31 PROMISES
31 PROMISES
How to use 31 promises

Uzabase is committed to The 7 Values. How do members with diverse backgrounds, such as race, nationality, and religion, overcome language barriers and habits to reach a common understanding? In order to overcome this, we have broke the values down into more detail and created the “31 Promises.”

In order to help people pick “Which is more likely to be the Uzabase-like, A or B?” we have defined specific examples that are based on each of the 7 Values. They do not represent ‘rules’ for our members, but rather a reminder for them when they are in doubt about something.
Example: Which is more likely to be the Uzabase-like in terms of “self start,” A or B?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How to use 31 promises</td>
<td>4-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be free &amp; own it</td>
<td>8-23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Start</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on results</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step up for your team</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be aware of your actions</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust your own ingenuity</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go find out</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know the reason behind the rule</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unleash Ingenuity</td>
<td>24-33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bring your own ideas</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imagine more</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make time to think</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create something worth celebrating</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thrill the user</td>
<td>34-43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Put the user first, no matter what</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See for yourself</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make things you’d want to use</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure out a path</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How fast? Wow fast.</td>
<td>44-53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pursue equality and speed</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make your own deadlines</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take control of your work</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switch it up</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know? Choose brave.</td>
<td>54-61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create your own opportunities</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evolve</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenge yourself</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We need what you bring 70–83

We need what you bring

Trust your team ........................................ 64
Pitch in .................................................. 66
Motivate each other ................................. 68

In it together. No matter what. 62–69

In it together. No matter what.

Express yourself ................................. 72
Speak directly ........................................ 74
Go to the source ....................................... 76
Take action ............................................. 78
Lead by serving ...................................... 80
Do something about it ......................... 82

History of 31 Promises 86-91

History of 31 Promises

How 31 Promises were created............. 86
Composition of 31 Promises ............... 88
Transformation of 31 Promises ........... 90

Illustrators 84–85

Illustrators
Value 1

Be free & own it

We are a community of self-starters. Each one of us has the freedom to think beyond the norm and make our best decisions. That kind of freedom comes with responsibility. We inspire each other to be bold, and we hold each other to the highest standards.
Be free & own it

Self Start

Don’t wait for management to tell you what to do. You’re not here to simply follow orders and check boxes.
You deserve freedom in how you work. That freedom comes with the expectation of self-discipline. Think about your mission. Consider your values and the values of the company and start working.
Focus on results

Don’t coast. Making excuses, cutting corners, and only working when you “have to” isn’t fair to your team, your coworkers, or yourself.

Be free & own it
Trying is a good start, but it’s not enough. The only way to achieve great things is to work at it, every day until you reach your goal. Put in the effort. Be persistent. And your results will prove your value.
Don’t be dead weight. When people show up late for meetings or aren’t willing to jump in and help out, it hurts the whole team. It gets in the way of them doing their jobs and succeeding.
When the whole team is working together, we are unstoppable. That’s why it’s essential for every person to step up and take responsibility for the team’s success.
Don’t blame others or make excuses. If something doesn’t work, it’s easy to point fingers or blame the external factors like the customer or “the market.” That sort of thinking stops our growth.
Take responsibility and ask yourself what you could have done better. Be the first to see opportunities for improvement within yourself. Seek out feedback and offer feedback to others with honesty and empathy. That way your weakness will become strengths, and your results will constantly improve.
Don’t get trapped by convention. If you hear someone say “that’s the way we’ve always done things” it’s a sign that something needs to change. Sticking to stale thinking and old habits gets in the way.
There’s always a better way to do something. That means that if you think it’s a good idea, you should try it even if no one else is doing it yet. Write out a PDCA. Create a prototype. Test it. That’s how great new products and processes are born.
Be free & own it

Go find out

Don’t use “I didn’t know” as an excuse. A big part of your job is understanding your projects and developing the expertise you need to get the end result you want.
If you don’t have the information you need, find it. Don’t be afraid to ask questions and hunt down the answers even if that means going outside your comfort zone. If someone needs info, help them get it. With the exception of private personal info and intellectual property, information should flow freely.
Don’t blindly follow the rules—don’t break them either. Ignoring guidelines slows everyone down and makes it hard for people to trust you. But following the rules “just because” makes it impossible to improve as an organization.
When you understand the “why” behind a rule you can either follow it with conviction using it as a tool to boost performance and keep expectations clear, or you can look at things critically and work to change rules that are outdated or that you don’t believe in.
Value 2

Unleash Ingenuity

Is this fresh? Will our users be excited? Are we excited? If the answer to those questions is no, then we don’t do it. We use our strengths as a team, fusing our technological skill with sharp business prowess to deliver original products and services that radiate creativity and outpace the zeitgeist.
Unleash ingenuity

Bring your own ideas

Don’t be a critic or a follower. Shooting down ideas without bringing any of your own isn’t enough. Following the crowd without voicing your opinions on how to make things better is just as bad.
Share your ideas. Think of a new solution. Speak up. Present a prototype. When everyone brings their creativity, problem-solving skills, and hard work to a project, we see new, interesting, and powerful results.
Don’t limit yourself by thinking that your work doesn’t require “creativity.” Creativity is more than being artistic. Creativity is about finding a better way to get things done and create value for our users. Every role requires creativity.
No matter your role, no matter the project, imagine ways to improve. Even when you think something is as good as it can be, ask “what would make this even better?” Seek out inspiration. Try something new.
Don’t get sucked into a cycle of running from task to task and meeting to meeting without creating time to think. Being busy and being productive isn’t always the same thing.
Carving out time to think, review, and engage your brain in deep work takes effort, but the rewards are worth it: fresh thinking, inspiration, and renewed passion.
Don’t rely on the obvious answer or on what you’ve done before. If everything you make feels the same, it’s time to challenge yourself.
Think big and let your passions drive your work. Start by imagining something that you want to see in the world, something that excites you. Envision the best possible version. After that, consider the feasibility and resources you’ll need to make it happen.
Value 3

*Thrill the user*

Approach every situation with the user in mind. Anticipate their needs. We listen—with open ears, hearts, and minds—to understand what they want. And then we give them more. We capture their imagination, and we strip away anything that doesn’t make their experience better.
Put the user first, no matter what

Don’t use the user. They aren’t a revenue stream. They aren’t a profit source. Giving them what they need will take more than quickly giving them what they want.
Go beyond what the user wants or thinks they want. Make something that will wow them, something more than they expected and more than they thought they needed.
Don’t rely solely on second-hand research and number crunching. Researching overarching trends and interpreting data is important, but it’s not enough.
Learn about the world from the world. Look with your eyes. Hear with your ears. Talk to users. Talk to everyone. First-hand experience is the best source of inspiration and understanding.
Don’t stop at just doing what the user says. Listening to the user is essential, but it usually only points out ways to fix existing issues.
Use empathy and experience to become the user then think about what would make you happy. Create something that makes you happy, and you’ll make the user happy too.
Don’t dwell on what you can’t do. Squandering your energy thinking about excuses or listing all the reasons something is impossible is a waste.
Think about the ways you can make things happen. Invest your time and energy focusing on the users’ needs and then plot a path from where you’re at to where you want to be.
Value 4

How fast? Wow fast.

Surprise users (and yourself) with the speed of our results. Think faster. Develop faster. Speed is our culture. From decision making and product evolution to how we respond to our users, we want to be first. Scrap obstacles or inefficiencies that get in the way so we can create amazing things quickly.
Don’t think you have to choose between doing something well or doing it quickly. It’s not either-or.

Pursue quality and speed

How fast? Wow fast.
Look for ways to make great things happen fast. Iterate quickly. Crank out a high-speed PDCA. Recruit resources and get creative.
Make your own deadlines

Don’t get pressured into deadlines that don’t make sense for you. If stakeholders keep pushing for a deadline, find out why and address it.
Work with stakeholders and figure out a smart, realistic time frame. Get agreement, and keep everyone updated. That way you can get things done quickly and on your terms.
How fast? Wow fast.

Take control of your work

Don’t let your work control you. Taking on too much can actually slow you down and create burdens for others on your team. If you feel overwhelmed, it’s a sign that you might need to reorganize your tasks.
Create circumstances that make it easier for you to stay on top of your workload. Carefully consider time requirements and prioritize tasks. Divide the work into targeted goals and schedule check-ins so you can stay on track with less stress.
Don’t get stuck in work habits that don’t serve you. If something seems impossible. Change your approach.
Examine the way you do things and be willing to try something new. Learn new processes and new ways to get things done. If you’re adaptable, you’ll be able to improve.
Value 5

*Don’t know? Choose brave.*

If there’s a challenge, chase it. Find the point of difficulty and push. If it means making mistakes—that’s fine. Failure is a master teacher. We’ll learn. We’ll get smarter. And we’ll do it over and over. In our world, success only comes from trying something new then learning how to do it better than anyone else.
Don’t know? Choose brave.

Create your own opportunities

Don’t wait around for opportunities to come to you. Complaining because you aren’t getting the new and exciting projects doesn’t work.
Take on new challenges and find ways to shine. Assign opportunities to yourself and take them on with commitment and drive.
Don’t rest on laurels or waste time dwelling on the past. When things change, it’s easy to get nervous and think about how “things used to be.” Don’t get sucked into the trap of looking back.
We will only improve as an organization if every person is also improving. Every day is an opportunity to grow your skills. Every year is a chance to become a better version of yourself.
Don’t freeze or panic when a task seems too difficult or the details seem too complicated to organize. That kind of thinking makes you powerless and will leave you feeling overwhelmed.
Approach challenges by focusing on the big picture then setting small goals to get to the finish line. Your ability to take on bigger challenges will grow with each success.
Value 6

*In it together.*

*No matter what.*

When an elite athlete feels pain, they don’t ignore it. They get help. We’re the same. We rely on each of you, so if you’re feeling down or stuck or exhausted, raise your hand. Say something. Your team will help—always. And you’ll be ready when it’s someone else’s turn to ask for help. Ignoring an issue makes it worse. Get help when the problem is the easiest to fix: now.
In it together. No matter what.

Trust your team

Don’t do it all yourself. Keeping all the work to yourself or failing to share your needs doesn’t help anyone. In fact, it can put your team at a disadvantage. Remember, if you did it alone, you probably did it wrong.
Relying on your coworkers makes your team stronger. Be brave and humble enough to tell your team what you’re dealing with and let them know where you need help.
In it together. No matter what.

Pitch in

Don’t think “it’s not my job.” If you see something that needs to be done, do it—even if it’s outside your usual work. Big wins are good for all of us. And if something goes wrong, it hurts all of us.
The end result is everyone’s responsibility, so if you see something that needs doing, do it. Zoom out. Take in the big picture, and if something or someone needs extra help, pitch in.
Don’t ignore people’s needs. It can be easy to overlook others’ feelings or points of view especially when you’re really committed to an opinion. But ignoring teammates can hurt morale and curb creativity.
Motivate and lift each other up with both words and your actions. When you keep each other energized it’s easier to do your best work. It makes life better for everyone, and it’s the right thing to do.
We communicate openly—expressing ourselves honestly and listening with respect turning our differences into strength. The unique way you see the world makes all of us smarter. The way you express yourself inspires us to be more creative. Speak your mind. Share from the heart. Express your talents and be yourself. We celebrate diversity of experience, thought, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, and culture. Whatever your path, we need your point of view.
Don’t bury your feelings. Keeping doubts or concerns to yourself doesn’t help anyone. When small stresses or worries build up, they can turn into a strain on your mental health and on your team.
Talk through concerns before they fester and turn into bigger issues. Getting things out in the open build trust. It helps fix issues faster and create a culture of caring for each other.
We need what you bring

Speak directly

Don’t talk behind people’s back. There’s no place for gossip or secret complaining—it just makes things worse for everyone.
Talk to people directly and in good faith even if the conversation feels like it might be difficult. Speak and listen with kindness then offer help where you can.
Don’t fixate on hearsay or jump to conclusions. Judging people or situations without getting the whole story first hand isn’t fair.
If you hear something that troubles you, get the truth firsthand. If a one-on-one conversation feels awkward, make it an inclusive, open team or group conversation.
Don’t get hung up on problems without doing something about it. Wallowing in issues and complaining to yourself and others spreads bad vibes. No one needs that.
It’s normal to have a bad day or to have an occasional complaint. It’s what you do with those feelings that matters. Figure out how to solve the problem. Discuss it. Work on it. Then move on.
Lead by serving

Don’t wield power over others. Using your title to force your opinions kills collaboration and hurts the quality of the end result.
Showing honest respect for others, especially those that work under you, elicits trust. If you serve those who work for you, you can develop their talents, and they will give you their best ideas and best work.
Do something about it

Don’t ignore problems or assume that the issue will go away if you pretend it’s not there. Wishful thinking doesn’t fix anything, and hoping someone else will notice the problem can be dangerous.
Your one-of-a-kind perspective gives you the ability to understand things in a way no one else can. So if you notice a potential problem, call it out. You might be the perfect person to prevent a bigger problem.
Illustrators

**Mitsuhiko Sasaki**
Born on Jan 26th, 1983 in Fukuoka. His representative work is *Interwall* (Pie Books). Not only creates illustrations, but also he does bookbinding and makes animations for music videos, etc. He publishes manga on his website occasionally.

Twitter: @sasakimitsuhiko

**Hirochika Machida**
Born in 1992. Author and illustrator. He also creates illustrations applied on goods for various musicians, events, artworks and books. His own projects are comics with an original character. Also creates pop art with the theme of travel and nature.

Instagram @hirochikamachida

**FACE**
An artist and illustrator born in Tokyo to a Taiwanese father and Japanese mother. He works globally mainly in the field of apparel, advertising and magazines.

Instagram: @face_oka

**Shigo-kun**
Illustrator born in Tokyo in 1977. He creates illustrations and manga for magazines, books, TV and websites. Shippai Zukan (Masato Ōno - Bunkyōsha), Goro no Omise (Shigokun- Gorō - Iwasakishoten) and other books. He published I My Moko-chan from Genkōsha.

Twitter: @sigo_kun
Instagram: @sigo_kun

**Mitsuhiko Sasaki**
Born on Jan 26th, 1983 in Fukuoka. His representative work is *Interwall* (Pie Books). Not only creates illustrations, but also he does bookbinding and makes animations for music videos, etc. He publishes manga on his website occasionally.

Twitter: @sasakimitsuhiko
Isamu Gakiya
Illustrator and painter. Being influenced by post-war American horror movies, science fiction films, and American comics, his artworks are colorful but somehow dark and poisonous. He uses various art techniques such as drawing, collage, and painting on different kinds of materials.
Twitter: @gakism

Shuntaro Takeuchi
Illustrator and painter. He created a clay animation duo “woodpecker” while he was in Tama Art University. After graduation, starting as a freelance illustrator, his works varies from writing for magazines and websites to collaborating with fashion brands and traditional crafts.
Instagram: @takeuchishuntaro

Irena Inumaru
Trilingual illustrator born between a Serbian father and a Japanese mother. Her everyday job is art direction, but one of the things she enjoys doing is expressing herself with freehand pictures and lettering.
Instagram: @irenainumaru
History of 31 promises

How 31 Promises were created

31 promises were created around the same time as the company’s public listing on Mothers in October 2016.

At that time, the number of employees had grown to 200 and the “7 Rules” (now called “The 7 Values”), were being able to be understood and to relate to it, but it was difficult to talk about it with actual experience. There were issues that hadn’t been ingrained in the company until now. In addition, the number of members working at overseas offices was increasing, and language and cultural differences were beginning to emerge.
It was very important for us to ensure that each member of the team understood the true meaning of our values and was able to express them in their own words and embody them. When asked about the meaning of the 7 rules, a vague answer like ‘I guess this means something like this..?’ was not enough. We needed to verbalize and communicate in a simple way by using specific cases to illustrate what the values represent. The members of the company at that time were asked to fill out a questionnaire to find out when they specifically needed values and when they were unsure of what to do. Eventually we developed our own words to describe these situations and summarized them into 31 pieces.

This is how the “31 Promises” were created.

As we were expanding our business overseas, we incorporated illustrations to express each of the DOs and DON’Ts in order to make the nuances that cannot be conveyed by words alone, including those of our overseas members, visually impressive and easy to understand.

Now we have an opportunity to think deeply about what each value actually means and what these words actually represent.
Structure of 31 Promises
(October 2016 - March 2020)

From October 2016 to March 2020, the 31 Promises were divided into a “DO” and “DON’T” action guideline for each of the seven values, with illustrations for each of the situation.

The seven values were described as the “Seven Rules” until March 2020. While following these rules, those actions were clearly divided into two categories: DOs (actions to be taken) and DON’Ts (actions not to be taken) and defined specifically.
Leave everything up to management

In a military-like organisation, everything can be left up to the big wigs. Sometimes that can be the easy option. But, unfortunately, because we are a company who has more ‘freedom’, this also means that we expect more ‘self-discipline’.

Be self-disciplined

If you think thoroughly about the meaning of your work and how to own your mission and your values, you will be driven by your own accord. This will then be conveyed to stakeholders and you can easily manage expectations. Self-discipline is, in fact, your passport to freedom.
Transformation of 31 Promises
(from April 2020)

Self Start

Be free & own it

Don’t wait for management to tell you what to do. You’re not here to simply follow orders and check boxes.

You deserve freedom in how you work. That freedom comes with the expectation of self-discipline. Think about your mission. Consider your values and the values of the company and start working.
In September 2019, as the number of businesses increased, some of them started differentiating by having their own cultures and traditions. Uzabase has decided not to enforce unification of the existing Values, but rather simplify the situation so each business can freely set out its own values.

This will allow us to diversify the value of each of our businesses, bringing together talents that have never existed before and flourishing new personalities. Therefore, we have changed the name of the “Seven Rules” to “The 7 Values” to reflect our desire to maintain values that can be valued by each business as a basis for its own operations, rather than forcing people to obey any “rules.”

In conjunction with the rebranding of Uzabase in April 2020, we have also reconfigured the “31 Promises” and avoided defining DOs and DON’Ts. We have changed the structure in order to leave some “thinking space” so that each person can think more freely and flexibly about the values.

The Uzabase Group will continue to evolve as it embraces new and different capabilities.
31 PROMISES
Uzabase

**Design:** Yuta Oda (COMPOUND inc.), Hanako Mori

**Editorial Direction:** Takafumi Ando (TISSUE inc.)

**Copywriting (English):** Joshua Barnes