

PLAY  
IS IN  
OUR  
DNA

The Values and Beliefs  
That Make Us Who We Are

# VALUES AND BELIEFS

This document outlines the values, beliefs, principles, and philosophies that guide Architects At Play. This is, by no means, a complete chronicle of the ideas that impact our practice, but provides some insight into how we think, behave, and aspire to be. It is intended to be an informative resource for our employees, our clients, our consultants, and our visitors.

This document will be updated, whenever necessary, to ensure its applicability and relevance. Please contact [architectsatplay@gmail.com](mailto:architectsatplay@gmail.com) or visit [www.architectsatplay.ca](http://www.architectsatplay.ca) if you have any questions or comments regarding the policy or if you have specific questions regarding our values and beliefs.

Date of first approval: December 12, 2018

The values and beliefs listed in this document have been in place since “day one” and are the ones that made it onto the first iteration of our business cards. We have categorized them into four key philosophy areas: Atmosphere and Culture, Innovation and Creativity, Design, and Play. We believe that there is, and should be, much overlap among these sections, and we place no emphasis on one section over another.

Ultimately, we hope that this document simply tells you a little bit about who we are, how we practice, and why we’re doing what we’re doing. Enjoy!



# VALUES AND BELIEFS

## 1. Atmosphere and Culture

### **Work is Fun:**

People often say that when you love what you do, it doesn't feel like work. That's how we feel too, and we "work" really hard to keep things fun.

### **Diversity is Strength:**

We're very fortunate to live in a country where openness and inclusion are considered core values. We believe that bringing different viewpoints, skillsets, and life experiences to the table makes us stronger.

### **Friendships are Essential:**

To quote IDEO founder Tom Kelley, "Friendships are a shortcut to play."

### **It is About You:**

This firm is not just about three people, it's about the people around us, our community, and our clients. We want to see them grow and succeed, and will support them as much as we can.

### **Humility is Fulfilling:**

We take every opportunity to acknowledge and give credit to those who have helped us get to where we are. We don't take ourselves too seriously, and we celebrate the little successes.



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## Atmosphere and Culture (continued)

### **Motivation Comes from Optimism:**

As Stephen Covey puts it, “Begin with the end in mind.” If you believe that you can create a positive future and know that you have the power to do something about it, do it.

### **Change is Embraced:**

When you embrace change, it frees you to move forward.

### **Culture Thrives on Passion:**

A group of people who are passionate about a subject can easily create a positive impact, when they work together. We make a point of finding, connecting with, and collaborating with passionate people in every area of life.

### **Mindfulness Makes and Impact:**

Only when you are aware and take the time to be educated about the world around you can you make a positive impact.

### **Individuality is Valued:**

You can incorporate your entire being (your interests, passions, and hobbies) into your craft. And we love that about you.

### **We are Free:**

Be as wacky as you want to be, says Grant.



# VALUES AND BELIEFS

## 2. Innovation and Creativity

### **Failure Teaches:**

Don't fear failure; fear not trying at all. Learn from your mistakes, and learn from others' mistakes too. Understand that risk can lead you on the path toward success, but only if you let it.

### **Everyone is Empowered to be Creative:**

We believe that everybody is born to be creative and that the best ideas can come from the least likely places. We also believe that anybody can use design thinking to bring creativity to their work and lives.

### **Innovation Starts with People:**

We believe that human-centred thinking leads us to better solutions and helps us contribute to our community's quality of life.

### **Imagination Brings Insight:**

Divergent thinking and the ability to imagine the possibilities are valuable tools for coming up with creative solutions to complex problems.

### **The Possibilities are Endless:**

Don't start with preconceived notions of what anything should be. Don't self-edit too quickly, and when starting a new challenge, go for quantity over quality.



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## 3. Design

### **Solutions Spark Emotions:**

Every artform has the ability to evoke feelings, and the practice of architecture can do that on a large scale. The built environment has a huge impact on people's emotions, and we believe that we can make a positive impact into our community's mental quality of life.

### **Space Fosters Community:**

We believe that spaces come alive when people engage with them, and we believe that spaces can inform how people engage with one another. Good design has the power to build up communities.

### **Challenges are Opportunities:**

We get excited when we encounter a challenge. In fact, sometimes, we seek them out because it gives us the opportunity to flex our creative muscles.

### **Complex Problems are Best Solved Creatively:**

When you utilize design thinking to attack a problem in front of you, solutions come quickly and easily.

### **Building Facilitates Meaningful Dialogue:**

Building things (digitally or physically) through sketches, models, and prototypes, provides opportunities for discussion, reflection, and action. Begin with quantity.



# VALUES AND BELIEFS

## 4. Play

### **Curiosity is a Skill:**

Questioning the world around you and having a desire to know more naturally leads to insight and education.

### **Restlessness is Energizing:**

When you feel like you want to get something done, you often find a way to get things done. Sitting still isn't an option for us.

### **Exploration Leads to Discovery:**

You won't find what you're not looking for. So, start looking.

### **Dreams are a Call to Action:**

If there is something that you want badly, go after it relentlessly.

### **Stories are Celebrated:**

We give time to celebrating the stories that make us happy: our accomplishments, our families, our friends, and our communities.

### **Childhood is Rediscovered:**

Think back to a time when you felt free to share ideas... when you were at your most creative. Fun, wasn't it?

### **Ideas are Tested:**

Think. Build. Try. Fail. Repeat. Succeed.

