A Noob amongst the Pros

Dealing with the fears beginner programmers face when working with the experts.

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Web Developer

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Personal Background

- A web developer at Siege Communications
- Works online
- First learnt Python in 2013 on Udacity

  Other experience
- 5+ years as a System Administrator

The Impostor Syndrome

- Feeling that you a cheat or a fraud and one day soon your peers will find out that you don’t belong in their circle.

Dealing with the impostor syndrome

Stop comparing yourself to “super devs”

- Kill off the notion of the 10x engineer, they got there 1x at a time.Great developers become that way because of experience.
- Foster a growth mindset
- “In one world, effort is a bad thing. It, like failure, means you’re not smart or talented. If you were, you wouldn’t need effort. In the other world, effort is what makes you smart or talented.” – Carol Dweck
- Move away from a “fixed mindset” which assumes that our character, intelligence, and creative ability are static givens which we can’t change in any meaningful way to a growth mindset which thrives on challenge and sees failure “not as evidence of unintelligence but as a heartening springboard for growth and for stretching our existing abilities.”

Making mistakes doesn’t make you a phony.

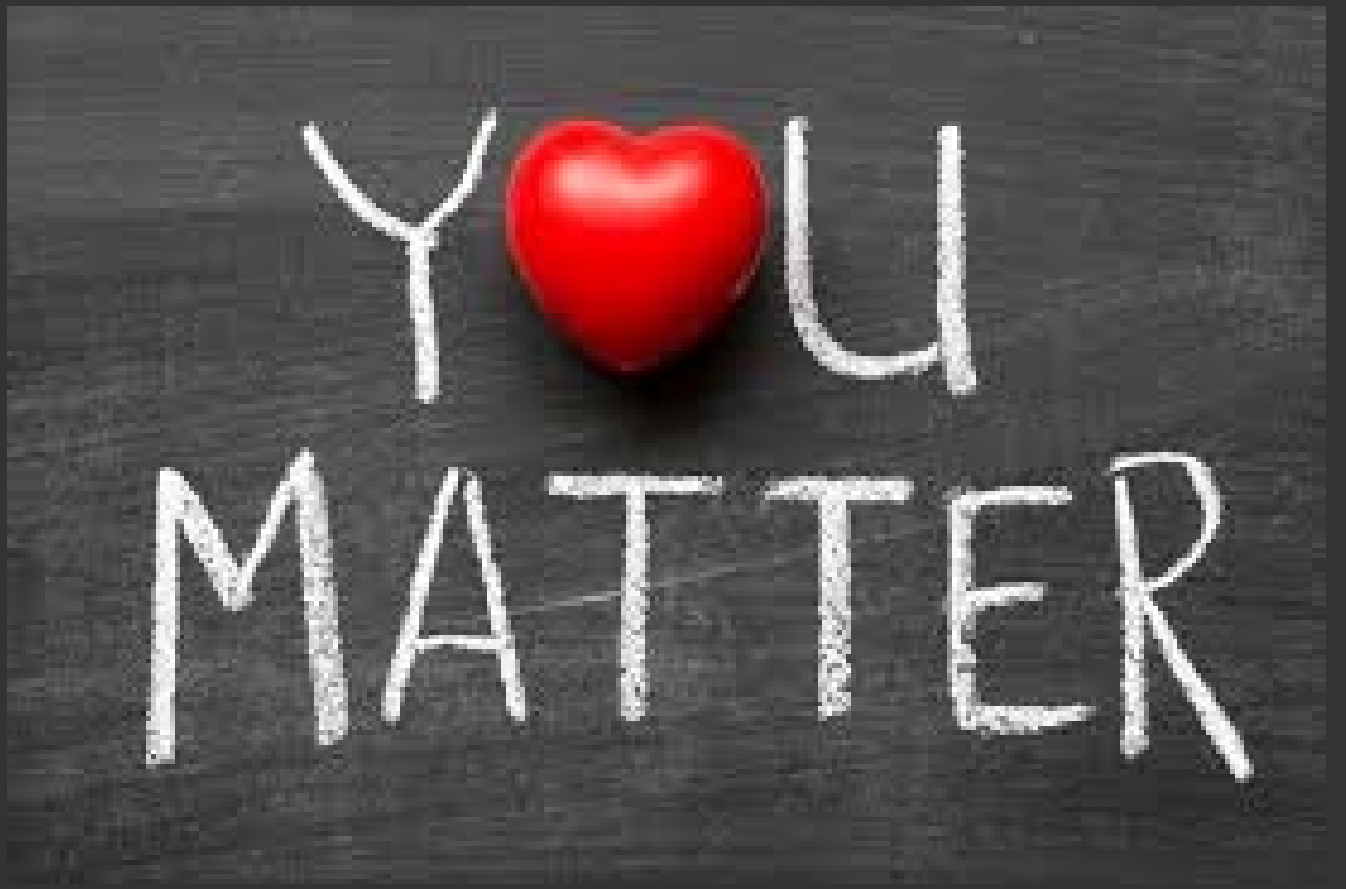
- David Walsh a programmer, who felt that as a developer for Mozilla he shouldn’t make any mistakes wrote this on his blog

  “That as a "Mozilla level" developer I should never, ever submit a pull request with so much as a console.log statement. You know what that led to? More mistakes, more self-pressure, and more feelings that I was an absolute fraud waiting to be flown to Mountain View and burned at the stake. The less I thought of myself and the harder I tried the more I would make the most obvious of mistakes”

Noob Programmers MATTER!!

Focus on providing value.

Imposter syndrome can happen when you're focused primarily on yourself.

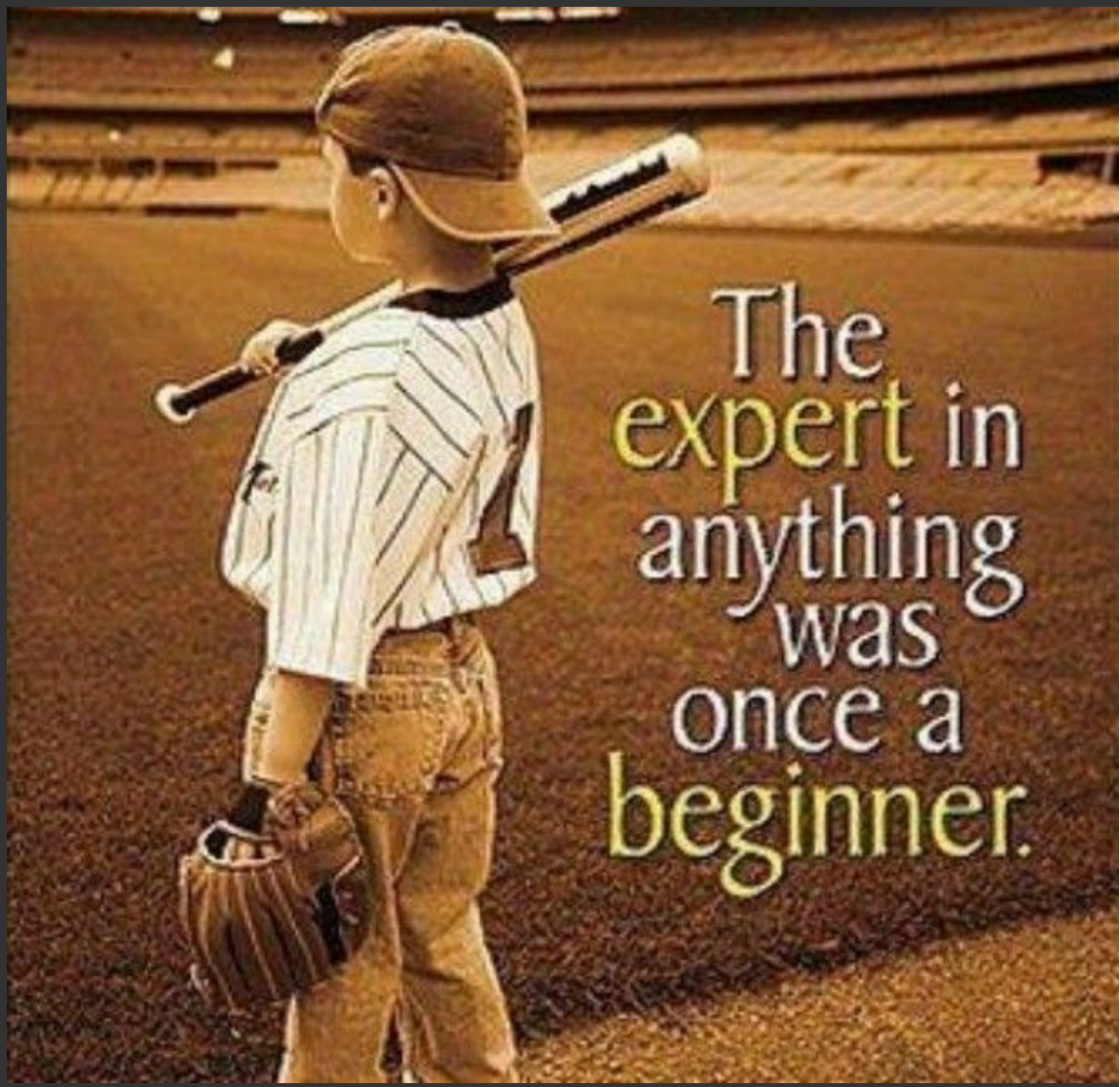


Fear of the unknown

- What if I am asked to use a new technology, will I be good enough

  Overcoming this fear
- Embrace Change
- Don’t be afraid to be

  a beginner



Afraid of asking-The Dunning–Kruger effect

- The Dunning–Kruger effect is a cognitive bias in which low-ability individuals suffer from illusory superiority, mistakenly assessing their ability as much higher than it really is.
- Dunning and Kruger attributed this bias to a metacognitive inability of those of low ability to recognize their ineptitude and evaluate their ability accurately
- You don’t know but you don’t want to appear stupid and burst your “bubble”

It’s OKAY not to KNOW things

- No one knows EVERYTHING and no one knows NOTHING
- There are too many things you can't learn in college. There are also too many things that are specific to a company/project
- Best way to deal with it, **ASK**, rather than waste hours solving a problem that another developer may have helped you solve within seconds it is better to get someone to walk you through.

Asking Questions the right way

Don't ask questions just to ask them.Learn to ask the right questions the right way.

- Always consult the official documentation first
- Do a quick Google to supplement the documentation
- Show that you have done some research to your question
- Provide extra information about your environment, etc
- A good rule of thumb is that generic programming questions should first be researched before asking, while internal company/project specific questions can be asked without much Googling.
- Remember that other people have their own work to do and their own deadlines. They have other things to do than spending their time helping you **with every** task.

Fear of doing the wrong thing - “To be or not to be that is the question”

- Programmers are faced with many dilemmas and sometimes get caught up in the fear of making the wrong decision or choosing the wrong path, that in the end they don’t do anything at all.
- Optimising for speed vs optimising for size, to REST or not to REST etc

  Overcoming this fear
- Get started and REFACTOR
- Work in a different branch and try out things
- Use virtual enviroments
- Stick to the principles

References

Refactoring https://refactoring.guru/

- Design Patterns: https://sourcemaking.com/design_patterns
- Asking Good Questions http://stackoverflow.com/help/how-to-ask

  http://www.wikihow.com/Ask-a-Question-on-Stack-Overflow

  David Walsh - I’m an Impostor https://davidwalsh.name/impostor-syndrome