

# Building Open Source Communities

JUNE 15, 2018  
NODESOURCE®

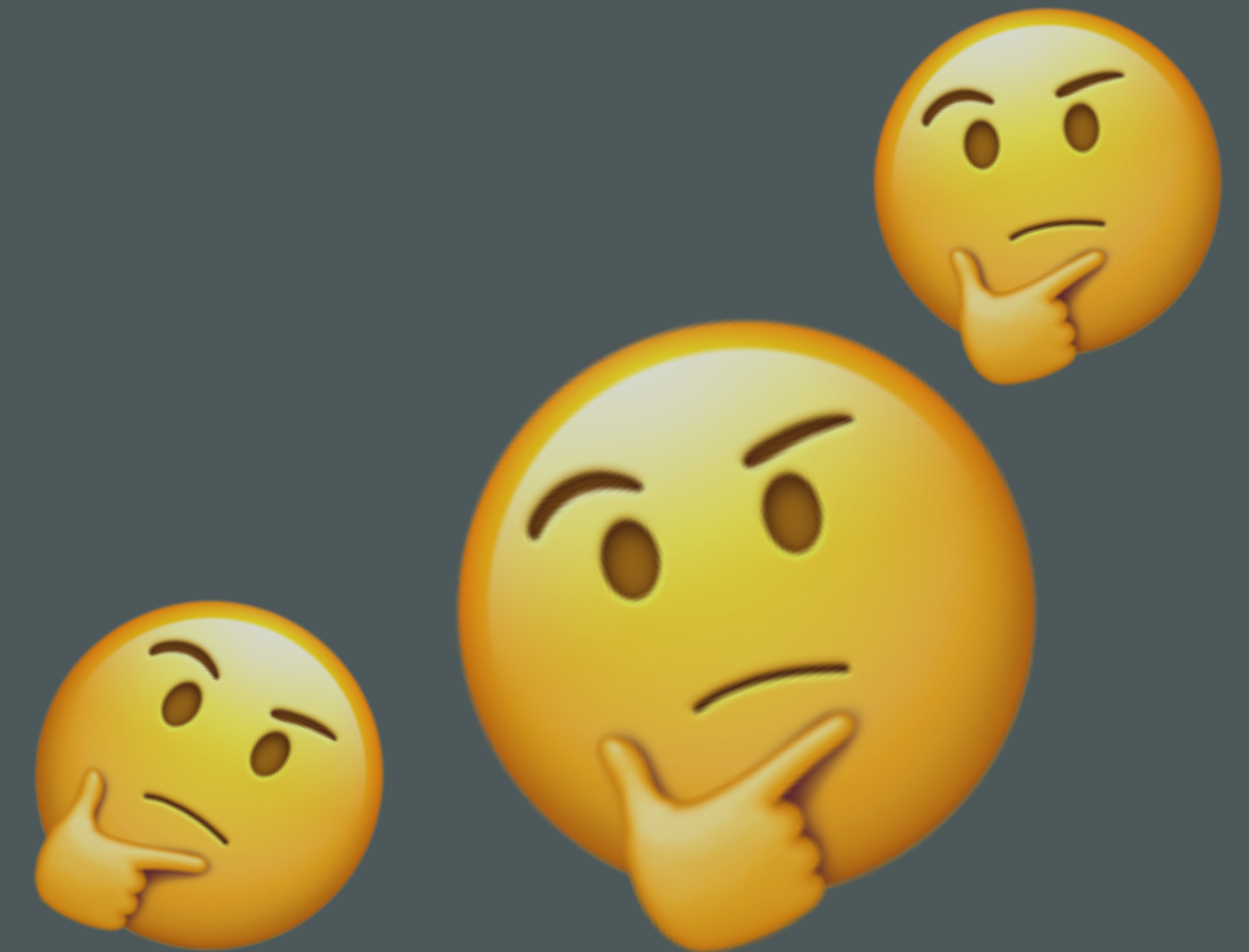
# Who am I?

- Developer Advocate at NodeSource
- Chairperson, Node.js Community Committee
- “Human Clickbait”






# What is an Open Source Community?




Open Source community is  
everything beyond the code.


# “What is an Open Source Community?”

 **Jay Phelps** @\_jayphelps · 1m  
Replying to @bitandbang  
The group of people who use, contribute, or create open source software.


🗨️ ↻ ❤️ 1 ✉️

 **Liran Tal** @liran\_tal · Jun 12  
Replying to @bitandbang  
people who value transparency, openness and respectfully collaborate together on a project.

🗨️ ↻ ❤️ 2 ✉️


 **Antonino Urbano** @antonino\_u · Jun 12  
Replying to @bitandbang @peakwinter  
For me it means sharing solutions to problems that you think other people do or might also have. As someone who mainly works on proprietary things, contributing to already open source libraries is my small way of giving back.

🗨️ ↻ ❤️ 4 ✉️

 **Sean Tilley** @DeadSuperHero · Jun 12  
Replying to @bitandbang  
Well, it's a definition that can apply to different parts of the space in a myriad of ways.

At its core, the notion is about sharing knowledge in the form of a usable implementation or framework that can be modified, reused, reshared and extended.

🗨️ 1 ↻ ❤️ 1 ✉️

 **Sean Tilley** @DeadSuperHero · Jun 12  
The community itself varies, however. For example, a number of large tech companies produce Open Source projects that are extremely niche, such as Lyft's microservice framework.

The culture there is markedly different than, say, user-facing apps or communication platforms.

🗨️ ↻ ❤️ 1 ✉️

 **© Hassan Sani** @iNidAName · 11h  
Replying to @bitandbang  
A chance to give back

🗨️ ↻ 1 ❤️ 2 ✉️

 **actually a kat girl** @maybekatz · 2m  
Replying to @bitandbang  
A feel-good label used for exploitation of free labor 🙄

🗨️ ↻ ❤️ 6 ✉️

 **Rabbi Ben Greenberg** @RabbiGreenberg · Jun 12  
Replying to @bitandbang  
Perhaps it can be articulated as a community of people that are united by their commitment to the notion that a more open, more accessible, more transparent society makes us all better. This is visible in our code but has ramifications far beyond.

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[nsrc.io/oss-community](https://nsrc.io/oss-community)



TL;DR:

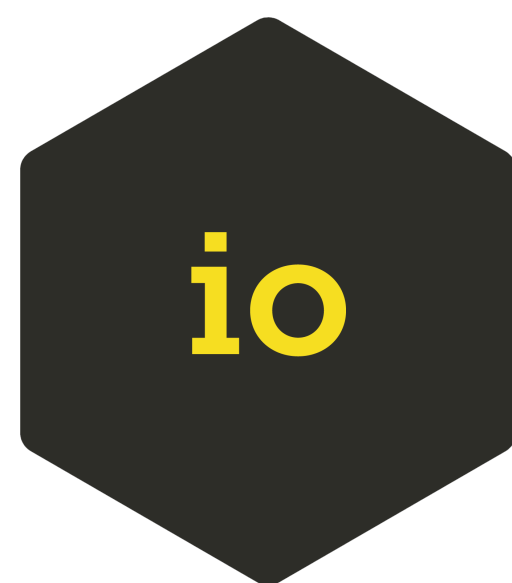
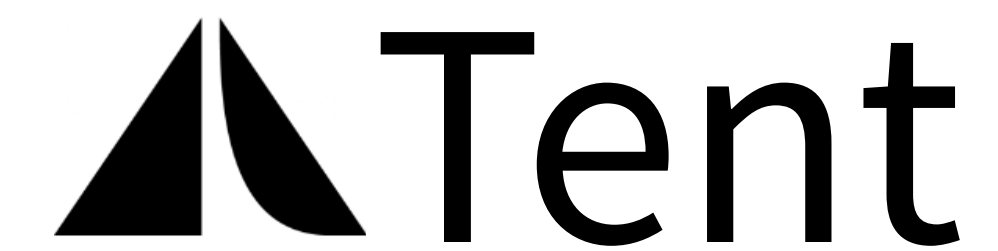
There isn't consensus on any one definition or thought process.

So, how does one *build* an open  
source community?

# Lessons Learned from Building Open Source Communities



# My Open Source Community Experiences



Lesson #1

# Don't Build *Too Much*

Lesson From: *MyBB*  



Having empty spaces to “grow into” limits and discourages growth.





Too much red tape limits growth



Lesson #2

# Ensure Contributors are Empowered

Lesson From:  

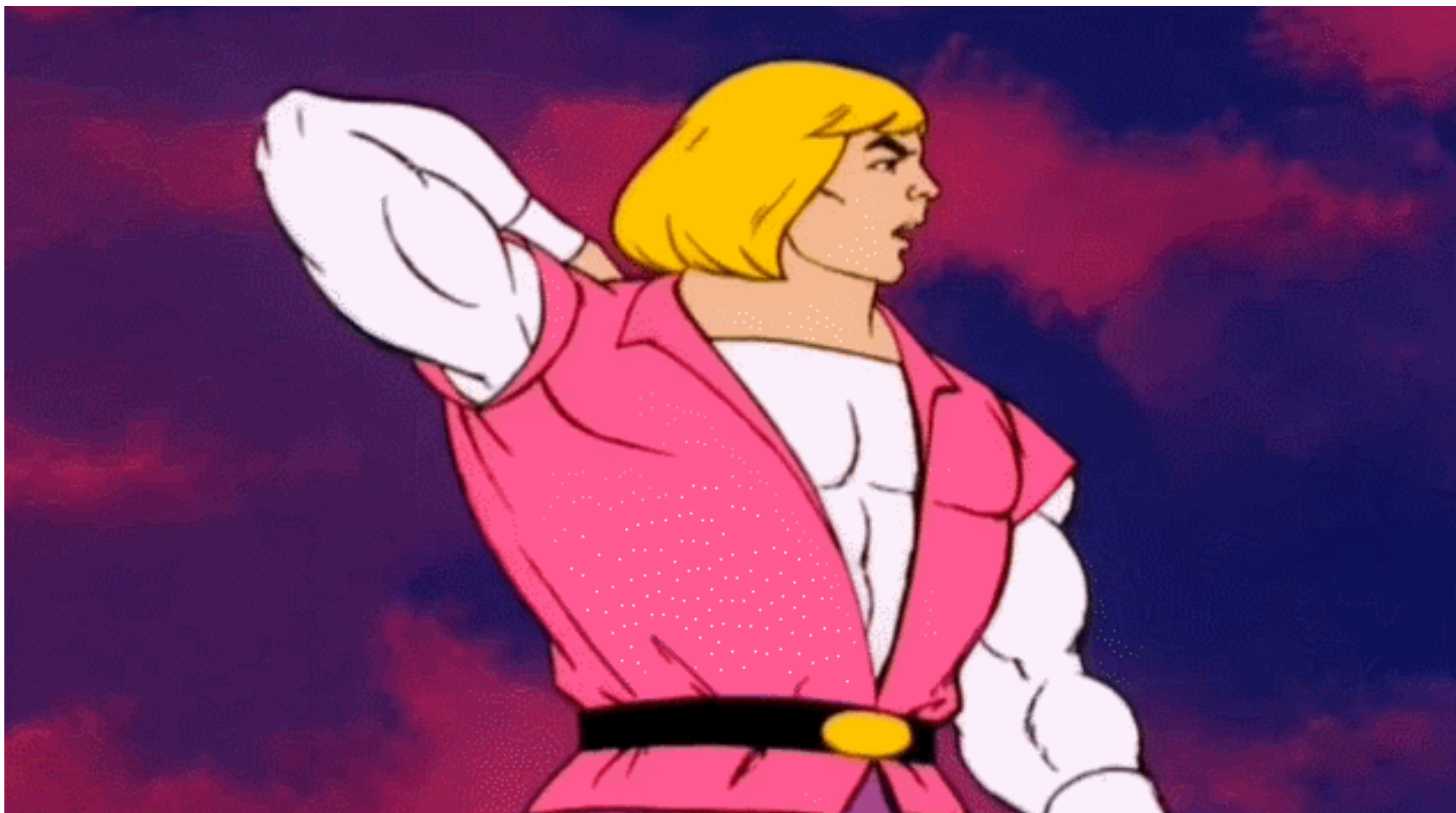
Empowering contributors to do the  
work they want to do enables  
communities to grow naturally



Please, sir, can I have some more?

Once empowered, individuals can  
begin to get needed and work.





Lesson #3

# Accept Help Along the Way

Lesson From:  



Communities can be led, but  
not owned.



Communities can outgrow  
their leaders.

Once you let Community lead,  
things change in interesting ways.





Lesson #4

# Take Multiple Approaches

Lesson From:  



Not everyone uses the same media,  
or has the same preferences.

Cater to as many as possible.



Certain channels will eventually emerge as your primary channels. That's okay!





# Time for a recap!



Lesson #1

Don't Build *Too Much*

Lesson #2

Ensure Contributors are Empowered

Lesson #3

Accept Help Along the Way

Lesson #4

Take Multiple Approaches



## How you can apply these four lessons, today:

- Have a purposeful plan and scope.
- Have a path to meaningful contributions.
- Don't "own" a community. Be a part of a community.
- Communicate your intents precisely and dynamically.

## Linkdump:

- **These Slides (Keynote Format):** <https://nsrc.io/oss-community-key>
- **These Slides (PDF Format):** <https://nsrc.io/oss-community-pdf>
- **“What is OSS Community” Twitter Moment:** [nsrc.io/oss-community](https://nsrc.io/oss-community)

# Thank you.

**Tierney Cyren**

[tierney@nodesource.com](mailto:tierney@nodesource.com)

@bitandbang



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# Q&A