Agenda

Guiding Questions
Priorities & Goals
Success Metrics
Culture & Core Values
Team, Hiring, Promoting, Onboarding
Operations

Guiding Questions

Questions to ask every day
- What are my top three problems to solve?
- Did I meaningfully contribute to my A+ problems today?
- How did I spend my time today by percentage and hours?

Questions to ask every week
- How much closer are we to solving our A+ problems?
- Did my organization's output hit expectations?
- Who on my team performed well and poorly this week?

Questions to ask every month
- Do our metrics still make sense or should I establish new ones?
- What does success look like for my organization?
- Did the way I spent my time meaningfully contribute to solving our A+ problems?

Questions to ask every quarter
- What problems will emerge in the next few quarters and how do I remedy them?
- Who on my team should be getting more responsibilities?
- Am I editing more than writing this quarter compared to last?

Priorities & Goals

1. Make top concerns list
2. Categorize into A+, B, and C problems today
    a. "If we don't solve X, then we will die because of Y"
3. What does the company look like if all A+ problems are solved?
4. What are the gaps that need to be filled to solve those problems?
5. What are A+ problems in 12 months?
6. What are macro risks from an investor perspective?
    a. "Why is there a higher premium on our future value now compared to the last round?"
7. Digest all this into quantifiable milestones in time intervals
    a. "If we accomplish A in B time, then we will unlock C benefit"

Success Metrics

Overview
- Manager's Output = output of his organization + output of neighboring organizations

Northstar
- Engineering timeline
- Revenue
- Sales cycle

Day-to-Day
- Weekly hours worked
- Average time in the shop
- Number of drones built
- Number of people hired
- Number of customers engaged

Culture & Core Values

Core Values
- Should be short, 3-5 at most, and enforceable
    - What are 3-5 values that are important to you personally?
    - What are 3-5 values that are important for the company to succeed?
    - What are we especially good at as a team?
    - What are some behaviors that cannot be tolerated?

-
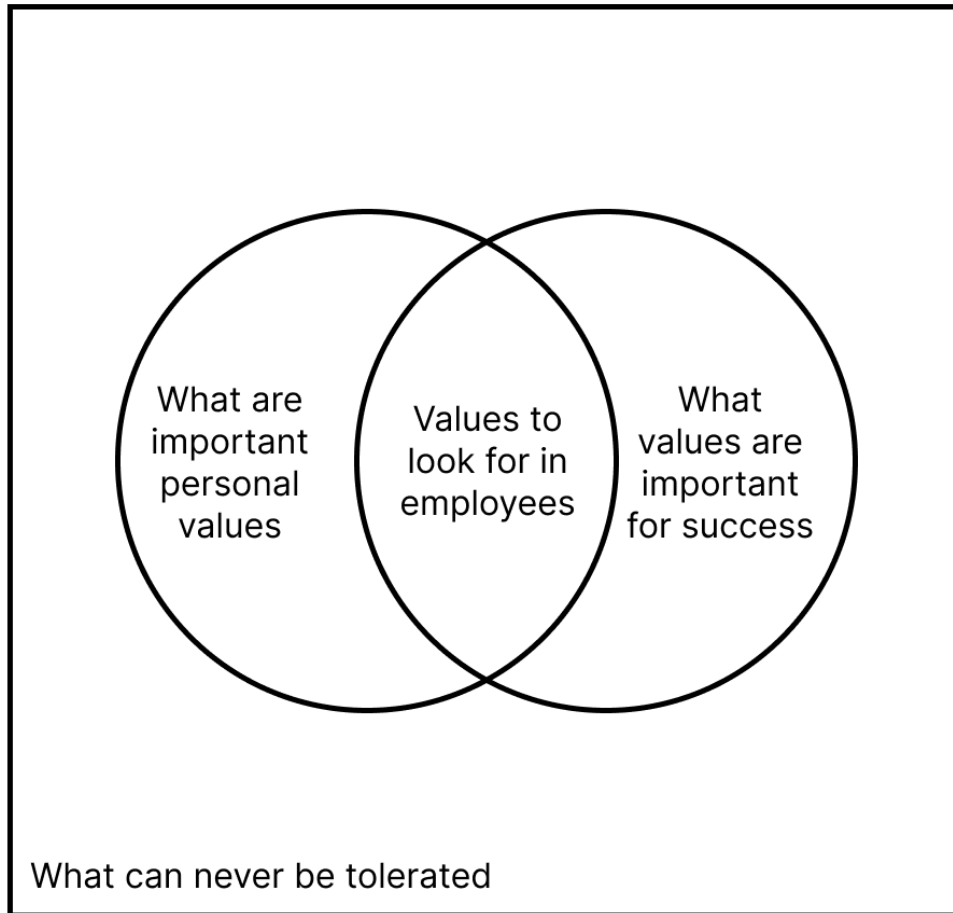
Culture
- How to implement core values into the routine?
- Write interview questions to screen for core values
- Project the company persona based on core values to attract inbound fits

Team, Hiring, Promoting, Onboarding

Defining Talent
- **In a different world, can you see yourself working for them?**
- **Would you be happy or concerned if you had ten times this person in the company?**
- Are they A players?
    - They're on the cusp of their career, this is their biggest act yet
    - They're drawn to opportunities to grow, tackle challenges, and run something
    - They add something to the culture vs just fitting in
    - They're adaptable and relentlessly resourceful
    - They're pillars in their own networks
    - Their peers naturally gravitate toward them
    - They consistently accomplish their responsibilities
    - They have shown a high growth trajectory
    - They're the best in the world at something

Team
- What does the organization look like today?
- Rate each person's strengths and weaknesses from 1-3
    - Individual Contributor
    - Growth Upside
    - Skillset Gaps
- Rate each department's strengths and weaknesses from 1-3
    - Engineering
    - Operations
    - Sales
- Identify gaps in each department today
- What does the organization look like in 12 months?
- Imagine the most bullish case → what milestones have been achieved?
- Now imagine the company in 12 months with those achievements but the same team → identify gaps in each department that cause dissonance
- Use this exercise to guide hiring and promoting strategy and schedule to close those gaps

Hiring
- What's the goal?
    - Close the 12-month gap in specific areas of the organization
        - What does the dream org chart look like?
    - Are we hiring for value creation or value preservation?
        - Value creation usually comes from young barrels
        - Value preservation comes from seasoned bullets
    - What absolutely cannot be tolerated in hires? (Reference Culture & Core Values)
        - What does the company look like if you had those qualities?

- What does the company look like if you didn't have those qualities?
- Remember: each person you hire is someone you may have to fire in the future
    - Visualize doomsday scenario where money is running out, the team has too much deadweight, and people aren't productive or motivated
- Write down the specific hiring process and provide them to candidates beforehand
    - Optimize candidate experience → induce word of mouth for inbound
    - Breakfast Factory model: what is the limiter? Design the hiring process around the bottleneck to maximize efficiency
    - Communicate constantly and respond to each message as soon as possible
    - Undisciplined process leads to undisciplined hires
    - Make everyone on your team commit to a hire/no hire decision for everyone they meet, and write up their thoughts. If you get it wrong, this is useful to look back at later. It's good to have a brief in-person discussion with the entire interviewing team after a candidate leaves.
    - Remember to check in with people, be a good manager, have regular all hands meetings, make sure people are happy and challenged, etc. Always keep a sense of momentum at your company—that's important to retaining talent. Give people new roles every six months or so. And of course, continue to focus on bringing talented people into the company—that alone will make other good people want to stay.
- See
    - Get everyone in the organization to write down a list of their smartest friends
    - Use the intern network to build a steady pipeline of interns from target colleges
    - Double down on VC networks
    - Write down the persona of candidates you want and come up with ways for them to self select into your top of funnel
        - Approach top of funnel as a marketing problem → where to distribute your message? What should the message be? How to track the conversion rate?
- Pick
    - Go interview the top operators in a specific role to get an idea of what great feels like
    - Give them specific problems to solve and test for basic skills
    - Plan out interview questions beforehand and iterate them with your team through mock interviews with top performers
    - Screen for:
        - Drive: people who will voluntarily run through walls to solve problems
            - Examples
                - Guilt from family pressure
                - Burning desire to make it big
                - Being incredibly Type A
            - How to test for drive
                - What have they done in the past? Be highly specific on what they actually contributed if they were on a team.

- What did they do outside of work? How do they spend their weekends?
                - Is this job their big chance to really succeed? How high are the stakes for them?
                - Did they come from a challenging background?
        - Curiosity: people who love what they do, read about it, study it, talk to others about it, and immerse themselves in it continuously
            - How to test for curiosity
                - Ask very detailed questions about a mutual interest that you know extremely well and see if they have informed opinions about it
                - "What are the top three most interesting things in hypersonics in the last few months?"
        - Ethics: people who are not a pain in the ass to work with
            - How to test for ethics
                - Same test as for curiosity but keep asking more esoteric questions until they bullshit or admit that they don't know
                - Sniff around their thought process
- Win
    - What are the company's top three selling points?
    - How can you make them visceral in the interview process?
    - What is their opportunity set right now? Where does your company rank on there and how are they ranking the set? What are their priorities?
- Track
    - Stay in touch with rejects and see their progress over time to identify your false negative rate
    - Monitor closely on the fence hires within the company to finetune your judgement
    - Take detailed notes during and after interviews at each stage, debug your judgement over time
- Common failures
    - Hiring for a single point in time instead of in advance of growth
    - Confusing 0-1 vs 1-10 leaders
    - Not being opportunistic
    - Skimping on compensation
    - Not properly onboarding
    - Not properly doing reference checks

Promoting
- How to maximize employee potential
    - Start every employee with a small responsibility
    - Pay attention to who consistently are able to achieve those responsibilities
    - Give those employees slightly bigger responsibilities
    - Repeat this motion until they fail
- How to give employees responsibilities: Delegate vs. Abdicate

- D = Delegate; O = Overrule

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Impact	High	Low	Low	High	High	High	Low	Low
Conviction	High	High	Low	Low	Low	High	High	Low
Competence	High	High	High	High	Low	Low	Low	Low
Decision	O	D	D	D	O	O	D	D

- When to micromanage vs. be hands off: Task-Specific Employee Maturity
    - Low ←——————————————————————————→ High
    - Micromanage   Point Direction
    - What, when, how   Set objectives, monitor progress
- How to identify barrels vs. bullets
    - Barrels = people who take ideas from inception to shipping and takes others with them
    - Who are peers gravitating towards naturally?
    - Ask managers who are ambitious and constantly taking on more projects above and beyond their roles?
    - Take more 1:1s with those emerging leaders and provide them with tools and votes of confidence
    - Celebrate work success of junior employees
    - Give employees more transparency and access to information so they can make their own informed decisions
- Map out each employee's personal growth curve against the company's growth curve

Onboarding
- Ethos: micromanage the onboarding, delegate the role, empower the person
- Plan out the first 15 days in excruciating detail
    - Who they should talk to on day 1, 2, etc…
    - Sequence their learning in the most efficient way possible
    - Introduce them to the team with visible endorsement
    - Daily quick check-ins and weekly longer sit downs
- Onboarding document
    - Top focus areas
        - 3-5 most important areas to orient their attention
    - Monthly initiatives and time allocations
        - Bulleted list of the highest leverage initiatives
    - Meeting sequence
        - Calendar of who they should meet and in what order
    - Lessons learned and institutional knowledge
        - List of resources to get up to speed on the organization's learnings
- Report back what they saw and learned
    - Candid assessment of team, company, opportunities, improvements, etc.

- What obvious problems do they think face the company
- Ask them to design their own path forward

Prep before day one
- Swag
- Desk setup: software/hardware
- Ask them what their software/hardware requests are
- Card or balloon or something
- Documentation: standard operating procedures
- When people get paid
- Notion, drive, slack
- Benefits, stocks, etc

Plan out first 5 days
- When to be here
- What to bring
- How to buy things
- Where tools are
- Lunch time, meeting times, generalization of days
- Office logistics
- Tax forms, benefits, etc
- Planned lunches
- Stock options training videos, safety training, harassment training etc
- Set expectations

Biweekly 1:1
- Staying on track
- Mutual feedback

Bulk email for communicating
- Weekly emails
- Weekly Monday sync notes

Operations

Communication
- Establish nodes within the organization feeding intel weekly
- Have weekly 1:1s with each team member for different perspectives on performance
- Transparency
    - What do people need to know to make informed decisions?
    - What absolutely cannot be shared with the team?
    - Share the intercept of those two with the team
- Consider all stakeholders' perspectives before each decision
    - What is the reaction process of employees?
    - What is the reaction process of executives?
    - What is the reaction process of decision-makers?
- Are your employees learning from you each week?
    - Establish a system for teaching ("Film Study")
    - Let them try out concepts during the week
    - Reconvene to share learnings and feedback

Routines & Schedules
- Daily
    - Write down key objectives each week and read them each morning
    - Do daily calendar audits at the end of the day
    - Daily / biweekly morning / afternoon team check-ins to align goals
        - Shoutouts from previous week
- Weekly
    - Identify top priorities and objectives for coming week
    - Analyze how much the organization contributed to last week's objectives
    - Establish biweekly weekend sprints ("scrimmage") for specific goals
- Monthly
    - Similar to weekly exercises
    - Performance reviews
        - Have a list of "starters", "bench", "rookies", and "free agents"
        - Swap employees between each bucket based on their performance
    - Align on company values and what projects to focus on
        - What went well and what didn't go well
        - Air grievances
- Quarterly
    - Plan quarterly retreats
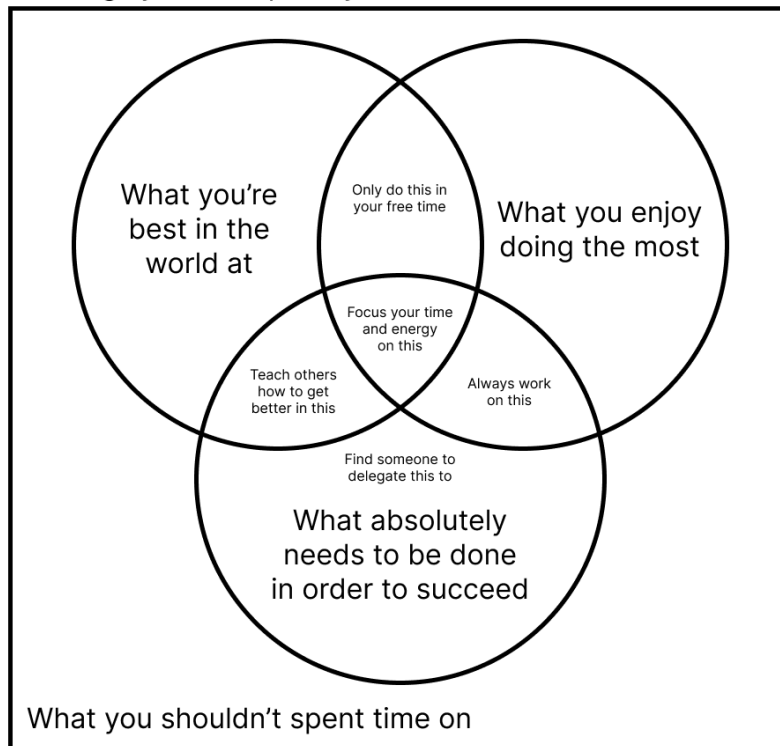   - Prepare board presentations

Day-to-Day
- How much time are you spending editing vs writing?
    - Is the amount of "red ink" you're using decreasing week over week?
    - Who is the main source of content that requires red ink?

- How much of your time is spent on: simplifying, clarifying, allocating resources, and aligning mission?
- Are you meaningfully contributing to your priorities or just crossing things off the checklist?
  - Be disciplined and limit activities that yield disproportionate rewards against the required time input
  - Bust disillusionment of being productive when in fact you're just loosely working on a bunch of unimportant things
- Prevent being counterproductive and burnout
  - Is the next 30min marginally more rewarding doing this task compared to all other things?
    - Sleep, eat, exercise
  - How does it help others if this task is completed today vs. in eight hours?
    - Time spent in the office != time spent being productive
  - Track your mind space and optimize towards positive feedback loops
    - Plan out the perfect day and build towards that schedule

Task Preferences & Core Competencies
- What are you best in the world at? What do you enjoy doing the most every day?
  - Identify the top three things for each and take the overlap
  - Reorient your schedule and responsibilities around those things
  - How can you delegate the negation?

All things you can spend your time on

-