to. It is equally important that you are known as an expert on something, even if you are not, you should aspire to be.

1. **People and Software**

An insufferable programmatic prodigy will be removed with the same prejudice as a likeable fool. We should not compromise on either the quality of our camaraderie or the quality of our strength. No one will be irreplaceable, but everyone who is around should feel valued and part of something extraordinary.

1. **Communication**

Written words can be misconstrued. Emails can be misinterpreted. Even speech can be misheard. When in doubt, establish communication and seek clarity. Failure to seek clarity when in doubt is not an excuse for the failure to meet standards and specifications. It is the onus of the confused to remove himself from that predicament. When communicating with each other, emphasis clarity over brevity.

1. **Autonomy**

Everyone should have an idea of where the ship is heading, even if they are not the captain. Only children should be hand-held, and if repeated instances suggest that you have a failure to handle autonomy, then you shall be treated as such. Appropriate guidance should be given, but the details of implementation should be handled with pride and competence. Initiative is not a bonus; it is an expected functionality. In the event that something is hindering your autonomy, be it confusion, lack of direction or other psychological matters; surface it immediately.