

THE NUTS + BOLTS.



Everything you need to know about EstimateOne.

Let's get on the same page.

(Or pages.
There are a few.)

A lot can happen in ten years. We'd know – because that's how long it's been since EstimateOne first stepped out into the world and said "You know what? We're going to change things up a bit".

Knowing how much can be done in a decade is what keeps us excited for the next ten years. And to make sure we're all on the same page, we've put together this book.

It's not just our story – it's yours too. So when you turn the page (and the pages after that), you won't just find the ins and outs of working here. You'll find out what we stand for, where we're headed – and how you fit in.

We reckon it's that last part that really makes this story a great one.

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Welcome

Hi there!

I'm Mike Ashcroft, one of EstimateOne's founders. Thanks for reading.

This organisation had humble beginnings (clichéd but true). We were two mates, sitting at a bar in Balaclava, talking about an idea we had to improve on the status quo in the construction industry. Beers were involved.

Ten years later and here I am, writing an introduction to a book about the company we formed.

A lot's changed since the first beers that got us going, but EstimateOne is still motivated by the desire to do things better than we did them yesterday – and by extension, to create and deliver value to our customers, our shareholders and our team.

I'm extremely proud of this business – the people who make EstimateOne what it is, and the things they achieve by working together. Its impact and legacy have eclipsed the aspirations we had when we first got started.

I'm inspired by what can be achieved when a group of incredible people work together to bring about positive change in the world. Our team and our achievements are testament to things I value deeply – thinking boldly, taking risks, being unconventional, and moving with energy and purpose. They're qualities that are now part of EstimateOne's DNA.

If you're new to EstimateOne, welcome aboard. There's no team like this one, and I look forward to meeting you. If you're reading this and thinking about working with us, think about your own values and priorities. If you see them reflected in what you read in here, there's a good chance working with EstimateOne will be one of the most rewarding opportunities of your career.

I wish you good luck and Godspeed!

Mike



Welcome

Hey there!

I'm Andrew, but almost everyone calls me Ritchie. (You can too.)

We've been on, and continue to be on, a wild ride. And we're lucky enough to have had enough success to be here today. The words of this book set out what's worked for us so far, and what we hope will continue to work for us.

There's a lot to be proud of at EstimateOne – the product, our market position, how we've shaped an industry. What I'm most proud of is our team – the people who dedicate their working weeks to our purpose and vision.

The most inspiring (and important) thing about our team is our commitment to continually improve how we do things. Many of the concepts in the pages to follow – our values, cycles, retros, Week 7s, feedback and more – are all designed to support a mindset of 'We can do this so much better.' Whatever bar we set yesterday, we raise it today.

I never thought we'd write a book. We're a tech company, after all. But there's a permanence to what's physical – whether it's a book, or an apartment tower (tendered via E1, of course) – that signals 'This is the important stuff.' It's not all the stuff. And it definitely can, and should, change as time goes by.

This business was founded on friendship – and so it follows that this book is founded on friendship. The friendship I have with Mike, is the central relationship from which all others here at EstimateOne derive and hopefully emulate.

We should be very proud of what we've achieved, and what we will achieve. As friends, as much as anything else.

Cheers,
Ritchie



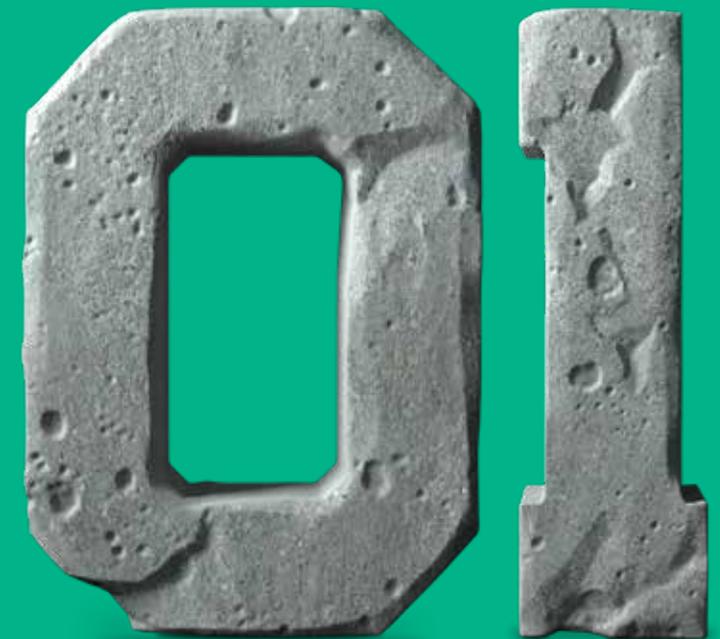
The Building Blocks

Some companies have an endless list of policies and processes they expect their team to follow.

We're not one of them.

Why? Because endless lists of policies and processes are really boring. And also, because we believe in the principle of self-management. Of having a small set of essential building blocks that we've given plenty of thought to – that you can easily understand and apply to the awesome work you do here.

These are those building blocks.



AKA

Our Vision, Purpose & Core Values

“We have a
history of looking
forward...”

If you're looking for a detailed history of every step we've taken since we first got started, we've got bad news. You won't find it here.

For starters, after over ten years in the game it'd be a really, really, really long story. Secondly, it doesn't mean much if you've joined us mid-journey. You're probably more interested in where we're going, instead of where we were in 2012*.

We have a history of looking forward – and our purpose, vision and values reflect that. Put on your thinking cap for a sec and picture a mountain you're planning to summit with friends. The vision describes what you'll see when you reach the peak – the future state you're aiming for. Purpose is why we're climbing this particular bloody mountain in the first place. What's really driving us? And finally, values are the non-negotiable behaviours that we agree to stick to, as a group of friends, as we climb.

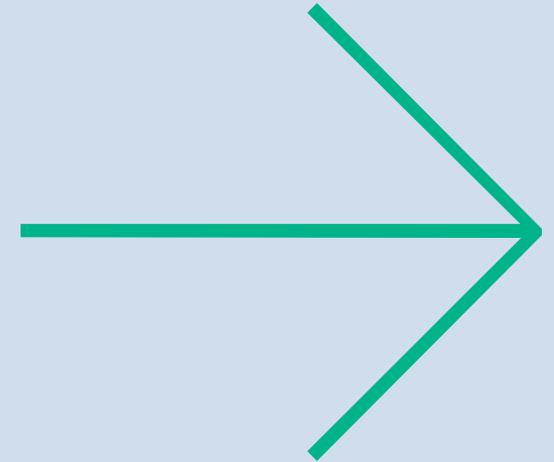
**If you really want to know, ask Ritchie or Mike. Clear your schedule. Bring refreshments. You might be there a while.*

Our Purpose —

To accelerate the progress of people and organisations.

To provide people with valuable connections, opportunities and insights.

To enable people to do more of the things that matter, and less of the things that don't.



Our Purpose

Purpose is our big ‘why’ – why are we here, and why is that important? It’s the core that everything else stems from. Our Purpose must be true both for what we deliver to customers and the way we go about delivering it.

To get a better grasp on our ‘why’ today, it’s a good idea to look at why Mike first cooked up EstimateOne in the first place. One – to automate the shitty part of estimating; and two – to provide an income that made it possible to do things more important to him, personally than estimating.

Then it’s worth looking at some of the phrases that have really struck a chord with us in the ten years since. ‘Allowing construction professionals to leave work on time’. ‘Cranes before code’. ‘Fostering the next generation of entrepreneurs’. They’re all about helping people get more value out of their lives. And the ways we can make that happen.

Which is why our ‘why’ doesn’t specifically mention the construction industry. It’s not because we’re not connected to it – or because we have plans to go beyond it – but because our purpose isn’t tied to any particular industry. We’re a business that fundamentally values people’s time, while trying to build their expertise.

And we reckon that’s a pretty great reason for being.



Our Vision

An organisation that intelligently connects the commercial construction industry, creating remarkable value for our team, our industry and our shareholders.

Our Vision is all about the commercial construction industry. They're who we're here to help – who we're always trying to understand on a deeper level.

We create value by intelligently connecting parties that operate in our industry – whether they're people from the same organisation (say, estimators with contract administrators), or two different companies (like a builder with a subbie, or a subbie with a supplier). That value we create falls into three buckets – team value (value for our employees), industry value (value for our users and customers), and shareholder value (value for our shareholders).



Core Values

Enabled

It's all about recognising, respecting and embracing the things each of us are great at.

Taking ownership in our roles and of our development.

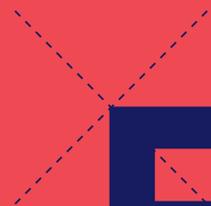
Spotting opportunities and problems across the business (and acting on them). And creating an environment where everyone can succeed.

Then getting the hell out of the way so they can work wonders.

We love hearing stories of one team member enabling the expertise of another – because it means a whole stack of really good things are happening all at once. It means teamwork is helping our team work collaboratively and communicating clearly. It means someone else's amazing skills are getting the respect they deserve. And finally, it means we're playing a direct role in each other's success.

It's not just about enabling our own team's expertise, though. There are tens of thousands of bright minds using EstimateOne at any given moment – with skills and know-how we don't have (like pricing up a construction project). What we do have is the software to make that process simpler and more seamless. And a commitment to breaking down any barriers that slow them down along the way. This is what it means to enable the expertise of our users.

When one person enables expertise, it's a win. When all of us do it, it's a game-changer.



Expertise

It means communicating early, regularly and concisely.

It means being straight shooters with our colleagues and customers.

Seeing honesty as a platform for major improvements. And always believing in the positive intent of others – even when they're being super direct.

Spend some time working in the construction industry and you'll quickly figure out that people say it how it is – and want you to do the same to them. There's no time for tip-toeing around sensitive topics when the industry's full of straight shooters.

Being forthright can be a challenge for some but if you show care and empathy whilst still being direct and constructive then you will be living this value, and helping the person you are giving the feedback to. It's as important (if not more so) to also give positive feedback to people you see doing something great and that should be timely and direct as well.

Challenge directly and care personally.

Over time we've learned that being *forthright and frank* is just about keeping it real – and what people really value is honesty. As long as you deliver that honesty in a professional way (and are open to other people doing the same), you'll start a cycle of transparency and trust.

Forthright and frank is our commitment to that transparency. It's about being transparent with our teams, our leaders, our Board and our customers – so that they can trust us entirely.

Being forthright can take some getting used to, but when we are, it makes life a whole lot easier.

Forthright + Frank



Authentic Ambition



It's about wanting to win
– fairly. And as a team.

It's about bringing value to our
team, our industry and our
shareholders in equal measure.

It's about creating value for
the long-term benefit, not the
short-term hit.

We're an ambitious bunch – but we don't approach winning in that weirdly intense, losing-isn't-an-option way. We're mindful that our journey as a start-up, and now scale-up, can create a lot of value for our customers, our shareholders and our team - if we do it the right way. It could destroy a lot of value for one of more of these groups if we're too aggressive, with a singular focus on winning.

Instead, we embrace humble ambition. We're as much about working with good people and *being* good people as we are about working hard and kicking goals. We're motivated to bring our A-game because we have a shared sense of pride – not because we're scared our jobs are on the line if we don't hit a target. If we do

miss a target, we own it – and have a *forthright and frank* conversation about what we could do differently next time.

We know winning feels good at EstimateOne. But genuinely wanting each other to succeed together feels even better.



Cranes before Code



It means chasing great outcomes over great processes.

It's seeking to really, truly understand our customers.

And getting a rock-solid grip on the problem before we start brainstorming ways to solve it.

This one's relevant for all of us – even if you have no experience with coding. In fact, ask any of the EstimateOne team which of our Core Values stands out the most and it's likely you'll hear these three words.

(And if you are a developer, don't worry. The quality of our code is important to us – it's just part of a bigger picture).

In a nutshell, *cranes before code* is a metaphor that helps us focus on what really matters. 'Cranes' sits at the more literal end of the spectrum – representing our customers and their world. 'Code' is the role EstimateOne plays. We're in the construction industry first, and the 'tech sector' second.

It's up to us to understand both our users and the world they inhabit at a deeper level – along with the ins and outs of the construction industry at large. Once we've got that down-pat, we can create incredible solutions to challenges our users are facing every day.

If the 'code' is what we do and how we do it, then 'cranes' are the outcomes of that work. It's not about focusing on one or the other – it's about thinking first about the outcome, and then tapping into our expertise to make it happen.

Core Values in action

It's one thing to talk about our Core Values, it's quite another to see them in action, where they make a difference. These next stories are all from our founders. They exemplify each of the values in full flight, not just in isolation but working together. Just as our two founders did.

Core Values in action

Enter the exit interview

Some people hear the words ‘exit interview’ and run for the door. They think awkward conversations, disgruntled co-workers, the works. If you have a similar reaction, you’re missing out on some pretty powerful stuff.

I’ve spent roughly ten hours in exit interviews here at EstimateOne – and I reckon those ten hours have led to hundreds, if not thousands, of valuable work, and more importantly (*cranes before code*) valuable outcomes.

Take an exit interview I had back in 2016. A team member named Gilad who was moving on to new frontiers. I asked Gilad for some *forthright and frank* reflections on where EstimateOne was as a business. Gilad had plenty of positive things to say – but he didn’t hold back when it came to what he thought was holding us back.

My own name made the list. Gilad mentioned that I was *the* decision-maker at EstimateOne, and that created both a bottleneck and a development ceiling for everyone else in the team.

That was tough to swallow. Especially because the last thing a CEO wants to do is block the development of their own team. We called in a HR consultant named James Law (the one and only who since joined the team), who spent

an hour with every single person in the team. Jim got their feedback on the culture at EstimateOne, as well as any potential roadblocks they were coming up against.

The feedback was unanimous. It read something like this:

“Ritchie needs to decide whether he is CEO, CTO, Head of Product, or Head of HR. No human can do them all and it won’t scale.”

That was tough to swallow too.

Empowering, though. It enabled my expertise by helping me realise I wasn’t getting the hell out of the way (and if you were paying attention a few pages back, you’d know that’s important). In the end, we decided to make the move towards self-management and cross-functional teams – where expertise was clustered in teams, and those teams set the course for what to do next.

Gilad proved that there’s room for *enabled expertise* every day you’re here. Right up until your exit interview.

—Ritchie



Core Values in action

500 reasons to keep it real

Back in 2013 I decided to run an end-of-financial-year campaign for our subbies. Considering I was still in my bedroom when I started coding, it wasn't the best start. I hit 'send' and went to have a shower.

I came back to a stuff-up. Instead of sending 5,000 users one email, I'd sent 40 users 500 emails. Each. I called Mike in a panic and proposed emailing them each a \$500 Bunnings voucher. He suggested I stop trying to email clients from bed and come into the office to sort it out.

Mike also suggested we take the *forthright and frank* approach – skip the 501st email (they'd had enough for one morning), and call them ourselves.

Honesty really was the best policy. While a few of the subbies weren't impressed ('I thought there was a chainsaw going off next door, turns out my phone was just vibrating for two hours with notifications...') – I don't blame them – every one of them appreciated the phone call and the honest explanation. It even gave us the chance to inject a little levity into the situation ('the deal was so good we thought we'd send it to you 500 times'), because we'd had the chance to be upfront, open, and appropriately apologetic.

That's what being *forthright and frank* is all about. Getting on the front foot, communicating positively, and holding onto the belief that doing so won't just get you heard – but respected too.

And you know what?

It's still the most successful email campaign in history. Four of the 40 users actually took up the offer. No thanks to my bedroom brainwave.

—Ritchie

Core Values in action

Two mates. One CEO.

By Ritchie

EstimateOne started with a beer.

Several beers, actually. And not because Mike and I were strangers who needed a few pints down the hatch before we could consider working together. We've always been great friends who respect each other, and love a good laugh – so our business partnership formed in a similarly easygoing way.

As anyone who's ran a business with a mate would know, though, it can be tough on a friendship. Eventually the beers took a backseat for the WIP meetings and sales presos – and while it was a shame on a personal level, it was working professionally.

Until it wasn't. By early 2015 we were running a team of 14 – and no one could work out who was the boss. Mike was broadly in charge of sales, and I was broadly in charge of product, but there was a whole lot more to the business that still had a big question mark over it. And when decision-making slowed and things started being missed, we knew we had to make a call.

It was time for a single CEO to steer the ship. But we agreed that it was too early to bring someone in from the outside. Which meant it came down to Mike and I.

EstimateOne was Mike's idea, so he needed to make the final call. I went to Golden Plains over the Labor Day long weekend and let Mike mull it over. If I'm being completely *forthright and frank* about it, I was so sure Mike would want to run the company that I was introducing myself to festival-goers as someone who was likely to be unemployed come Monday.

Authentic ambition can be surprising that way. The next week Mike told me he believed I was the best person to lead EstimateOne through its next phase. He'd placed the goals of his company, the team and his co-founder (and friend) ahead of status and recognition. That's *authentic ambition* – wanting to see great things happen not for your ego, but so you can share the sense of fulfilment that comes from success.

And Mike and I get to have a lot more beers these days, too. Maybe that was the plan all along?

By Mike

Founding a business is easy. Running one, less so. But leaving one, to ensure it succeeds, takes the cake.

I firmly believe that much of our early success, was due at least in part, to the partnership that Ritchie and I formed. We solved problems together, worked through challenges, came up with new ideas to test, and laughed a lot about the mistakes we made along the way.

We were a great team.

Without that type of relationship in the early days, I think we both would have given up when the going got tough, and EstimateOne would have died on the vine. Another business on the statistical scrapheap. But after a while, what got us going, started getting in the way.

One to lead.

Great businesses, generally speaking, do not have two 'bosses'. No amount of creative problem solving avoided the realisation that one of us would need to take over and lead the business as CEO.

But what of the other? In our heart of hearts, we knew the equal footing we had shared as co-founders would not play out as well in a subordinate role.

One to leave.

So, we weren't just deciding on a CEO. We were also deciding which founder would leave EstimateOne. There's a lot you don't see coming when you set out to build a business (most things really, if I'm honest). But, the realisation that one of us would, one day, need to leave EstimateOne to allow it to thrive was definitely not on my radar. Ultimately, I made what I considered to be the best decision for our burgeoning business – to depart, and install Ritchie as CEO.

And it was a good call.

I think the greatest testament to our friendship is that we successfully (and amicably) navigated a decision-making process that has ruined many a friendship. And a business. Ritchie and I are still great mates, and he's been an exemplary CEO for EstimateOne.

Choosing a single leader was tough but right. Reflecting on how we got there, it's clear that both Ritchie and I truly wanted to find the best for EstimateOne – to see it prosper. Despite how difficult that decision was.

To me, this is *authentic ambition*.

Core Values in action

Second time's the charm

“Subbies won’t use it.”

That was the feedback we received when we first pitched EstimateOne to three Melbourne-based builders – after spending *months* developing the product. Not just an MVP – the fully-realised platform.

“It looks like something a bank would use.”

Having just come out of banking, that feedback was frustrating. Disappointing. And pretty accurate, too. And when I tried to run through the technical capabilities (local servers for low latency and API integration, for a start), I was met with a harsh – but fair – truth.

“It’s too complicated. Subbies won’t use it. So there’s no point us using it.”

It was back to the drawing board.

And by that I mean I went travelling and assumed the industry was just slow to the innovation party. Turns out they were just telling me I’d put code before cranes.

So 12 months later, when I took another crack, we flipped the script. We went lo-fi, and thought about a real problem – like the subbies who spend hours looking through the Saturday papers for tenders. Then we built a super-simple, one-page web app that aggregated all the data being shared in the papers into one easy-to-use, easy-to-digest format. We gave it away for free, took the feedback on board and made changes.

I knew we’d put *cranes before code* a few months later. A guy named Gary gave us a buzz to say thanks for our Weekly Tender Report “thingy” (Gary’s words, not ours). What he called it didn’t matter – it was hearing that he was able to leave work on time and spend more time with his kids that really proved we’d flipped the script.

That’s what *cranes before code* is all about. Not looking at our work as a thing of beauty – but seeing the outcomes that work achieves, and always putting that first.

—Ritchie



Core Values in Action

“We
communicate
clearly and
concisely.”

Some thoughts from the team on what it means to work at EstimateOne.

“It is amazing how quickly *enabled expertise* became a crutch in my vocabulary...”



“When I first joined, I always thought *enabled expertise* felt a bit generic, a bit buzz wordy, but it’s become one of my favourite and most referred-to values. I love how it influences the team spirit that we have here at EstimateOne, even to the extent that our customers often feel like extended members of the teams. It couldn’t be less generic if it tried.”

Zaiga Finnis

EstimateOne since 20 February, 2018



“There is a quote, often misattributed to Einstein, which reads: ‘If you can’t explain it simply, you don’t understand it well enough.’ Provenance notwithstanding, I think one aspect of our *cranes before code* value perfectly encapsulates this sentiment.

Working at EstimateOne forces me to more thoroughly interrogate my own reasoning, because I often have to share it with the whole team.

This feedback loop is a valuable self-correction device which reminds me that shipping value to our customers is my *raison d’être*.”

Christopher Dyer

EstimateOne since 3 August, 2016



“The value that resonates with me the most at EstimateOne is *forthright and frank*. When we allow everyone to be honest with each other, we become more empathetic and happier as a team. By virtue of this, our customers hit us back with radical transparency, evidenced by the copious amount of useful feedback that we receive every day.”

Fernando Parra

EstimateOne since 8 October, 2018



“At EstimateOne *cranes before code* is a value that significantly impacts our Business Development and our day-to-day activities. Ensuring we always take the opportunity to learn more about the construction process from our existing clients means our support is industry specific, and we can really understand the nuts and bolts of what our future clients need.”

Simon Herod

EstimateOne since 2 October, 2017



“It is amazing how quickly *enabled expertise* became a crutch in my vocabulary, I commonly find myself using it to help my team feel comfortable about their actions often stating ‘You’re enabling my expertise’ or ‘You can enable the expertise of those around you by reaching out, not asking for help is disabling all of our expertise’. It is a statement that helps us remember that we’re constantly unlocking greater value.”

Rami Saleh

EstimateOne since 23 September, 2014



“It is amazing how quickly *enabled expertise* became a crutch in my vocabulary, I commonly find myself using it to help my team feel comfortable about their actions often stating ‘You’re enabling my expertise’ or ‘You can enable the expertise of those around you by reaching out, not asking for help is disabling all of our expertise’. It is a statement that helps us remember that we’re constantly unlocking greater value. I really like how Rami enabled my expertise by providing the previous sentences for me.”

Adrian Palmer

EstimateOne since 25 June, 2018



“Whatever the processes and templates and tools in place for working in teams, actually communicating with one another seems like the most basic and most important requirement. The qualities of that communication; what we say to each other, when we say it, and how we say it, end up being what drives our progress as an organisation and our development as individuals. *Forthright and frank* speaks to the all of these qualities. If we can be *forthright and frank* we have a much better chance of being all the other things we want to be!”

Daniel Clifton

EstimateOne since 11 June, 2018



“I think we are lucky to have a value like *forthright and frank* so entrenched in the way we do things. Externally, it’s a value mirrored in the industry we service and from my experience, an attitude respected/appreciated by our clients. Internally, it works because everyone understands it’s coming from the right place; never malicious. It’s actually refreshing.”

Daniel Stirling

EstimateOne since 8 May, 2017



“Being *forthright and frank* is the fundamental value that allows all the other values to work. If we are not giving each other feedback on what we are doing well and what could be improved then when can’t end up achieving the things we want to achieve. This value also encourages us to seek out feedback and treat it like gold which means that there is very little resistance to it and allows us to take it with the positive intent it is delivered. F&F for the win!”

James Law

EstimateOne since 21 February, 2018



“There’s no point creating something brilliant if no one knows how to use it. *Cranes before code* is our reminder that at the end of the day, everything we do is to help construction industry. It’s a bit of a constant back and forth, we work hard to understand how the construction industry ticks, and in turn we use this info to shape the way we communicate the value of what we do.”

Matthew Eccles

EstimateOne since October 2017

“Cranes before code
is our reminder that
at the end of the day,
everything we do is
to help construction
industry.”

“Taken to heart, forthright and frank can transform not just your career but your life as well.”



“As a developer I hated *cranes before code* when I first heard it. It is now the most important value to me. *Cranes before code* does not devalue my work, it tells me what is valuable about my work. Our customers don’t care what technology we use, they care what we do with it to enable their expertise. That doesn’t mean we shun progress – far from it – we embrace change at EstimateOne and we are always pushing to improve. However we must remember to examine everything through the lens of *cranes before code*. For example we won’t use React because it’s ‘new’ or ‘everybody uses it’. We will use it because it lets us iterate faster to bring new features to our customers sooner than we otherwise could.”

Tom Corrigan

EstimateOne since 5 January, 2015



“Nothing is more empowering than knowing you have the tools to help someone and the support to do so without question. *Enabled expertise* allows us to crack on with the tasks of the day, advising and assisting our customers and each other. We essentially have the green light from leadership to do what we do best, taking away any hesitation. With this kind of backing, we’re able to better serve our customers and teammates, confident in our skills, willing and able to go above and beyond expectations.”

Marni Strump

EstimateOne since 5 January, 2015



“It’s really refreshing to work at a company that champions the customer as much as we do. We always put the needs of the customer in the forefront so that we can alleviate inefficiencies within the construction industry. *Cranes before code* is one of our values and it’s constantly vocalised in the office so that we continue to develop a product that resonates with construction professionals. We draw upon this value to keep us grounded and remind us why we are here.”

Sophie Hack

EstimateOne since 26 June, 2017



“*Forthright and frank* is the value I hold dearest. It is the most challenging to consistently put into practice, but the rewards for doing so are commensurate with the difficulty. Respectful disagreement is more valuable than peaceful disharmony. Living this value empowers you to operate effectively as part of a great team. Finally, taken to heart, *forthright and frank* can transform not just your career but your life as well.”

Mike Ashcroft

EstimateOne since day dot

Value Loop

Making sense of creating value

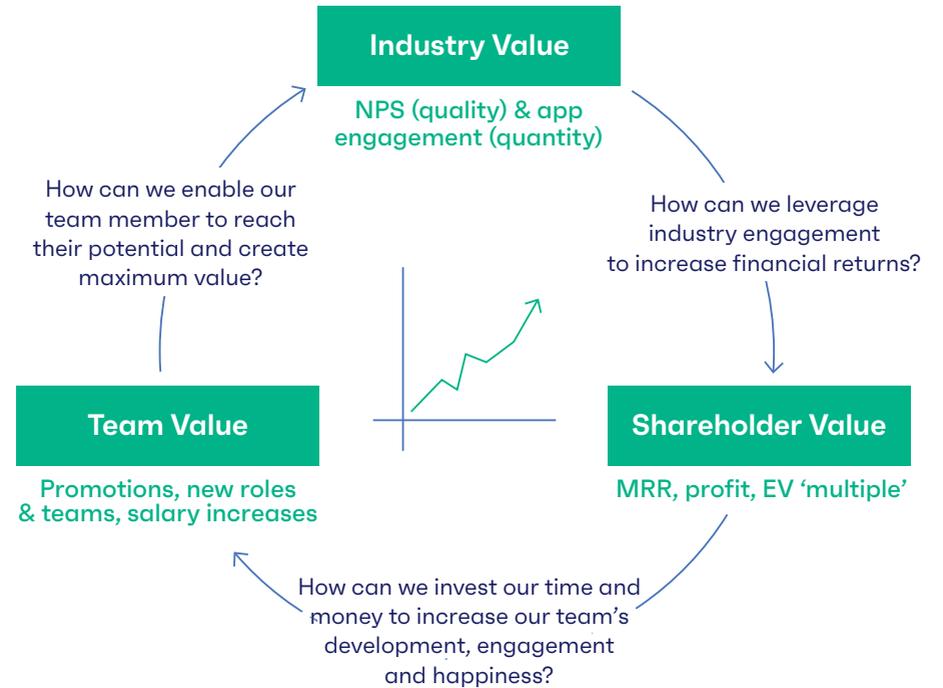
At this point in the book, you'd know we talk quite a bit about creating value. But what do we mean by 'value'?

The value of EstimateOne if we listed on a stock exchange? Revenue? Customer satisfaction?

It's actually all of these things – and a whole lot more. We generally consider value to be *industry value* (the value we create for our users, customers and the construction/tech industries at large), *shareholder value* (the value we create for our shareholders and option holders) and *team value* (the value we create for the people who work at EstimateOne).

While we measure these values in different ways, they aren't put in separate buckets, with separate levels of priority – because they all reinforce the others. Instead, they loop around to form a top-line 'scorecard' for how we're tracking as a business.

If any of the terms in this diagram are unfamiliar, head on over to the glossary (Pg. 114) at the end of this book for a quick explanation.



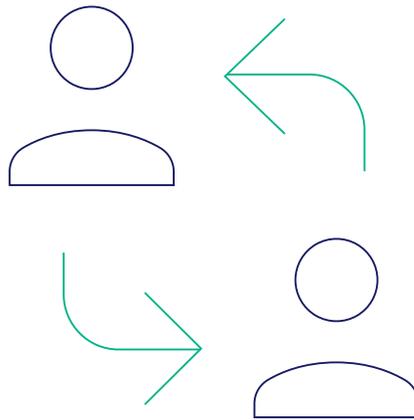
The Value Loop

What we can expect from each other

You'll find most of the ins and outs of your employment – like salary, weeks of annual leave, etc. – in your contract. But that's only part of the picture of working here.



This section outlines a set of mutual expectations we should have. What you should expect of the team (and why it adds to your experience here) – and what the team expects of you on the flip side.



Where you work

You should expect:

A super-safe environment (both physically and emotionally) that has zero-tolerance for any talk or action that's aggressive or discriminatory.

A highly-practical office with top-notch fittings, ergonomic and comfortable work areas, and the best tech you need – plus a focus on natural light and open space.

A laidback space that gives you room to interact socially and professionally. You can wear what you want, have a beer at your desk after hours, and even bring your family or kids into the office to meet the team.

A healthy mix of team-time (meetings, workshops) and you-time (in the zone with the headphones on).

No part of the business being off limits. See a meeting you're interested in sitting in on? Feel free to attend next time. Ask any questions, of anyone, about anything.

The team will expect you to:

Contribute actively to make sure that this is a safe place to work – both by doing the right thing, and by calling out the wrong thing if and when you see it.

Let us know if you're going to be in after 10am (or not in at all), through the #absences channel in Slack. We can make plans accordingly, but only if we know (and the earlier the better!)

Look after yourself. If you're crook, please stay at home and rest up. No one gets bonus points here for 'battling through' and sneezing continuously at their desk. Plus it's super awkward if you end up being patient zero in an office-wide outbreak.

Keep the office clean. That means your desk, dishes and rubbish, but also whiteboards and brainstormed sticky notes.

Whittle down that waste. Waste of materials, wastes of time, and wastes of money.

What we're not really into:

We're not big into table tennis tables, bean bags, slides and whatnot. We'd rather work at work, and play pool at the pub (or the playground, if you were really hanging out for a slide).

We're not that big on working from home either. We get that sometimes you might need time away from the office to get an important job done – but we definitely prefer being in each other's company.

Compensation

You should expect:

Clear salary tables and review processes – we know that salary probably isn't the only reason you come to work here – but we do know it's a big part of it. So we'll keep things *forthright & frank*.

Annual salary reviews (as well as any time your role materially changes), with salary tables matched to market averages each year.

Transparency on how we're performing as a business, so that you can breathe easy – knowing we're capable of paying you every month.

We'll fully fund your external professional development up to \$5000 a year. Think training, conferences, lunches with external mentors, and so on.

Preferring to pay the people already here, more, instead of recruiting at light speed. It's a preference in-line with one of our key goals as a business

The team will expect you to:

Have a deep respect for the people that pay our wages – our customers. All our salaries are paid for by our customers, and as a consequence they should be our continual focus.

Be genuinely excited about contributing to a world-class organisation. Going above and beyond what's expected of you in your contract and giving the gig a big dose of *authentic ambition*.

Talk with us if you feel you're being underpaid. Let's talk through the incremental value you're providing to EstimateOne. We don't factor in what you might be able to earn elsewhere – although we totally understand it might factor into your thinking!

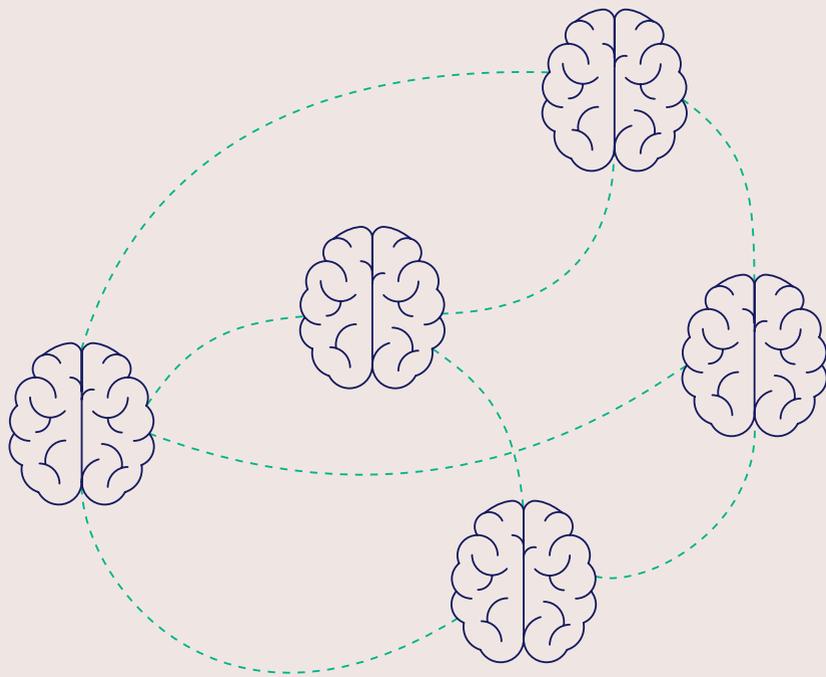
Be transparent about what you're working on – and what you intend to work on next. Not so others can micromanage you, but so we're all on the same page. And so we can keep enabling each other's expertise.

What we're not really into:

Matching an offer you get somewhere else. We prefer to pay everyone based on the value they bring to the team – not the value they could potentially bring to someone else's.



“We’re big on getting different heads together to investigate and solve problems.”



How we do work

You should expect:

No ‘boss’. Well not in the typical sense, anyway. We prefer our own take on things, with a mash-up of self-management and distributed leadership (so that you can still get support, advice or feedback from a whole bunch of specialist leaders when you need it).

The chance to work cross-functionally. We’re big on getting different heads together to investigate and solve problems, and you should expect to regularly work outside your strict ‘functional’ area. If you’re a developer, that means you’ll probably meet our customers. If you’re on the phones, expect to present regularly to the entire team on customer feedback.

Access to senior leaders. We don’t hide away our senior leaders in fancy private offices. Firstly, they’d get very bored. And secondly, they’re your teammates. That means there’s a good chance they’ll ask you for your input – and you’ll be able to do the same to them without worrying that you’re overstepping the mark.

The flex to set your own commitments and deadlines. It’s not often that a teammate will set a hard deadline for a job. We prefer if you let us know what can be done in what timeframe.

The team will expect you to:

Actively manage yourself. That means prioritising different tasks, asking for help when you need it (particularly if you see a roadblock up ahead), and ultimately doing a bloody good job.

Embrace cross-functional work. You might be a specialist developer, but both you and the wider team can benefit from your attendance at the occasional sales meeting or visit to a customer. Seeing different disciplines in action doesn’t just help your own development, it keeps work interesting too!

Get on board with the decision. There’s nothing wrong with healthy debate – but once everyone’s shared their opinion (including you), it’s time for everyone to get onboard with the decision and move ahead together.

Stick to your commitments. If it’s looking like you can’t meet a commitment you’ve made, it’s time to be *forthright & frank* – and let anyone who might be impacted know as soon as possible.

What we don’t really do:

Person A: “Why are we doing this?”

Person B: “I don’t know – we were just told to by the boss.”

The culture we're all creating

You should expect:

Strong adherence to our core values, – from senior leaders right through to new starters. We see ourselves as a values-driven organisation – and you should see that in the way your teammates think and act.

A team of really lovely people. Ask anyone what the best thing about working at EstimateOne is, and they'll tell you it's the people. What can we say – we've got a knack for hiring decent human beings who don't take themselves too seriously.

Continuous change. Very little is set in stone at EstimateOne. We're big on experimenting – roles, processes, marketing strategies – you name it. Things change regularly, and it definitely keeps things interesting.

A casual but hard-working environment. There's not much formality, plenty of laughs, and we're pretty relaxed about when you get to work. But we're still ambitious – so we're here to work hard.

Room for all of us. There are extroverts and introverts. Many of us didn't grow up in Melbourne, or even Australia. We have different backgrounds and different ambitions. And those differences aren't just okay, they're awesome.

The team will expect you to:

Live our values. There's plenty that's up for debate and discussion at EstimateOne – but our values aren't one of them. They're the anchor point that unites as a values-driven organisation, so we expect you to live them each and every day.

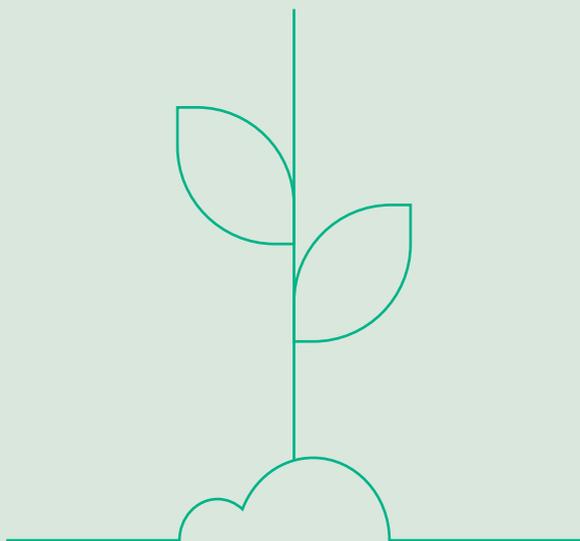
To not be territorial with your work. We don't work in silos – and we don't put hierarchy before the best ideas. So you should be a team player that doesn't get too proud or protective.

Be forgiving. We're a young, ambitious business that tries lots of things. Plenty work – but many of them don't. So you'll need to be forgiving of your colleagues – and the organisation as a whole – if things don't go as planned.

Believe in the positive intent of others. We all have good intentions around here – so even you're not 100% sure on someone's motive, it's better for everyone if you assume they're trying to do the right thing.

Be in, or be out. It's pretty hard for a company's culture to be at its best when people don't like work enough to be invested – but aren't yet ready to leave. So if you're feeling a bit off, come and talk to us. You won't be shown the door – you'll be supported with whatever decision you decide to take.





“You should believe that your abilities can be developed. This view creates a love of learning and resilience that is essential for teams working together to achieve great things.”

Your learning & development

You should expect:

To develop your skills while at EstimateOne. Our Chief of Staff is here to ensure that we attract and retain the best and brightest, and to advance your ongoing development.

To learn from others. Everyone from the CEO up is here to help, especially in your professional development. There’s a big body of varied knowledge and experience within the team – and they’ll be happy to share what they know with you.

A focus on entrepreneurship. We’re often talking about business ideas outside of EstimateOne – and plenty of us have our own side-hustles (or plans to start them). So when you’re part of the team, you can expect your entrepreneurial side to really come to life, whether you’re taking entrepreneur leave, taking part in a ‘lunch & learn’ with successful founders, or just checking out the #biz-ideas Slack channel.

A commitment to professional development. We’ll pay for up to \$5,000 worth of training, conferences, lunches with external mentors and the like – as long as you’re willing to give us an overview of what you’ve learned at the next team meeting!

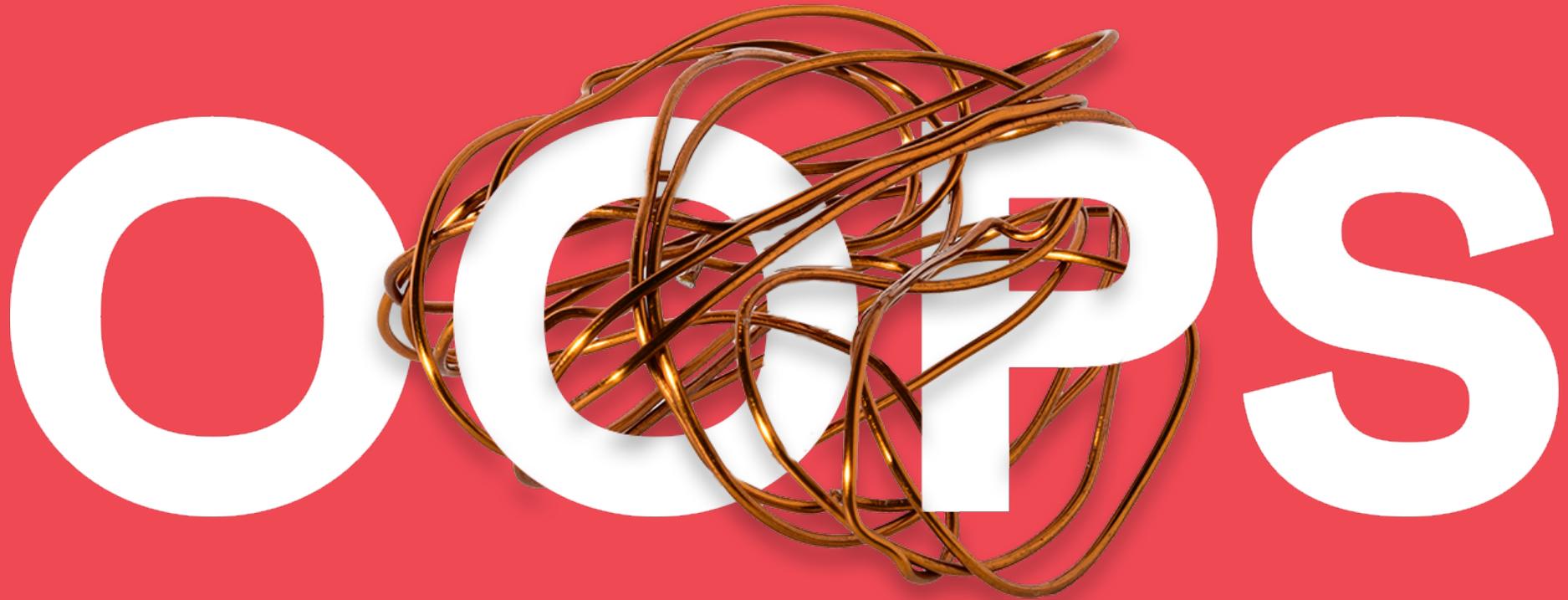
The team will expect you to:

Take ownership of your career. We can’t tell you what your career goals are – so you need to be *forthright & frank* with us so we can help make them happen!

Have a growth mindset. You should believe that your abilities can be developed further. It’s essential for teams working together to push on and achieve great things.

Take feedback as being given with positive intent. We give feedback often, honestly and always with positive intent. You should look at it as a key part of your own career growth, its purpose is to be constructive – even when it’s confronting. Make sure you dwell on the positive feedback as much as everything else.

Share your expertise with others. Expertise – whether that’s skills or information – is better shared. So whether you speak up in meetings, or provide coaching to newer staff, don’t be shy to share what you’re amazing at.



Well, this is awkward...
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...we can't seem to find the page
that you're looking for.

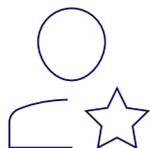
Working at EstimateOne

There's no secret method to doing awesome work while you're part of the EstimateOne team – but there are definitely a few bits and pieces that are worth getting your head around. They won't just help you do an amazing job, they'll make sure you have a great time doing it too.



Our Principles

Think of these principles as a taste of what working at EstimateOne 'feels like'. They influence the way we think about working together – so they're definitely worth getting familiar with.



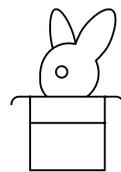
Self-management

Big fan of hierarchical, top-down, directive management? Bad news – you won't find it here. We're all about encouraging our team to self-manage. That doesn't mean haphazardly going it alone though. It means working collaboratively with one another – while still having the confidence to be personally accountable.



Autonomy

Think of this as self-management at a team level. Instead of having the CEO coming up with a strategy that the teams then put into action, we let the teams come up with their own visions and strategies based on their insights and expertise. (We do still coordinate the plans across the whole organisation, to make sure we're still heading in the same direction.)



No surprises

We reckon a Performance Review that talks about something you did four months ago – and wasn't raised at the time – is both unfair and disempowering. That's why we operate from a default position of no surprises. If it's likely to impact you, you should know about it straight away. We'll keep the surprises for Christmas.



Commitments

There aren't many better ways to track performance than when a commitment that's made is upheld. That's because they're usually entered into voluntarily, while still having a specific timeline and deliverable. We avoid – "I'll try to get that to you next week", and go for "You'll have this by 4pm Thursday."



Continuous improvement

We've never met a bar we didn't want to raise a little higher. And the best way to do this is to regularly review our performance – at an individual, team and organisation level. Feedback and 'retros' (you'll meet them later in this book) are two ways we put this principle into practice.



Transparency

We're an open book – and we've committed to a culture of transparency across the organisation. We don't share data breaches or anything else we're legally obliged to keep confidential. The rest you should know.

All kinds of ways to excel

We all come from different working backgrounds at EstimateOne – and approach each day differently too. And the ways we shine are different too.

(There are, however, a few common threads that our high-performers all share.)

The first is a deep commitment to our values.

This means an *authentic ambition* to be bold and direct in communication (*forthright and frank*). To put our customer’s needs at the center of everything we do (*cranes before code*). And to trust in and help our colleagues to do great work (*enabled expertise*). You’ll hear our values being referred to just about every day while you’re at work – so it makes sense that really excelling at EstimateOne means championing them.

The second is recognising that when we succeed, we succeed as a team.

We don’t have a lot of room for lone wolves to succeed – but plenty of space for team players! Our success stems from our cross-functional teams – that draw on the awesome range of talent and know-how that we have in the building. Really excelling means working together to get that much closer to the shared goals of the organisation. And championing new goals that we can accomplish together too.

Finally, our high performers don’t just deliver great work. They find ways to help improve EstimateOne as they do it.

Building a plane while you’re flying it is hard (metaphorically speaking, anyway – doing it for real is probably impossible and we don’t recommend it). But it’s those high performers that find a way to use the processes and frameworks we’ve got to deliver today, while still designing and building the future of EstimateOne at the same time.

How we’re structured: Streams and Functions

You might’ve noticed we’re big on teams. It’s because we’re better when we’re working together and drawing on our collective expertise. Everyone works in a team (and some of us in more than one!)

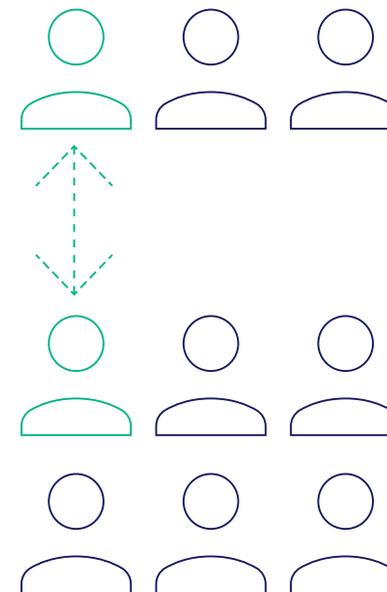
The way that we think about teams is in terms of ‘streams’ and ‘functions’.

Streams are teams that are organised around customer groups – for example, we have a Builder Stream that’s focussed on deeply understanding and creating value for our builder audience.

Functions are those teams that are organised around a specific area of expertise. Take our Brand and Communications Team – who’s work revolves around developing the EstimateOne brand, and supporting streams to deliver great comms for their customers.

Sometimes teams work together (like when the Brand and Comms Team work with the Builder Stream to deliver regular communication to builders), and sometimes the collaboration comes from someone who’s actually in a stream and a function. Our developers are the most common example – they’re all part of the Development Team and of a specific customer stream.

Because of this set-up, none of our teams are fixed. People can move between teams, or be part of a number at the same time, depending on what’s best for the organisation. And the people in it, of course.

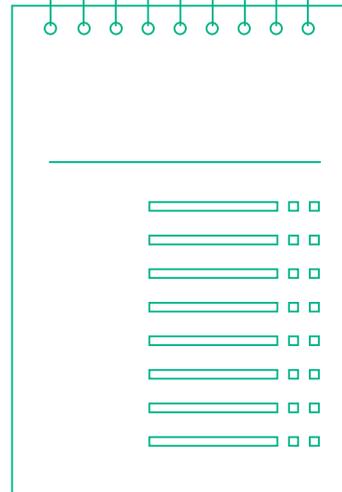


Success Plans

Nothing has more of an impact on our success as an organisation than the success of our people.

That's why every EstimateOne team member has their own 'success plan'.

A 'success plan' is a one-of-a-kind document that helps you map out your purpose, vision and development at EstimateOne, so we can work better as a cross-functional team. Along with objective info – like your roles and responsibilities – it also includes preferences around your work style, what you value and the best ways for others to communicate with you.

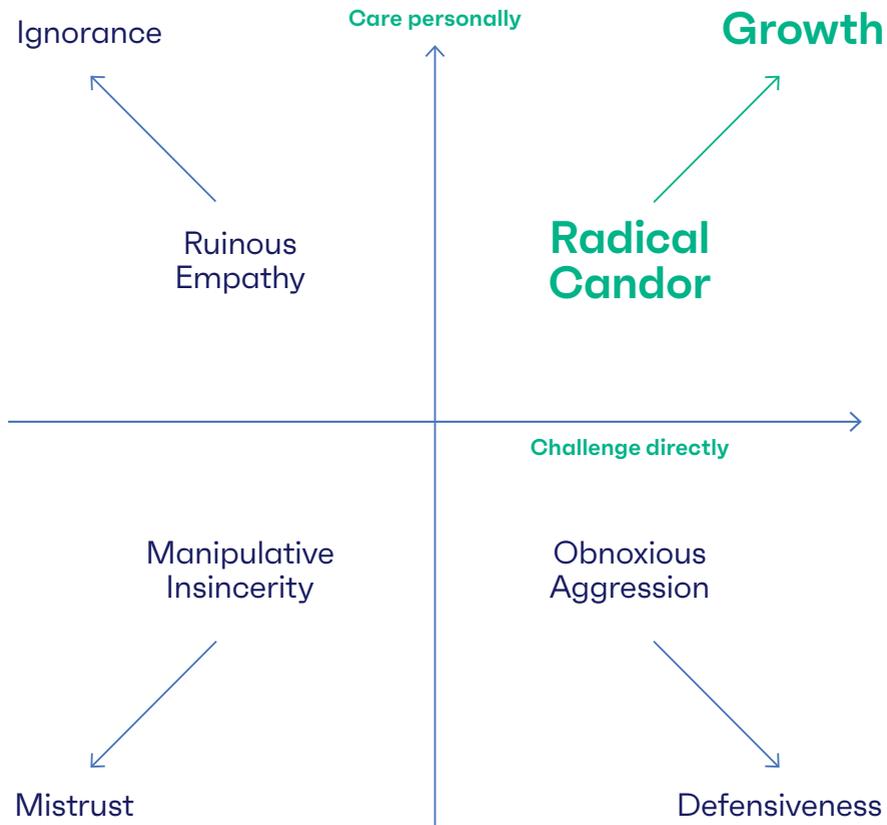


You'll have a success plan because:

- We think it's important to agree on the expectations of your role and give you a chance to drive a vision of what you want that role to be
- Sharing more about yourself gives you and the team more firepower when it comes to unlocking everything that makes you awesome
- We hate bureaucracy and filling in forms for the sake of it
- We love frameworks that help us grow our people (and our organisation)

“A Success Plan is a living, shared document unique to you that helps you map out your Purpose, Vision and Development.”





The four kinds of feedback

*Taken from *Radical Candor* by Kim Scott

“We have plenty of ambitions. Being famous for feedback is one of them.”

Feedback

Good-quality, direct feedback that’s delivered with positive intent is one of the most powerful gifts you can give a colleague.

We call this ‘Radical Candor’. (We didn’t come up with this either, Kim Scott coined it after receiving some ‘radical candor’ herself). It’s a great name for a racehorse, and an even better approach to feedback – one that demonstrates you care deeply about the individual, but don’t shy away from being direct.

In an effort to be famous for feedback, we have a process for gathering feedback for each team member at EstimateOne. This is drawn from your teammates over the course of a year with the purpose of identifying things being done well, as well as opportunities to develop. The collective feedback is shared and discussed separately from salary reviews or performance evaluation.



Salary

Who said money had to be a sensitive topic? Getting paid a salary that's fair to both you and the business is just another part of a really positive employment experience.

We have created a set of ground rules that spells out how and why salaries change at EstimateOne.

Key Principles

- A preference for paying the people here more, instead of going and hiring more people
- Have an approach to setting and adjusting salaries we can repeat
- Remove ad-hoc negotiation and bias
- Be crystal-clear on how performance can increase your salary
- Have a number of mutual incentives to increase salaries
- Salaries should be driven by a person's level of responsibility and how they contribute to our values

We use salary tables to give you a clear idea of what you can be expected to be paid, based on:

- Your broad job function;
- Your level of responsibility; and
- Your Radius of Impact

Your 'Level' relates to your level of responsibility (and associated behaviours), while your 'Radius of Impact' relates to how well you're creating value in that role.

Setting & Adjusting Salary

We generally hire people at a Radius of Impact of 1-3 – knowing that there's a good chance you'll have a fair bit to learn about the industry before you can start creating a higher level of value. Your Radius of Impact is adjusted every year during a performance review – and we use peer assessments to measure how this is changed. In a similar way, we'll chat through whether the level you're on is still appropriate if your role or responsibilities have changed on a practical level.

Some Key Rituals

Friday Team Meetings

It probably comes as a surprise to you that we love Fridays. We're only human.

But Friday afternoons are a particularly good time. That's when the whole team gets together to reflect on the week, share what we've learnt and cover off any important company-wide events. It's also pretty casual – we spend a fair bit of every meeting having a laugh.

A Q&A to wrap up the day

Usually, two people will be nominated ahead of time to answer three of eight standing questions – and share their answers with the team. Some of the questions include, “What's the most important thing you'll be working on next week?”, or “Have you seen a team member do something great this week? If so, what was it, and why was it great?”. The answers are always insightful – and in many occasions, have totally reshaped our product roadmap and our organisational strategy.

Once the meeting's done, it's usually time for a beer (or a wine, if you prefer) and some downtime. It's a good way to wrap up the week – and if the cheese comes out, that's even better.

Cycles

Cycles are a structured way of breaking the year even chunks – 7 cycles a year, 7 weeks each, with a break over Christmas and New Year.

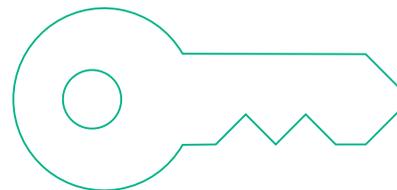
Why have we introduced this way of working?

It's not because 7's our lucky number (although if it's yours, you'll be stoked). It's to maintain a clear focus – and to make sure we're always working on the most valuable things. The shorter time frames help us be more accurate with our planning, and chunking large projects into smaller stages usually leads to better clarity and performance. Better to tackle those big jobs one little win at a time, right?

The first week of the cycle is all about kicking off and gaining momentum, which carries through to Week 6 – when 'work' concludes with a Showcase to share what's been done.

Week 7

A 'cycle' is effectively six weeks of structured 'work', then a seventh week (the creatively-named 'Week 7') that's dedicated to unstructured thinking, reflection, recognition, feedback and celebration. Its purpose is to break up the pace of the cycles with some downtime to reflect, share thoughts and adjust course if need be.



It's Showcase time

We have our showcase on Friday of Week 7 – where all our teams present all the work they've completed in the cycle. Then we all head out for a shared lunch and team activity (which is totally optional, if you're out of steam and ready for an early one). After all, a cycle is a lot of work – so it's important we get out of the office to spend some quality time together.

OKRs

'OKR' – or objectives and key results – is a framework used by lots of companies (like Google) to help define both the bigger picture goals (objectives) and the measurable steps we want to take to reach them (the key results). We use OKRs for every cycle.

Both streams and functions use OKRs here at EstimateOne for every cycle – with an objective or a key result often being shared when a stream and function are working together.

Retros

A 'retro' is short for 'retrospective' – a highly-structured team workshop. We do retros regularly, so our teams can look back on a specific piece of work, see what's working, work through what isn't, and think about ways we can improve for the next cycle.

What's in a retro?

They're made up of your personal reflections, which are collected on sticky notes and discussed with your team. You might answer questions like:

- What went well over the last period?
- What didn't go so well?
- What pushed us forward?
- What held us back?
- What am I confused about?

There's no single way to run a retro, but often they are facilitated by someone outside that stream or function to allow full participation by the whole team. At EstimateOne, retros form a key part of Week 7 activities but can be held at any time.

Other cool stuff that's worth knowing

Workplace giving program

EstimateOne is committed to sharing the financial windfalls of our success with worthy causes.

We always do our bit to give back and aim to donate two per cent of pre-tax profit to charity. We EstimateOne will match employee donations at a ratio of 2:1. That means for every \$1 (pre-tax) you put towards a cause you're passionate about, we'll donate \$2.

We calculate this every quarter. So if you've put \$50 towards a charity over three months, \$100 from us won't be far behind – so you can make an even bigger difference where it matters most.

Entrepreneurial leave

EstimateOne is committed to helping every team member have the space and time to grow and learn.

That's why we offer everyone five paid days of leave each year (pro-rated if you're part time) to work on those entrepreneurial pursuits you mightn't otherwise find the time to bring to life.

You'll need to have been employed at EstimateOne for six months before you can take this up, but once you're eligible, you'll get a further five days to use that year. It doesn't accrue, so you're best to take it.

What could I do?

- Start an eBay shop online to sell your handmade clothing line
- Organise a music festival
- Build an app that allows you to find someone else to do your laundry
- Start a dog-walking business
- Just about anything involving building your own business

Volunteer leave

EstimateOne is committed to community engagement that is meaningful, purposeful and helps those in need.

We get that sometimes you'll want to do more than donate to make a positive difference. And all of our full-time and part-time employees who've been with us for 6 months get one day of paid leave each year to volunteer for any charitable, not-for-profit organisation. You can take them as half-days if need be, and volunteer on your own or as part of a group. This leave doesn't accrue either, so be sure to find a worthy cause to support.

What could I do?

- Create a website for a fundraising event to fight cancer
- Set up Google Adwords for a dog shelter
- Project manage a new office fit-out for a migration service
- Bookkeeping for a homeless persons' legal service
- ...anything that would be an invaluable use of your volunteered time (so you're not just making an impact here)

Parental leave

EstimateOne is committed to supporting its people during arguably their most important role – parenting! We want you to have the time and space to cope with what can be a difficult job, and when you're ready, come back to work where we'll continue to support you with flexibility (and hugs).

All full time and part time employees who have been at EstimateOne for 9 months or more are entitled to paid parental and paid partner parental leave.

EstimateOne offers the primary caregiver 12 weeks leave at full pay, with the option to take it as 24 weeks at half pay. In accordance with the Fair Work Act, as a primary caregiver you are entitled to take 12 months off in total (with the difference being unpaid).

For partner parental leave we offer two weeks full pay or 6 weeks at 60% of your full pay. This can be taken up to a year after the baby is born/adopted, taken in one continuous block.

That's it, good luck!

Our Brand

What is a brand, and what does EstimateOne's brand represent?



What's a brand?

We're literally surrounded by brands. We buy them, we talk about them, we recognise them in an instant. Sometimes we even help build them.

EstimateOne is a brand as much as it is a product or service. But what's our brand all about?

It's a promise.

One that we've made to our customers and each other. It's what we say and how we say it. What we do, but more importantly how we go about it. It's our products and equally how we build them. A combo of values, personality and attitude that customers put together to form a picture of who we are – and most importantly, why they should choose us.

It's the expectations our customers have of us.

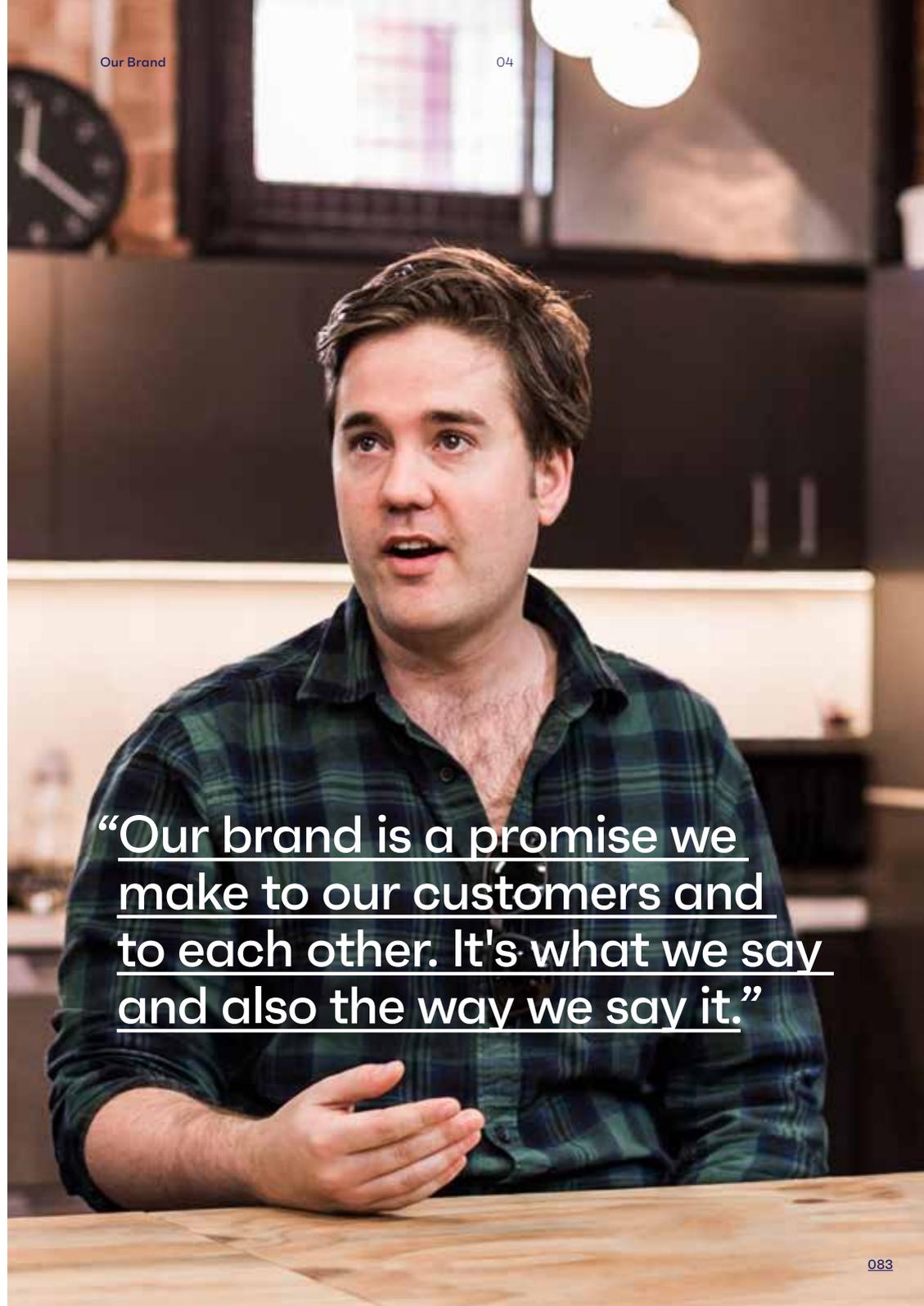
Whether they've been customers for days, weeks or years. These expectations accumulate and evolve every time we interact with them – and a rock-solid, reliable brand experience helps us make more of the opportunities those interactions bring.

It's here to make your job more enjoyable, too.

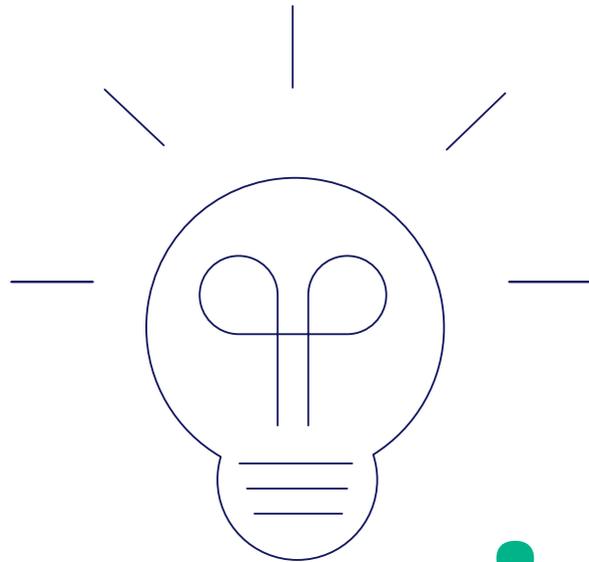
It can guide you through how to respond to customers, work with your team and plan your cycle. It should help you make decisions and push forward. And it will hopefully give you a sense of pride when you come to work every day. If that's how our brand makes you feel, we've done our job properly.

It's described in words, but it's so much more.

The following pages describe our brand in words. Our **essence** is us in a nutshell – our **promise** is how that comes to life. Our **pillars** are the ideas that set us apart from our peers, while our **personality** is the distinctive way that we go about it. And finally, our **target mindset** is how we sum up our core audiences – capturing an attitude that's in line with our own.



“Our brand is a promise we make to our customers and to each other. It's what we say and also the way we say it.”



Our Essence

Proactive

“We intelligently connect commercial construction people, helping them to work smarter with practical solutions that solve real everyday problems.”

Ingenuity

Our Promise

We intelligently connect commercial construction people, helping them to work smarter with practical solutions that solve real everyday problems.

We put ourselves in your shoes and think two-steps ahead – so you have what you need at your fingertips to think strategically and act fast.

Personality traits

Bright

Pragmatic

Can-do

Energised

Pillars



We get you

Our customer centricity

Customer benefit

“Someone I can trust”

We listen to our customers’ feedback so we can always continue to improve. We use plain English, no tech jargon, and our support is there when you need it.



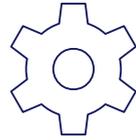
One for all

Our popularity

Customer benefit

“Access to a wide network”

We’re fast becoming the new industry standard for sharing detailed information during tender. More builders use us – so there’s better market intelligence. And because we’re affordable, nobody has to miss out.



Master of one

Our specialisation

Customer benefit

“Information that’s relevant to me”

We’re exclusively for the commercial construction industry. We give you the power to navigate this world of information so it’s most relevant for you.



Working smarter

Our smarts

Customer benefit

“Power to control complex processes”

We’re always enabling smarter ways of managing information in commercial construction, so our customers can think strategically and prioritise their work – giving you more control over your tendering efforts.

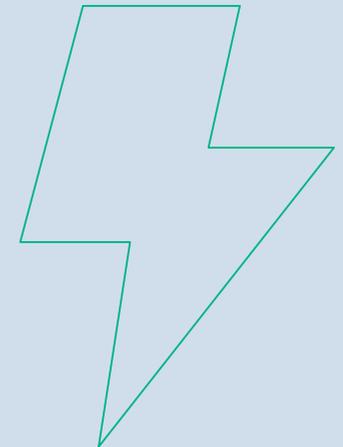
Our Target Mindset

Attentive bright sparks

More new school than old school, we appeal to those that understand the big picture – people who want to do things properly – not just the task at hand.

Strategic thinkers, they are the savvy talent in their field. Driven to succeed, they want to put their best foot forward to win. They want to be part of a success story in an industry on the verge of a technology evolution.

We are the choice for smarter, judicious construction professionals.



The Construction Industry

Tendering? Head contracts?
Subbies and sparkies?

If your head hurts, don't panic –
we've all been there. So here's a bit
of an overview of the ins and outs of
the construction industry – who's who
and how they all fit together.





The Industry

Commercial Construction at a glance

EstimateOne serves the commercial construction industry. And while there's no formal definition of this industry, we consider it to be all building activity that's greater than your typical residential property. It's not just limited to commercial buildings like office towers – it also includes public sector (schools, hospitals, etc.) and multi-dwelling residential buildings (high-rise apartments). Besides new builds, commercial construction also covers refurbishment, extensions, alterations and upgrades of existing buildings.

The most relevant part of this construction activity for us is that it usually includes a tendering phase – where builders submit tenders, and in the process of doing so solicit quotes from subcontractors and suppliers.

Who's who in the construction zoo

There are a whole stack of different players in this industry.

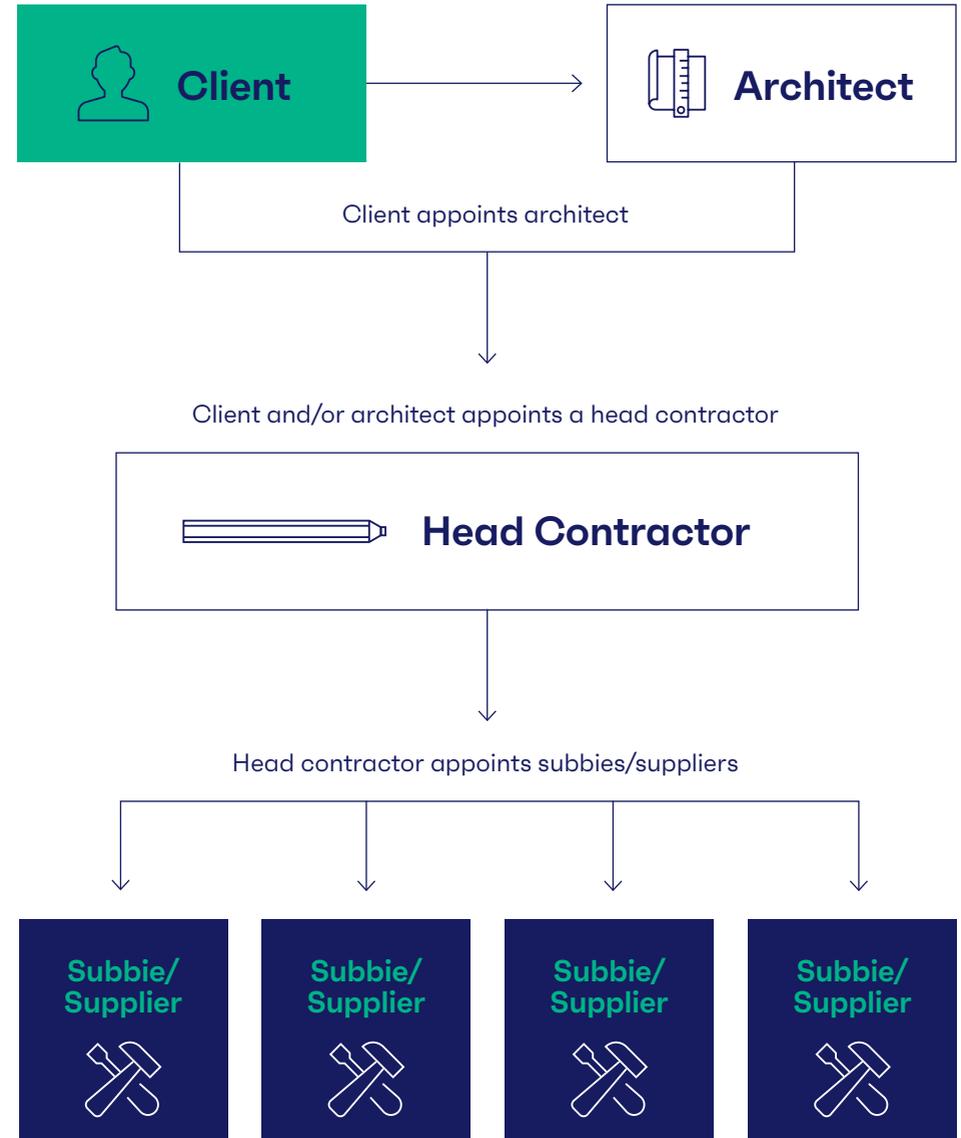
Some of the key ones include:

- **Client** – the person or entity that procures the building work.
- **Architect** – designs and specifies the detail of the building work and produces drawings and plans (paid by the client). With the client, they select the head contractor to take the lead in completing the building work.
- **Head contractor (builder)** – delivers the building work specified in the drawings and typically takes full accountability for its completion (paid by the client.)
- **Subcontractor (or subbie)** – completes a subset of the building works that is specific to their trade/s such as concreting (paid by the head contractor.)
- **Supplier** – provides goods/materials to be used in completing the building works (paid by the head contractor or other subcontractors).

That's a lot of pieces for the one puzzle, right? Here's a handy visual reference for how they all interact.

The lines aren't always clear-cut. Some building companies might be head contractors on one job and subbies on another. And some suppliers are also paid to install or build with their supplied goods – essentially making them subbies too.

A typical commercial construction project



What’s tendering?

The word ‘tender’ has a few important definitions. It describes the process of requesting proposals (the client or architect can ‘tender’ the job), the act of making the proposal (the builder can ‘tender’ for the job) and the actual proposal itself (builders submit their ‘tenders’).

And they’re all relevant to EstimateOne.

In the construction industry, tendering is happening in at least two places: between the client/architect and builder, and between the builder and subbies/suppliers. Both cases are a good way for an organisation to get a tailored, cost-effective offer for any good or service. It is commonly used in the construction industry because it helps to control costs while delivering a complex product (i.e. a building). By soliciting multiple tenders for a given item of work, an organisation has a better chance of identifying the best provider, whether they’re the lowest cost or preferred for another reason.

“We help facilitate one level of this tendering: head contractors inviting subcontractors and suppliers to tender.”

Still not 100%?

Here’s an example we prepared earlier:

‘Radeon Construction’ is tendering the new Narre Warren High School project. Radeon Constructions will need quotes from subcontractors for all of the different building elements. Each subcontractor will only supply a quote for their particular trade (e.g. concrete, electrical services, painting, etc). In order to determine if a quote is competitive, Radeon will need several quotes from each trade.

Radeon Construction has identified 50 different trades involved in the proposed project. To ensure a competitive and accurate tender price, Radeon seeks 5 subcontractor quotes per trade. This means they’re looking for 250 quotes overall – that’s a fair few!

Radeon Construction will now need to contact at least 250 subcontractors, but more likely 500–600 subcontractors, in order to find enough organisations willing to quote the tender. Radeon contacts 600 subcontractors to confirm their interest in tendering, and once confirmed, they supply each subcontractor the relevant documents they’ll need to price up the project and provide a quote.

It’s a lot of work.

A typical tendering process



Different trades involved in the proposed project

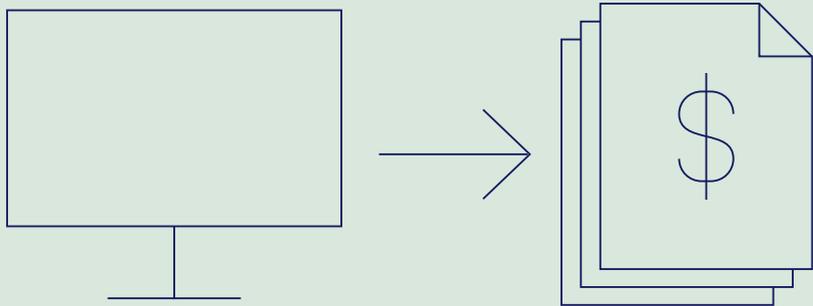


Subcontractor quotes per trade are required, to ensure a competitive price.



Subcontractors will need to be contacted for quotes! (but more likely 500–600 subcontractors, in order to find enough organisations willing to quote the tender.)

“For subcontractors and suppliers, EstimateOne is a valuable source of potential leads and a way to win more work.”



How does EstimateOne fit in?

We take some of that hard work out of the tendering process – in a whole bunch of ways.

Builders use our software to intelligently manage the hundreds and thousands of pages of drawings, schedules and other documentation for a construction project. They can create ‘packages’ of documents that include only the relevant sections for specific audiences – and then distribute those to subbies and suppliers when they’re requesting quotes.

When the project doesn’t have to be kept under wraps

Builders can post the documents and details on our public noticeboard – sharing their project with even more potential subbies and suppliers. (Things like a new army base probably won't be shared there).

We help subbies and suppliers win work as well

If they’re invited directly by builders to submit quotes, they can use EstimateOne to indicate their intention to quote (or not). They can also access, search and filter our tender noticeboard – which includes all the projects posted by builders (along with all the essential docs).

Products, Audiences & Value Propositions

If you've made it this far into the book, you'll know a whole heap about what we value and how we work. But what do we actually do? Who are our customers? How do we create value for them?

Read on – we've got answers.



EstimateOne services three key audiences: builders, subcontractors and suppliers. They all need each other to successfully win and deliver a project – and we help them out in different ways.

Our Audiences



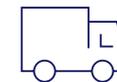
Builders

A builder (technically referred to as a 'head contractor') is a company who deals directly with the client at one end, and with subcontractors on the other. Builders often don't 'build' anything themselves. They engage subcontractors to carry out all the building works necessary as part of a head contract agreement. Examples include Lend Lease and Multiplex.



Subcontractors

Affectionately referred to as a 'subbie', a subcontractor is an organisation contracted under a builder to perform a specific piece of work. Subcontractors are the ones responsible for actually constructing a building under the direction of a builder. Examples include A.A Plumbing and Delta Demolition.



Suppliers

Suppliers provide all manner of finished materials, fixtures, fittings and products required to build a building. If subbies provide the services, suppliers provide the goods. Suppliers can be contracted directly by the builder, or can supply to a subcontractor who in turn is under contract with the builder. Examples include National Tiles or Boral Concrete.

Our Value Propositions

We help builders distribute and manage large volumes of drawings and documents, across multiple projects at the same time – while helping them invite subbies to tender.

On top of that, we make it easier for them to assess trade coverage (having enough quotes for each trade) by knowing if subbies are planning to quote or not. These relationships with subbies are important to builders – so it's important to them that subbies find EstimateOne easy to learn and use.

We create value for builders by being simple and reliable to use – so that estimators can hop on every day and take care of their tendering tasks.

We help subbies find and manage upcoming work opportunities that are relevant for their trade.

They can view and filter our tender noticeboard, or search for projects based on the specifics that matter more them. We also make it easier for them to access documentation for projects, let builders know if they are planning on quoting and stay up to date with any design changes.

We create value for subbies by helping them win more work in less time – increasing their revenue while reducing their costs.

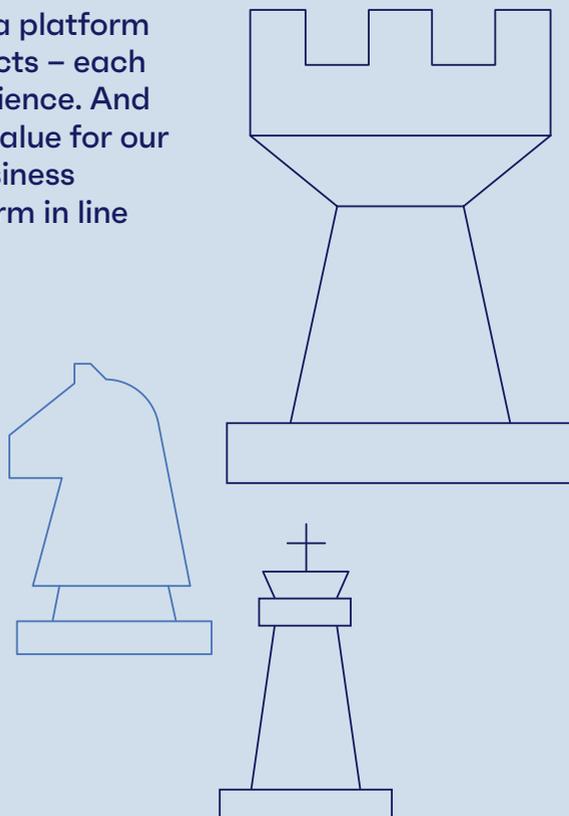
We help suppliers find and follow projects that may require their products.

For suppliers looking for specific product names or brands (which might normally be hidden in pages and pages of project documentation), our search feature makes it easy to track down the specifics – which can ultimately lead to orders for their products, goods or materials.

We create value for suppliers in a similar way to subbies – by winning more contracts to supply, while saving time and admin costs.

Our Product Strategy

We see EstimateOne as a platform of interconnected products – each servicing a different audience. And in order to build lasting value for our customers – and our business – we develop that platform in line with these principles.



1. Engage

Develop industry-leading workflow solutions for commercial construction companies that easy to engage with – and generate valuable data.

2. Unlock

Collect, transfer and simplify that data – turning that info into insights that can be put to work to help the industry make progress.

3. Convert

Cross-sell our insight products to other members of the commercial construction industry.

4. Service

Provide (extremely) user-friendly and low-support interfaces, built with robust and responsive tech – to reduce the costs of delivery.

5. Sustain

Build a high-performance organisation that isn't dependent on any one individual, using repeatable formulas and delivering the points above consistently and regularly.

6. Retain

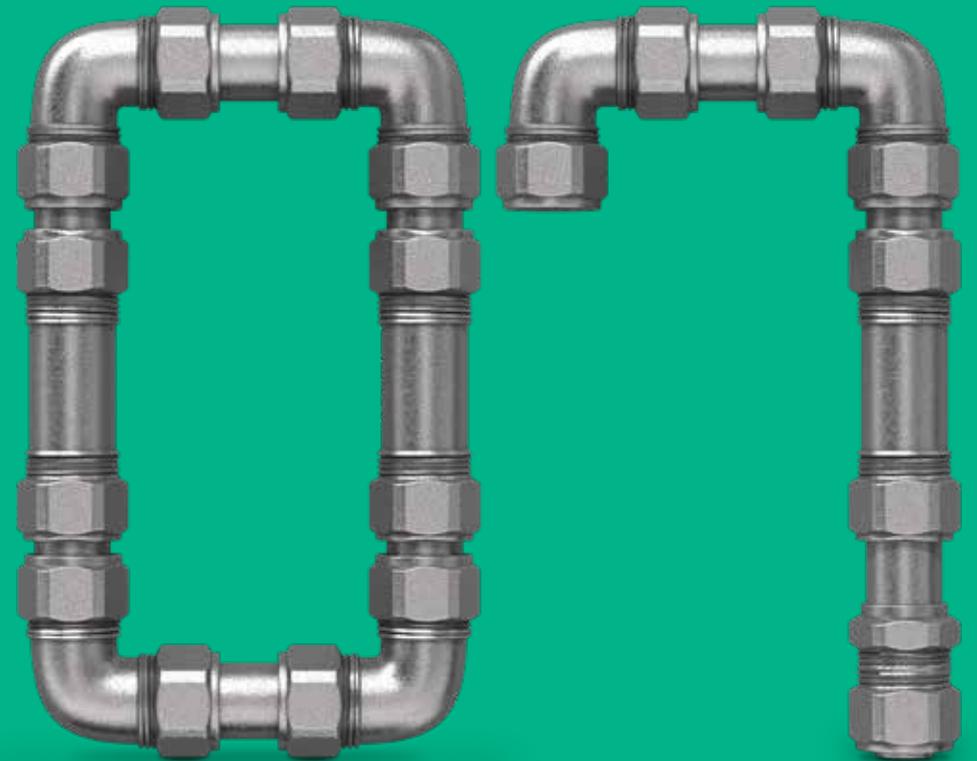
Create network, brand, service and data lock-in effects from using EstimateOne – to foster long-term, stable and recurring subscription revenues.

We call this EUCSSR for short. Unfortunately, 'WINNING' or 'AMAZING' didn't work as an acronym – but the point stands.

Our Technology

This section describes our tech 'stack' at EstimateOne. This is a bit technical and intended for developers, so feel free to skip it if you're in a different function.

Or if you're a developer – like we said, this stuff is for you.

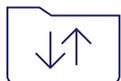


There are three primary codebases at EstimateOne:



Ascension

This is the main application and the majority of the source code. The backend is built with PHP using the Symfony framework and a large number of open source libraries (eg. Doctrine, Monolog). Frontend assets are written in JavaScript and JSX. We use webpack as a build tool for compiling and minifying our frontend assets.



The file manager

This is a microservice which handles all file uploading and downloading for Ascension. It communicates with Ascension via an API – and relies on a pre-shared secret to generate tokens for authentication. It’s written in JavaScript and leverages the Express framework.



The marketing site

This is hosted at estimateone.com and queries an Ascension API.

“Nothing is sacred. If any developer (or anybody for that matter) thinks we could improve something, then they should bring it up and make it happen.”

We run our entire application stack on AWS, with a fairly uncomplicated classical stack. We have a load balancer that balances between two EC2 instances that serve Ascension. We have a worker server that hosts RabbitMQ and runs all of our cron jobs and processes that consume messages from RabbitMQ. We also run an Elasticsearch E-server to power the search functionality of the site. We use the CloudFront CDN to serve our frontend assets. Our database is hosted on Amazon RDS. We use Amazon Aurora as our database engine. It is a custom fork of MySQL provided by Amazon that allows higher throughput.

We have a separate staging environment that replicates production as much as possible. It’s useful for testing the performance of features (especially database queries) with production scale data.

In terms of supporting tools, we use GitHub for version control – and pull request reviews, and BuildKite for continuous integration.

A history of making progress

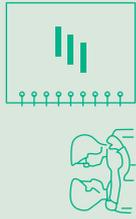
Interested in the full journey?
We've managed to pull it all together
onto one (larger than normal) page.



Our Journey So Far

Keen for some time travel? Let's go back to where it all began.

2008



EstimateOne is formed

Mike and Ritchie put their heads together and start sketching out concepts for a digital tender workflow system. Over beers. Many beers.

Revenue: \$0
Head count: 2

2009

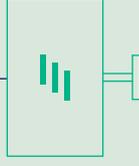


We sign our first customer

P&R Air Conditioning becomes the very first subscriber to our Weekly Tender Report (WTR). Within a few weeks, that number jumps from 1 to 30.

Revenue: \$0
Head count: 2

2010



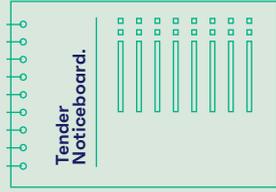
We form a working prototype

We demonstrate our tender workflow software to three key builders. The feedback's positive, but there's a common theme:

"Subbies won't use this!"

Revenue: \$30k
Head count: 2

2011

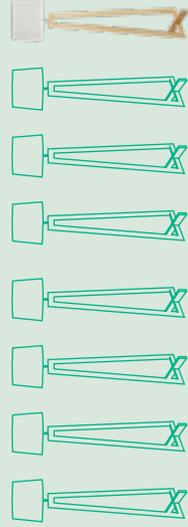


We launch the tender noticeboard

Mike and Ritchie change tack. They build a tender noticeboard for subcontractors and suppliers, listing open commercial tenders. It's a hit.

Revenue: \$70k
Head count: 2

2013

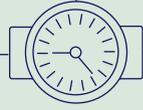


We have 35,000 subcontractors using the platform

The platform becomes very popular with subcontractors across Australia – who value it for its ease of use, as well as the number of projects available.

Revenue: \$1.2m
Head count: 6

2012

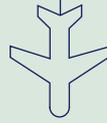


We release the tender documentation platform

After getting requests from a whole bunch of builders, EstimateOne is expanded to support the delivery of tender documents to subcontractors and suppliers. We have over 500 subbies on month-to-month billing plans.

Revenue: \$447k
Head count: 3

2014



We launch in New Zealand

EstimateOne goes multinational. We discover the same process problems in New Zealand, and the platform is a hit across the ditch as well.

Revenue: \$1.6m
Head count: 12

2015

2019

We get a facelift

With the next 10 years of growth ahead of us, we refresh our brand and platform to reflect the organisation we've become. The year's still young and anything's possible – with a pilot in the UK and continued efforts in the Asia-Pacific.



2029

This book is still a great read

Some things don't have to change.

2016

We sign our 200th builder client

And with that, we establish our position as the clear market leader in the tender workflow and RFQ-issuing space. It feels great.

Revenue: \$2.5m
Head count: 14

2018

We look to new international markets

Celebrating 10 years since our inception, we look to Asia Pacific – adding the Philippines to our roll call. Our organisational design has an upgrade too, as we implement streams, cycles and OKRs.

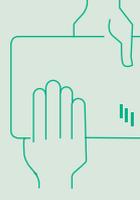
Revenue: \$5.2m
Head count: 27

2017

We release a handover and delivery platform

We go beyond estimating – launching a new builder product to help delivery and site teams communicate more effectively with subbies and suppliers.

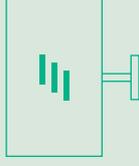
Revenue: \$3.0m
Head count: 14



We're officially the most popular document distribution platform

With 60,000 subbies now using us across Australia and New Zealand, we're quickly becoming the dominant pre-construction platform in the region.

Revenue: \$3.8m
Head count: 17



60,000



Our story
continues
to unfold...

What's



Now you've made it to the end of the book,
it's time to start thinking about the next chapter.

As you've (hopefully!) gathered by now, we don't work in hierarchical, top-down operations – and that includes our strategy. It's all about self-managed, values-led continuous improvement. Always has been. Certainly isn't going to stop being the case just yet.

All of us are working on things in this cycle – and we have visions in place that we want to achieve by the end of the year. So if you're interested in what a particular team (or the whole organisation) is aiming to get done this year, ask for their vision & playbook. It should give you a pretty good idea.

Our *authentic ambition* extends well beyond this year

It's about being the best organisation we can be, doing work that makes the biggest and best possible difference to our shareholders, our industry and our team. Today, tomorrow, and all the days after that.

Ready to get to work?

You'll need to put down the book first. Then it's time to do amazing things.

next?

“WTF?!”

There's some terms and phrases you should get your head around in order to avoid those “Huh?” moments.

Construction Industry Terms

AA

An abbreviation for ‘Architects Advice’. This is used as the formal reply to an RFI.

Architect

Architects are specialists in designing the built environment. They're responsible for creating the concepts, drawings and specifications that detail the building work – as well as liaising with other consultants like engineers to make sure the project's buildable. Architects work together in a ‘practice’ and often specialise in certain building types – such as health, education or residential.

Asbestos Removal

Asbestos is a hazardous substance that is typically slow and expensive to remove – and there's so much of it that it's a trade all of its own. Because it's so hazardous, its removal from building sites is very tightly regulated.

Awarded Work

A term used in the industry to describe tenders that have been accepted – and a contract is agreed on the basis of the tender. A project being ‘awarded’ is the next step after a tender is submitted by a Builder (See Builder).

CA

Stands for ‘Contract Administrator’. They are responsible for creating the various scopes and contracts that subcontractors carry out.

Carpentry

Often called ‘chippies’, carpenters’ primary task is often timber framing. Carpenters will also stand door frames, hang doors and install door furniture and hardware. If there ever was a trade that lived up to the cliché of being a ‘jack-of-all-trades’, it would be the carpenter.

Client

This is the person or entity who's commissioning the building work. They're usually the key decision maker in any construction project.

CM

Stands for ‘Construction Manager’. They're more senior leaders, responsible for managing several PMs (project managers) across various sites and occasionally in assembling bids as well.

Concrete

Responsible for creating the structure of the building, it can be used to pour ground slabs, walls, columns, suspended floors, elevator shafts etc. Concrete usually takes 28 days to reach full strength but is usually fine to walk on the same day it's poured. This process is called curing or sometimes waiting for concrete to ‘go off’.

Demolition

The demolition trade (often referred to as ‘demo’) is responsible for safely pulling down or deconstructing a building, or getting rid of refuse. Demolition can also be on a small scale, such as the ‘strip-out’ of an existing office setup, returning to its ‘base’ conditions (sometimes called, ‘shell & core’).

Drawing Register

Used by all kinds of parties. For an architect, it's a record of all drawings and schedules with their respective revisions. To an estimator, it's a spreadsheet used in the process of allocating drawings, specifications and other tender documents to specific trade packages.

Documentation

Also referred to as ‘docs’, ‘documentation’ is an umbrella term used to describe any form of document that's part of a tender. It's sometimes also referred to as ‘contract documentation’ – and can include plan drawings, specifications, schedules, surveys and bills of quantity to name some of the most commonly issued documents.

Early works trades

These are a collection of trades that are first to any site, including demolition, asbestos removal and earthworks. They're largely responsible for preparing the site ready for new construction.

Earthworks

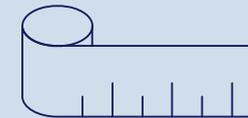
The earthworks trade is responsible for removing existing earth, so foundations can be poured or the site can be made completely level. If the site needs to have earth removed (i.e. needs to be ‘cut’) this is taken off-site and needs to be dumped.

Electrical Services

Often referred to as ‘sparkies’, this trade is responsible for wiring the building with electricity, data, communications, security, CCTV, audiovisual, nurse call, and much more.

EOI

An abbreviation for ‘Expression of Interest’. It's used when referring to subcontractors who express interest in quoting a trade package for a tender that a head contractor is pricing. Sometimes builders have to compile EOI submissions before being accepted onto a tender list with a client.



Estimator

A person responsible for constructing a price for a specific scope (or scopes) of work. They weigh up labour, time and material costs – using documents, schedules and prior project experiences to calculate the likely cost to build something.

FF&E

An abbreviation for fittings, fixtures and equipment, this is a schedule the architect provides alongside the drawings, to specify items such as taps, light fittings, whitegoods and joinery hardware.

Fill

Extra earth or crushed rock brought in by the earthworks trade to make a site flat.

The Finishing Trades

A collective term that includes trades like plastering, joinery, floor coverings, painting and caulking. These are the last trades to come through a site and are responsible for the presentability of the project – its enduring look and feel.

Fire Services

This trade takes responsibility for the systems designed to come into effect in the event of a fire. All buildings are built to a strict code, which is primarily concerned with preserving life rather than the building itself. It can include treating existing structure with fire retardants, as well as more conventional systems like sprinklers.

Floor Coverings

The floor coverings trade can be split up a bit further into carpet, vinyl and timber coverings. More often than not, they'll be separate trades altogether – but they sit nice and neatly under this heading.

Formwork

Formwork is essentially a mould or ‘form’ to hold concrete in its place while setting. It's usually a form of laminated timber that won't adhere to the concrete while it's curing. You'd never have formwork without concrete.

Head Contractor

A head contractor (more often referred to as ‘the builder’) is a company who deals directly with the client at one end, and with subcontractors on the other. Most commercial builders in Australia act as head contractors. Head contractors don't technically ‘build’ anything themselves. They engage subcontractors to carry out all the building works necessary as part of a head contract agreement.

Hydraulic Services

More colloquially referred to as plumbers, this trade covers quite a few areas. It can include clean water connection and associated piping, hot water supply, sewage, storm water and natural gas.

They're usually the first trade to start and the last to leave – and we're sure a few of them take the same approach to parties.

Joinery

Joiners essentially make cabinetry. So it probably won't come as too much of a surprise to hear they're sometimes also known as cabinetmakers.

Lift Services

The lift trade handles 'vertical transportation', which usually involves lifts. Because lifts are expensive and custom-made they have a long lead time – and need to be ordered a long time before you want to install them.

Loose Furniture

A term used to describe furniture that isn't fixed, like chairs, tables, mobile storage units and some lighting.

Masonry

This trade covers brick and block-laying. Bricks are usually made from hardened clay – while blocks are typically made from concrete.

Mechanical Services

In a nutshell, the mechanical services trade is responsible for air-conditioning and all the different forms that takes. It comes under the umbrella of HVAC – Heating, Ventilating, Air-Conditioning.

Package

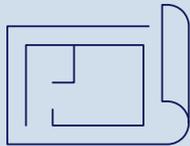
Also referred to as a trade package, these are bundles of project documents put together by estimators for specific trades.

PC

Stands for 'practical completion' – which is an important milestone for builders, because it indicates that the client can occupy the building.

Piling or Bored Piers

A pile or bored pier is basically a giant concrete 'stilt' or 'pylon' that sits buried in the ground. The idea is to have the base of the piers resting on bedrock or something equally solid. A pile is usually made of reinforced concrete, prefabricated off site and rammed into the earth with heavy equipment (usually in soft and boggy conditions). A bored pier is where the earth is bored out with equipment (looks a bit like a giant corkscrew) and concrete is poured back in its place to form a pier.



Plan Drawings

More commonly known just as 'plans', these are the most common form of tender and contract documentation for all projects. Plans are scale drawings of existing conditions and the new works that need to be carried out by the head contractor and subcontractors.

Plastering

The plastering trade includes both wall and ceiling coverings (i.e. plasterboard) – plus the structures that hold them up.

Precast Concrete

These are concrete panels that are prefabricated off site, then transported to the construction site on a truck and hoisted into place by a crane. Panels can comprise walls, floors, columns or just about any component of a structure.

Preferred Subcontractor

A term used by builders to describe subcontractors that they prefer to request quotes or tenders from.

Preliminaries & Site Establishment

Also referred to as 'prelims', this describes what's required for a builder to establish the building site. This process involves setting up temporary accommodation for builder's representatives and subcontractors who'll carry out works on the site.

PM

AKA Project Manager. These exist on both the client side (representing the organisation commissioning the building or works), and on the builder side (as the main coordinator of the building works).

Quote

An offer to carry out an agreed scope of work for a fixed amount of money. This term is most commonly used in reference to subcontractors submitting 'quotes' for their trade packages to a head contractor for a tender.

RFI

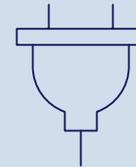
An abbreviation for 'Request for Information'. An RFI is a formalised (i.e. in writing) communication between two parties when clarification around a particular piece of information is needed.

RFQ

Stands for 'Request for Quote'. Estimators on the builder side use EstimateOne to send out RFQs to subbies and suppliers – asking them to price a project scope.

Reinforcement

Often called steel-fixers, the supply and installation of reinforcement for concrete (or 'reo' as its known on sites) is carried out by the reinforcement trade. Reinforcement is needed to make concrete capable of withstanding tensile forces, which allows it to be used for suspended floors and tall columns.



The services trades

A collection of trades including electrical, hydraulic, mechanical, fire and lift services. This set of trades usually has a very specific set of engineering drawings that they work from, along with the architectural set.

Specification

Also referred to as 'specs' (pronounced 'spess', just to keep things interesting), specifications will always accompany plan drawings – as they describe details of elements contained in the plans. The specification will contain details that describe which materials should be used, or a standard that must be met during the construction of that element.

The structural trades

A collective term for trades responsible for the fundamental support or structure of a building. This includes piles, bored piers, concrete and its associated formwork and reinforcement. It also includes structural steel, masonry, and even carpentry with timber framing.

Structural Steel

Structural steel is also (usually) an important part of a building's structure. It's often used in instances where long spans are required without support as it's lighter than concrete.

Subcontractor

Affectionately referred to as a 'subbie', a subcontractor is a person or organisation contracted under a builder to perform a specific scope of work. The subcontractors are the people and businesses responsible for actually constructing a building under the direction of a head contractor. They're usually split into areas of specialty, otherwise known as a 'trade'. Trades come in a few large categories in order of their activity on site – services trades, early works trades, structural trades and finishing trades.

Supplier

Suppliers provide all any of the finished materials, fixtures, fittings and products required to build a building. Everything from taps to cabling, carpets to plasterboard. Suppliers can be contracted directly by the builder, or can supply to a subcontractor who in turn is under contract with the builder.

Trade Coverage

Trade coverage (also referred to as 'coverage') refers to builders having a sufficient number of quotes for each of the trades needed as part of a tender submission.

Trade Prices

These are prices from subcontractors who are willing and able to carry out the work for a specific tender. This is important because it reflects the real 'market' price for a trade package. Trade pricing is always preferred to an estimator's rates.

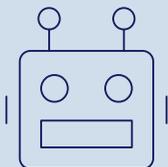
Tender

A bid or offer to provide goods and/or services for a stated fixed amount of money.

Workstations

A widely-used term that describes desking systems often used in commercial office fitouts, which is often a separate trade or supplier.

Software Development Terms



AI

Artificial intelligence (AI) is an area of computer science that focuses on creating intelligent machines that work and react like humans. An example of a real-world application of AI is the computer vision system in self-driving vehicles.

API

An *application programming interface*. APIs set out a set of rules for interacting with a software library or platform. They take many forms, but one example is that we use – ‘consume’ – various *AWS* APIs, to leverage the features of their platform.

Ascension

Is the codename we gave to the ‘new’ version of EstimateOne that was launched in September 2015. The big change from the previous version (codename *Dominance*) was a complete rewrite of the backend to use the *Symfony* framework.

AWS

Stands for Amazon Web Services. It’s a platform of services such as servers, database hosting and file storage sold by Amazon. We use it (along with many other tech companies) to host the code that runs EstimateOne and serve it up to our users.

Back end

The server environment where all of our *PHP* code runs – and where we store user data in our databases and save uploaded files and drawings

Bug

A software bug is an error, flaw, failure or fault in a computer program or system that causes it to produce an incorrect or unexpected result.

CSS

Stands for Cascading Style Sheet. It’s a language that lets us control the appearance of *HTML* elements on a web page.

Deploy

These are all of the activities that make a version of a piece software system available for use in a particular environment.

Developer

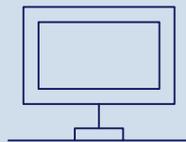
A person concerned with facets of the software development process, including the research, design, programming, and testing of computer software.

Domain Name

A domain name is a convenient, easy-to-remember alias for an *IP address* – like estimateone.com. It’s quite similar to looking up somebody’s address in the phone book.

Elasticsearch

Elasticsearch is the search engine we use here at EstimateOne. It allows our users to search not only by project name, but within all of our uploaded documentation. We also use it within our admin interface to search for user accounts.



Front end

This refers to a user’s browser environment. It’s where all the *HTML*, *CSS* & *Javascript* is executed.

git

Git isn’t just an old-fashioned English insult – it’s also a distributed version control system. It keeps a record of all the changes we make to our source code – in a repository – and allows us to work on the codebase in parallel without stepping on each others’ toes.

GitHub

An online platform we use for hosting our *git repositories*. It also allows us to review *pull requests*, create tickets and record discussions around how best to approach the squashing of *bugs* and the implementation of new features.

HTML

Stands for Hypertext Markup Language. It’s the language all web pages on the internet are rendered in – and determines what you see in a browser window. Our *PHP* code produces HTML as its output.

IP Address

Stands for Internet Protocol address. It’s a number that corresponds with a particular location on the internet. Every computer on a network has an IP address and it’s how all the servers on a network know which other server to send a message to. Think of it like a mailing address.

JavaScript

A scripting language that runs in the browser and provides interactivity beyond static *HTML* pages. EstimateOne makes extensive use of JavaScript in *Ascension* on almost all pages.

jQuery

Is a *JavaScript* library that we use extensively in our frontend code. It was incredibly popular when the first version of EstimateOne was being built, but modern frameworks like *React* have changed that. We’re trying to write all of our new *JavaScript* code using *React* and we plan to stop using jQuery altogether in the future.

Machine Learning

Machine learning (ML) is the scientific study of algorithms and statistical models that computer systems use to progressively improve their performance on a specific task. Machine learning algorithms build a mathematical model of sample data, known as “training data” – so that they can make predictions or decisions without being explicitly programmed to perform the task.

PHP

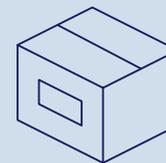
Stands for PHP Hypertext Preprocessor (a recursive acronym, for the trivia buffs). It is the programming language we use to write all of our *backend* code. It is also the same language that *Symfony* is written in.

PR

Short for Pull Request – a method of submitting contributions to a repository. It needs all changes to first be approved by a second developer before they’re added to master version of the code base.

Shipped

Code is shipped when it has been deployed to our *production environment* and is usable by our customers. It derives from the old practice of literally shipping boxes containing disks/CDs in the post.



Stage

Stage is the software environment we use for testing new code before it’s deployed. It’s set up to emulate our production environment as closely as possible – so that we can ensure the code we *ship* is *bug-free*.

React

React is a *frontend* framework created by Facebook – who use it extensively (along with many other software companies across the world). We’re writing as much of our new *frontend* code in React as possible.

Symfony

Symfony is a web development framework that provides the basic building blocks for us to create *Ascension*. It saves us the trouble of dealing with lots of the boring repetitive parts of software development – so we can focus instead on building the bits that drive real value for our customers.

Production

Production environment is a term used mostly by developers, to describe the setting where software and other products are actually put into operation for their intended uses by end users. In other words, it’s the copy of the application used by customers.

Unit tests

Unit testing is a level of software testing where individual units or components of a software are tested. A unit is the smallest testable part of any software.

Session

Session is a reference to a certain time frame for communication between two devices, two systems or two parts of a system. Typically the amount of time an end user spends ‘logged in’ to an application.

Commercial & Organisational Terms

Acquisition

Describes finding and acquiring new customers – like how many users are becoming a paid customer each month, or how many create a free account. Acquisition could be measured by lead indicators of acquisition, including outbound sales activities per month.

Activation

After acquiring our customer, we want them to start using EstimateOne and getting value from it. Onboarding efforts are usually in aid of ‘activating’ new customers. These include adding a tender within 30 days of signing up (for the builder stream), or adding a project to the watchlist within 30 days of signing up (for the subbie stream).

B2B

An abbreviation that stands for business-to-business, it describes a company who mainly sells its wares to other businesses – rather than individuals or consumers.

Churn

When paid licenses aren’t renewed. This happens either because a customer lets us know that they don’t wish to renew (which we call a ‘discontinuation’) or because they don’t pay for a renewal when it’s invoiced – in which case we ‘terminate’ the license.

CRM

An abbreviation that stands for ‘Customer Relationship Management’. It’s used to describe processes and systems (often software products) that help businesses manage all their dealings with customers.

Cross-functional teams

A way of working in a business environment where different functions collaborate with customer-centric teams (‘streams’ at EstimateOne) towards a common goal. They’re a popular and effective way of bringing various areas of functional expertise together – often boosting creativity and productivity along the way.

Core Values

A series of core beliefs that an organisation abides by, which influence both cultural behaviour and business ambitions. At EstimateOne we have four: *cranes before code*, *authentic ambition*, *enabled expertise* and *forthright and frank*.

CTR

An abbreviation that stands for ‘click-through-rate’ – it describes how many people click or engage with something online compared to those who just view it.

Cycle

A structured 7-week long chunk of effort which is repeated over the course of the year – this is how we set short to medium-term goals at EstimateOne.

Delinquent

A license who hasn’t paid an invoice that was issued at least 21 days prior.

Freemium

A coined word combining ‘free’ and ‘premium’ that describes a business model (often software) where a product with basic functionality is free – while more advanced features and functionality must be paid for.

Function

A team with specific expertise centred around a skill set, responsibility or expertise – such as Brand, Analytics, Operations or Development.

Go-To-Market (G2M)

The strategy we have for bringing our value propositions to customers. It describes aspects like timing, marketing approach, and channels for communication.



Kick-off

A structured meeting at the start of a project or cycle designed to work out what activities need to take place with the team that will be undertaking them.

MRR

Or ‘Monthly Recurring Revenue’. This metric tells us the total monthly recurring revenue across all accounts (annual subscriptions are divided by 12 when calculating this figure). It’s particularly important given we’re a subscription-based business – so this number moves as customers sign up or churn away.



New-in

A term for all the new paid licenses created in a given period. Includes ‘new sales’, that are first-time paid licenses for an account, and ‘resells’ that are new licenses on accounts that have previously had paid licenses. It doesn’t include renewals – which directly replace expiring licenses.

NPS

If you’ve ever been asked by a business ‘how likely are you to promote this to a friend or colleague?’, you’ll be familiar with NPS – or ‘net promoter score’. It’s a widely-used metric to measure customer sentiment, calculated by taking total % of promoters (those that answer 9 or 10 on a 11 point scale), minus total detractors (those who answer 6 or less).

OKRs

Stands for Objectives and Key Results. This is how we outline pieces of work to be delivered in cycles – so that we keep in mind the big ‘objective’, as well as the things we’ll do and achieve along the way (‘key results’).

Pirate metrics (AARRR)

A term that collectively describes some key business measures – Acquisition, Activation, Retention, Revenue, Referral. Using these metrics helps us understand various aspects of customer behaviour. It’s also good fun to say.

Profit

The money that’s left over from our revenue once we’ve paid for all of our costs.

Referral

Happy customers are some of our greatest assets – because they’ll often refer other customers we can activate. Sometimes we have explicit referral schemes incentivising customers to do this – other times we measure this through proxy, like NPS.

Renewal

The process of rolling over or extending a current subscription to a future agreed time frame. At EstimateOne, we have single month, 12 month and 24 month contracts, each with a respective renewal process.

Retro

Short for ‘retrospective’, this is a team session dedicated to reflection and improvement – usually in Week 7 of a cycle.

Retention

This is a commonly used term to describe our efforts to keep an existing, paying customer. We can do this by making sure they’re engaged and still deriving value from EstimateOne, so that they renew their subscription. Churn and retention are closely linked – if we fail with retention, this usually leads to a churned customer.

Revenue

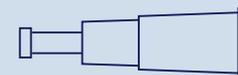
This is any money that we collect through the business operations. It’s different from profit – which is calculated by taking then total revenue and subtracting operating and other business expenses. At EstimateOne we mostly refer to MRR (monthly recurring revenue) as one of our key metrics.

Roadmap

A term used to describe a high-level plan towards achieving a specific goal. The biggest difference between a road map and a plan is usually the level of detail – while a road map is more schematic, a plan might be much more in-depth.

SAAS

Stands for ‘Software-as-a-service’ – or businesses like EstimateOne whose main products are software that’s offered on a subscription basis.



Scoping

A word used both in business and construction, scope is a detailed description of what needs to be done – usually within a corresponding timeline. At EstimateOne, we often ‘scope’ work to be done in cycles, which includes what will be included in that time – and what won’t be.

Showcase

A milestone at the end of Week 6, where each stream and function share some of their completed Key Results.

Sketch shops

A structured meeting with a focus on teasing out creative solutions to a specific problem. Often run by designers, they usually bring together cross-functional team members who sketch potential product solutions or ideas. They’re designed to harness a broad range of perspectives in one short, super-focused, very-creative session.

Straw (wo)man

A term used to describe a starting point or framework for the purpose of furthering a discussion – like a rough draft of an idea or concept. We often use a ‘straw man’ as a starting point to give anyone we’re working with something to respond to.

Stream

A team at EstimateOne dedicated to a particular customer or customers, like builders, subcontractors or suppliers.

Success Plan

A shared, live and co-authored document outlining your roles, responsibilities, communications and working preferences – as well as your personal development goals at EstimateOne.

Three Ws

A framework we often use to frame a meeting or an initiative. They are: ‘What do we want to achieve and why?’, ‘Where are we now?’, and ‘What next?’.

Value proposition

A value proposition is a unique set of benefits that we provide a customer that are both valuable and attractive to them. It can be thought of as a promise to customers – that we can do more to help them achieve whatever it is that we claim to than if they tried to on their own, or with a similar product.

Week 7

The last week in a ‘cycle’. It’s special because it’s dedicated to reflection, planning and scoping future work.

“A value proposition is a unique set of benefits that we provide a customer that are both valuable and attractive to them.”



