



Fucking up projects - a manual, MM16DE, Rico Neitzel & Fabian Blechschmidt

Fucking up projects a manual

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Might contain

- irony
- sarcasm
- bad ideas
- horrible ideas
- **don't try at home**

Acquire the project

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I'll describe different options,
best, 2nd best, ...

Screwing up projects implies a project,
so we don't suck here.

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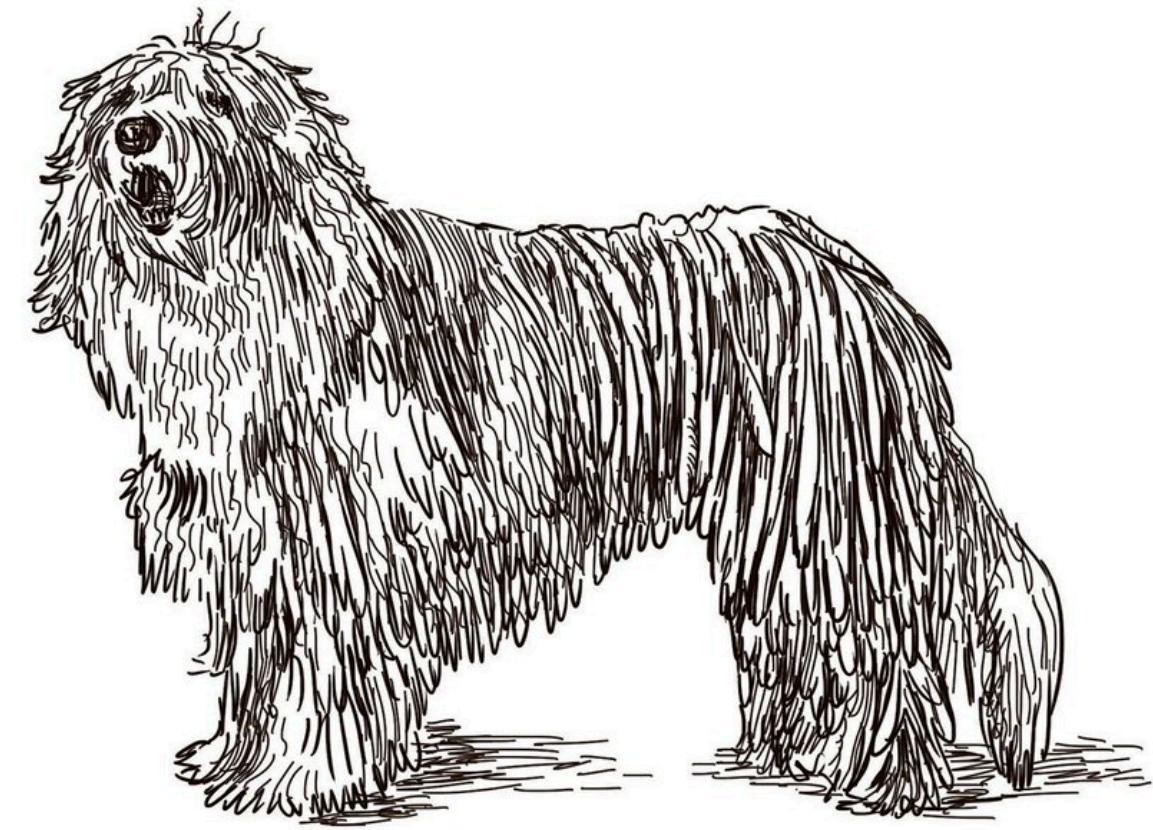
**talk based on a true story
project was aquired by PM**

Before the project

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Project? What project? The goal

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Buzzword-first Design

The Definitive Guide

O RLY?

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diffuse answers on questions and goals

- scope/feature creep
- use ambiguous vocabulary (backend, content, CMS, Open Source Software, final, tested, requirements, concept)
- invent new words
- make sure DO THIS IN THE CONTRACT!
- Abbreviation and technical terms wherever possible

Meetings, meetings, meetings

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Bad mood in meetings

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- give the customer the feeling they have to decide anything
- No eye contact during meetings
- phone calls instead of meetings
- No notes after telephone calls

Great Expectations

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different expectations
overadvertise vs. underdeliver

No decisions

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- no decisions
- No decision making process

Alternative a LOT of decisions

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customer makes all the specifications (CDD! customer driven development)

- decide everything even if you don't know
- unknown business
- unknown processes

Who decides?

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ONLY CEO!

a LOT of decisions

Environment

- Operating System, IDE, Keyboard, mouse/touchpad
- what tools to use (jira, asana)
- what screen to use (2 "smaller" ones vs 1 big one)

Estimates

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Best case: Customer decides
how long it will take (and how
much it costs)

2nd best: management makes
time assumptions
without talking to the team!

Deadlines are deadlines

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People respect them!
book TV and newspaper ads
BEFORE the estimate

Content and asset delivery

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- text in image (jpg, not PSD)
- final in filename - with
version number!

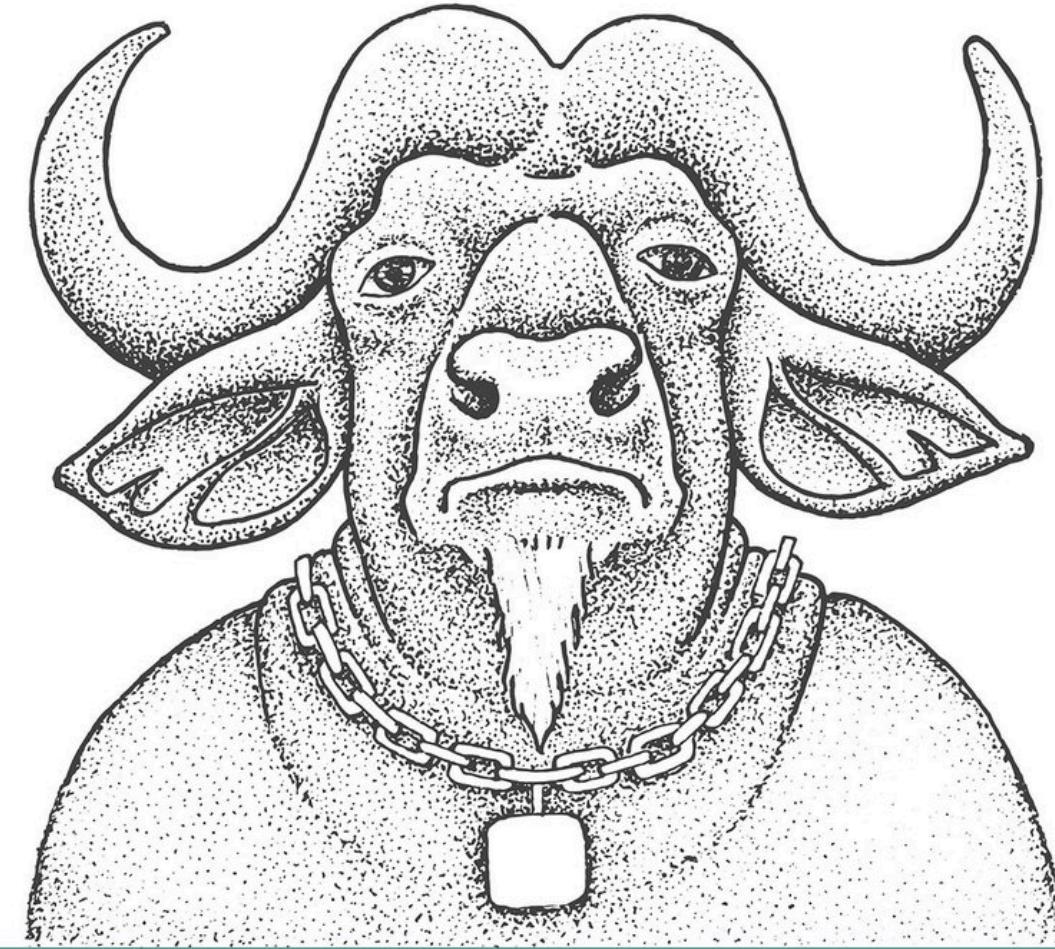
During the project

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No communicati on ever

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People have names of varying lengths, who knew?



Fitting Actual
User Data Into
The Design

ugh...

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no communication between content and design team!

- never let them talk to the customer
- prevent communication wherever possible
- frontend <-> backend, design <-> frontend, team <-> customer
- team doesn't need to know wo "team" is
- Management as mushrooms: Always keep them in the dark, sprinkle them regularly with dung and if the heads show up, cut them off

Phone numbers

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only telephone switchboard is
callable

- never give out number of project manager
- only private mobile numbers of developers, designers and other people in the trenches (Fußvolk)

No approvals

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- No approvals with customer during the project
- **YOU ARE THE EXPERT!**

If not avoidable mix channels

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- use many communication channels
mail, telephone, slack, HipChat, ICQ, jabber,
MSN, Facebook, Twitter DM, Fax!, issue tracker
- all the channels need to be open all the time
to answer instantly!
- Ringing phones all the time help speeding up!
- mix channels: especially for one ticket/task,
MANY channels parallel. Make sure to lose the
overview!

Responsibility

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make sure they're group chats
– no responsibility, maximum
noise - and always say YOU!
- change responsibility for
tickets, teams, etc.

Avoid issue tracker

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- if not possible MIX
- phone dev, reference email, which references ticket, which references evernote document (HAPPEND to us!)
- only use one ticket for everything and 2000 comments

Mix everything else

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- Different languages (english/german/french/czech, PHP/Python/Java/...)
- experiences in team

No Documentation of anything

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- no documentation for ANYTHING- no tech doc
- obvious comments in code (i is int, starts with 10)
- PMs like to communicate: only a ticket with title, the rest will be told (and not documented)
- only have open/resolved - no process
- comments/time sheets with only with "development", "update", ...
- IF documentation, make sure it is not up to date

**Do your job
but only this**

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Don't look beyond one's own nose

- Don't tell any problems upfront – they shoot the messenger!

Only Pressure Makes Diamonds

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It's like weekday coding, but pants are optional



Coding on the Weekend

A Frustrating Hobby

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artificially short deadlines, high pressure

- even less communication
- night shifts
- bad food (pizza, cola, red bull, mate)
- less sleep
- no breaks

Measure the project

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- number crunching for projects
- make questionnaires every week, or even twice to get enough numbers!
- Do it with paper!
- managers and PMs like it (I heard)
- hours in the office
- Lines of Code
- emails answered
- tickets closed
- tickets opened (for tester)

Pay as late as possible

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Freelancers work harder if they
are not paid on time

- tell them multiple times, you
already paid the invoice
- never tell them the customer
paid already - lie if needed

Completing the project

- the dead zone phase -

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we are already late!

- but no problem, 3 of 4

projects will fail!

- gather time!

- competitor implemented X,
we need this too for launch!

Right time to OUTSOURCE

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Ignore the client

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- If the clients asks for the project status ... ignore these mails! several times.
- even don't answer the phone

Change the team often

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Increase the team size when you are late with unknown freelancers and junior dev fire team members on a daily basis and don't talk to them ever again

Rotate contact person

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We need culprits
not solutions

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cover your ass

Blame always the others, they
are idiots.

don't search solutions before
culprit is found

Questions?

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— Bonus —

Tech related

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only FTP + no VCS

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- no deployment
- doesn't matter which, just no
git, SVN, CSV
- no encryption

VCS

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git commit -m "changes"



Writing

Useless Git Commit Messages

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- IF VCS: No comments! wrong comments
- if not inevitable : Mix deployment via VCS and FTP (with old VCS!)
- Dropbox as VCS,,
- only one user!
- <http://whatthecommit.com/>

Removed test case since code didn't pass QA

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Not one conflict, today was a good day.

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work in progress

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**Use a real JS construct,
WTF knows why this
works in chromium.**

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It compiles! Ship it!

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```
git config --global alias.yolo  
'!git add -A &&  
git commit -m "$(curl -s whatthecommit.com/index.txt)"'
```

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What about a git alias?

Do it your way

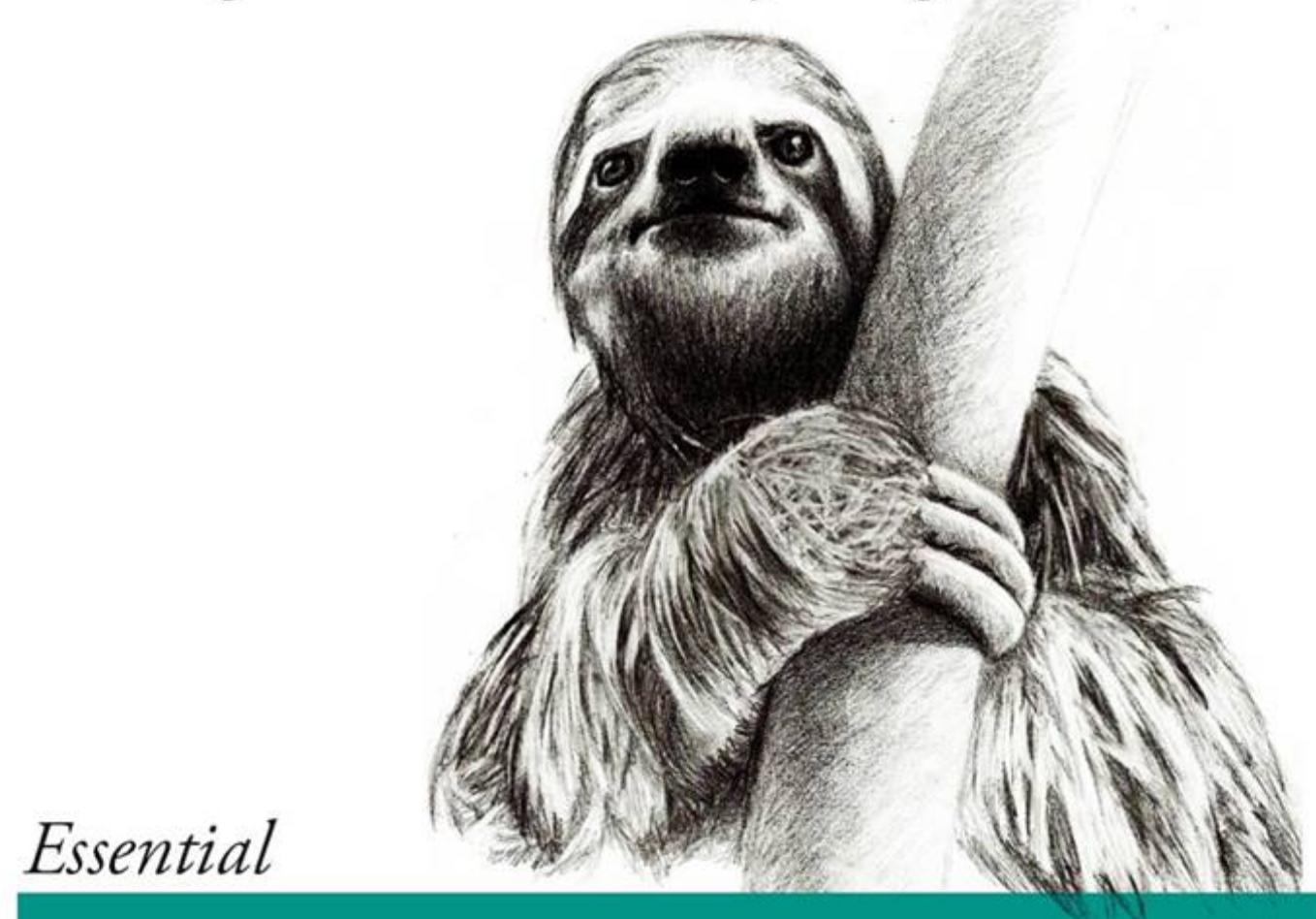
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- formatting
- no grammer/spelling
- css/php class names,
namespaces
- never ask experts for help AVOID
THEM - YOU ARE THE EXPORT!

Maintain bad code quality

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Cutting corners to meet arbitrary management deadlines



Essential

Copying and Pasting
from Stack Overflow

O'REILLY®

The Practical Developer
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- don't remove TODO, after
forced to fix something

Encodings USE THEM!

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- umlauts in file names
- use UTF-8, emojis in function names anyone?
- different encodings in different files, but same project
- MySQL supports one encoding per column!

Images/Image types

!^- golden rule: only way to send screenshots: in word file!

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- customer sends bitmap
- we need a jpg
- customer sends bitmap with name image.jpg
- CMYK vs. RGB
- different color spaces

Change tools early

Change tools often

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- issue tracker, instant messenger, agile methods, language (PHP/Erlang/Assembler, mix)!
- Misuse tools, like a TODO list (asana) for issue tracking (process)
- "Databases": MySQL -> Oracle
-> MongoDB -> Couch -> Redis

Project methods

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Like Last Time

^- BDD: Birthday driven development: Making releases because of customers birthday

^- Alternative: Intuitive driven development

Agile is just guidelines no rules

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- change goals during sprint
- no retrospective

Use the latest, hottest shit

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Symfony, Silex, Laravel, Luma, BETA!
- Even better with JavaScript
doesn't work
no documentation
no experience
handful experts on earth

One machine fits all

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- dev and prod environment on the same machine
- no need for copies of the code, so edit directly on production
- no need for testing, stage, etc.

**Help others fuck up
Release it open source!**

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Yoav Kutners recommendation

Backup

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No one wants backup,
everyone wants restore
(Wiederherstellung)
^- Backup: YES OF COURSE!
Customer pays for backup, not
restore!

git blame-someone-else

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git blame-someone-else

→ core-decorators.js git:(master) |

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Sources

- Experiences (Rico Neitzel, Fabian Blechschmidt)
- Sonja Riesterer
- Fabians lovely girlfriend Pia
- lots of attendees of our talks, thanks!
- <http://peopleprocessandprofit.com/2010/03/14/ten-ways-to-screw-up-a-project-2/>
- <http://www.cio.com/article/2384088/project-management/15-ways-to-screw-up-an-it-project.html>
- <https://twitter.com/ThePracticalDev/status/748518856214384640>

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More ideas? I would love to share them

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