
Cultivating A Healthy Open Source Community

— Forest Anderson —

What This Talk Is

- Ideas to apply to other projects
- Understanding open source ecosystems
- Alternate views on team work

Who Am I


- 4th (5th) year at Carleton
- 4th year at CUSEC!
- CTO of Timsle
- Co-lead H4TT, Lame Jam
- Meta lead of Veloren



A stylized, pixelated landscape featuring a bright sun or moon in a colorful sky, casting light over a valley with green hills and a winding path. The scene is rendered in a retro, low-resolution style with vibrant colors and a soft, hazy atmosphere. The sun/moon is a large, bright white orb in the upper left, surrounded by soft, glowing clouds in shades of yellow, orange, and pink. The sky transitions from a deep blue at the top to a lighter, hazy blue near the horizon. The landscape below is a valley with rolling green hills and a winding path. The hills are covered in dense green foliage, and the path is a light brown color. The overall scene is peaceful and serene, with a strong sense of light and atmosphere.

Veloren

Veloren

- Built in Rust 
- "Veloren is an open world multiplayer voxel RPG. It is inspired by games such as Cube World, Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild, Dwarf Fortress and Minecraft."

TL;DR: Minecraft++

~15

Core Developers

90+

Recorded Contributors

Meta Lead Role

- Run team meetings
- Write a weekly devblog
- Community development
- Social outreach
- Git/CI/CD



What Defines A Healthy Project

- Sustainable development
- Contributor health
- Contribution flow
- Community relations





Make It Easy For New Contributors To Join

For Beginners

- Large projects are intimidating
- Need an easy way to ask questions
- Peer programming sessions
- Beginner tasks/issues
- Detailed code review

Get Experts Where They Need To Be

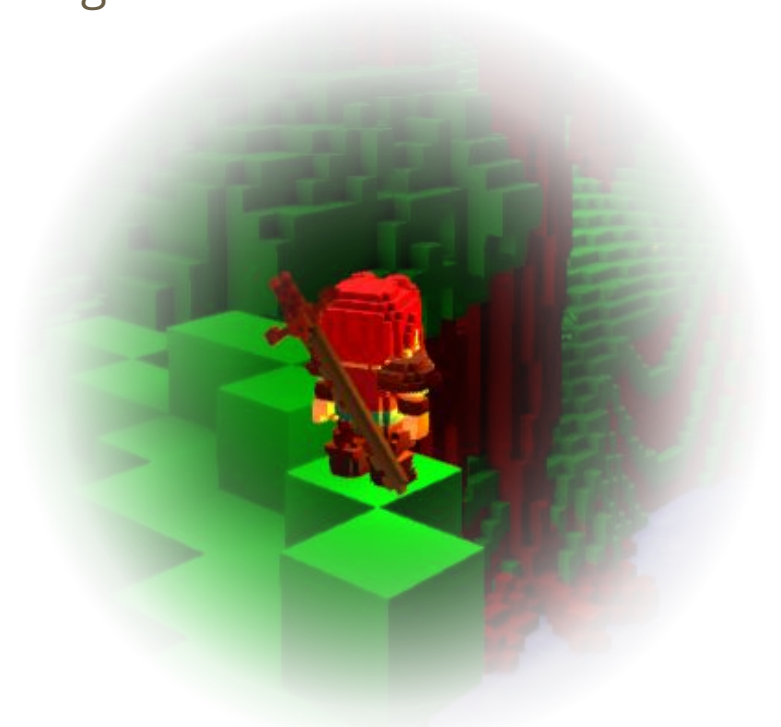
- Someone with specific domain knowledge
- Direct lines of communication
- Support ASAP
- Treated as VIP



Moderate Communication

What Leads To Bad Communication?

- Difficult to convey intended emotion through text
- Discussions can get heated
- Language barriers
- Hard to fix relations after incidents



Moderate Communication

- Community leaders need to proactively intervene
- Good skills don't override toxicity
- Consistently enforce your Code of Conduct
- Start a conversation with someone when they mess up once
- Drop the hammer if they do it again



Find what works

Consensus Is Difficult

- Everyone has a different vision
- There is likely not someone who makes all the choices on a project
- Regular meetings can help this



Find A Good RFC Format

- A method for anyone to convey their thoughts
- Gives structure to focused discussion
- A good goal for meetings

Delegate Work

- Easy tasks are great for new contributors
- Lead devs should focus on core problems
- Working groups can distribute tasks



Working Groups

- Groups split by specific focus
- Each group has a lead
- Tasks are assigned based on working group



Keep the Community in Touch

Interacting With The Community

- Blogging highlights progress
- Periodic social media posts
- Ways to contribute to ideas
- Consistently improving documentation

Manage Expectations

- Standard release cycles
- Future roadmap
- Changelog is good to update the end-user



Open Source != Corporate

Open Source Is Not A Company

- Burnout is real
- People might leave for a bit, but they can always come back
- It's ok to be wrong
- Not everything needs to work
- The project is the people

Motivate The Team

- This isn't the primary job for contributors
- Acknowledge efforts of contributors
- Full team meetings



What Can I Do?



“See a need, fill a need”

- Robots (2005)



Thank You!

forestkzanderson@gmail.com

forest-anderson.ca