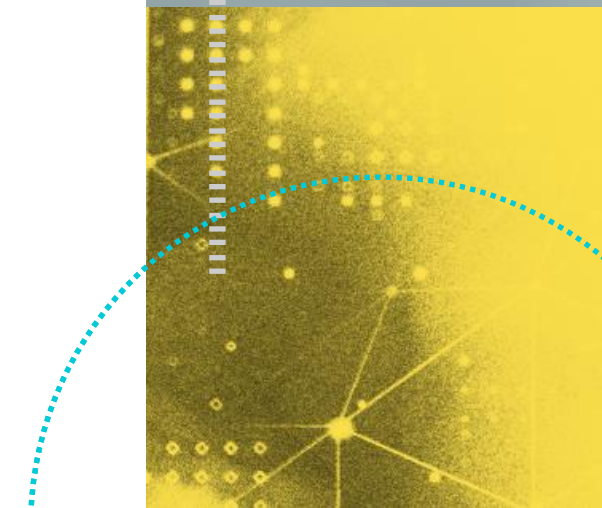




# solarwinds



## Fundamentals for Leading Technical Teams

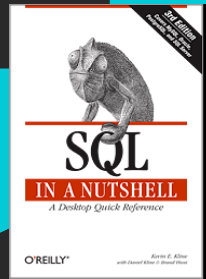


# Kevin Kline

Head Geek™

**Kevin** has over 30 years experience in roles including programmer, data scientist, DBA, enterprise architect, and manager. He enjoys traveling, writing, teaching, and indie rock.

**database**  
TRENDS AND APPLICATIONS



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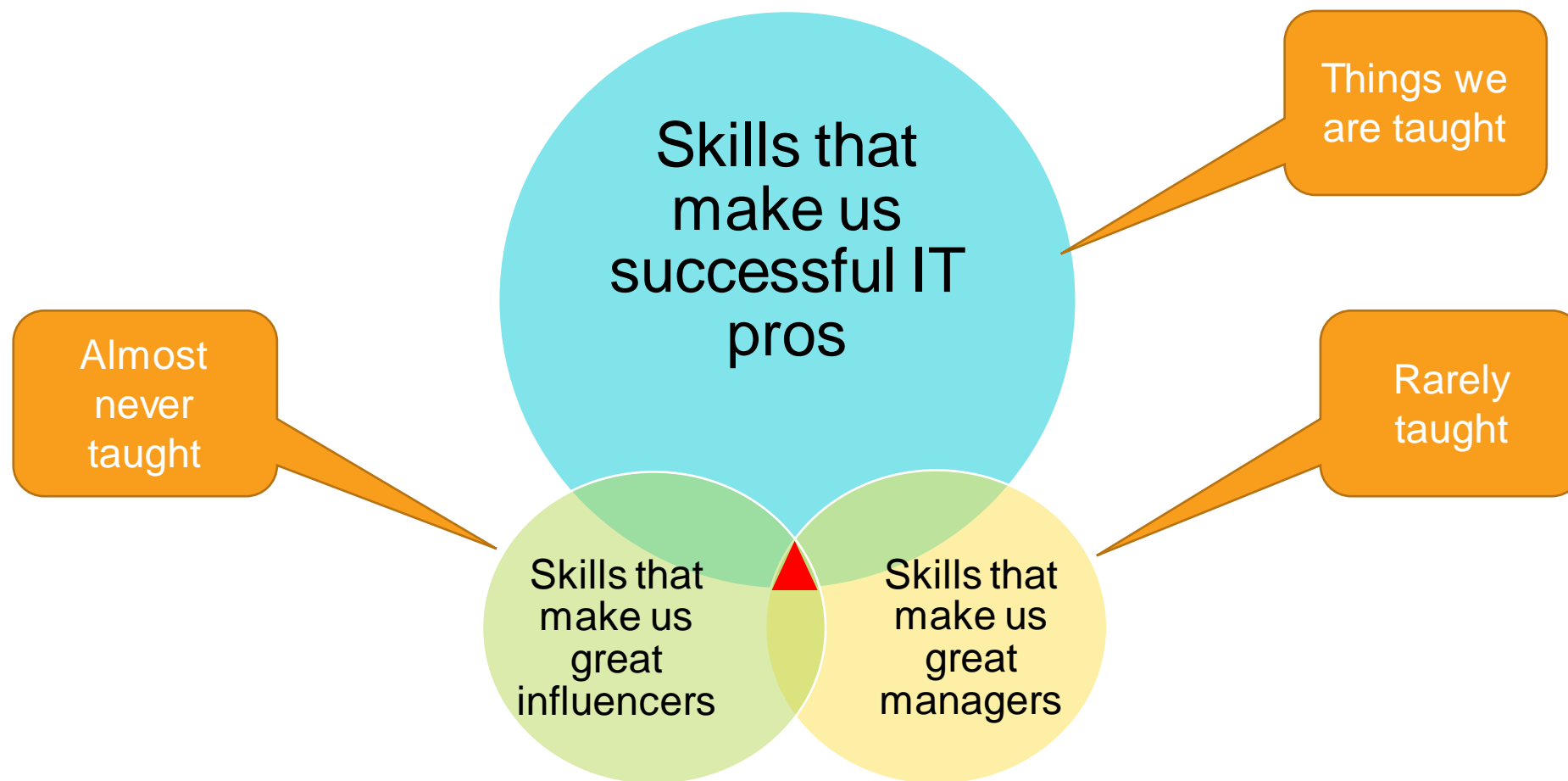
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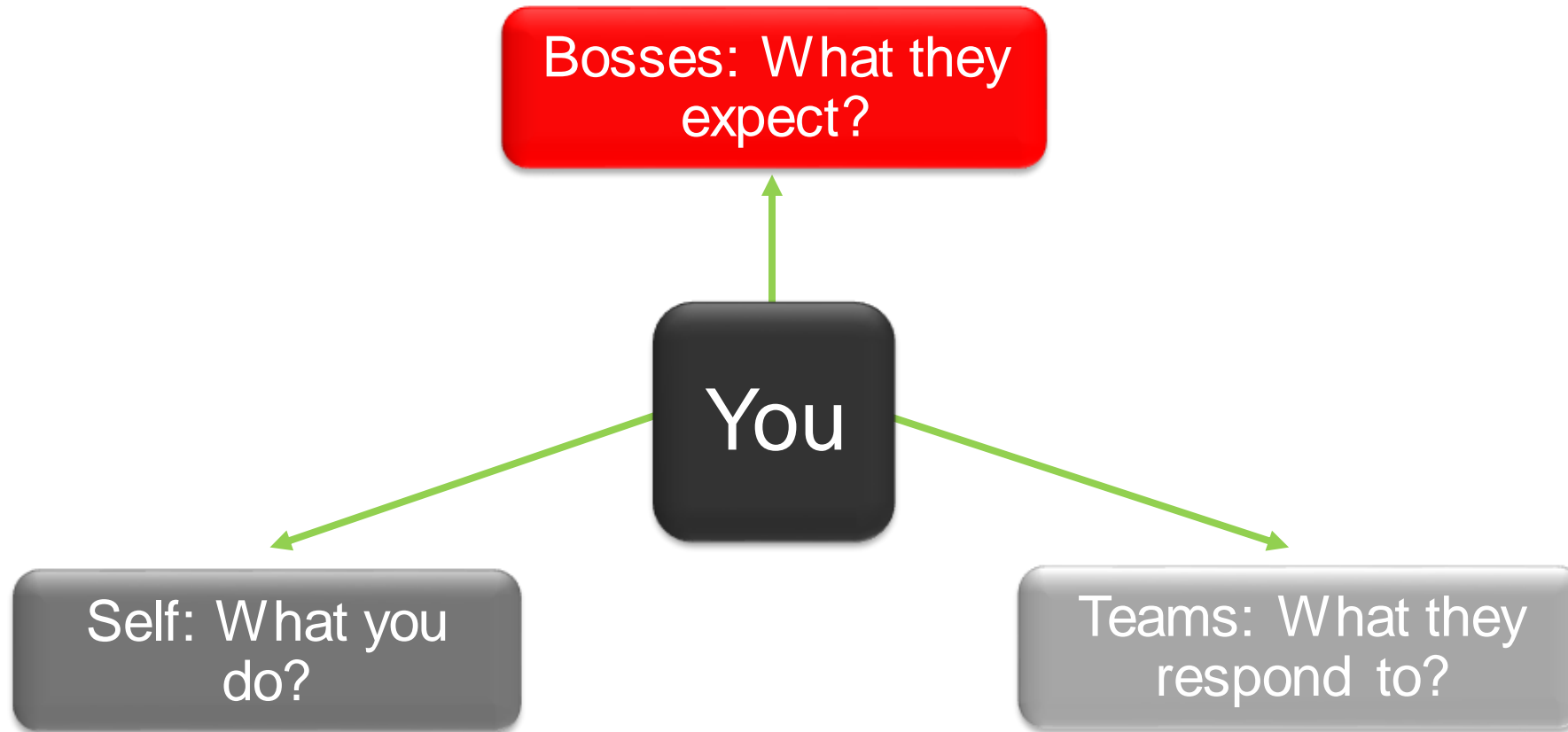
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# When a Technologist Becomes a Leader



# Tech Team Leadership Success Formula





# To Thine Own Self Be True

You – Building Self-Awareness

# The Foundation: Character

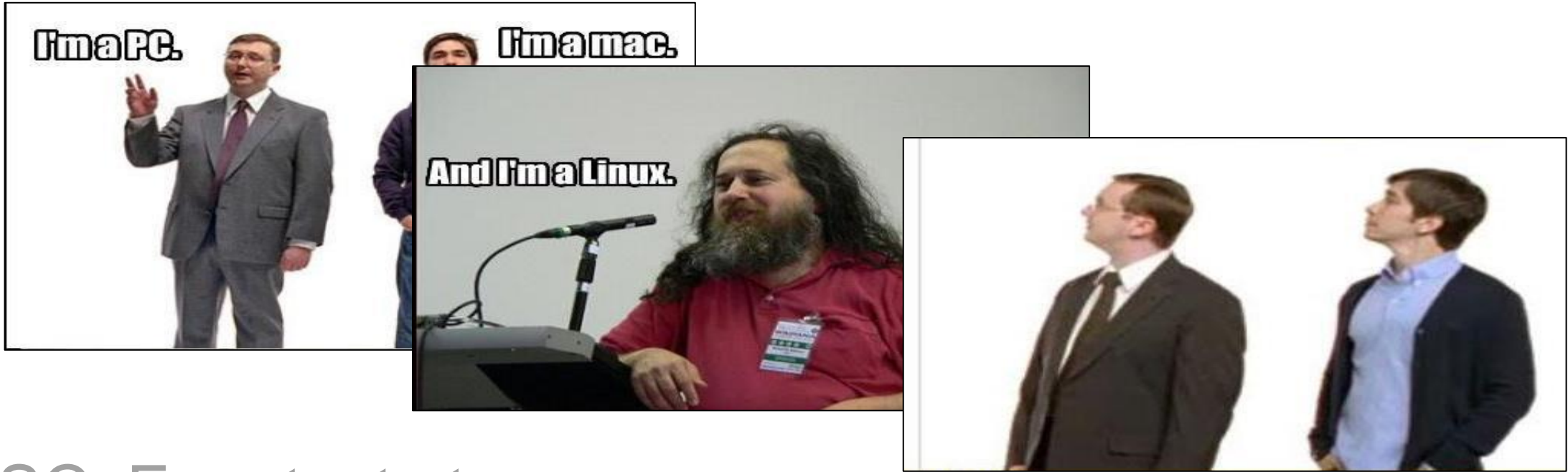
What's the difference between “character” and “personality”?

Organizations reflect the character of their top leaders.

Authenticity is a winning ingredient for coaching leaders.

**What we *do* is far more telling than what we *say*.**

# Know Thyself



DISC: Free test at

- <http://www.123test.com/disc-personality-test/>

Myers-Briggs: Free test at

- <http://www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/jtypes2.asp>

# What Leadership Style is Most Successful?

## Director

Dictates

Commands

Bolsters Hierarchy

Hoards information

Builds dependency

Less autonomy

## Coach

Collaborates

Asks

Networks

Shares info

Self-managing

More autonomy



# Good Leadership in Action

# Good Leadership IS ACTION

Good leaders practice four broad skill categories:

- Coaching
- Facilitating good communications
- Meeting team goals
- Supporting change and ideas

Where are the technology skills?

# Communication: Questioning/Listening Skills

Good questioning skills involve:

- Getting the specifics
- Appropriate fact vs. value, open vs. closed questions
- Observing reaction

Good listening skills involve:

- Acknowledging statements
- Summarizing
- Empathizing

Practice the Uncomfortable: thoughtful silence

# Team Goals

## Establish goals:

- Describe project objectives & its benefits
- Agree on team member's project responsibilities and goals
- Build commitment to action plan that achieves mutually agreed goals (remember S.M.A.R.T)
- Offer support, set follow-up date/review sessions, and express confidence

## Review progress toward goals:

- Provide regular, overall status
- Review individual progress, set revised action plan where off-target
- Summarize and set next follow-up/review session

# Corrective Coaching: Focus on Behavior and Outcomes

Focus on a specific behavior and impact, not character traits.

Helps team members focus on:

- Importance of behavior
- Generates internal motivations

Always explicitly follow-up.

- “Let’s talk again next Wednesday to see where we’re at. How does 11 am work for you?”

# Motivating Teams

Join me for my 3-part series on influence and motivation!

<https://www.solarwinds.com/events?t=Database&p=Kevin%20Kline>

# Practice Skills That Motivation

There are six tools consistently used by coaching leaders to motivate their team:

1. Cultivating self-esteem
2. Focusing on specific behavior and outcomes
3. Communicating benefits (WIIFM!)
4. Setting goals and following-up
5. Good question style
6. Good listening skills

*Use what you know about what motivates people, and appeal to their strongest motivators!*

# Change & Ideas: What Motivates IT Pros?

Studies show that technology professionals have **SIX** motivators:







# Best Practices for New Tech Leaders

In No Particular Order

# Value and Protect Team Productivity

## Destroyers of productivity:

- Interruptions to 'flow'
- Meetings, in many situations
- Technology hype and fads
- Mitigating weaknesses rather than leveraging strengths

# Happy Boss and/or Align with the Business

Are they rational?

Demonstrate that you understand the business and what the business needs

What does Boss need to be considered successful?

Speak their language:

- Are they a technologist?
- Are they detail oriented?
- What's the common ground, opportunity for analogy, storytelling?

# Gain & Maintain Credibility

## Proactive communications

- Regularly scheduled updates
- As a leader, we communicate even when we say \_\_\_\_\_.

## Do a little cheerleading and credit-taking

- The difference between bragging and boosting esteem is ...
- For the team, not yourself

# Physics and Banking Analogies

## The physic analogy:

- The law of inertia says “An object at rest tends to ...”
- The law of momentum says “An object in motion tends to ...”

## The banking analogy:

- Political capital
- Depreciation

# Summary

Technical skills <> leadership skills



The Law of Reciprocity: Show trust to build trust. Show credibility to build credibility.

Value and protect your team's productivity

Utilize a team's points of motivation for best results

Evaluate success against a clearly defined set of goals or objectives

## Suggested Reading

John P. Kotter, *What Leaders Really Do* and other titles

Warren Bennis, *On Becoming a Leader*

John Maxwell, *21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership* and other titles

Merrick Rosenberg, *Taking Flight: Master the Four Behavioral Styles (DISC)*

Linda Berrins et al, *Quick Guide to the 16 Personality Types in Organizations (MBTI)*

Stephen Covey, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*

# Resources

<http://www.ccl.org/leadership/index.aspx>

- My favorite leadership training organization

<http://www.techrepublic.com/blog/tech-manager>

- Good on-line resource with lots of topical content and forums

[http://www. pass.org](http://www.pass.org)

- Professional development content





# THANK YOU

Slides and scripts for this  
webinar and others at:

<https://thwack.solarwinds.com/members/kecline/blogs>

Contact me at:

[kevin.kline@solarwinds.com](mailto:kevin.kline@solarwinds.com)

Social media at kecline on  
LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook.


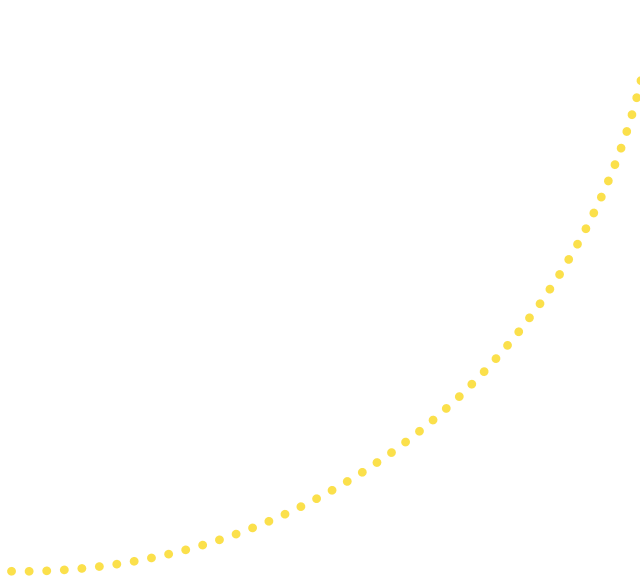
1<sup>ST</sup> in a 3-part series on  
influence, starts 11/11/2021.

Register at

<https://www.solarwinds.com/events?t=Database&p=Kevin%20Kline>

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