the ladd way

FUNDAMENTALS



THE LADD WAY

THE LADD WAY is our roadmap to create and sustain a diverse, inclusive, and equitable organization. It is not empty rhetoric or a "workplace initiative" – it is a culture shift.

The LADD Way is made up of a set of fundamentals and the behaviors that bring those fundamentals to life. From leadership to frontline employees, The LADD Way is for every single employee. It's what you will be held accountable for, and what you will hold others to.

By committing to these fundamentals, you will create a community of belonging and a culture that empowers you to better support people with disabilities and your LADD team members.

EMBRACE THE MISSION

YOU ARE INSPIRED BY LADD'S MISSION.

As such, you relentlessly pursue excellence in your own work and your team's work.

REMEMBER "THE WHY"

means you always keep in the forefront of your mind the people LADD supports. You do not make decisions or take actions that cause harm to the LADD community.

PRACTICE INCLUSION

means you both seek out and offer diverse perspectives and life experiences. You invite conversations about disability, race, sexuality, gender, and faith and embrace the process and occasional discomfort of navigating and understanding differences.

HAVE FUN

means be yourself and look for ways to enjoy your work and your team! You celebrate each other's quirks (both staff and the people you support) and give each other space to play.

STRIVE FOR RESULTS AND BE STRATEGIC

means you focus on creating meaningful results for the people we support and/or LADD's goals. You do not mistake being busy with getting results. You also do not mistake "doing good or trying hard" with results.

EMBRACE ACCOMMODATION

means you readily adjust your teaching or communication style to fit how the person you are teaching, supervising, or communicating with best absorbs information. It also means you make sure everyone has what they need to fully participate in work gatherings.

BE AN AMBASSADOR

means you show pride in being part of the LADD community internally and externally. You do not discredit or devalue the organization internally or externally.

BALANCE YOUR GOALS

means you determine if your personal and professional goals align with the organization's mission. You do not harm or otherwise undercut others in the organization to "get ahead" or curry favor.

PRACTICE CONFIDENT PROBLEM SOLVING

YOU ARE INSPIRED BY LADD'S MISSION.

You take time to learn what is expected of you related to your job and understand where you have the freedom to make your own decisions. You seek out different perspectives and ideas from your colleagues when grappling with a challenging problem. You act thoughtfully and expeditiously.

UNDERSTAND YOUR ROLE

means you know what your job is, how to do it, and when to seek assistance and/or permission as well as when to give assistance. You do not expect or let others (including your supervisor or manager) solve problems for you, nor do you deprive others of their opportunity to use their problemsolving skills.

MAKE IT HAPPEN

means once you have come up with a solution, take action. You do not waste time and energy getting unnecessary input or analyzing it to death.

CLIMB THE DECISION TREE

means you and your supervisor have determined the levels, situations, and times when you make decisions without permission or input, when you make decisions with input and from whom, and when you need permission to make a decision. You do not make decisions you do not have the authority to make.

INFORM

means once you have taken action, talk to your supervisor or manager about the situation, the action, and the results. You do not cover up mistakes or bad outcomes, nor do you keep good ideas and outcomes you've achieved from others who could benefit from them.

BE FIERCELY ACCOUNTABLE

YOU ARE DOGGED ABOUT RESTATING, UNDERSTANDING, AND AGREEING TO EXPECTATIONS.

You take personal responsibility for meeting the expectations. You understand that it is OK to make mistakes and accept correction and helpful feedback when you and/or your team don't meet those expectations. You implement appropriate changes so expectations are met in the future.

ACTIVELY LISTEN

means giving your full attention to the person you are listening to. You do not multi-task (that includes but is not limited to texting, reading emails, forming a response in your head while the other person is speaking, etc.).

ACT WITH INTEGRITY

means you make promises you and/or your team can keep.

ASK QUESTIONS

means you come right out and ask to ensure clarity and understanding. You do not assume.

MAKE CHANGES

means you seek to understand what went wrong, address it, and resolve it so it does not happen again. You do not make excuses for yourself or others and you do not blame others when you do not meet expectations.

ENSURE AGREEMENT

means you and the other person agree to the expectations at the outset whether it's about deadlines, quality, quantity, or behaviors/actions. You do not say you really didn't agree after you have missed meeting the expectations.

APOLOGIZE

means you recognize and sincerely accept responsibility for not meeting the expectations and the impact it has on others. You do not explicitly or tacitly dismiss the other person's feelings/reaction.

BE ON TIME

means be on time.

USE COMPASSIONATE EMPATHY

YOU SEEK TO UNDERSTAND THE OTHER PERSON'S BEHAVIORS

Even if you don't agree with their decisions or actions, you use emotional intelligence to respond thoughtfully and strategically.

ACTIVELY LISTEN

means giving your full attention to the person you are listening to. You do not multi-task (that includes but is not limited to texting, reading emails, forming a response in your head while the other person is speaking, etc.).

ASK QUESTIONS AND SEEK FEEDBACK

means you come right out and ask to ensure clarity and understanding. You do not assume another's perspective. You also seek input at the appropriate time on whether or not your support has been helpful and how you can improve.

HONOR FEELINGS

means you allow the other person to feel what they feel without judgment or time limits. You do not tell someone to calm down, relax, or get over it, nor do you say things like you don't see why they are so emotional.

GET CONSENT

means you get permission before you begin solving other people's problems with them.

PROTECT YOURSELF

means you take care of your emotional well-being. You do not get so entangled in others' problems and emotions that you lose yourself or burn out (i.e., you can't want it more than they do), nor do you allow behaviors to escalate to an unhealthy/unsafe level.

NEVER COMPROMISE ON WELLNESS

YOU KNOW AND IMPLEMENT LADD WELLNESS AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS AND REQUIREMENTS.

You are vigilant about healthy lifestyle choices.



SUPPORT MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

means you show care and understanding when your colleagues and the people you support are dealing with difficult circumstances personally and/or professionally.

SPEAK UP WHEN YOU

witness violations of LADD policies or procedures by colleagues. You intervene if you see anyone being put in harm's way or exploited in any way. If you are unsure of a new rule, or changing guidance do not be afraid to ask.

RECOGNIZE YOUR POWER TO INFLUENCE OTHERS

means you are a role model for colleagues and the people you support. You find creative ways (other than food) to thank colleagues; you celebrate holidays and birthdays, and host gatherings with unhealthy foods in moderation.

EMBRACE ACTIVITY

means you encourage and find opportunities for regular physical activity during work among you and your colleagues and the people we support.

SPEAK THOUGHTFULLY

YOU SAY WHAT YOU MEAN, MEAN WHAT YOU SAY.

Just don't be mean when you say it.

BE UPFRONT

means you are direct and respectful when you talk to others regardless of their role or relationship to you. You are not snide or abrupt, you do not yell or otherwise try to intimidate, belittle, or threaten anyone for any reason. When asked a question that you do not want to answer, do not ignore it. Respond and explain your hesitancy.

RESPOND THOUGHTFULLY

means if you are emotional, speak with the person, do not email or text.

PRACTICE DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

means if you have something you are frustrated or hurt by that you are struggling to "let go of," you choose to have a difficult conversation to address it. You recognize that difficult conversations require practice and they are just that, difficult—at LADD you have them anyway.

ENSURE UNDERSTANDING

means you ask and genuinely seek to understand the other person and that they understand you. You do not leave the conversation without coming to an understanding (not necessarily agreement).

WORK CURIOUSLY

YOU SEEK OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE.

You ask "why" when there is a policy or procedure you don't understand. You seek to learn more about your colleagues and the people we support and invite them to share their stories.

ASK WHY

means you dig further than the surface and deeper than "this is the way we've always done it."

RECOGNIZE COMPLACENCY

means you notice when you have stopped challenging yourself to be better. When this happens, you seek to understand the source of your complacency and find a resolution. You do not stop learning and improving, nor do you say "it's not my job."

EMBRACE CHANGE

means you hold yourself and others accountable for making course corrections and/or trying something new when it is introduced. You do not actively resist or lobby against change (because it's hard or you like the way things are), nor do you allow others to do the same.

COLLABORATE

means you seek out and utilize the experience, expertise, and feedback of your fellow employees. It means you do not keep failure to yourself. You readily share your challenges with others and seek the advice of others.

SEEK FEEDBACK

means you are curious about how you are doing and areas in which you can both accentuate and improve.

PRACTICE INCLUSION

means you both seek out and offer diverse perspectives and life experiences. You invite conversations about disability, race, sexuality, gender, and faith and embrace the process and occasional discomfort of navigating and understanding differences.

PLAY UP STRENGTHS/ TROUBLESHOOT WEAKNESSES

YOU ARE HONEST ABOUT YOUR STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES.

You utilize your strengths. You complement and leverage the strengths of others. You are open about your weaknesses and seek help when you are struggling to share their stories.

FOCUS ON YOUR STRENGTHS

means take the time to know the strengths of yourself, your colleagues, and the people you support.

SEEK AND GIVE FEEDBACK

means you welcome feedback on how you can mitigate your weaknesses or correct a mistake. It also means you speak up when you see where a team member can improve or where you feel they made a mistake.

RECOGNIZE YOUR VALUE

means that you know your area of expertise and you freely offer up advice and ideas when provided the opportunity. When offering advice or insight, you do so respectfully and without condescension. You do not expect an invitation, you freely offer your thoughts.

TAKE CONTROL

means you make known your job/career aspirations and take the lead on your individual development plan. You do not leave it up to your supervisor or manager to make sure you are working to your potential.

CHECK YOURSELF

means you ensure that you have listened first and responded after. You do not attempt to coerce, over power, or otherwise force your point of view on others. You are strategic in your communication and do not send/leave emails, texts, or in voicemails a highly emotional frame of mind; you have a person-to-person conversation.

BE FEARLESS

means you are unafraid to be quirky, creative, and fun when doing your job! What makes you, you, is a strength!

GET INVOLVED



YOU RECOGNIZE THE CRITICAL IMPORTANCE OF PEOPLE WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES HAVING A VOICE AND BEING VALUED IN THEIR COMMUNITIES.

You believe that the people we support can successfully advocate for themselves and issues for which they are passionate. You are part of an agency that has a civic duty to make our community more inclusive and connected.

GIVE SPACE FOR PEOPLE TO ADVOCATE FOR

THEMSELVES means include the voice of people with disabilities when advocating.

BE AN AMBASSADOR

means you recognize that people with developmental disabilities are devalued in our community and you are aware that you represent more than just yourself when you are out in the community. You must never devalue or dismiss people with developmental disabilities internally or externally.

GET OUT THE VOTE

means you provide the support necessary for people with developmental disabilities and staff to vote and to speak up for themselves and others.

MAKE CONNECTIONS

means you seek and identify opportunities to help the people we support build natural community connections based upon shared passions and interests.

BE COURAGEOUSLY INCLUSIVE



YOU ACTIVELY CREATE A SAFE SPACE FOR EVERYONE TO BE THEMSELVES.

You put a stop to any and all active or passive behavior that marginalizes, disparages, or in any way oppresses another person or group of people. You seek and are open to doing things that increase the LADD community's diversity.

DRIVE CHANGE

means you advocate for those who are marginalized and seek to bring more people into the community. You do not explicitly or implicitly accept any behavior that supports the negative status quo.

EXAMINE AND ADJUST

means you consistently look at yourself, your actions, and the day-to-day practices and policies of LADD to ensure you are creating a sense of value and belonging for the entire LADD community. You do not accept bad behavior or poor performance under the guise of inclusion, nor do you retaliate against anyone who brings to light issues related to inclusion and equity.

GIVE SPACE FOR OTHERS TO SPEAK THEIR TRUTH

means you proactively seek to understand, listen to, acknowledge what you've heard, and learn about people who are different from you, including their feelings, thoughts, and experiences. You do not make assumptions, try to downplay their feelings or experiences by comparing your "hardships" to theirs, or attempt to "recruit" them to your way of being.

ACCEPT THE REALITY AND EMBRACE THE DISCOMFORT

means you recognize discrimination and oppression (such as racism, ageism, homophobia, sexism, and ableism) exist and that you have biases, beliefs, and societal conditioning that contribute to these disparities. You do not deny the reality, nor do you become defensive or play the victim if/when your behavior is identified as troubling or problematic.



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