

# Welcome to **Careem Values**

Release **4.0**

September 2022

Estimated reading time: 25 minutes



# In 2012,

Careem started with a desire to build something **big** and **meaningful**; something that would help people in our region, something that would inspire others.

Ten years in, we have come farther than we expected. But the farther we have come, the smaller we have felt.

Our desire now is to build a **lasting institution** that will uplift our region at scale, something that will outlast us, something that becomes a perpetual source of impact and prosperity for our region.

**If we have come this far from nothing, we will get there too.**



“We have never been, nor ever will be among those who rest on their laurels; nor those who obsess on their success; nor those who believe that the march forward will continue automatically.”

- H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Ruler of Dubai



# Careem's purpose is its superpower

It has thankfully been with us since **Day 1**.

Careem's purpose is **why** we are doing it.  
It's what gets us out of bed every morning,  
what gives us meaning, and what makes all  
the struggles and hard work worth it.

It remains our ultimate north star, the  
source of our passion, and our resilience.

Our purpose has been and will remain...

**To simplify and improve  
the lives of people, and  
build an awesome  
organisation that inspires.**

**simplify lives...** so that the enormous potential of the people in our region is not lost to the friction of daily life.

**inspire...** so that more people believe in their ability to achieve extraordinary things.

"The most important part of performance with purpose is the use of the word "with." It's performance *with* purpose, not performance *and* purpose, or performance *or* purpose. Unless you focus on purpose, you cannot deliver performance. And unless you deliver performance, you can't fund purpose. This is a very closely linked ecosystem."

**- Indra Nooyi**  
**former CEO of PepsiCo and current Chairperson**



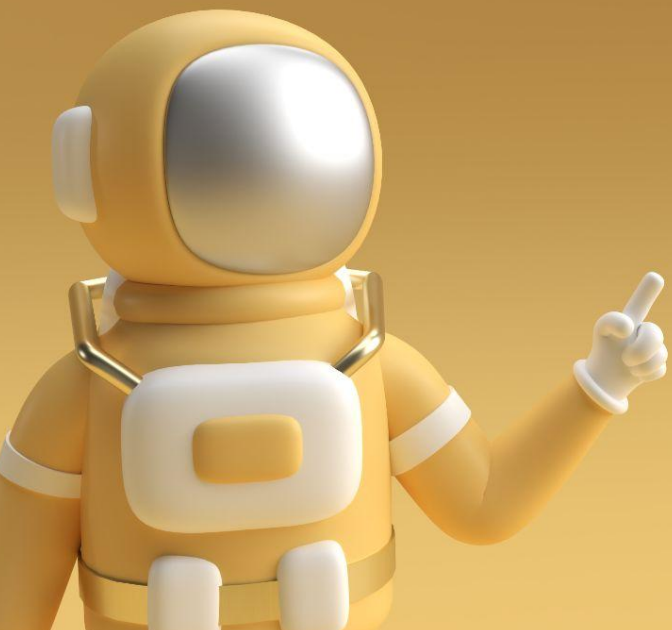
# Realising our purpose requires strong values

Values determine long-term success.

They guide behaviors and decisions. They are the algorithms that our brain uses to process information before it outputs an action or a decision.

When understood and followed at scale, shared values can unleash an organisation. They build trust among colleagues, they align decisions and actions in the right direction, and they radically reduce the need for bureaucracy.

**All lasting organisations are values-driven.**

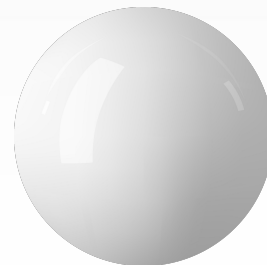
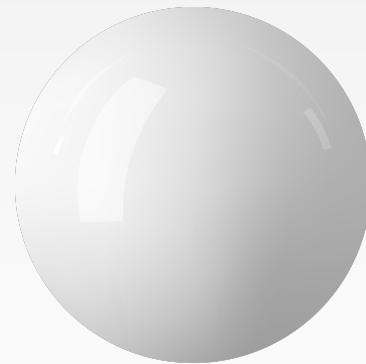


# Unlike purpose, our values have evolved (like they should)

We wrote the first version of our values literally on **Day 1 of Careem**, which was also the **1<sup>st</sup> of Ramadan** in **1433h** or **22<sup>nd</sup> July in 2012**.

They served us well for three years before we needed a version two to unite us on the cusp of our sprawling geographic expansion.

Version three was launched in 2018 at the peak of our colleague growth. It supported us through some big, exciting and also tough times.





# Now that we're entering our second decade...

...as a multi-service organisation on our way to becoming a broader consumer brand, it's time for a new version.

Every version of our values has built on the last and evolved it to reinforce specific values that we believe are most important for the next few years.

Keep reading for our rocketship's new and improved navigation system: **Careem Values 4.0!**



# Here are Career Values 4.0



**1. Owners, not employees**



**2. To the moon and beyond**



**3. Every Experience Matters**



**4. Committed to developing each other**



**5. Responsible for our communities**



**6. Building a lasting institution**

Value #1

**Owners,  
not employees**



"As you become an adult, you realize that things around you weren't just always there; people made them happen. But only recently have I started to internalize how much tenacity everything requires. That hotel, that park, that railway. The world is a museum of passion projects."

- **John Collison,**  
Co-founder of Stripe



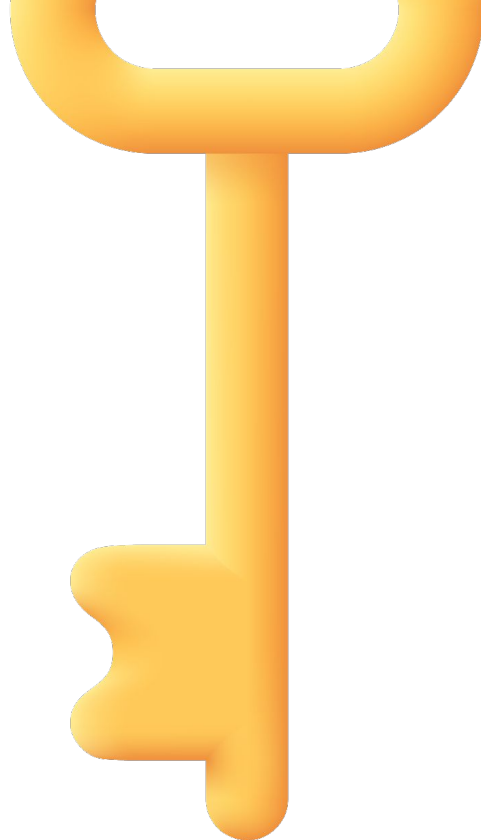
# Owners, not employees

Our purpose is our magic. We feel passionate about it. This passion is the fuel that runs Careem. A regular company-employee relationship just cannot sustain it.

Instead, it requires **ownership** and things that follow from it. That's why there are zero employees of Careem. We are all its **co-owners**. We win together, we lose together. Being owners reflects in everything we do.

Most importantly, we:

- **Solve for Careem;**
- **Speak up and take initiative;**
- **Own things to the finish line; and**
- **Be frugal with company resources.**



# We solve for Careem

As owners, we know that our success is tied to Careem's success. We know that propelling the rocketship forward is more impactful and beneficial than getting a better seat on the rocketship.

As owners, we always **solve for Careem**.

We do what's right for Careem, even when it's not great for us. That means we volunteer our team's resources if it's better for Careem, adapt our goals when that helps our common cause, even **disagree and commit** to put our full force behind a decision. Heck, we even **step aside** when we are no longer the best qualified to play our role.

**We are selfless in our service to Careem's purpose.**



# We speak up and take initiative

Careem is, and will remain, work in progress. That's the nature of ambitious organisations; they never stay in their comfort zone, they keep changing.

As owners, we are all responsible for evolving Careem. We do this by **speaking up and taking initiative**.

When we spot something that can and should be better, we have an **obligation to act**. If we can **take the initiative** to improve it, we do it. If we cannot, we **speak up** to relevant colleagues. Under no circumstances do we sit around and wait for instructions, or avoid challenging conversations that can improve Careem.

**It's our baby, we are responsible for developing it.**

# We own things to the finish line

As organisations grow, “employees” can get disconnected from the impact of their work. They start focusing on their “jobs” and not on the impact they are making. On the other hand, “owners” remain **focused on impact**.

As owners, we **own things to the finish line**.

Our job as owners is to make an impact in the lives of our customers,<sup>1</sup> not write code or run a process. We focus on that impact. If our work feeds into other steps on the way to impact, we remain supportive and restless until that desired impact is achieved.

**Our destination is the moon, not the rocket; impact is what matters!**

1 Defined broadly to include customers, captains and partners.



# We are frugal with company resources

Our purpose is to simplify the lives of everyone in our region, not just the affluent. But our default cost structure cannot serve people with low income sustainability - our transaction values are small and margins are low. Realising our purpose requires continuous focus and radical thinking on cost.

We bring this focus to life by being **frugal with company resources**.

We know that reducing cost keeps unlocking impact. We find cheaper ways to do things. We put our creativity to work. We drive a hard bargain with our vendors. We treat company's resources even more dearly than our own.

**It's hard work, but worth it for the millions of lives we must improve.**

Value #2

# To the moon and beyond



“Everything around you that you call life was made up by people that were no smarter than you; and you can change it, you can influence it, you can build your own things that other people can use.”

- **Steve Jobs,**  
Co-founder of Apple



# To the moon and beyond



For a single lifetime, our purpose to simplify the lives of people at scale in our region is quite ambitious. It's larger than what we could ever achieve individually, but will only materialise if each of us are crazy ambitious in our areas of influence.

Each of us do our part to keep Careem bold, determined, and frankly a bit crazy.

We especially:

- **Think and act BIG;**
- **Do it today, not tomorrow; and**
- **Take calculated risks.**

# We think and act BIG

More than 50 years ago, humans landed on the moon. The mere thought of it sounded impossible and crazy just a few years before. Unfortunately, we are still scrambling for the basics across a lot of our region. For the most part, we have short-changed our potential by limiting our ambition or efforts.

It's time for us to make a habit of **thinking and acting BIG**.

This means we shoot for the moon in our goals, we make bold plans, and we execute with crazy determination. We remind ourselves that **nothing is impossible** and that obstacles are meant to be overcome.

**It keeps us out of our comfort zone, but drives impact and inspires others.**



# We do it today, not tomorrow

Our purpose has a long road ahead. Getting there on time (i.e., our lifetimes) requires us to move really fast. In a large organisation with interdependencies, individual speed is a massive multiplier, or a big drag (if not there).

We solve it with a basic rule: **do it today, not tomorrow.**

If we can do something today, we do it today; we do not postpone it to tomorrow.<sup>1</sup>

It's a simple rule, but when followed universally, it has a compounding effect and creates crazy momentum.



<sup>1</sup> Unless as owners, we really believe something can and should wait.

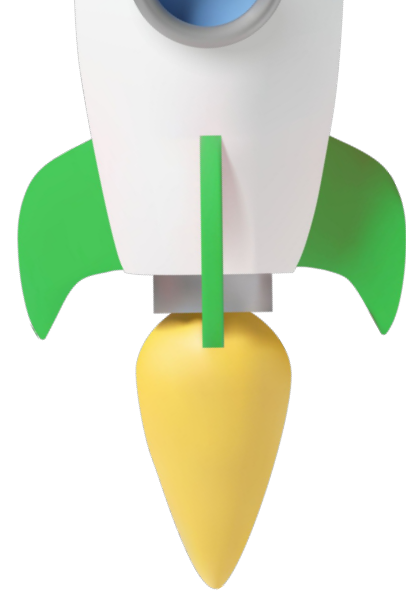
# We take calculated risks

Speed and innovation requires risk-taking. If we had played it safe in the past, we would not be here. If we play it safe now, we will not reach our destination - we will struggle to innovate, not do many things that create value, or take a looong time to do them.

To remain on the fast-track of impact, we **take calculated risks**.

We invest the time to understand the risks and rewards of a decision. If the upside is sufficient, our **default is action**. It's only if we cannot find a way to to manage risks that we abandon an opportunity. We recognise that **not taking risks has a cost too**.

We play it smart - not safe, and definitely not reckless.



Value #3

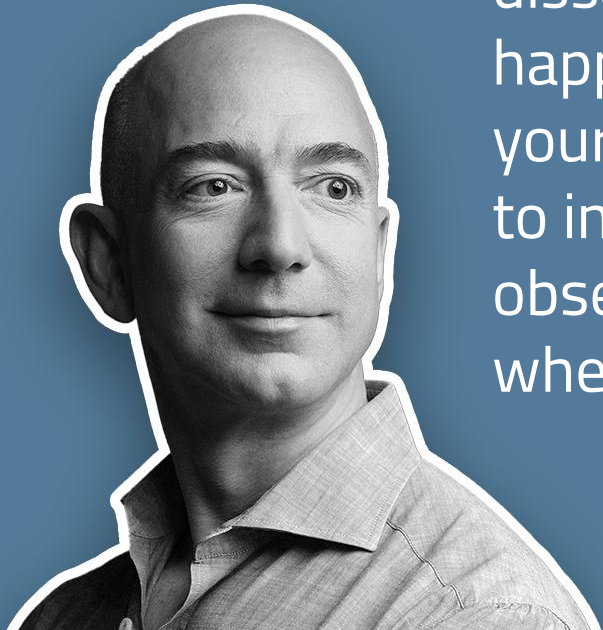
# Every Experience Matters (EEM)





"There are many ways to centre a business... But in my view, obsessive customer focus is by far the most protective of long-term success. Customers are always beautifully, wonderfully dissatisfied, even when they report being happy... customers want something better, and your desire to delight customers will drive you to invent on their behalf.... A customer obsessed culture best creates the conditions where all of that can happen."

- **Jeff Bezos**,  
Founder of Amazon



# Every Experience Matters

Our purpose to simplify people's lives requires consistency. Without consistency, we subject people to uncertainty and complication. That's why **every experience matters**.

This customer-centricity<sup>1</sup> is our legacy. **Customers first** were the first two words in our values on Day 1. We obsess over every single experience.

It is our promise and we show it by:

- **Taking responsibility for people's daily lives;**
- **Being dependable every single time; and**
- **Doing whatever it takes to build trust.**



<sup>1</sup> Defined broadly to include customers, captains and partners.

# We take responsibility for people's daily lives

**People depend on us.** Our customers<sup>1</sup> depend on us, not for entertainment, but to lead their lives productively. Earners (captains and partners) depend on us to earn a livelihood that supports their families. Our obligation to them is massive.

At Careem, we **take responsibility for people's daily lives.**

We have the power to make or break people's daily lives. We never think of system, reliability or safety failures as events that drag down our numbers. Instead, these are deeply painful moments when we have put people who depend on us in very difficult positions.

**There are real lives behind every Careem transaction. We never forget it!**

<sup>1</sup> Defined broadly to include customers, captains and partners.

# We are dependable every single time

People's lives only become simple when they can take things for granted, when they don't need to stress about them. Every disappointing experience adds an element of doubt and consumes mental capacity that should be more productively spent.

To really deliver on our purpose of simplifying lives, we must be **dependable every single time**.

Our first priority is to be a **utility** that's always available. On the rare occasion when we are not, we respond with deep empathy in product and care experiences. We do our best to avoid **silent failures**.

It's also critical for business. People will create substitutes and competitors when we let them down, making us less relevant over time.



# We do whatever it takes to build trust

It takes a long time to build trust and a moment to destroy it. When we fail a customer, which will happen invariably at our scale, how we respond will determine if they continue to trust us or give up on us.

In those moments, we **do whatever it takes to build trust**.

We invest in **exceptional rebound experiences**. We act with empathy and create alternatives where we can; where we cannot, we apologise in ways that minimise trust erosion. In the past, we have shared learning reports, even sent hand-written apology letters.

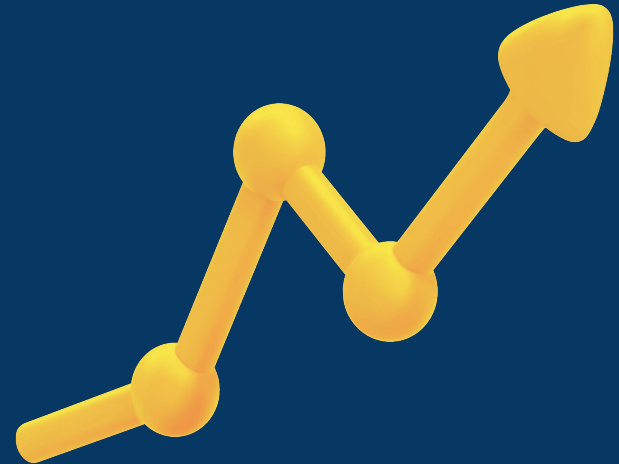
Some of our biggest advocates became die-hard supporters after a remarkable rebound that followed a challenging experience.

**We had their back, and they saw it in action.**



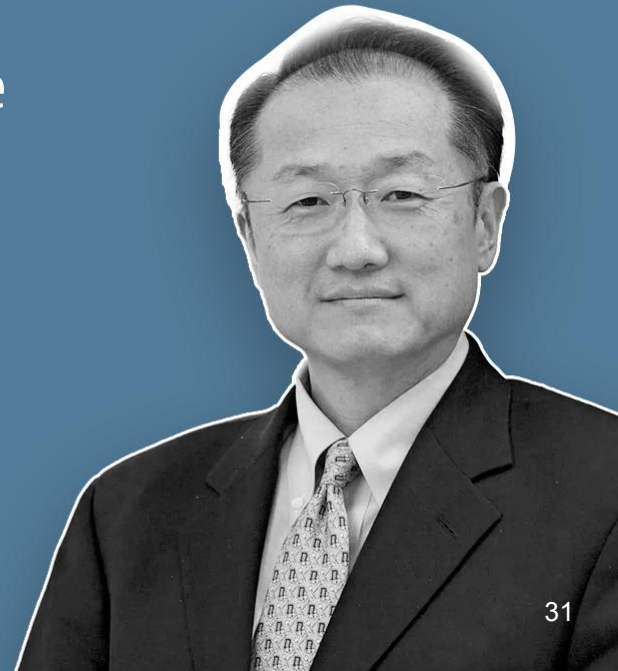
Value #4

**Committed  
to developing  
each other**



"No matter how good you think you are as a leader, the people around you will have all kinds of ideas for how you can get better. So for me, the most fundamental thing about leadership is to have the humility to continue to get feedback and to try to get better."

- **Jim Yong Kim,**  
Ex-President of the World Bank



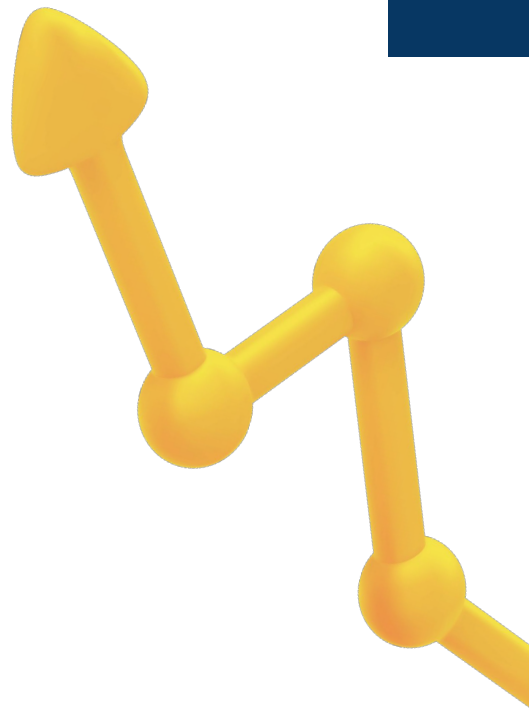
# Committed to developing each other

It's hard to imagine how Careem will realise its purpose without a lot of extremely capable colleagues. Fortunately, there is no shortage of potential in the region. But potential alone is not enough. It must be developed.

Each of us have a powerful ability to develop colleagues around us. By using this power in our day-to-day, we can rapidly develop each other to our full potential.

To create this super-charged environment of learning, we:

- **Challenge and inspire each other; and**
- **Gift recognition and constructive feedback.**





# We challenge and inspire each other

All big human achievements can be traced back to an impossible challenge, insane curiosity, or crazy inspiration. That's how we generally snap out of our comfort zone, discover our potential, and learn new things.

At Careem, we **challenge and inspire each other** to our full potential.

We make each other believe that anything is possible, we push each other for stretch goals, and we are never fully satisfied with results. We do all of it by challenging and inspiring each other, always ensuring that we are **kind to each other** and that everyone has a **safety net** to take risks.

**It stretches us but it unlocks potential like nothing else!**

# We gift recognition and constructive feedback

Effective feedback has an extremely high ROI. It is relatively low cost and highly developmental. Most high-caliber organisations have very strong feedback cultures.

At Careem, we invest in each other by **gifting recognition and constructive feedback**.

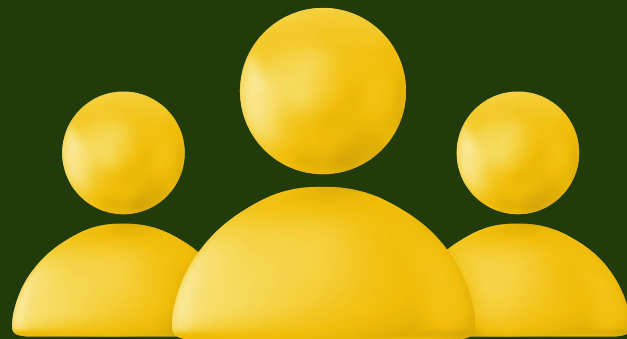
We think of feedback as a **gift** and always assume positive intent. We are grateful to receive it and generous in giving it. We make our feedback **balanced and constructive** - balanced by not forgetting to recognise what a colleague did well, and constructive by including a thoughtful improvement suggestion.

Next time you get feedback, take the time to understand and feel grateful.



Value #5

# Responsible for our communities





"In terms of power and influence, you can forget about the church, forget politics. There is no more powerful institution in society than business. The business of business should not be about money, it should be about responsibility. It should be about public good, not private greed."

- **Anita Roddick,**  
Founder of The Body Shop

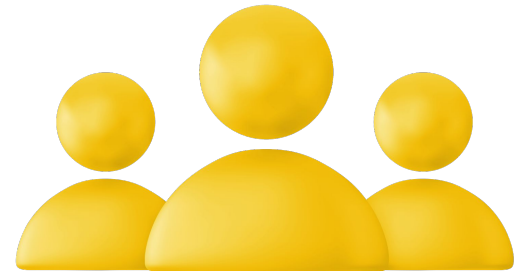
# Responsible for our communities

At the heart of our purpose sits a deep desire to uplift the lives of people in our region. It is badly needed (unfortunately), and we are blessed to have the opportunity.

For most companies, such things are part of a CSR programme; for us, it is the reason for our existence, a core responsibility.

We must each fulfill this responsibility by:

- **Seeking opportunities to be of service;**
- **Driving progress in our region; and**
- **Conducting business fairly.**



# We seek opportunities to be of service

For the most part, our region still lacks enough organised infrastructure to look after people in need. Careem's reach puts each of us in a privileged position to help, from responding to crises to helping communities with basic needs.

At Careem, we **seek opportunities to be of service**.

We look out for opportunities to serve our communities. When we spot something, we team up with like-minded colleagues, build an ambitious plan of impact, and execute with passion. We include our customers and earners, who are always eager to help.

Nothing is out of reach, every drop counts, and our bold actions always inspire others.

# We drive progress in our region

From our schools to our economic systems to the general intolerance in our societies, the region has a lot of ground to cover. These structural gaps have held us back. At Careem's scale and influence, we are no longer a bystander. We can make a difference.

We have a responsibility to **drive progress in our region**.

This strong sense of responsibility guides our decision making. If something pushes our region forward, we fall in love with it. On the other hand, if something does not have positive contributions to society or has harmful side-effects, we try to avoid it - even if it creates value for shareholders.

It is our region, we must drive progress in it!

# We conduct business fairly

A company's intrinsic need to make money is a powerful force. As it grows and increases its economic power over customers and partners, it can find itself on a slippery slope of jacking up profits through harmful or unfair practices.

At Careem, we are committed to **conducting business fairly**.

We treat our customers and earners fairly, even when we have power over them, even when no one is watching. Our source code reflects it, and so does our personal behavior.

This is our commitment to the people of our region.



Value #6

# Building a lasting institution



“For century after century, the societies that achieved powerful leadership roles in the world – not only politically and economically but also intellectually – did that through their ability to discover new knowledge, to make it their own, and to build constructively upon it. They became the knowledge societies of their time.”

– **Aga Khan IV**  
Imam of Ismailis



# Building a lasting institution

The intent all along has been to build a lasting institution, one that will outlast us and be a perpetual source of impact and prosperity for the region. Turmoils of the last few years have only strengthened our resolve.

It's time to get intentional about habits that will create lasting foundations and under-index on fire-fighting.

In particular, we must:

- **Pursue mastery and excellence;**
- **Codify knowledge and evolve systems; and**
- **Fix root causes, not symptoms.**

# We pursue mastery and excellence

Almost all lasting organisations are consistently amazing at something. Building anything that stands the test of time requires outstanding skill, years of craftsmanship, and a quest for excellence.

For Careem to become a lasting institution, we must **pursue mastery and excellence**.

It's no longer enough to just build a process or system that works. We must persevere, through multiple iterations, to build a masterpiece every time. It's no longer enough to be just good at what we do. We must each pick a domain and work hard to become world-class in that domain. At our scale now, such mastery is a prerequisite to consistent excellence.

**Our region needs this depth to scale its most promising companies.**

# We codify knowledge and evolve systems

Humans are unique in their ability to build on knowledge. Language and then eventually writing unlocked it. It allowed humans to pass knowledge onto future generations and made it possible to evolve things and not start from scratch every time.

For Careem to become a lasting institution, we must **codify knowledge and evolve systems**.

We must systematically transfer knowledge from our heads into Careem. That will allow us to build on each other's knowledge. It also unlocks our ability to truly **iterate and evolve** our systems and processes, our default in everything. This approach may take some upfront time but pays off very quickly.

**Let's build Careem for multiple generations.**



# We fix root causes, not symptoms

Scale is generally good but it has one big curse - **issues multiply**. There is never just one person who runs into an issue or misunderstands something. Many others follow. Not only do we lose trust when that happens, unresolved issues start a vicious cycle of unproductivity and hold us back.

At Careem, we **fix root causes, not symptoms**.

When someone reports an issue (system or otherwise), we lead with curiosity not defensiveness. We invest the time to understand the underlying root causes not just take immediate action on the symptoms. We then fix the root causes so that no one stumbles on that issue ever again.

**That's how we build things that stand the test of time.**

A few of these  
values-aligned  
behaviors might look  
like they're in conflict  
with each other...

**Well spotted,  
that's by design!**

Should I do it today not tomorrow, or fix the root cause not the symptom?

How can I make sure we're dependable everytime while also taking a calculated risk that may impact reliability?

**These are great questions and it's awesome that you're really engaging with the values.**



# **There is no value system that can give you the perfect response for every scenario or question.**

That's why we have people not robots as our colleagues at Careem ;)

These values are guiding principles, and when two values appear in conflict, it should make you think. Values in conflict are like guardrails that prevent us from going too far towards the extremes.

There will be times when the right thing to do is apply a short term fix today to address a symptom, but then own the problem to the finish line in the weeks ahead to ultimately address the root cause.

There will be times when it's smart to sacrifice some reliability to achieve another objective, but knowing that reliability is a core value should help guide your decision about how much reliability to risk.

**As an owner of Careem you are empowered and expected to use your judgment.**

Guided by these values, to solve for Careem. When a fellow co-owner has a different point of view, you two should debate it out.

The owner closer to the topic should get the benefit of stronger intuition and the owner farther out for outside-in perspective.

At the end, if you're using your best judgment and trying to do what's right for Careem, we are confident you will find the right answer to any problem!

# Now that we have new values, let's put them into action

Please invest the time to read and understand these values, multiple times. The sooner we internalise them, the sooner they will guide our decision making and actions. The goal is for everyone at Careem to know our values by heart.

Additionally, **reinforce and protect these values**. Remind each other of specific values where they might be relevant. Even more importantly, call out decisions or actions that may not be aligned with our values. It is our job to protect them.

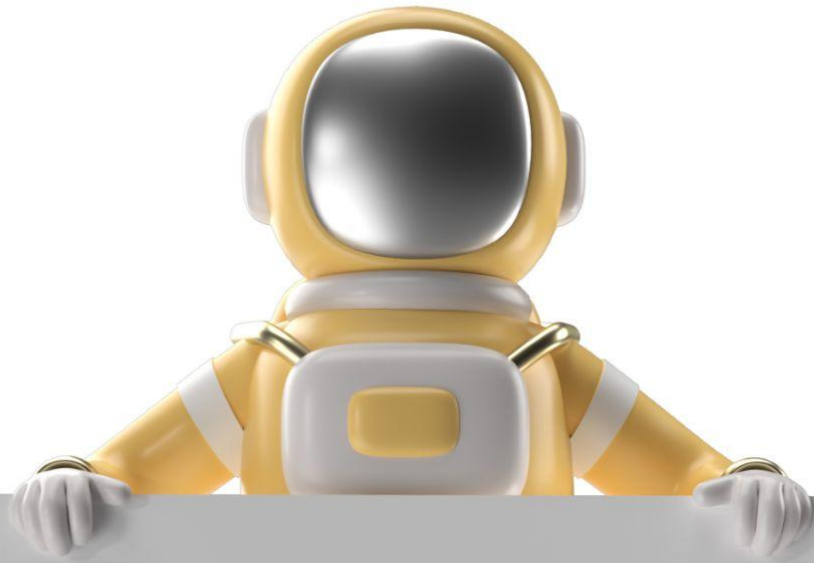
As an owner of Careem, each of us are a guardian of these values. It's up to us to make them part of everyday life and to help Careem fulfill its purpose and potential.



“Just as CEOs can’t look away when social issues clash with their values, employees can’t pretend that whatever its leadership decides to do is above their pay grade. If leadership won’t act on a company’s values, employees at every level need to hold them accountable.”

- **Marc Benioff**,  
Founder Salesforce.com





That's it, these are our values

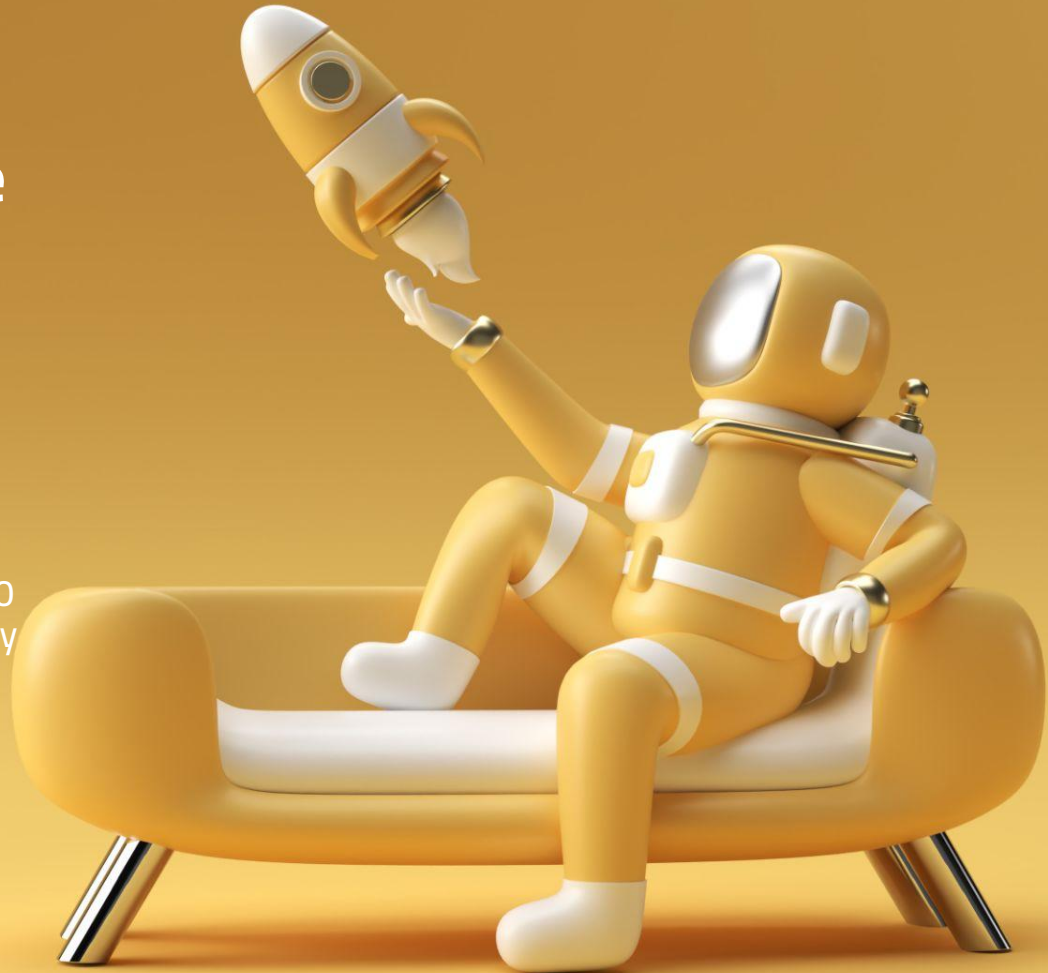
**Yalla, let's go live them!**

# So... you're still here and reading... wow, that's awesome!

Just for you we've include a few more  
pages to nerd out on in this appendix.

## Keep reading for:

- Values 4.0 cheat sheet
- Comparison of Values 3.0 to Values 4.0
- Double-click on what changed and why
- Values releases 1.0, 2.0 and 3.0



## Cheat sheet

We have six values and that show up in 18 day-to-day behaviors



### Owners, not employees

- Solve for Careem
- Speak up and take initiative
- Own it to the finish line
- Be frugal with company resources



### Committed to developing each other

- Challenge and inspire each other
- Gift constructive feedback and recognition



### To the moon and beyond

- Think and act big
- Do it today, not tomorrow
- Take calculated risks



### Responsible for our communities

- Seek opportunities to be of service
- Drive progress in our region
- Conduct business fairly



### Every experience matters

- Take responsibility for people's daily lives
- Be dependable every time
- Do whatever it takes to build trust



### Building a lasting institution

- Pursue mastery and excellence
- Codify knowledge and evolve systems
- Fix root causes, not symptoms

**Values 4.0** includes a lot of the previous values, **replaces the OS and Careem Expectations** and includes a **new value** to **build a lasting institution**

Key

Existing, further emphasized	New!	Dropped + evolved in some cases
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Values 3.0		
To the moon and beyond	Be of service	Be an owner
Think and act big; we have unlimited potential!	Be reliable; trust has to be continuously earned	Speak up and take initiative; Careem needs our leadership
Keep raising the bar; there is always a more awesome version	WOW Captain & Customers; great experiences build loyalty	Own it to the finish line; impact is what matters
Do it today, not tomorrow; speed is our advantage	Gift colleagues with recognition and constructive feedback; let's grow each other	Be frugal, be efficient; our resources are a trust
Stay humble; we have much to learn and grow	Drive progress in our communities; we are blessed to have this opportunity	Collaborate as one team; we are stronger united
Careem Expectations		Careem OS

Values 4.0	
Owners, not employees	To the moon and beyond
Every Experience Matters	Committed to developing each other
Responsible for our communities	Building a lasting institution



# Let's look at the biggest changes from **Values 3.0** to **Values 4.0**

## **Building a lasting institution is a new value**

We've been running fast for 10 years and yet we still spend too much of our time fire fighting, rather than building on the work of those who came before us.

To make Careem truly sustainable and scalable, we need to change the way we're operating. We need to slow down at times and build things to last to avoid structural weakness in the foundations we're laying.

This means reducing tech debt, replacing manual processes with systems that can operate at scale and documenting work so others can build on it for years to come.

## **Take calculated risks is a new behaviour**

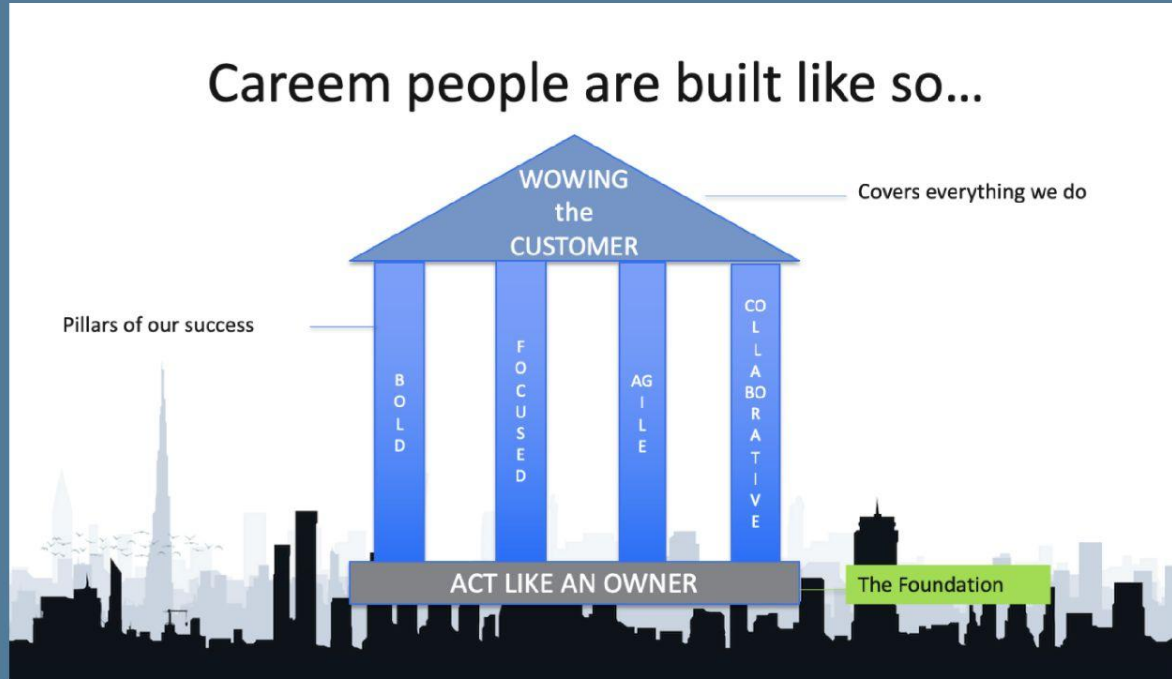
In 2012 when we were a dozen colleagues calling captains to manually match them with customers, we didn't need a value to encourage risk taking; everyone at Careem had taken a pretty big risk by joining.

Fast forward to 2022 and there's a danger of letting process and bureaucracy leading us to taking the super safe - but ultimately wrong - path forward.

# Values 1.0 / 2012 - 2015

1. **Customers first.** Our customers are the reason we exist. As such, we will work hard to delight them. We will do that by understanding their perspectives, designing products and services that account for those perspectives, and going out of our way to keep (or make) them happy.
2. **World-class products and services.** We will be one of the best in the world in what we do. We will do that by pioneering new business models and practices, not spending wastefully, hiring the best people that we can find, and focusing on a few big opportunities.
3. **Exceptional people.** We will attract, develop and retain exceptional people. We will empower our people, make them partners in our success, look after their professional development and take care of their personal well being. Our people will be the source of our competitive advantage.
4. **Collaborative, honest, and fun culture.** We will build a non-hierarchical culture that rewards joint achievement, where people look after each other's professional development, where everyone (regardless of their age or rank) has an obligation to dissent, where integrity is highly valued, and where people have a lot of fun!
5. **Community friendly.** We will strive to improve the lives of peoples and communities that will become a part of our journey.

## Values 2.0 / 2015-2018



# Values 3.0 / 2018 - 2022

## To the Moon & Beyond



*Think and act BIG;  
we have unlimited potential!*

*Keep raising the bar; there is always  
a more awesome version*

*Do it today, not tomorrow;  
speed is our advantage*

*Stay humble; we have much  
to learn and grow*

## Be of Service



*Be reliable; trust has to be  
continuously earned*

*WOW Captain & Customers; great  
experiences build loyalty*

*Gift Colleagues with recognition  
and constructive feedback; let's  
grow each other*

*Drive progress in our communities;  
we are blessed to have the opportunity*

## Be an Owner



*Speak up and take initiative;  
Careem needs our leadership*

*Own it to the finish line;  
impact is what matters*

*Be frugal, be efficient; our  
resources are a trust*

*Collaborate as one team, we are  
stronger united*