



My Code of Practice

Introduction

To define your Code of Practice is to shape a personal guidebook for *how you work*—something distinct from how you live. It's about defining the values, principles, and practices that help you navigate your professional life with clarity and integrity.

Think of it as setting your own Terms and Conditions. These aren't rules for others—they're touchstones for *you*. They help you know where you stand, what you stand for, and what you're willing (or not willing) to flex on. Yes, there may be times when you choose to adapt or renegotiate with others—but the starting point is yours to set.

Not into the term *Code of Practice*? That's fine. Call it a Constitution, Playbook, Manifesto, Operating System, or even your Work-Life Handbook. Pick the name that feels right. What matters is that you're curating a meaningful collection of statements that express what matters to you in how you show up at work.

These statements might be practical actions, core values, guiding beliefs—or all three. They act as your compass, helping you stay aligned with what feels true and right.

And here's the key: this is *for your eyes only*. You're not publishing it for a boss, client, or colleague. No one else gets to judge you against it. You choose whether it's a set of aspirational ideals or a set of promises you hold yourself to. You're the author, the audience, and the accountability.

Method

PART A

1. Ideate a list of Values

Think about incidents that have frustrated you in the workplace – consider what value might have been violated.

Review a list of Values (you can find these commonly on the web as “critical values”). Note the ones that resonate strongly with you.

2. Ideate a list of Behaviours

Think about actions you have taken of which you are most proud – they may represent a value that you seek to honour. Be specific; not broad actions.

Think about actions you tend to repeat as etiquette or precepts which are your personal honour code.

3. Match values with behaviours

Look at your list of Values and your list of Behaviours. Match them up.

For Values that have no matching behaviours, consider what behaviours you would do to honour these. For Behaviours that have no matching Values, consider what Values they represent.

PART B

1. Create a document

Make a document with the suggested structure.

Level 1 - Areas

4-8 items; labels or headings

Level 2 – Agreements/Expectations

1+ statements, written in present tense, active voice

One variation on the two-tier structure is a three-tier structure with a middle level of Principle statements, as in Example B below.

2. Determine your categories (Level 1)

You are likely to have at least 20 items in your list, so you will need some good categories to best organise them.

See suggestions in Appendix A as a starting place. One idea is to collect items for your list, then group 'like' together, and see what categories suggest themselves to you.

3. Add your content (Level 2 and 3)

Write statements and organise them within the structure.

Example A and Example B below contain sample statements.

Example A

RELATIONSHIPS

1. *I draw upon a collection of meaningful relationships to support and enable the activities of Self unLimited.*
 - 1.1. I chose members of my professional village carefully and dedicate time to cultivating trust and rapport with village members.
 - 1.2. At least twice a year, I review the member list to remove people who no longer have a meaningful relationship with me.
 - 1.3. I keep a record of who is in my professional village and maintain current details to enable mutual contact.
 - 1.4. At least once a year I make personal contact with every member of my professional village to let them know they are valued.

OPERATIONS

2. *I am self-employed regardless of who pays me.*
 - 2.1. I start each gig with a list of declared personal reasons for taking the gig and only stay in/at a gig while these reasons are still valid. I always have the option to change my reasons.
3. *I make choices and take actions to work smarter.*
 - 3.1. I keep copies of work product I can reuse to be effective in future work.

Example B

1. GET WORK
 - 1.1. Know what shared value there will be in deciding and accepting a piece of new work. Only accept work for which there is a reasonable level of shared value.
 - 1.2. Set good expectations about what expertise I will use in agreeing to a piece of work. (Just because I have the skills doesn't mean I will do or be anything or everything they want me to be. I am not an employee!)
 - 1.3. Honour and obey my gut if there is a values-conflict with me and a potential client; don't accept the work!
2. DO MY WORK (Tactical)
 - 2.1. Don't answer my mobile phone during meetings with other people.
 - 2.2. Be punctual in all meetings. Allow sufficient time to move or travel between meetings to prevent delays.
 - 2.3. Provide contact details in email signature so others have easy access and quick option to alternative ways to contact me.
3. MANAGE MY WORK (Work Activity, Macro & Strategic)
 - 3.1. Use a digital calendar to organise and track my time honestly and flexibly, and with mindfulness about energy levels.
 - 3.2. Keep a master list of all work commitments to which I am offered and to which I have agreed. Update the master list at least once a fortnight.
 - 3.3. Have and use an Activity-Time Budget to ensure important activity is prioritised and apportioned with limited time.
4. MANAGE MY WORKSCAPE (Attention, Energy, Contexts)
 - 4.1. As much as possible, don't work outside normal business hours. Preserve non-business time for rest and personal rather than professional activities.
 - 4.2. Don't receive, read, or respond to professional emails or professional messages via social media outside business hours.
 - 4.3. Take lunch breaks during the working week, away from the desk or situation in which I am working if possible.
 - 4.4. Take regular rest breaks, especially when sitting and/or working on a computer.

4. Put in place habits and resources to enable you to operate as you have specified.

For each of the statements, consider how much time you need to factor into your working schedule.

Make sure you do the action as habitually as possible. It might seem slow or uncomfortable at first; with regular practice you'll develop fluency, and it will seem more natural.

For each of the statements, have appropriate tools or resources to enable you to do the stated action with minimal fuss or hindrance.

Appendix A: Potential items for 'Areas'

Set 1

Logistics
Operations
Relationships
Resources
Wellbeing

Set 2

Renewal	performance, improvements, development, learning
Reign	purpose, strategy, direction, values, beliefs
Relationships	connections, introductions, collaborations
Reputation	branding, marketing, social media
Resources	infrastructure (soft & hard), tools
Revenue	value, pipeline, multiple sources, administration
Rules	code of practice, processes, terms & conditions, standards

Set 3

Mental
Physical
Spiritual
Emotional

Set 4

Get work (Find, Enter)
Do my work
Manage my work
Manage my workscape
Finish/close work (Exit)

Appendix B: Inspiration from other's work

Other people have written down their beliefs and guidelines. You may be inspired by what they wrote and how they presented the content.

"How to be Creative" by Hugh Macleod

<http://changethis.com/manifesto/6.HowToBeCreative/pdf/6.HowToBeCreative.pdf>

Pamela Slim's "Declaration of Independence"

<http://www.escapefromcubiclenation.com/2011/02/23/your-declaration-of-independence/>

Max Ehrmann's "Desiderata"

<http://mwkworks.com/desiderata.html>

This Activity was designed by [Questo](#) as part of their Self unLimited Learning Programs.
Learn more about Self unLimited™ at www.be-selfunlimited.com



This content is released under a Creative Commons BY-NC-ND 4.0 International licence so it can be freely shared with attribution to the creator (Questo); it cannot be used for commercial purposes; and it cannot be modified.

