



peppercontent

Our **Culture** Code



As a company becomes **bigger in size and aspirations**; as founders, it becomes almost impossible to be the sole flag bearer of what the company culture comes to be. Culture, in its most rugged form, is the sum of parts of **individuals that make up the organization**. Initially, it is more of what the founders are, until it morphs into something that faintly resembles what it was and more of what it can be - which happens to be this very moment in our organization. And this is when it needs to have a directed set of **cultural principles** and be a guided pathway for all people who are already here and for more people to come.

Mission

We want to become the **world's largest content company** and build the technological plumbing that will power all content ever created and distributed on the web and social!

Key Values

1



**Customers &
Creators**



2



**People
(the Team)**



3



Shareholders

Be Creator & Customer Obsessed

We at Pepper, believe that every individual that gets associated with Pepper should have an **unprecedented empathy towards users** on our platform - both on the customer and the creator side. In all the highs and lows that we have sailed through, the thing that has helped us the most is **the trust the creators and businesses have in us** - even when we have faltered. Every customer and creator, irrespective of their importance should matter to the company and its people.

Investing in Excellence & Keeping the Highest Benchmark for Quality

We **thrive to attain quality** in everything we do and that is the only way we know we can **achieve excellence**. This is very important and straightforward - everything you do has to be done with regard to the highest quality standards. The benchmark should be, till the time you don't think it is the best output, it's not finished.

Take Extremely Strong Ownership

“Something happens when you feel ownership. You no longer act as a spectator or consumer, because you're an owner. Faith is at its best when it's that way too. It's best lived when it's owned.” - Bob Goff

Every individual in the company has to take complete ownership of the things that they are working on. **Ownership is both given and taken** - and we try to do practice both at Pepper. We will trust you with most things and for which we fail to do so, we trust you to take it from us.

Take Extremely Strong Ownership

When you ask to own something up, you won't hear a no. People that have the confidence to believe that they can get things done, a belief that is rooted in **first principle problem solving and second-order thinking**, are the people we want on our team. Ownership, in many ways, maybe construed as always going out of the way to take up something, even things that may not fall directly under your ambit.

We also realize that the best people need autonomy to do their best work. And **autonomy is there when there is trust.**

Grit, Perseverance & Humility

When you are building a company, failure comes often and hits you hard and we want people to be **dedicated to the battle** irrespective of the outcome. Keep executing and turn up the next day with a renewed sense of purpose. We have learned that Gritty people don't care about job descriptions or doing something that falls out of their comfort zone. They thrive in the trenches if they have to, but they persevere and get the job done! Along with Grit, comes the need for humility as well. No matter what happens or comes in the way, **keep executing and stay humble!**

Building a Talent-Dense Organisation

“You don’t build a business, you build People and then People build the business.”

We like to work with people who think that they are going to do their life’s best work at Pepper. We hire and retain World-Class talent only! We at Pepper, are firm believers in the concept of Talent Density, where we need to increase the average talent per employee of the company. We are looking for high-performers and with every hire we make, we want to make sure that Pepper gets more talent dense.

Building a Talent-Dense Organisation

The best talent brings their best network to the company and further increases talent density. When we hire people, here's what we look at :

- We primarily look for **ambition** in a person, without which they become a drain even if they are very talented.
- **Entrepreneurial DNA** - can the said person act as a mini-CEO of their functional area and own the execution and the outcomes for the same.
- Who can think from **first principles and have second-order thinking**
- Who feel like the best in their life is still yet to come, and want to explore **finding that 'best' at Pepper.**

Extremely High Bias for Action

The thumb rule is simple - every day, you should have done something to push us all towards **our collective goals**. We firmly believe that a company culture that talks in hours and days instead of weeks and months is one that can help us outperform and outpace all competition.

Doing things and moving the needle should be a default state - even in face of uncertainty and doubt. This also sometimes means having deadlines set for our own selves to **make things happen at a faster pace**.

Extremely High Bias for Action

We expect you to set targets for yourself and we will hold you accountable to those targets. One of the biggest characteristics for everyone that we seek is a **sense of urgency** which is extremely important to move the needle forward. Everything is not urgent but the sense of urgency even in the smallest task makes things 100x better. If you think that demonstrating that urgency can help deliver work without compromising on our quality standards, do it. You should be **process-driven** but you should not be limited by it - for true scale and innovation.

It is not My Problem, Your Problem – it is “Our Problem”

The best part about our culture is people rally together to see things till the end. It's never a 'Your Problem' scenario at Pepper. Even if it comes to going out of the way, out of your time, out of your comfort zone - we will all **rally together to solve the problem**. We at Pepper believe in the power of having a **collective mission** to go towards. Organizations that outlast their builders are built when every team member feels as strongly for the purpose or the mission for which the company was started in the first place.

Experiment and Deliver Results while Staying Frugal

All companies that are behemoths right now come from humble backgrounds. **Frugality is not a bug, it is a feature.** It means to optimize for things in lesser resources - and we feel the best solutions arise through these constraints. Once we know what is working for us, we have no qualms in doubling down on those bets. But experimentation as a practice should be approached very frugally.

Experiment and Deliver Results while Staying Frugal

We are **output-centric** and focus only on delivered results. Till the input variables are within the constraints of the company, you have the liberty to experiment in ways that work for you! We also increasingly want to push the entire company towards an experimental approach - where we encourage everyone to **stress-test their hypothesis**. At times, these experiments are what change the direction and course of a company. Innovation comes from frugality and scrappiness.

TAM is a mindset – there is no limit to our TAM

There is **no limit to the TAM** and the people we can touch through our company and the limit for us should only be what our imagination can be! Every company is a content company and there should only be two kinds of companies in the future - **companies who work with Pepper and companies who will work with Pepper.**

Disagree & Commit

If you think something is not right and you disagree - always commit post that. If you can't reach a consensus, that's okay but you need to make a decision and then ask the team to disagree and commit. It's possible that your concerns might prove wrong - but even if it isn't - the outcome is much better. We look for people who are **not afraid to voice their concerns** and thought processes behind something. Unless we speak up, things don't change or people don't pause to look deeply. Also, **committing goes both ways.**

Disagree & Commit

Especially for leaders - **“Leaders are obligated to respectfully challenge decisions when they disagree, even when doing so is uncomfortable or exhausting. Leaders have conviction and are tenacious. They do not compromise for the sake of social cohesion. Once a decision is determined, they commit wholly.”**

Thinking & Committing Long-Term

Build for the **longer-term horizon instead of short-term gains**. When you think like an owner, your interests act favorably to your customers as well as team members. When you design processes, frameworks, your organization, and business from a long-term lens, it always pays off. Even when you are joining Pepper, or are already a part of Pepper - understand that we are here to build this company for the next few decades and that is the **long-standing lens** we look at as we build businesses and people alongside.

Being Adaptive & Responsive to Feedback & Change

We love to **adapt and be open to change** if it helps us grow more sustainably and efficiently. We take feedback very seriously and are always looking for ways to scale to the next orbit of growth and innovation. We are **strong believers in the compounding rule**. 1% innovation daily and things will compound. That 1% innovation has to come from our ability to be able to adapt and respond to feedback and change.

All these principles come from 4 years of learning and unlearning - and just like everything else in the company, this too will evolve over time. Everyone that is currently with us or will join us in the future will leave a mark and contribute to the culture that we all will witness. It is upon you, to make sure that what you leave stands the test of time, and outlives all of us.

