

Orcta Engineering Philosophy & Practices

Orcta Engineering Leadership

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June 11, 2025

Contents

1	Introduction: Why This Document Exists	2
2	Core Engineering Beliefs	2
3	Building Philosophy	2
4	Engineering Practices & Rituals	3
5	How We Collaborate	3
6	What “Great” Looks Like	4
7	Continuous Improvement	4

1. Introduction: Why This Document Exists

At Orcta, engineering is not just about writing code. It's about building systems that are reliable, scalable, and empowering. This document captures our collective mindset, show we build, how we grow, how we make decisions, and how we work together. It is a living document that guides new engineers, anchors team culture, and aligns us around what excellence looks like at Orcta.

2. Core Engineering Beliefs

- **Principles over Tools:** We value deep understanding over superficial mastery of frameworks. Concepts drive the choice of tools—not the other way around.
- **Progressive Abstraction:** Build simple first. Then abstract. Avoid premature optimization or abstraction that hides clarity.
- **Craftsmanship:** Code should be clean, understandable, and respectful of future readers. We practice empathy through our engineering.
- **Speed with Stability:** We move fast, but we do not ship broken things. Testing, CI/CD, and code reviews are how we safeguard quality.
- **Document to Scale:** Documentation is not a chore—it is an act of generosity to your teammates and your future self.
- **Learning is Continuous:** Every engineer is expected to grow. Knowledge is shared through pairing, writing, and discussion.

3. Building Philosophy

- **Start with the “Why”:** Every feature or system starts with a user need or pain point. Engineers should ask *why* before *how*.
- **Design before Code:** We favor thinking through architecture, drawing diagrams, or writing PRDs before writing the first line of code.
- **Minimum Lovable Product (MLP):** We don't just ship MVPs. We aim to build the smallest version of something users can love.

- **Refactor as You Go:** Don't postpone improvements. Make the codebase better every time you touch it.
- **Fail Fast, Learn Faster:** Mistakes are okay. Cover them in post-mortems and use them to build a stronger culture.

4. Engineering Practices & Rituals

- **Code Reviews Are Sacred:** Every PR gets reviewed. Feedback must be kind, clear, and focused on improvement.
- **Testing Is Expected:** Unit tests, integration tests, and linting are part of our CI pipeline. No broken code in main branches.
- **Standups Are for Focus:** Standups aren't status updates—they're about unblocking, prioritizing, and syncing purpose.
- **Retros Are for Growth:** We reflect weekly or bi-weekly. What worked, what didn't, what we'll try next.
- **Sprints Should Deliver Value:** We don't measure productivity by tasks completed, but by impact created.

5. How We Collaborate

- **Cross-functional by Default:** Engineers work closely with product, design, and sometimes even users.
- **Asynchronous First:** Clear messages, documented decisions, and recorded demos help us reduce meeting load.
- **Respect the Deep Work Zone:** We protect maker time. Fewer meetings, clear schedules, and Slack etiquette support focus.

6. What “Great” Looks Like

- **Systems Thinkers:** Great engineers at Orcta think about the whole—not just features, but users, trade-offs, and long-term effects.
- **Builder’s Spirit:** They take initiative, prototype solutions, and get their hands dirty.
- **Ownership Mentality:** They don’t wait for permission. They own problems end-to-end.
- **Communication is Clear & Kind:** They write well, speak with clarity, and give thoughtful feedback.
- **Help Others Level Up:** They mentor, pair program, and teach.

7. Continuous Improvement

This philosophy is not final. We review it annually, and any team member can propose changes. Great cultures are not enforced—they are co-created. As we grow, our practices will evolve. But our values will remain our compass.