

Summitto Engineering Principles

Stability is key

Be open

Relate and respect

Have conviction

Seek engineering maturity

Stability is key

We're a mission-driven team that obsesses over our impact — on taxpayers, tax administrations, on teammates. Our primary mission is prevent fraud while delivering value to the users of the system.

Attention to detail

Our software is going to be used by countless companies in the EU, this requires a dedication to detail and perfect code. We strive for beautiful code which is readable and testable. An important aspect of this, is that simple (not to be confused with easy) solutions are encouraged.

“This is a nudge away from perfectionism.”

We code review every changeset and emphasize both unit and integration tests.

Privacy and confidentiality is key we ask everyone in our team to value this in the highest regard.

Bias towards action

Communicate, but don't rely on consensus before acting. Seek others' input, but be decisive. Speed matters — we'd rather test a hypothesis cheaply than overanalyze.

Focus on the big picture

Our top company value is especially important for engineers. It's easy to get lost in the complexity of what we're building and start valuing the thing itself instead of the users. Everything we build is in service of the positive impact we can make on society.

Be open

We tend towards open communication with ourselves and our community.

Over-communicate internally

Constantly share your work with teammates and stakeholders. When in doubt, follow these steps: “tell people the impact you’re about to make, make the impact, then tell people you made it.”

“No project failed because there was too much communication between team members”

Share beyond our walls

We’re part of a broader engineering community that cares about us. We blog, open source useful frameworks, give talks, and share what we build. Open source is important to us, as it is to give back.

Relate and respect

We care about each other's success and happiness. We respect everyone for who they are and do not tolerate any discrimination against race, sexual orientation or religion.

See possibilities, not just problems

Anything that's broken is an opportunity to make summitto better. Be the type of teammate you want to work with. Openly and productively acknowledge weaknesses. Talk about possibilities, don't focus on negativity.

"Every problem is someone else's opportunity to shine"

When you want to change something, think outside the box and find the true causes of a certain challenge. Perhaps the challenge should not only be tackled directly, but a habit or the environment have to be changed. We create our culture with every interaction, and we can fix whatever imperfections we face. Starting with how we talk about them.

Respect humans, not just code

We recognize that the best products come from highly functioning teams, not perfect codebases. We respect each other, trust each other to deliver, humbly challenge each other to improve, and help one another. And we extend this same respect and empathy to our users. We try to combine the head and the heart.

Though willpower is a muscle, it is also a finite resource. We encourage each other to train this muscle, but also make sure we identify when the resource is starting to deplete in order to adjust our behaviour to it.

Have conviction

Great products and teams come from strong beliefs.

Strong opinions, weakly held

We value the ability to simultaneously have conviction and be open to doubt. Anyone's allowed to argue their opinions — even in areas other than their own. If it's worth fighting for, share it. But we also listen, seek conflicting opinions, and flex in the face of new info.

“Argue your point with a colleague but still be able to drink a beer with him afterwards”

Anybody can fix anything

We don't have strict artificial boundaries between our teams or codebases. Nobody is forbidden from fixing what they think needs fixing, regardless of team or specialization.

“Sergey Brin once made a printout of a problem, hang it in the pantry with the request “someone should fix this” - a week later the bug was fixed”

This doesn't mean it'll be trivial to jump into a new codebase, nor does it mean we have a pass to disregard other teams' practices.

It doesn't mean you have to fix everything yourself. But it does mean you should consider the fact that you probably can!

If you wanna improve something, you're invited to start finding the right way to do so and to share your findings without seeking Official Permission.

Leave it better

We also pragmatically increase code quality over time by “leaving it better.” We don't try to fix everything at once, but we always leave whatever code we're touching a bit better. If we could graph a measure of code quality, we'd focus more on keeping a positive slope rather than making step function jumps.

Seek engineering maturity

We hold ourselves to high execution standards. Our code needs to protect millions of company's transactions.

Embrace accountability

We set goals for ourselves, don't shy away from estimates, and objectively assess success.

We know we face ambiguity about what we'll build and how we'll build it, and we embrace failure (we're not being ambitious if we're not failing at times). But even with these risks we don't shy away from holding ourselves accountable.

Tackle technical debt where and when it makes us faster

We protect time needed to pay technical debt. We respect that we can't constantly seek forward progress while ignoring code quality. We approach this pragmatically by never tackling technical debt for its own sake, when doing so is not going to make us faster or impact learners. We tackle technical debt by thinking hard about whether doing so will make us faster at delivering impact.

Keep learning

This is one of our company-level values, and when applied to engineering it means we are always learning about new tech and certainly aren't afraid of it. We maturely judge when the time is right to put it into practice. It also means we invest deeply in teammate mentorship.