Al benefits for the lazy hacker

Get fast usable access to Al services with Node-RED

The purpose of this workshop is to give you quick and easy access to the *IBM Watson Cognitive Services* APIs, and allow you to experiment with

- Image classification
- Speech to text, and text to speech
- Document discovery
- Language identification and translation with little or no code.

This workshop assumes a little programming understanding/experience - an appreciation of procedural logic, data structure, and the use of API-based services.

For those with full-on developer experience, we hope you'll find using the Node-RED tools a fun and useful addition to your skills kitbag.

What You'll Learn

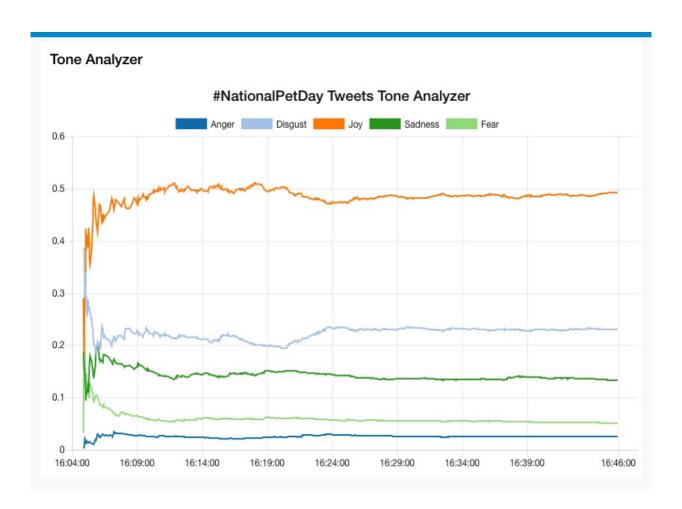


We will kick off with the basics of running **Node-RED** in the IBM Cloud (previously known as *Bluemix*).

You'll learn how to construct event flows in the Integrated Development Environment (IDE), through simple, and progressively more complex examples.

Then you'll be ready to link into the Watson services, to experiment with off-the-shelf Articial Intelligence capabilities you can use straight away to build or enhance applications.

Immediate results will be a Node-RED web server app which can display trending emotions associated with a popular Twitter hashtag, and optional generate (in)appropriate responses or replies.



What You'll Need

- 1. A laptop running Windows, MacOS, or linux, with access to the public internet.
- 2. A current version of one of the following browsers:
 - Firefox
 - Chrome
 - Safari
- 3. An IBM Cloud account; if you don't have one already, sign up at IBM Cloud account setup

For a brand new IBM Cloud account, that's it!

If you have an existing IBM Cloud account, and have existing applications and services, particularly *Cloudant* database instances, you'll possibly need a couple of extra tools:

- 1. the Cloud Foundry command line tool cf
 - download and install cf from github.
- 2. the Git Version Control Management command line tool git
 - download and install git from git-scm

A note of thanks and appreciation

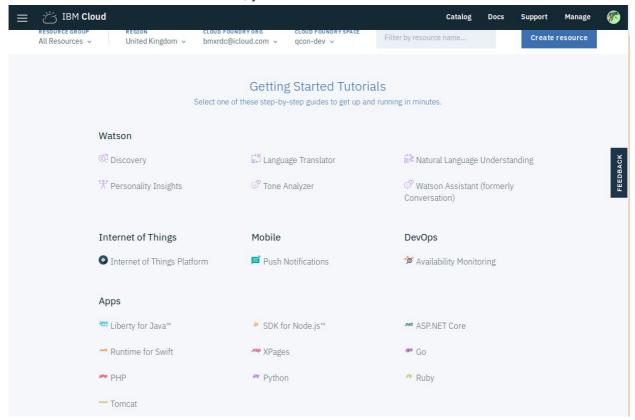
Sections of this workshop take significant inspiration (and a bit of sample code) from the Watson Tone Analyzer Tutorial by Michael Qiu from the excellent team at SenseTecnic.

Sample data sourced via RESTful API calls is provided by typicode's JSONPlaceHolder

Installation/environment Requirements

Using your IBM Cloud account, login to the IBM Cloud console.

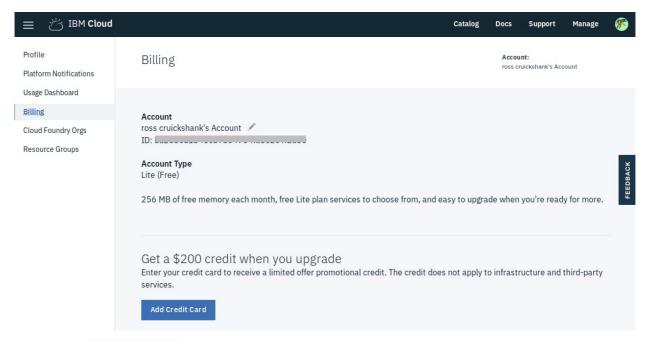
For a brand new IBM Cloud account, you'll see a dashboard similar to this:



We need to establish what type of IBM Cloud you have, so there are a couple of simple steps:

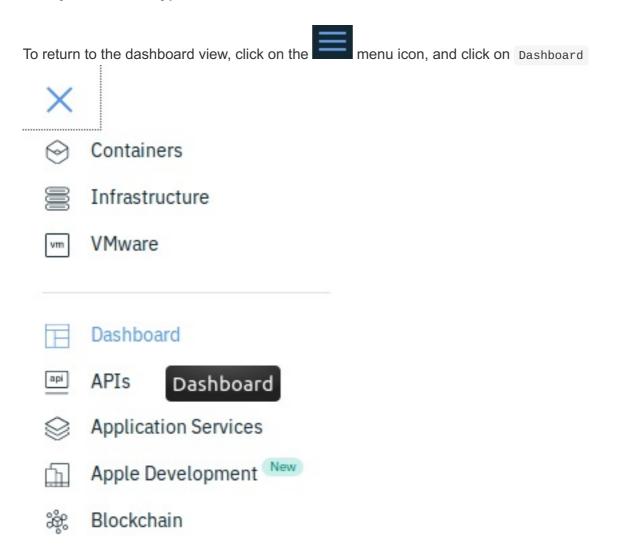
- 1. at the top right of the dashboard, click on Manage
- 2. click Billing and Usage
- 3. and then click Billing

The resulting page



shows the Account Type information.

Note your account type



Things to know about your account

Lite (Free)

- 256M runtime memory, up to 100 service instances
 - sample applications tend to be created with 256M allocated, so will need adjusted if you want to run more than one application at a time
 - service instances by IBM (database, messaging, Watson, etc) will be created with
 what is call a *Lite Plan*, only one each of which can defined to your account at any
 time; for example, trying to create a second Watson Speech to Text service instance
 will fail
 - third party services which have no IBM Cloud charging plan (twilio, elephantSQL, rediscloud, ...) can be added, subject to the provider's restrictions
 - sample applications available in the catalog (shown as "Boilerplates") may try and create instances of services (usually Cloudant database), regardless of whether a similar instance already exists

Pay-As-You-Go

- 512M runtime memory, up to 100 service instances
 - keep using the free services (*Lite Plan*), as well as adding other services which may incur charges after any free use allocation

Trial (Free)

 you have applied a promotion code to your account, usually to experiment with services for which the Lite (Free) option is too restrictive; this type of account is time-limited, and must be converted to Pay-As-You-Go (or Subscription) by the end of the trial period, or it will be suspended.

Subscription

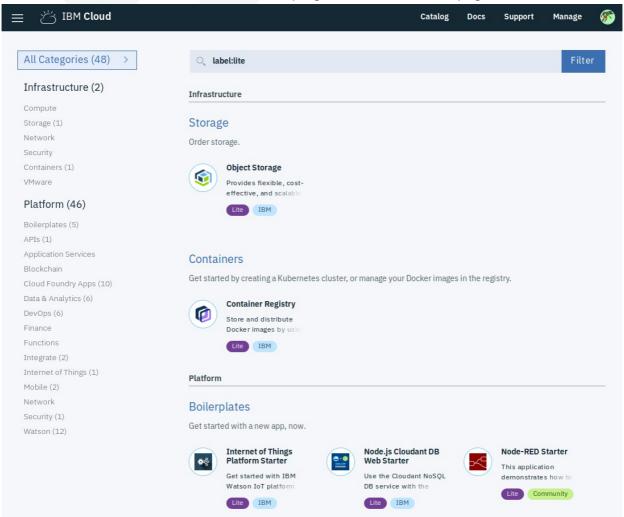
you've elected to pay monthly upfront - you probably know what you're doing ...

Getting started

Account type = Lite (Free), no existing applications or services

This is the simplest starting point.

From the Dashboard, click on Catalog at top-right. You should see a page similar to this:



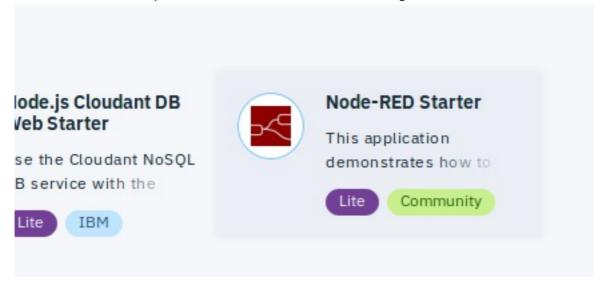
(The categories and numbers vary from time to time, as new offerings are published, and older/less popular services are deprecated).

The area of interest for this workshop is the Node-RED Starter Boilerplate, shown here bottom-right.

This boilerplate will create a ready-to-use web-accessible Node-RED application, employing three components:

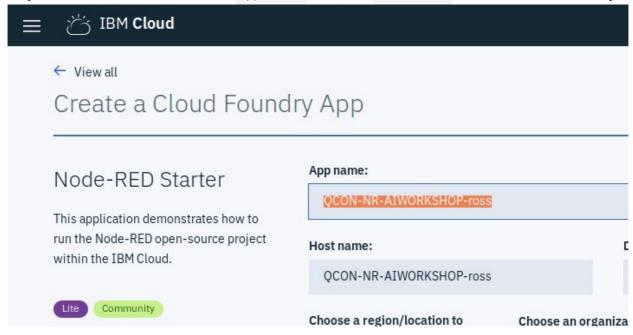
- Cloudant nosql database used to store Node-RED configurations (and applicationgenerated data) - see also Apache CouchDB
- 2. Node.js runtime container (**node v6.13.0** at time of writing)
- 3. Node-RED application package (node-red v0.18.4 at time of writing)

Hover over the description of the Node-Red Starter until hilighted:



then click.

At this point, you will need to provide a **unique** name for your hosted application - note, you only need to enter a name into the App name: field; the Host name: field will fill automatically.



(if you're stuck for a name - as a minimum, change the example by overwriting "ross" with some random - alphanumeric - characters)

A brief introduction on some of the Watson Cognitive Services

As you can see, there are quite some nodes in the Watson node modules, and they are all used for different purposes. Each of the Watson nodes is corresponding to a specific Watson service on the IBM Cloud platform. You are able to view the documentation of each service in the info tab of these nodes.

- Assistant: helps to interpret human language and host a simple conversation/dialog. This
 is the Watson component you'd use for building a Chatbot backend service. -- Driving
 chatbot demo
- Discovery: helps prepare your unstructured data, create a query that will pinpoint the
 information you need, and then integrate those insights into your application or existing
 solution. This service also includes the continuously updated News service, giving access
 to current and recent news articles from around the world -- News demo
- Natural Language Classifier: applies cognitive computing techniques to return the best matching classes for a sentence or phrase -- Classifier demo
- Natural Language Understanding: The Natural Language Understanding will analyze a
 block of text, an article or HTML data to output a JSON object that matches the input data
 with various index -- NLU demo
- Personality insights: derives insights from user-created text/content (transactional and social media data) to identify psychological traits which might determine purchase decisions, intent and behavioral traits; may be utilized to improve retail conversion rates --Personality insights demo
- Visual Recognition: Analyze images for scenes, objects, faces, and other content.
 Choose a default model off the shelf, or create your own custom classifier. Develop smart applications that analyze the visual content of images or video frames to understand what is happening in a scene -- Visual Recognizer demo
- Speech to text/Text to speech: for a growing set of spoken languages, converts from one
 form to another, allowing speech to be processed by text-oriented services like chatbots,
 Personality Insights, etc, and use speech synthesis to convert messages and text into
 audio streams -- STT demo, TTS demo
- Tone Analyzer: The Tone Analyzer service uses linguistic analysis to detect emotional tones, social propensities, and writing styles in written communication. This service will be

used in this workshop to show how Node-RED nodes can be used to easily integrate Watson Cognitive Services into an application, with little or no Al skills -- Tone Analyzer demo

Labs Overview

In this lab, you will learn how to Node-RED can be used as a rapid protoyping server application which can integrate local and remote data, and present information in a variety of eaisly consumable forms.

The first couple of activities help set up Node-RED as a web application service.

- 1. Initially, simple application-generated data will be sent to the requester (a browser).
- 2. Then remote data will be requested, reformatted and returned to the requester.
- 3. Next, your application will use the Watson Tone Analyzer service referred to earlier to quickly and easily analyze the content of Twitter messages and graphically display the trending tones/sentiments embodied in the messages.
- 4. Finally, select tweets will be exchanged with an example Watson Conversation Agent (Chatbot) and the responses sent to the requester.

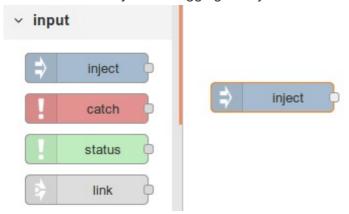
Lab - basic user response

Step one for any first-time exercise with a new programming tool is Hello World!

The most basic option for this in Node-RED a combination of an Inject and a Debug node; for Node-RED this looks like



This is achieved by click/dragging an Inject node from the palette on the left, onto the canvas:



then do the same for the Debug node:

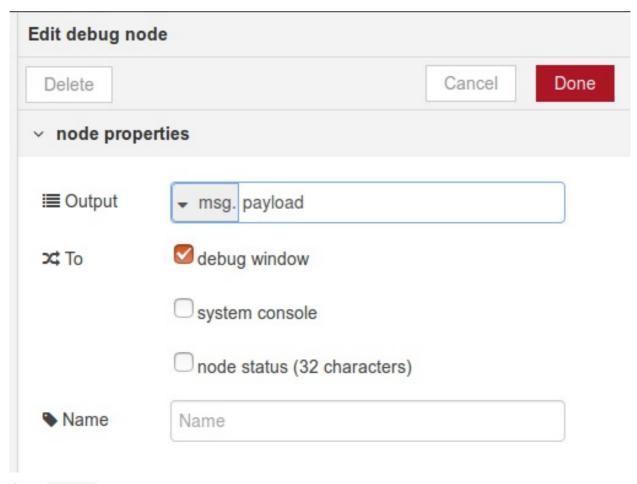


and link the output of Inject to the input of Debug:



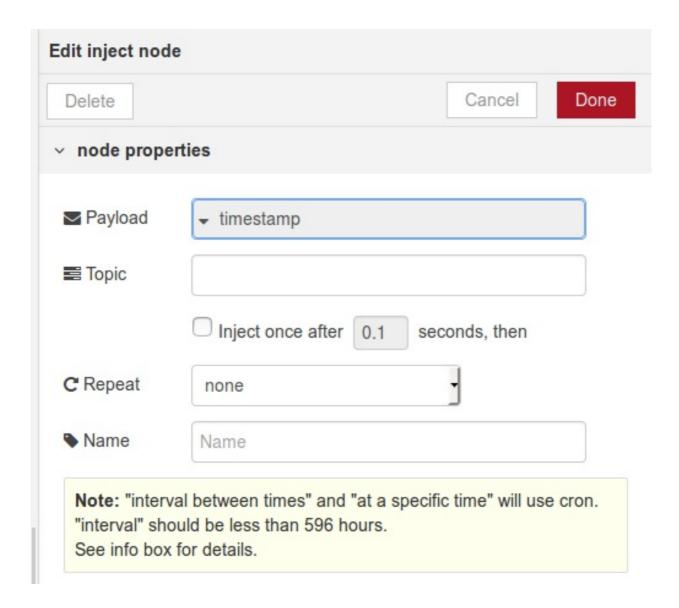
Click-and-hold the output connector of the Inject node, drag the connection line to the Debug node inout connector, ensuring the target connector turns orange; then release.

Review the Debug node by double-clicking in the body of the node, and you will see the configuration panel:



Click Cancel

Review the Inject node by double-clicking in the body of the node, and you will see its configuration panel:



Click on the black triangle next to timestamp, select the string option, and type into the new text entry field the message you would like to see in the debug window. Then click Done.

You should see that the Inject node has a blue dot, indicating it has been modified:



also observe that the top-right menu now has a red Deploy button:



This indicates the Node-RED configuration has changed and does not match the running application. Click <code>Deploy</code> to add the flow you just created into Node-RED runtime.



Click on the button on the left side of the Inject node and observe the message displayed in the debug window:



Congratulations! - you have established a working Node-RED live application, and successfully generated data.

Lab - enable Node-RED as a server application

Now you have a working Node-RED instance, you can add support for external applications (browsers, other applications on mobile devices, cloud apps, etc) to invoke services within Node-RED, to exchange information.

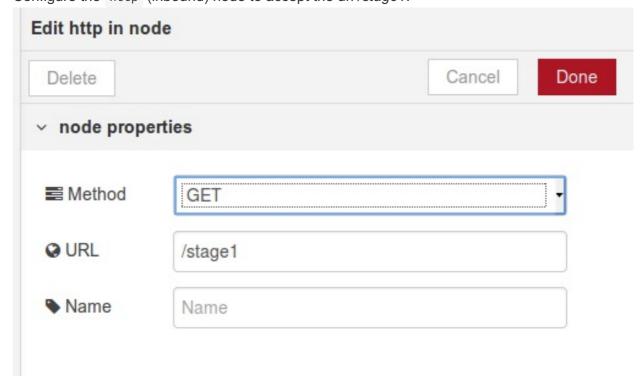
In this Lab, the goal will be to add support for incoming HTTP requests, from a browser, to request data be returned to display in the browser (i.e basic HTML).

- 1. Add the necessary nodes
- 2. Configure the nodes to support inbound HTTP and return content
- 3. Deploy
- 4. Test and validate via https://{your-node-red-hostname}/stage1

Using the techniques from the previous Lab, add a new flow to the canvas:

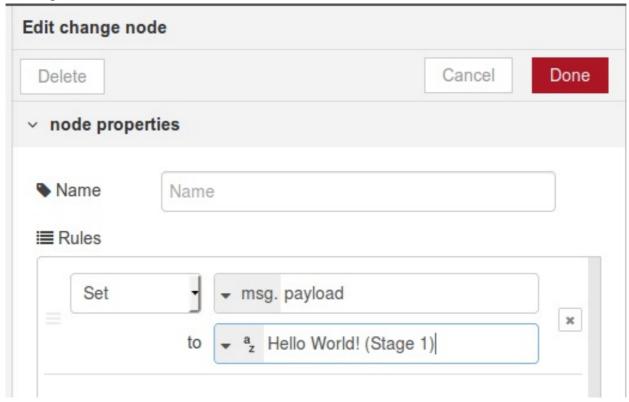


Configure the http (inbound) node to accept the url /stage1:

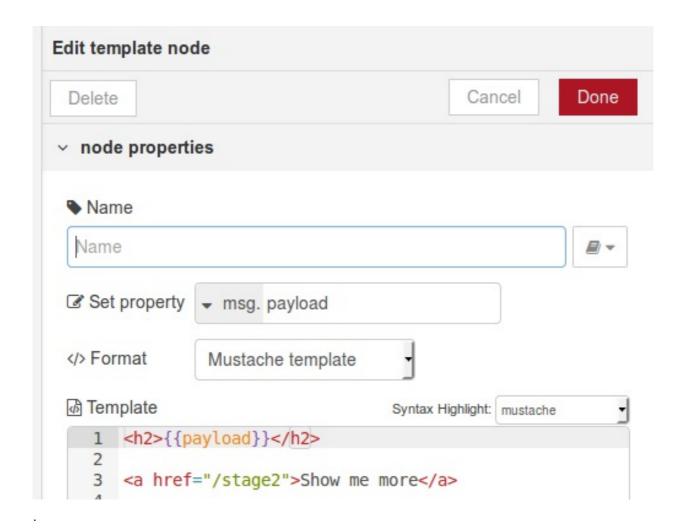


Configure the change node to set the response text, by chnaging msg.payload to the desired

message.



Configure the template node to be some simple HTML, and imbed the msg content from the flow, using mustache templating:



The http response node does not usually need configuration, but is required as a final stage for returning data to a waiting http requester.

Now Deploy the changes.

To test this flow, open a new browser tab or window and load https://{{your-node-red-hostname}}/stage1.

All being well, you should receive the following response:



Hello World!

Show me more

Note that if you click on the Show me more link, you will receive a response like cannot GET /stage2 - that's because "stage2" will be added in the next Lab.

Congratulations! - you have completed the first stage of establishing Node-RED as a web server application, and responding to HTTP requests with static data.

Lab - remote data presentation

Now your Node-RED application can service web requests, you can add support for integrating local and remote data into your responses.

In this Lab, the goal will be to take an incoming HTTP request, from a browser, retrieve data from a remote application API, and return part of the data (reformatted) to display in the browser (i.e basic HTML).

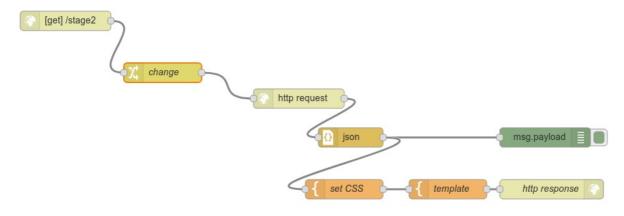
- 1. Add the necessary nodes
- 2. Configure the nodes to support inbound HTTP, invoke API, and return content
- 3. Deploy
- 4. Test and validate via https://{your-node-red-hostname}/stage2

The source for the remote data is a very handy, simple JSON API server provided by @typicode

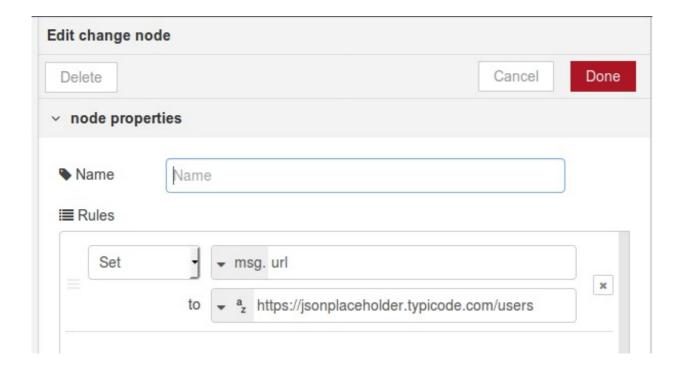
https://jsonplaceholder.typicode.com/ - the /users API returns a reasonable amount of data for demonstration purposes:

```
[
    "id": 1,
"name": "Leanne Graham",
    "username": "Bret",
    "email": "Sincere@april.biz",
    "address": {
      "street": "Kulas Light",
      "suite": "Apt. 556",
      "city": "Gwenborough"
      "zipcode": "92998-3874",
      "geo": {
        "lat": "-37.3159",
        "lng": "81.1496"
    "phone": "1-770-736-8031 x56442",
    "website": "hildegard.org",
    "company": {
      "name": "Romaguera-Crona",
      "catchPhrase": "Multi-layered client-server neural-net",
      "bs": "harness real-time e-markets"
    }
  },
{
    "id": 2,
    "name": "Ervin Howell",
    "username": "Antonette",
    "email": "Shanna@melissa.tv",
    "address": {
```

As before, add a new flow to the canvas:



A small, but important difference to note this time - instead of setting the msg.payload property, the change node is placing the target API url into the msg.url property. This is used to dynamically configure the http request node.

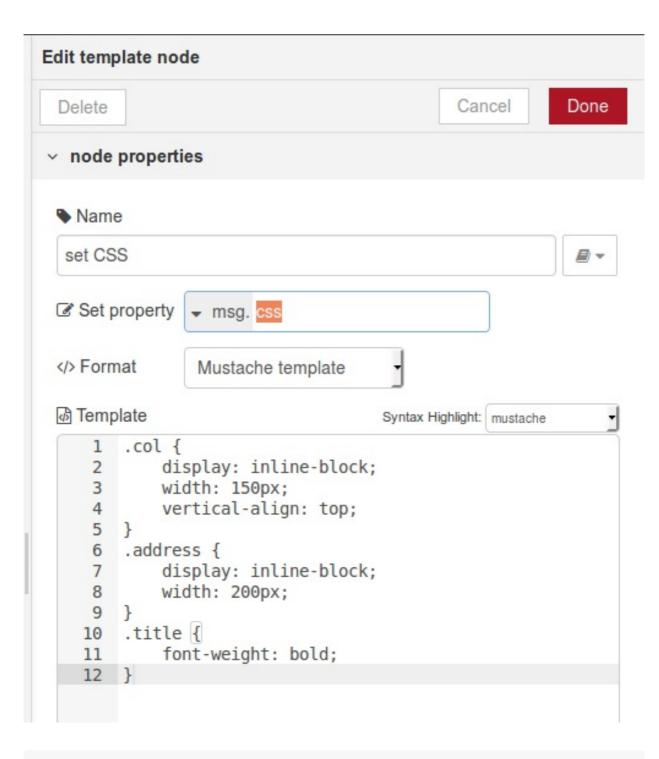


The http request node does not need any specific configuration for this flow.

The response from https://jsonplaceholder.typicode.com/users is a string; to process more easily and efficiently in Node-RED, we pass it through a JSON node which will parse the string into a JSON object (in this case an array of *user* objects).

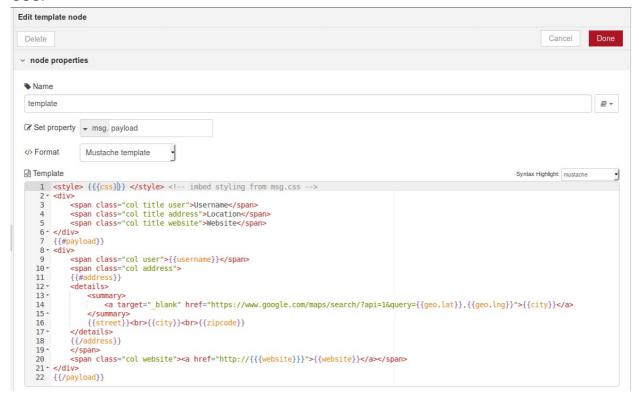
To add a little sophistication to the response content, the two template nodes allow generation of dynamic HTML, and support the creation of inline CSS.

The first template sets a msg property msg.css to some simple CSS for imbedding in the returned HTML:



```
.col {
    display: inline-block;
    width: 150px;
    vertical-align: top;
}
.address {
    display: inline-block;
    width: 200px;
}
.title {
    font-weight: bold;
}
```

The second template node creates a tabular response from the users array, and imbeds the CSS:



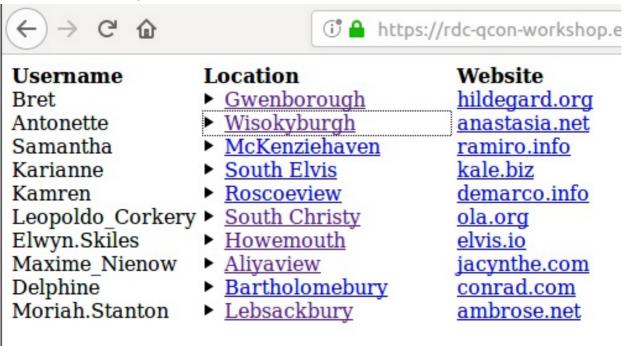
```
<style> {{{css}}}} </style> <!-- imbed styling from msg.css -->
<div>
    <span class="col title user">Username</span>
    <span class="col title address">Location</span>
    <span class="col title website">Website</span>
</div>
{{#payload}}
<div>
    <span class="col user">{{username}}</span>
   <span class="col address">
    {{#address}}
   <details>
        <summary>
            <a target="_blank" href="https://www.google.com/maps/search/?api=1&query</pre>
        {{street}}<br>{{city}}<br>{{zipcode}}
   </details>
    {{/address}}
   </span>
   <span class="col website"><a href="http://{{{website}}}">{{website}}</a></span>
</div>
{{/payload}}
```

Note that although the response will generate links to **Google Maps** locations, the data appears to point to random places.

Now to test ...

https://{{your-node-red-hostname}}/stage2

You should see a response like:



Congratulations! - you have completed the second stage of establishing Node-RED as a web server application, and responding to HTTP requests with dynamically sourced data.

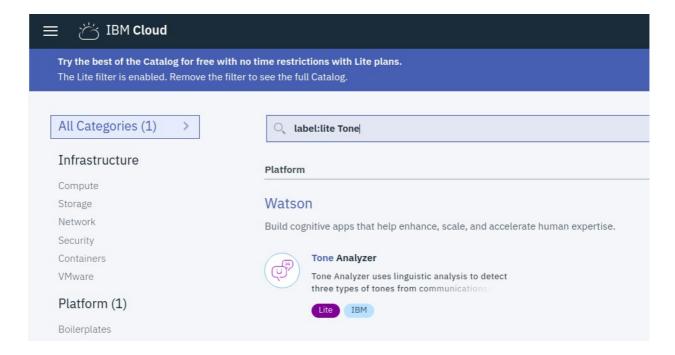
The next Lab will build on your new Node-RED skills to pull in tweets from Twitter, analyze with the Watson Al language services, and generate a dashboard showing trending emotional response.

Lab - twitter sentiment

This time, you can build a fun, simple application that uses the Watson Tone Analyzer service.

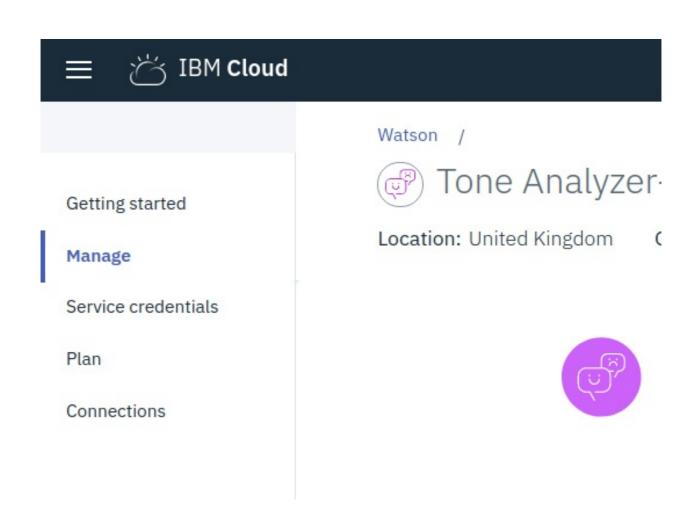
You will need an instance of the Watson Tone Analyzer service to created from the IBM Cloud catalog.

Switch to the IBM Cloud dashboard, select catalog from the menu bar (top-right), and add "Tone" to the filter search argument.

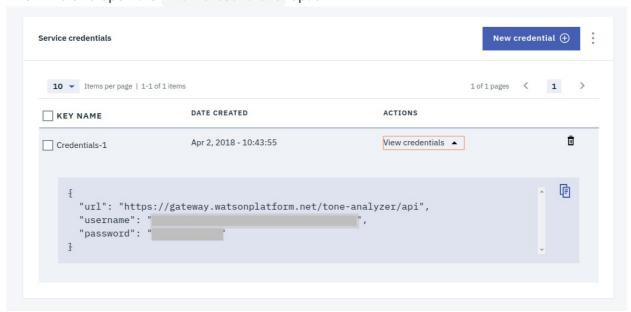


Click on Tone Analyzer and create a new instance, accepting all defaults.

When the instance has been provisioned, you'll be presented with the service management panel -- select the Service credentials option from the left navigator.



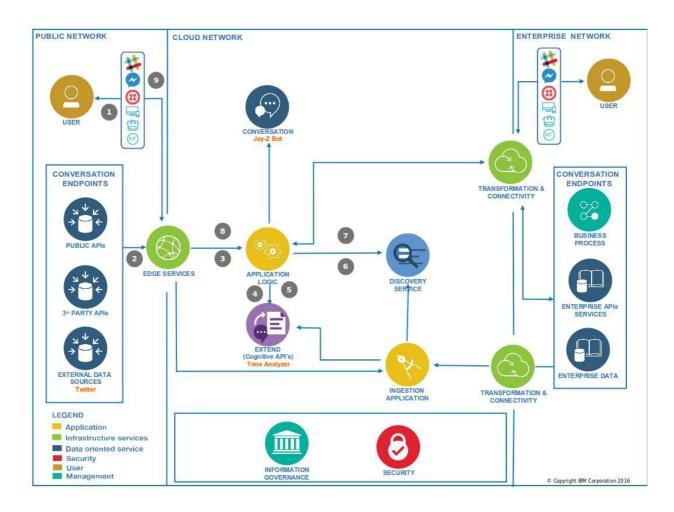
Then find and open the View credentials option:



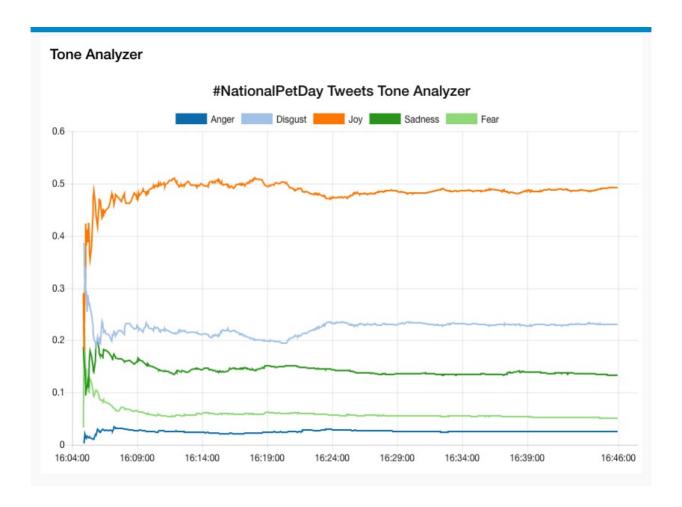
Take a note of where the username and password fields are, as you will need to copy/paste these values into the Node-RED Tone Analyzer node, shortly.

The basic application flow is based on the following Cognitive Application Reference

Architecture:



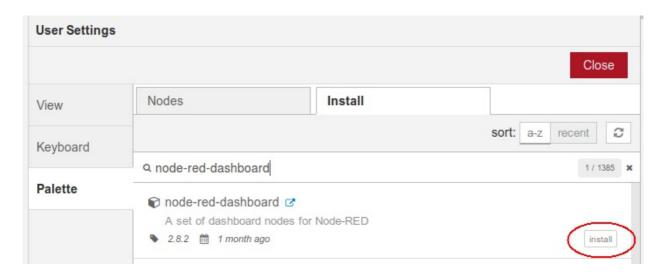
Let's say we want to know about people's general opinion on a specific topic on Twitter. We can use a twitter in node to obtain tweet feeds, then send the content to Watson Tone Analyzer service. When we get the analytic result, we will keep track of the result over time and visualize the average score of each index - similar to the following:



To produce the sample chart, you will need an additional package to be added to the Node-RED palette - node-red-dashboard .

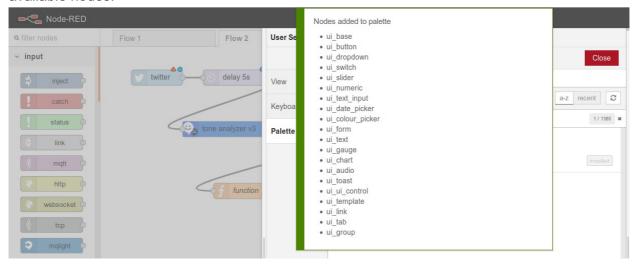
From the Node-RED menu (top-right), select Manage palette.

Click on the Install tab and enter "node-red-dashboard" in the search modules field.



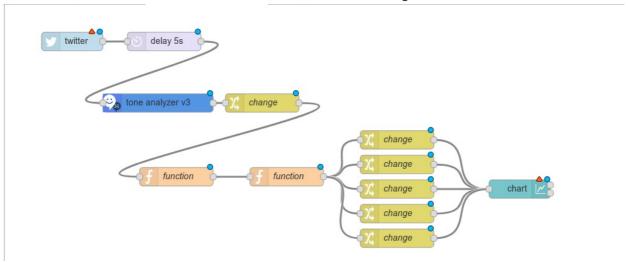
Click the install button.

All being well, you should see the additional nodes being dynamically added to the list of available nodes:



You'll find these new nodes towards the bottom of the left-side palette menu.

Once more, create a new flow on the canvas with the following nodes:

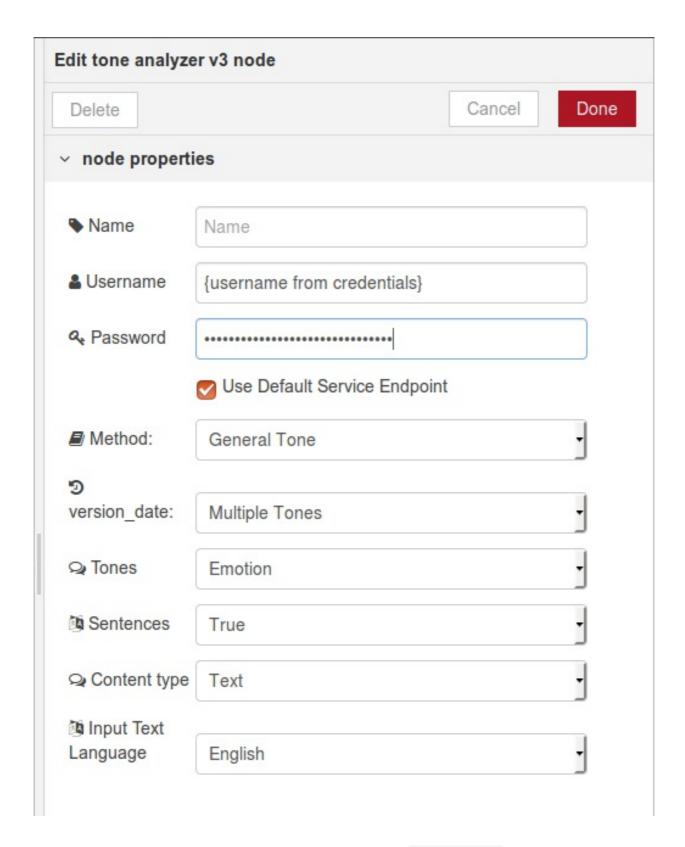


For this Lab we will use **#Trump** as the Twitter topic to monitor.

Since this topic is VERY active at the moment, we have to avoid the flood of the incoming tweets overwhelming the Node-RED instance. Add a delay node after the twitter node and setting the node action to "Limit rate to" 1 message per 1 seconds - this should leave sufficient time for the Watson Tone Analyzer service to handle each request.

You will need to fill in the service credentials (username and password) from the Watson Tone Analyzer service that you created earlier.

In this example, the purpose is to extract emotion tones, so select the Emotion option in the Tones field.



Since the result from the Watson Tone Analyzer will be in <code>msg.response</code>, we can add a change node to move <code>msg.response</code> to <code>msg.payload</code> to make it easier to process in subsequent nodes.

In a function node named "Add tweet scores to total", the scores can be accummulated using the following code:

```
var defaultResult = {
  "emotion_tone":{
  "Anger":0,
  "Disgust":0,
  "Joy":0,
  "Sadness":0,
  "Fear":0
  },
  "count":0
}
if(msg.payload) {
  var result = context.get('twitterAnalysis')||defaultResult;
  {\tt msg.payload.document\_tone.tone\_categories.} \textbf{forEach} (\textbf{function}(\texttt{toneCategory}) \{
    if(toneCategory.tones){
      toneCategory.tones.forEach(function(tone){
         result[toneCategory.category_id][tone.tone_name] += tone.score;
      })
    }
  })
  result.count += 1;
  context.set('twitterAnalysis', result);
  return {payload:result};
}
```

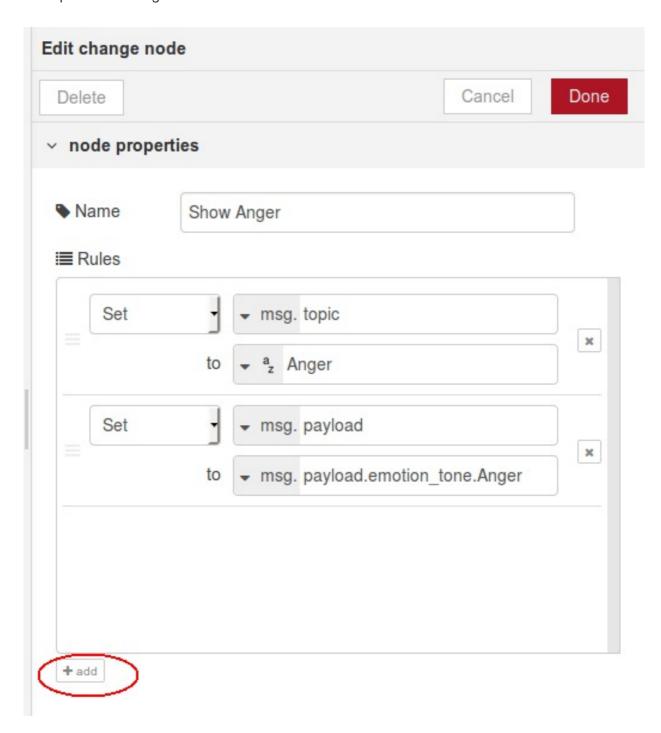
Here, we add the scores of each tone and then save into a context variable named "twitterAnalysis". A track of the count is kept, for the next node to use in calculating avergages.

The next function node calculates averages with this code:

```
if(msg.payload.count){
  msg.type = "newMsg";

for (var toneCategory in msg.payload) {
   if (!msg.payload.hasOwnProperty(toneCategory)) continue;
   var obj = msg.payload[toneCategory];
   for (var prop in obj) {
     if(!obj.hasOwnProperty(prop)) continue;
     obj[prop] = obj[prop]/msg.payload.count;
   }
}
return msg;
```

In order to show the scores of each tone, each score needs to be moved into different topics before sending to the dashboard chart node. We use the <a href="https://change.node.upw.node



Note that the second set section has been added using the + add button lower-left.

Modify the other change nodes to reflect "Joy", "Sadness", "Disgust" and "Fear"

Lab - twitter chatbot setup

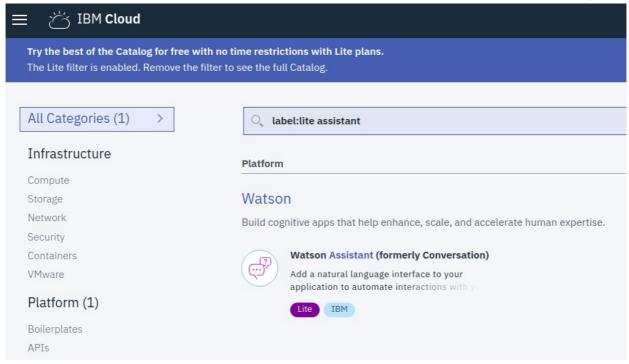
Now, a selection of the tweets can be directed to a chatbot service to trigger a response (based on the Watson Assitant service).

Firstly, get hold of an existing Chatbot configuration; for this lab, we will be using one of the Bot definitions in the IBM Bot Asset Exchange

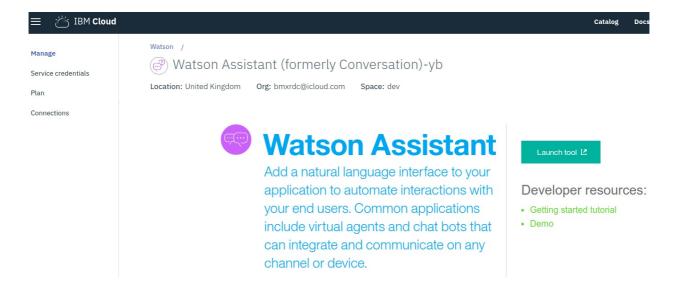
This bot responds to queries with the lyrics and wisdom of renowned artists Jay-Z.

Click the Get this bot option and save the resulting JSON string to a local file. This file will be imported into the Watson Assistant tool shortly.

Yo will need to create an instance of the Watson Assistant service in the IBM Cloud catalog -

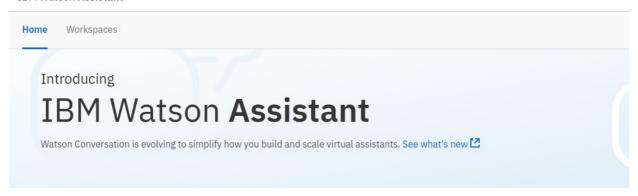


As before, leave the name to default, create the instance, and then use the Launch Tool option to beging creating a Conversation workspace.



Select the Create a Workspace option

IBM Watson Assistant



Three easy steps

Follow these steps to create a virtual assistant.

1

Create intents and entities

Determine what your virtual assistant will understand by providing training examples so Watson can learn.

Learn more 🛂

2

Build your dialog

Utilize the intents and entities you created, plus context from the application, so your virtual assistant responds appropriately.

Learn more

Get started now

Create a Workspace



And *carefully* **NOT** clicking on the create option, select the Import workspace icon and navigate to your saved Jay-Z bot JSON file.

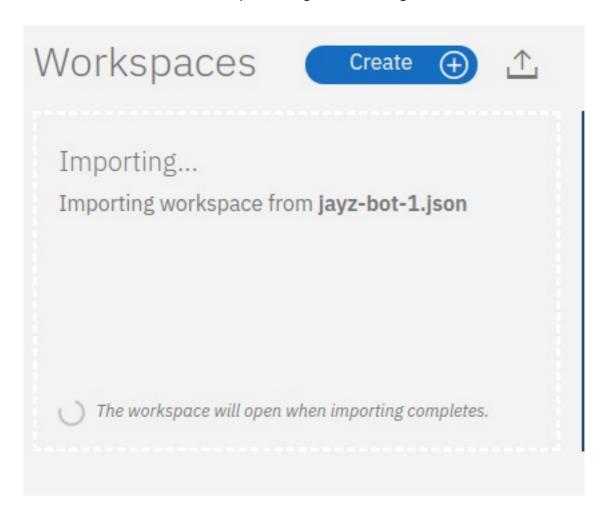


Import a workspace

Select a JSON file then choose which elements from the workspace to import.



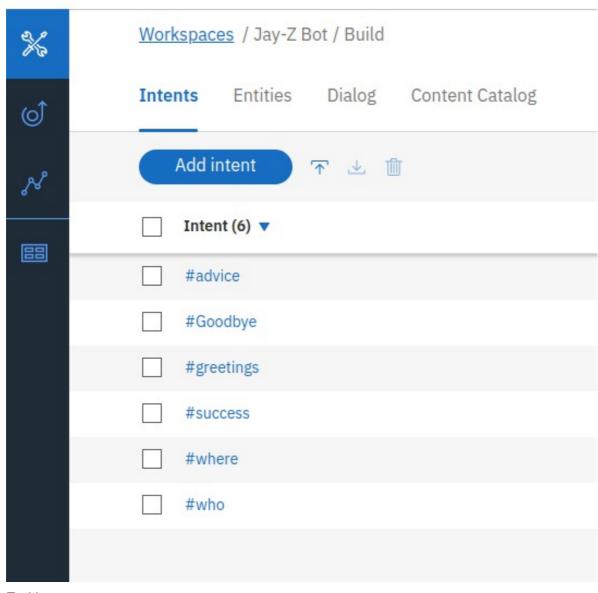
This should result in a new workspace being created, using the definitions in the JSON file



This will create the 3 main areas of chatbot server configuration:

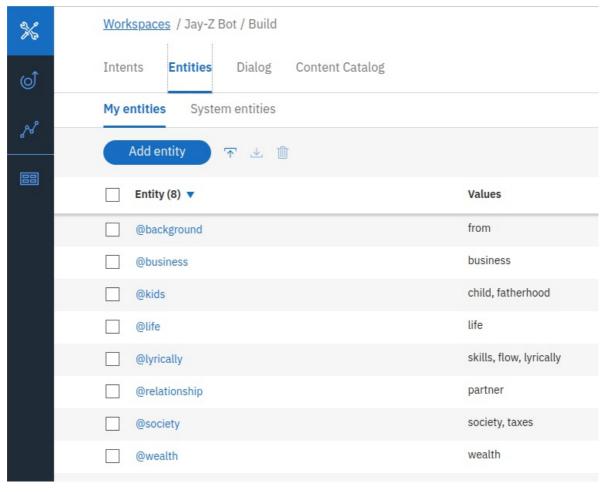
1. Intents:

IBM Watson Assistant



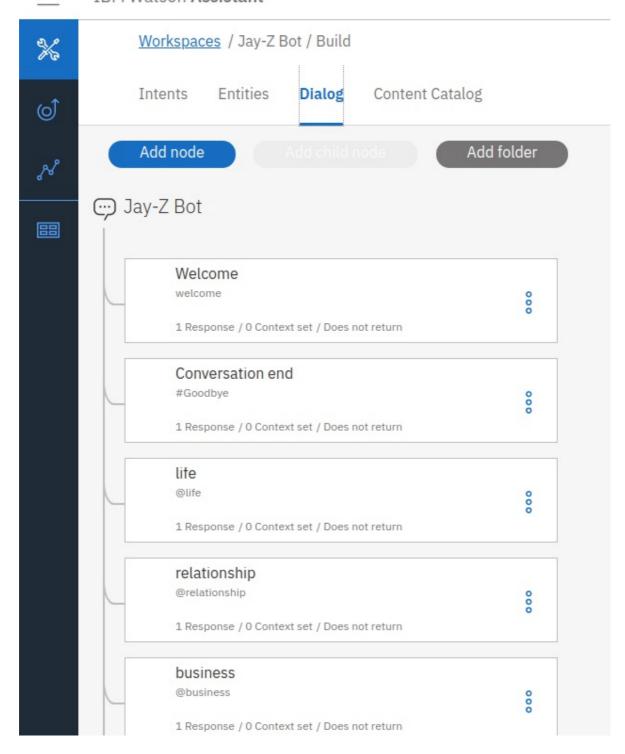
2. Entities:

IBM Watson Assistant



3. Dialog:

IBM Watson Assistant

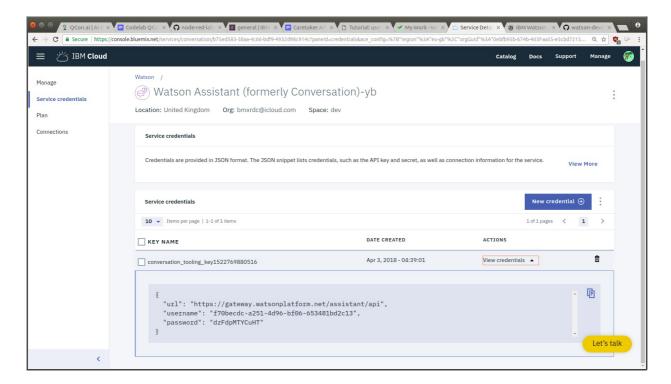


Using the existing Node-RED flow, select one of the tone category streams from the twitter anlysis [Joy, Anger, Disgust, Sadness, Fear], to direct into the Chatbot, using the Watson



You will need the credentials for the Watson Assistant instance, to plug into the node configuration menu. Either:

- make a connection between the Watson Assitant instance, and your Node-Red application, and after re-stage, the credentials will automatically populate the Watson Conversation nodes
- copy the credentials from the Watson Assitant instance, and apply directly to the node configuration, and use straight away.



Challenge

Congrats!