Cpp North 2025

The 10x Team

Tom Sellek

Obligatory...

- C++ since ~2000, mostly Windows kernel
- Team lead since 2016 - AMD, Armis, CrowdStrike
- Inspired by April Wensel's talk from CppNorth 2024
- All opinions are my own except where stated

https://www.linkedin.com/in/tomsellek/
https://paper.wf/fnord/

“The ends of software development is software developers”

- Jim McCarthy, The Dynamics of Software Development

The Mythical "10x Developer"

- "Exploratory experimental studies comparing online and offline programming performance"
  - Communications of the ACM, 1968
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- But also: "Real Programmers Don't Use Pascal", "The Story of Mel", and the inevitable XKCD

The Mythical “10x Developer”

Medium
https://medium.com › static-object › how-to-become-a-10x-developer-bf7104262381

How to become a 10x developer:. Let's start by asking ... - Medi...

Here are 5 fundamental steps to **become a 10x developer**: Step 1: Always be the dumbest person in the room. This may sound counterintuitive, but to quote entrepreneur, author, and motivational ...

The New Stack
https://thenewstack.io › 7-principles-and-10-tactics-to-make-you-a-10x-developer

7 Principles and 10 Tactics to Make You a 10x Developer

Jul 10, 2023 · At the Shift conference, Brandon Bayer from Flightcontrol proposed that you can **become a 10x developer** by making 10 other people 10% more productive.

HackerNoon
https://hackernoon.com › how-to-become-a-10x-dev-an-essential-guide

How to Become a 10x Dev: An Essential Guide - HackerNoon

The ultimate guide to becoming a **10x** Dev - or what kind of devs I'm hiring (and promoting) as a VP of Engineering?

DEV Community
https://dev.to › acromondx › 5-simple-steps-to-becoming-a-10x-developer-hao

5 Simple Steps to Becoming a 10x Developer - DEV Community

5 Simple Steps to Becoming a **10x Developer** # productivity # programming # beginners # career As a software **developer**, it is often tempting to strive for the title of a "**10x developer**." This term, popularized by the tech industry, refers to a **developer** who is capable of producing ten times the amount of code ...

CodinGame
https://www.codingame.com › work › hr-news-trends › the-10x-developer-everything-you-need-t...

The 10x Developer: Everything You Need to Know - CodinGame

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JULY 26, 2021

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Measuring & Maximizing Developer Productivity

Developer Productivity Measurement ... f 2025 Research Papers & Resources

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Making the most of 10x Developers

Avoid time-wasting activities such as:

Making the most of 10x Developers

Avoid time-wasting activities such as:

- Code reviews
- Teaching, coaching and mentoring
- On-boarding other developers
- Pairing and mobbing
- Continuous improvement
- Building relationships

"The unit of delivery is the team"

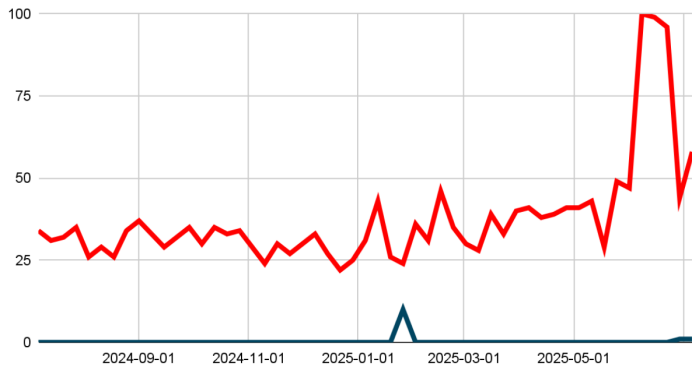
- Attributed to Jamie Arnold, UK's Government Digital Services

“The Team is the Product”

- Jason Gorman

And when it comes to teams...

Individual vs. Team Productivity



Source: Google Trends

Notable exceptions:

- Scrum and Kanban
- Google's Project Aristotle
- "The Wisdom of Teams", "Team Topologies"

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$\prod_n [Interaction_n] \longrightarrow \infty$

What's valuable?

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What's valuable?

- Interactions that **increase relevant knowledge**

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Increase the number of interactions

Team members should *want* to interact!

- Reduce “friction” of interactions

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- Motivation

- Increase relevance of shared information
  $\Longrightarrow$A shared goal

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- Increase relevance of shared information
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- Use a common language
  $\Longrightarrow$"T-shaped" developers

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- Discuss the team itself
  $\Longrightarrow$Continuous Improvement

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- Failure

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- Flow is real

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- Flow is the reason some of us are even in this business

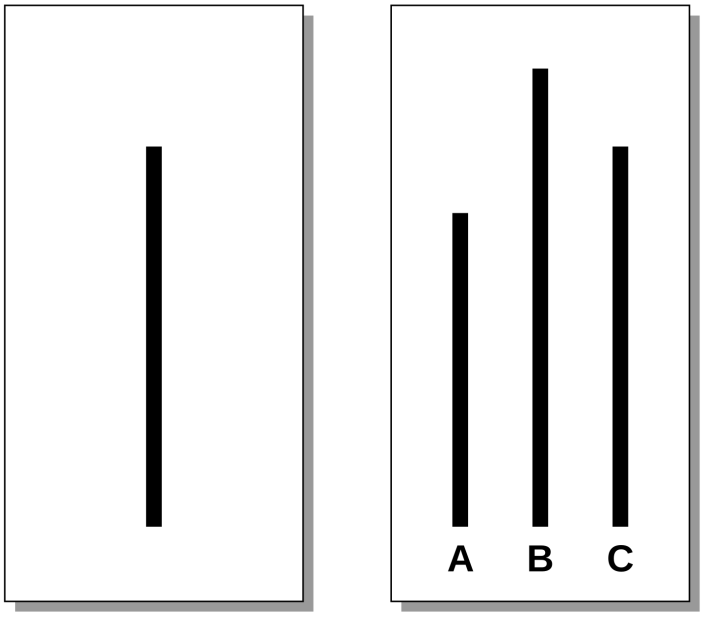
But what about Flow?

- Flow is real
- Flow is the reason some of us are even in this business
- Engineering is the art of the trade-off

The 10x Team Member

The 10x Team Member

- Remember Asch's Conformity Experiments



Source: Wikipedia, By Fred the Oyster, CC BY-SA 4.0

The 10x Team Member

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- Care about the team
- Be trustworthy and dependable

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- Try to push towards being team-first

What If I'm A Manager?

- Establish common goals

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Takeaways

- Teams should never be ephemeral
- Developer productivity matters much less than team productivity
- “10x Developer” notion is harmful. Aim to be a “10x Team Member”

Thank You!

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