Angular Communication Guidelines

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"Your words have great effect! Plan for what you want the effect to be."

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# Intro

Angular is no longer a team of 3 people working on a project that nobody pays attention to. As the team, project and community grows, so does the responsibility each of us have. People care about Angular and in many cases their livelihood depends on what we do. We must take this into consideration when communicating publicly. As the team grows it is as important (if not more important), that we communicate well internally too, because if we can't transmit information well within the team, we'll do even worse when communicating with people that we don't interact with every day.

For these reasons we've created these guidelines to helps us do the right thing in situations when we are not sure what the right thing is. This doc is organized as a set of five guiding principles and FAQ for common situations and is meant to be an extension of the [Angular Code of Conduct](https://github.com/angular/code-of-conduct/blob/master/CODE_OF_CONDUCT.md) for the core team members.

This doc is being made public, because the matters discussed here are not secret in any way, and could help the members in our community do the right thing when interacting online or in person.

# 5 Communication Principles

All of our public and in-team communication should follow these principles:

## 1. Helpful and useful

We are all bombarded by information. When we publish stuff publicly or in large team setting, we should do our best to make the information helpful and concise.

Spending an extra day on a presentation can save several person-weeks for the audience. Spending 30min on preparing for a meeting, can save several person-hours for the whole team.

It's ok to not say anything if there is nothing to be said.

Before you share anything, think about whether the content is helpful and useful for the audience you are sharing with and whether the information is complete, concise and easy to consume and understand.

## 2. Personal and responsible

Angular was born because a few people thought that it was a good idea. It didn't come about because of a corporate mandate. So from its very early beginnings everything we did was very personal and even the presentations and public messaging reflected that (take a look at all thousands of emails that we posted on the angular mailing list in the early days).

As Angular grows, we are increasingly perceived as "a big Google project" by people who are just discovering the project. Because of this assumption, we want to take extra care to highlight the individuals who contribute their time, ideas and code to make Angular what it is today. For this reason, when we post or announce something from an official Angular account, we should try to always make the post personal and connected to the individual.

For example, If Julie has a new Protractor release, she'll post about it from her personal account first, and we'll reshare it from the official Angular account. That way people learning about the project also find out about the individual developers behind the work. We also include lists of contributors in our release announcements, as a thank-you to the community members who contributed their work and PRs.

While keeping things personal will help us keep Angular personal, it doesn't relieve us of the responsibility for our communication. Everything every one of us says, can and will be mistakenly perceived by some as "Google said …". We need to be aware of this and take it into consideration when speaking.

## 3. Positive or constructive

As a community, we’re all working toward a common goal of a better web, with diverse approaches and ideas on how to get there. It's easy to say "I hate it!", it's much harder to say "I would like it more if …".

Avoid FUD, unfounded criticism or plain attacks, and instead provide constructive feedback that can help to improve the state of things.

If you see something you like, giving praise or thanks is always a good idea.

## 4. Open. Honest. Humble. No fakes. No rumors.

Angular is an open source project. There is very little we consider a secret (the only exceptions are personal matters, other projects at Google, especially the unreleased or internal ones, projects of our partners and external companies that use Angular.) Be open and honest, but be careful about setting wrong/unrealistic expectations.

Be humble. Bragging or self-advertising usually does more harm than good. Be proud of our achievements, but save your praise for others.

Be authentic. If you are nerdy, emotional, quirky, or funny that's ok, as long as you don't break the other principles in this doc. Don't fake stuff (people will find out sooner or later). Don't spread rumors or speculations.

## 5. Inclusive and empathetic

Excluding or targeting people because of any trait or belief is not cool. Don't do it.

We are often in situations where we don't agree with other people or when we communicate with people that are different from us. It doesn't matter whether they are on our team, in our community, random people posting on reddit or members of other projects that we interact with online or in person. Before you say anything, consult all the principles above, and imagine that you are them and look at the situation from their perspective. Only once you think you understand their point of view, respond. You'll be surprised how different your response will be.

We should also make an effort to enable people to make the right choice for their project, even if that means that they'll choose a solution other than ours.

# Common scenarios / FAQ

## Communicating on behalf of the team and often Google

In any communication on GitHub or elsewhere public, you communicate on behalf of the team. This is hard because you might not always know the right answer, the answer that we as a team decided on or sometimes, you might even disagree with the rest of the team. These guidelines were created to set the bar for communication and primarily serve as a guide for how to say things, not for what to say.

Nobody on the team, with the exception of Brad and Naomi, is authorized to speak on behalf of Google. Having said that, people often mistakenly take our personal opinions and twist our words into "Google said …". Keep this in mind, if needed, be explicit that the opinion is yours, and be prepared to still see misinterpretation of your words.

## How do we use +AngularJS, @AngularJS accounts or our blog?

The main Angular accounts have lots of followers, so they should be used respectfully and only for messages that highlight achievements (of community members or the core team), solicit feedback or share an important news. Do your best to avoid typos, double-reshares and meaningless noise.

Additionally, as we mentioned in the "[give credit where credit is due](#h.8nybdvybnp48)" section, we want to credit community members and core team members for their hard work, so rather than creating synthetic content via Angular accounts, we use these accounts to only reshare content created by real people.

The Angular blog should be used only for low frequency communication, usually announcements with archival value. These post should be posted under the name of the person who created the post (which should typically be the person who worked on the thing being announced).

## What's the relationship between Angular and Google?

Angular is an open source project. The core framework grew out of one Google product's need for a better way of writing code for the web. Today Angular and Angular Material are driven by a small team of Google employees and contributors. Google supports and funds this part of the project; our ultimate vision is for a framework that represents the needs of the broad community of large and small app developers.

In addition to core development work on Angular, there is a broader developer ecosystem that no one "owns". Conferences such as ng-conf and ng-europe and many many complementary projects were organized by and for the community and exist as part of the broader open source effort.

## Give credit where credit is due and avoid "I"

If someone does work, they should be credited for it. This applies generally to the core team, as well as the community, but also to internal vs public communication.

If a feature is conceived and implemented by someone on the team, it's only fair that they get to show it off, announce it, etc. The same applies to fixing difficult bugs, improving processes or organizing events.

However, at this point almost nothing in Angular happens in a vacuum. We brainstorm together, review each others code, build on top of old features or prior experiments. Because of this, it would not be fair for someone to claim full credit and therefore it's almost always to use "we" instead of "I".

When it comes to ideas or work that comes from the community we should not only highlight the work but also the person behind it.

In practical terms, if there is an announcement to be made on g+ or twitter, we should reshare the post from the person responsible or if that doesn't exist, reshare a post mentioning the person responsible. In release notes, we should include the names of people that contributed to the release.

## Communicating about JS and Dart

JavaScript developers usually don't care about Dart. Dart developers usually don't care about JavaScript. We support both JavaScript and Dart, but by creating a single-purpose communication that targets both sets of audiences, we can give the impression that we are force-feeding the developers or that we have some hidden agenda. That's not the case and to avoid misunderstanding it's better to tailor communication for these two groups.

In practice this means, having separate docs for JS and Dart. When speaking at JS conferences focus exclusively on the JS bits. When creating tools and build configuration take the two groups into accounts (e.g. don't force JS developers to install dart in order to build AngularJS). When explaining a concept or an API to Dart developers, use Dart lingo, conventions and idioms.

## Communicating about Polymer

We see Polymer and Angular as complementary technologies with different strengths and weaknesses. Polymer is awesome at getting the most out of web components in order to build reusable components, Angular is focused on building awesome applications that are pleasure to use and develop. Since Angular 2 can smoothly consume web components, Polymer components can be used in Angular apps.

If you are need a more in depth answer, then feel free to check out or point people to [this reddit answer](http://www.reddit.com/r/ngconf/comments/2xy59d/we_are_the_angular_team_ask_us_anything_this_week/cp4irbq).

## Communicating about dates, roadmap, features, partners, customers and other projects

In general, don't. If you have to, refer to public announcements, public presentations, and stuff that was agreed upon in team meetings.

Historically, we've had very poor track record in delivering stuff on pre-announced date because of being oversubscribed, priority changes due to customer feedback, and many other internal and external factors.

When you do need to talk about future looking stuff, always set the expectations that things might change whether it's date, scope, API, etc. That gives us the flexibility to do the right thing without breaking promises.

When it comes to talking about other projects, avoid comparisons and if you do not have anything good to say, then say nothing.

## What to do when something goes wrong?

On several occasions we've been under public pressure because of a misunderstanding or error on our part. We should do our best to avoid these situations, but be ready when things do go wrong. These are the steps that we found the most effective in the past to resolve these issues:

* acknowledge - respond to email, tweet, g+, or issue stating that you are core team member and you are looking into the issue. thanking people for bringing whatever it is to our attention usually helps to set the tone for further communication.
* bring it to the team's attention and decide on the owner - contact angular-dev chat and try to get hold of the person responsible for the area related to the problem. For anything semi-serious, either Igor, Misko, Naomi, or Brad should be made aware.
* analyze - analyze the issue, ideally start a doc with status info, in many cases we can share the doc publically later
* provide status - let the original reporter and in case of a bigger issue g+ and twitter followers know that we are working on resolving the issue. Optionally point to the doc created above
* take action (correct or explain) - if we screwed up, apologize and correct the issue or create a plan for correcting the issue. If things work as intended then explain.
* improve - in any case, we could have done better. Analyze what we should improve in the future. Write a post-mortem doc if necessary. Take actions and let the team and community know what they are.

Don't ignore anything that looks serious, or worse, fight back. Keeping cool and being polite usually helps to get the information you need to act faster and resolving the issue sooner.

## OMG, I posted something stupid on G+/Twitter/GitHub/MySpace

Well, at least you know that you did something wrong. Contact one of the leads (Igor, Brad, Pete, Misko, Naomi) to determine the next steps.

Keep in mind that you can't delete stuff from the Internet. So if you did post something wrong, don't just delete it without telling anybody.

## Things are not going the way I want, I'm upset, I want to…

Sometimes things don't go the way we want. Either because of factors under our control (focus, priorities, etc) or even more often because of factors outside of our control. Especially the second case is when a sense of entitlement kicks in (I did all this work, and I don't see the results, I'm entitled to the results!), which can easily blind us and could result in wrong decisions or actions being made. For this reason it is important to have a mindset that we are only entitled to the effort and not to the desired outcome.

If we reach the desired outcome and see it have the desired impact in the wild, then that's great. If we failed to reach the goal, there is still a lot to be learned from the failure and the expensed effort. Failing is ok, as long we recognize reasonably early that we need to change the course and we make every failure count for something great in the future.

## Responding to (public) feedback, misunderstanding

We welcome feedback! That's how we know if we did something right or if there are issues or places that we need to improve. This applies both to internal as well as public communication.

You do not have to personally make everything right on the Internet. Sometimes it's ok to let things work themselves out, or let people figure out in their own time why they were wrong, or that we understand the problem and we are fixing it. Think about where you want to spend your energy. A solid pull request to fix the bug is worth more than a thousand tweets about the issue.

## Responding to provocations, misguided criticism, outrageous claims, outright lies

Don't.

If you think it really needs to be addressed, raise it with one of the leads (Igor, Misko, Naomi, Pete, Brad).

## Someone is being mean/arrogant/insulting to me or another member of the community, what should I do?

We adopted the [Code of Conduct](https://github.com/angular/code-of-conduct/blob/master/CODE_OF_CONDUCT.md) exactly for this situation and we require that anyone who wants to participate in our community must abide by it.

If someone is violating the code, politely but firmly explain to them that their behavior is unacceptable and point them to the Code of Conduct document. If that doesn't help escalate the issue to project leads (Naomi, Brad, Pete, Igor, Misko) and they'll determine further actions.

We need to be especially vigilant about attacks on other community members because such experience can be very off-putting or result in impression that such behavior is acceptable and result in spreading the behavior further.

Example message:

<username>, your <comment/email/post> is in violation of our [code of conduct|<https://github.com/angular/code-of-conduct/blob/master/CODE_OF_CONDUCT.md>] <if appropriate, add: and will be deleted>. If you can't keep your communication within the boundaries described in the code of conduct document, we ask you to not participate in further discussion here. We invite you to participate again, once you are ready to communicate constructively and respectfully. Thank you for your understanding.

## Expressing disagreement or dissent

In the early days, Misko and Igor had some epic fights over the details that became Angular 1.0. We learned a lot from those battles: our different mindsets brought a diversity of ideas to Angular and each idea had to stand on its merits rather than the originator's tenure or status. But fighting isn't a lot of fun. We also missed some opportunities to improve Angular, because it can be hard for others with ideas to wade into a fight. We learned the hard way that it's best to raise issues early, especially about contentious topics, and to set some boundaries on how to discuss constructively.

Voicing concerns on any topic is not a privilege of some, but a responsibility of all. Whether it's API, process, presentation content, strategy or roadmap. It's important that we all understand what we are doing and even more important why we are doing it. This helps us be one team and execute well on a shared vision.

The only hard rules for expressing disagreement or dissent are:

* no personal attacks
* focus on merits
* consider other views (be empathetic, assume good intentions)
* provide evidence that supports your argument
* don't just disagree, suggest alternatives or use cases to help clarify the problem

If you have anything on your mind, try to resolve it 1:1, if that doesn't work, put it on the agenda for the team meeting and be prepared to present the case.

In most situations it is better to keep this stuff within the team because outsiders might lack the context of the discussion and misinterpret your words. If you go public, provide full context.

**Resolving conflicts within the team**

We are a large group of people. In any diverse group of people with opinions, conflicts, whether intentional or unintentional, are bound to happen. When you see or hear something you don't like, speak out. "Not cool" is the code word to use in such situation. The offender should take it as a cue to retrospect what happened and take an action.

Talking about problems early helps to build good relationships. If you don't speak out, people might not know that they might be doing something wrong. Once they know, they can either explain or correct it.

If you are not comfortable speaking out, please talk to one of the leads (Naomi, Misko, Igor, Pete, Brad).

## What to do when these guidelines are being broken?

We need to hold each other accountable. If you see these rules being broken speak out. Let the offender know, if that wasn't enough, let the rest of the team know.