



# The Montel Intergalactic Culture Handbook

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*This handbook is made for all (potentially) new Montelieers. By reading this you should have an understanding of our work culture. Enjoy reading!*

# Who we are

In the early spring of 2016 three seasoned software veterans gathered in a remote cottage in Lapland to get away from the information society. Inspired by vast open spaces around them they envisioned the ultimate working place, a clear win-win destination for both the clients and professionals working there.

The base layout for a new company was laid during that refuge. Coming up with the name proved challenging until the three put on their skis and hiked up the Pallas fells to a tiny hut called "[Montellin maja](#)".

The official company was founded during autumn 2016, registered in [Enontekiö](#) to respect the inspiration given to us by Lapland.

Since then we have been here to form the A-team of technology. We want to have the happiest team members, most satisfied clients and most awesome adventures. To get there we need to agree on the principles that form the foundation of this enterprise.

## Communication is key

Don't be afraid to speak up and say your mind. Be open about any issues, celebrate all success and don't forget to listen to your coworkers and clients.

Always be honest. We at Montel can be brutally honest at times and that is nothing to be ashamed of. But when being brutally honest also have respect for others. Also never hesitate to contact the management and/or founders directly, and if you need help, don't ever hesitate to ask.

## Be proactive

In Montel we believe in low hierarchy. We are all professionals, so nobody is going to be hovering at your desk telling you what to do. Although tasks are distributed with the aim of everybody having enough on their plate, sometimes you might finish quicker than anticipated. When this happens be proactive. There's always something to do.

Also be brave to try new things and throw in new ideas. And *always* remember that it is totally ok to make mistakes.

# Respect for what we do

For developers: The craft of writing and designing software is a massive creative effort. It takes imagination, problem-solving skills and stone-cold perseverance to do the things we do. Often it also requires a tough head or soft walls around you.

Respecting our craft is about dedication to the industry, about never ceasing to learn new things and about sharing knowledge with our fellow colleagues. We Montelieers are not competitors, we are companions.

For those who don't do software: your skills and knowledge are as important for the company. Share your knowledge and also listen carefully, what *the nerds* are saying to learn what Montel really does.

## The Client is who we do this for

While enjoying our work and having fun at it, the goal of everything is to provide value for the Client.

Working with Montelieers should feel *Easy, Reliable and Efficient*. So plan your meetings, communicate with clarity and be proactive in suggesting next steps, be professional.

We are in the service business helping our clients on their path to success. Listen to them and be understanding about their changing situations. At the same time prevent bad technological decisions and guide them towards more sensible ones by explaining facts. Make decision making easy for them with planning and suggesting a few Work Packages to pick and choose from the ones suiting best their current situation. You are the expert so here's your chance to channel your inner Obi-Wan.

## Put yourself first

Becoming an exceptional digital wizard is a marathon, not a sprint. To make it to the finish line we need to take extra good care of ourselves along the way. In addition to training your digital skills, take care of your physical as well as mental side.

Try new hobbies, suggest new things we could try at Montel. Or go for a swim during lunch if that makes you happy. When feeling unmotivated or in need of a rest don't hesitate to mention it and take some time off. No great things come from tired minds.

We organize well-being conversations with each and every Montelieer every few months. Those meetings are for you to have a chance to reflect your wellbeing, but

also do feel free to speak with HR or the founders about your wellbeing *anytime* you feel like it. For us it's not just MontelCare, it's also Montelieer care.

## Responsibility

At Montel, we pay attention to environmental, social and governance aspects of responsibility. We, for example, aim to realistically compensate all CO<sup>2</sup> emissions of work-related flights by buying forest from Enontekiö through Finnish Nature Heritage Foundation. We also make responsible donations instead of buying material presents for Christmas, support local sports and hobby opportunities by working pro bono for local sports club Westend Indians and support climate actions through pro bono project with Ilmastometsä ry.

## How we organize our work

At Montel, we do development projects and MontelCare monitoring. Often you will be working on several projects during the same week. MontelCare monitoring is done in rotating shifts by our MontelCare-team.

Every project has a lead developer who is not only in charge of finding other developers from Montel to work on the project but also listens to the clients' desires and proactively suggests new ventures for them.

The lead developer always has a second-in-command, the one who steps in when the leader is absent. These are the two top honchos in all of our projects. The roles change from time to time as new developers come in and unique skillsets are required elsewhere.

MontelCare, our 24/7 monitoring and infrastructure development service, is aimed to take the cost and difficulty of ensuring critical service availability and infrastructure development away from our Clients.

We have one routine that we swear by, the Monday meeting. That's when we get together collectively and see what happened last week and what can be expected of this one. It's also the time we meet, discuss and enjoy breakfast together. Please be there, preferably face to face to meet and greet your work mates - and enjoy the delicious breakfast!

Projects have meetings of their own. Some even have weeklies. For meetings it's often more efficient and pleasant to gather in the same room but often not absolutely required.

Montel.space is where we meet when we can't all make it to the Helsinki-office, the mothership. The channel is always open at the office lounge and used for the company's internal communication.

## Day-to-day

### Remote work

Our aim is to be as productive as possible while maximizing the kicks we get out of doing our work. Often that means working from home or the office and sometimes from the end of a long pier by the sea. All this is totally ok and up to you.

When contemplating on doing distant work please take into consideration that no man is an island and often your colleagues might suffer from you not being there. Stay connected and communicate with your fellow Montelieers.

### Work time

We've discovered that time is subjective. Some people like to work in the mornings while others burn the midnight oil. Despite this, we aim to be available between 10-16 of your local time. Of course, there are moments that can make this a challenge. Again good communication helps us maximize our team effort.

Sometimes it can be fun to crunch and work long hours on a project, but mostly working overtime should be seen as a failure of planning beforehand.

## Perks

As a Montel employee working in Finland, you are provided with lunch, recreation and transit fringe benefits. You are also offered phone benefit and free participation in a floorball hobby group. As a full-time Montel employee in Finland, you will get 200 euros lunch benefit every month, 400 euros annually for recreational purposes, such as festival or sports tickets, and 300 euros annually for commute benefits. There is also basic accident insurance for all employees in Finland, as well as occupational healthcare services.

For freelancers, we can't for administrative reasons offer all these benefits but that will be taken into account in the compensation.

# Mothership

Even though we are a largely remote organisation we have a Montel HQ, the mothership, in Helsinki. Temporarily it lies in UMA Teurastamo work hub, in Kalasatama, Helsinki. It is a place for all to enjoy oneself and work in an environment that inspires and provides facilities for both relaxation as well as efficient and ergonomic work. There is always fresh coffee as well as snacks and beverages for everyone to enjoy!

## FUN!

Work is more fun when you work with friends instead of strangers. That is why we organize events together, such as monthly TekijäTorstai / Tinkerers' Thursday, sports and cultural events, annual Christmas party and Summer Fiesta.

### Montel Intergalactic nano brewery

We used to have our nano-brewery in our old office. Now we are looking for a new place to start the brewery activities again. Check our room in UMA to find a collection of four fine beers from Montel Intergalactic brewery.

## FAQ

I want to showcase my qualifications with a certification. Is it possible?

Yes, definitely! The certification will be paid by the company and you can also organize time to study for it during your work hours.

I want to speed up and/or have a structure in my learning and professional development. What should I do?

Great! The better you are the more intergalactic Montel is. When you are not fully booked by our customers just use that time to develop your skills and knowledge in a way that suits you best. Also, feel free to arrange time for personal development if your client projects don't satisfy your hunger for learning.

Also, remember that your fellow Monteliuers are happy to help you. Let us help you to create an Intergalactic Study plan and match you with a designated mentor to help you out: schedule to meet quarterly to check the progress and next steps of your plan.

## What tools will I need on the road to technological enlightenment?

We want to super-charge your creative process and won't limit your tool selection in any way. Use the tools that you feel most comfortable with. If you are unhappy with your current toolbox, ask around and listen to different opinions from Emacteers, Vimsters and devoted IntelliJians. No tool is one-size-fits-all so shop around and experiment.

## Rumour has it that there's an interesting conference coming up. Can I go?

Yes, you can - and should! If it is a conference where you can learn and get inspired, we think it is worth spending your workdays to attend. Once a year you can participate in a conference trip abroad that will be paid by the company (conference pass, travel tickets, accommodation). Let us know when you spot a conference you would be excited to attend. Also, do share the acquired knowledge with other Montelieers.

Thanks for reading!