



# The Misfits Who Fit

Our Philosophy

## Introduction

**'Everyone's  
a misfit  
somewhere  
in their life.'**

*Neil Sampson, Founder*

### **Solar Gates is 18 years old.**

After 18 years of doing things a bit differently, you might think we'd slow down. Stop and settle into a routine.

But that's not really who we are.

The older we're becoming, the stronger our hankering to innovate becomes too. To be honest, it's a bit curious. It's like every time we try to stop, we can't seem to manage it.

Our philosophy hasn't changed, but it's evolving.

**How do the misfits fit together?**

**How is compassion even remotely related to worksite barrier production?**

**Why do we even bother in the first place?**

## 4 Key Values

**Here at Solar Gates, we have four key values.** They're pretty straightforward (we've learned that the more straightforward something is, the more likely it is to work).

### **INNOVATIVE**

Make new stuff. Do new things. Reinvent the wheel. Build different, hire different. Be the change.

### **CAPABLE**

Be good at stuff. This is generally advisable business practice. Be steady. Stay strong. It's something we tell our staff when they are having a bad day. A reminder to self.

### **COMPASSIONATE**

Capability is important. But if you're half-arsing it, you're going to come out with some right crap. 100% care for everything we do. All the time.

### **PASSIONATE**

We've named ourselves after the most renewable energy source there is. We shout about being misfits. We dish out second chances. Whatever we do, compassion is leading the charge.

## Product



'Innovation at Solar Gates means making products that are better for the environment, easier to use, and safer for the people who rely on them... our philosophy is about making technology that works better and is sustainable for everyone involved.'

- Chris Long, Operations Director

### Actions tend to speak louder than words, and all that.

It's all well and good for us to harp on about innovation and capability, passion and compassion. All that stuff's lovely. But if we're doing the bare minimum and making the world's most pollutive, least effective worksite barriers, then it's just a load of wind.

Take the **INSTABOOM**, born out of customer need for a solar, portable barrier system.

This wasn't just about meeting a customer request (although that is obviously very, very important); it was about reimagining what a worksite barrier should be, with a bit of help from Neil's Lego set.

We don't just slap solar panels on stuff that already exists and call it a day: as Chris, our Operations Director, points out:

'Our philosophy revolves around designing products that are solar-powered from the start, ensuring they are not only functional but also environmentally-friendly.'

- Chris Long, Operations Director

We're solar-first, not solar-later; for us, it's not just about ticking a box or filling a quota. We operate under the assumption that we'll one day be existing within an entirely Green energy infrastructure, because we know there is no sustainable alternative.

**Innovative. Capable. Compassionate. Passionate.**

Every day we come to site, you best believe we're keeping our word and bringing value to our customers and the industry we serve.

## People



'Our team is made up of people from all walks of life, and that diversity drives our creativity and innovation.'

- Neil Sampson, Founder

### We often describe ourselves as 'the misfits who fit.' But what's a misfit?

Well, for starters, everyone's probably been labelled a misfit at some point. We've been told 'this won't work' and 'you're not quite right for that.' We've been put in boxes, labelled and written off.

We've also made plenty of mistakes.

Here, we reckon that making a mistake is the most important part of driving change. We make a million mistakes during the production process before we land on a product that we're proud of. Because the more mistakes you make, the better you get.

We're chuffed to say that our team is made up of misfits: from ex-cons, to recovering addicts, to prisoners on licence. People who've made mistakes, over and over again, and have grown stronger and more capable because of it.

'We're proud of the fact that we hire people who've made mistakes and learn from them.'

- Anna Blake, Head of Sales and Marketing

We're proud of the products we create and the service we provide. But giving our people all the support we possibly can to become the best versions of themselves gets us out of bed in the morning.

'Everybody here has had a run-in with addictive behaviour, or has had other troubles - like struggles with mental health... if you're having a problem with any of those things and you're open and honest about it, this is a place where you will be supported.'

- Chris Long, Operations Director

# Purpose



**'It was just an accident and it grew.'**

*- Neil Sampson, Founder*

It'd be easy for us to say we had a grand plan from the start about what we wanted to do... A dream that came to us during a meditation session with a Buddhist monk or a divine revelation swimming with dolphins in Honolulu.

But that's not true at all. We fell into all this. We saw demand, and we met it. It's the path we've chosen to take that's made us who we are today.

The journey has uncovered our purpose and helped us define the how we 'do good' for our clients, our people, and the planet we love dearly.

**'I met Neil at a Church when I was 18. I told him I loved digging holes. He hired me on the spot.'**

*- Dave Gammon,  
Installation Manager, Solar Gates Longest  
Serving Member of Staff™*

We don't use solar because we're white knights who want to lecture the world on energy consumption, and we don't hire ex-cons because we're a charity. We use solar because it makes sense, it's cost-effective, and long-lasting. We hire ex-cons because they're exceptionally capable people.

We're not just doing this because it gives us butterflies and makes us feel nice. We innovate with purpose, not just for the sake of it; we're passionate about what we do because quality comes from caring. This passion comes from caring about each other as a team and as a planet; and the more we help each other, the more capable we become and the stronger we get.

Sometimes, doing the right, good thing and doing the right, logical thing is - well - the same thing. If you get what we mean? So, that's what we'll be cracking on with. Doing good by doing what works... or something like that.

**'If you do make a mistake, it's okay. You've constantly got someone looking over your shoulder who'll help you pick yourself up again.'**

*- Emma Tindall, Sales and Marketing Executive*



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