

Roku Culture

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High Performance

Working at Roku is like being part of a professional sports team. We put extreme care into recruiting the best people; we pay well in a competitive market; encourage excellent teamwork, and expect everyone to perform at a high level. We are independent thinkers who are able to take action and accomplish huge things by working as a team.

Proud to Work Here

Roku endeavors to be a great place to work. Not through lavish perks (alas no massages, dry cleaning, concierge or volleyball courts - although we have classic arcade machines). Instead, we provide a workplace where the company is a recognized leader in its market, the team plays to win, great talent is everywhere, politics are minimized, and employees are proud of their and Roku's accomplishments.

We value ability. Our culture and the complexity of our business call on employees to walk in to Roku and contribute immediately. You need to have the experience and the maturity to be able to make independent decisions, work quickly and be able to perform in a team environment. We see no contradiction between being highly productive at work and having families and other interests outside of the office. We aspire to maintain a good work / home-life balance.

Trust & Responsibility

Employees at Roku are trusted, encouraged to make decisions, and to be leaders. Strategic decisions at Roku are inclusive with an appropriate amount of consensus building. Employees, managers and executives make use of the broad talent base at Roku for advice and diverse points-of-view. If consensus cannot be achieved (often because of legitimate different points of view), decisions are still made quickly. Difficult decisions are not delayed. Once decisions are made, everyone supports them and takes appropriate action.

An example of trust is the Roku vacation policy. For salaried employees, we don't track vacation or have official holidays. Employees can take as much vacation as they think is appropriate, so long as they get their job done and do not block others' work or deadlines (We simply check and give notice before taking vacation).

Roku expects you to take responsibility for your career, yourself, and your outside interests.

Roku generally doesn't support charitable or political causes, though many of our employees do. Our employees have diverse interests and beliefs, and so we believe that individuals are in the best position to decide which causes they wish to support.

Talent

Roku endeavors to hire the most talented individuals possible. We like working with people who are great at their jobs. We also want co-workers who are easy to work with, and who keep their egos in check. We appreciate a sense of humor. We believe a fewer number of very talented folks can do more for less cost than a larger number of less talented teams.

We pay well and at “market” rates for top talent, and review compensation quarterly to proactively ensure employees stay paid at market. Pay is not tied to performance reviews; it is tied to “market” for a particular individual. Other than a few sales-oriented jobs, Roku does not use bonuses tied to “MBOs” (objectives). We have objectives and goals, but they often change in our dynamic market. And the type of employees that work at Roku want to do a great job, regardless of a bonus. Instead, we pay a “total comp” that is market (matching other companies total compensation that might include a bonus component and benefits). We prefer to pay employees cash+stock, rather than offer specific benefits or perks that might be valued differently by different employees. We provide our employees with benefit options, but maintain the philosophy that employees should have the ability to use their cash for whatever purpose they want (Some might buy a gym membership, others might prefer donuts.)

We interview rigorously to hire talent that matches our culture and is top of market. We don’t “settle” to close a position quickly. If we make a mistake, we ask people to move on with a generous severance package. There are lots of companies in the world, probably one that is a better match.

Communication & Context

Roku teams communicate clearly, in real time with each other and with other teams across the company. Plans, milestones, and strategic context are broadly known. Leaders provide the context to allow co-workers to make the right decisions (we believe that talented people, given the right context, usually make the ‘right’ decision). Email is used heavily at Roku. Wins are celebrated, and bad news isn’t hidden, so that we can course correct and improve.

Employees understand that much confidential information is communicated, and are careful to make sure it stays confidential.

Be present in meetings and only attend if you need to – if you use your laptop during the meeting for email or other non-meeting activities, that’s a sign you don’t need to be in the meeting.

Ask yourself which decisions your boss wants to be involved in, and solicit advice on those issues. Learn and judge what decisions need approval, which needs to be communicated, and which should just be handled.

Roku relies on everyone to identify problems and opportunities, propose solutions, and try to build consensus – even if it's not clear it's your job.

World Class Product

Our success is based on building and shipping the best consumer products in the world. We focus on ease of use, great value for the customer and having the best content. This focus on exceptional products permeates everything we do.

We value and try to protect our intellectual property. We are especially careful (particularly in engineering) about unnecessarily sharing our innovations with partners that may pass them along to our competitors.

Process

Process is as simple as possible, but no simpler (to paraphrase Einstein). For example, when we release software it goes to millions of customers so checks and balances are in place to prevent a disastrous mistake. But if you need to buy a simple piece of equipment to do your job, you should do so without “asking”.

Ask yourself, “What is this the simplest, but effective, way to do this?”

Partners

Much of our success is based on being an excellent partner (for example, with media companies, OEMs, CM’s, retailers and suppliers). We endeavor to be a great partner for them, easy to work with, transparent, and value building (for them and us). Partners may not always reciprocate, but we still treat them with respect.

Content Standards

As an “open platform” there is a broad range of content on our platform. We believe in free speech (which means speech that may offend someone). We don’t censor content, except in these cases:

- Illegal content (in the region it is published)
- Pornography
- Content encouraging violence

Ethics

We have high ethical standards for ourselves and our vendors. Lying, either overtly or through holding back information, is not something Roku teams do. To avoid being conflicted, we don’t accept material gifts, tickets or trips from partners and vendors.

Our sole standard for hiring an employee is “How good are they at their job?” and “Do they fit into our culture?” It goes without saying that race, age, religion, gender, political beliefs, sexual orientation, country of origin, being a nerd, and the like don’t factor into our hiring or pay policies.

Okay, we prefer nerds, but don’t tell anyone.