

Python Learning Meetup

Peter Wang
pwang@continuum.io

Purpose

Create an environment for improving one's capabilities with Python

- Regardless of current level of knowledge or background in programming
- Specifically taking advantage of in-person learning opportunities

Possible Approaches

- Traditional tutorial instruction
- Peer mentoring / Office hours
- Project-based learning
- Augmenting video learning (discussion/
homework groups)
- ???

Tutorial Instruction

- Pros
 - Available instructional materials
 - Straightforward time commitment
 - Easy transition between multiple teachers
- Cons
 - Time-intensive
 - Synchronous
 - Difficult to pace for heterogenous audience

Peer Mentoring

- Pros
 - Minimal course material development
 - Straightforward time commitment
 - Targeted learning
- Cons
 - Unstructured; hard to keep people coming back, or develop sense of “program”
 - Matching learner to mentor
 - Produces no online artifacts

Project-based Learning

- Pros
 - Very motivating, especially for novices
 - Some ideas/materials available online
 - Useful approach for learners at all levels
 - More fun for teachers/mentors (?)
- Cons
 - Material development can be time intensive
 - Can end up in trap of teaching libs/APIs instead of patterns or core skills

Video Learning Workshops

- Pros
 - No material development
 - Can collaboratively market our initiatives
 - Asynchronous for learners
- Cons
 - Mentors need to learn/know the course
 - Dearth of material for more advanced learners
 - Not collaborative knowledge sharing in the community

Other Activities

How can we contribute back to the greater Python community?

- Producing our own mini-courses
- Screencasts
- Webinars in conjunction with tutorials
- IRC presence
- [meta]

Big Questions

Is this a useful thing to do?

- What is the value of in-person learning?
- Do people want to learn in a group? Why?
- Can APUG do something with broader impact?

Big Questions

Does APUG have the bandwidth?

- Everybody has day jobs
 - If you don't, we get lots of contact from recruiters.
- This only works if there are a core set of people willing to actually commit their time.
 - Just like open source!

Thoughts?

