

Interaction Principles

Last Updated: 12 October 2026, 13:58

Prepared for Tailwind

Project Tailwind App

© We Are Affective Ltd 2026. All rights reserved.
Private and Confidential.

Contents

Introduction 3
How To Use These Principles 3
Principle 1: Every Interaction Should Feel Considered, Not Reactive 3
Principle 2: Transitions Should Guide, Not Just Connect 5
Principle 3: Feedback Should Be Immediate and Proportionate 7
Principle 4: Progressive Disclosure Must Be Felt, Not Just Structured 8
Principle 5: The End of Every Section Is a Beginning 9
Principle 6: Loading and Waiting Should Never Feel Like Waiting 10
Interaction Anti-Patterns 11
A Note on Consistency 12

© We Are Affective Ltd 2026. All rights reserved. Private and Confidential.

Introduction

Tailwind's brand intent is unusually clear. A named person holds the journey. The client should feel accompanied without being followed, informed without being managed, and free to put the phone down knowing someone has it. That intent can survive a beautifully written brief, a carefully chosen palette, and a considered tone of voice, and still be undone the moment a user touches the screen. Interaction design is where intent either holds or quietly collapses. Every tap, transition, response, and pause is a micro-moment in which the product either confirms what it claims to be, or contradicts it.

A product can have all the right ingredients and still feel wrong. The copy can be warm and specific, the visual language calm and unhurried, the brand thinking genuinely considered, and yet if the screen hesitates when it should respond, or animates when it should stay still, or asks for a gesture the content hasn't earned, the felt experience tells a different story. For Tailwind, this gap carries particular risk. The entire promise rests on the client feeling that something has been taken care of before they asked. A product that behaves effortfully, however beautiful, hands that weight straight back.

This document defines how Tailwind should behave. Not what it should look like, and not what it should say, but the quality of the interaction itself: the pace, the feedback, the transitions, the moments of stillness, and the moments of movement. These are the decisions that determine whether a client, standing in a terminal at six in the morning, opens the app and feels accompanied, or feels, however briefly, that they are on their own.

How To Use These Principles

These principles are a standard, not a checklist. They are not meant to be stepped through in sequence or applied mechanically to every decision. They are meant to be held in mind, so that when a question arises about pacing, feedback, or transition, the answer comes from a consistent place rather than from instinct alone. A principle that has to be consulted every time it is needed is a principle that hasn't yet done its work.

When facing an interaction decision, the most useful test is not whether the outcome satisfies a requirement, but whether it feels made for this specific person, or made and then sent to them. Those two things can look identical on a specification sheet and feel entirely different in the hand. The first has a quality of attention that the second lacks, a sense that someone considered the moment before the moment arrived. That is what Tailwind's interaction design is trying to carry. Not polish, not cleverness, and not warmth performed at scale, but the quiet evidence that something was already thought about before it was needed.

Principle 1

© We Are Affective Ltd 2026. All rights reserved. Private and Confidential.

Every Interaction Should Feel Considered, Not Reactive

There is a particular kind of interaction that feels like being handed something before you have reached for it. The screen is already on the right page. The answer is already there. Nothing asks you to catch up. For Tailwind, that quality is not an aspiration. It is the standard. The product exists to serve people who have, often for years, been the person who knows where everything is. They arrive at the app with a question already formed, usually in a lounge, in a car, or on a jet bridge, tired, one-handed, with something else competing for their attention. Every interaction they encounter should feel as though it was already expecting them.

Considered interaction is not the same as slow interaction. A considered response can be immediate. What makes it considered is that it carries a quality of attention, a sense that the moment was thought about before it arrived, not assembled in response to a tap. The Anti-Principles exercise surfaced this with unusual clarity. The worst version of the product, Tailwind Live, was constantly busy. Typing indicators, scrolling activity feeds, live maps with pulsing dots. It performed attention rather than demonstrating it. The result was a screen that asked the client to watch, when the whole promise is that they can stop. Considered interaction is the opposite of that. It moves when movement serves the client, stays still when stillness does, and never uses motion to prove it is working.

This matters most at the moments that carry the most emotional weight. A disruption message, a handover announcement, a line that says "nothing needs you," these are not routine interface moments. They are the interactions that determine whether the client's guard comes down or stays up. The First 60 Seconds exercise described clients arriving at the product braced for effort, carrying a reflex of scanning built over years of being let down by travel apps. That reflex is not broken by good design alone. It is broken by an interaction that answers the question the client arrived with before they have had to ask it, and then stays quiet. Considered interaction is the mechanism by which a product earns the right to say "nothing needs you" and be believed.

What this looks like in practice

- Status lines appear already resolved, not assembling. When a client opens the app, they see the current state of their journey as a finished sentence, not a loading indicator followed by content. "Michael is at the left of arrivals" is on screen before the moment requires it. The product should never appear to be catching up.
- Transitions serve the content, not the interface. When a status line updates, for instance when a disruption is resolved and "Charlotte is rebooking you now" becomes "Done. You're on the 9.15, same seat," the change happens in place, with a quiet, unhurried replacement. The new line arrives where the old one was. Nothing sweeps, nothing bounces, nothing draws attention to the mechanism of the change.
- Responses to user input are immediate and unambiguous. Tapping a message thread, a contact line, or a status item should produce an instant and clear response. No delay, no loading state dressed as polish. The product should feel as though it was ready before the client arrived, because, in every meaningful sense, it was.

© We Are Affective Ltd 2026. All rights reserved. Private and Confidential.

- Moments of weight are given appropriate space. A line that carries significant information, a handled disruption, a handover announcement, the first "nothing needs you" of a journey, should not arrive alongside other content competing for attention. It should have room around it, visual and temporal, that reflects its significance without announcing it.
- The product holds its register regardless of what it is communicating. Good news and bad news arrive in the same tone, at the same pace. The Voice Sort sessions established this as a core quality of Tailwind's voice: calm enough that you cannot tell from the register alone which kind of news is coming. The interaction layer should carry that same steadiness.

What to avoid

- Loading states that perform effort. Skeleton screens, animated placeholders, and progress indicators all tell the client that the product is working hard on their behalf. For most products that is neutral. For Tailwind it is counterproductive, because it asks the client to wait and watch, when the product's entire purpose is to have already done the thing. Where loading is genuinely unavoidable, it should be as brief and as quiet as possible, with no visual theatre around it.
- Motion used to signal engagement. Pulsing status indicators, looping animations, typing dots that never resolve. These were identified in the Anti-Principles work as the visual language of Tailwind Live, and they were identified as wrong for the same reason: they invite watching rather than releasing. Animation in this product is reserved for transitions that carry meaning, not for ambient activity.
- Interactions that ask the client to decide before they are ready. A confirmation dialogue that appears the moment a screen opens, a choice presented without context, a prompt that arrives before the content it is responding to. Considered interaction earns the right to ask something of the client by first demonstrating that the product already understands where they are and what they need.
- Inconsistency in response time or register across different interaction types. If routine interactions feel snappy and weightier ones feel hesitant, the product starts to signal which moments it is prepared for and which it is not. For a client who opens the app in a disruption, a moment of hesitation in the interface reads as uncertainty in the system, which is exactly the feeling the product exists to dissolve.

Principle 2

Transitions Should Guide, Not Just Connect

A transition is not cosmetic. It is the moment the product either explains where the user is going or leaves them to work it out alone. For most apps, a transition is a visual effect, something to soften the cut between two states. For Tailwind, it is an act of orientation. The client is often tired, one-handed, reading in poor light between other things. They cannot afford to lose their place, and they should never have to find it. Every movement between screens, states, or sections should carry enough information in its behaviour alone to tell the client exactly what kind of shift is happening and what they are moving toward.

© We Are Affective Ltd 2026. All rights reserved. Private and Confidential.

The emotional dimension of this is just as important as the navigational one. Moving deeper into a journey's detail is a different feeling from returning to the summary that holds everything. Completing an action feels different from waiting for a result. The transition should reflect that difference, not merely connect the two ends of it. When a status line resolves and "Charlotte is rebooking you now" becomes "Done. You're on the 9.15," the change should arrive with a quality that matches the moment, quiet, in place, unhurried, because that is the feeling the content carries. A transition that sweeps or bounces in that moment undermines everything the words are doing. Conversely, a transition that is too tentative when a client completes something meaningful, sending a message or confirming a standing instruction, misses the chance to confirm that the action landed.

Transition type	What it communicates	How it should feel
Going deeper into detail	"You chose to look closer. The summary is still behind you."	A calm, horizontal move into the content, with the originating layer still implied. Never a full replacement. The client should feel they can return without retracing.
Returning to summary	"You are back at the thing that holds everything."	The reverse of going deeper, with the same quiet authority. The summary should feel like arriving somewhere already known, not like loading something new.
Moving between systems	"You are crossing from your journey into a conversation, or from a message into your itinerary."	A more deliberate shift, enough to mark the change of context without drama. The client should know they have moved between different kinds of content.
Completing a section or action	"What you did has registered. Something has changed as a result."	A settled, conclusive quality. Not celebratory. A standing instruction confirmed, a message sent, a preference noted. The transition closes the moment cleanly and returns the client to stillness.
Loading or resolving a result	"The answer is coming. It has not been withheld."	As brief and unobtrusive as possible. No theatre, no progress animation performing effort. If a result takes time, the interface should hold calmly rather than fill the wait with movement.

The test for any transition is simple. A client who has never seen a specification for this product should be able to tell, from the behaviour of the interaction alone, whether they are going deeper, coming back, crossing into something new, finishing something, or waiting for a result. If the transition could mean any of those things, it is doing nothing. If it could only mean one, it is doing its job. The product should never ask a client to read their surroundings. It should tell them, quietly, without a label, through the quality of the movement itself.

© We Are Affective Ltd 2026. All rights reserved. Private and Confidential.

Principle 3

Feedback Should Be Immediate and Proportionate

Every action a person takes in a product produces a response. The question is never whether that response exists, but whether it is proportionate to what caused it. For Tailwind, this matters in a specific way. The clients who use this product have spent years reading systems, working out from the behaviour of an interface whether their input registered, whether something changed, whether they need to do anything else. That habit is not broken by good intentions. It is broken by an interface that consistently responds in a way that matches the weight of the moment, quickly enough that no gap opens, and quietly enough that nothing unnecessary fills it.

Immediacy is not the same as speed. A response that arrives quickly but says nothing useful is not immediate in any meaningful sense. Immediacy means the client does not have to wonder whether their action landed. The confirmation of a tap, the settling of an expanded section, the quiet resolution of a sent message, each of these should arrive close enough to the action that the two feel continuous. Where any delay exists, whether from a network call, a status update, or a heavier calculation, the interface should hold calmly in a state that makes clear something is happening, without performing the effort of it. The Anti-Principles work named this precisely. A feed showing "contacting Michael" and "checking gate B22" was not more reassuring than silence. It was more alarming, because it asked the client to watch work being done rather than to trust that it had been. The same principle governs feedback at the interaction level. A response that narrates its own process is doing the wrong thing.

Interaction	Feedback level	How it should behave
Navigation tap	Minimal	Immediate state change on the tapped element. No delay, no animation beyond the transition itself. The response confirms the tap registered; nothing more is needed.
Expanding a detail or status line	Light	The content opens with a controlled, unhurried expansion. The surrounding layout holds; nothing shifts unexpectedly. The client feels they have looked closer, not that the screen has reorganised itself.
Sending a message to a travel partner	Settled	The message moves into the thread cleanly, and the input field returns to a resting state. No fanfare. A small, conclusive quality to the moment, enough to confirm the message is on its way, nothing that invites further attention.

© We Are Affective Ltd 2026. All rights reserved. Private and Confidential.

Interaction	Feedback level	How it should behave
Confirming a standing instruction	Deliberate	A clear, composed moment of resolution. The instruction appears in the client's record, stated plainly, and the screen returns to stillness. This is an act of delegation, and the feedback should carry that weight quietly. Not a celebration, but a close.
First sight of a resolved disruption	Present, unhurried	The new status line replaces the previous one in place, without sweep or flourish. The resolution arrives with the same register as everything else, because good news and bad news here always sound the same. The client reads it; the screen stays still.

Not every interaction warrants acknowledgement beyond the functional. A tap that opens a screen is confirmed by the screen opening. An expanded line is confirmed by its expansion. The product should not add a layer of response on top of the thing that already constitutes the response. But some moments are different. A standing instruction confirmed, a message sent to Charlotte at midnight, a disruption resolved before the client had to ask. These are the interactions that the product was built for, and they deserve a quality of response that reflects their significance, not through animation or colour or sound, but through the weight and stillness of the moment itself. The difference between a functional close and a considered one is not visible. It is felt.

Principle 4

Progressive Disclosure Must Be Felt, Not Just Structured

Progressive disclosure in a travel product is usually treated as an information architecture problem. What to show first, what to put one level down, what to hide in settings. Tailwind's version of this problem is different, because the stakes of the primary layer are different. "Nothing needs you. Checked at 5.52." That is a complete, valid first screen. The client who reads it and puts their phone in their pocket has had the full experience the product exists to deliver. Going deeper is not a correction of that state. It is an extension of it, available when curiosity or circumstance calls for it, and never implying that the summary was insufficient. This means every gesture that takes the client further into the product has to carry a quality of invitation rather than necessity. It should feel like being offered more, not like being asked to look for what was withheld.

The way that invitation is expressed in interaction matters as much as the information it reveals. An abrupt cut into a deeper level of detail tells the client, without words, that the summary was a surface. A calm, unhurried expansion into the same content tells them they have simply chosen to look closer, and that the thing they were looking at is still there behind them. The Zurich corridor is worth holding in mind here. A woman standing in a hotel corridor at midnight, scrolling through three sources trying to assemble a picture that someone had already assembled on her behalf. The problem was not that

© We Are Affective Ltd 2026. All rights reserved. Private and Confidential.

The three rules of progressive disclosure in interaction

1. Depth is always a choice. Nothing the client needs to act on lives below the surface. The primary layer holds what matters now: who has the journey, where things stand, and whether anything is required. Detail below that, flight numbers, hotel confirmation codes, supplier contacts, exists for the moments a client wants to go looking, not for the moments they are assessed and then served.
2. The path back is always visible. Moving deeper should never create a moment of disorientation. The layer the client came from should be implied in the transition itself, and always reachable in a single gesture. If a client expanding a status line cannot immediately feel how to return to the summary that holds everything, the expansion has asked too much.
3. Depth rewards curiosity. When a client does go looking, the detail they find should have the same quality of attention as the surface. A confirmation code shown inside a journey record should carry its own status and timestamp. A supplier contact should include when that contact was last verified. The product should never create a sense that the good information lived at the top and the raw data is what's underneath. Depth is where the evidence lives, and evidence is what lets the client stop checking.

A client who never feels lost in this product, and never feels that something important was being kept one layer away, is a client who has learned they can stop. That is the identity shift the whole product is working toward, from the person who has to look to the person who trusts that what they see is what there is. Progressive disclosure, at the interaction level, is one of the quieter mechanisms that makes that shift possible.

Principle 5

The End of Every Section Is a Beginning

The structural failure the Zurich corridor revealed was not missing information. Everything had been handled. What was missing was a clear sense of where the journey ended and what came next. The client moved between the thread, the PDF, and the portal because none of them closed properly. Each one trailed off, leaving her to decide whether she was done or whether something still waited. Dead ends, in a product built around the promise that nothing needs you, are a quiet betrayal of that promise. They do not announce themselves. They simply leave the client standing somewhere without a clear sense of where they are in relation to everything else, which is precisely the condition Tailwind exists to remove.

A section that ends well does something simple but deliberate. It confirms that the client has seen what there is to see in that part of the product, and then it offers a natural path to what is adjacent, without demanding they take it. The difference between a dead end and a good ending is not navigation, strictly speaking. It is orientation. The client should finish every section knowing where they came from, where they are, and what is available to them if they want to go anywhere else. That

© We Are Affective Ltd 2026. All rights reserved. Private and Confidential.

knowledge should arrive through the structure of the interaction itself, not through a back arrow or a label that says "return to home."

What a good section ending contains

- A quiet signal of completion, not announcement. The content settles. The last line carries a conclusive quality, a confirmed standing instruction, a status line resolved, a detail noted and attributed. Nothing performs a finish. The client simply feels, from the weight of the moment, that this section has said what it had to say.
- A clear, effortless return to the layer above. The path back to the summary or the primary view is always one gesture, always in the same place, and always feels like arriving somewhere already known rather than loading something new. The product should never require a client to retrace. The return is implied in the transition.
- A contextual thread to what is adjacent. Where another part of the product is genuinely relevant, the connection is offered plainly and without pressure. "Charlotte is a message away" at the end of a status detail is not navigation. It is a reminder that the relationship continues beyond the screen that holds this particular fact.
- No invitation to linger. A well-ended section does not ask for a rating, prompt an action the client didn't initiate, or suggest a next step the product decided on their behalf. Silence here is not emptiness. It is the product doing what it promised: handing back the client's attention once it has done what was needed.

This is the quality a good hotel door has. It opens without resistance in the direction you are already moving, and when you have passed through it, it settles behind you without a sound. The room you have left is still there. The corridor ahead is clear. You are exactly where you expected to be, which is the only kind of navigation that does not ask anything of you.

Principle 6

Loading and Waiting Should Never Feel Like Waiting

Loading takes time. That is a fact of how networks and systems work, and no amount of design intention changes it. What design can change is what that time communicates. A spinner communicates nothing except absence. It says the product has gone somewhere and will return, and it leaves the client in exactly the condition Tailwind exists to dissolve: uncertain, waiting, with no sense of who has it or what is happening. For a client who opened the app because something may have changed, a blank or rotating placeholder is not a neutral state. It is a small version of the corridor in Zurich. The information exists. The product is simply not showing it yet. That gap, however brief, costs something. Not drama, and not distrust exactly, but a slight tightening of the attention that the product was supposed to release. Loading moments are not pauses between experiences. They are part of the experience, and they deserve the same quality of consideration as everything else.

© We Are Affective Ltd 2026. All rights reserved. Private and Confidential.

What a spinner says	What loading should communicate instead
"The product has gone to retrieve something. Please wait."	"Here is what we already know, and here is what is being confirmed. The information is coming from a named place."
"Something is happening. We cannot tell you what."	"Charlotte is confirming the gate. You will see it here the moment she has it."
"We are working on it. There is nothing for you to look at in the meantime."	"The last confirmed state is shown. Its timestamp tells you how recent it is. Nothing has changed that you need to know about yet."
"This moment belongs to the system."	"This moment belongs to the journey. The part being resolved is named, and the part that is settled remains visible and readable."

Every loading state in Tailwind should contain three things. First, a stable layer that holds what is already known, because a screen that goes entirely blank while one piece of information resolves tells the client nothing is reliable. The confirmed seat, the named travel partner, the status that was true sixty seconds ago, these remain visible and legible while the outstanding item resolves beside them. Second, an honest description of what is being waited on and, where a person is involved, who is handling it. "Charlotte is confirming now" is not a placeholder. It is evidence of the same quality as any other line in the product, and it carries the same named accountability. Third, a sense of when the client will hear, even if that is approximate. "Next update by 6.30" turns an open wait into a bounded one, and a bounded wait is one the client can set down. A loading state that holds calmly, names what is unresolved, and offers a time sits in the same register as everything else Tailwind produces. It does not perform effort. It demonstrates presence.

Interaction Anti-Patterns

Every interaction design decision eventually meets a moment that tests whether it holds. The anti-patterns below are not abstract risks. They are the specific places where a product that means well quietly contradicts itself, and where a client who came to stop thinking about travel finds they cannot.

Anti-Pattern	Why It Fails
Showing activity instead of outcome	A feed that reads "checking gate B22" and "contacting Michael" asks the client to watch work being done. It is the Tailwind Live failure in miniature: effort performed as reassurance, when the only reassurance that works is evidence that the thing is handled.
Sending a notification that changes nothing	Every alert that does not require an action, or confirm something resolved, trains the client to check every alert. The rare, meaningful notification only carries weight if most notifications are absent. Over-alerting hands the vigilance straight back.

© We Are Affective Ltd 2026. All rights reserved. Private and Confidential.

Anti-Pattern	Why It Fails
Using "nothing needs you" without a timestamp	Without a time beside it, the phrase is a claim. With one, it is evidence. A client who has learned to trust "checked at 5.52" will believe the sentence. A client who has seen it used carelessly will check it against everything else they have.
Animating between states without purpose	Motion that does not carry meaning asks the client to process something that tells them nothing. In a product where stillness is a promise, unnecessary animation is a form of noise, and noise is what Tailwind exists to remove.
Asking for confirmation of something already handled	"Please confirm you have read these changes" is the old portal failure written as an interaction pattern. It hands a task to the client at the exact moment they were expecting to be released from one, and it signals that the product is not sure the work is done.
Revealing too much on a loading state	A screen that goes blank while resolving tells the client that nothing is stable. A screen that holds what is already confirmed, while naming what is still being checked, stays in the same register as everything else: honest about limits, clear about who has it.
Letting a section end without closure	A view that simply stops, with no settled quality to the final line and no clear return to the layer above, replicates the corridor in Zurich. The client is left deciding whether they are finished, which is exactly the decision the product should have already made for them.
Speaking in a partner's name without their approval	A single discovered automation, sent under Charlotte's name without her having written or approved it, makes every genuine message that came before it uncertain. The warmth built over years is not recoverable from that discovery.

A Note on Consistency

Consistency is not about treating every moment identically. The tone that belongs to a disruption is not the tone that belongs to a calm morning departure, and a product that cannot tell the difference between them has not understood either. What must remain constant is the quality of care beneath the tone: the named person, the honest timestamp, the specific fact where a vague claim would have done, the absence of anything that asks the client to work. These do not change between a gate update and a standing instruction confirmed, between a message sent at noon and a reroute handled at midnight. The interaction should always feel as though someone had already thought about it before it arrived. Consistency is what makes that feeling credible over time, rather than a pleasant surprise on the first journey.

A product that holds its principles at the emotionally significant moments but lets them slip elsewhere teaches its clients exactly the wrong lesson. If the disruption update is specific and calm and named, and the confirmation email is corporate and unsigned, the client learns that the quality is situational,

© We Are Affective Ltd 2026. All rights reserved. Private and Confidential.

that nobody will remark on. The loading state at six in the morning. These are the places where trust is either kept or quietly lost, and they are kept in exactly the same way as the moments that carry more obvious weight: with a person, a time, a fact, and nothing asked of the client that we could have carried ourselves.

© We Are Affective Ltd 2026. All rights reserved. Private and Confidential.