Welcome to Working with Ashish!

Every product (and human!) has a happy path, ways it can malfunction, and methods for getting the most value from it. I'm like a product in those ways. And like a product, evaluate me by my happy path and edge cases.

My goal for this doc is to share my operating system — how I think and work — so that you get a sense of what it would be like to partner with me as your manager & teammate.

About my team

Leadership Principles

In service of that, these are the main leadership operating principles I strive to uphold for our team:

Cultivate a Learning Culture - Mistakes are valuable opportunities to grow and improve. I encourage my team to view failures as part of the journey to success. I strive to build trust in my team's abilities, allowing them the

How I build product

Think Big and Work Small - We aim to understand the full customer problem and the vision for the product's future. However, we focus on satisfying immediate customer needs by building for the first milestone. By embracing Toyota's law of small jobs, we learn quickly and iterate, while always keeping the final state in mind to avoid creating one-way doors.

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freedom to take calculated risks while owning both successes and setbacks.

How this shows: Admitting and learning from mistakes,   sharing wins, and fostering trust in the team.

Processes: Retrospectives, weekly "fails" highlights, and   modifiable team norms.

Respect Breeds Candor — Respect is the foundation for open and honest communication. By valuing and acknowledging the expertise of every team member, we create a collaborative space where diverse perspectives are welcomed. Rooting for someone means being candid with them when it matters.

How this shows: Recognizing the unique strengths of each   team member, career conversations, and lunch chats.

Processes: Five-minute "talk about anything" sessions,   manager-led debriefs, and modeling open communication.

Strategy is Saying No / Choose Your Problems — Effective strategy is about prioritization—focusing on the goals that truly matter and saying no to distractions. This involves clear communication of priorities, aligning the team's efforts, and empowering team members to make decisions aligned with our objectives.

Principle in Action: Start small to build momentum, but   always design with the broader context of the system in   mind.

Salute the Buyer, Sit with the User - The buyer and user often have different needs, and our job is to respect both perspectives. Honor the buyer by ensuring the feature aligns with their priorities, and support the user by addressing their needs. Balance is key to building trust on both ends.

Principle in Action: Understand the buyer's priorities while   crafting solutions that work seamlessly for users.

Bet on the Customer - When there's a choice between the customer and the solution, bet on the customer. Ideas evolve and improve when they incorporate customer feedback early and often. Trust that even hearsay from customers reflects valuable sentiment, especially when data and direct feedback diverge.

Principle in Action: Seek feedback at every stage to refine   ideas and ensure they resonate with real-world needs.

Failure as a Stepping Stone — Our goal isn't to avoid failure but to fail safely and learn. Failure is an essential part of the creative process that guides us to better solutions. While avoiding clear wrongs, we recognize there are often many paths to   Built on

How this shows: Publishing roadmaps with clear principles, priority rankings, and semi-annual roadmapping exercises. I apply the <u>Kano Model</u> to guide decision-making around product features. It's not just about meeting expectations but determining how much excellence is needed in each aspect of the product.

Processes: Investment breakdowns and decision frameworks.

Debate with Goodwill, Support the Outcome — Healthy debates are vital for innovation and team cohesion. I encourage structured discussions that accommodate diverse communication styles, from introverts to extroverts, while ensuring everyone supports the outcome once a decision is made.

How this shows: Encouraging reflective debates and engaging in self-challenging exercises.

Processes: Principles for discussion, brainstorming "what else," and creating space for thoughtful dialogue.

For every job that must be done, There is an Element of Fun - Work should include moments of joy and creativity. I aim to foster a team culture where we dream big, enjoy one another's company, and celebrate our efforts with organized fun.

Principle in Action: Create a safe environment to test ideas, learn from mistakes, and iterate toward success.

Great Artists Steal - Not every aspect of product development requires innovation. Established patterns often provide the best usability and reduce risk. When differentiation isn't essential, consistency and familiarity can lead to optimal results.

Principle in Action: Copy proven solutions when innovation isn't a competitive advantage.

Don't Forget the Sprinkles - Sprinkles might not change the flavor of ice cream, but they make it more delightful. Similarly, a great user experience includes elements that bring joy, validate sadness, and offer comfort. Find the fun and engage the user in ways that feel meaningful and memorable.

Principle in Action: Focus on delivering not just functional value but also emotional resonance through thoughtful design.

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How this shows: Team games, shared laughter, and   collaborative creativity.

Processes: Get to know you questions, demos, hats.

About me as a manager

My top priority is to create the conditions for you and the team to be wildly successful. Winning is fun, and our chances of winning go up when we're world-class at what we do—both as individuals and as a team.

My Manager Strengths

As a manager, you can count on me for:

Coaching Through Questions - I thrive on asking thoughtful coaching questions that empower you to figure things out on your own. This helps you grow and build confidence in your own decision-making. If you want my advice, please ask for it.

Clearing Roadblocks - I excel at removing obstacles that stand in your way. My extensive relationships within and outside the company allow me to call on the right people or resources to help.

Decisive - I am talented at making decisions. I feel this is the best way to support my team by making timely decisions. I might be wrong and you might disagree with my decision (and that's ok! See Debate with goodwill leadership principle and Communication nuances.)

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Support in Uncertainty - I lean into uncertainty and provide a steadying presence when navigating the unknown. Whether you need a listening ear to vent or a collaborator to solve problems, I'm here.

Diverse Experience - My background spans product management, finance, strategy, analytics, UX design, and marketing. I've built zero-to-one products, worked on growth, redesigns, Platforms, full-stack features, and contributed to multi-figure sales deals. I'm skilled in pattern recognition, thinking years ahead, and setting teams up for future success.

My Manager Nuances / Areas for Growth

Balancing My Load - I tend to take on a lot of projects, which sometimes leaves less time to focus on team needs. This can lead us to overcommit as a group. I'm working on prioritizing and managing promises better.

Pride of Ownership - I sometimes try to fix things myself instead of asking for help or saying no. I'm learning to delegate more effectively and trust others to step in when needed.

Your Growth with Me

I create structured plans for our collaboration:

When we begin: A career conversation about how you see your story shaping at Zapier. From this, we develop a plan together for your growth.

Weekly: 1:1s where you set the agenda. This is about working through anything on your mind. I welcome venting as much as problem-solving. I welcome unhinged dreaming as much as tactical issues.

Monthly: Retrospective-style meetings to reflect on our working relationship. This is where we will manage your workload and priorities.

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Quarterly: Career trajectory check-ins to assess your progress against set goals.

Semi-annually: Career conversations to refine your growth path.

I also develop a team plan for growing our impact. You can choose how much of your growth journey you share with the team. I believe understanding and leveraging each other's individual work styles is key to collective success.

About me as a co-worker

Working with me

Flexible with Feedback - I welcome feedback. You can expect that I ask for multiple examples and suggestions to improve. To help me prepare, let me know feedback is coming by adding it to an agenda or bringing it up in a regular cadence. If you want feedback from me, giving me time to prepare ensures it will be thoughtful and constructive. When you ask me for feedback, please share with me your goals and what areas you welcome feedback.

Introverted with a Need for Focus - While I enjoy connecting with others, I am an introvert at heart. I do my best work after time for independent reflection. I block out large chunks of my calendar for focus time and prefer agendas for meetings whenever possible.

Calendar-Driven - I live by my calendar—if there's open time, feel free to schedule something without asking. However, if it's a day of meeting, I prefer you ask me before scheduling. I prefer knowing about meetings a day in advance to plan effectively. I may message you outside of hours if inspiration strikes, but I don't expect responses. Similarly, I have very effective notification boundaries in my life - you can message me whenever you want!

Team Collaboration - I see "team" as a broad concept, extending to design, Go-to-Market, engineering partners and beyond. Our collective success is rooted in understa Built on ▬

supporting one another's work styles and goals. I do not like politics and will not stand for them. I'm happy to be a sounding board for relational nuances, but strongly believe we are all in this together, so expect me to focus much more on problem-solving after letting you vent.

Autonomy and Flexibility - I trust you to manage your time effectively. As long as you are meeting your commitments and not negatively impacting the team, I fully support taking mid-day breaks, vacations, or any adjustments that help you do your best work. In fact, I usually have to take a walk or go into the garden in order to effectively focus on a big project.

I like to celebrate wins - My biggest strength from <u>Strengthsfinder is Competition</u>. This means that I like to compete and win. I also have a strength in relationships, so being competitive shows up as a strong desire to win as a team. When we win as a team, I like to also celebrate as a team. And I get the most joy when it's publicly and together.

Communication & How I Think

Online hours: 8am-4/5pm. I do take breaks during the day to prepare and rest my mind, but I will be available within 2 hours.

Very calendar-driven: I am motivated by dates and deadlines. So, if you need me to work on something or review something, please put a meeting on my calendar. Similarly, if you see that I have "review time" on my calendar, please respect it because it's a forcing function for me to get something done ;)

Getting a hold of me: I check Slack all day long, and I check email 2x a day. If you need me urgently, put a meeting on my calendar to "respond to ___", and this can conflict with a meeting I have if necessary.

   With Slack, I'll try to respond within 2 working hours. I have horrible ADD, so I silence notifications when I'm in a meeting or have   blocked focus time.

Communication nuances: I say things more confidently than I mean them. My style is to say things confidently, but I have learned over time that it can send teams in the wrong direction. So, I have a paradigm I use:

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Strong No = I care, I will argue my position and strongly believe I am right. I worry that the other side is "wrong". Be prepared to   represent your position.

Soft No = I don't really care, but my opinion is No. Feel free to go around my opinion or ask why I feel that way.

Soft Yes = I don't really care, but my opinion is Yes. Feel free to go around my opinion or ask why I feel that way, but I won't be   intense about it.

Strong Yes = I care, I will argue my position and strongly believe I am right. I worry the other side is "wrong". Be prepared to   represent your position.

I respect strong decision-making techniques, like the DACI model. I like it when decisions are pushed as locally as possible. I respect   it when there is a positive escalation culture. I would rather you make a decision and escalate it than have us talk about it a lot.

I respect it when you own your failures. Failures and mistakes happen! To me, it's more about what you do when that happens. I like   the framework: "[This] happened. [This] is what we are going to do by [when] to fix it. And you can help by getting us [Ashish action   items]."

Please wait until I tell you I'm done reviewing a document to read my comments. When you ask me to review a document, I like to   comment as I read and sometimes my comments are more notes to myself. Then, I go back and review the entire thing to give you   a robust commentary. There are lots of times when I resolve comments I made in the beginning or revise them. So, I ask you wait   until I tell you I am finished; and thank you!

A final note

Thank you for reading this document and taking the time to get to know me as a person and a co-worker. I welcome clarifying questions and refinements. Like I said, I'm a work in progress, and thanks for being a part of my story.

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