



SHOPPINPAL'S EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

Playbook for ShoppinPal'ers

Preface

The seeds of ShoppinPal were sown several years ago by the founding team when an exploration to improve the in-store shopping experience and retail applications in general led to the discovery that the much bigger and deeper problem exists around the lack of integrations and workflow automation in retail, hospitality and several other adjacencies.



Several key learnings and failures have come from our journey so far which have guided us to do better in every iteration. For example, when the founders deployed a [novel mobile self-checkout solution at Boutique retailers in Soho \(New York\)](#) they ended up building a Linux server from the ground up and deploy it at customer sites; quickly the team realized that this approach would not scale if the company was to eventually solve problems for millions of merchants worldwide. This guided us in selecting partner companies and systems that could scale rapidly in a cloud-based model via effective partnerships. From the very beginning we have believed in product-led growth. To this day, even after deploying our solutions at thousands of businesses globally ShoppinPal is driven by our product and engineering team without any need for extensive Sales or field support.

We are building an extraordinary company focused on solving real issues faced by millions of small businesses (with a focus on Hospitality and Retail) in every part of the world. We have always known that we had to first create a place that was designed to foster the extraordinary. A place where incredibly talented individuals are empowered to put their best work into the hands of clients, with very little in their way. This book is a map to our guiding principles. As ShoppinPal continues to grow, we hope that these principles will serve each new person joining our ranks.

If you are new to ShoppinPal, welcome and thank you for trusting us as your career destination! We are thrilled to have you with us. Although the goals in this book are important, it's really your ideas, talent, and energy that will keep the company shining in the years ahead. Thanks for being here. Let's make great things!

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How to Use

This book isn't about the perks or how to set up your workstation or where to find source code. We work in ways that might seem counterintuitive in a traditional workplace but comes most naturally to humans – through collaboration, openness and freedom.

Use this book as your inner compass whenever you are in doubt and stuck on a decision. For more nuts-and-bolts information on anything, go to docsy.shoppinpal.com.



This book is not a finished work and we don't think it ever will be; we love contributions, suggestions and additions made by the people who know the best. That includes you. Suggest new sections, or change the existing ones. Add to the Glossary. Or if you're not all that comfortable editing it, annotate it: make comments and suggestions. We'll collectively review the changes and fold them into future revisions.

Our Mission and Culture

- We are deeply committed to **simplifying our customers' lives via Automation**. Our daily decisions are guided by what's in the best interest of the millions of merchants and the App Providers that serve them. We've chosen to take a focused approach by picking Hospitality and Retail as the 2 key tracks since the team knows the intricacies of these domains really well, and it's a large enough unsolved problem impacting millions of businesses globally. Take a look at this intro video by our founder: <https://youtu.be/yiioPSufM9E>
- We view this adventure as the *journey to self realization* via a commitment to "deep learning". The basic tenets of being successful at ShoppinPal involve taking an approach of Giving before you expect to Get, and having a tremendous zeal to learn and contribute every single day, with humility.
Transparency and **Integrity** are central to our culture and success. The leadership will share everything ranging from company financials and challenges

being faced, and you have an absolutely free invitation to ask / learn more about any topic -- barring sensitive/confidential matters we take pride in being *an open book*.

- We encourage and strongly prefer candidates who can operate with complete autonomy and ownership. You have a strong say in what you work on - we believe exceptional outcomes and productivity can be achieved only when everyone is fully vested into what they do. Mostly you will get direction on where we want to go / blueprint of what we need to build, figuring out the HOW is up to you
- In most cases you will be entrusted with using your best judgment honing it with continuing to make and own tough decisions. The hierarchy is to always put the interests of our Customers first, then look out for your Team, and finally for yourself. If you are in doubt it's completely fine to consult your peers for ideas, but eventually the decision needs to be owned by you.
- The spirit of **Entrepreneurship** is the organizational glue that binds us. Our clients are mostly small entrepreneurs who reach out to us to ease their business issues. The nature of being an entrepreneur means that you fully embrace ambiguity and are comfortable with being challenged regularly. You would often find your colleagues working on their own ideas or personal projects. Jump in and help out.
- Passion for **Learning continuously** and the **motivation to share what we know**, is what sets ShoppinPal apart. All of us bring our experiences and knowledge to the team. It does get hard to manage knowledge. What you can do is to manage the environment in which knowledge can be volunteered, created, discovered, shared, distilled, validated, transferred, adapted, and applied. We do this and we do it well.

We are all in the trenches together, so have empathy for your fellow soldier and have their back in every way possible. The only way we will win is when we trust each other with our lives!

- We will always strive to be **comfortable with being wrong**. When you make a mistake or receive critical feedback, don't panic. Think of it as an opportunity for learning, and remember that the process of 'failing'—when you're willing to pay attention—is often what leads to the greatest successes. All humans are unique.

We're meant to share our opinions, no matter how outlandish they are. Some of the best creative ideas came from people sharing peculiar viewpoints. Know when to speak and hold your ground versus getting in the boat and rowing hard when your captain says so :-). And always remember that leaving your ego aside makes for a great workplace!

Day Zero

We know you are raring to go but for your first day, slow down. Your assigned buddy/mentor would have, by now, made a plan to introduce you to your team and set up discussions in different parts of the company to get you started.

How to make best use of this is up to you. **Hint: Ask a lot of questions & and join Slack asap!**

To help you along, the following items will be in your welcome kit: Laptop, credentials to all essential tools, basic joining forms, important contact numbers, and more. Take some time to hand over essential documents to your HR contact and also share your emergency contact info with them. And don't forget to bond with your teammates over coffee, lunch, TT/foosball or anything else that you fancy!

If you are joining a startup for the first time, brace for the best time in your life. We encourage everyone to craft their own way at work and we do not believe in keeping a constant check on everything. We trust that if all of us share a common vision for the company and own its future, we would always behave in the best interest of our company.



When it comes to questions like work timing, leave, etc we prefer leaving it to you and your team to decide the best way forward. Take some time today to do this. This playbook will help, but the best people to answer queries are your buddy and your teammates.

Your first 90 days

Your first 3 months is a time of mutual adjustment when you get to know the company and its way of working and we understand you and your strengths better.

So really, there's nothing we can tell you here. But to welcome you in 'gently', we are suggesting the following checklist for you to use.

The first month

By the end of your first month, you should have done one (or more) of the following:

- Introduce yourself to all other employees
- Been a part of company huddles
- Taken charge of your role and created your OKR (fancy acronym for Goals/Objectives)
- Get paid (we will take care of this one!)
- Posted a message (or many) on our company intranet/group messaging app

By the end of the Second month

By the time you've finished your second month, you should have done one (or more) of the following.

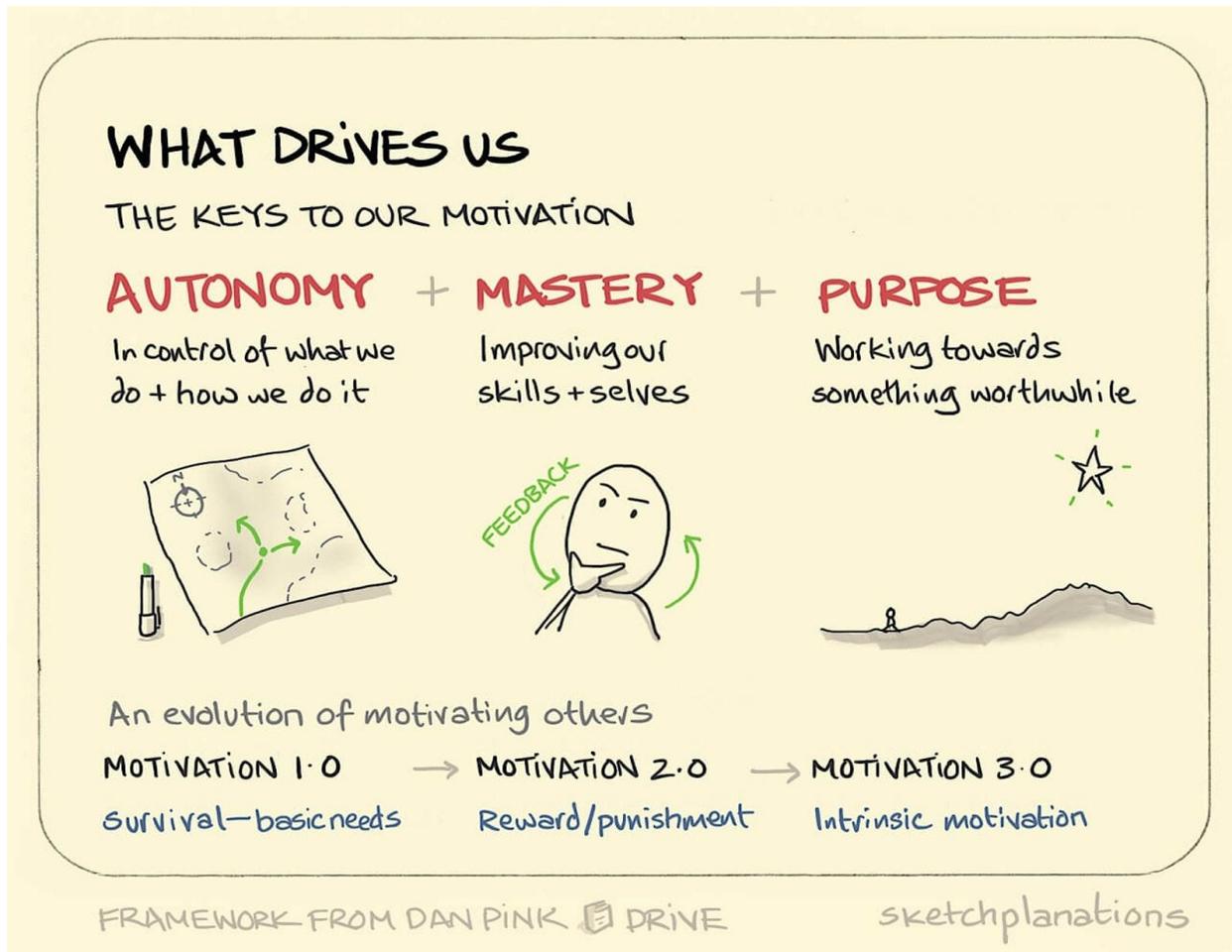
- Tried a new way of doing something for yourself
- Suggested a better way of doing something to your colleagues

By the end of the Third month

By the time you've finished your third month, you should have done one (or more) of the following:

- Anchored an activity (your choice) at a team huddle
- Completed your probation completion discussion with feedback on your OKR
- Received a word from us on your confirmation and stock grant

Keys to being successful at SP



Source -Sketchplanations - <https://sketchplanations.com/autonomy-mastery-purpose>

When we look at our team today, we find that the most successful members are the ones that are self-motivated. There are three common traits that jump out.

- **Pursuit of Mastery**

Mastery is the desire to improve. People motivated by mastery, see their potential as being unlimited, and constantly seek to improve their skills through learning and practice. Someone who seeks mastery, attains it for its own sake. For example, an athlete who's motivated by mastery might want to run as fast as they possibly can. Any medals that they receive are less important than the process of continuous improvement. A sense of progress, not just in work, but in capabilities, contributes to the inner drive. People seeking mastery do not look for tasks fitting their exact

capabilities, but look for space and support to reach a little higher to foster improvement, continual mastery, and growth.

- **Belief in the ShoppinPal Purpose**

They care about the 'Bigger Picture' and are motivated to pursue the most difficult problem. Those who believe that they're working toward something larger and more important than themselves are often the most productive and engaged. Purpose is what gets you out of bed in the morning and into work without groaning and grumbling — something that you just can't fake.

- **Thriving on Autonomy**

They like to choose their own adventure. Autonomy is the need to direct your own life and work. To be fully motivated, they must be able to control what they do, when they do it, and who they do it with. Sense of autonomy comes as a natural inclination. Whether it's deciding what to work on or when to do it, ShoppinPal is built on the principles of freedom and the ones that revel in it are the most successful.

Hours we work & leaves

It is important to take time off to recharge oneself and refresh the mind so you can come back to work with new energy and be prepared to do your best work ever!

Here are some pointers on how this can be done in a collaborative manner:

- Our **working hours** are guided completely by the task at hand and results that are required to be achieved. You can start and end your day whenever you want, as long as delivery is taken care of.

It will be up to the team to decide their most productive hours.

Team Huddles are an important mode of communication among team members, and we urge you to actively participate and contribute in each huddle.

- **Paid Leaves** can be taken as per your need taking into account the work deliverables you have - which only you know the best. Use good judgement, see what the priorities are and review the impact to the business along with your team members.

Being part of a fast moving dynamic team means you need to be highly organized and a considerate team player. Each team member has busy times so it is always a good idea to check with them to ensure there is adequate coverage in place.

- Always keep your team members informed about your absence. Add an event / appointment / time off on your calendar well in advance, available for others to view, you can always change later. It would be helpful if you can add your time off as FYI in the calendar as soon as it gets decided.

As a general guideline, members can take long leaves (greater than 1 working week) up to 2 times a year. We will observe up to 8 public holidays in a year. The dates will vary as per the calendar year.

Please also remember to turn on your out of office message and include contact details of a co-worker in case anything urgent or critical comes into your inbox while you're away.

- **Maternity leave** up to 26 calendar weeks will be granted to eligible permanent female employee staff. Since the leave is 26 calendar weeks, all the intervening weekly offs and holidays will be considered as leave. To be eligible for maternity benefit, female employee must have worked with the organization for 80 days in 12 months immediately preceding the date of delivery)
- **Paternity leave** can be taken when required and with good judgement. This leave can be availed of 15 days before birth or within 6 months after the birth of the baby.
- **Maternity and paternity leave benefits will be applicable to adoptive parents.**

Benefits

Your health and well-being matter to all of us. The hospitalization benefit is provided to all team members to take care of their own and their immediate family's hospitalization expenses. Please work with your HR contact to enroll within your first week of joining.

The Employee Benefits philosophy at ShoppinPal is driven by the belief that each of us is unique. Personalized benefits take into account the unique situations, needs, and preferences of each employee and use that to deliver the benefits that fits their needs. Whether it is unlimited learning resources [online, books etc] or a bigger monitor, whatever makes you most comfortable and productive, just ask and it will show up!

Spending Company Money

In keeping with our vision of creating a self-managed organization, we expect our colleagues to take responsibility to determine what they need to purchase or expense in order to do their jobs effectively.

Spend the company's money like it's your own. We trust you to use your best judgment.

It is generally easiest and fastest for you to make the purchases and expenses yourself. Just ask for the company credit card and manage the expense that you need to make to get the work done.

Communication

Effective communication is crucial for the success of any business. It brings clarity and builds visibility of our work.

We have a code for team interactions. Here is how it goes

- Be clear about your work and dependencies
- Be respectful regardless of external pressures, no compromise here
- If you are unavailable in any blocks make sure to inform in advance
- Reply at the earliest to keep others informed, regardless of when the work is going to be done.
- Keep the video on during calls.

Guidelines for customer interactions

- All of the above.
- Keep the Communication Concise, Clear and Context-driven
- Communicate important factors such as progress status, deadline, costing, etc, in definite terms. Avoid using terms like, “almost”, “perhaps”, “numerous” – as they lead to confusion.
- Keep your client conversations agenda-based. Hold discussions that matter right now and plan when to discuss what. Trying to fit too much in a single conversation can backfire.
- Be aware of how certain information will be received by the client. Pay attention to the context of the agenda in hand, and who it is being reported to.
- Clients are the happiest when the tone is professional. If you're wondering what professional tone entails, here are a few helpful points: Exhibit confidence, Be courteous and sincere, Use language that is non-discriminatory and unbiased,

Always keep “how this benefits the client” in mind, Avoid tone that is accusing in nature.

- Be an Active Listener
- It is worth mentioning a few things which are not acceptable
 - Harassment in any form is prohibited including verbal, physical and visual conduct, threats, demands, and retaliation. Such conduct will not be tolerated.
- There is zero tolerance for
 - harassment or bullying because of race, sex, colour, religion, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation or any other protected basis.
 - Unwelcome sexual advances involving verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct such as sexually coloured remarks, jokes, letters, phone calls, e-mails, gestures, showing of pornography, lurid stares, physical contact or molestation, stalking, sounds, display of pictures, signs, verbal or non-verbal communication which offends the individuals sensibilities and affect her/his performance.

Performance and Growth

We have just one method of evaluating each other: peer reviews. Peer reviews are done in order to give each other useful feedback on how to best grow as contributors.

We all need feedback about our performance—in order to improve, and in order to know we’re not failing. At least once a year we all give each other feedback about our work. Outside of these formalized peer reviews, the expectation is that we’ll just pull feedback from those around us whenever we need to.

Because we don’t have a traditional hierarchical structure, it can be confusing to figure out how ShoppinPal fits into your career plans.

Working at ShoppinPal provides an opportunity for extremely efficient and, in many cases, very accelerated, career growth. In particular, it provides an opportunity to broaden one’s skill set well outside of the narrow constraints that careers can have at most other companies. So the “growth ladder” is tailored to you. It operates exactly as fast as you can manage to grow. You’re in charge of your track, and you can elicit help with it anytime from those around you. We believe that high-performing people are generally self-improving.

Recognition

The purpose of the recognition program is to recognize, appreciate and encourage contribution and achievements of colleagues. We value the spirit of teamwork, sense of initiative to go beyond the job description and mutual trust. Accordingly, three types of awards that recognize this sentiment have been initiated in the company.

- **The Square Peg award**

This award is given to those problem solvers who can solve problems that make people say, “impossible,” “no way” or “why even try?”

- **Thanks a zillion**

This award is meant for the most helpful member of the team. This award is dependent upon the voting from employees. Any employee can nominate any of their colleagues across the organization for this award. This award recognizes unconditional help and support by the colleagues at the time of need.

- **Above and beyond call of duty (ABCD) :** This award is to appreciate those employees who contribute to the company in more ways than expected (beyond the routine of their job). Award recognizes those individuals who were deemed worthy of special recognition for their impact on the company’s growth.

How we hire and your (critical) role in building the perfect commando unit

Hiring is the most important thing in the ShoppinPal universe. Nothing else comes close. So whenever you are part of the interviewing process, give it all you have.

Adding a great person can create value across the whole company. Missing out on hiring that great person is likely the most expensive kind of mistake we can make.

How do we choose the right people to hire?

Here are some questions we always ask ourselves when evaluating candidates:

Would I want this person on my team? Would I learn a significant amount from him or her?

What if this person went to work for our competition?

Across the board, we value highly collaborative people. That means people who are skilled in all the things that are integral to high- bandwidth collaboration—people who can deconstruct problems on their own, and talk to others as they do so, simultaneously being inventive, iterative, and creative.

Whenever a team needs a new hire, they can create a panel to evaluate candidates against parameters that they decide. The final selection decision will lie with leadership.

Bring your friends.

One of the most valuable things you can do as an employee is tell us who else you think we should hire. Assuming that you agree with us that ShoppinPal is the best place to work, then tell us about who the best people are, so we can bring them here. If you don't agree yet, then wait six months and ask yourself this question again.

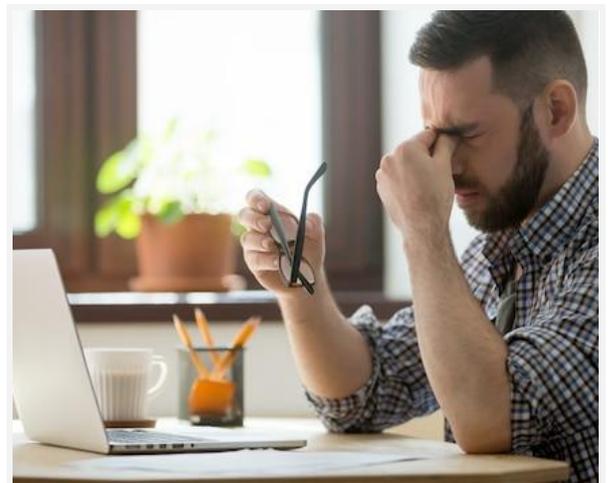
What if I screw up?

Nobody has ever been fired at ShoppinPal for making a mistake. It wouldn't make sense for us to operate that way. Providing the freedom to fail is an important trait of the company— we couldn't expect so much from individuals if we also penalized people for errors. Even expensive mistakes, or ones which result in a very public failure, are genuinely looked at as opportunities to learn. We can always repair the mistake or make up for it.

Screwing up is a great way to find out that your assumptions were wrong or that your model of the world was a little bit off. As long as you update your model and move forward with a better picture, you're doing it right. Look for ways to test your beliefs. Never be afraid to run an experiment or to collect more data.

It helps to make predictions and anticipate nasty outcomes. Ask yourself "what would I expect to see if I'm right?" Ask yourself "what would I expect to see if I'm wrong?" Then ask yourself "what do I see?" If something totally unexpected happens, try to figure out why.

There are still some bad ways to fail. Repeating the same mistake over and over is one. Not listening to customers or peers before or after a failure is another. Never ignore the evidence; particularly when it says you're wrong.





Who we are not and what we are not good at

The design of the company has some downsides. We usually think they're worth the cost, but it's worth noting that there are a number of things we wish we were better at:

- Helping new people find their way. We wrote this book to help, but as we said above, a book can only go so far.
- Making predictions longer than a few months out.
- We miss out on hiring talented people who prefer to work within a more traditional structure. Again, this comes with the territory and isn't something we should change, but it's worth recognizing as a self-imposed limitation.
- Sometimes, the philosophy and methods outlined in this book don't match perfectly with how things are going day to day. But we're confident that even when problems persist for a while, ShoppinPal roots them out.
- As you see it, are there areas of the company in which the ideals in this book are realized more fully than others? What should we do about that? Are those differences a good thing? What would you change? This handbook describes the goals we believe in. If you find yourself in a group or project that you feel isn't meeting these goals, be an agent of change. Help bring the group around. Talk about these goals with the team and/or others.



Exiting ShoppinPal

We don't believe in long notice periods and binding people to stay. Our only ask is to be fair and transparent, and do the right thing for your peers and the company, if and when you decide to leave.