

ACKLEN / AVENUE

HANDBOOK



A guide for your Acklen Avenue journey!



Acklen Avenue Handbook

Byron Sommardahl

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Welcome to your Acklen Avenue Handbook. THIS IS A WORK IN PROGRESS, but since we are “agile”, we want to start getting value out of our handbook as soon as possible and improve on it over time.

Our goal for this handbook is to tell the story of our team, help everyone to be “on the same page”, and to help newcomers become effective at their job and place on this team.

Contributing

If you would like to contribute to this handbook, please fork this repo and submit a pull request with your changes. Here are some things you can help with:

- Fixing typos or clumsy writing.
- Adding sections or paragraphs to enhance understanding of how things work at Acklen Avenue
- Adding images and illustrations.
- Anything else that may improve this handbook.

Welcome to Acklen Avenue

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1OMqVUekGzLU64rLn-qU-BxrncKpPYhx5ukgM7OG0L2c/edit>

B) Experiment in Honduras

In July of 2012, when Acklen Avenue was still very young and trying to find its place in the world, we decided to try a risky experiment. You see, Byron had recently sold everything and moved to Honduras after marrying the girl of his dreams. After finding the quiet tech community in Honduras and getting as involved as they would allow, he started to realize just how much incredible talent there is in Central America. His eyes were also opened to how many english speakers there are in the tech community. Then he started to notice certain characteristics of the culture in Honduras that seemed to lend itself to a strong work ethic and a healthy respect for learning and growing. All that seemed like a recipe for success!

In those days there was plenty of negative stigma around “outsourcing” and “offshore workers”. Too many nightmarish stories involving time-zone woes, miscommunication, poor quality, and wasted money. But Honduras (and Central America in general) was largely untapped and untested in those days. Despite the risks, we decided to hire a few Honduran developers and build some software together.

Our first hires were students from one of Honduras’s tech universities (Unitec) and another, more experienced developer. They were sharp, hard-working, and excited about learning. We handed them some small projects and they powered through them like champions. They also committed to learning our techniques, practices, and principals and started studying. They quickly rose to the occasion and became well-versed in Test-Driven Development and SOLID principles, two things that Acklen Avenue has counted as essential development practices since the beginning. They were invited to work on more and larger projects and easily became one of our most entrusted developers. Our experiment was a success largely thanks to these first Honduran team members and their willingness to work hard and learn.

C) Focused on the Future

Even as we have grown, we haven’t lost our agility as a company. When we see a need, we are faithful to our original vision and courageous to implement changes to our team and process. We love creating great software and we love having a great place where we can do it! And we are focused on continuously improving to make sure that never changes!

D) Wild Growth

Between 2012 and the present, we have grown into a fairly large software development company. Now, instead of one team working on one project with limited velocity and resources, we can handle as many as 9 simultaneous projects. Now, instead of only developers doing everything, we have team members to cover every aspect of the software development lifecycle. When we have detected a need to change or shift direction, we have done so willingly and courageously. When better testing was identified as a need, we hired our first testers and learned the meaning of QA. When we realized we needed better graphic design in our products, we hired our first designers and started learning what it means to provide excellent user experience. When we realized we sucked at project management, we learned about Scrum and implemented it with a passion by converting some devs to Scrum Masters and hiring our first Product Owners and Engagement Managers.

1.3 Employee Handbook

This Employee Handbook (“Handbook”) is designed to summarize certain personnel policies and benefits of Acklen Avenue Software, LLC (the “Company”), of 1033 Demonbreun Street #300, Nashville, Tennessee 37203, and to acquaint employees with many of the rules concerning employment with the Company. This Handbook applies to all employees, and compliance with the Company’s policies is a condition of employment. This Handbook supersedes all previous employment policies, written and oral, express and implied. The Company reserves the right to modify, rescind, delete, or add to the provisions of this Handbook from time to time in its sole and absolute discretion. This Employee Handbook is not a binding contract between the Company and its employees, nor is it intended to alter the at-will employment relationship between the Company and its employees. The Company reserves the right to interpret the policies in this Handbook and to deviate from them when, in its discretion, it determines it is appropriate.

1.4 Changes in Policy

Since our business is constantly changing, the Company expressly reserves the right to revise, modify, delete, or add to any and all policies, procedures, work rules, or benefits stated in this handbook or in any other document, except for the policy of at-will employment as described below. No oral statements or representations can in any way alter the provisions of this Handbook. Nothing in this employee handbook or in any other document, including benefit plan descriptions, creates or is intended to create a promise or representation of continued employment for any employee. Any changes to your at-will employment status, described below, must be in writing and must be signed by the Company.

If you are uncertain about any policy or procedure, please check with your manager or Human Resources.

Section 2 - Joining an Amazing Team

Here at Acklen we have unique ways on doing things.

Getting Started

Training

Before you start at Acklen Avenue, you will receive a mentor who will guide you through the training according the area of your work. You can also look to your mentor for general questions or clarifications on how Acklen works. Your mentor will stay with you as long as you need him/her.

Throughout the training process, you will become familiar with your role, our culture, our tools, our ways, and how they all fit together in perfect harmony!

You will love Acklen and the way we work because everyone always has something to contribute because we have passion for what we create every day.

2.1 How Acklen Works

Hierarchy is great for maintaining predictability and repeatability. It simplifies planning and makes it easier to control a large group of people from the top down, which is why military organizations rely on it so heavily. Acklen Avenue is a flat organization because we recruit valuable, talented, innovative people and laid in a desk 8 hours a day doesn't seem very valuable for us we pursue fun and creativity in order to do that we do not have any management.

2.2 A) We All Have a Job to Do

We have one goal: Happy clients and a happy team! We make our clients and ourselves happy by creating great software. But software is HARD. So many things can (and do) go wrong. Successful software development is born out of a constant balancing act between around, oh... around 43,606 different tasks, ideas, attitudes, actions, techniques or practices. We used to try to do all that with JUST developers. That didn't work out so well. Over time, we discovered that we needed more people and roles to handle the balancing act. The next section includes "job descriptions" for each role we have at Acklen. Each role is focused on our two goals: Happy clients and a happy team!

B) Developers

Own our client's success by researching, designing, developing, and testing software. Set operational specifications and analyze software requirements. Apply principles and techniques of computer science and engineering in order to complete features for a given project. Build applications from scratch or maintain existing ones working with a team of developers, discuss and propose architectural decisions with fellow developers. Communicate effectively with clients.

Essential Functions:

- Develop back-end and front-end features for a given a project.
- Extensive use of pair programming, dueling devs or any other methodologies for working in pairs.
- Join 3 amigos meetings and analyze information to determine and recommend scenarios.
- Join sprint planning meetings to establish the amount of time required to complete features for a given sprint.
- Join retrospective meetings to point out flaws in current methodologies to improve on the followings.
- Join internal demos and sometimes lead them.
- Join daily standups and report status of assigned tasks and work done.
- Perform code reviews to peer junior developers.
- Check-in code developed for a specific feature using a version control system.
- Develop or direct software system testing or validation procedures.
- Modify existing software to correct errors, add new features and improve performance.
- May be requested to work with an external team.
- Adhere to company's software development methodologies when working on external teams.
- Join meetings to discuss and propose architectural decisions for a project.
- Supervise and train junior developers by doing pair programming.
- May be requested to work with an external team or train them.
- Join calls with client when requested.
- Identify and communicate process improvements for the entire development team
- Identify and communicate improvements to this job description (make your job better for you and your team mates)

C) Senior Developer

Essential Functions:

- Develop back-end and front-end features for a given a project.

- Extensive use of pair programming, dueling devs or any other methodologies for working in pairs.
- Join 3 amigos meetings and analyze information to determine and recommend scenarios.
- Join sprint planning meetings to establish the amount of time required to complete features for a given sprint.
- Join retrospective meetings to point out flaws in current methodologies to improve on the followings.
- Join internal demos and sometimes lead them.
- Join daily standups and report status of assigned tasks and work done.
- Perform code reviews to peer junior developers.
- Check-in code developed for a specific feature using a version control system.
- Develop or direct software system testing or validation procedures.
- Modify existing software to correct errors, add new features and improve performance.
- May be requested to work with an external team.
- Adhere to company's software development methodologies when working on external teams.
- Join meetings to discuss and propose architectural decisions for a project.
- Supervise and train junior developers by doing pair programming.
- May be requested to work with an external team or train them.
- Join calls with client when requested.
- Lead development team(s).
- Join meetings to discuss, propose and decide architectural decisions for a project.
- Decide what tools to be used on the project.
- Research, plan and develop architectural solutions.
- May be requested a join hiring process.
- Analyze and evaluate candidates.
- Collaborate with and train other developers by doing pair programming.
- Identify and communicate process improvements for the entire development team
- Identify and communicate improvements to this job description (make your job better for you and your team mates)

D) Designers

at Acklen Avenue we really care about client success, to ensure it, we focus on understanding the client's needs and requirements. As a UX/UI Designer you are responsible to effectively create clever visual solutions/experiences for mobile and web applications.

Essential Functions:

- Create sketches, wireframes, high fidelity mockups and interactive prototypes for web and mobile applications.
- Develop artifacts for user research as: personas, user journey, user mapping, user stories, usability testing, data gathering etc.
- Creation of scalable and clean style guidelines
- Ensure the use of UX best practices in app creation: deep understanding of usability, accessibility, information architecture, content management, consistency and user-centered design with conversion in mind.
- Work together with developers and communicate design specifications to ensure high quality implementation.
- Have a strong understanding of the web technical feasibilities and limitations, both on desktop and mobile devices.
- Identify and communicate process improvements for the entire development team
- Identify and communicate improvements to this job description (make your job better for you and your team mates)

E) Product Owner

The Product Owner is responsible for maximizing the value of the product and the work of the Development Team.

Essential Functions:

Position

- Member of the development team (flat org, no bosses, everyone working towards a common goal)
- Zoomed in a bit from EM, with vision for client's current project.
- Interfaces primarily with the main client-representative (their PO) instead of all stakeholders
- Serves as product evangelist to the rest of the development team
- Key role in any project type whether design, discovery, prototype, or full-development (this includes but is not limited to helping with initial wireframes and mockups)

Maximizes Value

- Researches existing systems/documentation to provide clarity
- Turning ideas into further products, ideally MVPs.
- Assists project stakeholders to validate their needs and requirements via walkthroughs, demos, etc.

- Observing, learning about and analyzing the market.
- Observing, learning about, contacting and analyzing customers and end users of the product.
- Helps the client build what they really NEED, not just what they WANT

Champion of Product Vision

- Works with EM and client to develop, understand, communicate and adapt the product vision.
- Works with EM and client to strategize on the best and smallest possible releases
- Helps to communicate the product vision across all team members.
- Works across all team members to ensure the product vision is supported by team practices, including testing, coding practices, architecture, and deployment operations.
- Deciding what to build and what not (priorities, releases)
- In charge of prioritizing backlog items according to the client's desires/needs
- Responsible for product quality

Domain Cheerleader

- Searches for and interfaces with domain experts in the client's organization to get the best possible info to make the best possible product
- Dig up and pull out business requirements, business rules, user requirements, exception conditions, external interface features, constraints from the client and domain experts.
- Through grooming sessions with the development team, the PO helps create and maintain a product backlog of agile user stories that describes the functionality to be done across the life of a project.
- Works with the dev team on a day-to-day basis to provide an on-site product expert

Active Team Member

- Owns the product backlog
- Facilitates grooming meetings
- Participates in Scrum meetings: Providing sprint goal and new user stories for sprint planning, Giving feedback regarding the achievement of the sprint goal in the sprint review, Reflecting and taking action as a team member in the sprint retrospective, Informing, helping and learning in the daily scrum.

Seer

- Re-estimates the entire project at the end every sprint and delivers re-estimate to Engagement Manager.

F) Human Resources

This position is responsible for compiling and maintaining accounts payable records.

Essential Functions:

Accounts Payable

- Reviews all invoices for appropriate documentation and approval prior to payment.
- Prints and obtains signatures on all accounts payable checks.
- Distributes signed checks as required.
- Processes payroll.
- Maintains all accounts payable reports, spreadsheets and corporate accounts payable files.
- Prepares cleared checks for storage.
- Maintains communication with Acklen Avenue accountant
- Authorize refunds

Human Resources

- Compile and maintain employee handbook
- Maintain records of employee agreement with employee handbook and company policies
- Monitor employee satisfaction/engagement and maintain leadership informed
- Employee retention
- Implement employee raises
- Implement peer reward/bonus system
- Maintain current copies of employee agreements
- Assist Recruiting Director in the recruiting process
- Make initial contact with candidates to verify realistic salary expectations
- Provide administrative approval for candidates
- Participate in interview meetings
- Onboarding new employees
- Manage employee benefits like health insurance
- Mediate when there are problems between groups
- Offboarding existing employees
- If someone takes a course make sure that the person spread the knowledge
- Have close communication with the hiring director/social director/ development director

G) Security Tester

Tries to break into or find possible exploits in different computer systems and software.

Essential Functions:

- Identify and document security vulnerabilities in every project.
- Perform penetration test.
- Good understanding of security processes.
- Write Security Test strategy, Test Cases, Remediation Plan, and Security Test Report.
- Conduct Dynamic Security Scans, Manual validations/Pen Testing, and other Security QA activities.
- Work on improvements for provided security services, including the continuous enhancement of existing methodology material and supporting assets.
- Provide feedback and verification as an organization fixes security issues continuous enhancement of existing security methodologies.
- Implement secure coding practices.

H) Engagement Manager

Main point of contact with client. Oversees the process from inception through delivery. Manage all deliverables using Project Management techniques including planning, estimating, tracking and oversight, quality management, risk management, and communication management.

Essential Functions:

Position

- Zoomed out quite a bit (to client's level), with view of client's current and future/potential projects.
- Face-to-face presence for entire engagement

Client advocate

- Often not full-time on the project or physically present with the project team
- Partners with PO to execute on projects and plans

Client Onboarding

- Whiteboard sessions
- Pre-SOW estimates
- Create/Deliver/Manage/Renew SOW's
- Pre-sales conversations when needed by the biz dev folk(s)
- Identifies and schedules Acklen services that the client needs be it design, discovery, full development, prototyping, or punting.

Product Vision

- Cares about long-term vision and strategy for all client products, our client's business in general, and how our work fits into their overall strategy
- Partners with PO and team to negotiate release plans with client
- Negotiates scope or budget with the client
- Partners with PO to identify and set priorities.

Client Relationship

- Focus is on the management of the contractual relationship between client and vendor rather than the management of the project itself.
- Ensuring the services delivered by our team conform to what has been contractually agreed between client and Acklen and monitoring the delivery of said services against agreed schedule, quality, scope and budget; Managing the financial aspects of the contract (billing for services, following-up on payments etc.)
- Keeps on eye on approaching end dates and seeks extensions when appropriate
- Acting as the escalation point when issues arise with our resources / services and managing any dispute or conflict; ♥
- Once the project has started, identify further business opportunities for services to the client.
- Works with client after engagement to secure additional development services when needed (bug fixes, new contracts, etc).

Abundant Communication

- Keeps the client informed of progress
- Educate client on Agile processes and how Acklen implements them with Scrum and other ideas
- Seeks out and maintains relationships with all stakeholders
- Report progress to management and stakeholders (e.g. release burndown).

Delightful Experience

- Has responsibility for the customer's experience
- Monitors changes in scope and re-aligns client expectations
- Sharing insights throughout the company regarding the product (micro-blogging, blogging, internal conferences, etc.).
- Keep the quality and joy of the engagement

Process Improvement

- Reporting internally within Acklen on project performance (services delivery, progress, economics, etc.).
- Identifies ways to improve processes and helps the team implement those improvements

I) Hiring Director

Hiring Director is a volunteer position held by an elected member of the team.

Essential Functions:

- Schedules and organizes different types of interviews through the process
- Knows the hiring process from beginning to end
- Communicates with applicants and helps facilitates all information needed to follow the interview process
- Help organize and select interviewers for each candidate
- Maintains record of all the job applications
- From the applicant's data, helps provide potential hires for each position opened
- Strong relationship with human resources (we have this goal with pamelala)
- Gathers information and opinions about all the interviewees
- When enough candidates have been interviewed, helps moderate the discussion and decision making of the best candidate
- Maintains the recruitment candidates information up to date with the interviews recordings
- Communicates with the candidates and the rest of the team when a decision is made

J) Quality Assurance

Responsible for the correct and desired functionality and usability of the product by identifying problems in the software or system and the causes of those problems.

Essential Functions:

- Work closely with business and technology experts to understand the product and its requirements.
- Assist the development team in gathering meaningful requirements and acceptance criteria.
- Design test plans, scenarios, scripts, or procedures.
- Test system modifications to prepare for implementation.
- Develop testing programs that address areas such as database impacts, software scenarios, regression testing, negative testing, error or bug retests, or usability.
- Document software defects and report defects to software developers.
- Identify, analyze, and document problems with program function, output, online screen, or content.
- Monitor bug resolution efforts and track successes.
- Create or maintain databases of known test defects.

- Plan test schedules or strategies in accordance with project scope or delivery dates.
- Participate in product design reviews to provide input on functional requirements, product designs, schedules, or potential problems.
- Review software documentation to ensure technical accuracy, compliance, or completeness, or to mitigate risks.
- Implement automated mobile/web/API testing in every project
- Have knowledge and apply different testing methods
- Have Knowledge to Inspect WebPage.
- Identify and communicate process improvements for the entire development team
- Identify and communicate improvements to this job description (make your job better for you and your team mates)

K) Scrum Masters

The Scrum Master is responsible for the success of the project. To ensure success, the scrum master provides a framework by which the development team can work and collaborate in the most efficient and effective way possible.

Essential Functions:

Sprint 0

- Secures necessary resources for the project and ensures they are able to do their job efficiently
- Secures necessary plans and artifacts for a successful project
- Style Guide
- Servers
- Architectural Plans
- Sets up the team for success during Sprint 0 by setting in motion an agile framework that will help reduce friction and encourage the best possible velocity while maintaining high quality standards

Framework

- Helps the team to generate a clear and concise backlog.
- Finds/utilizes techniques to manage the backlog.
- Facilitates/protects the Acklen Avenue agile development process
- Coaches the team to self-organize
- Provides a listening ear to the team when there are complaints and conflicts and takes action to address these issues
- Facilitates decisions on architecture and technologies to use in the project
- Own the sprint board and maintain appropriate lists/sections.

Meetings

- Facilitate (not always lead) Scrum Events (Sprint Planning, Daily Scrum, Sprint Review, Grooming Sessions and Sprint Retrospective)
- Attends and leads Sprint Planning and Daily Scrum meetings

Process

- Watches velocity and helps team to keep velocity at peak potential and/or works with the PO to realign priorities
- Champion of devops in project to reduce friction for devs and testers
- Watches for blocks and works with entire team to remove those blocks
- Maintain relevant metrics that gives the team insight into the health of their project and process.
- Helps the team to stay focused and follow the agreed-upon rules for daily scrums.
- Helps the team to reach consensus for what can be achieved during a specific period of time.
- Works with other scrum masters to improve processes across all Acklen Avenue projects.

Product Vision

- Maintains a big picture view of development process and takes charge when needed to improve processes or realign the team's goals
- Helps the PO to know how to prioritize the backlog to get maximum value from a dev perspective.

Communication

- Helps the different parts of the team to have a fast and effective communication
- Ability to effectively communicate within a multi-disciplined team, across multiple locations and time zones, and interacts with business users.

2.3 Good team performance

Good Team performance is dependent on ten key factors. We encourage teams to develop these key areas as they work together:

1. **Awareness:** Situational awareness — understanding the bigger picture — is vital. It leads to better decision making. Every person needs to understand the overall aims and interests of the project.
2. **Belief:** The high performance team believes it can meet commitments and deadline together. They believe in each others' ability, embrace diversity, and trust one another.

3. **Challenge:** The high performance team challenges things as they are — the status quo — and works collaboratively to transform the business. We aim to be different!
4. **Communication:** The team spends time getting to know each other. It creates personal connections. The high performing team realises that communication can make or break the team. (We leverage Slack to make this happen!)
5. **Focus:** Clear and measurable goals give direction to the team. The team works in unison to meet common goals. The team know where it is heading. And, it understands the difficulties ahead.
6. **Honesty:** Team members are open and honest with each other. Our teams aim to create an environment where people are comfortable to speak openly.
7. **Motivation:** A positive outlook and approach to team work makes for a more fulfilling and effective job. The high performance team wants to succeed.
8. **Responsibility:** Taking responsibility is crucial in any team. People take control because they are confident and realise their efforts influence decisions and outcomes.
9. **Optimism:** Positive thinking is quite possibly the most important behaviour in our teams. It's about having a can do attitude.
10. **Enthusiasm:** People who are enthusiastic usually bring these behaviours together. The our teams takes responsibility for their actions and believes in what it is doing.

2.4 Acklen Facts that matter

Flat Land

We have the most talented people so we do not need them to be on a desk receiving orders 24/7 we do not have any managment of course we have people to guide new people path but we trust in our team and one of our main goal is to remove organization barriers with our flat structure.

Take your time

We hire great people and Acklen Avenue. We expect that as team members focused on the goal of our client success and company success, that we can trust our employees and contractors. We also want to respect the needs of our teammates. For that reason we don't count time off for our teammates that have been around for more than one year.

We like to say, "take the time that you need." That means, if you get sick, you should take the time off that you need so that you can be healthy and ready to work again. We don't give a specific number of days that you can take because every situation is different. And we trust that you'll come back to work as soon as possible because you're focused on success just like the rest of us. The same thing goes for almost any situation where you need to take off days. Many of those things are explained in other parts of this handbook. For example pregnancy, death in the family, death of a friend, sickness, broken bones, or simply that the day is too beautiful and you need to get outside. We trust that this

policy will only make our team stronger. We have said from the beginning of this policy, that we will look at things this way until the day that we can't. Let's all work together as teammates to make sure that this policy can stay in effect, never taking advantage of your teammates or the company.

Happy Environment

We care for our team so we only make agreements with clients that our team will love to work, for us is the Team is happy everyone will be happy

Section 3 Evaluation and Performance



Aclen Avenue

3.1 Peer evaluation

Instead of management reviews and evaluations, we choose evaluate each other as peers. This makes performance reviews more useful to each one of us as we constantly strive to improve as professionals.

Post-Project Evaluations

For those who work on development projects, there will be a project-related peer interview that will be performed. At the end of each project, the Human Resources will chat with all team members and compile notes. Those notes will be distributed back to each team member so he or she can see what they did well and where they should focus improvement efforts.

Team Culture Evaluations (Yearly)

At least one time per year, Human Resources will reach out to each member of our team and gather your feedback on your team mates, especially focusing on our company culture and professionalism. This will be your chance to anonymously help your team mates improve or even to know what they should keep doing! Since everyone will receive their feedback after the eval, it's also your chance to know where you are excelling and what you need to work on personally or professionally.

3.2 Bonus

Bonusly

We never get angry to receive some cash, rather we like it a lot. We like to be able to recognize those little struggles with something that motivates us to take a step forward and continue giving the best. A way to be recognize from your coworkers is with Bonusly, every month you will be granted with 35\$ So you can shout out your teammates when they excel on a project, they provide you some help with a tough task or to help them pay the bills.

(insert some bonusly images as an example)

3.3 Growth

Acklen does not have the traditional hierarchy so it may be a little confusing how your growth plan can be developed here. You decide your own growth no matter the area that you start you can move to another area with training and mentoring by other coworkers. But you need to be aware that the only one managing your times is yourself you need to set your own goals and based on that planning your growth to take you wherever you want to go.

Acklen will provide you time to do training based on your needs so you can create you own growth ladder it will work as fast as you can manage your grow.

More tools in your pocket

Since most of the tools are obsolete in 6 months we worry about always being at the forefront in technology, if any of the members of our team hears about new and better tools/practices we try to implement them and that everyone related to those new granges is aware on them so that we can always be in harmony with the growth in the tec world.

Code is not everything

If you were hired as a software engineer, you're now surrounded by a multidisciplinary group of experts in all kinds of fields-creative, legal, financial, even psychological. Many of these people are probably sitting in the same room as you every day, so the opportunities for learning are huge. Take advantage of this fact whenever possible: the more you can learn about the mechanics, vocabulary, and analysis within other disciplines, the more valuable you become (this is a copy paste by valve handbook for now)

Continuous learning

We care about continous learning of our team, you can take your time for you lessons online and offline.

Section 4 No fear

Fear is a really common feeling on every human being, but is something that is not felt at all in Acklen Avenue.

No fear in growth

Company has change a lot over the years. Lots of new positions/roles have been created and filled out gracefully by the team. As the company grew and it got more and more clients, each time with bigger ideas, the teams grew as well in both roles and members. Not once during this transition everybody stood shy with fear of assuming a new role on the team. Acklen embraces change and it adapts to it to ensure the success of the client.

No fear to try new things

Acklen was hands down a pure C# powerhouse, every single project was developed with a C# oriented tech stack. Naturally things changed and they changed fast. We've moved from doing only C# projects to building applications with Nodejs. We've moved from developing mobile applications with Appgyver and Phonegap in favor of React Native. There is no room for fear when taking a leap on new grounds.

4.1 Culture

Here talk about Acklen culture and how we build great software and have fun also explain the things that we are not so good at similar to valve handbook because this is just a guide (not written on a stone)

4.2 Asking questions

Knowing where you came from is no less important than knowing where you are going.

Neil DeGrasse Tyson's

The dynamics of agile projects demand constant learning by the members of the development team in a collaborative framework in order to push the project towards the end of the goal. They all move

to the same step and no one can be left behind, is one of the slogans of the scrum play in rugby, which takes its name from the famous development methodology. But how can you advance on unfamiliar terrain and at the same time deliver value to the finished product? Asking questions. In an epistolary exchange with his rival Robert Hooke, Sir Isaac Newton wrote, “If I have managed to look away it is because I have stood on the shoulders of giants,” thus humbly recognizing the process of knowledge-building that led him to describe the laws serious. Newton had been inspired by previous works of Copernico, Galileo, Plato, Aristotle, etc. He had sought knowledge by “asking questions” through the classics. No one can build a knowledge out of nothing, at least not fast enough that demands an agile project and that is why it is critical to ask questions in the slightest doubt, since small initial doubts can become major problems in future stages of draft. The most difficult and expensive part of any development project is to fully understand the business, since this poorly executed step can lead to the failure of the solution, in spite of the technology being implemented. For this reason at Acklen Avenue we practice a development methodology called DDD (Domain Driven Development) that seeks to bring business knowledge to the code that make the programmers so that it is understandable enough for anyone in the business removing the language barriers between All team members, by constructing a “ubiquitous” language, where each term has a unique meaning in the context of the business. By eliminating language barriers we gain understanding and quality of communication. Developers no longer speak of terms like “datasets”, “connection strings”, speak and understand business concepts. The terms of this “ubiquitous” language are taken from the everyday language of the project “users”, “customers”, “order”, “shopping cart”, etc. Such terms may seem common to other contexts, however, it is better to ask rather than to suppose it, since a misunderstanding of one of these words can lead to poor design of the system. There can be no assumptions, it is always better to ask.

But how can we ask questions?

First:

we must have clearly formulated the question we want to ask and to whom we must do it. Being clear about what we want by answer and who is going to help is enough to start clarifying our doubt.

Second:

we must avoid questions that result in a Yes or No, since this type of questions originate short and dry answers that prevent us from gaining a deeper understanding of our interlocutor and prevent us from challenging our preconceived ideas of a concept, limiting our learning.

Third:

deepen the response. You should always consider asking additional questions to deepen a first response, in order to gain a better understanding of the first.

Fourth:

never dismiss the silence and never interrupt. After asking a question it is important to let our interlocutor speak and allow him to express himself freely without interrupting us, as this causes the conversation to flow towards us, cutting off the possibility of learning the answer.

4.3 Being proactive

Lessons of life

John Francine was one those co-workers that always had bright ideas in his mind but never had the time to implement them. As a supervisor, he would always have initiatives and suggestions to make teams and processes work and evolve better. Was very interesting to see him talk about improvement, empowerment and few other things that would help the current situation of the company that was going through a very rough patch, and uncertainty towards work stability was the menu of the day, but all of us were asking when he would start putting those good ideas into practice. One of those days, the administration felt into hands of a group of people not very interested in team empowerment but budget constraints and austerity. An attitude not very helpful for a company that was struggling to survive in a market that was too big for what they had to offer. That was the moment when John tried -in a desperate attempt- to start with what he called “a revolutionary method” that would help the economy of the company. It was too late, John and the company were in dire straits and he was the first to be laid off due to budget cuts. It was very sad to see him go with his bright ideas in a cardboard box along with his coffee mug, a few magazines, a 2014 calendar, a Cleveland Indians baseball cap and valuable documentation on how to get better one day at a time.

A bit ironic is in it? Prevention is not a habit. It's a culture, a way of life, a philosophy that tells us that if you don't act on time, time will act on you. Proactivity is always walking one step ahead. Is visioning what might be hidden on the other side of the horizon and getting prepared for such experience. In a culture where prevention is a behavioral practice, unfortunate events are very unlikely to occur due to people is always considering all different scenarios that might happen along the way. The good thing about proactivity is that applies to every single aspect of your life. “Always carry medicine in the glove box compartment of your vehicle”, “always carry an extra pen” “don't forget to check the weather before going on a trip” are simple things that can mean the difference between success and failure. Even though is a simple practice in life, it requires education to embrace the concept and more important yet, to make it part of our day to day agenda. When people has never been taught in this type of behavior you can't expect it to happen. Laziness, lack of motivation, conformity, procrastination, are just a few of the factors that contribute to this problem where the common is that you wait until the storm hits you before you get your umbrella. There is no way to survive and be successful if you don't develop the habit of foreseeing situations instead of waiting to happen to see what you will do. In a world that moves in a rapid pace, there is no time to sit, gaze at the stars while zipping a cup of tea and think for a solution. Solutions should be waiting for problems and not vice versa.

Proactivity is a powerful combination of initiative, action, vision, ambition, teamwork, organization and much other things. It's contagious, fun, easy to apply, understand and its outcome is nothing but success. Is a tool that serves and helps in any possible situation of life since it teaches us on how to be prepared. Is not failure proof, but gives us the knowledge to face harsh environments and how to deal with them. From a simple vaccine when you're a toddler to a nuclear contingency plan. Every action is aimed to prevent major problems than can be catastrophic in one way or another. Prevention is not an option, is a weapon to fight reaction and offer protection. In a world that fights for everything we need to think ahead and move one step ahead. Planning, forecasting, consulting, delegating. There are a few of all the good things we can implement in our environment if we want success to dwell in our surroundings. A small action towards prevention can change people lives.

I speak to Mr. Francine from time to time and it seems that he learned a lesson. He got a new job and better yet, he started building a nice shed in the backyard before winter comes. A good idea that he finally did implement on time.

4.4 When reach out for help

This is an excerpt from Byron Sommardahl's blog on the subject:

How to Unstump a Developer

It takes a special breed of problem to stump the developers on my team. I work with some of the hardest working and most talented software developers in the world, and I rarely see them truly stumped. The amazing thing is, even when they are stumped, they never throw up their hands and give up. But if you're on the other side of the coin, biting your nails as you see sprint or project goals slip, you could easily miss the dev team's quiet heroics. I believe we all want to celebrate tenacity, persistence, courage, and selflessness in the face of a problem. But, if a developer is truly stumped, they might truly need a hand getting unstumped.



Unstumping a Dev Infographic

When Is a Developer Actually Stumped?

Software development is predictable at times, and many times it is definitely not. Problems of any shape and size may arise without apparent warning and delay features or entire projects. Developers do the best they can to prevent delays, firing every arrow they have to solve problems. Sometimes,

a feature takes longer than expected, but comes to resolution after the 41st arrow when the problem finally falls down dead (or gets fixed). Other times, no matter how many arrows the developer uses, the problem persists. Though all resources have been spent, often developers have a hard time admitting defeat and will continue working through the problem. To a developer it feels a lot like chasing one's tail or repeatedly going over the same code, looking for something he missed. That's when you know developers are stumped.

When developers get stumped, they may need help getting unstumped. Also, project leaders need to be aware of the problem so that they can plan around the problem. The following humble list is my attempt at providing a bit of structure around the process of getting a developer unstumped.

Get Another Brain

Two heads are better than one, especially if one head has been banging against a tough problem for awhile. A fresh perspective combined with the necessity of verbalizing the issue can, often times, unclog the drain (so to speak). Not only is pair programming a fantastic way to reach resolution to a problem, it's also a great way to prevent getting stumped in the first place. Not that pair programming is the silver bullet, but it sure does help to nip those problems that are caused by simple oversight and tired eyes/brains.

At Acklen Avenue, the first thing a Scrum Master will ask when a developer when it seems like they might be stumped on an issue is, "Have you been pairing? Can I help you find a pairing partner?"

Use Your Circle of Developers

Some developers work alone and seem to like it. Still, countless other developers know how truly blessed they are to work alongside a larger team of skilled software craftsmen. If you are stumped on a sticky issue, and you are surrounded by other talented developers, why not tap into their problem-solving energy. Think back to pairing... if two heads are better than one, how much better are twenty or fifty? The first time you try this, you'll be absolutely amazed at the insight you encounter as your fellow developers pose questions and poke around at your issue. You may have the problem solved in a matter of minutes and you'll be free to LOL at yourself for bruising your forehead on the wall for the last hour.

At Acklen Avenue, developers who have been stumped for an hour or more should head on over to the water cooler (or a channel on Slack) to start socializing the problem to see what questions and insights come up.

Alert Project Leaders

Nothing is harder to explain to stakeholders than a feature that was estimated at 3 hours and turned into 10 days. It is even harder when there still is no resolution in sight. Developers are extremely hard workers and are sometimes know to sacrifice their own emotional wellbeing to power through a problem, even if it means running in the same circle 1000 times looking for patterns and microscopic

anomalies. Now that I've complimented my fellow developers sufficiently, I have to admit that they are also horrible at knowing when to come up for air and say, "I'm stumped!" This step in my process is admittedly a bit futile, but we should try all the same. If you're a developer and you think you might be stumped, alert the project leaders so they can strategize and realign your team's goals. If you are around a developer who seems to be banging his or her head against the wall (or you happen to hear them weeping quietly in the bathroom), tap them gently on the shoulder and ask them, "hey, are you stumped?" The first step to recovery is admitting the problem. And in this case, getting that information to the project leaders is the first step to saving your project from imminent peril!

At Acklen Avenue, developers must alert the Scrum Master if they have been stumped for more than an hour and a half. An hour and a half might seem like a lot of time, but it can feel like nothing to a developer who is lost in thought in a world of zeros and ones. This step is, as I mentioned, very hard to take, but we need to try!

Post Problem Publicly

Few methods of problem solving have as much potential success as verbalizing and writing. Some developers have found that the solution appears in their minds before even finishing the post. The simple act of organizing thoughts in order to write a cohesive question for the public might be enough to trigger an insight or reveal something you had missed before. If you're not that lucky, a publicly posted question can still be massively powerful because, if fifty heads are better than one, imagine a thousand! Yes, writing takes time. But the profits far outweigh the investment. Not only will you expose your problem to the developer community and invite questions, feedback and solutions, but you will also have a well thought out description of your problem to which you can refer back by simply pasting a URL. If you're stumped and nothing has helped to get you unstumped until this point, don't go a step further without posting about it publicly.

At Acklen Avenue, developers who have been stumped for 2 hours or more must take this important step and post their problem publicly. From here, the solution is close at hand!

Getting Expert Help

When posting your issue publicly hasn't led you to a solution or you need to solve the issue more quickly, it might be time to call in heavy guns from outside. Rest assured, there is help out there. The trick is finding the right people and knowing how to compensate them for their help.

When it is necessary to compensate someone for helping you solve a problem, and you're working with an scrum team, talk to your Scrum Master. He/she should be able to handle getting people paid whether it's via Paypal, credit card, check or bitcoin. It's probably a good idea to clear potential compensation amounts with the Scrum Master before you agree to anything.

At Acklen Avenue, after a developer has been stumped for 4 hours or more, it is essential to reach out to the vast pool of experts at our disposal and seek a helping hand.

Contracting Authors and Contributors

If the issue you're facing is related to a library, tool, or component that was developed by someone outside your team, you may be able to contact the people or person who created it. For example, consider an open source library whose code is stored in GitHub. In many cases, the creator's GitHub profile includes an email address, which means you can email him/her directly asking for help. Other times, a quick look at the recent committers will reveal one or many other developers who might be willing to respond to an email.

When your problem is related to a commercial product, the path to getting help is as easy or difficult as the provider has decided it to be. Your first mode of attack should be to use the methods they ask you to use. If those methods do not work, then it should not be beneath you to find the names of the company's management team, look them up on Facebook and LinkedIn, and begin a small email/message campaign until someone responds. Using the "CC" function in email is a good tactic because it causes the folks on the other end to hold each other accountable. Bounties

If your public posting has not gotten the answers you needed and time is ticking, you can add a "bounty" to the posting to attract more attention. For example, on StackOverflow.com, you can add a bounty to an existing question for almost any amount (for more info, check out <http://stackoverflow.com/help/bounty>). GitHub issues have a similar mechanism via a few third parties. A really good 3rd party option is BountySource.com which allows you to attach a bounty to an existing issue. In either case, your post gets more attention and, hopefully, gets fixed!

Expert Marketplaces

When it's not obvious who to approach with your problem, and you're not getting the right help from the public post or a bounty, or it seems unlikely that a public post or bounty will do the trick, it might be time to re-post the problem in one of the existing expert marketplaces. Two of the platforms that seem to give good results are HackHands.com and CodeMentor.io. These sites allow you to post your problem using tags and a specified budget and make your problem available to their pool of experts. Ideally, one or more experts will respond quickly and set a time to pair with you to resolve the problem.

Section 5 Acklen Avenue is fun

It is what it is. Acklen Avenue is fun and it is in many different ways.

Fun at work

You don't see fun and work in the same sentence very often but it is something really easy to achieve at Acklen Avenue. We've built a culture that strives for everyone's happiness. Since the search for clients, type of project, technologies to be used, all these are variables that are taken into serious consideration before we jump into building amazing stuff for our clients. You see, when you get connected with happy clients that have a great idea they want to build with the latest technologies available you will secure a lot of happiness and fun for everybody that will be part of the project.

Fun with coworkers

Every month we have a gathering, where we are able to turn off from work and spend some time with everybody else on the company. This is valuable time since most of us work from home, so we don't get the chance to spend face-to-face time with the rest of the team. We generally poll on what activity to do and also the date. We've done paintball, dinner at restaurants or barbeques at someone's place.

Casual Environment

Acklen has a really casual work environment. There is no unreachable status on anybody on the team. Everybody is willing to help or talk with you on any subject (work related or not). The fact of spending time working on a place where everyone trusts you are going to do your part, relieves a lot of pressure from your shoulders. Knowing that everybody is willing to help you on any issue you encounter and everybody is trying their best on a daily basis makes even Mondays fun.

5.1 Summits

We have an annual meeting with the entire Acklen Avenue team (Honduras and USA). The main goals are to create teambuilding and bonding experiences for our team as well as provide opportunities to share information and training on important topics.

Activities

Summit planning

4 months prior - Select and Reserve Venue (lodging/transportation/food)

Lodging and Venue Requirements:

- Rooms/beds for everyone (clarify that there are separate beds)
- fast wifi in rooms and general areas
- meeting/breakout rooms
- close to other activities
- food which accommodates different tastes and diet restrictions

3 months prior - Plan Fun Activities

Examples of Activities:

- hiking
- zipline
- snorkeling
- museums
- sight-seeing
- parks
- movies

2 months prior: Identify Training Classes and Team Building Activities

Brainstorm for ideas:

- Leadership
- Technical developer topics
- QA methods
- Communication
- Time Management/Planning
- Team Building Games
- Free time with co-workers

1 month prior: Finalize Schedule for the Summit

Previous Summits:

- Santa Ana
- Yojoa
- Copan

5.2 Gathering

We have Gathering to strengthen our friendship since although we see ourselves in virtual meetings, we do not shake hands. Acklen Avenue is a large family that seeks to keep its members happy.

Since we work remotely sometimes we organize gathering in Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula, each team decide an activitie for the month some previous activities are:

- Barbacues
- Argentinian Pebetes
- Hamburguers
- Paintball

5.3 Coworking Space

In Honduras most of our team is located in Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula and in order to have a backup space you have the chance to go to this spaces in case of an emergency or if you want some fresh air

Connect Cowork

Co-working spaces consists in using desktop in an open space for a very flexible period. The space is shared by other people coming from different backgrounds: nomads, freelancers, entrepreneurs, associations, programmers, designers, artists, students, researchers. The “co-workers” can interact so that everyone brings his own talent to a project, improving the outcome. The co-working space is based on important values: participation, sharing and open-mindedness.

Connect Cowork provides Acklen Avenue with the following benefits:

- Use of office space in co-working hours for all Acklen Avenue staff during coworking hours 9am to 5pm, Monday through Friday.
- Use of office space out of regular coworking hours with prior reservation to assure availability. For this Connect Cowork will entrust keys to staff.
- Brand showcased on the premises of Connect Cowork as home Acklen Avenue.
- 2 A/A sponsored events hosted at Connect monthly.

- Possibility to promote job offerings, events, and other types of news at all monthly networking events pertaining to the Recipient.
- Access to lockers for equipment storage, and additional ones for individual use if requested.
- Connect serves as a landline for bank referrals and questions about the staff.

Urban Office

Located in Barrio Los Andes, 2 y 3 calle 15 ave NO, San Pedro Sula, Honduras [map](#)¹

Acklen Avenue start with Urban Office on August 2016 with the following benefits:

- Office spaces
- High speed internet (10Mb download and 5Mb upload)
- Unlimited coffee break

and others optional services with extra cost covered by each A/A Member:

- Conference room
- Data show, scanner, printer and photocopy

Acklen Avenue rent these spaces because is focused in provide a good work space for all SPS A/A members and make them feel happy, also Urban office can help you when you need to change the environment in case you are tired working from home or if there is a power outage and many others reasons.

How it works: if you are a new member of acklen avenue you just need to contact to Pamela Sommardahl and request to be added a to the urban office A/A members then you just need to go to Urban office choose a space, connect to their network, work and enjoy the unlimited coffee break. for more information visit their Facebook page or their site:

- <https://www.urbanofficehn.com/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/UrbanOfficeSPS>

¹https://wego.here.com/directions/mix//Urban-Office,-Barrio-Los-Andes,-entre-2-y-3-calle,-15-Avenida-NO,-San-Pedro-Sula:-eyJuYW11lloiVXJiYW4gT2ZmaWNliwiYWRkcmVzcyI6IkJhcnJpbyBMb3MgQW5kZXMsIGVudHJlIDlgeSAzIGNhbgxLCAXNSBBdmVuaWRhIE5PLCBTYW4gUGVkcml8g=?map=15.50797,-88.0352,15,normal&fb_locale=es_ES

Section 6 - Employment (Contractor) Policies

6.6 Introductory Period

The first 60 days of employment are considered an introductory period for all newly hired employees. During this time, you will learn your new responsibilities, get acquainted with fellow employees, and determine whether you are happy with the position. Also, during this time, your manager will monitor your performance. Upon completion of the introductory period, your manager will review your performance. If the Company finds your performance satisfactory and decides to continue your employment, you will be advised of any improvements expected. This is also an opportunity for you to make suggestions to improve the Company's efficiency and operations. Completion of the introductory period does not entitle you to remain employed by the Company for any definite period of time, but instead allows both you and the Company to evaluate whether or not you are right for the position. Your status as an at-will employee does not change-the employment relationship may be terminated with or without cause and with or without advance notice, at any time by you or the Company.

Section 7 - Hours of Work and Payroll Practices

7.1 Pay Periods and Paydays

Employees are paid on a bi-monthly basis. All employees will be paid Every other Monday. All employees are paid by check or direct deposit on the above-mentioned payday. If the regular payday falls on a weekend or Company holiday, employees will be paid on the last business day before the holiday and/or weekend.

7.7 Direct Deposit

All employees are encouraged, but not required, to use direct deposit and have their paychecks deposited into a bank account of an accredited participating bank or credit union. United States employees will receive a paycheck, they will receive this payment by national mail to the address provide by the employee and it can be use immediately. Honduran contractors will need a Dollar account on Banco promerica in order to receive payments. They will release the money every two weeks.

Section 8 - Standards of Conduct and Employee Performance

8.2 Attendance

Punctuality and regular attendance are essential to the successful operation of the Company's business. If an employee is unable to report to work (or to report to work on time) for any reason, the employee must notify his or her supervisor before his or her starting time. If an employee desires to leave work for any reason during the workday, the employee must obtain the approval of his or her supervisor prior to leaving. Excessive absenteeism or tardiness may subject the employee to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

8.3 Discipline and Standards of Conduct

As an at-will employer, the Company may impose discipline whenever it determines it is necessary or appropriate. Discipline may take various forms, including verbal counseling, written warnings, suspension, demotion, transfer, reassignment or termination. The discipline imposed will depend on the circumstances of each case; therefore, discipline will not necessarily be imposed in any particular sequence. Moreover, at any time the Company determines it is appropriate, an employee may be terminated immediately.

Every organization must have certain standards of conduct to guide the behavior of employees. Although there is no possible way to identify every rule of conduct, the following is an illustrative list (not intended to be comprehensive or to limit the Company's right to impose discipline for any other conduct it deems inappropriate). Keep in mind that these standards of conduct apply to all employees whenever they are on Company property and/or conducting Company business (on or off Company property). Engaging in any conduct the Company deems inappropriate may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

- a. Dishonesty;
- b. Falsification of Company records;
- c. Unauthorized use or possession of property that belongs to the Company, a co worker, or of the public;
- d. Possession or control of illegal drugs, weapons, explosives, or other dangerous or unauthorized materials;

- e. Fighting, engaging in threats of violence or violence, use of vulgar or abusive language, horseplay, practical jokes or other disorderly conduct that may endanger others or damage property;
- f. Insubordination, failure to perform assigned duties or failure to comply with the Company's health, safety or other rules;
- g. Unauthorized or careless use of the Company's materials, equipment or property;
- h. Unauthorized and/or excessive absenteeism or tardiness;
- i. Lack of teamwork, poor communication, unsatisfactory performance, unprofessional conduct, or conduct improper for the workplace;
- j. Sexual or other illegal harassment or discrimination;
- k. Unauthorized use or disclosure of the Company's confidential information;
- l. Violation of any Company policy.

Section 9 - Employee Benefits and Services

9.1 Generally

Aside from those benefits required by state and federal regulations, Acklen Avenue Software, LLC also offers additional benefits for its full-time employees. From time to time, benefits may be added or deleted from the benefits package. The Company reserves the right to make such changes.

This Handbook does not contain the complete terms and/or conditions of any of the Company's current benefit plans. It is intended only to provide general explanations. For information regarding employee benefits and services, employees should contact Pamela Sommardahl.

9.2 Group Health Insurance

Acklen Avenue Software, LLC offers a group health plan for eligible contractors (Hondurans). The Company's group health insurance plan is offered through Honduras Medical Center. For more information, refer with Human Resources team.

Section 10 - Employee Leaves of Absence and Time Off

10.1 Generally.

While regular attendance is crucial to maintain business operations, the Company recognizes that, for a variety of reasons, employees may need time off from work. The Company has available a number of types of leaves of absence. Some are governed by law and others are discretionary. For all planned leaves, however, employees must submit a request at least 14 days in advance; in case of emergencies, employees should submit the request as soon as they become aware of the need for leave. All leaves must have the approval of Company management. If, during a leave, an employee accepts another job, engages in other employment or consulting outside of the Company, or applies for unemployment insurance benefits, the employee may be considered to have voluntarily resigned from employment with the Company.

All requests for a leave of absence will be considered in light of their effect on the Company and its work requirements, as determined by Company management, which reserves the right to approve or deny such requests in its sole discretion, unless otherwise required by law. For disability-related leave requests, the Company will engage in an interactive process with the employee to determine if a leave is the most appropriate accommodation. The employee must provide a certification from his or her healthcare provider to the Company to support a leave for medical reasons. Failure to provide the required certification to the Company in a timely manner will result in delay or denial of leave. If an employee requires an extension of leave, the employee must request such extension and have it approved before the expiration of the currently approved leave.

While the Company will make a reasonable effort to return the employee to his or her former position or a comparable position following an approved leave of absence, there is no guarantee that the employee will be reinstated to his or her position, or any position, except as required by law.

10.2 Paid Time Off Days.

At Acklen Avenue, we try to have flexible work hours for every project. Since every project and team is unique, the work hours for each day might be equally as unique. Some teams may decide to work later in the day, while other teams decide to work in the morning. It's ultimately up to the entire team to come to an agreement on the work hours and then stick to those work hours. Team members are expected to communicate their work hours and stick to them as closely as possible. When it's necessary to take off during work hours, the unexpected time off policies apply.

-Paid Time Off Days. applies for contractors during the first year on Acklen.

10.3 Holidays.

Acklen Avenue Software, LLC observes the following paid holidays for employees and contractors:

- New Year's Day
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day
- New Year's Eve

The Company will grant paid holiday time off to all eligible employees/contractors. Holiday pay for regular full-time employees will be calculated based on the employee's base pay rate (as of the date of the holiday) times the number of hours the employee would otherwise have worked on that day. Regular part-time employees will be paid on a pro-rata basis.

If an eligible non-exempt employee works on a recognized holiday with Company approval, he or she will receive holiday pay plus wages at his or her straight-time rate for the hours worked on the holiday.

10.4 Pregnancy-Disability Leave

Employees and contractors will have this benefit after a year on the company with the exception of a medical certificate showing the reasons. In case of pregnancy during the first year will cover 15 days before and after pregnancy.

Employees who are disabled on account of pregnancy, childbirth, or a DE related medical condition may request a paid leave of absence. Such leave will be granted for the period of disability, take as much time you need. Time off may be requested for prenatal care, severe morning sickness, doctor-ordered bed rest, childbirth, and recovery from childbirth.

Leave provided for pregnancy disability is treated separately from leaves required by the state family and medical leave law. However, the first 12 workweeks of a pregnancy disability leave will be treated concurrently as a leave pursuant to the federal Family and Medical Leave Act ("FMLA") for all eligible employees.

Employees who wish to take a pregnancy disability leave must notify Pamela Sommardahl of the date the leave is expected to commence and the estimated duration of the leave. Notice should be given as indicated above. The employee must also provide a medical certification of disability to the Company. Failure to provide the required medical certification to the Company in a timely manner will result in delay or denial of leave. Before returning to work, the employee must provide a medical certification that she is able to resume her original job duties. Appropriate forms may be obtained from Pamela Sommardahl.

Employees who return to work immediately following the expiration of an approved pregnancy disability leave will generally be reemployed in their former position or a comparable job, as required by law.

Employees who are affected by pregnancy may also be eligible to transfer to a less strenuous or hazardous position or duties, provided certain prerequisites are met. Reasonable accommodations may be requested with the advice of the employee's health care provider. In addition, lactation accommodation is also available, upon request. For more information on pregnancy disability leave or transfer and its effect on the terms, conditions or benefits of employment, please contact Pamela Sommardahl.