

**THE J.W. COLE WAY** describes the values, behaviors, principles, and practices that are the foundation of our unique culture. It explains how we relate to each other, our advisors, and those we serve. It's who we are, and it's what drives our extraordinary success.

### **1. DO THE RIGHT THING, ALWAYS**

Demonstrate an unwavering commitment to doing the right thing in every action you take and in every decision you make, especially when no one's looking. Always tell the truth, no matter the consequences. If you make a mistake, own up to it, apologize, and make it right.

### **3. BE POSITIVE**

You have the power to choose your attitude. Choose to be joyful, optimistic, and enthusiastic. Give people the benefit of the doubt. Your attitude is contagious. Spread optimism and positive energy.

### **5. GET CLEAR ON EXPECTATIONS**

Create clarity and avoid misunderstandings by discussing expectations upfront. Set expectations for others and ask when you're not clear on what they expect of you. End all meetings with clarity about action items, responsibilities, and due dates.

### **7. LISTEN GENEROUSLY**

Listening is more than simply "not speaking." Give others your undivided attention. Be present and engaged. Minimize the distractions and let go of the need to agree or disagree. Accept feedback. Suspend your judgment and be curious to know more, rather than jumping to conclusions. Above all, listen to understand.

### **9. TAKE OWNERSHIP**

Take personal responsibility for making things happen. Respond to every situation by looking for how we can do it, rather than explaining why it can't be done. Be resourceful and show initiative. Don't make excuses or wait for others to solve the problem. See issues through to their completion.

### **11. THINK TEAM FIRST**

It's not about you. Don't let your own ego or personal agenda get in the way of doing what's best for the team. Be there for each other and be willing to step into another role or help a co-worker when that's what's required for success. Help each other to succeed.

### **13. ASSUME POSITIVE INTENT**

Work from the assumption that people are good, fair, and honest, and that the intent behind their actions is positive. Set aside your own judgments and preconceived notions. Give people the benefit of the doubt.

### **2. PRACTICE BLAMELESS PROBLEM SOLVING**

Demonstrate a relentless solution focus, rather than pointing fingers or dwelling on problems. Identify lessons learned and use those lessons to improve ourselves and our processes so we don't make the same mistake twice. Get smarter with every mistake. Learn from every experience.

### **4. HONOR COMMITMENTS**

Do what you say you're going to do, when you say you're going to do it. This includes being on time for all phone calls, appointments, meetings, and promises. If a commitment can't be fulfilled, notify others early and agree on a new deliverable to be honored.

### **6. BE CURIOUS**

In the search for the best solutions, challenge and question what you don't understand. Don't accept anything at "face value" if it doesn't make sense to you. Be curious, ask thoughtful questions, and listen intently to the answers. Dig deeper to go beyond the expected. Ask the extra question.

### **8. SPEAK STRAIGHT**

Speak honestly in a way that helps to make progress. Say what you mean, and be willing to ask questions, share ideas, or raise issues that may cause conflict when it's necessary for team success. Be courageous enough to say what needs to be said. Address issues directly with those who are involved or affected.

### **10. PRACTICE HUMAN CONNECTION**

Show people you care about them as individuals, and not just as transactions. Pay attention to the things that make people unique. Use handwritten notes, personal cards, and timely phone calls to acknowledge their significance. Recognize anniversaries and birthdays.

### **12. MAKE AN IMPACT**

Have a passion for what we do and be fully engaged. Make the most of each day by approaching every task with energy, focus, purpose, and enthusiasm. Work with a sense of urgency to get things done.

### **14. SHOW MEANINGFUL APPRECIATION**

Recognizing people doing things right is more effective than pointing out when they do things wrong. Regularly extend meaningful acknowledgment and appreciation — in all directions throughout our organization.

### **15. THINK AND ACT LIKE AN OWNER**

Make decisions by asking yourself, "What would I do if this were my company? What would I do if this were my own money? Will this help the company to succeed?"

### **17. GO THE EXTRA MILE**

Be willing to do whatever it takes to accomplish the job... plus a little bit more. Whether it's starting early, staying late, or doing something that's not in your job description, it's the extra mile that separates the ordinary from the extraordinary.

### **19. EMBRACE DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES**

Be open to learning from others, no matter what role they have, and regardless of their age, industry, experience, or tenure with our company. We make better decisions when we consider multiple perspectives.

### **21. BE A FANATIC ABOUT RESPONSE TIME**

Respond to questions and concerns quickly, whether it's in person, on the phone, or by email. This includes simply acknowledging that we got the question and we're "on it," as well as keeping those involved continuously updated on the status of outstanding issues.

### **23. INVEST IN RELATIONSHIPS**

Our business is built on trust and trust is built on relationships. Make smart decisions that enhance long-term relationships. Strong relationships enable us to more successfully work through difficult issues and challenging times.

### **25. PAY ATTENTION TO THE DETAILS**

Missing just one detail can have an enormous impact on a job. Be a fanatic about accuracy and precision. The goal is to get things right, not simply to get them done. Double-check your work. Get the details right the first time.

### **27. MAKE QUALITY PERSONAL**

Demonstrate a passion for excellence and take pride in the quality of everything you touch and everything you do. Have a healthy disdain for mediocrity. Good is not good enough. Always ask yourself, "Is this my best work?"

### **16. INVEST IN YOURSELF**

Be a lifelong learner. Seek out and take advantage of every opportunity to gain more knowledge, to increase your skills, and to become a greater expert. Be resourceful about learning and sharing best practices.

### **18. BE PROCESS DRIVEN**

Create systems and processes that are scalable and that support our ability to perform with consistency. Strong processes are the foundation of organizational effectiveness.

### **20. DELIVER LEGENDARY SERVICE**

It's all about the experience. With every experience, do the little things, as well as the big things, that surprise people. Make every interaction or stand out for its helpfulness. Create the "WOW" factor that turns advisors into raving fans. This includes both internal and external customers.

### **22. DELIVER RESULTS**

While we appreciate effort, we reward and celebrate results. Follow-up on everything and take responsibility to ensure that tasks get completed. Set high goals, use measurements to track your progress, and hold yourself accountable for achieving those results.

### **24. WALK IN YOUR CUSTOMERS' SHOES**

Have an Extreme Customer Focus. Understand your customers' world. Know their challenges and frustrations. See the world from their perspective. The better you understand them, the more effectively you can anticipate and meet their needs.

### **26. BE HUMBLE**

Don't let your ego get in the way of doing what's best for the team. Be open to learning from others, no matter what role they have, and regardless of their age, industry experience, or years with our company. Everyone has something he/she can teach us, and everyone's perspective has value.

### **28. KEEP THINGS FUN**

While our passion for excellence is real, remember that the world has bigger problems than the daily challenges that make up our work. Stuff happens. Keep perspective. Don't take things personally or take yourself too seriously. Laugh every day.

