



Our culture compass

 TransferWise



Welcome

We live in a unique time, where people like you and me can take on the huge problems of the world – and fix them.

It still amazes me that banks get to take \$300bn every year just to move their own customer's money around the world. You joined us to fix this – we are the solution to the problem. It will be super hard, but we've already made a lot of progress. It can be done.

This little guide will give you an overview of why we're here, how we act, how we work and what you should do next to be successful at TransferWise.

Let's make a positive, irreversible change in the world of finance. Together.



Kristo,
TransferWise co-founder

A large group of people, mostly men and women, are dressed in white bathrobes and are celebrating. They are holding up champagne glasses and spraying champagne, creating a dense cloud of bubbles that fills the air. The scene is set outdoors, possibly on a stage or a large open area, with several tall, thin vertical structures in the background. The entire image has a strong blue color cast.

**Why
we're here**

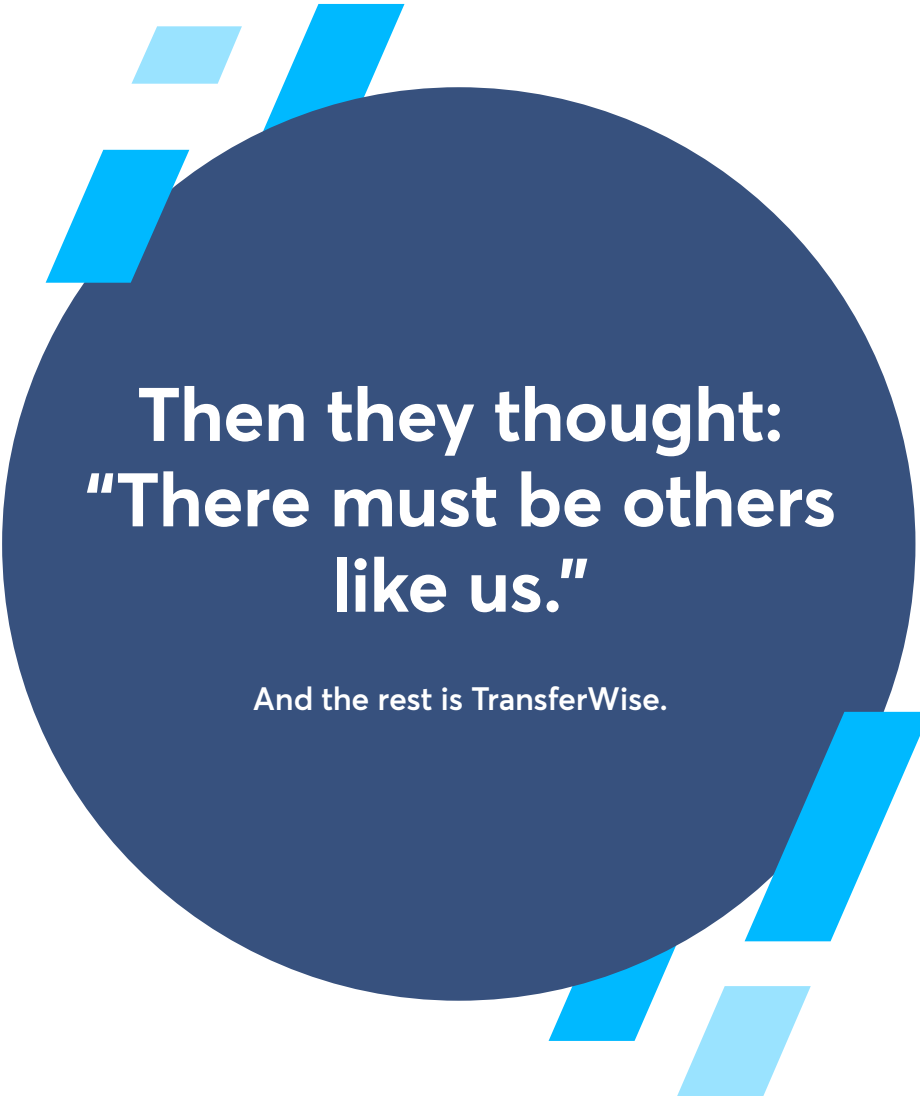
How it all began

TransferWise really started when our founders, Taavet and Kristo, realised how much banks were ripping them off when they transferred money between the UK and Estonia.

They knew there had to be a fairer way to send money internationally.

Taavet lived in London, but got paid in euros. Kristo worked in London and got paid in pounds, but had a mortgage in Estonia he needed to pay in euros.

They each needed what the other had, so they figured out a way to exchange money between themselves. Taavet put euros in Kristo's Estonian account and Kristo topped up Taavet's UK account with pounds. They did it at the real exchange rate. No more hidden fees.



**Then they thought:
"There must be others
like us."**

And the rest is TransferWise.

Our mission

Our mission is money without borders – instant, convenient, transparent and eventually free.

We move money for people and businesses who live increasingly global lives. We help them send, spend, receive, pay and get paid – in any currency – for less.

TransferWise is
**Money without
borders**

What matters to our customers

We're completely driven by our customers. We focus on what matters to them: cost, speed, convenience and coverage. We also need to build trust and awareness.

Cost

Moving money across borders shouldn't be very expensive. We're already cheap, and as we gain more customers and build better pipes, we can keep dropping our prices.

Speed

Sending money to another country should be as fast as sending an email to one. In the end, it's simply about moving bits around the world.

Convenience

Moving money around the world should be as easy as sending an email, too. As we keep improving our product and app, we move closer to making this ideal a reality.

Coverage

Customers want access to their money wherever they are and whenever they want. To build a global financial network which lets our customers access their money anywhere on the planet, we need to connect to local banking systems across the world.

Trust

People trust us with their money. That's a big responsibility, and we need to honor it every day. That means we keep data safe, but it also means we work hard, we work smart, and we remember our work affects people's lives.

Awareness

Most people aren't aware that their bank charges them an unfair exchange rate when they send money overseas. To achieve our mission, we need to make sure people know there's a problem in the first place.



**How
we act**

Our values

We're revolutionising an industry. It can be chaotic and challenging. Change is constant.

So we focus on our customers, and let their needs lead us. We use data to separate signals from noise. We challenge ourselves and take risks because that's the only way to grow.

Sometimes we fail, and that's okay. It's a great way to learn.

TransferWise is made of people who care deeply about our mission, get stuff done, put customers first and work to avoid unnecessary drama.

These are our 4 core values:

- 1. This isn't just a job, we're a revolution.**
- 2. We get it done.**
- 3. Customers > team > ego**
- 4. No drama. Good karma.**

Obviously, we're human beings, and none of us are perfect. But we are in this together. So if you feel that someone has room to improve, speak up. None of us can get better at what we do without feedback.

VALUE #1

This isn't just a job, we're a revolution.

We're making a positive, important change in the world.

We can't do this hanging out in our comfort zones.

No-one can do this alone. We need each other.

VALUE #2

We get it done.

We break through walls to make amazing things happen.

We take ownership of what we do. This thing belongs to all of us.

We take care of ourselves and each other.

VALUE #3

Customers > team > ego

We're working to create a better world for our customers – that's the whole point.

Customer voices should always be the loudest.
We listen to and serve them as a team.

Ego? Vanity? No. Stay humble.

VALUE #4

No drama. Good karma.

We start by assuming everyone has good intentions.

We respect others' worldviews and challenge arguments, not individuals.

We're open and honest – no hidden agendas here.

Some important words and what they mean

Ownership

Working here is about really, truly owning everything you do. There's no such thing as "Not my job." If you see a problem that needs solving, you can – and should – be the one to solve it.

Autonomy

We work in independent teams that have to trust each other to do their jobs well. In many ways, you'll be your own boss. Which means you'll get the freedom – and the accountability – that comes with that.

Personal impact

Your contribution to TransferWise shouldn't be dictated by your job title, your previous experience, or the volume of your voice. Your impact comes down to your willingness to work hard to make a difference in our customers' lives – and to step outside of your comfort zone.

Inclusiveness and respect

To really help our customers, we need to understand them and empathize with them. That means we need to be physically close to them, and to have similar life experiences. So we hire a diverse group of people, from all parts of the world, and all walks of life.

We're proud that we have a truly international team and we celebrate our differences. Every Wiser should feel free to be themselves at work.

Security, trust, integrity

Our customers trust us with their money – we must always honor that trust. We have some guiding principles around security and confidentiality that help us do that:

- We keep confidential information safe
- We protect our intellectual property
- We don't take bribes – and we check before accepting gifts
- We look out for conflicts of interests

Feedback

Every Wiser should ask for, listen to, and give feedback. Feedback helps us move forward and get better at what we do. We're always honest with one another, but we're also respectful and compassionate.

When you give feedback, it needs to be specific and thoughtful to be helpful.

You'll probably get a lot more feedback here than at other places you've worked. It might be a challenge at first. If you can, try not to take anything too personally.

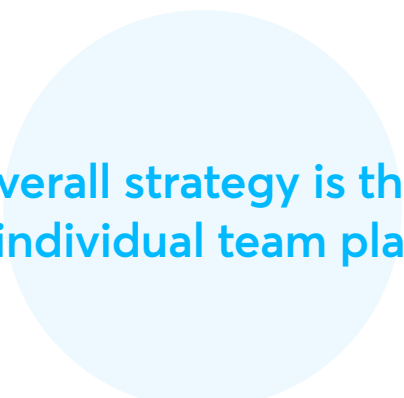


How
we work

We work in autonomous teams

We work in autonomous teams because we believe it helps us move faster towards our mission.

Each team is basically an expert in its own area. Teams can go full speed ahead when they know what they need to do, so they can deliver for our customers as quickly as possible.



Our overall strategy is the sum of individual team plans.

Start with customers by talking to them.

Look at data and then build. Learn. Then improve or start again.

Teams make decisions by talking to customers and by analysing data. They ask for input and feedback – and they're challenged by their colleagues – but they're the final decision makers.

How we communicate and make sure we're moving in the right direction

With teams working on so many different things at once, it can be hard to keep up with everything that's going on. So it's important to be proactive about communicating with your colleagues.

We share information in many different ways, including team calls and updates, slack channels, wikis, and more.

No question is stupid, no answer is unappreciated

It almost goes without saying – we're all here to learn. And a key part of learning is being able to ask questions without feeling judged.

How we think about success

Two words: happy customers.

They're the biggest driver of our growth. Each team's success is defined by the positive impact they've made for our customers, and each team has KPIs (key performance indicators) that let them know how well they're doing.

Every team should be able to stand up in front of the company and explain how their work helps our customers.

How we think about failure

If something goes wrong, or a project doesn't turn out as planned, it's a learning experience. As long as we use it to improve the next time, it will never be a failure.

In fact, things should go wrong now and again. That shows that we're trying new things to make the product better for our customers.

With the freedom to take smart risks comes the responsibility to learn from failure. We share what we've learned with the whole company – in retros and post mortems. They include what happened, how it affected customers, what we learned, and how we'll avoid making similar mistakes in the future.

Move forward as fast as you can

If you've found a way to help our customers, don't delay. Get to it!

If it's a smaller task you can do yourself, go for it. If it's something bigger, that needs input from a lot of people, see if you can ship it with a smaller group – then improve it with the rest. We're in a competitive industry, so speed is important to our success.

What to expect from your lead

TransferWise leads are just that – leads. They aren't meant to be your bosses or micromanage what you do.

They're people who've been on the journey and can help you with some of the wisdom they've picked up along the way.

And it's not meant to be a one-sided relationship. Just as you want your lead's feedback, they want – and need – yours. So don't be shy. Speak up.

A large, spherical globe is the central focus, constructed from a mosaic of numerous small photographs of diverse people. The globe is suspended by ropes and is surrounded by a large crowd of people on a grassy field. Many of the people are holding white balloons, some of which have the letters 'S' and 'A' on them. The background consists of a dense forest of tall trees. The entire scene is overlaid with a blue tint. The text 'What you should do next' is written in white, bold, sans-serif font on the right side of the image. The phrase 'Be without borders.' is visible on the globe's surface.

**What
you should
do next**

What you can do to get up to speed

1. Be patient and don't stress – we all need time to get the hang of things
2. Learn about our customers
3. Do a lot of side-by-sides
4. Join cross-team events
5. Get to know as many colleagues as you can
6. Ask questions when you don't understand something

7. Start learning by doing
8. Make sure you understand what your teammates expect from you
9. Ask for feedback
10. Speak up when something seems wrong
11. Learn what kind of information is valuable to your job, and try to filter out the rest

Own your TransferWise journey

We don't have clearly mapped out career tracks in TransferWise. As we grow, the number of problems we're solving for our customers grows. This gives us lots of opportunities to learn and develop – within our own roles, or by moving to another position or team.

[Every Wiser is encouraged to create their own path.](#)

A nice general goal: Strive to work yourself out of your current job in the next 18-24 months. Look to your lead and other smart people to help you find your own path and make it happen.

[And remember – it's not a sprint, it's a marathon.](#)

Last, and definitely not least

As we've said, we're all in this together. You should never feel like you're alone. But if you ever do feel that way, please reach out to your lead, someone on the People team, or another Wiser you trust. There are plenty of people who'd love to help.

And if you think we missed anything in this guide, please let the People team know!



We're all in this together

Welcome to the revolution!

I'm excited that you've joined our mission to change the old world of money.

I hope this little guide gave you a head start in your journey towards having a positive impact.

Take it as pointers in the right direction and inspiration to go out, talk to people, and learn more yourselves.

There are three things I'd love you to keep in mind:

1. We have the smartest folks around and nothing should stop us from doing our best and most impactful work here. Speak up if you see something in the way.
2. Not trying is a sin, failing is not. Encourage yourself and others to try!
3. We're building a better world for our customers – talk to customers and keep them as your true north.

Onwards!



Taavet,

TransferWise co-founder