

NORDNA

Creating the most inspiring workplace where we enable talented people to provide amazing customer experiences.



NORDNA

NorDNA is a framework rolled out in 2013 to align our vision and expectation of how we work in Nordstrom Technology. It is designed to capture values that are core to our heritage, such as using good judgment and delivering amazing customer experiences, while also challenging us to evolve new cultural capabilities that will enable us to create an inspiring work environment that develops and attracts talented people to our team.

We hope this handbook offers insights into what each of the NorDNA values look like in action, and how you and your teammates can all infuse these values into your daily work.

For questions about this handbook or the NorDNA framework, please contact the Technology People Lab at PeopleLab@nordstrom.com.

PEOPLE

We're in the business of making our customers feel great. To achieve this, developing, retaining, and attracting talented people is a top priority. At the end of the day, it is our people that power our services, deliver great experiences to our customers, and create long-term value for our company.

We must be innovative, nimble, and collaborative to respond to an ever-changing and competitive retail environment. We are committed to offering meaningful challenges and opportunities to grow. As stewards of our Nordstrom culture, we accept nothing less than excellence from each other. In a changing world, we'll never forget our heritage of the shoe salesperson, on one knee, assisting one customer at a time.

SKILLED

Bring deep expertise in at least one or more areas, with breadth across other areas (referred to as a "T-shaped" person). Others are excited to work with you because your presence and capabilities gives confidence to those around you.

ACCOUNTABLE

Demonstrate character and integrity. Be reliable and take pride in delivering results. Follow through on commitments while always striving to surprise and delight.

PASSIONATE

Driven to make real impact through your skills and contributions. Model high engagement whether you are introverted or extroverted.

ACTION-ORIENTED

Don't wait for permission; give appropriate thought and use good judgment. Bias towards action!

COLLABORATIVE

Listen to others and build on their ideas, contribute ideas to groups, have a "Yes, and" mindset. Create connections and alignment through your ability to tell the story.

CURIOUS

Ask questions, see the world with a child's eyes, always seek inspiration. Do not be afraid to express new ideas, experiment to learn and combine ideas together in new and radical ways.

COURAGEOUS

Take smart risks and embrace "Fail Forward" moments as opportunities to learn. Share your ideas - even the wild and crazy ones - with others.

CULTURE

While people are the foundation of our business, our culture provides a shared set of values and mindsets to differentiate the way that we work.

Our NorDNA framework represents our expectation and vision for how we work together, and gives us a shared set of values that we believe are key to delivering great service to our customers. It is important to understand how each of the NorDNA values build upon each other in order - read on for details on how NorDNA connects together.

It starts with developing, retaining, and attracting **Top Talent**. Next, let's ensure you know where we are heading as a company so you can connect the dots between your work and our company strategic objectives. Continuously improving our ability to focus on value-creating work and understanding the value of our work in context of the organization creates **Meaningful Work!**

With the above in place, it is critical that we have an environment where we practice **Empathy** and listen to each other. Seek to understand instead of seeking to be understood by others. We can all learn from each other and we should challenge ourselves to understand the perspective of others.

Now that we know where we're going and how to ask the right questions to challenge our assumptions, we are ready to be **Empowered** to deliver great experiences for our customer. Without talent, context, or empathy, empowerment results in chaos. However, with those three attributes, we deliver amazing results!

With the building blocks to work together, learn from each other, and push each other to do our best, we can create and take advantage of an environment where **Collaboration** occurs.

We all have one goal: to provide amazing experiences for our customer that lead her to feel good about her Nordstrom purchases. For collaboration to happen, it's important to make time and space for play in our workday by creating a **Fun Environment**. As individuals and as teams, play lets us bring our full selves to work, to recharge, and to feel safe in building bonds while breaking down barriers - strong collaborative cultures don't develop solely in meetings. Play reminds us that this is a marathon, not a sprint, and sometimes the best ideas happen through play and exploration. Once we have an environment in which we feel empowered, playful and can collaborate while performing meaningful work, we have space for Unstructured Time.

Unstructured Time helps us reinvest in ourselves through learning a new skill or tool, improving our systems and processes, or building a side project that aligns our passions and skills with exploring new ideas for our company and customer.

The only constant in Retail is change but the pace has greatly accelerated. All of the above values create the cultural foundation needed for Innovation. Making space for unstructured time, building empathy for each other and our customers, and collaborating effectively are all building blocks needed for innovation to succeed. **Innovation** is part of our job descriptions and we should always seek to create differentiated, delightful experiences for both internal and external Nordstrom customers.

Selling shoes might not change the world, but the way that we do it might.

TOP TALENT

Develop, retain, and attract talented people who make our company better than they found it.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE

- Use the audition process.**
- Actively involve team members in hiring and onboarding.**
- Facilitate career growth and help define career paths.**
- Offer meaningful challenges and opportunities to grow.**
- Provide ongoing coaching and feedback.**

ASK YOURSELF...

Are 1:1s (or conversations with team members) tactical status updates or do they cover personal/team dynamics and career development?

Do you know the career goals of your team members?

Would you encourage others to join your team?

How easy is it to recruit?

WHY NORDSTROM?

We're a relationship-based company and people are the foundation of everything we do. To serve our customers, we must hire and nurture talented people who are not just technically skilled, but also embrace and embody our cultural values.

WHY NOW?

There's a war for tech talent in Seattle, and frequent job changes are the norm today.

THINGS TO TRY

- Provide monthly coaching and feedback within your team through 1:1s.
- Include entire team in hiring decisions and use activity-based audition hiring process.
- Ask team members to share how they like to be recognized for good work, and types of recognition to avoid.

TOP TALENT IN ACTION



“I’ve had the opportunity to work on a team that stood apart for its top talent. It was evident in their work, their results. But what I remember most is the sense of humility - the sense that what you accomplished today might be done better tomorrow. The desire to seek out mistakes as a team and rather than point fingers, learn from them collectively. Individuals with top talent are experts, but they have a continual hunger to learn more.”

- Esther Armstrong, Salesperson Texting Team

MEANINGFUL WORK

Understand the value you add to our organization and its customers.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE

See the big picture (company strategy) and the team's role in it.

Understand and articulate how the work is valuable to the end customer.

Have vision and goals that guide decisions and inspire the team.

Recognize individual and team contributions informally and formally.

ASK YOURSELF...

Do you have forums or platforms to continuously tie the team's work to the team and company vision/mission?

How does your work impact the end-customer? Does everyone on your team know how?

Do you know what motivates each team member to come to work?

WHY NORDSTROM?

We need to actively connect the tech team's work to sales to show how tech impacts the end customer.

WHY NOW?

We're in a "purpose economy," where people seek meaning at work.

THINGS TO TRY

- Take your team on a tour of the CEC, store, or contact center to connect individual work to customer experiences.
- Post visual metrics and analytics that show how your team's work is doing against their target goals.
- Post the company goals, Technology goals, and how your team's projects support them.

MEANINGFUL WORK IN ACTION



"Since Calgary was our first international store, everyone involved knew that we needed to provide our Canadian customers with a great first impression. The project was never seen as a technical or business project, but instead a Nordstrom project. The quality that was delivered was outstanding and a reflection of the pride the teams took in being part of this meaningful project for the company."

- Deb Huntting, Canada Technology Team

EMPATHY

Seek to understand the perspectives of others.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE

Take time to understand others' perspectives on an ongoing basis.

Build empathy for each other, our partners, and our customers.

Regularly practice being more curious: ask open-ended questions, probe deeper, and ask why.

Refrain from jumping to solutions before understanding needs.

ASK YOURSELF...

When someone presents a different point-of-view, do you truly consider it?

Do you spend time getting to know your team and your customers?

Do you leverage tools or reminders to remain open and curious during meetings and product visioning?

WHY NORDSTROM?

“We’re a relationship company,” but our rapid growth has resulted in less connections with other teams and the business.

WHY NOW?

We’re working in a highly diverse, multi-generational workforce where emotional intelligence helps people work together.

THINGS TO TRY

- Spend an hour shadowing your customer or another team to understand their daily flow and needs.
- When someone shares an opinion, follow up with “why?” and “tell me more” to understand their perspective.
- Schedule time to listen to contact center calls, work in the store, or observe someone using your product.

EMPATHY IN ACTION



“We facilitated a workshop for Windows server builds and once the teams had developed prototypes to improve the process, they invited customers in who request Windows servers to be built. There was an amazingly rich conversation for about 90 minutes. The server team learned that they had made some assumptions about their customers and were able to make adjustments to their prototypes based on their feedback. They have since put the prototype into production and are still engaging customers in their process!”

- Amy Evans, Continuous Improvement

EMPOWERMENT

Focus on trust, accountability, and well-defined outcomes.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE

Have the context (through vision and goal-setting) needed to make decisions.

Define the why and let the team figure out the how.

Define guardrails as boundaries within which the team can operate freely.

Trust each other to deliver to their own goals and ask for help when needed.

Hold each other accountable – agree on an approach with deadlines, and follow up.

ASK YOURSELF...

How often does your team manager check in on the team's work? Does that match your team's need for guidance?

Would others consider you or your lead a "micro-manager"?

How much ownership do team members feel to make decisions and take action without permission?

WHY NORDSTROM?

Our one guideline is to "use good judgment at all times" and support through an inverted pyramid model.

WHY NOW?

We've shifted from "command & control" leadership to "empower & engage."

THINGS TO TRY

- When planning projects, schedule time to try multiple approaches and experience fast failures early in process
- Ask teams if they know what their project goals and boundaries are. If they are not explicit, define them.
- Focus on protecting the team to make their choices rather than removing obstacles.

EMPOWERMENT IN ACTION

改善

"One example of Empowerment is the adoption of continuous improvement (Kaizen) in the Enterprise Platform Group (EPG). We have discussed the desire to create this culture in EPG and to measure results. Not prescribing an approach allowed teams to experiment on their own to find the most effective way to reach the right outcome. Ultimately, the teams have rallied together and standardized their approach, but it started with individual teams doing what worked for them."

- Mark Peterson, Enterprise Platform Group

COLLABORATION

Seek input and share ideas to further company goals.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE

Create opportunities and space for working together, conversation, and idea sharing.

Encourage pairing on work within the team and across the organization.

Build on others' ideas. Use “yes and” in meetings.

Model inclusive decision-making, that's not consensus or autocratic.

ASK YOURSELF...

Do you have physical space and/or times set aside to allow for collaboration?

What tools or frameworks do you use to include multiple perspectives in decision-making?

How easy is it for others to access information or resources?

Do you focus on success for the organization or success for your team or project?

WHY NORDSTROM?

Our combination of digital and physical sales requires dissolving silos to deliver an optimal experience for customers.

WHY NOW?

Complex challenges and scale require collaboration; agile relies on the “power of pairing.”

THINGS TO TRY

- If you're holding a meeting, make sure everyone has a chance to share their opinion and ideas.
- Define working sessions or brainstorms as different than shareout meetings, and keep those to 6 people maximum.
- Filter and align on ideas after collaborating by going through prioritization exercises with your partners.
- Create platforms to share ideas across teams such as Yammer groups, Show & Tells, and design/code reviews.

COLLABORATION IN ACTION



“Our team has mobile workstations so we pair up by physically moving our desks together and then going through code and writing it together. We also will use the big TVs to pair and one person shares their desktop while the other uses their laptop to help troubleshoot. In every standup we pick a task and pair up with someone to get the task done. This is important because it helps us all grow in our coding ability and teaches us new ways of approaching a task.”

- Arielle Allen, Infrastructure Engineering

FUN ENVIRONMENT

Refresh and recharge as individuals and a team.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE

Create opportunities for collaborative play that energizes the team and fosters “flow.”

Look for ways to incorporate people’s passions and interests into work.

Sponsor/support team time together such as game tournaments, happy hours, team engagement away from desks, etc.

ASK YOURSELF...

What activities or time have you set aside recently to support a fun environment?

What frequency or regularity of team building would be ideal for your team?

Do you have a sense of your teams’ passions?

Do people on your team feel safe being playful and taking risks?

WHY NORDSTROM?

The high degree of service we offer our customers is reliant on our people and processes being at their best.

WHY NOW?

Data shows that people who are happy and engaged at work are more productive.

THINGS TO TRY

- Get out of the office as a team – volunteer, go wine-tasting, or try other activities where you get to know each other beyond project work.
- Bring some friendly competition to the team through a tournament or contest like foosball, darts, who takes the most steps in a day, etc.
- Take opportunities to celebrate at work such as meeting a deadline or birthdays.

FUN ENVIRONMENT IN ACTION



“We recognize that we all work very hard and having fun is imperative to our survival. For our ‘fun’ time we have it all, puzzles, darts, chess, foosball tournaments, golf, spontaneous lunch or coffee outings, a question of the day in our standup, and most recently UNO battles.

Through this fun environment we have created bonds and trust, ultimately making us a stronger team. One team member notes ‘you can hear the laughter in our area.’ This laughter speaks to the health of our team and it’s a team effort each day to keep that alive.”

- Molly Levin, Service & Experience Team

UNSTRUCTURED TIME

Continually improve yourself, the company, and the customer experience.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE

Balance team workload to meet deadlines and have time for reflection.

Fund and plan for training and skill-building (classes, conferences); document in APRs.

Support people pursuing side projects that improve our business.

Prioritize continuous improvement efforts in team processes.

ASK YOURSELF...

How often is unstructured time prioritized on your team?

How does your team manage project priorities?

Does your team share personal goals for skill or knowledge development and help each other achieve those goals?

WHY NORDSTROM?

The philosophy of “leave it better than you found it” requires time to work on improvements beyond projects.

WHY NOW?

The fast pace of technology today requires ongoing professional development to stay relevant.

THINGS TO TRY

- Encourage team members to participate in Hackathons, NED Talks, Tech Fair, value stream mapping, and programs like Innovation Bootcamp.
- Schedule a set time each week for a full team to have “unstructured time” when they can build new concepts
- Take a class (online or in-person) to learn a new work skill or tool.
- Build unstructured time into project plans after deadlines are met.

UNSTRUCTURED TIME IN ACTION



“From my perspective, seeing the team set a schedule one day a week for unstructured time has given the team the needed space and environment for success. It was amazing to see a few of the team members come together to create the Debut Rewards App. In our demo with the business, they were so impressed that they started asking questions about how quickly we could ship it. The fact that they used the time to not only to improve their skills but also to think about our customers’ problems in a meaningful way was really motivating and inspiring.”

- Chris Teufel, Credit & Loyalty Team

INNOVATION

Make time to explore and experiment with new ideas.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE

Explore new ideas and build on the ideas of others.

Rapidly build and experiment to get feedback early and often.

Think big (10X) then take small experimental steps towards that goal.

Invest time upfront to make sure you're asking the right questions to solve the right problems.

ASK YOURSELF...

Do you have innovation tools/methods that you use on projects?

How do you teach innovation techniques to new teammates?

Do you participate in the Hackathon, Innovation Bootcamp, or Code Camps?

Does your group make decisions through experimentation or go with known solutions?

WHY NORDSTROM?

We need to spend time exploring new approaches to provide differentiated experiences for customers

WHY NOW?

Innovation is required for companies today to compete in a highly competitive and advanced marketplace.

THINGS TO TRY

- Participate in Innovation Bootcamp, or request an innovation workshop for your team.
- Start off each week with a team brainstorm.
- Have “experiment days” as a team where everyone tries out a new tool or approach.

INNOVATION IN ACTION



“With just six weeks’ time, our team was challenged with generating concepts and ideas; and synthesizing those ideas into prototypes that showcased emerging mobile experiences. We had a lot of hustling to do and knew we could depend on the support of one another to make it happen.

We leveraged the work of others, digging in to uncover findings from previous experiments and efforts. We talked with customers and salespeople to see what they wanted and expected. We sought the advice of our leaders to link insights to strategic opportunities. Empowered by these three channels, we were able to think really big: both in the way we wanted to tell the story and in the experiences themselves, solving problems in a way that was best for Nordstrom’s customer at every touchpoint. We double and triple checked, and made improvements to ensure that what we were doing was resonating. At the end of the day, our team embraces the fact that innovation is for the customers, not for ourselves or our competition.”

- Design & Discovery Team