

Columbia College Operating Principles

Columbia's working environment is based on operating principles derived from our professional beliefs relating to human interaction, development and leadership. These principles are the cornerstone of the organization. They assist us in developing and maintaining successful relationships with our various customers. As all our Operating Principles are of equal value, there is no set order of priority.

Principle #1: Exceptional Service & Quality Improvement

Exceptional service is uppermost in every decision made and action taken at the college. We believe that the satisfaction and success of each type of customer (see Pillars of Success) will have a direct reflection on our success. To achieve this, we constantly focus on quality improvement.

It is our goal to be recognized by each group of customers as an exceptional service provider. To maintain excellence we continually monitor and objectively evaluate each aspect of our business through factual analysis of information. Our high quality of service distinguishes us from other organizations.

Principle #2: Relationships with Others

We believe we are all equal and therefore, regardless of position, status, or function, we always treat each person we come into contact with dignity, respect and trust. We are ethical, honest, courteous, open and friendly in our professional relationship with others.

Principle #3: Effective Communication

We recognize it is important to communicate effectively and therefore work hard at being effective listeners and presenters. We understand that how something is communicated can have a greater impact on others than what is communicated. To ensure mutual understanding we conduct perception checks.

Principle #4: Support Through a Positive and Safe Climate

We work in an atmosphere of creative challenge, respecting other's circumstances and capabilities. We ascribe positive motives for each other's actions and encourage all Columbia employees to provide exceptional and safe service to the best of their abilities.

Within a safe and supportive environment, we challenge those around us in an honest, sincere and respectful manner.

We maintain a positive atmosphere for ourselves, fellow employees and other groups of customers. Therefore, our words and actions create and foster a positive climate.

Principle #5: Motivated Team Members

Our dedicated, motivated and hardworking professionals find work self-fulfilling and rewarding. We strive to learn and develop our knowledge, skills and abilities.

We approach our work as committed and effective team members, recognizing that we are more effective when sharing positions as leaders and followers with fellow team members.

Our desire is to work with people who are motivated to grow and develop quality services within the organization.

Principle #6: Teamwork

Although we are made up of many programs/departments (teams), we work together as a larger team in the best interest of our students and their potential employers first, the whole organization second. Our competition is not within the organization, rather it is outside organizations.

Principle #7: Innovation and Improvement Through Change

We recognize the world is constantly changing and as a result new opportunities within the world around us are being created. We accept change and find proactive and innovative ways to address our challenges.

Principle #8: Efficiency and Productivity

We manage our work efficiently and effectively to become more productive.

Principle #9: Approach to Learning

We recognize each individual student and employee learn in different ways, rates, and for different reasons. However, they learn more when they are respected, trusted, supported, understood and feel comfortable in their learning/working environment. It is also recognized that learning is a life-long endeavor. Information and/or skills learned must be relevant with individuals taking responsibility for their actions.

Principle #10: Balancing Caring and Results

We effectively achieve the important balance between ‘caring’ for each customer and challenging them to achieve results.

Principle #11: Customer Needs

Customer needs (eg. employee, students, and their potential employer) are constantly changing; therefore we conduct ongoing needs assessments in order to deliver our services in a flexible manner. Our customers recognize us as innovative, responsive and open in our methods of program design and delivery. We use a questioning and enquiring approach to every aspect of service provision, utilizing innovative technologies and techniques.

Principle #12: Community Support

Volunteering time and service to the community is important to us. We belong to community organizations, provide customers with scholarships and participate on a variety of community-based committees, boards and organizations.

Principle #13: Community Mentors

In order to provide exceptional service to our primary customers (students), we seek formal and informal advice from the community. Program Board of Advisors consisting of individuals from groups or organizations such as business, labour, or government participate in evaluating our students, programs, products and services.

Principle #14: Strategic Alliances

We work cooperatively and collaboratively with members of other organizations to ensure future success for each group of our customers.

Principle #15: Long-Term Success

Our programs, products and services are concentrated and cost effective. We focus on long-term success rather than short-term surplus. Providing after sale service is important to long-term success.

Principle #16: Vendors and Suppliers

Our vendors, suppliers and consultants are essential for our success, and therefore we treat them as valued customers.

Principle #17: Competitors

Recognizing the importance of competitors is instrumental in providing a benchmark for all areas of our services, a referral network, and collaborative partnerships in service delivery.

Principle #18: Win-Win Approach

A win-win situation for learners, their potential employers, contract holders, other external customers, and internal customers provides Columbia a greater opportunity to succeed.