

# Strategy and culture deck

Accelerating the world's transition to skills-first hiring



# Strategy and culture deck

This document is a blend of our company manifesto and employee playbook. It reflects who we are today and who we aspire to become.

Whether you're considering joining Clevry (which we hope you will, because we're awesome!), just getting onboarded (congrats on that excellent choice!), or you've been with us for a decade (you're a legend, wow!), this document is here to honestly share our values, beliefs, and the way we work. It also captures our aspirations for the future.

For our clever rebels already part of the team, we hope this sets clear expectations and inspires purpose in everything we do. It's designed to align us and keep us moving toward our shared vision.

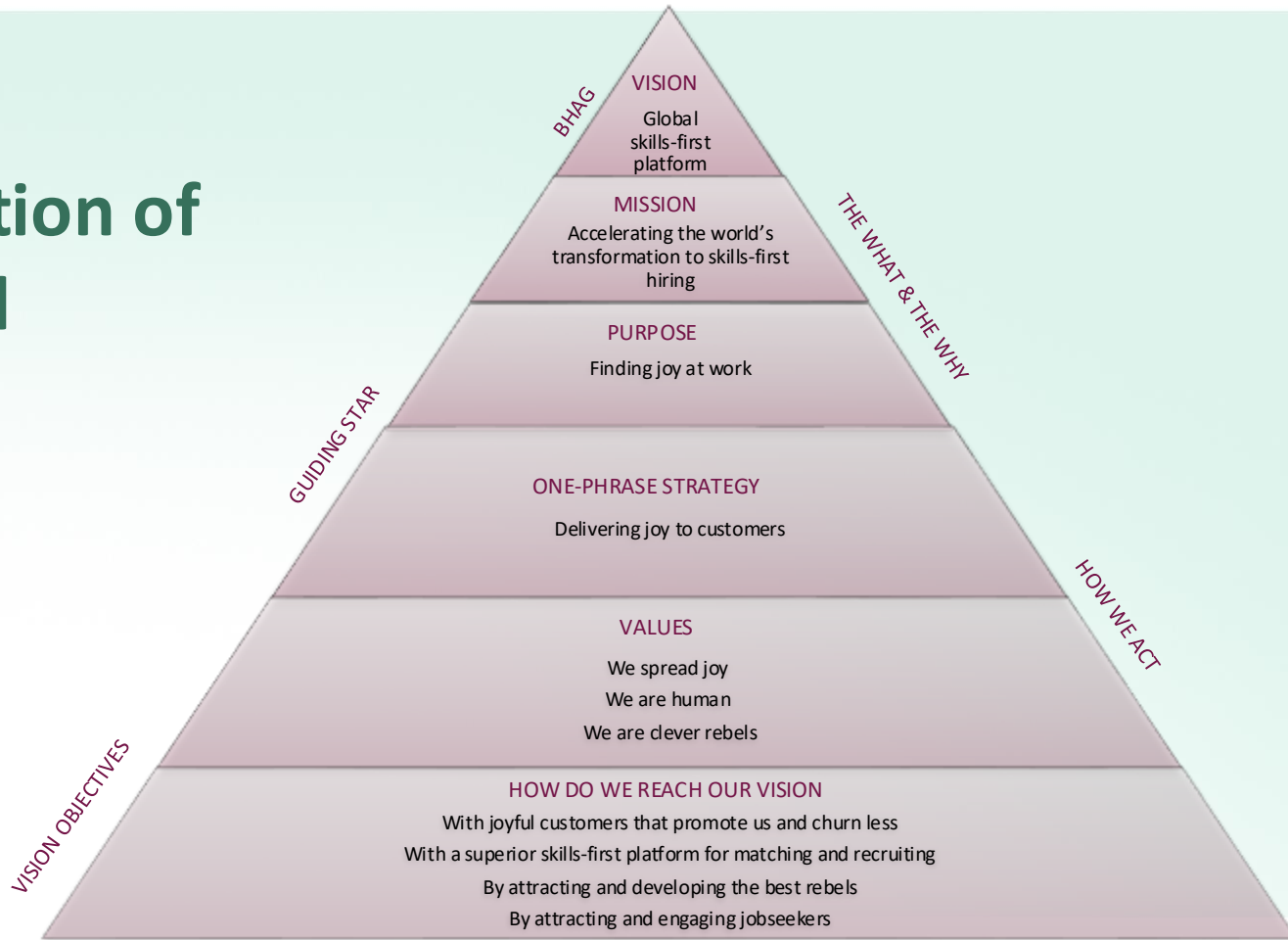
And for those thinking about joining us, we hope this makes your decision easier—whichever way you decide.

We'd love your feedback—let us know what you think and how we can make this even better!

Joyful wishes,

Luke

# Direction of Travel



# Our vision objectives

Our vision objectives are aspirational objectives that we need to achieve in order to reach our vision. They work as the perfect summary of this playbook:

**Joyful customers that promote us and churn less**

**+ Superior skills-first platform for matching and recruiting**

**+ Attracting and developing the best rebels**

**+ Attracting and engaging jobseekers**



**= The global skills-first platform**

# The world we are fighting for

## **More Human!**

Prioritizing soft skills over technical expertise fosters stronger leadership and creates a supportive, collaborative work culture. Employees thrive in environments where recognition, respect, and appreciation are core values, enabling them to feel genuinely valued.

## **More Joy!**

When employees are matched to roles that align with their natural soft skills, they're more engaged and experience a stronger sense of belonging. This leads to lower turnover rates, higher job satisfaction, and enhanced performance across teams.

## **More Diversity and Inclusion!**

Focusing on soft skills opens the door to candidates from diverse backgrounds and perspectives. By moving beyond rigid qualifications, organizations can build a more inclusive and innovative workplace culture.

Skills-first hiring isn't just about filling roles—it's about building thriving, diverse teams that bring humanity, joy, and innovation to the workplace. Are you ready to make the shift?

# Finding joy at work

## **Our Purpose**

Our purpose is the core reason we exist—the broader impact we strive to make in society. It's about creating meaningful contributions that inspire and elevate the world around us.

## **Finding Joy at Work**

Joy at work goes beyond mere satisfaction; it's about experiencing deep fulfillment and passion for what you do. It's when employees feel energized and genuinely enthusiastic about their tasks and responsibilities. Joyful employees carry a positive attitude, high levels of motivation, and a sense of pride in their work.

Employees find joy when their work aligns with their personal values, passions, and preferences. Feeling a sense of purpose and knowing that their contributions make a meaningful difference fosters true fulfillment. It's about doing work that matters.

## **The Benefits of Joy at Work**

Joyful employees aren't just happier—they're more productive, creative, and engaged. This joy translates into:

- Increased productivity and job satisfaction
- Reduced burnout and higher retention rates
- Stronger collaboration, creativity, and resilience

# Skills first hiring answers three questions

Can you do the job? Cognitive ability refers to a person's general capacity for problem-solving, critical thinking, learning, and decision-making. Research has consistently shown that cognitive ability is a strong predictor of job performance across different professions and industries.

**How will you do the job?** Personality traits: Certain traits significantly influence job performance.

For example, traits like resilience, ability to handle stress, and adaptability have been linked to better job performance in various roles. Soft skills help employees navigate change, cope with challenges, and bounce back from setbacks more effectively.

Do you want the job? Motivation and work ethic: Preferences, passion for the job, and motivation can significantly influence an individual's commitment and dedication to performing well in their role.

# What correlates with future performance:

Hard skills



Soft skills



The other stuff



Performance

Hard skills showcase your technical expertise, like programming or negotiation tactics, but it's your soft skills that determine how effectively you apply those abilities to achieve success in real-world situations.

You could read every book on sales or leadership and have a decade of experience, but qualities like grit, motivation, optimism, and interpersonal skills are what truly drive success. It's not just what you know—it's how you connect, adapt, and persevere that makes the difference.

There's no such thing as a 100% accurate predictor of job performance during the hiring process—people are complex and full of surprises. However, research shows that with a valid and robust assessment of soft skills, combined with thorough vetting of hard skills, we can achieve up to 85% accuracy in predicting pre-employment success.

The remaining 15%? That's influenced by factors like effective onboarding, strong leadership, team dynamics, organizational culture, work-life balance—and sometimes, a bit of sheer luck.

Hiring is as much art as it is science, but with the right tools and approach, we can get remarkably close to finding the perfect fit.



# Recruit for soft skills, check hard skills

Every recruitment process should focus on assessing essential soft skills while verifying hard skills. Done right, this approach can achieve up to 85% accuracy in predicting pre-employment success.

Start by eliminating “nice-to-have” skills that don’t directly correlate with long-term success. Avoid rigid requirements like specific years of experience (e.g., four years) as a mandatory criterion—they often exclude great candidates unnecessarily.

Once you’ve sifted through and shortlisted candidates, it’s time for the structured interview. This step allows recruiters to delve deeper into the candidate’s soft skills, strengths, and preferences, following a clear and consistent interview framework. It’s also the moment to align on goals, role objectives, team dynamics, and practical matters like compensation and policies.

When you’ve found your next team member, don’t underestimate the importance of effective onboarding. We see onboarding as an integral part of recruitment, not a separate process. It should transition seamlessly from the final interview to pre-boarding and onboarding. By leveraging what you’ve learned about the candidate’s soft skills, you can set them—and your organization—up for success.

Done right, onboarding can double the impact of a successful hire. (Psst—this is why we developed the Onboarding Report!)

# Brief history of the assessment industry

## LATE 19TH CENTURY

### Interest awakens

- Emergence of psychological theories and interest in understanding human personality.
- Early attempts to categorize personality traits and types.
- Sigmund Freud's Contributions (Late 19th to Early 20th Century)

- Carl Jung's Contributions: introducing e.g., personality archetypes and introversion/extroversion.
- Development of psychological types and the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) later based on Jung's work

## EARLY 20TH CENTURY

### Type based, theoretical models are born

## MID TO LATE 20TH CENTURY

### Emergence of empirical models and the Big 5

- Advancements in statistical methods lead to empirical studies aiming to identify and measure personality traits.
- Raymond Cattell's 16 Personality Factors (16PF) questionnaire contributes to the development of factor analysis
- Emergence of the Five Factor Model (Big Five) as a comprehensive framework for describing personality traits: openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism.

## LATE 20TH CENTURY

### Workplace applications and Rational Models

- Applying personality assessments to workplace settings for hiring and employee development
- Transition to rational models that connect personality traits to job-related competencies.
- Integration of personality assessments into broader talent management and organizational strategies.

MODERN  
TIMES

## **“There is only one way to grow a business profitably. Treat our customers so well that they come back for more and bring their friends.”**

Our one-phrase strategy captures the essence of our organization’s strategic direction. It’s a guiding principle that aligns decision-making and actions across the entire company.

Delivering customer joy isn’t about meeting every customer demand or chasing the highest NPS scores (though we used to think so). Instead, it’s about gathering meaningful feedback, sharing it with the team, and taking actionable steps to improve—ensuring customer happiness, loyalty, and referrals.

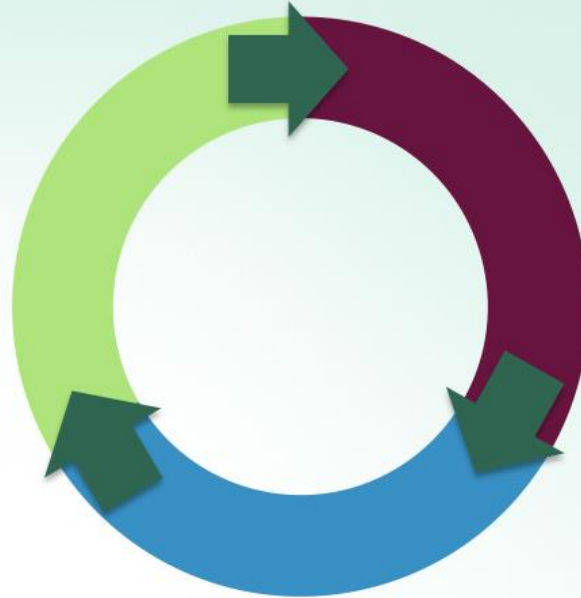
To highlight the importance of feedback, we introduced the Customer Joy Award (previously the Top NPS Award). Today, we focus on the quantity, quality, and actionability of feedback rather than just the scores.

Honest, constructive feedback is the foundation of building genuinely happy customers—and lasting success.

# Customers are the best teachers

## TAKE ACTION

Take action with your team. Elevate bigger improvement/solutions to senior management when needed



## MAXIMISE QUALIFIED FEEDBACK:

Ask customers or browse feedback forms in Hubspot for feedback. Qualified feedback is tangible and concrete feedback that can lead to either us enhancing something specific we are doing well today, or something concrete we can improve.

SHARE AT LEAST ONE FEEDBACK WITH YOUR TEAM EACH WEEK

together with a possible solutions/an improvement

## Here is our priority order:

**Customer** > **Company** > **Individual**

When in doubt, prioritise the customer's interest over the company's or your own.

For every important decision we ask ourselves, what is in it for our customers? We are on the right track as long as we can expect that the decision will delight our customers!

# Our culture

We envision a company where the last person out turns off the lights, and the first one in puts on the music. A workplace where you smile and genuinely ask colleagues how they're doing. A place where nobody walks past trash on the floor, assuming someone else will take care of it. At Clevry, we value colleagues who take responsibility as if it were their own home. Picking up the trash isn't just literal—it's a metaphor for addressing challenges, big or small, without ever thinking, "that's not my job."

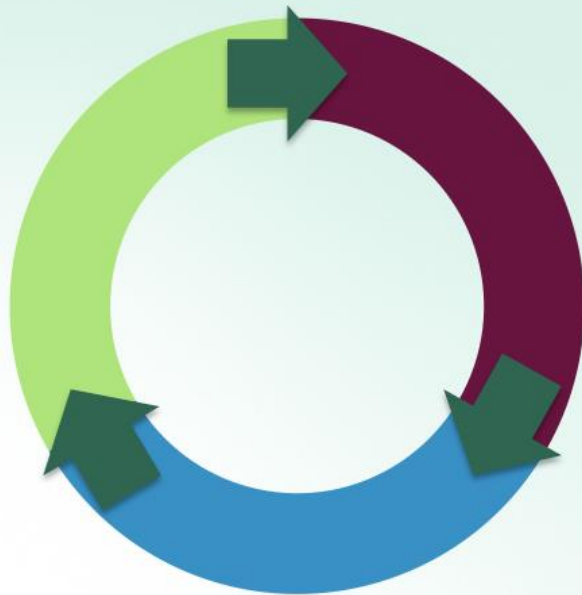
We strive for a workplace where everyone leads by example, inspires, encourages, and supports each other to excel. A culture where we celebrate success, embrace feedback, and grow together through coaching. We aim to build a team where every individual aspires to be the best in the industry.

Above all, we want a workplace where everyone believes in our shared vision and mission: Accelerating the world to skills-first hiring.

# We strive to improve, not preserve, culture

## EASIER RECRUITMENT

Top performers want to be part of high-performing teams. As a global company, we compete for talent with the best teams worldwide. That is why we have high expectations for those who join us, making Clevrly a selective choice. Clevrly is not for everyone.



## GREATER CULTURE

Culture is not static; it evolves, changes, and fluctuates over time. That is why we do not strive to preserve our culture, but to continuously improve it. The best culture is cultivated from the bottom up.

## STRONGER PERFORMANCE

Ambition and standards are contagious. We must hire, promote, and reward rebels who truly aim to be the best in their respective roles. A simple test is whether we'd fight to keep them if another employer approached them.

# Leadership and culture

We aim to minimize the number of managers and their involvement in everyday decision-making. Fewer management layers make us more agile and give individuals greater freedom. We follow the principle of “context over control,” which thrives when leaders manage larger teams. While smaller, specialized teams may occasionally be necessary, they should be exceptions, not the norm. In general, having between six and twelve direct reports strikes a good balance for effective leadership.

Most questions can be resolved by simply discussing them with your manager. We trust that you and your manager are best equipped to decide on solutions that align with customer joy, Clevry’s culture, and your team’s performance. For the majority of decisions in our organization, there’s no need for HR involvement, lengthy meetings, or overly detailed policies.

Freedom doesn’t mean a lack of structure. People thrive with clear guidance and data. Everyone should have a blueprint for success—an understanding of which activities drive results when executed with quality and efficiency. This is where coaching plays a vital role.

We believe in supportive leadership. Leaders should coach, set processes, provide context, and deliver feedback while empowering their teams to succeed. Freedom doesn’t mean working in isolation; involving managers, peers, or direct reports in decision-making leads to better outcomes. Our approach ensures that freedom and support go hand in hand.



# Results matter most

## Company

The company is responsible for overall strategy , processes, compensation models, and budgeting.



## Team & Individuals

Teams are responsible for their results, performance, engagement, well-being, joy at work, collecting and sharing feedback.

Clevry aims to inspire rebels rather than manage them. Our goal is to create a sense of responsibility and accountability on team level, so that individuals – rather than the company – do their best to achieve our mission.

# WE SPREAD JOY

Spreading joy means helping people grow by bringing fun, energy, and a little sparkle to every interaction. It's about being optimistic, positive, and a force for good—engaging with others, generously sharing praise, and celebrating successes together.

- We are positive, optimistic, and grateful.
- We share our energy with those around us.
- We acknowledge our colleagues—smiling, saying hello, and genuinely asking how their day is going.
- Spreading joy is about putting the team before the individual and lifting each other up.

Let's make joy contagious and part of everything we do!

# Spreading joy is about the team

We come into the office to connect, collaborate, and spread joy with our team. In a business like ours, nothing can replace the energy, camaraderie, and growth that comes from being physically together.

Each week, we share, discuss, and focus on engagement during team huddles. Together, we take responsibility for ensuring everyone feels included, supported, and part of the team's success.

We celebrate every win—big or small. From bookings and orders to placements and deals, we make sure to recognize every achievement. Whether it's shared in Teams, WhatsApp, or celebrated with bells, horns, applause, and gratitude, we always acknowledge those who made it possible.

Because joy is best when shared!

**Team**



**Individual**

# It's really not about you

It takes selflessness—and sometimes courage—to stand up, share joy, give shout-outs, and celebrate wins with your colleagues.

But it's hard to overstate how important this is. Celebrating success is about recognizing everyone who played a part in making it happen. At Clevry, magic happens when all functions work together. So, take a moment to thank the marketing team for inbound SQLs, the recruiter who placed the assignment, the Science and Tech team for the features that helped close the deal, or the business psychologist (or any other rebel!) who contributed to your success.

And to all the heroes in Human Services, Finance, and other support functions—we see you! You keep everything running smoothly, and for that, we're deeply grateful.

Let's always remember to celebrate each other—because no success happens alone.

**Company**



**Individuals**

# WE ARE HUMAN

Human beings are at the heart of everything we do. Being human means showing compassion, supporting one another, and building trust by keeping our word. It's about being inclusive and fair. While we may stumble at times, we embrace those moments as opportunities to learn and improve.

The future is more human, and soft skills are at the center of what it means to be human.

- We are kind, helpful, and humble.
- We share information openly, broadly, and intentionally.
- We prioritize helping our colleagues across Clevry succeed.
- We maximize our time together: teams sit together as often as possible, holding huddles, coaching sessions, and feedback discussions whenever needed.
- We communicate with candor and clarity.
- We grow through coaching and feedback, asking open questions, offering support, and helping fellow rebels find their own answers.

Together, we create a workplace where being human—and helping others thrive—is at the core of everything we do.

# WE ARE CLEVER REBELS

Being clever means making things simple, staying curious, creative, and grounded in both street smarts and science. To rebel is to challenge the status quo, defy traditional hard-skill-focused norms, and break down prejudices. Clever rebels are the changemakers, reshaping attitudes and helping people find joy at work.

- We forge our own path and are transforming the industry.
- We embrace curiosity and a growth mindset.
- We ask open-ended questions, actively listen, and strive to find solutions to the challenges faced by customers, colleagues, and candidates.
- We focus on the 20% of actions that deliver 80% of the impact.
- We bring solutions, not problems.
- We embody grit—we show up, stick to the plan, and never give up until we achieve the vision.
- We lead by example, take ownership, and take responsibility for our actions.
- We empower employees to make decisions confidently.

Together, we are driving change, solving meaningful problems, and inspiring others to join us on this journey.

# Feedback at Clevry: A Daily Habit

At Clevry, positive and constructive feedback isn't reserved for monthly or quarterly check-ins—it's part of our everyday culture. We understand that meaningful feedback can be challenging to give or receive, but like any skill, it gets easier with practice. That's why we help everyone build this habit through coaching and by modeling the behaviors we want to see across the company. Every rebel takes part in our business psychology team's exceptional "Coaching" and "Feedbacking" soft skills modules and applies those lessons daily.

It takes courage and selflessness to ask someone how you can improve or to reflect on what feedback you might still owe a colleague. Both require trust and a commitment to positive intent. For new hires, this level of candor can feel especially daunting—direct feedback isn't always common, particularly when there's a power imbalance. But it's a vital part of personal and organizational growth, helping us all become stronger together.

# Employment proposition

## **PURPOSE**

A value and purpose driven organisation

## **POSSIBILITY TO GROW**

Market leading onboarding, training and career development

## **PARTNERSHIP**

Possibility to become shareholder and group partner



# The partner program

At Clevry, we firmly believe that shared ownership fosters the strongest commitment. Ownership empowers individuals to contribute meaningfully and take pride in our collective success.

## **Why become a partner?**

As a partner, you'll have the opportunity to participate in discussions about Clevry's goals, strategies, and decisions that shape our future during annual partner meetings.

## **How do you become a partner?**

Each November, partners nominate and select new members. To be considered, you typically need:

- At least one year with Clevry.
- A proven track record of success.
- A strong alignment with our culture and ambitions.
- A genuine desire to contribute to the partner forum.

If you're interested, don't hesitate to reach out to a partner for more information. And remember, if you're not selected this year, there's always next year. The door is always open.