The Smarp Way of Working.
Our company culture and values form the foundation of our existence and help guide us in all our decision making at all levels of our organization.

Employee development and continuous learning is crucial not only to our success but to the success of our clients as well. The extent of the impact we have in the world is dependent on getting the right people on board. That is why we decided to create the “Smarp Way of Working” handbook and explain what Smarp stands for, what we believe in and how we work. Just as we are looking for the right people, you are looking for the right company, and we want to help you decide if you want to join us in our journey and be a part of the Smarp story.
1 Overview
Why Culture Matters
The Reason for Smarp’s Existence

We believe that in today’s knowledge-based economy, communications is our biggest challenge.

Breaking Down Silos

As the knowledge each organization processes is siloed within departments, regions and even individual employees, knowledge sharing becomes harder and harder for companies of all sizes. And the more complex an organization becomes, the deeper the information gaps become. Employees are wasting precious time trying to find the relevant information from knowledge databases, instant messaging platforms and intranets, all of which rely on top-to-down communications or require that the user already knows where the information they are trying to find is. This again stops employees from reaching their full potential, as they have to spend up to a third of their workday simply searching for information.

There’s a saying that “If IBM knew what IBM knows, they would be unstoppable.” We believe this, and would like to apply this frame of mind and make all of our customers unstoppable.

Preventing Information Overload

While employees are spending more and more time searching for information, they are also suffering from information overload. The amount of content is increasing all the time, and employees aren’t able to personalize and filter the content flow in a way that helps them make sense of it. This leads to frustration, loss of productivity, and decreasing levels of employee engagement at work.

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Product Vision

“The primary place where employees find and share professional content”. This is our product vision: to be the single most important content hub for organizations that want to keep their employees informed, engaged, and productive. One of our biggest strengths is the fact that we are making a meaningful and positive change in the way employees and companies communicate and share knowledge. We want to see both internal and external communications become more employee-driven instead of top-down because, at the end of the day, the most important success factor for any knowledge organization is their employees.
The Story of Smarp

From Dreaming Big...

We founded Smarp in a student apartment back in February 2011. The goal was always to build a global business that has a real impact on the lives of our customers. As we had no funding or outside support, we financed our small operation by doing ad-hoc consulting for our first customers while building the first version of Smarp.

During the first years, we learned the most by making a lot of mistakes. From a failed expansion strategy to a product that never took off, each of these strategies taught us how to become better and learn faster. When looking for opportunities, we always go for the ones that are most rewarding and most challenging, as these allow us to learn the most.

...To Making It

In early 2014, we launched the first commercial version of the Smarp content hub, which effectively created a new market for both internal and external content sharing. Having fought an uphill battle for years, it felt great to come away with a product that could truly revolutionize the way companies and employees communicate with each other and the outside world.

Since February 2014, we have proven our worth by growing our revenues every month and building a global customer base with many of the world's largest companies using our solution to engage their employees. Today we are a team of over 50 professionals working with over 300 global customers to change the way organizations communicate, engage, and empower their employees.
Smarp Values and Their Impact on Our Everyday Work

We have always believed that successful employees make a successful company. We believe this is done by having a culture that supports taking initiative and ownership while acting in the best interest of the company as a whole. Based on these core beliefs, we have created our unique set of values that guide our everyday decision making:

1. Get Shit Done, Be Accountable #GSD
   - Our first value is about speed and ownership. All Smarpers are encouraged to act fast and take full ownership of their work.

2. Fear of Missing Out #FOMO
   - We do not fear failing, but instead, we fear missing out on opportunities. We fail fast and treat each failure as a learning opportunity.

3. Work Smart, Work Hard - High Impact, Short Time #BESMARP
   - We always look for the smartest way to do things. This means finding the solution that has the highest impact with the least amount of time or effort required. This allows us to move and create value for our customers quickly, and it prevents us from doing things in a certain way just because “that is how it has always been done”.

4. Be a Team Player, Collaborate, Have Fun #COLLABORATE
   - We operate like a professional sports team where we win and lose together. As such, it is important we collaborate closely and celebrate our successes together.

5. Get Out of Your Comfort Zone #NOPAINNOGAIN
   - We all grow by doing things that are outside of our comfort zone. Constant learning is a big part of our culture and that happens best by trying new things.

6. Be Part of the Solution - Positive Attitude #SOLVER
   - As we move quickly and evolve we will always face new challenges. We encourage everyone to find solutions to these challenges and work with a positive and supportive attitude.
Defining Leadership at Smarp

Supporting Excellence

At Smarp, leadership is not about management giving orders they come up with, but about supporting the team to do their best work. We believe that low-hierarchy and empowered teams provide the most effective way for a company to work in a quickly evolving industry like ours. The primary role of our managers is to support their teams in reaching their goals and making sure knowledge and learnings are shared effectively throughout the organization.

Encouraging Ownership

In this type of organization, each employee needs to be a self-starter and take full ownership of their work. There is no micro-management; instead, there is a high level of accountability. Everyone needs to be self-motivated and function as a productive member of their team. We want everyone to look after their team and after the company. We don’t have room for people who would optimize their success at the expense of others or put their own interests ahead of the company’s interest. We only hire people who want to help others and who understand that we win together and lose together, as a team.

“When you are building something completely new, you can not rely on anyone else to lead the way or show you the right path. You need to be transparent and honest about what is working and what is not and learn quickly from both successes and failures to stay ahead. I believe this happens best when the company functions like a high performing professional sports team where the role of leadership is not to dictate but find and empower the best people to do their best work. After all, successful employees make a successful company.”

Roope, CEO, on #SOLVER
As a growth company, Smarp does not offer traditional career paths but instead, growth opportunities that each team member defines for themselves.

There are no glass ceilings or limit to what an ambitious individual can achieve at Smarp. This is for two reasons:

1. **We create our own growth opportunities.** As the goals of the company grow and change, we create our own opportunities and new roles to meet the need for change.

2. **We don't only grow as individuals, but also as teams.** The more you challenge yourself the more you learn, and the more you improve, the more exciting and responsible career opportunities and roles you will be able to build.
We Encourage Taking Initiative

We have had team members jump from New Business Sales to Customer Success to Product Owner roles. Most of these roles did not exist before the team members created them by spotting an opportunity to add value to the company while also growing their professional profiles.

We Encourage Learning

Smarp’s success is built around being able to constantly learn. Employees on all levels of the organization need to be quick to adapt and actively look for new learning opportunities in order to grow. We are big believers in learning by doing, which is a must when you are creating a new industry. Many of the challenges we have or will face will be completely new with no pre-existing solutions, and we will have to face the challenges head-on as we go.

Don’t just be a part of the machine. Help build it.
Unified Team

While we work in multiple offices around the globe, we still operate as a singular team working towards the same goal. We encourage movement between our offices and host annual global kickoffs where team members from different locations get to know each other better and work together to identify and solve the challenges we face as a company.

Truly International Company

We value diversity and already have over 20 nationalities represented in our company. This leads to a very international environment and helps us better understand the needs of our global customer base, as well as helps us look at situations from different points of views.

Efficiency, Efficiency, Efficiency

From our humble beginnings, we learned to value our resources and have continued to value them as we have grown. We always try to find the most efficient way to do things so that we maximize our opportunities to learn even from failures. We hedge our bets based on data but realize not all the opportunities we go after will be successes - by testing our bets quickly and efficiently we enable ourselves to grow even when everything does not work out as planned.

Incentives for Success

As we believe our success is fully dependent on the success of each individual member of our team, we offer all team members the opportunity to become option holders and thus benefit from the overall success of the company.

Growth Over Swag

We value our time and capital extremely highly and want to make the best use of it in anything we do. We do not fly business-class or stay in five-star hotels - instead of talking the talk, we walk the walk and put our resources into improving our products and employees and growing our market share, preparing to take the world by storm.
Sales & Customer Success at Smarp
Smarp’s product provides endless opportunities and allows us to innovate and create value for organizations across multiple verticals, geographic locations and company sizes. Representing a product that is truly changing the way organizations engage with their employees is both challenging and rewarding.

Known and respected brands

It is extremely motivating to work with some of the **largest and most prestigious brands in the world** such as Amazon, KPMG, Nissan, L’Oreal, European Comission, Merck, and many many more. In addition to the largest organizations, we work with some of the most agile and fastest growing companies like Mulesoft. Whether you want to hunt whales or unicorns, we can help you take the next step in your career.

We Provide International Business Experience

As we have clients on all continents and offices in multiple countries, there are opportunities to work from our international locations and to develop yourself as a sales professional while future-proofing your career with international business experience.
Modern Sales Leadership Approach

We utilize a modern sales leadership approach that is focused on coaching and bringing out the best in our salespeople instead of micro-managing. We also work with the latest digital sales technologies to ensure our sales professionals’ time is used where it matters the most - creating more value for our customers. As always, with increased freedom comes increased responsibility. We look for individuals who have a high level of accountability and ownership of their own work and who are not afraid to have high-level discussions with experts from some of the biggest companies in the world.

High Stakes over Stability

If you’re looking for a stable, transactional sales role with maximum stability and minimal change, this is probably not the place for you. But if you want to play with high stakes, get responsibility from day one, embrace change, take ownership and deal with world-class clients, you might be exactly what we are looking for.
Recognizing and Rewarding Talent

All of our Sales and Customer Success Managers are hard-working professionals, hungry to grow and bring value to our business. We do not compete with each other, rather we aim to improve and inspire each other to be better every day. Even though we work as a unit, we do recognize individual talent, individual effort and going beyond what was asked for.

Rewarding Commission Structure

Because of this, our sales commission structure is uncapped with an accelerator for going above expectations. This means that there is no limit to how much an ambitious sales professional can earn at Smarp through being successful in their own role and through the continued success of Smarp as a whole. This job isn’t easy, but it sure is rewarding.
“One of the key reasons I enjoy working for Smarp is collaborating and connecting with international, well-known clients and brands. Being able to provide the Smarp solution to big market players is a great feeling.

It is very exciting to get the opportunity to support and grow my client portfolio daily, all the while learning and growing as a professional myself. The #GSD-mentality and the chance to take ownership of projects has allowed me to advance in my career from Int. Customer Success Manager to Int. Customer Development Manager.

Smarp’s great work environment and brilliant and culturally diverse colleagues have made it enjoyable to come to work every day since I joined!”

Cristina, Customer Development Manager, on #FOMO
“After 4 years in the company, I still get excited about coming to work every day. I get to see my amazing colleagues who support me in the turbulence that is enterprise sales, and I get to challenge myself with some of the leading brands we all know. I develop myself and feel heard by the management and my colleagues. Everyone owns their own work at Smarp and we are trusted to be driven - having a great product and a vision that we can believe in helps.”

*Sandra*, Senior Account Executive, on #COLLABORATE
3 Marketing the Smarp Way
Structured & Data-driven

Transparency in Numbers

We always try to make sense of things by looking at the data first. Every single aspect of our marketing efforts is measurable, and we pride ourselves on having 100% transparency in our numbers. From financials to CTR’s, heat maps to ACV, we try to correlate everything to understand how the fine mechanics of our organization affect each other. As said by Lord Kelvin: “If you can’t measure it, you can’t improve it.”
The marketing team takes pride in creating opportunities for success for everyone else.

Using Scrum Agile Framework

Everything we do needs to drive us closer to achieving our goals. To align ourselves, we take the best elements of the Scrum Agile framework and break our targets into smaller projects and actions. Based on a backlog of development ideas, deliverables and requests from other specialists or departments, every marketing specialist plans their own work in 2-week sprints. Thus the entire team knows what is expected of them and has agreed on what’s possible to achieve. The result is an environment where you can safely focus on being creative and giving your work the attention it deserves.

Automated and Technology-Driven

Our software stack is compiled to fully support the versatility and agility of specialists. We automate to liberate us from routine and predictable outcomes so that we can focus on the challenges which require creative thinking. New processes are designed and executed manually, tested and optimized, and finally automated.
Specialized

As our product and our client base grows and evolves, so must our marketing strategy. As we scale our strategy to resonate with our growing needs, we constantly need to rethink our approach, react quickly and shift our focus in short time spans. Each individual has a few limited specializations, which allows us to consistently deliver high-quality work in a short time.

Encourages Professional Growth

The team fully trusts each other to provide their input on any challenges and we meet regularly in an organized manner to ideate and discuss. This way we make sure that we have considered all strengths and weaknesses. A self-development plan is created for each team member and we allocate time in our sprints to self-study and acquiring new skills.

Helping Others Succeed

As everything we provide is measurable and transparent, we are able to own a revenue stream from top to bottom of funnel. On top of this, we support the other departments and make sure they have what they need to be successful. Here at Smarp, you can’t be a lone wolf or an individual star: everything you do aims at helping your team members, other departments, the company and its customers.
“What I like most about Smarp is the opportunity to grow as a professional while having fun! When I joined Smarp back in 2015, I was a Business Development Representative and one year later I became Brand Marketing Specialist. I’m given the opportunity to suggest, launch and develop new strategies and I just love it! Our gathering events make me feel even more as a part of a big family.”

Valène, Brand Marketing Specialist, on #GSD
4 Tech and Smarp
At Smarp, we not only do agile, we live agile and all our actions and decisions are driven by the 4 values and 12 principles in the Agile Manifesto. We are result oriented and quick to react. As the tech organization structure is agile, we are quick to adapt to changes and we have frequent organization updates. Team members enjoy flat hierarchy, our feedback loops are short and we value face to face communication. Development team is not lead by micro-management, instead, we trust the teams to be the best judges of deadlines.

Encouraging Risk Taking

We encourage taking risks, we like to experiment. Whenever we fail, we fail quickly and rise right back up. We are not afraid of failure, and instead, we are driven by #FOMO, the Fear of Missing Out. We believe in transparency: transparency in our product, in our failures, in our processes.

Real Scrum

As for our processes, we use industry best practices and do extreme programming (TDD and pair programming). We use “real scrum”, and our processes are iterative and incremental.
The greatest thing about working in tech for Smarp is the learning and growth opportunities. A fast-growing company means a lot of career opportunities, and we provide a lot of trainings and opportunities to become full-stack.

Continuous Improvement
We work with the “kaizen” or “continuous improvement” principle at all levels: individual level, team level, product level and organizational level. In Smarp, you will make a real difference, and everyone participates in improving the ways we work.

Ownership and Responsibility
We emphasize ownership and responsibility for your own work. In return, team members have flexibility and the opportunity to constantly grow and learn. Everyone needs to be willing and hungry to develop themselves, and everyone has to be able to lean on each other.
Our environment is very international and while our main office is located in Finland, you don’t need to know Finnish to work for us. **We are multicultural and multilingual and celebrate our diverse workforce.**

**Mutual Respect**

Our interview process is rigorous, and only the best make it to Smarp. We place high value on mutual respect and social elements of working. This is why team members meet potential candidates before they are hired: we want the team members to get to know their potential future teammate, and we want the candidate to get a feel of the people they would be working day to day with.
“I joined Smarp as a frontend programmer, but since then I have learned to develop backend as well. Being more full-stack, I wanted to get my work out to users ASAP so after I identified a bottleneck in deployment, I learned how to do the necessary section of the work myself and have been doing it ever since. I got support from internal training and from my colleagues.”

Ali, Software Developer, on #NOPAINNOGAIN
“My generation is not meant to sit in front of a monitor for 8 hours a day and code in silence. I appreciate our trainings, such as “User Stories Explained”, “Pair Programming” and “Test-Driven Development”. I can learn a lot faster here than in a big corporation or in university. I like the fact that I have been entrusted with an important project right away. It’s also great that we are able to estimate our workload ourselves and not be tied to somebody else’s estimation.”

Dinh, Software Developer, on #BESMARP
5 Smarp Operations
Behind the scenes we have a well-functioning operations team. We are here to **support all areas of the business globally** - even though we are all located in our Helsinki office. Our team covers everything from finance, funding, legal and people management to pretty much anything the other teams need to function properly and be successful in their work.

We also collect all the data around the company, so that we have a proper overview of everything that’s happening and can adjust our work accordingly. Simply put, we are here to make sure that Smarp is able to scale and move forward efficiently! The work we do in operations, even though not always that visible, is sort of a backbone of the whole company.
“I joined Smarp in the summer of 2017 as a Office Coordinator, but in about six months I was working as a Administrative Manager. What I love most about my job is that if you are willing to develop yourself and the work you are doing, there is no limit where you can go. It is amazing how my job challenges me and teaches me something new almost every day!”

Nia, Administrative Manager, on #BESMARP
Should you have any questions about Smarp as an employer, do not hesitate to contact our people lead Tony at tony.lofving@smarp.com.