



Culture Book



**“Culture eats
strategy for
breakfast.”**

Peter Drucker

At Cascade, our culture is at the heart of our success. New recruits always ask about it and Cascaders always talk about it – but what is it, really?

While the Senior Leadership Team may be the custodians of the culture, it’s those who live, breathe and role-model it every day who really own our culture.

This document captures, to the best of our ability, the way we do things around here.

The Kascade back story

Once upon a time, when storage tapes were still trendy and before Intel had released the Pentium microprocessor, the Kascade story began. Way back when, we were known as ComputerWorld and specialised in training as part of a franchise of ComputerWorlds around the UK.

Kascade evolved through significant changes over the years, including our specialisms. We owe a huge debt of affection to our previous owner, Jon Osbourne, who sadly died in 2014. He entrusted us with his legacy of 'a customer-service business that happens to be in the IT industry'.

Fast-forward to 2018, when the current ownership team was formalised. John Armstrong, David Wynn and Barry Coombs cemented their decade-long working relationship by taking the wheel of the good-ship ComputerWorld. However, their dreams quickly turned into something of a night-terror as the UK faced the financial uncertainty of Brexit, a hung parliament, a recession and then Covid. But, thankfully, they are stayers and sailed through the choppy waters by navigating new courses for technology. We transitioned from our heritage as a value-added reseller to being a managed services provider of infrastructure modernisation, workspace transformation, and security pillars.

Our ship is built of sturdy stuff and continues to gather speed, with the wind in our sails and a steady course ahead.



[cass-cay-de]

Kascade is the culmination of three decades of experience, industry knowledge and evolution. A great deal of sweat and a few tears have got us to where we are today – a Microsoft Solutions Partner with solid financial footings and a vision to be the tech sense behind organisational success for our clients. We enable people through technology.

The thinking

Alternative spelling of 'cascade'; meaning to arrange components to fall in or like a cascade.

This hints at the effects of your work – the effect of good tech when things feel like they're falling into place, helping people get into the flow and achieve their goals.

Kascade, but why with a K?

Quite simply, because Cascade wasn't available. But we love it, it sums up who we are; when you work with Kascade – your technology simply falls into place.

This is John

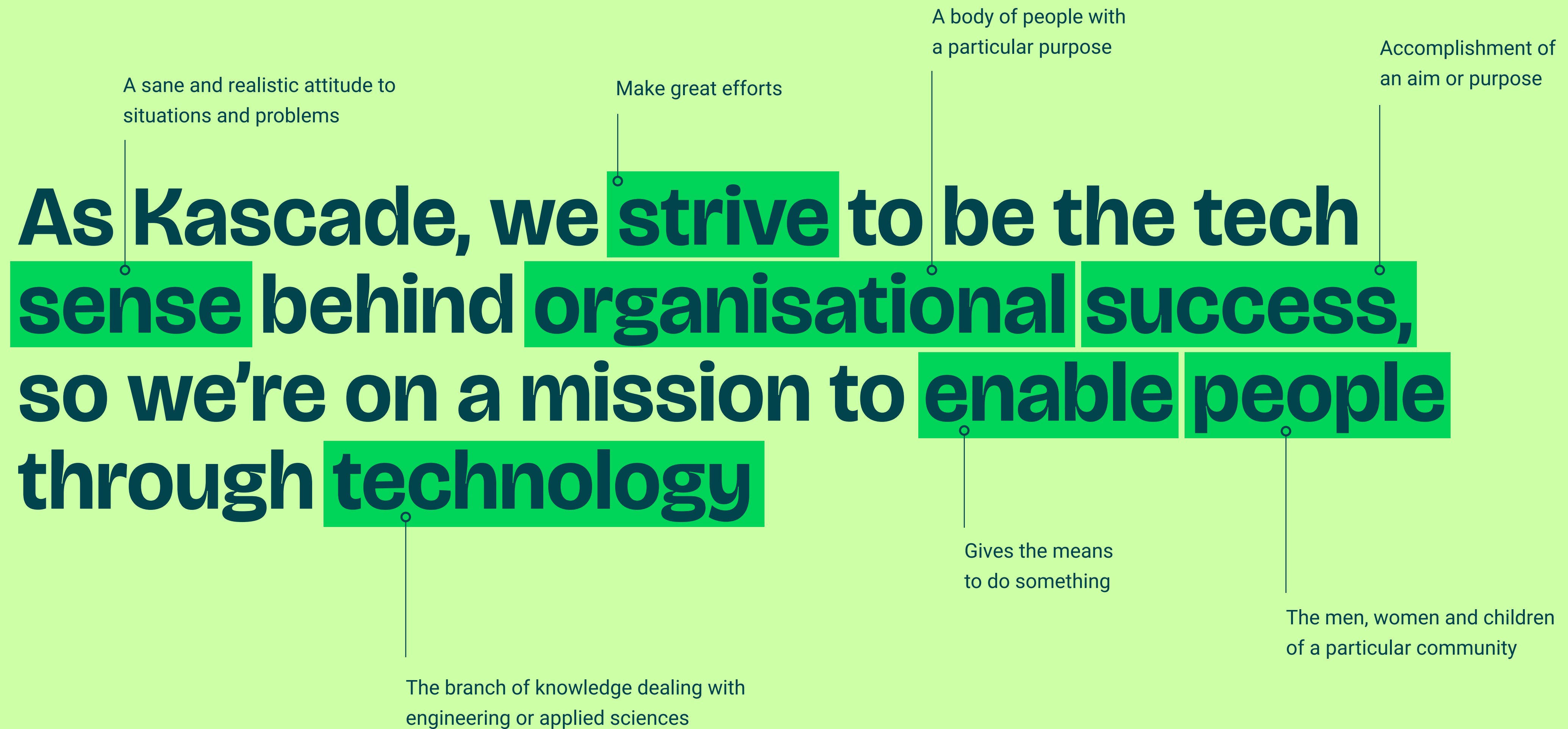
John is our CEO

It's John's job to keep us all going in the same direction to achieve the business goals.

What's important to John is doing the right thing by people and delivering outcomes for our clients. John values having a high-performance culture, based upon honesty, ownership and passion.



Our vision and mission



Kascade is committed to

Taking the time to understand a business and its people.

Consulting all involved to secure company-wide confidence.

Knowing tech like the back of our hands to offer the best advice.

Aligning technology with clients' goals for the right impact.

Overseeing our recommendations every step of the way.

Our clients' success is our success.

As we support more clients with their tech needs, our team grows, and we offer more people the opportunity to be Kascaders and the chance to learn and grow and do what they love doing and to do that with brilliant people.

And that's what we consider to be winning together.





Our values

**To be a Kascader,
you must share
our values –
no excuses.**

**These aren't just some fancy words on a
wall – this is how WE do business.**

Our values underpin the way we make decisions and the way we work, and we call it out when someone doesn't live up to our values, because this is our organisational DNA.



Honesty is the best policy

Our values

Be open with your teammates and give clients honest answers. We want a solid team and long-standing relationships – showing integrity and trustworthiness will make this happen.

What this means to us

- ✔ We are truthful and we don't intentionally mislead
- ✔ We act with complete integrity and adhere to strong moral and ethical codes of doing the right thing
- ✔ We can be relied upon and trusted
- ✔ We are transparent
- ✔ We are candid and help others to develop by identifying their blind spots

What this doesn't mean

- ✘ We are brutal, harsh or hurtful
- ✘ That we have to share every detail; we respect privacy and discretion
- ✘ We excuse rudeness; we communicate truth kindly and in a considerate way



Take ownership

Our values

Show people you can be counted on to deliver because we go above and beyond for our clients. And step in when your colleagues need support or encouragement to honour our business commitments.

What this means to us

- ✔ We empower, and are empowered, to make choices and take initiative
- ✔ We lift the load for others and own our responsibilities. We do what we say we are going to do, when we say we are going to do it
- ✔ We take responsibility for our actions and recognise how we affect others

What this doesn't mean

- ✘ That we are overly protective of our areas of responsibility
- ✘ We work in isolation and don't seek advice or support when we may benefit from it
- ✘ We are rigid and unwilling to be flexible or adjust course as necessary



Be constructive

Our values

Apply your distinct knowledge to investigate and solve problems. Think critically, and ask for advice to refine your skills and keep learning. Give others clear and helpful feedback in return, and always celebrate success.

What this means to us

- ✔ We give praise where it's due to recognise achievements, encourage and give credit
- ✔ We find solutions rather than dwelling on problems
- ✔ We communicate, openly, candidly and respectfully to encourage a conversation
- ✔ We open our minds to others and consider different points of view even if we are a subject matter expert
- ✔ We have a continuous improvement mindset where we constantly seek to make things better
- ✔ Help to build foundations of knowledge rather than just saying what you need to know right now

What this doesn't mean

- ✘ That we disrespect boundaries or overstep to force our point of view
- ✘ That we are overly positive and ignore reality
- ✘ We are assertive in a way that is disrespectful



Engage everyone

Our values

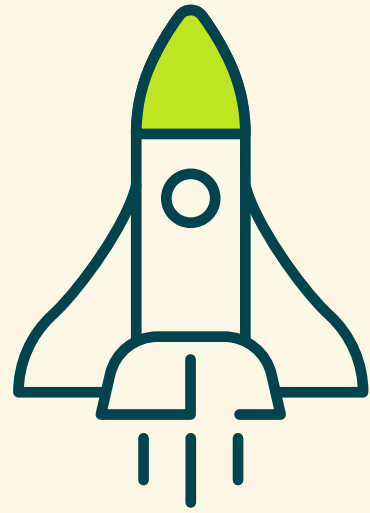
Build rapport and share your expertise. Learn from each other, and always be respectful. We want to be seen as industry-leading professionals, so it's OK to be opinionated – but never arrogant.

What this means to us

- ✔ We make the effort to build relationships by getting to know one another, what makes us tick and where our strengths lay
- ✔ We are present in the moment, we give our full attention to the person we are with at the time
- ✔ We welcome thoughts and experiences from others, actively listening to what they have to say and encouraging them to be open and honest
- ✔ Encourage others to participate authentically and have a voice

What this doesn't mean

- ✘ We overcommit ourselves and spread ourselves too thinly across projects
- ✘ We reach too far to understand points of view or make decisions by committee
- ✘ That we disrespect professional boundaries, especially where we may-not-know-what-we-don't-know
- ✘ That we take our problems to people who can't improve the situation, solely to share our pain or to build support
- ✘ That we gossip or talk behind peoples' backs to seek validation for our opinions



Embrace adaptability

Our values

Anticipate and communicate changing circumstances – if we need to switch things up, we do so without scrimping on performance. Proactively manage situations and look for ways to enhance people experiences.

What this means to us

- ✔ We are open to change and flex to new ideas, approaches and ways of doing things
- ✔ We are resilient and bounce-back quickly in the face of challenge
- ✔ That we seek to understand the benefits rather than focus on the problems
- ✔ We can be brave and fail-fast
- ✔ We play as a team and know when to build others up in good times and bad

What this doesn't mean

- ✘ We are inconsistent and flighty, chasing from one shiny thing to the next
- ✘ That we don't finish what we have started
- ✘ That we resist any kind of structure to keep things fluid
- ✘ We don't worry about the consequences of our actions



Understanding is crucial

Our values

Be interested and inclusive – ask lots of questions of different people. Listen with patience and care so that people feel comfortable sharing their opinions... and are receptive to yours in return.

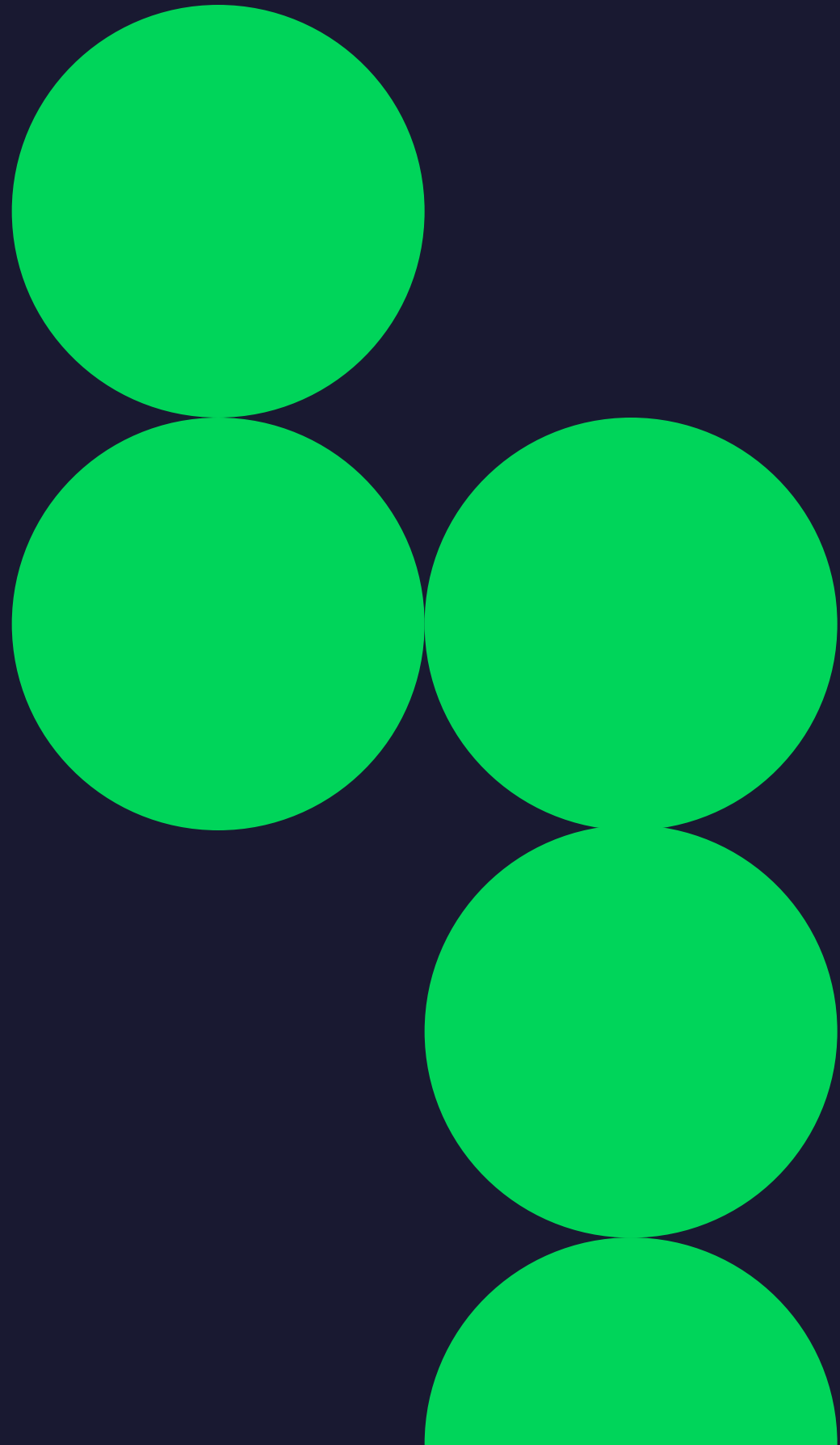
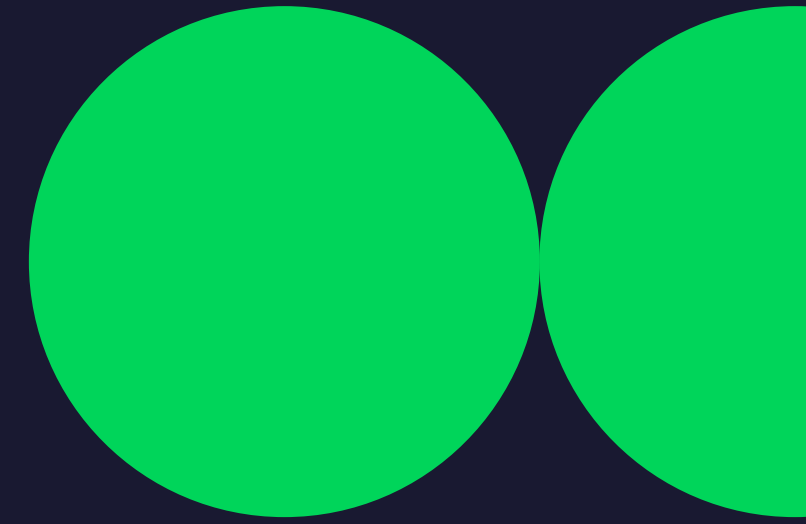
What this means to us

- ✔ We have empathy and respect for the thoughts and experiences of others
- ✔ We really listen carefully and encourage others to speak up
- ✔ We read between the lines and delve deeper where we think something is not being said
- ✔ We embrace respectful debate and candidness
- ✔ We offer our opinions thoughtfully and kindly

What this doesn't mean

- ✘ That we passively agree with everything we hear or every differing perspective
- ✘ That we excuse harmful or unethical behaviour
- ✘ We expect others to educate us rather than putting in the effort to understand the topic for ourselves
- ✘ We ignore facts or reality
- ✘ That we blindly believe what we're told and skip our due diligence

What do we want to be famous for?



The outside world sees Cascade through a lens and our brand is the way that we present ourselves.

Our rebrand has given us a fresh new face that's modern, with a tone of voice that sounds like us. To read more about it, take a look at our Brand DNA.

Our brand doesn't just attract clients – it also attracts our talent, so we ensure that our people are part of our brand. We're a Great Place to Work® and we want the world to know.

- ✔ We help technical leaders and operational managers for mid-market professional organisations...
- ✔ Who need to ensure technology helps the business achieve its goals
- ✔ To experience complete faith and satisfaction in hybrid working – from security to productivity and user experience.
- ✔ Unlike conventional IT consultants pushing off-the-shelf or one-size-fits-all solutions...
- ✔ We take the time to understand a client's business strategy, so we can match work practices with the right tech to make an impact.

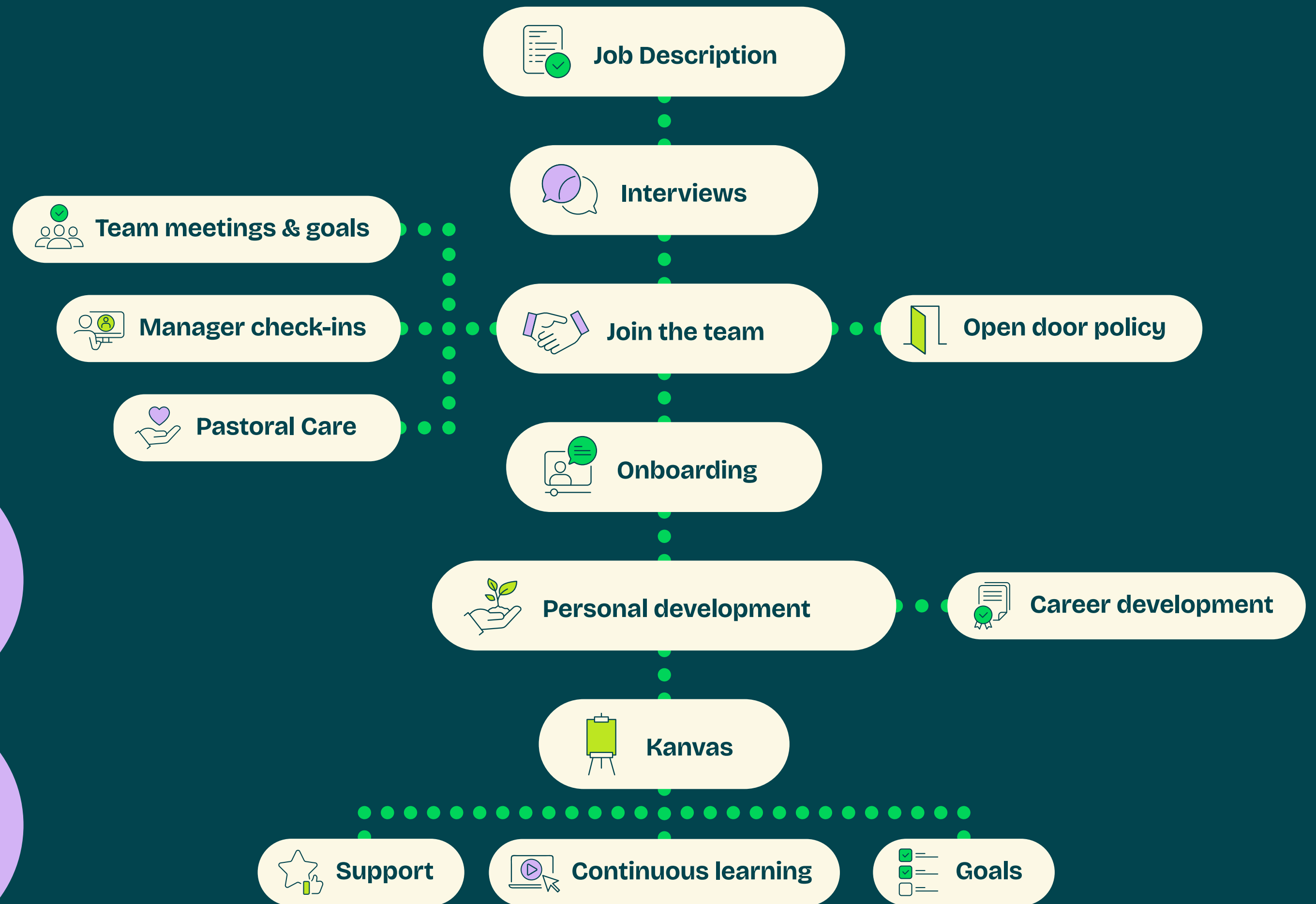
High performance

We work hard for our clients and for each other. That's how we 'grow together'. And we call it out if we don't think someone is pulling their weight.

We believe in an honest day's work for an honest day's pay. And if you'd like to know more about an honest day's pay, you can check out our Total Reward Policy.

It's important to us that you have clarity in terms of what's expected of you, and we believe you get this from each step of our performance management process.

We have role objectives that form our 'business as usual' approach to achieving our goals – this is the stuff that just simply has to get done. And we use Objectives and Key Results (OKRs) to keep us focused on the same short-term goals so that we 'win together'.



High-performance behaviours

Our high-performance behaviours give us a common framework to talk about what top performance looks and feels like at Cascade. No matter what job you do as part of the community, these behaviours ensure that we're all operating with the same heart. We're asking you to push past comfortable and...

Get uncomfortable

You may be engaging in team and company discussions where you feel out of your depth, and that's exciting.

You'll be picking up work and getting involved in work that puts you outside of your comfort zone, and that takes bravery. And you'll be acquiring new skills and knowledge that enable you to push and grow within your current role and that prepares you for your next.

We look further than the end of our nose. We look inside and outside of the business to find answers and to challenge our ideas and assumptions.

We seek out feedback. The good stuff is nice, but the constructive stuff is where we really grow. We always say thank you to anyone who has been brave enough to care about our development and to talk to us about it. We consider feedback to be a gift and we return the favour across the team when we have something constructive to offer.

Give energy

You'll be expected to bring energy to meetings. Don't just show up – be present and impactful. There are no stupid questions here – if you're wondering it, then be assured that someone else is too.

You'll start discussions from a place of possibility rather than impossibility. You'll open your mind to what could be and not what has always been.

We will recognise when our Cascaders need a boost and share our energy with them. Sometimes you have to bubble up and lead and sometimes it's ok to let someone else take the reins so you can recoup.

Drive for results

We'll question and welcome questions about whether there is a faster or more efficient way to achieve an outcome. There's normally more than one road to reach a destination.

Meeting expectations is our minimum service level. Think of a time when you were delighted by the care shown to you and give that level of service, consistently.

We'll ensure that our time is used productively.

The Cascade community

We know that feeling like part of a team is simply one of the best feelings, but what's even better is winning as a team.

We're big on belonging – and belonging is the opposite of 'fitting in'. At Cascade, we don't do group-think, we do team-think.

And your experience will be unique, just like you.

Quite simply put, we're proud to be a **Great Place to Work®** and we've been accredited by **THE** global authority on workplace culture.



**“If you want to go fast, go alone.
If you want to go far, go together.”**

African proverb



There's no I in team

Teams form in stages and being part of a team is being part of a lifecycle. Just when you think you've nailed it, something is bound to change. But that's ok, remember our values and embrace adaptability... we are not intimidated by change – we're in this together and we tackle challenges as a team.

Building teams used to be easier when everyone was co-located, but now we are working in a purposefully hybrid way. We still believe that some roles need to physically work together in the same location, so we have a 3/2 hybrid split approach to hybrid working.

How we do hybrid

We understand commuting can be expensive and at on occasion, time consuming. Yet being shoulder to shoulder with peers and collaborating with colleagues can bring huge benefit to you and the wider business. With that in mind, we built a purposeful 3/2 hybrid split.

Lets break it down, for two days a week (usually a Monday and Friday) you can work from home. Saving you time and costs on commuting and giving you flexibility to sleep in, pick up the kids, walk the dog... you do you.

For the other three days we'll expect you to be in the office (unless your role is a remote role – and we'll ensure this is clear for you – or unless you have a specific health-related reason not to be).

Not set in stone

There may be occasions where you're needed in the office for more than 3 days; for example, team building days, workshops, new team member onboarding or business critical incidents.

We know that our team members enjoy the advantages of hybrid working. Here are just a few:

- ✔ The flexibility and balance to sleep in, pick up the kids or walk the dog.
- ✔ No commute, and therefore money saved on fuel or transport, plus precious time to do something less boring instead.
- ✔ The opportunity to find their flow with fewer interruptions and greater productivity.

And we expect that all Kascaders will be willing to come to the office regularly to collaborate and socialise. We ask that everyone:

- ✔ Makes themselves available for social events with teammates.
- ✔ Makes the effort to build relationships with people outside of their immediate team – avoid silo socialisation.
- ✔ Respects that an awful lot of learning can only be done sat shoulder-to-shoulder with a more experienced colleague and being happy to be the learner or the mentor. And appreciating that this is a benefit and an honour (and not a curse).
- ✔ Is consistent in maintaining a somewhat regular schedule. Everyone should be working roughly the same core hours and times each week (or be incredibly consistent at communicating fluctuations) so we can ensure that we're available when we're needed.



Bad ideas and problems

Great products and services are built not by individuals, but by the input of many, through iteration. Iteration means many changes, driven from even more ideas. Most ideas never become an iteration or don't stick around for long and are quickly replaced by others. But with each change, we learn something new. To fuel this, we need ideas – even bad ones from different people with different points of view.

So we'd love you to:

Share ideas, problems and annoyances

To do this, you need to share your ideas and problems with the people who can help you to bring them to life. At Cascade, this means sharing your ideas with your team leader/manager or the Senior Leadership Team. If you don't have an idea but you do have a problem/annoyance of any size, share that instead. We know we're not perfect. Yet!

What defines us is not how we behave when it's all going well, but how we behave when it gets tough.

Contribute

You must contribute to other people's ideas when you can add value. Let them know what you think, both positive and negative, being mindful to be kind and constructive – don't forget to embrace our values of honesty is the best policy and be constructive and be brave with your gift of feedback.

Explore

Keep exploring and don't limit your input and ideas to anything in particular. Try suggesting a change in an area you're not very familiar with. You might learn something new based on the feedback you get on that idea – or you might just have created the next iteration.

“When two ~~men~~ [people] in business always agree, one of them is unnecessary.”

William Wrigley, Jr

Need help?

Not sure of the correct terminology? This is what we say:

- ✔ We don't say IT. **But we do say technology.**
- ✔ We don't say employees. **But we do say team.**
- ✔ We don't say colleagues. **But we do say Kascaders.**
- ✔ We don't say Cascade family. **But we do say Cascade community.**

Need advice

For specific help, the Senior Leadership Team has an open-door policy. The People team is available to support you with pre-, current and post-employment enquiries, and the Marketing team is here to support you with brand advice, materials and becoming famous. Fellow Kascaders are great reference points to find information – or, if you prefer try Viva Engage for company updates, or our numerous SharePoint sites that signpost everything from policies to praise.

You can always go direct to the top of the tree as well. John is always happy to hear from you and considers your feedback to be a gift.

