

My Operating Manual

v1.0 – 22/12/2023

About Me

What do people get right about me?

- I think about things a lot and deeply. I don't want to give advice (don't allow me) but if you need clarity, I can help.
- I forge my own path. I don't let convention, tradition or expectations dictate how I live and create, in my life and work. A friend recently said about me: "Anything you'd tell me about Dimitris, I would believe it". I am thrilled by unconventional ideas and I love to be provocative.
- I have very high standards for quality. I HATE mediocrity and I won't hesitate to trash something mediocre.
- I can be crass and come across as indiscriminate or insensitive. There will probably come a time where I will respond quickly and harshly. I apologize in advance. Know that this is not personal.

What do people underappreciate or underestimate about me?

- I care a lot about my closest people and I hate to see them upset. Perhaps I care more than I should.
- I am extremely liberal in my relationships and I believe everyone should do whatever they want. Live and let live. I expect the same attitude on the other side.
- I love meaningfully connecting with others in quality time. I might appear as a lone wolf but I'm not. I just need the right invitation.

What are 3 essential things about me?

- Self-awareness. It's my most important project and I am relentless in my pursuit to understand myself more deeply and improve the way I live, create and collaborate.
- Serving life. Either by helping others become who they are, creating and running a good business, or by helping my friends to raise their kids, I want to serve life with everything I do.
- I love good things. Quality. Good fashion, good art. I'm audiophile. Cinephile. Foodophile. I love what I admire.

About my relationships

What are my good relationships like?

- We make communication intentional, not random. This might mean regular scheduled quality time. The relationship is not left to chance.
- I trust the other person can take care of themselves. I don't have to worry about them because I know they will ask for what they need.
- Everyone takes responsibility for being self-aware and owning what they bring to the relationship, eg. ghosts from past traumas.
- I err on the side of goodness. If something does not feel right, I always assume it's a misunderstanding as I try to understand more.
- They listen. In fact, I don't care about relationships where the other person does not listen. I completely disengage.
- I can speak freely. If I'm afraid of triggering a bomb in them with my words, I'll check out of the relationship.
- In a working relationship, they give me feedback early and often.
- Absolutely no toxicity.

What are my frustrating relationships like?

They...

- are not being open about their needs. What we call stonewalling.
- act randomly. One day we're good, one day we're not. I don't know what to expect.

I...

- keep to myself. I feel something is off but I'm not saying it out of fear.
- worry I might have done something wrong.
- lose trust in the relationship and I start to expect worse from them.
- become distant and less available as I try to protect myself.

What does it look like when I'm stressed?

- I close off and might become distant. I might avoid eye contact and give shorter responses. This should tell you there's something else on my mind.
- I might become harsh and rush to action or be critical if action has been delayed, eg. a project is late.
- It helps if you point it out to me. I hate being given advice unless I ask for it. Asking me if there's something I need works better.

Working with me

How I like to communicate

- If it's time sensitive or if you need to talk, call me. If you're blocked from doing your job, call me. If you're not sure if it's important, err on the side of caution. Call me.

- In all other cases, based on priority, here's how I like to communicate (higher priority → lower priority): call → SMS / WhatsApp / Signal → Slack → email.
- This means that I check Slack and email less frequently. I will probably see your message early but will not respond instantly.
- Don't worry about disturbing me. I take excellent care of my peace and attention and will not be disturbed unless when I allow it. Don't worry about texting or calling at any moment. If I am not available, you won't bother me.
- I hate to write on my phone so with written messages it might take hours until I respond. If it can't wait, call.
- I don't expect you to respond to any message in real-time but I do expect you to close the loop on anything we open. I hate to follow-up and ask twice about something. If it's on your plate, take care of it and get back to me when there's progress. I will do the same.
- Remote work is best when done asynchronously. This means that we shouldn't have to talk in real-time except in rare cases. To ensure that, **make your messages count**.

Help me help you

If you need my help, I need to you to do your homework first. I can help you clarify your thoughts and unblock you with your challenge but I don't want to do your thinking for you. If we get on a call and you're not prepared, you've just wasted time from both of us.

Don't give me half-done jobs

We are working together because I truly believe you are more than capable of great work so I am holding you up to those standards. If you deliver something half-done (or with typos), I won't accept it. I will get disappointed and might even get angry. You disrespect my time and your greater self. Figure it out, then come back when you have something that you can admire. Recall that I hate mediocrity and I know you can do better.

Champion for what you care about

Everyone in our team is different. Everyone has a different view about things. What is important to you might not be so important to someone else. I expect you to champion for the things you care about. Don't wait for an invitation. This is your invitation. Step up and be bold about what you think should be done.

I hate to micromanage

I trust you can do a great job and I don't want to get in your feet. I will make sure you have everything you need to get your job done and then let you do it. Please take care of the details (the quality is in the details) and I won't bother you at all. I am here to help you with anything you need (ask me!) but I don't want to have to get involved in the details.