

Levelset Field Guide

Get Ready for Take Off

Levelset
2019

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Legal Advice Disclaimer

This is information and is not legal advice.

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Why You're Here

An introduction from our CEO & founder, Scott Wolfe

Millions and millions of hard-working people make a living in construction, one of the largest industries on the planet.

Jobs that used to get done with a handshake are now buried under a labyrinth of red tape and contractual bullying. This leads to bad outcomes, slow payments, disputes, and liens.

When I was an attorney, contractors would approach me with the same problem: cash. Cash was being held from them, cash was coming too slowly, cash was in dispute, etc. It was always cash, and the person was always certain and passionate that they earned that cash. They deserved that cash.

Levelset's beginnings are rooted in this moment of extreme pain, looking to help the unpaid contractor with nowhere else to turn. In some circumstances, filing a lien could really help. But more often than not, a lien was just one more complicating thing the contractor didn't understand. So we made it easy to understand. We published simple how-to guides and overviews. We made the filing process fast, easy, and painless.

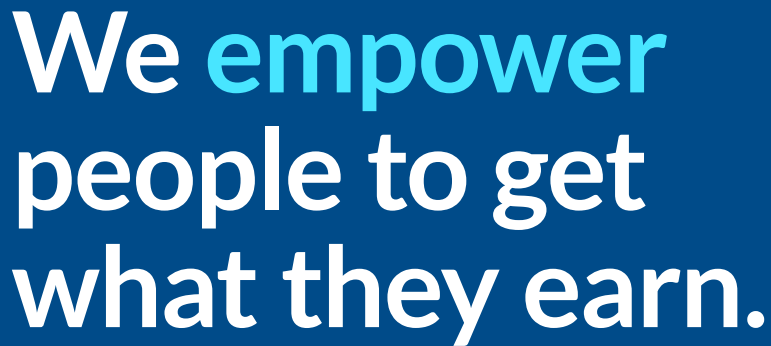
We began to see the underlying problem more clearly — the reason why the contractors were even experiencing those pains. The fact is that no one walks onto a job and thinks *I can't wait until there are payment problems and liens get filed.*

They wind up there. And the entire purpose of our founding is to prevent that.

We embrace a methodology that connects



everyone in the payment chain to make the payment process easy and less stressful and to set up every job for success.



We empower
people to get
what they earn.

Levelset's underlying purpose is in a fight against the unfair results that gave birth to this company, and it is simple and virtuous. Today, contractors, developers, lenders, and suppliers all over the world start jobs from a protective position, stacking up a pile of protective processes, procedures, documents, and leverage-points before the shovel ever hits the dirt. We dream of an opposite approach. We dream of a world where the payment process is easy, fast, and fluent for everyone, and where risks are so objectively low and the process is so trusted that the parties all take a collaborative-driven approach to payment and start shoveling dirt confident they'll get everything they've earned.

That is the world you're here to help us build. We're not there yet, but the flywheel is turning, and we're glad to have you on board to get that flywheel zooming.

-Scott



Notes:

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How To Use This Book

You've decided to jump in to a new position, you've gone through the interviews, you've circled your first day of work on the calendar, and now you're here.

Congratulations, and welcome to Levelset.

You're joining a world-class team working on big, meaningful challenges, and your role with Levelset has the opportunity to be the greatest and most important work experience of your life. You'll notice something around here pretty quickly, though. Things at Levelset can seem counterintuitive at first.

This book is here to make your first few months easy, and to help you better understand the company's purpose and guiding principles from day one onward. During your time at Levelset, you're going to make a lot of choices. And, in fact, we're counting on you to make choices. This book offers a guide to how to think about them.

If you're looking for specific information about our policies, health care plan, and more, please refer to the company's policy documentation available on our internal, online Employee Center. If you see, hear about, or experience something sensitive or out of line, please contact your supervisor or the People Operations Director. If you have any general questions, ask!

We're incredibly excited that you're here and are looking forward to working with you!

“Nothing
is worth
more than
this day”

- Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Your First Days

"Happiness is not reaching your goal. Happiness is being on the way. It is our wonderful fate to be just at the beginning."

Ingvar Kamprad, founder of IKEA

The most important thing in building anything is to start with a good foundation, and that's going to be the focus of your first day at Levelset.

Your first day will be an exciting whirlwind where you'll learn about our purpose, platform, tools, and culture. You'll be assigned a "z-buddy," you'll have some awesome new swag, and you'll be sorted into your Core Values House (more on that to come).

This section should help you acclimate in your first days and months at Levelset.



Key Facts About Levelset

What We Do: Now that you're working here, you'll need to be prepared for that cocktail party question, "What do you do?" Getting into the details of how the platform works is going to be overkill. Focusing on the problem and our purpose, here is what we do in a nutshell: Cash is the contractor's lifeblood, but red tape has turned payment into a stress-filled nightmare that results in slow pay cycles, bullying, burdensome paperwork, and costly disputes. At Levelset, we believe in empowering people to get every dollar they earn, and our solution makes payment paperwork and collaboration quick, easy, and stress-free.

Our Offices & Locations: Levelset was founded and is headquartered in New Orleans but today it spans the globe. We have offices in Cairo, Egypt, and Austin, Texas, and also have team members working in various cities across the world. This can sometimes present logistical challenges to connecting with one another, but we bridge the gap with Slack and by being considerate in all meetings to make certain that remote locations can see and hear us. (Be close to that mic!)

Levelset Is Venture Funded: It's important to understand that Levelset is venture funded because it underscores two key features. First, since venture funding is only put into billion dollar opportunities, our venture funding is some validation that we're working on a big, financially valuable opportunity. These billion dollar opportunities don't grow on trees. Second, since capturing big venture opportunities is improbable and unusual, we operate with aggressive goals and have extremely high expectations. These billion dollar opportunities don't turn into realities on accident.

This Isn't Usually How It Works: Levelset is a challenging, challenging work environment. There are a lot of remarkable and unusually rapid growth opportunities for this team, but this type of environment gives and takes. It can sometimes feel random. Some hairs grow longer and faster than others without explanation. Things move fast. Things break. Things are not as neat and tidy as they could be. Things -- like employee headcount, users, and revenue -- can double seemingly overnight. This is not a place you'll work the rest of your life.

This is not the place for everyone, and that's okay.

It Can Get Noisy: When we design office spaces, we make them open and a bit congested on purpose. Certainly, this can sometimes be a distraction, and - especially when a deal closes, a five-star review comes in, a release pushes live, etc. - it can get pretty noisy. However, the buzz is an energy that feeds the organization and helps us push forward against the odds. It's a trade-off for the enthusiasm we get to share as a team. Don't go off creating superfluous noise for sport, but do ring the gong when you knock something out of the park, and give your co-worker that high five when it's well deserved.



Notes:

The Levelset Rhythms

Our organization moves with a rhythm. Don't be afraid when these things change, as we frequently re-evaluate these rhythms to make sure they work for our fast-evolving scale and structure.

Team Daily Standups: Your team will likely have a daily standup meeting. The team uses this to stay in sync with their daily activities, wins, and challenges.

Team Weekly Meetings: Most teams also meet together weekly to go through their team's performance, their focus areas, and their progress on priorities and goals.

Leadership Weekly Meetings: Leadership also gets together weekly in different groupings. Leadership from each department group (i.e. Revenue, Operations, Product) meet weekly, the executive team meets weekly, and a "Leaders Circle" group meets weekly.

Department Group All-Hands Monthly Sync: Each of the department groups have an all-hands meeting once each month. The department group goes over their shared performance in the month, progress on their goals and priorities, wins and challenges, and highlights individuals with awesome contributions in the period.

All-Hands Monthly Sync: Each month, the entire company gets together across all teams and offices for an all-hands meeting. During this meeting, we review the company's purpose of empowering people to get what they earn and how we delivered on that purpose. During the period, the CEO discusses the horizon and longer term initiatives of the company, and together the group reviews the period's performance, priorities, and goals. We also spend time on cultural elements, such as reviewing employee engagement scores and recognizing star contributors. While this meeting is monthly, it acts as a "quarterly" meeting at the start of each quarter, and an "annual" meeting at the start of each year. It is usually at 8:45am on the first Thursday of the month.

Quarterly Planning: A planning team -- which includes the executive team and an alternating blend of other participants -- meets offsite each quarter to plan the priorities of the business for the quarter ahead; the meeting is facilitated by a third party. The planning team prepares for this session by examining the company's performance and strategic documents and processing feedback from the front lines and from team leaders.

Quarterly Themes: Each quarter, the planning team creates a "theme" for the quarter. The theme is designed to be a fun, slightly-over-the-top, method to succinctly communicate an area of focus across the company.

Annual Planning: The executive team meets offsite every December to plan for the next calendar year. To prepare for this session, the executive team reviews the prior year's successes and failures, input from the Board of Directors, input from leadership and employees across the company, and more. During the annual planning session, the executive team reviews the company's 3-5 year targets, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats and sets out the key strategic theme for the year and annual priorities and goals.

Board Monthly Call: Levelset's Board of Directors have a monthly call to review the business' performance. In preparation for this call, the finance team prepares and distributes a business reporting package to the Board and to the full team.

Board Quarterly Meeting: The Board of Directors have a formal board meeting each quarter. The location of this board meeting alternates between New Orleans, Austin, and San Francisco. The board meeting lasts between 3-4 hours, is conducted by the CEO, and includes participation from the executive team and an alternating blend of other participants. During these meetings, the board reviews the company's financial performance and progress on key strategic priorities, and conducts formal corporate business such as approving employee stock grants. The board financial packages, board deck, and other board meeting materials are made accessible to the full team.

Bi-Annual Shareholder Update: Twice each year, typically in Q1 and Q3, an update is prepared and distributed to all Levelset shareholders (and the full team) updating them on the company's high level performance, opportunities, and challenges.

The Flywheel

Picture a huge, heavy flywheel...[and] imagine that your task is to get the flywheel rotating on the axle as fast as possible.

Pushing with great effort, you get the flywheel to inch forward, moving almost imperceptibly at first. You keep pushing, and after two or three hours of persistent effort you get the flywheel to complete one entire turn.

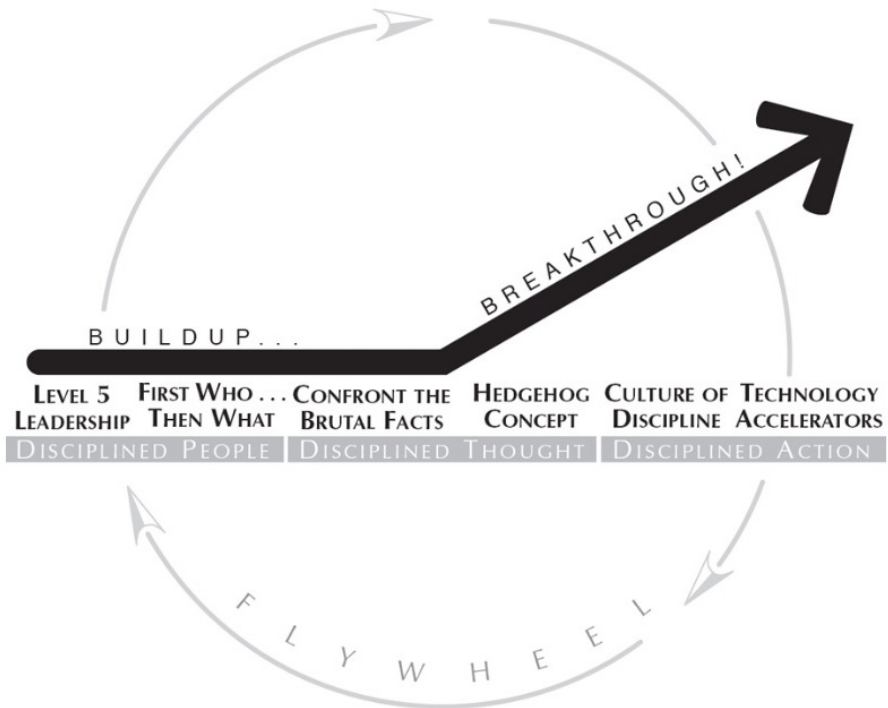
You keep pushing, and the flywheel begins to move a bit faster, and with continued great effort, you move it around a second rotation. You keep pushing in a consistent direction. Three turns...four...five...six...the flywheel builds up speed...seven...eight...you keep pushing...nine...ten...it builds momentum...eleven...twelve...moving faster with each turn...twenty...thirty...fifty...a hundred.

Then, at some point -- breakthrough! The momentum of the thing kicks in in your favor, hurling the flywheel forward turn after turn...whosh!...it's own heavy weight working for you. You're pushing no harder than during the first rotation, but the flywheel goes faster and faster. Each turn of the flywheel builds upon work done earlier, compounding your investment of effort. A thousand times faster, then ten thousand, then a hundred thousand. The huge heavy disk flies forward, with almost unstoppable momentum.

Now suppose someone came along and asked, "What was the one big push that caused this thing to go so fast?"

You wouldn't be able to answer; it's just a nonsensical question. Was it the first push? The second? The fifth? The hundredth? No! It was all of them added together in an overall accumulation of effort applied in a consistent direction. Some pushes may have been bigger than others, but any single heave -- no matter how large -- reflects a small fraction of the entire cumulative effect upon the flywheel.

Jim Collins, Good to Great



Revolution means turning the wheel -Igor Stravinsky

Some Questions You May Have

Who owns Levelset? Levelset is not owned by a single person or entity, but is owned by a variety of shareholders, which includes our past, present, and future employee base. Many of the shareholders are people or entities who have invested capital into the business. Since 2012, Levelset has raised over \$17M from investors across four distinct rounds of funding. The leading investors in these rounds, who remain major shareholders today, are S3 Ventures, Altos Ventures, Brick & Mortar Ventures, and Operating Venture Capital. The company's founder, Scott Wolfe, and the founding team are also major shareholders in the company. The company also awards stock options to team members, so our shareholders include many former and current employees who have executed these options.

Who runs Levelset? Since Levelset has many shareholders and a Board of Directors it may be confusing to understand who “runs” the company. The company is “run” by the CEO and the executive team, who exercise virtually all decision-making for the organization. The shareholders, subject to the company's By-laws and Voting Agreements, elect the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors hire the CEO, and that is the most impactful decision-making authority they have. It is the CEO's authority to handle all aspects of the business, except for explicit decisions that require board and/or shareholder approval, such as decisions to raise further capital, take on debt, sell the business, make major purchases, etc.

Can I be included the next time Levelset is deciding X? Yes. There's no special, top-secret decision-making process going on at Levelset, and there isn't an appointed decision group that dictates how everything happens. The truth is that decisions are being made all around the organization by people all over the place. You're probably sitting next to someone working on a decision; and if not, you're a phone call, Slack message, or Zoom meeting away from that person. All you have to do here is get involved. Raise your hand, ask around, and start talking to the people you think would be working on the decision. All meetings are open door meetings and you're welcomed in them. Your input is welcomed. But it is your job to insert yourself where you think you should be.

Is there something going on that I don't know about? Well, it depends on what you know. There's a ton of transparency at Levelset, but just because we're transparent doesn't mean you'll always know about everything. You have access to everything. We share everything in the Employee Center or on Slack, and every department and leader is an open book to you. However, there is a lot going on at Levelset, and it's impossible for everyone to know everything. The company leadership will always prioritize certain communications to keep the team focused on the priorities at hand. It's quite possible that something is going on you don't know about, but nothing is being hidden from you, and you have access to everything.

I have an idea, but what do I do with it? By all means, tell somebody! You're such an important part of this company, and your perspective, based on your background, creativity, and the interactions you have with Levelset co-workers and customers, will lead to unique and valuable ideas. Pass those ideas around, share them gratuitously, communicate them with others who you think are relevant to the ideas, etc. One thing you may hear around the office, though, is that "ideas are cheap." Expressing an idea, in other words, is the easy part. The hard part is crafting the idea to fit snugly with the company's focus, strategy, and challenges and then in executing on the idea. Share your ideas, but also be prepared for those ideas to be challenged in how they fit, and to do all the unglamorous work to make that idea a reality.

I hear we're losing money and I don't get it. Are we going to run out of money? Our business does currently "lose money," in that we are spending and burning through more cash than we bring in through revenue. This is intentional. We have raised capital from outside investors for the purposes of spending it, in fact, in anticipation of a "return" on that.

Learn More Context With The Library

Learning is important, and almost synonymous with growth, in the Levelset environment. To succeed and grow at Levelset, you should never stop learning. We have a few ways to help you. You can lean into your stunning colleagues. You can reach out across offices, countries, and cultures to connect with other Levelsetters. You can take advantage of our unlimited vacation and international travel stipend to broaden your horizon. You can subscribe to the #readers-curiosity channel on Slack to see what others are reading, or follow your co-workers (like Scott, our CEO) on Goodreads.

Here are a few books we love that will help you better understand Levelset’s business model, strategy, and approach.

Marketing & Messaging	<i>Positioning</i> , Al Reis <i>Made to Stick</i> , Chip & Dan Heath <i>Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion</i> , Robert Cialdini
Sales	<i>The Sales Acceleration Formula</i> , Mark Roberge
Customer Success	<i>Switch</i> , Chip & Dan Heath <i>The Power of Moments</i> , Chip & Dan Heath
Product	<i>Competing Against Luck</i> , Clayton Christensen <i>Platform Revolution</i> , Geoffrey Parker <i>Hooked</i> , Nir Eyal

Business Strategy & Theory	<i>Competitive Strategy</i> , Michael Porter <i>The Founder's Mentality</i> , Chris Zook <i>Good to Great</i> , Jim Collins <i>Team of Teams</i> , Stanley McChrystal <i>Scaling Up</i> , Verne Harnish <i>Decisive</i> , Chip & Dan Heath <i>Business Adventures</i> , John Brooks <i>American Icon</i> , Bryce Hoffman <i>The Method Method</i> , Eric Ryan
Leadership	<i>Start with Why</i> , Simon Sinek <i>The Score Takes Care Of Itself</i> , Bill Walsh <i>Multipliers</i> , Liz Wiseman <i>Turn the Ship Around</i> , David Marquet
Life	<i>Educated</i> , Tara Westover <i>The Bright Hour</i> , Nina Riggs <i>Factfulness</i> , Hans Rosling <i>Grit</i> , Angela Duckworth <i>When Breath Becomes Air</i> , Paul Kalanithi <i>Short History of Nearly Everything</i> , Bill Bryson <i>Essentialism</i> , Greg McKeown <i>The Remains of the Day</i> , Kazuo Ishigur
Greatness	<i>Walt Disney: The Triumph of the American Imagination</i> , Neal Gabler <i>Leonardo da Vinci</i> , Walter Isaacson <i>The Billionaire Who Wasn't</i> , Conor O'Clery <i>The Everything Store</i> , Brad Stone <i>Shoe Dog</i> , Phil Knight <i>Steve Jobs</i> , Walter Isaacson

New Orleans	<i>Huey Long</i> , Williams T. Harry <i>Frenchmen, Desire, Good Children...and Other Streets of New Orleans</i> , John Churchill Chase <i>Confederacy of Dunces</i> , John Kennedy Toole
Austin	<i>Lone Star: A History of Texas and Texans</i> , T.R. Fehrenbach <i>The Gates of the Alamo</i> , Stephen Harrigan <i>A Journey Through Texas</i> , Frederick Law Olmsted
Cairo	<i>Cairo: The City Victorious</i> , Max Rodenbeck <i>Into the Hands of Soldiers</i> , David Kirkpatrick



Your Core Value House

We don't use a Sorting Hat, but we do put all team members into a House based on what Core Value they most embody. You're in good hands. Our House Leaders were selected for being true ambassadors in the company for the core value they represent. They help curate fun house activities, volunteer work, and group challenges. It's a great way to meet people you may not otherwise see everyday, and to make an impact related to the core value on our organization, on other team members, and our external community.





Our Core Values

Core values are things that rest in the heart of the organization. They are discovered over time and never change. Similar to how an archeologist makes a discovery under layers of dirt and then slowly dusts away all the dirt to expose the artifact, so too does an organization slowly examine itself over time to reveal its core beliefs and values as succinctly as possible.

When someone joins our team, we've accepted that they are good representatives of our core values. During the recruiting and hiring process, it's incumbent on us to ensure that the prospective team member fits into our values structure. In fact, if our values are properly identified, they should automatically attract the right team members and repel the others. If you're reading this and are a part of our team, then you've been deemed to fit in with Levelset's values.

Something to note about our core values is that we don't always live up to them. In fact, in the proceeding sections that discuss each value, you'll notice instances when we changed things because they were out of line with our core values. Living up to the values of the organization is work, and it's hard work.

Nevertheless, the values always serve as a lighthouse.

And that is perhaps the most important point to make about Levelset's core values.

They provide team members – at all levels of the organization - with clarity on how they should behave and a guide of the highest order on how to think about their choices. Even if you make a sub-optimal choice, it will still be correct, so long as it conforms to these core values.

Be Passionate About Fairness

"Fairness is what justice really is."
- Potter Stewart

Fairness - this abstract and impossible virtue - sits at the very core of our purpose, and it is our first and founding core value. It differentiates us from every other software product and company on the planet.

It guides everything we do, from strategic discussions, to writing content, to building our product. Rather than simply building and selling a tool to solve a user's workflow pains, we are chipping away at an entirely different gold mine. We're building a product and company to win a war in an industry plagued by a disease of stress and fear, and we're extinguishing a culture of payment abuses, unfairness, and good people suffering greatly from bad situations.

This core value is not only relevant to the change we'll drive into the construction industry. It's relevant to the company's day-to-day decisions and actions, and our relationships with employees, shareholders, customers, partners, vendors, and others. When confronted with choices and decisions, at Levelset we're compelled to contemplate whether the results will be fair to the affected parties, and we always aspire toward a fair result.

In our users' words:

"The one thing Levelset has done for us (a very small, family owned, subcontract company) is help us feel less lost and alone when confronting Goliath. I really believe that we can bring the tyranny to an end if more little guys had you in their corner."

- Kathleen Miller

"Great to have Levelset and Emily in our corner. Levelset guides you through a process which lifts a huge weight off your shoulders. No matter how smart

you may be, you'll eventually run into a situation where you fall back on the old way of doing business: trust and a handshake. It's the way most honest people would like to do business. And it's just what the devious are looking for in a contractor. You get an education when you thought you knew it all. And Levelset teaches you how to be proactive so it will never happen again."

- George Taylor



Notes:

Make Complex Things Simple

"Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication"

- Leonardo Da Vinci

Interacting with the construction payment process is hard, because the process, regulations, paperwork, risks, and more are all staggeringly complex. In fact, it is this very complexity that creates injustices in the system, as it's extremely difficult and intimidating for contractors and other stakeholders to understand it all. Complexity is a barrier. Complexity is injustice in disguise. The problem with complex things is that they are inaccessible things.

For us to deliver our purpose, it's required that we make this simple. It isn't easy to make complex things simple. In fact, it's hard work and requires a lot of contextual understanding of the complex thing. That hard work is baked into this core value.

In doing the hard work we must always "read enough." We must peel back the onion and ask why until we reach the root of our purpose and the essential. We believe that clarity, transparency, and empathy are the pillars of simplicity, and we are obliged to deliver it.

In our users' words:

"Levelset has been a wonderful asset in assisting us in staying current with the rigors of notifying owners, sending notices and making sure that we are heard and seen from start to finish on projects. Levelset has been an invaluable tool in navigating and complying with the various lien laws that differ greatly from state to state."

-Susan Malone

"This program has made the lien process easy to understand and I have the confidence that everything is done correctly at the start."

-Matt Wanless



Notes:



Do The Right Thing

"In any moment of decision, the best thing you can do is the right thing, the next best thing is the wrong thing, and the worst thing you can do is nothing."

- Theodore Roosevelt

This core value is about being active instead of passive, and it empowers everyone at Levelset to use their best judgment to do what they think is right. In interpreting the word "right," it's appropriate to consider both the ethical definition, as in doing right versus wrong, and the correctness definition, as in doing the right thing instead of the incorrect thing. Most importantly, though, this is about empowering and trusting you to be active and, in any moment of decision, to decide.

You and all the other people working with you at Levelset are smart, ambitious people who care about doing a great job, making an impact on their own professional path, and helping us fulfill our purpose.

When you walk through our doors, we rely on your intelligence, ambition, and concern, and we trust you to rely on the same to do the right thing. This may often result in mistakes or failures, but this core value creates room for that



Notes:



Create Wow With Magic

"Stop fixing potholes and start building peaks."

- Chip Heath

When you think something is unnecessary, not required, not expected, or unimportant...look closely. It's probably an opportunity to wow. To make the person you're interacting with feel like something happened by magic.

This is a core value because we're so passionate about our purpose -- to empower people to get what they earn -- that we want to go out of our way through service, through our product, through the extensiveness of our resources, and more to bring the person under any payment stress to the doorstep of what they need, and to confidence.

This requires endless work to identify and create moments that wow. There's a bit of artistry involved here. "Wow" is one of those "I know it when I see it" things.

In *The Power of Moments*, a book on creating peak experiences and wow moments written by Chip Heath (a Levelset investor and advisor) and Dan Heath, the authors describe peak / wow experiences as "short experiences that are memorable and meaningful," and describe four primary types of these moments:

Moments of Elevation: Experiences that rise above the routine.

Moments of Insight: Experiences that deliver realizations and transformations.

Moments of Pride: Experiences that commemorate people's achievements.

Moments of Connection: Experiences that bond people together.

We believe in wowing users, document recipients, prospects, partners, and

whoever comes our way with the ease, speed, and effectiveness of our solution, all to liberate them from tasks and workflows that ordinarily frustrate.

In our users' words:

"The customer service chat was extremely helpful. She was right to the point, step by step and made my job so easy. I felt like I was in good hands and I could trust her guidance. I would not hesitate to use the feature again. Especially if I got the same representative again. She was wonderful."

-Tiana



Notes:

Make Levelset The Most Important Place To Work

*When you have a chance to get on a rocketship,
don't ask what seat. Just get on.*

- Eric Schmidt

This may be the most important place you'll ever work. But that's up to you.

Billion dollar opportunities don't come along every day. The circumstances must be perfect. Billion dollar companies aren't made by accident. It's hard, grueling, glass-chewing work, and the execution has to be pristine.

This core value is not about career planning (we don't do it), mentor programs, benefits, pay, or fun. This core value relates entirely to the fact, and the opportunity, that you're going to be thrown at an opportunity to create a billion dollar company. You're going to have to plow through difficult, rapidly changing challenges. You're going to be given unusual resources to ring the bell and get it done. And you're going to be surrounded by stunning colleagues who are driven, smart, and talented. You're going to be put in an environment that can grow 100%+ year over year, and you know that this is an opportunity for you to grow at the same pace.

You're going to chew the glass. You're going to challenge yourself to grow as fast as you can manage, to get on the rocketship and travel to Mars with us, and to always be moving forward.

In our team members' words:

"The best decision I've made in my career"

- Anonymous employee

"There is a lot of room for personal career growth...the opportunities to grow within



Notes:





More Details

Here, it's okay to...

- Ask questions
- Not know the answer
- Take time off when you're sick
- Take vacation, and NOT check Slack
- Go to executives' office hours
- Observe an executive meeting
- Go to another department's meeting
- Join the board call or a board meeting
- Cheer on your teammates
- Share an unseen opportunity with your team
- Have an "off" day
- Celebrate the winning moments
- Talk about the challenges you're facing
- Schedule time to talk to a co-worker on another team
- Schedule time to talk to a co-worker in another office
- Have and give constructive feedback
- Wear a wolf shirt on the last Wednesday of the month (actually, this is more of a requirement).

Giving Feedback

You are so important to our culture and to our success, and we are here for you. We crave to hear from you!

There is a survey after your first week we'll ask you to fill out. We also use a handy little Slack robot called Leo the Officevibe Bot to collect your feedback on a weekly basis. Officevibe is by default anonymous.

If you have any concerns about workplace safety, legal concerns, or feel in any way unsafe or uncomfortable in the office, please talk to your manager, People Operations, or any member of the executive team.

Where to Find More Details

Refer to our online Employee Center for other important information. This is where you can find answers to all of your Levelset questions, including:

- Who do I talk to if I have a payroll question?
- How does the Levelset stock plan work?
- Where can I find an explanation of my health benefits?
- What education classes are coming up?
- Where can I submit customer feedback?
- How can I suggest a product change?
- How can I nominate someone for a Thumbs Up?
- How can I request a day off or access the company holiday calendar?
- Where can I leave feedback for People Operations?
- Where can I access the Levelset strategic plan?
- And much, much more.

Things We Say

There are some Levelset aphorisms it will be helpful for you to know, and a few funny traditions that can catch you off guard. Here's a short introduction to get your vocabulary off to the right start.

What We Say	What It Means
We are all customer success	There's a customer success department at Levelset, but you'll hear that team frequently share this important aphorism, reminding you and us that we're all customer success.
Ideas are cheap	Having an idea is great, but it's cheap and easy to have ideas. Getting an idea executed is expensive and hard.

Help first, sell second	One of the sales teams' stated core values, this phrase cuts right to the founding purpose of our company: To help. We look to help, comfort, and deliver value to everyone in our universe first, believing that selling and revenue will take care of itself.
Toes in the line	You'll hear Scott remind us that billion dollar opportunities, like disrupting the construction payment market, are rare, and that billion dollar companies don't happen on accident. Billion dollar companies get created on purpose, by rare, championship teams, who always get their toes in the line.
More comma more	There's always room for more. And not more of more. More of less. But more. For this, think about Will Smith's treadmill theory. He said, "You might have more talent than me, you might be smarter than me, you might be sexier than me, you might be all of those things, you got it on me in nine categories. But if we get on the treadmill together, there's two things: You're getting off first, or I'm going to die." More comma more.
Flywheel of the mind	You already know about the flywheel. The thing about ideas and figuring out complicated things is that they take time. The thing about experience and wisdom is that it's accumulated. That's the flywheel of the mind.

<p>It's not impossible, but it's improbable</p>	<p>During Scott's training or sync presentations, he explains how Levelset is a billion dollar opportunity. But he stresses that these opportunities are not captured on accident. It's hard. And in fact, it's highly improbable. But it's not impossible.</p>
<p>Turkey popper problem</p>	<p>Turkey poppers tell you when the turkey's done cooking. Billions of these things are sold. One day, the CEO of a company selling turkey poppers was asked when the company was going to stop selling those damned turkey poppers, because so many people complained about them. The turkey poppers were not the problem. It's just that since they sold so many they got a lot of complaints, because a small percentage of a billion is a lot. Know how to identify when problems are actual problems and not turkey popper problems.</p>
<p>Bright Spots</p>	<p>This comes from <i>Switch</i>, a book by an investor and advisor, Chip Heath. If your kid brought home a report card with five A's and one F, your instinct is to focus on the F. It's more effective to focus on the A's. What is going well in those classes that can be accentuated or transferred to the F class. Always fight the urge to try and fix the potholes. Look for the bright spots. Find your opportunities there and make bright spots brighter.</p>

Eat the whole banana	Every decision carries a trade-off. Sometimes, you have to remind yourself that you're going to "eat the whole banana" with respect to a decision, trade-offs and all.
Generally	Nate's favorite word because we can't, won't, and don't give legal advice. Use it.
If it's Texas, it's fixed	Once upon a time there were bugs in the product with the Texas Mail Pull Queue and batching. It was a pretty big deal. Hisham worked on a lot of these things and let this get said to tempt the universe. The universe replied.
Remarkable	<i>"It's going to be remarkable"</i> says Hisham, when dreaming about how the product's viral and network effects will drive growth.
Does a bear ride a bicycle in the circus?	This is when it's clear that something is true.
That's a WOW moment	You know it when you see it.
The muppet baby you get, is the muppet baby you get.	The undisputed best meeting at Levelset is our chat huddle ("chuddle") hosted by our Customer Support team. All employees who use live chat to talk to our customers are assigned a Muppet Baby. There are no take-backs.

Name your top 5 favorite Levelsetters	After your first few days of working here, expect this tricky question from Gretchen. Don't get it wrong.
Magic Fast	Some users come to our product to get data gaps filled in, or to get a document sent off. They want it to go fast. When the company was tiny, with Scott and Jason Bull sharing a small co-working office by the Seattle waterfront, Scott figured out how to describe just how fast he wanted it all to be. Magic fast!
Something else to get good at	Some parts of the job are hard. Situations with a customer, a partner, another team member, an investor, etc. may be hard. The hard thing about hard things is that they are hard. But, whatever it is, it's just something else for you to get good at.
You'll know it when you see it	When we set out to do something it's important to select some way to measure our progress -- a key performance indicator (KPI). Some years ago, working on our "Create Wow with Magic" core value, we tried to "define wow" and measure it. We wound up having to quote Justice Potter Stewart's attempt to define obscenity: "I know when I see it." Sometimes, the KPI is an "I know it when I see it" kind of thing.



Notes:

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Growing at Levelset

Figuring out how Levelset fits into your career plans can be confusing.

Working at Levelset provides employees the opportunity for increased responsibility, continuous learning, rapid career progression, and more. Everyone at Levelset has a unique opportunity to invest their time in working on challenging problems. But more than that, they have access to the necessary resources and are surrounded by colleagues who are the best of the best doing the same.

Sheryl Sandberg has a way of describing these types of environments; she calls them “rocketships.” In her 2012 commencement speech to Harvard’s business school, Sandberg recalled being recruited to Google by Eric Schmidt. “When you have the chance to get on a rocketship,” Schmidt told her, “don’t ask what seat. Just get on.”

The reason why you should “just get on” a rocketship is succinctly explained by Netflix, another “rocketship” company, in their famous Culture Deck: “In some periods, in some groups, there will be lots of opportunity and growth at Netflix. Some people, through both luck and talent, will have extraordinary career growth.”

Levelset’s opportunity can have the consequence of catapulting many of its people through great professional, personal, and career growth. This growth would be nearly impossible in other environments. However, it’s critical to understand why this growth is possible in the Levelset environment and not elsewhere, and how the growth occurs.

We Don’t Do Career Planning or Career Paths Here

It can be confusing, frustrating, or disheartening to try to design your career journey at Levelset. If you’re looking for a defined or clear “career path” or a “career plan,” you’re going to have a hard time at Levelset.

There are three primary reasons for this.

First, our organization is not in a good position to do career planning. Unlike a small lifestyle business or an established mature business, our organization grows extremely fast. New departments, functions, and roles pop up into existence in spurts, and the company's structure is rarely static. It would take a crystal ball to predict exactly how the organization will evolve and what specific career opportunities could be offered in six, twelve, or eighteen months. There will be many opportunities for growth, but plotting the stages and ladder of your career is not very possible in our environment.

Second, we're generally not a fan of career planning and think it's a bit like a corporate tooth fairy. The fact is that you don't know where you're going to be in five years. Climbing the corporate ladder and planning a career isn't attractive to us. Quoting from Sheryl Sandberg's, commencement speech again, she says, "If I tried to plan my career, I wouldn't have a career." We agree.

Third, that's simply not the opportunity we offer. There are plenty of companies in the world where you can get a great career plan (and other stuff, too!). That's not what we offer. We like the rare and exciting opportunity we offer, and that's what we have. We don't have the other opportunity here.

Growth v. Advancement

We think there's a difference between professional growth (i.e. building your skills) and professional advancement (i.e. building your resume). While there is room and opportunity here at Levelset for both, we think it's clear that growth is more important.

At Levelset, it's plausible the company will grow 100% in a calendar year. We may double or triple our headcount, revenue, customer base, and/or data reach in short periods of time. Three months after you start work, while you're still getting ramped up and acclimated to the role, the company or your department may grow by 10%, 20%, 30%, or more.

In these short periods ask yourself -- are you going to grow that much?

And if so, how? What exactly are you going to do to grow 20% in a quarter and 100% in a year?

Growing at Levelset isn't done through osmosis. It's not done through a mentor program, a career consultation, or a professional development project. You can't sit at the door with a pail in hand asking for professional development to be put inside. Growing at Levelset is hard work, and it's your work. It takes enormous commitment, self-discipline and motivation, and constantly reaching out beyond your comfort zone to colleagues, mentors, publications, resources, and more, inside and outside of your network to keep up.

At Levelset, there is opportunity to grow as fast as you can manage to grow.

The Triangle of Growth When You Catch Lightning in a Bottle

If you're right for the opportunity here at Levelset, then you are curious and self-improving, and we believe you'll be better positioned personally and professionally after spending time here than you would be had you spent your time anywhere else.

This is because we believe you have a chance to catch lightning in a bottle here. The opportunity exists because of the company's overall opportunity, the unordinary financial resources it has to chase that opportunity, the incredible challenge of capturing that opportunity, and the ability to work with other people who are attracted to and able to conquer such a challenge.

We think about this as our Triangle of Growth.

- We will surround you with stunning colleagues.
- We will give you enormous challenges to work on.
- We will provide you with unusual resources.

When you, our leadership, our people operations group, or anyone else is considering your growth opportunity, we should always consult this

triangle. Can you be challenged more? Can we provide you with better resources to meet the challenge? Are you surrounded with the most stunning, inspiring, and demanding colleagues?

Growing at Levelset will be extremely challenging. The work will be demanding. You may be called upon to punch above your weight-class. And because of all of this, you have a rare opportunity, and you can make Levelset the most important place you'll ever work.

How Promotions Happen

Levelset is growing, and it's growing quickly. Along the way, you'll sometimes find yourself ahead, and other times behind, the growth curve. Along the way, new people will come into the organization who have different experience levels and who plot in different places on the curve. This is great news, because it is part of our duty to you to surround you with stunning colleagues who can push you to excel and grow. Lean into these opportunities.

It's also very common for promotions to happen internally as our team members become equipped to take on more. These promotions happen under three conditions:

1. *The organization needs the role.* As the company matures, the need arises for different divisions, leaders, and functions. These areas are filled with people as they are needed. If the area is not needed, or not needed yet, someone will not be assigned or promoted into the role. When Levelset began, it had a team of 4-5 people who did everything; and then, slowly, the organization's component parts began to form. Looking ahead to when the organization is 200, 500, 1,000, or 5,000 people big, the needs will change, and opportunities will arise. The needs must come first.
2. *You have to be amazing at what you're doing already and show great fit for the role.* When a need arises in the organization, we look to our star players to potentially fill the need, and then we look for the right fit with the needed role. Determining fit requires an examination of

the team member's skills and knowledge in the area of need, and the company's experience with the person. People who may be great fits for a role but are ho-hum players on the team aren't going to be promoted. Likewise, people who are great star players aren't going to be promoted into a position that is not a clear fit.

3. *You have to be a role model for our culture and values.* Finally, the person has to be a role model for Levelset's culture and values. Those who embrace our core values, for example, are humble in their abilities and knowledge, constantly push themselves outside of their comfort zone to learn and grow, and who quarter-after-quarter and year-after-year become increasingly valuable as team members and parts of Levelset, and increasingly relied upon.

Hey Engineers, We're Talking to You!

Okay engineers, now we're talking specifically to you, and the first thing we need to say is that we've been talking to you all along. Here are a few other things.

1. Code and engineering skills don't work without context: we want you to be an enormously valuable engineer and for all your technical dreams to come true. Code, though, is only a component of your skillset. We believe that code and technical skills are a language, but truly great engineers still need to know how to write a story. Learning to write the story requires context. Look to a famous engineer of history -- Leonardo da Vinci -- for inspiration here. It wasn't his engineering skills that made him special. It was his wide view and context that empowered him to leverage those engineering skills. You're now surrounded by every business discipline. You're surrounded by interesting business and global challenges. Build your context.
2. We've got engineering skills too: we're working on a lot of interesting technical things as we aim to build a global two-sided marketplace platform for the world's biggest industry. This presents many technical challenges and opportunities. Find and lean into these.

Invent them. Push us to work deeply in areas that we aren't getting to yet. to yet. The technology we build is going to be a reflection of you, but that requires you. Shape our technology. Push the envelope. Build your engineering skills.

3. Leave your fingerprints: there are a lot of "tech giants" out there with thousands or tens of thousands of software engineers among their ranks. You can go work for one of these companies and be a cog in their machine. You can work deeply on a single technical area and gain a lot of experience in that area. We bet, though, that the great engineering minds who took those tech giants from a small company of 100 people to a big company of 1,000+ people aren't working there anymore. They're out in the world looking for another opportunity to leave their fingerprints on something. They're looking for lightning in a bottle, and for opportunities like Levelset. Here, you have a place where you can leave your fingerprints and truly shape a global, world-class technology product.

Levelset Is Not Right for Everyone

This environment is not for everyone. It may not be for you. That's okay. We can still be friends.

Here at Levelset, your professional path may be a little uncertain. The timing may be uncertain. The entire opportunity here is uncertain and a bit of a risk. But we're working on something special here, and now that you're on board, we want you to be part of this special story, and we want to be part of your special story.





The Culture According to You

“A few months after working with a customer, he called me to say that he had been paid in full on the project. **He thanked me for being in his corner when no one else would and THAT moment is when I realized the sheer power of what we do at this company that no one else is doing in the industry.”**

“The people you get to work with here are incredible. Working with everyone to solve complex problems almost seems fun at times even though it can be stressful at times, as well. The amount of feedback, collaboration, hard work and people who want to improve themselves and help others truly have made this company **the most important place to work for me.”**

“I know I’m offering a solution to a REAL problem people have and helping them improve their business. I play a part in their overall experience and adoption, and I’m fortunate to have coworkers at other stages of the user’s journey who care about those folks as much as I do. **It’s a great team and we’re doing great work!”**

“Our company is diverse and makes intentional efforts to use various outlets to hire people from all backgrounds/ethnicities. Discrimination is not tolerated and nothing I’ve witnessed has ever suggested otherwise.”

We have all built a culture of hard work, execution and success. You cannot achieve that without helping a **“I love to see how the company celebrates the customer.** *With 5 star reviews and WOW moments* **happening every day, it’s easy to see our Passionate about Fairness come to life.**

“The job we’re performing is actually helping people. Coming from corporate America I used to believe all sales were soulless and I was just trying to make a quick buck. The culture on a day in and day out basis reflects the company’s mission to empower people to get what they have earned. We as a sales floor educate and help people with real life issues affecting their livelihood. Even if a sale isn’t made it still feels very rewarding to help people with next steps to get paid and I truly feel like I’m making a positive difference in other people’s lives. I no longer wake up, staring at the ceiling and question what I did wrong in my life to end up in a soulless corporate job - **now I’m excited to come to work and help people.”**

“It’s clear to me everyday that we as a team are united by our mission statement: “... Empowering people to get what they earn.” And it’s clear this objective holds us both individually and collectively responsible for the quality of work we produce. In my opinion, when the quality of my work wanes I usually notice a decline in my level of engagement. **I find concentrating on my work and how it fulfills the company’s why helps me greatly to keep pushing with intent on the greater flywheel.”**

Levelset's culture is a melting pot of collaboration. Over the past two quarters—I have seen the doors open up for anyone who wants to be a part of anything happening within the company. I believe that Levelset is the most transparent it has ever been— more and more resources (and better ways to access) have become available.

In the past, I believe that our culture could have been defined as 'work hard — play hard' with a constant cycle of one outweighing the other. **In the present Levelset I believe the scale to be balanced and everyone producing great work!**

Actually, **one of the most important things in Levelset is the culture and I am always describing our culture as a role model and winning culture.** The way management is transparent about the company's future and plans and how everyone is understanding, whether it's personal or career related, is fantastic. **Levelset culture for me is a role model that I wish to last during our up's/down's :)**

Team oriented — focus on constant education — goal oriented people with positive energy.

Supported by its core value pillars, **Levelset's culture definitely serves a higher purpose!** Let me describe it in a nutshell, It's a nice, friendly, and cohesive business environment with a lot of personal growth opportunity in different areas.

A fast-paced environment where employees are expected to grow and adapt quickly and are trusted to work on interesting and engaging projects.

“Hardworking, Fun, and Transparent”



**“If you want a
happy ending,
that depends,
of course, on
where you
stop your story.”**

- Orsen Welles

Caution! The Levelset Warning Label



Aggressive growth companies like Levelset are exciting. Working at Levelset provides you with interesting and rare opportunities and challenges. You will learn continuously, and there will be moments when you'll take on extra responsibility and be allowed to punch above your weight class. In some circumstances, team members may experience very rapid career progression.

While at Levelset, you will have many great days.

You'll also have very rough days.

You'll find yourself at times breaking through difficulties and feeling ahead of the curve, but then, perhaps even quite suddenly, you'll feel far behind and overwhelmed.

Sometimes, it will seem as if Levelset is perfectly assembled and put together, and other times, Levelset will look like an absolute mess. There will be misses. There will be times when information is hazy, incomplete, and inaccurate. There will be times when we make a big investment and it doesn't pan out. We'll lose on an expensive bet. It's not fun to lose.

Remember, all of this is on the warning label. It's part of the system.

When we fall, it's the job to get back up again. When we're burned, the saddest thing is to never learn. And at the end of the day, we're all on this rocketship mission to Mars. We just need to keep inching closer. Keep focusing on the prize.

Good luck.

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