# Personal User Manual & Quickstart Guide to Working with You

## About

**Personal User Manuals (PUMs)** capture information intended to help co-workers get to know one another and work better together.  Each individual writes their own PUM.  In some companies, all employees create a PUM based on a standard template. In other cases, individuals write and share PUMs proactively when joining a new team.

A **Quickstart Guide to Working with You (QSG)** condenses the PUM down to the key information teams need to know about one another before entering into a new working team agreement.

In this handout, you'll find:

- A Personal User Manual Template

- A Quickstart Guide Template

- Personal User Manual Resources, including:

  - Reference templates

  - Public example PUMs

## How To Use This Guide

Create a folder in your digital note taking tool of choice. Create new files for your QSG and PUM, and copy in the template questions. Add your answers.

You may find it helpful to answer these questions over a period of time. You should expect to update them on a regular basis as your experience grows and preferences change.

If possible, ask a trusted colleague to review your answers to ensure that they are clear, useful, and reflect their experience working with you.

Before joining a new team, review your PUM and make sure your QSG is ready to share with your new team members.

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# Template: Personal User Manual

We recommend creating a private PUM you can use to increase your awareness of how you do your best work and draft answers that you'll share with others. These questions were inspired by the examples listed in the resources and our experience with Working Team agreements.

## How You Like to Work

- **Work Motivation:** Why do you work? What lights you up?

- **Value Creation:** What does creating value at work mean to you? What does value look like?

- **Work Style and Conditions:** How do you prefer to work? What are your optimal conditions regarding time, tools, and environment? What's happening when you're doing your best work?

- **Bad Fit:** What tasks or situations do you try to avoid?

- **Learning Style:** How do you learn best? How do you process new information? When do you do your best thinking?

## How You Team

- **Communication:** What's your favorite way to communicate, especially from a distance? What is your communication style? What should people do if they're confused or concerned?

- **Collaboration:** How do you like to collaborate? When do you want to meet and work synchronously, and when do you prefer to collaborate asynchronously? What does your ideal team collaboration look like?

- **Contribution**: Reflecting on your experience, what skills, knowledge, resources, and networks do you bring to the group? Where do you excel?

- **Team Preferences**: What qualities do you value in team members? What irritates you or has been a challenge in past teams?

- **Feedback and Support:** How do you want to exchange thoughts on work? What support do you need when you're struggling?

- **Non-negotiable Boundaries:** Do you have any absolute no-gos in a work context?

- **Expert Advice About You:** If we asked people you've worked with in the past, what advice would they give about working with you?

## Knowing You Better

- **Values:** What's important to you, in life and work? What are your core values?

- **Personal Insights:** Is there anything people often get wrong about you that you'd like to clear up?

- **Personality Assessments**: Do you have results from a personality/behavioral assessments that could help us understand you better?

- **Stress Management:** How do you behave when stressed, and how to you regain your calm? How can others help?

## You Outside of Work

- **Interests and Hobbies:** What do you love doing outside of work?

- **Fun Facts and Tidbits:** Quotes, favorites, trivia, family, etc.

## Your Journey

- **Background:** Can you talk about your background, where you grew up, and any key experiences?

- **Achievements:** Can you share a moment you're really proud of?

- **Goals and Aspirations:** What are your current goals and what drives you towards them?

- **Personal Development:** What are you learning or trying to get better at right now?

# Template:
# Quickstart Guide to Working with You

The QS guide shares details that speed up the process of creating a new Working Team Agreement.

Your QS should include a short overview of when and how you collaborate at your best and the team agreements that are most important to you. Start with these sample questions, but feel free to change these to match your needs. Keep your answers short (bulleted lists are great) and the whole document less than one page long.

**An important note from Lisette Sutherland:**
"Explaining one's "quirks" is not an excuse for bad or rude behavior. Be sure to pair any vulnerable statements with an accountability statement. For example: if you are "x," how do you take responsibility for that?"

## Sample questions:

### How to Address You

Your preferred name, pronunciation, pronouns, etc.

### Your Availability

### When You Shine

Note the kind of work you love and that team members should send your way.

### When You Struggle

The tasks that someone else should take, or where you'll need support.

### Agreements You Care About

The two or three things you want the team to agree on.

### How to Learn More About You

What folks should do if they have questions. Did you publish a Personal User Manual? Link to it here!

For an example, visit: https://labs.newrulesforwork.com/p/qsg-for-working-with-you

# Resources and Examples

Reference Personal User Manual Templates

## Templates and Articles

- [David Politis's This is How You Revolutionize the Way Your Team Works Together... And All It Takes is 15 Minutes](#)

- [Management 3.0 Personal Map](#)

- [Collaboration Superpowers Personal User Manual Miro Template](#)

- [Rhys Lindmark's How to Work With Me Manual Template](#)

- [Rad Read's How to write a user manual](#)

- [Almanac's Personal User Manual Template](#)

- [Ken Norton's guide to Personal User Manuals](#)

- [Psychological Safety's guide to Personal User Manuals](#)

- [Future Forum's Personal User Manual Template](#)

- [Atlassian's Guide to My User Manual](#)

- [Liminal Collective's Transformational Teams User Manual](#)

- [Brad Feld's A User Manual To Working With Me](#)

- [PWC's Personal Brand Handbook](#) (related concept)

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## Examples

- [Lisette Sutherland's Personal User Manual](#)

- [Steph Smith's Personal User Manual](#)

- [User Guide for Jess Martin](#)

- [Claire Hughes Johnson, COO Stripe](#)

- [GitLab Engineering Team](#)

- [GitLab CEO](#)

- [Michael Lopp, Rand in Repose](#)

- [Roy Rapoport - August, 2021 (Netflix)](#)

# THE NEW RULES FOR WORK

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# Unleashing the teams & leaders of the future by turning insights into action.

At the New Rules for Work Labs, we connect with the front runners who are out there mapping the uncharted waters of work, and share their insights with you.

We then seek the simplest possible ways to put these insights into practice.

The New Rules for Work project is hosted by Elise Keith and Dave Mastronardi.

We encourage you to share this guide with your colleagues and friends, and invite them to become a subscriber

### Join us at: labs.newrulesforwork.com

Comments, questions, feedback? Get in touch. Let's experiment!

- Dave & Elise