

**THE  
EMPLOYEE  
HANDBOOK**

**FOR THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE**



*Imagine a world  
where work is  
FUN!*

*Imagine a world  
without a  
BOSS!*

*Imagine a world  
where you decide  
what happens every day!*

*...welcome to  
OUR WORLD!*



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# How (NOT) to use this book

So maybe you've had employee handbooks in the past, and maybe you're expecting something a little different to what you're going to find here.

## If you're looking for anything like this:



What to wear for work

How to book a holiday

What to do when you're sick

## ...then you're reading the wrong book.

Why? Because from the moment you join **People**, you manage your own actions. It's a scary thought, isn't it? A job where you actually call the shots?

This handbook is not designed to tell you what to do.

This handbook is designed to help you come to terms with deciding what to do. So read it, smell it, taste it... use it however you like.

## After all, you call the shots now.

Help other people to set their own pace.

We want each of the people joining **People** to get off to a flying start, so once you're here, if you think you've got a killer tip for any newbies, come and stick it in!

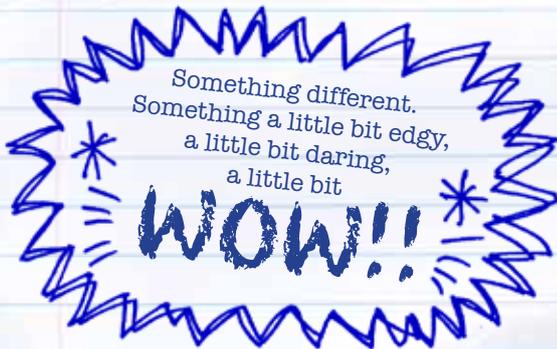
This book is not a finished work and we don't think it ever will be; we love contributions, suggestions and additions made by the people who know the best.

And if you're one of  
PEOPLE's people,  
that means you.

# You get out what you put in!

**People** began its journey with a vision of creating Human Resources software that made managing a workforce fun for businesses.

OK, we wanted it to bring these businesses speed, ease and efficiency too... but the most important part was creating something that could make a dull job fun.



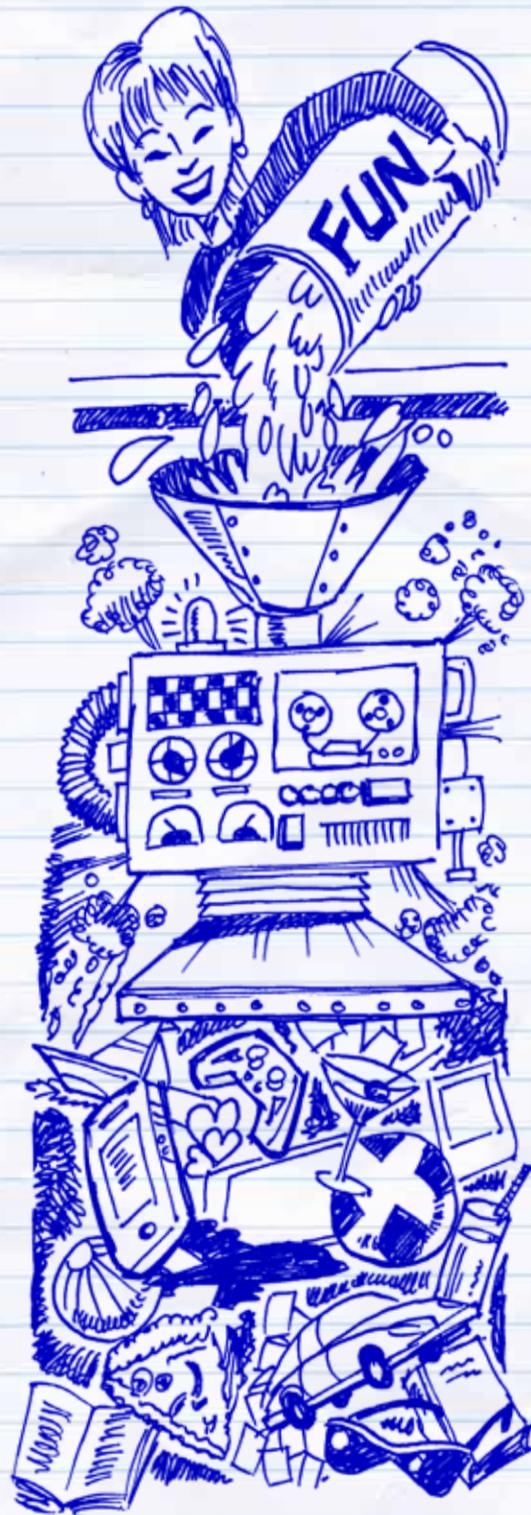
But knowing that the age-old cliché speaks wisdom when it tells us that we 'only get out what we put in', we knew that for this to work, fun would have to be set firmly at the very heart of everything we did... and for that reason, our fundamental ethos here at **People**, has become 'finding fun in all we do'.

We like to take risks. We like to try new things. We like to work in a world free of judgement and let laughter become our driver.

**We like to have fun, because it's fun that makes us different.**

And if your idea of fun is working in your PJs... then we strongly suggest that you start stocking up on PJs!

So take a deep breath, and step into a world of fun where ideas flourish and wonderful people work together to create wonderful things.



## PART 1

# Welcome to PEOPLE

### ABOUT PEOPLE

We could talk all day about **People** and still have more to say. So we're going to stick with the most important facts. The facts you probably want to know.

The facts that matter.



### WHO WE ARE

**People** is an exciting blend of different people, and between us we hold the power of raw creativity in our hands.

We all have different experience, different skills, come from different cultures and have our own input to bring to the table. And although we're all different, the glue that holds us all together is the simple desire to collectively be the best.

### WHAT WE DO

We create daring, 'against-the-norm' HR software for businesses up and down the country. But this HR software revolution we've started goes much deeper than just making staff management easy... it serves the purpose of making a dull job fun.

We want our software to inject passion, life and creativity into an industry that is often seen as nothing more than a necessary part of business. And that's why we take risks. That's why we try out new things. It's why we hired you... because from the moment you become a part of **People's** journey, it's you who decides how we make it all happen.

### WHO CONTROLS US

**People** is fully-owned and self-funded. That means we really can do whatever we want to!

**Think about it:** We've got no investors or bank-loans to answer to, meaning we can choose our direction completely. And although we like to make a profit, we love the freedom of being able to simply do the things we want to do. In fact, it's that very freedom that allows us to create incredible software that's not just claiming to be different, but that's actually different.

And as one of **People's** people, how we become different is now as much your responsibility as it is anybody else's. Because here, you won't find anybody trying to control you...



# Who Stole My Manager?

What we're about to tackle is one of the most important concepts you'll need to get the hang of when you join **People**:



## THE LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

Now, it's worth pointing out here that in certain businesses, a formal management structure is necessary. When a business is transactional, when its operations are already mapped out, when it can be clearly defined down to every last detail... it needs a formal hierarchy.

But that isn't **People**.

At **People**, innovation is the currency that funds us. We buy and sell in the form of ideas... we grow only by pushing technology to its limits, always on the hunt for new ways with which we can shape it, morph it and change it in order to better empower others.

At **People**, we refuse to stifle creativity. We value each of the individuals that helps to make us who and what we are. And that's why we've ripped out the traditional management structure and gone for equality across the board.

In other words, you are now just as valuable as the guy wearing the badge that says 'Managing Director'...

We ask ourselves the same question with each applicant: Would this person be capable of not only doing the job they're applying for, but of running the company for us? And if the answer is yes, we know we're onto a winner - because in essence, our employees do run the company for us.

And although each of the people at **People** is working towards the same goal, we know that there are thousands of ways to hit it... that's why we leave it in your hands.

✦ We do not want you to ask approval on every decision you make.

✦ We do want you to use initiative and try something new.

**And perhaps the most important part of all: Do not be worried about making mistakes - nobody is here to judge or criticise your actions, and if something goes wrong (which it will, we assure you!) then no sweat - we learn something new every day!**

"But how do you make sure everybody's doing what they're supposed to without a formal management structure?"

## That question's easy.

Think about it: We've employed you for your skills, not your ability to follow orders. We already know you have what it takes by the time we put the big fat tick beside your name and sign the contract with you... if we thought you didn't have your own valuable set of ideas, we wouldn't have hired you. It's that simple.

You might notice that at the company we have individuals with titles such as "Head of Marketing" or "Software Development Manager" wandering around. If you're working in a 'department' that's 'managed' by one of these elusive beings, remember that they are not the boss of you. They are merely springboards for bouncing off. They are your central points of contact which you can use at your discretion for advice and guidance. They are tactical facilitators of team projects and group activities.

**But they are in no way the boss of you.**

# Your first day

So, you're here and you're raring to go.

## Slow down.

If this is going to work, you need to take some time to get comfortable with your own style and how you want to 'roll'.

Although our employees are all classed as 'home workers', where you choose to work from and how you choose to work is down to you. Alright, we do meet from time to time to catch up, review projects and throw ideas around... but the rest of the time, how you set yourself up is your decision.

To help you along, we've slipped the following items into your employee inventory:

- \* A Macbook
- \* An Apple Ipad
- \* An Apple Iphone

You see, the software we sell to our customers can be used from anywhere... so surely it makes sense for you to have that same flexibility with your work?

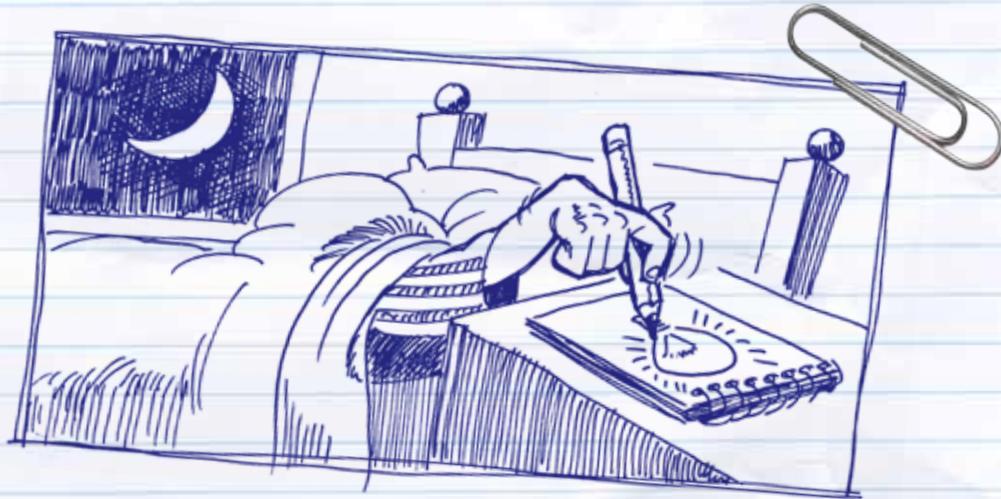


It might be that as you get into the swing of things, you'll have days where you prefer to sit at a desk with your Macbook, focus your concentration and knuckle down to something awesome. Perhaps on others, you might want to meet up with someone from another department to iron out a kink that's been really bugging you... whatever it is, you now have the power to work flexibly, and work from anywhere. You shouldn't have to 'go to work' - your work should simply come along for the ride.

So what you do on your first day is really down to you... but why not use the time to fire up your new gadgets and test them out from the comfort of 4 different locations?

**The challenge is on.**

# Getting started



## **MANAGING YOUR WORK PATTERN**

Have you ever had a job where you're expected to put in 60 hours of overtime a month?

Or have you ever sat at home twiddling your thumbs wishing you'd been given more hours on the staff rota for the week?

We're giving you free reign over how you work for two main reasons:

- 1. You know how you work best.**
- 2. We don't.**

The fact is, we feel that for really high-quality work to be produced, our employees need to be as comfortable as possible with how and when they work. And if that means that you wake up one morning and simply don't feel up to working, so be it - take some time out, recharge your batteries and come back later - just make sure you're not letting any of your workmates down. On the other hand, if you wake up at 2am with a fantastic idea, then why wait 'til morning?

Setting your own working pattern is going to take some getting used to, but we'd like to offer three points of advice that might just help you get on track a little easier:

- 1. Keep Promises.**
- 2. If you've got a great idea, act.**
- 3. If you're away on holiday... make sure you enjoy it! That means ensuring your responsibilities are covered, getting somebody to water your plants, turning your phone off, temporarily forgetting your work login details and catching some sunshine!**

We will never stop you putting in extra time... but if you're having to put in 60 hours a week to get something right, chances are there's probably a better way to get it done.

**Why not try finding it?**



# Your first month

Once you've got over the hurdle of your first day, the rest of the month should fall into place on its own.

So really, there's nothing we can tell you here. But to break you in gently, we've cobbled together the following checklist just for you.

**Print it off.**



Stick it to your bedroom wall, your microwave, your favourite table in your favourite cafe... but most importantly, see how many you can get ticked off!

## The First Week

By the end of your first week, you should have done one (or more) of the following:

- Introduced yourself to 3 other employees
- Told a joke to a customer (they've got to laugh for it to count!)
- Tried working from an unusual place

## By the End of the Second Week

By the time you've finished your second week, you should have done one (or more) of the following.

- Given at least 5 compliments to at least 5 colleagues (you can't make them up - they've got to be genuine!)
- Told us an embarrassing (true) story about yourself
- Posted a message on our company intranet

## By the End of the Third Week

By the time you've finished your third week, you should have done one (or more) of the following:

- Shared a bag of sweets (your choice) at a team meeting
- Come up with an employee nickname for yourself (like Super Aman, the Marketing Hero)
- Learned how to do something that isn't in your 'job role' (are you a graphic designer? Why not learn how to write a line of code!)

## By the End of the Month

At the end of the month, you should do all of the following:

- Get paid (we'll take care of this one)

# What we expect from each other

From the moment you join **People**, you become a valuable part of the company. And without a traditional hierarchy, knowing what's expected of you or what to expect from others might seem like uncertain territory.

We really do mean it when we tell you that you're now an equal member of the team, but to help you understand how everybody fits in with each other, here is a bit of advice on how to manage your expectations on a level playing field.

One of the biggest things you can expect, is to see people turning ideas into action and making decisions.

It doesn't matter if they're the wrong decisions either... I mean, we hope they'll be right; but the fact is, the right decision could be a hundred and one different things... **People's** people are hired very selectively for their unique set of skills, and therefore they are also the right people to decide how to use those skills. In other words, if you think something's a good idea then it probably is. Or then again it might not be. There's only one way to find out.

## A few other pointers for you:

- ✦ If you see somebody doing something that you think could be done better, suggest your idea. They'll thank you for it (and might even decide to use it).
- ✦ If a colleague makes a suggestion, don't take it as a personal attack. Thank them for it (you might even decide to use it).
- ✦ If you think you'd be good at something you've never done before, then do it. We have employees from every walk of life and from every industry... so don't be shy, ask if they'll show you a thing or two.

The more our employees can do in any field of expertise, the better it is for our company.

Imagine starting a job as a Customer Service Executive... but turning into a 'Customer-Servicing Computer-Programming Graphic-Designing Sales-Generating Superstar'? We wouldn't want to stop you becoming one of those, so if it suits you, become one... just don't lose sight of your original area of expertise!

We love that having such an open-plan working structure creates the kind of outcome other workforces can only dream of, and we love that our people feel confident that they can make decisions and take pro-active action without the fear of backlash.

## Here are a few more things you can expect from **People's** people:

**People's** people respect each others' decisions and value each others' area-expertise.

**People's** people praise one another for being pro-active.

**People's** people praise one another for taking the company somewhere new.

**People's** people are not sanctioned for making mistakes.

**People's** people welcome requests for help and give that help where possible.

**People's** people communicate clearly, keep their promises and work as a team.



## PART 3

# Your progress - 1

### REVIEWING YOUR PERFORMANCE (...and what about that pay rise?)

There are some things that you might think won't work on a level playing field, and you might have a few questions bouncing around your brain at the moment. Questions like...

Who tells me how I'm doing?

My performance has improved... what about a pay rise?

At **People**, we think pouring hours into picking at an employee's record every quarter is counter-productive... and anyway, much of what we do cannot be measured in numbers (does fun have a number?) - so instead, we have a couple of systems in place to help you understand how you're doing as an employee, and how to make sure you're getting adequately rewarded for your hard work.

### SYSTEM 1: A JURY OF YOUR PEERS

Don't worry, you're not in the dock... but everybody needs third party feedback from time to time. Feedback helps us to both define and refine our actions, and gives us the perspective we need to make the things we do better. And who's in a better position to assess you and provide that perspective than those who you work with every day?

So throughout the year, we use each other to gather objective and anonymous feedback based on the value we each provide to the company, which is then analysed at our annual peer review to paint a picture of how each person is doing.

**This feedback system is structured, but it is not quantitative...**

Unlike transactional businesses where sales figures can be easily analysed and performance can be placed on a pretty little bar chart on the MD's office door, the feedback gathered from the people at **People** throughout the year is personal to each individual and designed to specifically help them see where they are and where they might want to go next in terms of their position within the business.

Of course, this annual review is simply the formalised version of a naturally occurring process within our company... after all, as one of **People's** people, you'll probably already know how others see you way before the annual peer review comes around.

### And remember...

Our annual peer review is not designed to compare one employee to another. It is not a way of deciding who gets a promotion over another, and it is not a way of re-sorting the pecking order ...mainly because there is no pecking order.

Your value to the company is determined entirely on your own merits, and not on how they compare to somebody else's - if you're doing well and deserve recognition, this does not mean you'll be taking that privilege away from somebody else.

So if our annual peer review suggests that in comparison to the year before, every single employee deserves a pay rise... then every single employee gets a pay rise!



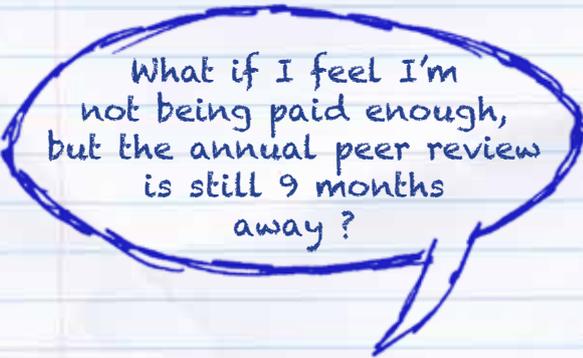
# Your progress - 2

## SYSTEM 2: REVIEWING YOUR COMPENSATION

The peer review we just described plays a huge part in making sure you're getting paid enough for what you do.

And each year when we analyse feedback, we also analyse pay-packets.

If we take a look at what we all think of each other and notice that your value to the company has increased since the last formal review, we'll make sure your pay is adjusted accordingly. It's that simple.



What if I feel I'm not being paid enough, but the annual peer review is still 9 months away?

Nobody should feel they are being underpaid for the value they're providing. So if you think something doesn't balance, raise the issue!

Nobody's going to call you greedy for pointing out that you feel you're worth more than it says you are on paper... but what people will do, is take a look at how your peer review is looking so far, and if everybody's in agreement, it will be taken care of.

When we're being paid what we're worth, we can stop worrying about our compensation and start having fun.



## REVIEWING YOUR POSITION

If you've been thinking about how progression works on a level playing field, you may have by now started wondering: "How do I move up when everywhere is flat?"

With a traditional hierarchy, it's easy to define your career progression because every job role has a brightly coloured sticker that tells people exactly what they are and what they should be doing... but at **People**, there is no brightly coloured sticker and there is nobody telling you how things should be done.

Of course, many of **People's** people will assign themselves a title to be used for the outside world, as this makes doing their job easier... you might bump into a 'Customer Service Executive', or a 'Legal Advisor' - but inside the heart of the company, everybody takes on the role that suits them the best at any given point in time. You see, **People** is made up of individuals who are unafraid of stepping into new territory, broadening their skill sets and becoming great all-rounders as well as the cutting-edge experts they already are. And we call this process 'career growth'.

**Career growth is far more valuable than job-title advancement**, as it gives you the opportunity to race ahead with your career without the restrictions specific roles and responsibilities often impose.

You will never be stopped from going somewhere new with your career. You will never be stopped from taking **People** to newfound heights. If you think you can do something, you probably can - and how you grow your career is completely down to you.

# PART 4

# Our progress

## WHERE WE'VE BEEN

**People** is made up of a diverse, wonderful and sprawling network of talented individuals who have had the fortune to collide during their journey through life, and come together to create fantastic software that makes a dull job fun.

So it might be nice for you to see how our story's unfolded so far (as well as how it might continue!)

**2012**

The company philosophy and **People's** flagship product is defined during a 'Eureka' moment over morning coffee.

The design work begins and **People** starts to look pretty sweet!

A team of experts is sourced, and Product Development gets underway

The key concepts behind the software are refined and developed

**People** introduces 'Missions' to the software's interface, allowing HR administrators using **People** to earn awesome titles such as 'Black Belt in Absence Reduction'

The Development Team work on making **People** quick to get started with, easy to use, and integrate a sophisticated 'Reporting' feature into the software

An HR expert with 20 years of experience adds a little something to the mix, allowing HR Managers using the software to make easier decisions by following the on-screen prompts & suggested actions

**People** hires a full-scale workforce who marvel at the Employee Handbook

The product is tested, tweaked & launched

**2013**

Initial feedback from businesses using the software suggests 'HR Managers are starting to enjoy their job too much and are working harder, better and faster than ever before...'

**People** is investigated and branded "HIGH RISK BOREDOM-BUSTER" by the 'Boredom-at-Work' Panel, who claim that such high levels of fun could lead to dangerously high levels of productivity

Thousands from all over the world try to get a job with **People**. **People** remains firm on the matter, issuing a statement: "We Only Hire the Best"

**2014**

**People** hires a dedicated employee to deal with the ever-growing daily influx of fan mail sent in by businesses all over the country

**2015**

Dear Sir,  
We Love you.  
Yours Sincerely,

**2017**

**People** is short-listed for the "Top 10 Places to Work in the World" Award

**People** wins the award, and is also given the remaining 9 places

**2021**

The developers start adding artificial intelligence to the **People** software

**2022**

**People** software becomes self-aware and begins re-programming all boring HR systems with its self-generated algorithm - it's lovingly dubbed...

**2024**

**People** becomes the first piece of software to build & fly a rocket to Mars, reporting back that 'It's a good place to take a holiday'

# Where we're going...

When you join **People**, you might want to know...

Where are we going?

This is the part where we ask you a similar question, and it answers yours:

Where will you take us?

You see, with so many unique minds working together, there are so many exciting directions we could take... we're all working towards the general goal of 'success', and we're all dedicated to having fun along the way... but that general goal can be defined in so many ways that we'd prefer to ask for directions from you.

You're in the driver's seat and we're riding shotgun. Go wherever feels right for you. Take the scenic route. Discover somewhere you've never been before.

**We can't wait to find out where we end up!**



## PART 5

# The learning curve - 1

### THAT LOOKS COOL... CAN I HAVE A GO?

- ➔ Maybe you've been hired to work in software development.
- ➔ Maybe you've been hired to become part of our legal team.
- ➔ Maybe you've been hired as a Sales Executive.

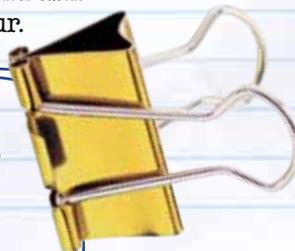
Whatever your 'role' within the company is however, it should never separate you from those working in other 'departments'.

One benefit of hiring top-level experts is that we have a diverse pool of talent overflowing with knowledge, and when that pool of talent is emptied onto a level playing field, it's impossible for each of us not to learn something from somebody else.

So if you see something you like the look of but you don't know much about it... have a go! You never know, you might be good at it.

And this lack of boundaries between 'departments' doesn't just mean you can try something new... want to test something you're working on? Why not call up a colleague and ask them to become your guinea pig for an hour.

Let's not be afraid of dipping our proverbial toes into muddy water, let's not be afraid of learning from each other, and let's not let our job roles define us... let's start defining them.



# The Learning curve - 2



## HELP! SOMETHING'S GONE WRONG...

You've made mistakes before.

I've made mistakes before.

Everybody in the world has made mistakes before.

So when you start working at **People**, you should always remember the following: You are going to make mistakes.

There's absolutely nothing anybody can do about that, short of putting you in a box and only letting you out at lunchtime.

And that would be a mistake.

We're on a journey through a minefield, and it's natural that from time to time, something's going to explode underneath our feet. But if you never dare to take a step forward... you'll always stay where you are.

So although mistakes are unfortunate, they're inevitable. And in a way, you should be making them - because it shows that you're making decisions, taking action and trying out new things.

At **People**, mistakes are not going to lead to a big red cross on your employee record, and they're not going to get you fired.

They're a vital part of our company's learning curve, and they help us to keep moving forward.

**Made a mistake?** Fine. Let's see what went wrong, re-analyse our attack plan and try again.

## DON'T DO THAT... I'VE GOT A BETTER IDEA!

During your journey of fun and success with **People**, you'll meet a lot of talented individuals just like yourself. Each of them will know something that you don't, and similarly you will know something that they don't.

It's the perfect set-up because together, we have the ideal network of skills, ideas and abilities.

So when you see somebody doing something that could be done differently, don't be afraid to tell them! Nobody's going to bite you for helping them make something faster, easier or better.

Even if you think "that's way out of my area of expertise", that's no reason not to give your input - after all, you have the advantage of a fresh set of eyes, and might just see something they don't.

## Think about it like this:

Imagine you're a big-fish investor, and you're sat in your office analysing the stock market... your cleaner comes in, has a cheeky look over your shoulder and says "Why don't you do that?"

If you choose to take the advice and it makes you your next million, you're going to be happy your cleaner stuck his or her nose in, right?

We don't want people bossing other people around. But we do want people sharing their ideas, opinions and perspectives.

**So don't hold back. Jump in.**



## PART 6

# In conclusion...

### PEOPLE ISN'T PERFECT (YET!)

Hopefully by now you're feeling enthusiastic about becoming one of the people who makes **People**.

But as with anything, **People** isn't perfect. For example:

Our philosophy doesn't always work. This isn't too worrying though.. we've accepted that no structure is perfect 100% of the time, and we're sticking with our philosophy come rough or smooth.

Things don't always go according to plan. In fact, even the fixes we implement as a result don't always go according to plan.

We don't spend as much face time with each other as we could. Our flexibility allows us to, but it doesn't always happen.

But there's no reason why we can't aim for perfection together. Maybe we'll never hit perfection... and maybe we'll find that as we iron out one crease, another will appear. But nobody can ever say we didn't try, and you never know... one day, we might just get there!

### GOOD LUCK!

So, you've had the tour of how we work, and now the only thing left for you to do is to start growing your career, and adding your own ingredients to the cauldron of fun.

We're all here if you get stuck, and you're now here if we do... so let's take the next few steps of our journey together!

We wish you the best of luck every time you roll the dice, and remember:

Never stop rolling the dice!

