Dear Mr. Chandrasekar:

I am writing regarding suggestions for the improvement and accessibility of Stack Overflow. As a software developer, I have often found this site immensely useful, and I know that this is an experience shared by many other programmers of all sorts. Stack Overflow has not reached where it is today by accident; it is due to the careful planning and foresight of the site's vision and structure. However, as Stack Overflow itself has acknowledged, the site can fall short when it comes to providing an open and welcoming space for beginner programmers and marginalized communities. I respectfully submit these ideas in the hope that, under your new leadership, Stack Overflow might provide a more welcoming space for all.

Attached are several slides detailing two concrete improvements I believe will improve Stack Overflow. Firstly, the ability for users to hide responses and comments would benefit them greatly. The volume of responses to a single question can grow overwhelming and require a great deal of scrolling to simply traverse the information and context present. Hiding information would allow users to focus only what is useful to them. Importantly, this would mean users can individually decide what is useful and need not oppose others for posting information they believe to be extraneous. This idea might seem problematic to some; after all, if any information at all is encouraged to be contributed, would this not degrade the conciseness and quality of the community's answers? This is not the case. Answers that are objectively helpful to no one can still be removed, as before. Answers that are helpful to only certain people, which before might have been grounds for removal if the perceived group was small enough, now are preserved and can be viewed at will. This ability to retain information that is helpful to anyone, not just everyone, makes Stack Overflow a stronger reference point than ever.

Secondly, contributors and those visiting the page would benefit from "tracks" of responses, separated by level of detail. The "detailed" section of the proposed change would likely fulfill a similar role to Stack Overflow's response section at present, thanks to the incredible detail most popular answers have, so, at worst, nothing should be lost. But, if other levels of detail are filled with lesser-detailed, what is the purpose of having them? Because of the wide swath of people who use Stack Overflow, of all programming levels, the ability to make answers more friendly to relatively newer programmers would be a welcome addition. Rather than parsing through large amounts of dense information, users can find more direct, simplified answers in these other channels. Programmers who do not comprehend the full depth of a specific topic can still contribute to the Stack Overflow community.

As these suggestions are additive, I believe they will not detract from the current Stack Overflow experience, but instead will add to it and provide space for all, not just seasoned developers, to feel like they are contributing to and receiving from the robust community that has revolved around Stack Overflow. Thank you for your time and attention.

Yours in respect and sincerity,
Benjamin Fickes