

Douglas Squirrel

Age 43, married
Clean, full UK driving license
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Experience

2014-present Osper

London

Vice-President - Technology (June 2014 - present). In high-growth, revenue-later startup, rebuilt fractured, disengaged development team by bringing in less costly generalising specialists who contribute to front-end, back-end, and product functions - achieving substantial productivity improvements while reducing headcount costs. Using project-management tools like limited work-in-progress and feature thinning, instilled culture of daily delivery and experimentation despite regulated environment. Notable achievements include:

- Using a series of daily deployments, developers built referrals engine and onboarding programme that are driving substantial improvement in signups and retention, tripling company's main engagement metric - all in only one month.
- Developers took control of a faltering viral-growth feature, substantially simplified original design, and delivered a working version within a week.
- Entire company use disciplined root-cause analysis process to find and fix cultural and training problems that lead to each production issue - keeping major issues to at most one per month.

2012-14 Secretsales.com

London

Chief Technology Officer (April 2012 - June 2014). Turning around an unloved Technology team of three, creating IT, Operations, and Development teams and growing all three substantially; total team size now 13. Reversed low morale, poor quality, and unclear priorities in Development team using tools like kanban boards and regular retrospectives. Team release new features multiple times per day on live system (no need for release batching or "sprints"). Led several major Technology initiatives:

- Moved to new email/CRM provider with significant live data replication while continuing to send millions of emails per day.
- Initiated efficiency drive in retail operation, using tools like JIRA for project tracking and introducing aggressive automated and manual checks to find and fix on-site errors before customers are affected.
- Switched from custom-built, unmanaged physical servers to fully Puppet-ized, replicable virtual machine cluster running on Amazon Web Services, with minimal user disruption and savings of £270,000 per year.

2011-present Arachnys Information Services Ltd.

Advisor (July 2011 - present). Provided advice to emerging-markets search startup, chiefly on technology and technical hiring. Made small investment and joined advisory board as part of an angel funding round.

2002-2012 youDevise Ltd., now TIM Group

London and Manchester

Chief Technology Officer (June 2004 - April 2012). From a standing start, built 49-person technology organisation that operates and continuously improves two products:

- **TIM Ideas**, the world's dominant trade-idea communication system, used daily by 5000 fund managers, salespeople, and sales traders at 650 buy-side firms and brokers (including all of the largest investment banks).
- **TIM Funds**, a portfolio-management system for funds of hedge funds and their administrators that provides accounting, liquidity analysis, currency hedging, and front-office decision support for a small number of highly demanding clients.

Technology team update both applications with significant new features every fortnight while maintaining exceptionally high quality (TIM Ideas had under twelve service-affecting bugs in 2010) and resilience (over 99% availability despite having only a single data centre).

Trained initial team of four developers while putting in place basic agile development practises and helping to define product features. Grew team through aggressive, highly selective recruitment and introduced additional agile processes like retrospectives and one-click deployment to manage growth. Guided development of a 98-machine server farm that continuously integrates software changes and reports to developers on failures in over 250,000 tests per week. Manage non-people budget of around £300,000.

Senior Technical Consultant (Nov 2002 – May 2004). Played senior role in four-contractor, two-year contract for a billing solution at a FTSE 100 company (United Utilities). During build, consulted on performance, database changes, and application design with developers and skeptical IT staff, and led tactical squads of 2-6 people to rescue late deliverables. Application is now in production for 3 million customers.

*1999-2002 TenFold Corporation
San Francisco and London*

Project Manager (Oct 2000 – Nov 2002). Planned and executed complex, record-breaking billing application benchmark, managing team of 4-6 developers to manufacture 3 terabytes of artificial data, simulate 2400 concurrent end-users, and execute ten batch processing steps. After three months' preparation, tested and tuned for six weeks in performance centre and met all benchmark targets to customer's satisfaction. After project completion, managed several performance, coding, and testing projects for customers in Manchester, London, and New York simultaneously.

Software Developer (Jun 1999 – Sep 2000). Improved integration, quality, and performance of data-feeding and data-validation components of enterprise application. Built and ran nightly integration testing process for development teams in two cities on Sun and Windows systems. Won company-wide award for precision execution.

1997, 1998 Technische Universität Darmstadt, Germany

Guest Scientist. Invented and analysed number-theoretic algorithms. Implemented these algorithms using C++ as part of an integrated number theory library.

Skills and Qualities

Executive

- Describing revolutionary technology in business-friendly terms
- Presenting strategic technology options to company executives and boards
- Negotiating complex contract terms involving several contractors and customers
- Advising senior management on industry trends and best practices

Managerial

- Evolving team processes to include agile methods without losing productivity
- Training new team members to use unfamiliar tools and processes
- Retaining highly-skilled but highly-strung super-coders while gently improving ability to work with others
- Designing fully automated processes that guarantee quality on every check-in
- Tracking project progress in a simple and transparent way to help customers set sensible goals and cut scope to make targets

Technical

- Languages: Java, C, C++, HTML, Perl, PHP, Python, Ruby, SQL, XML, XSLT
- Operating systems: Microsoft Windows, Solaris, Linux, Mac OS
- Application tools: Oracle, MySQL, Hibernate, Tomcat
- Development tools: Eclipse, Ant, Hudson, CruiseControl, Emma, FindBugs

Personal

- Speaking and writing German

Education

1997-99 University of California at Berkeley

Master's and candidate's degrees in mathematics. National Science Foundation Graduate Fellow. Thesis on computing kernels of integer matrices.

1995-97 Reed College, Portland, Oregon

Bachelor of Arts degree in mathematics. Phi Beta Kappa honours society. Thesis on computing reciprocity symbols in number fields.

