How to do HumanOps

DevOpsDays Amsterdam June 2017

David Mytton, CEO, Server Density

server **density**

HumanOps

1. Humans build and fix systems

@davidmytton

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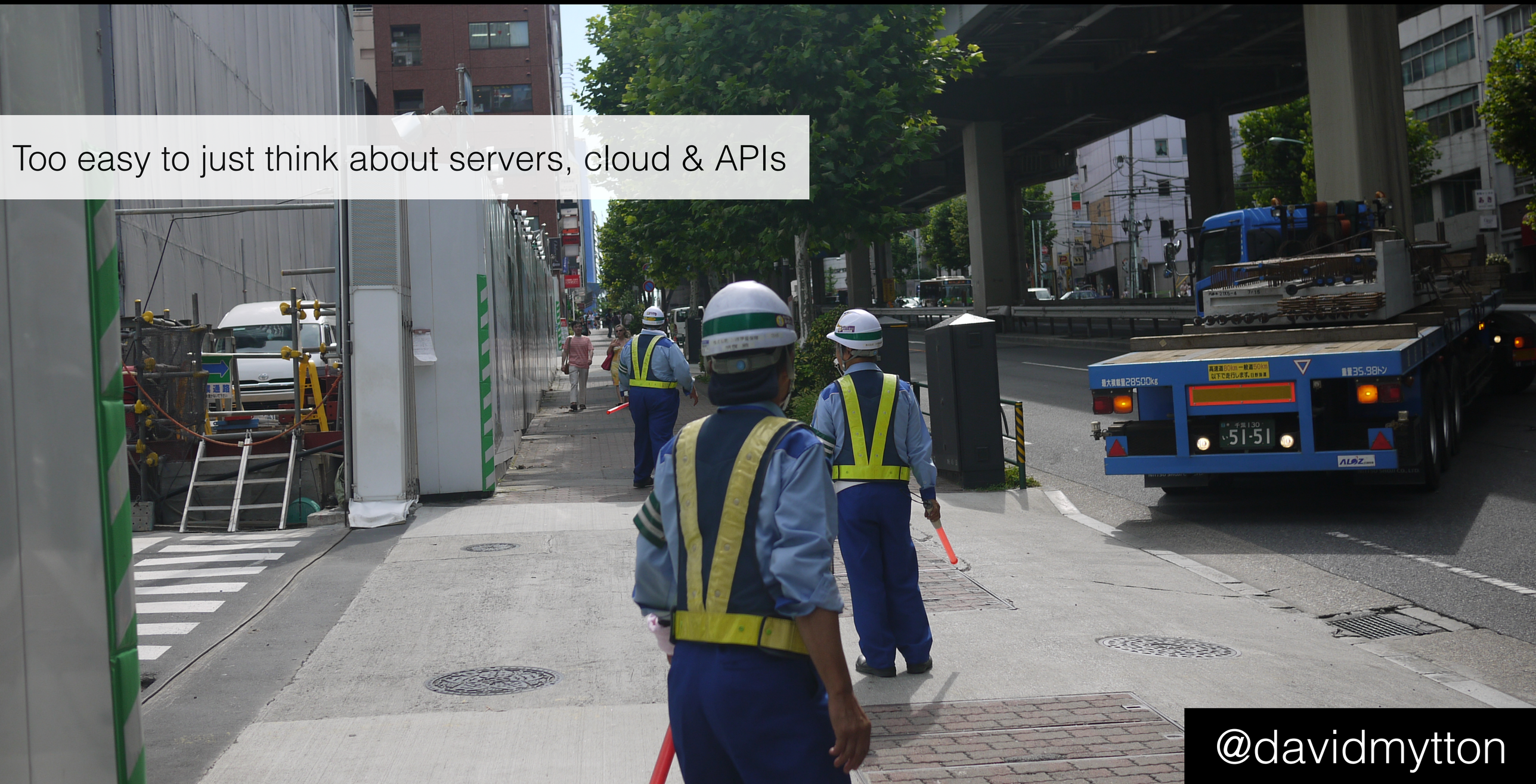

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Too easy to just think about servers, cloud & APIs

Running operations necessarily involves humans

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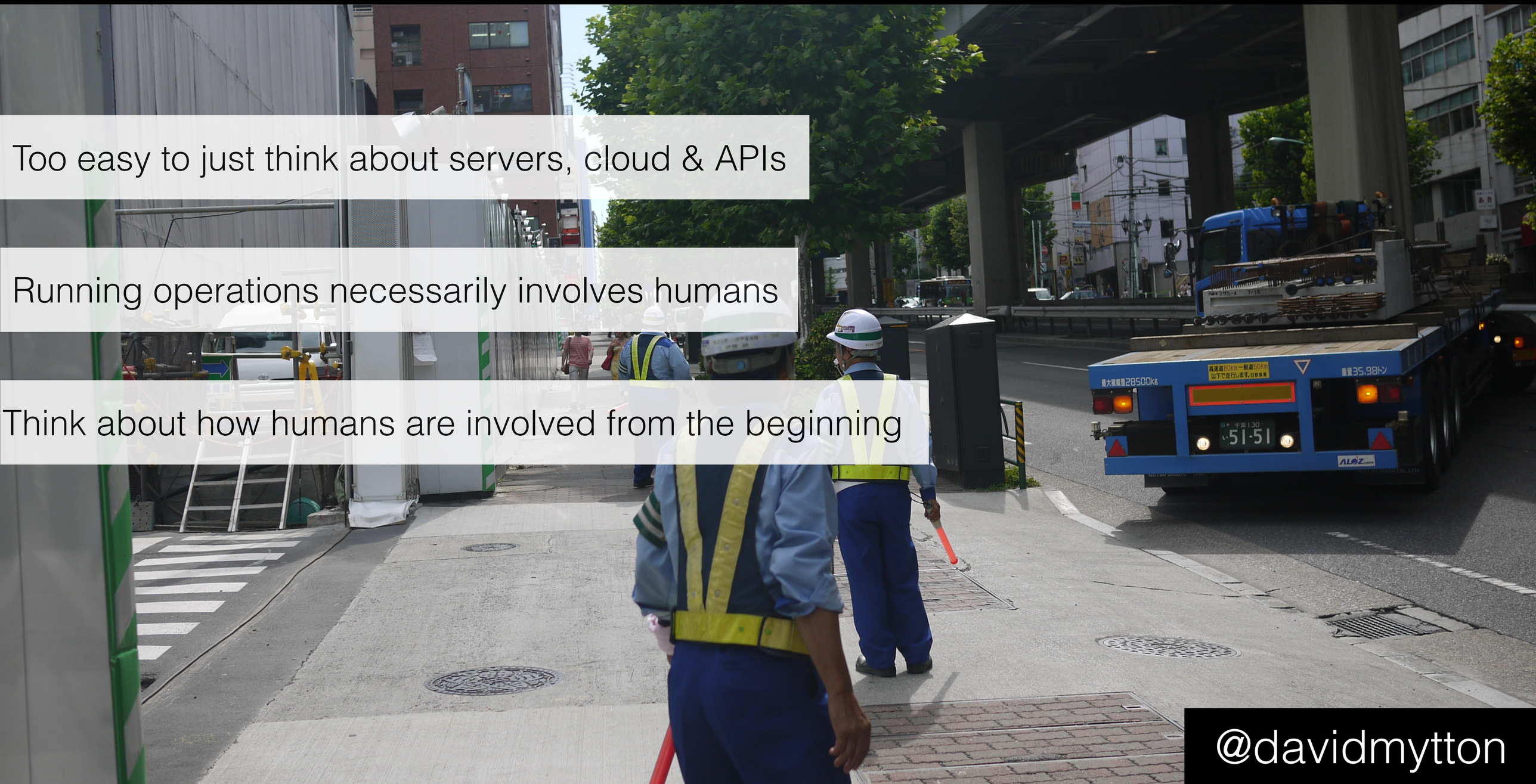

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Think about how humans are involved from the beginning

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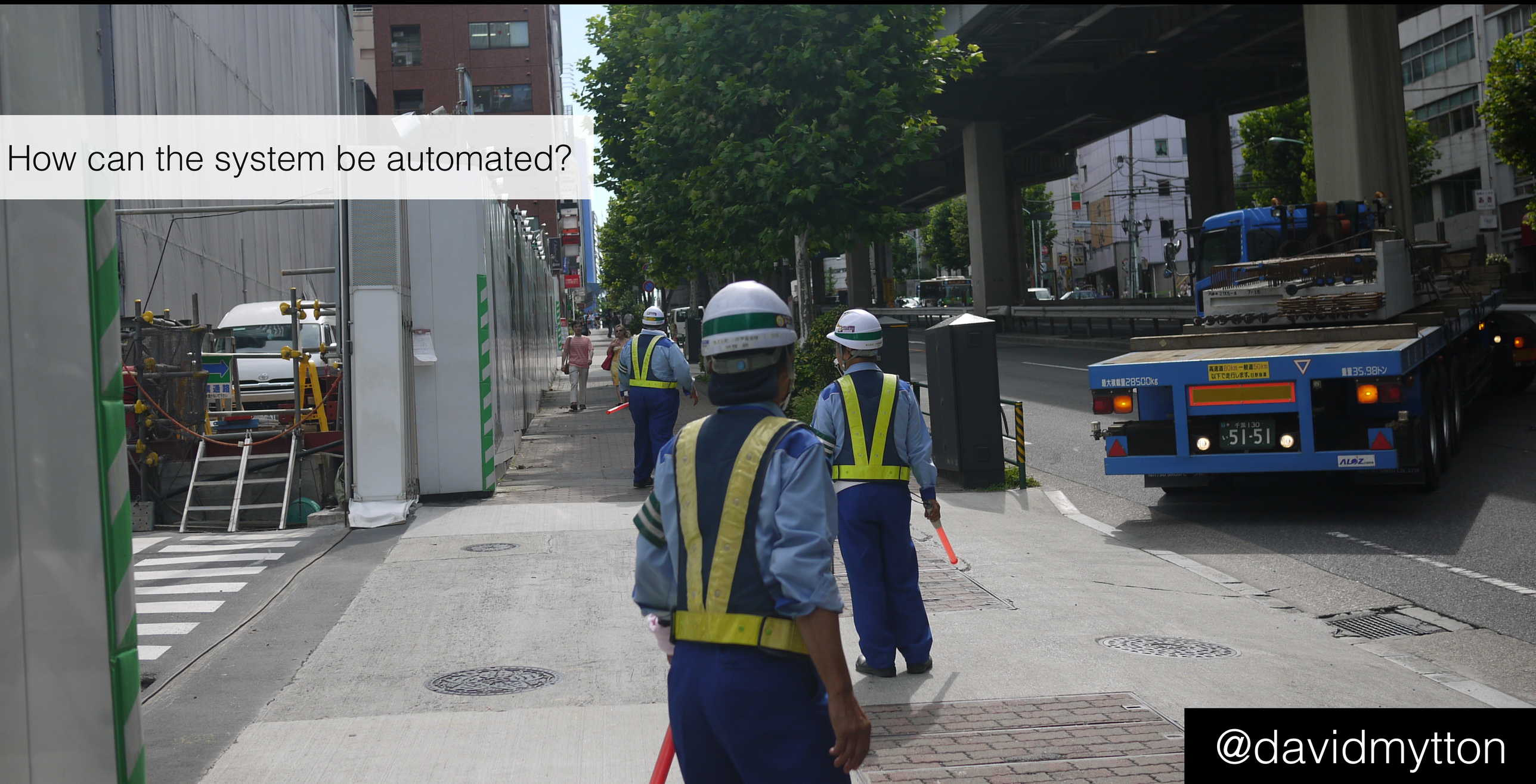

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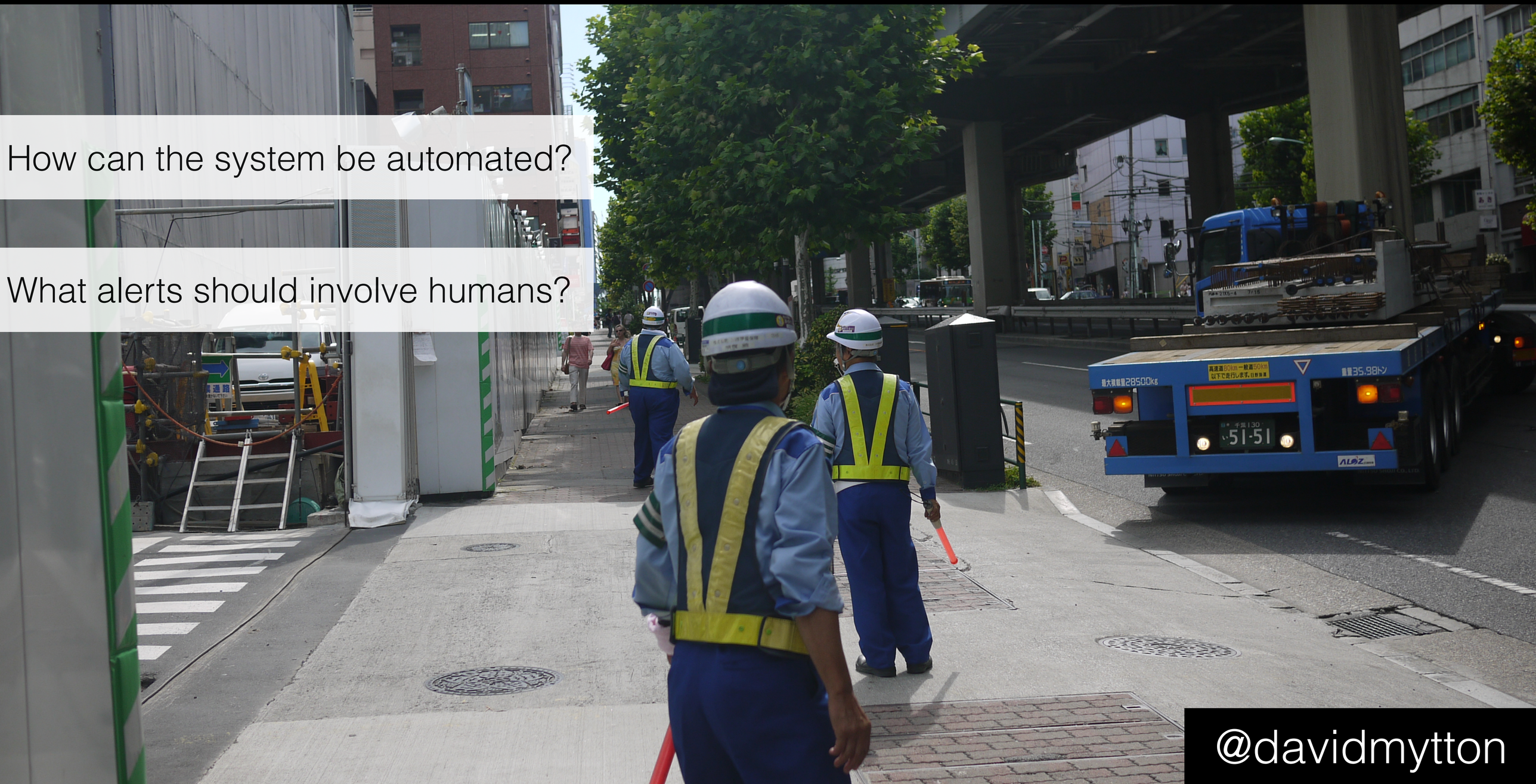

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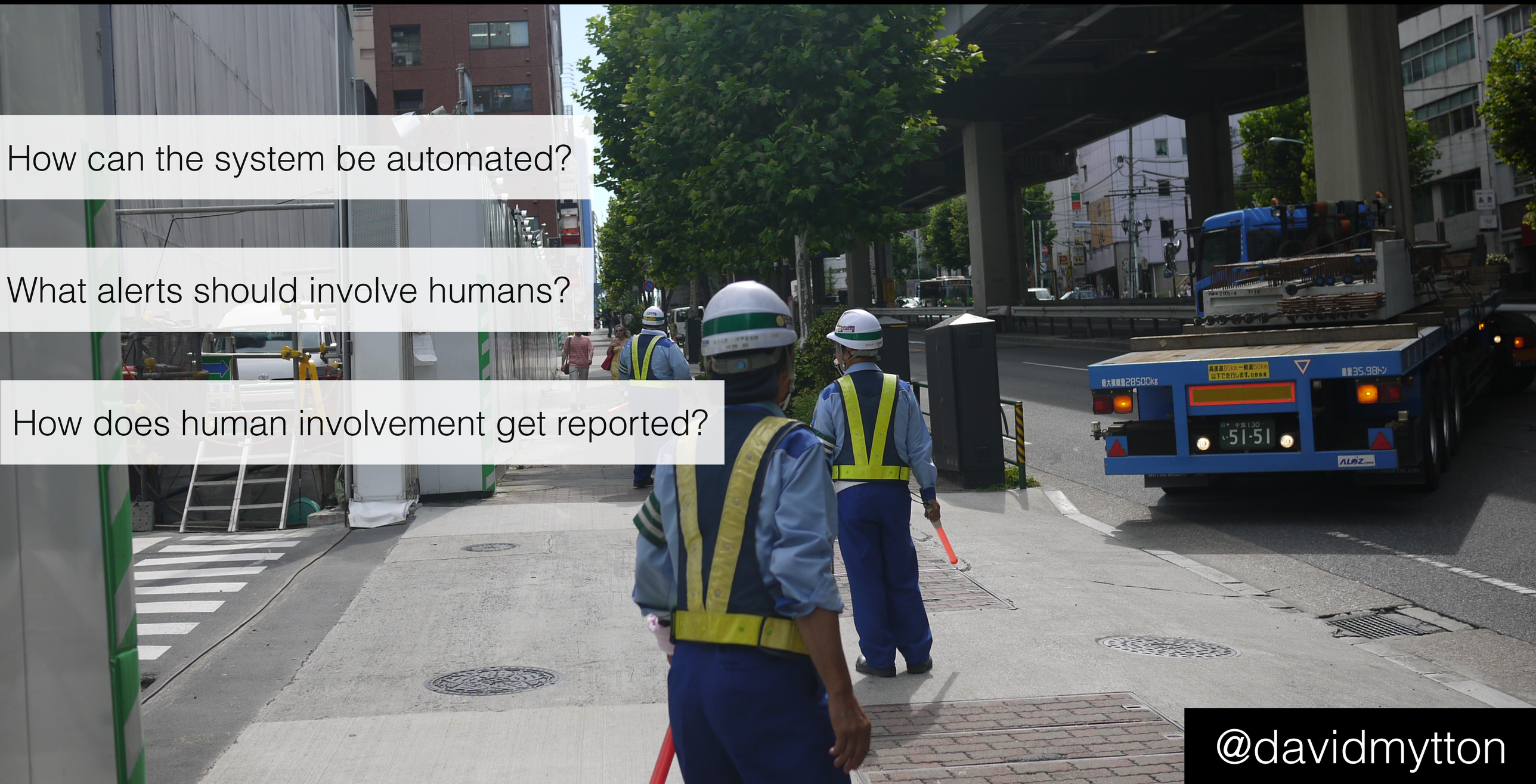

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Machines reliably execute tasks without getting tired

The same approach cannot be applied to humans

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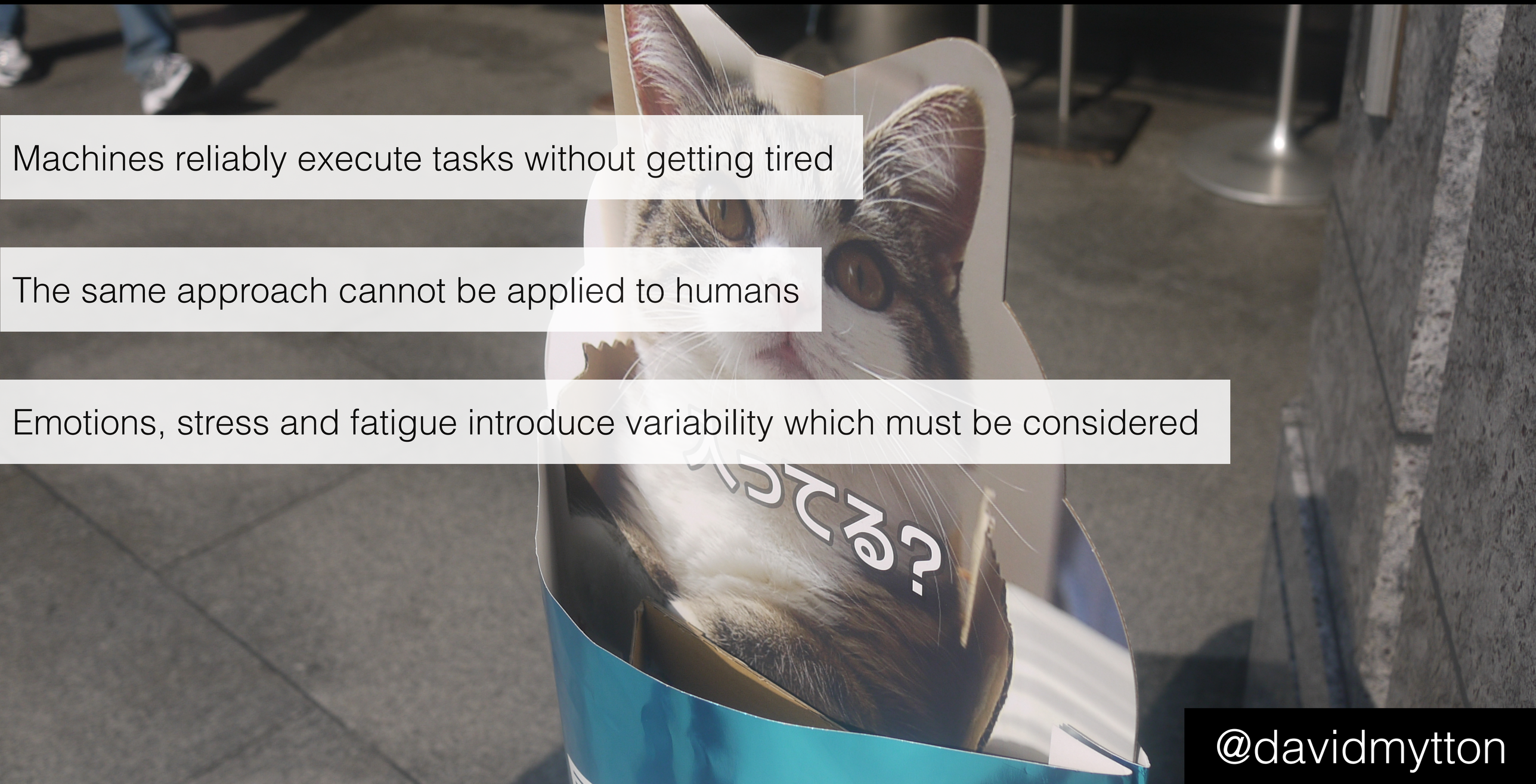

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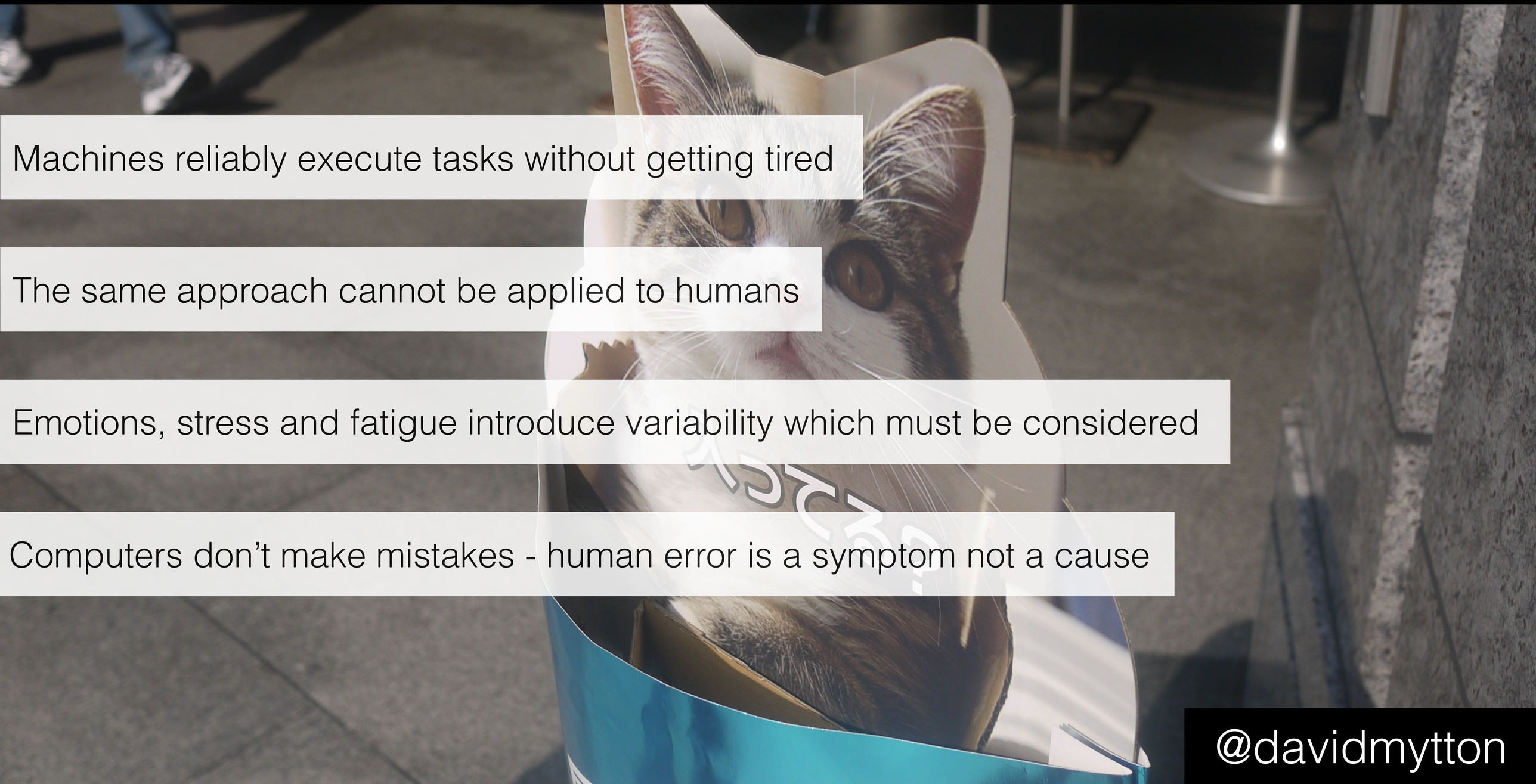

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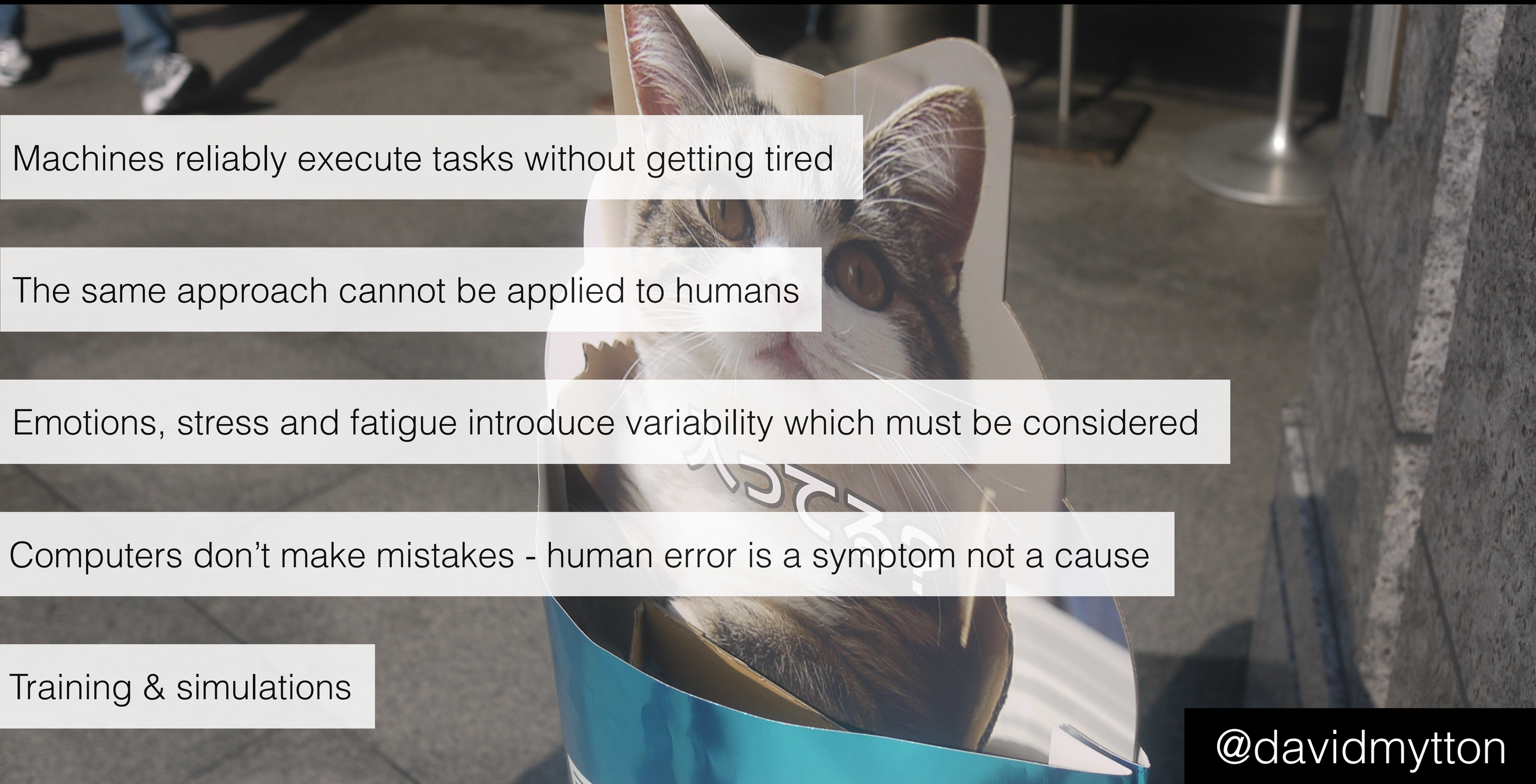

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Training & simulations

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SLAs are a standard way to define expectations

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SLAs are a standard way to define expectations

Use SLAs to determine if systems are operating normally

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4. Humans need to switch off and on again

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Computers can run constantly for a long time

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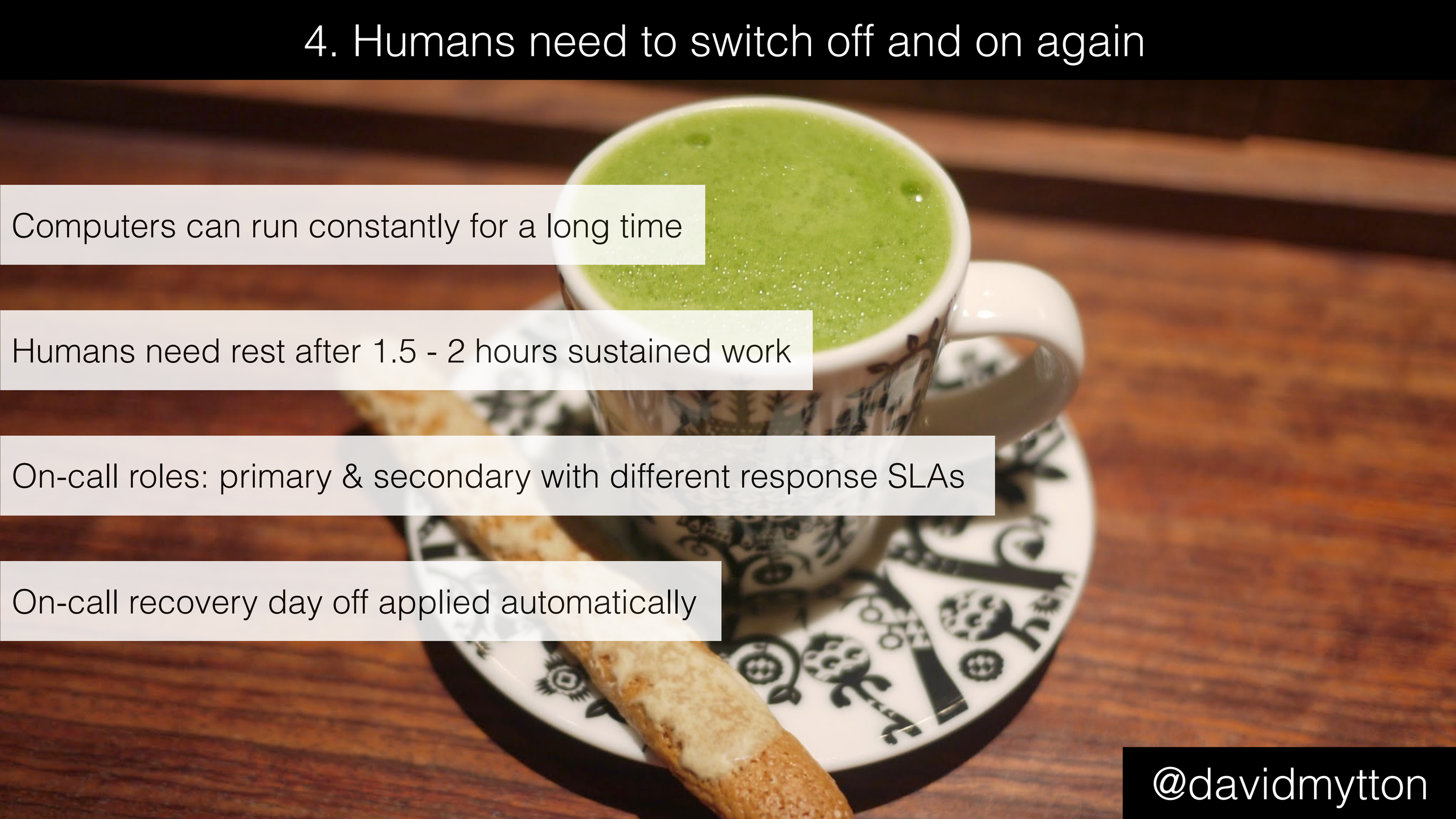

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On-call roles: primary & secondary with different response SLAs

On-call recovery day off applied automatically

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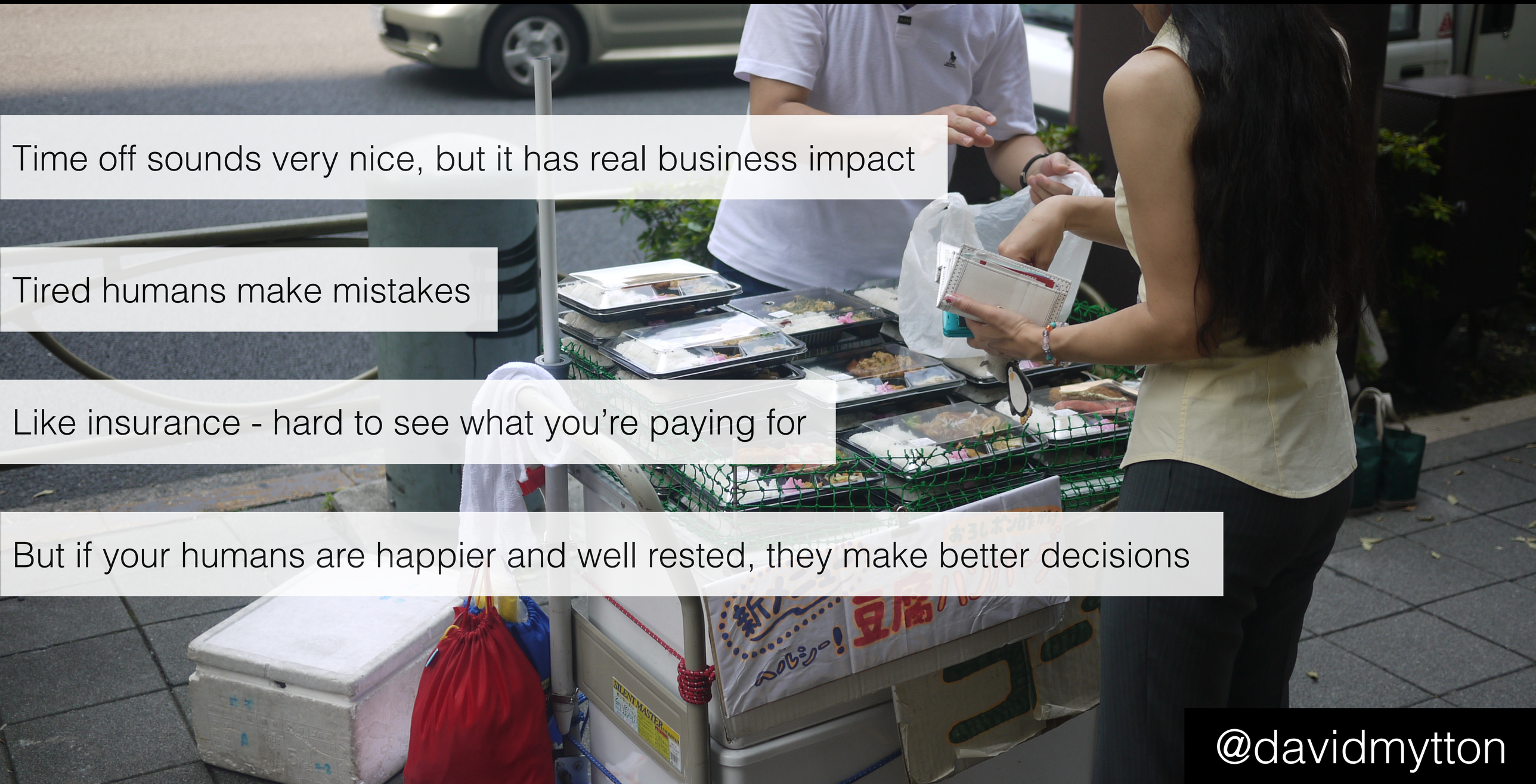

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But if your humans are happier and well rested, they make better decisions

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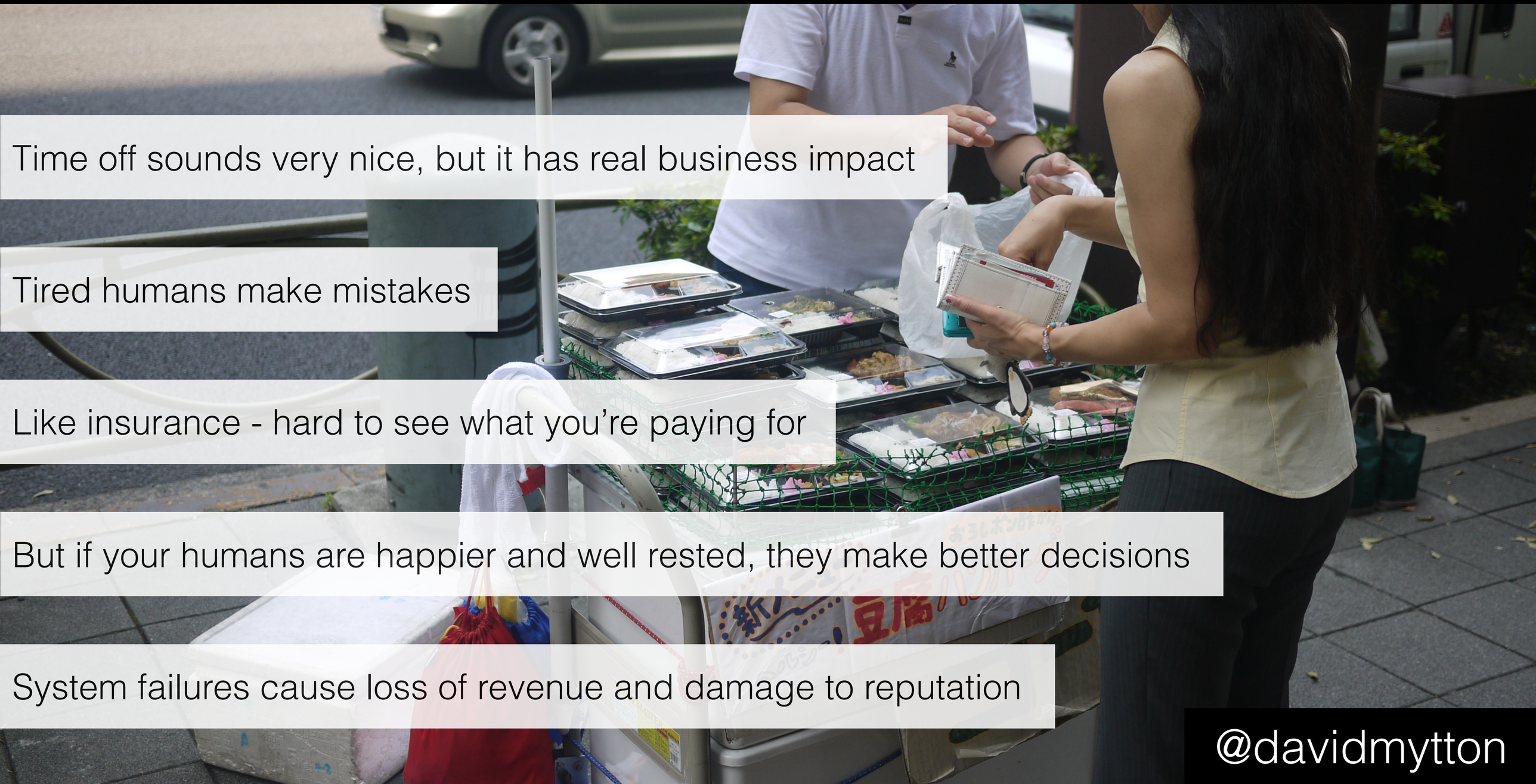

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Too many alerts = alert fatigue

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UK Health & Safety Executive: Rule based mistake

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Alerts must be actionable

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7. Automate. Escalate to a human as a last resort

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Alerts should only reach a human when the system can’t fix itself

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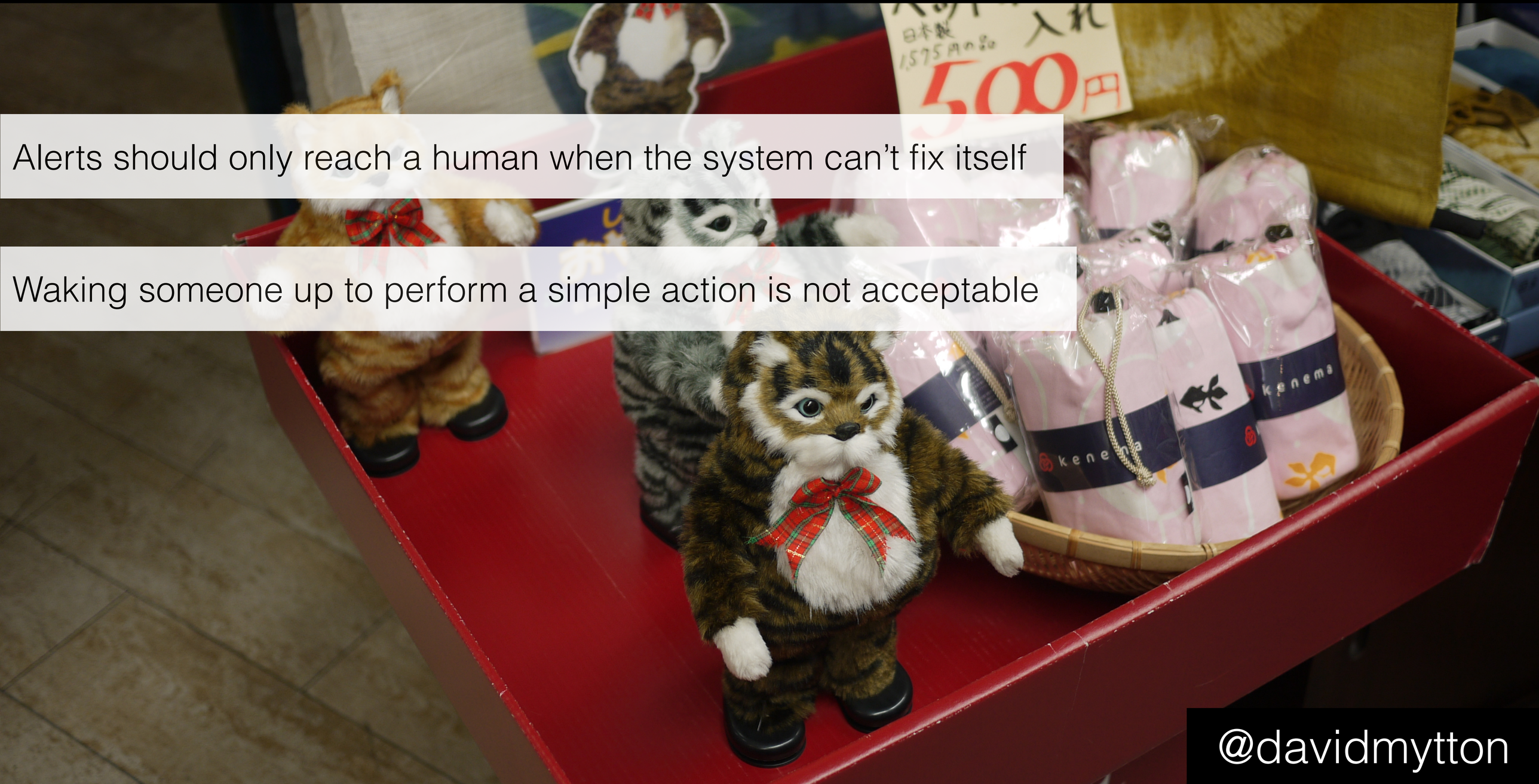

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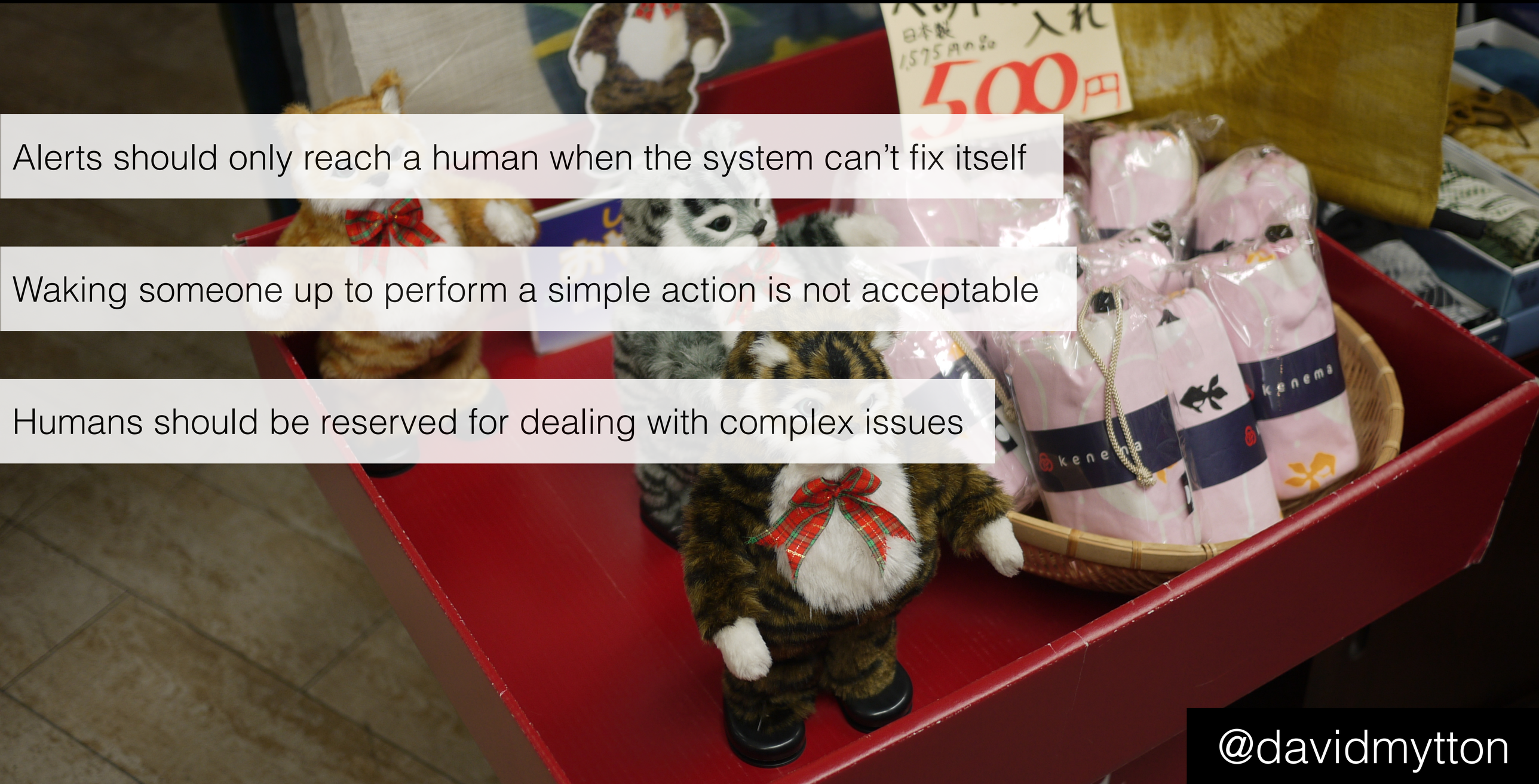

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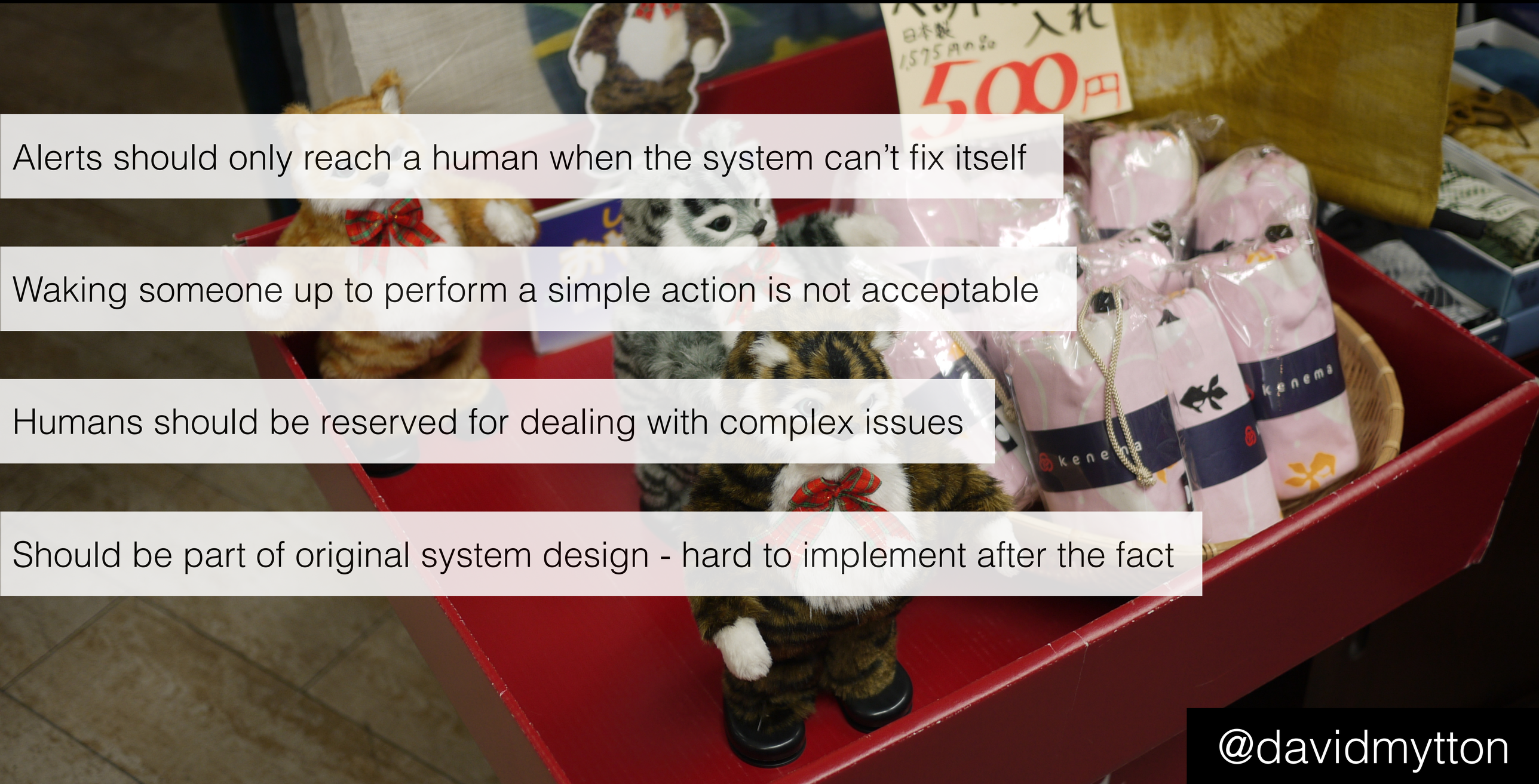

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Waking someone up to perform a simple action is not acceptable

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Should be part of original system design - hard to implement after the fact

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Checklists & runbooks are crucial

Training and simulations will reveal flaws

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Up to date documentation, easily searchable

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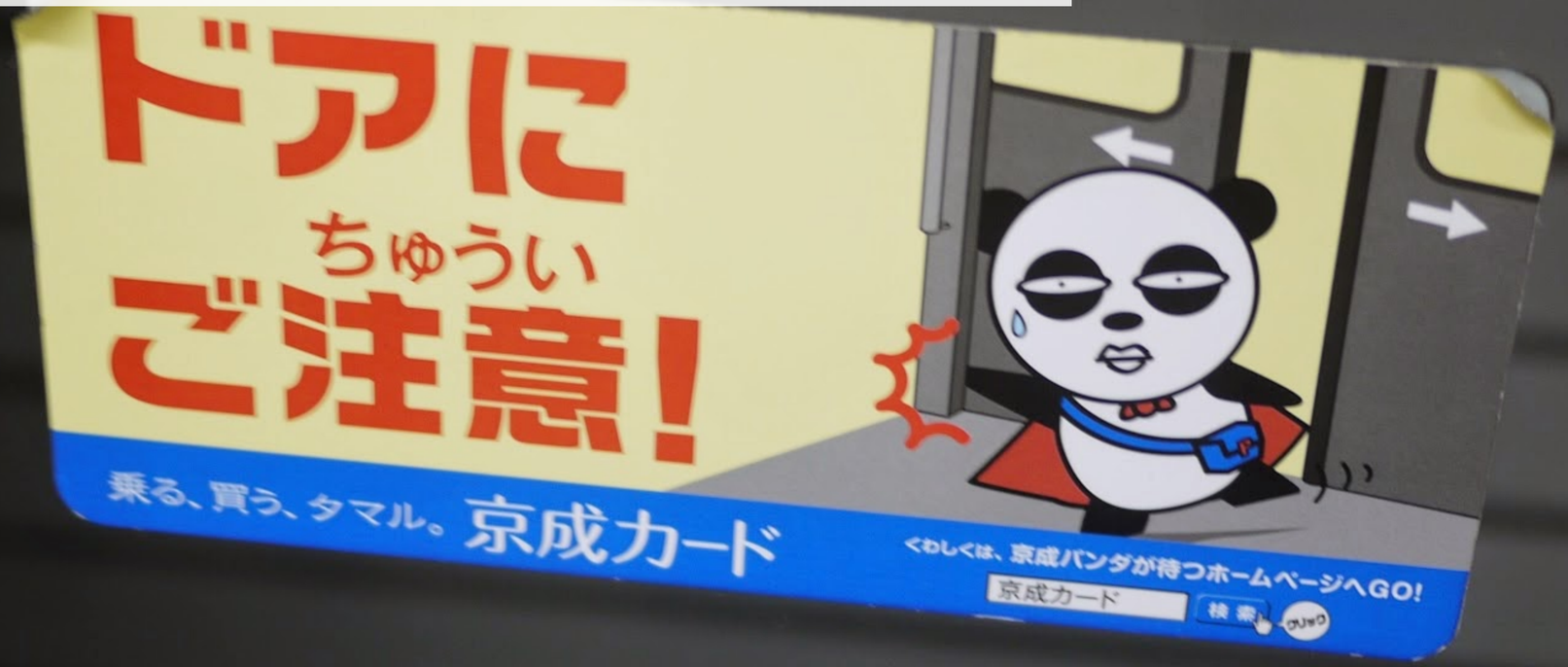
Nobody is perfect. Everyone breaks production at least once!



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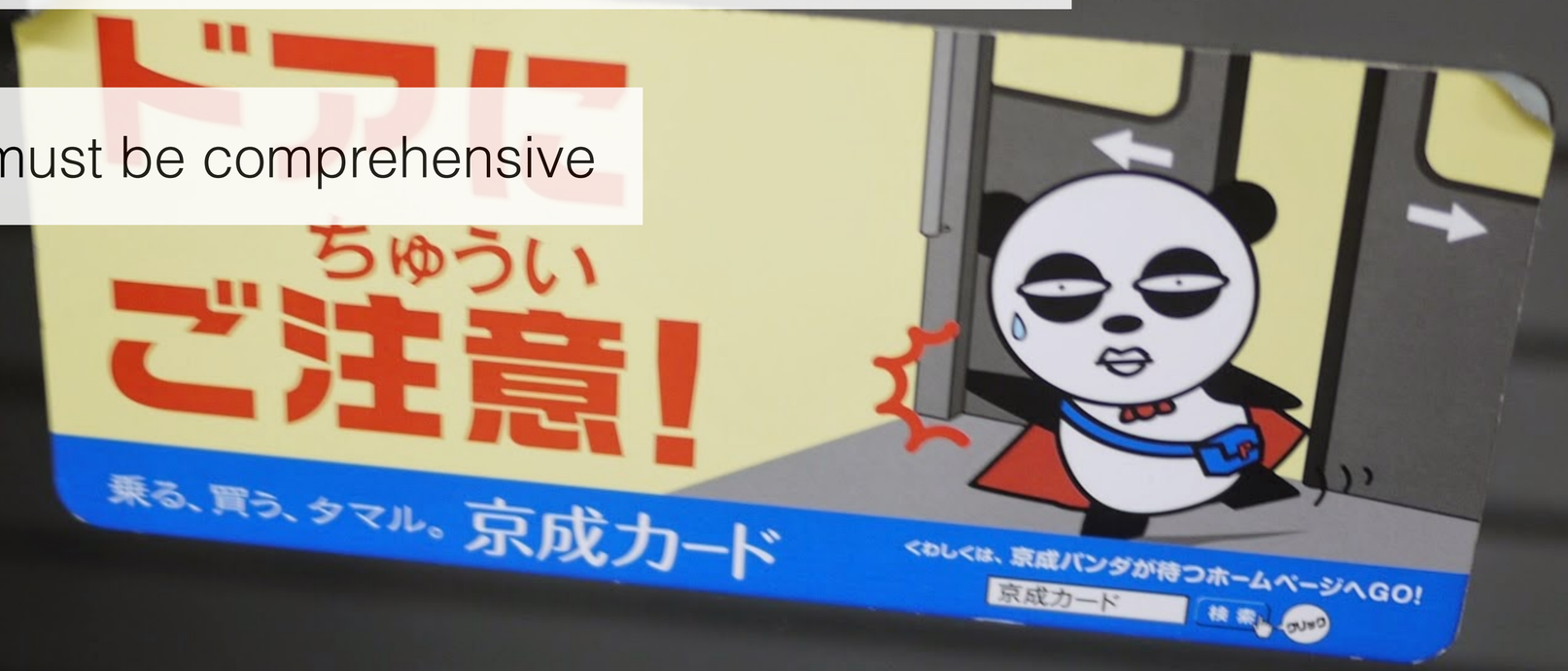

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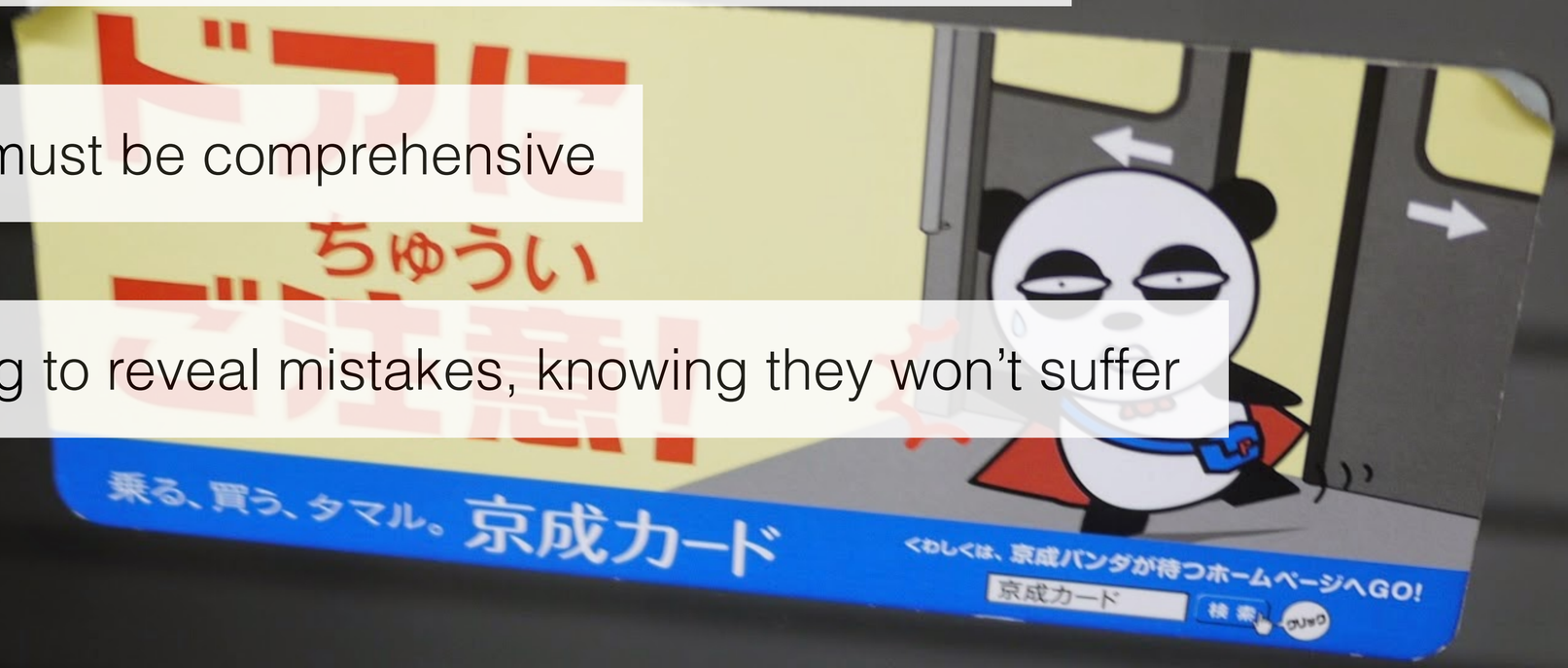

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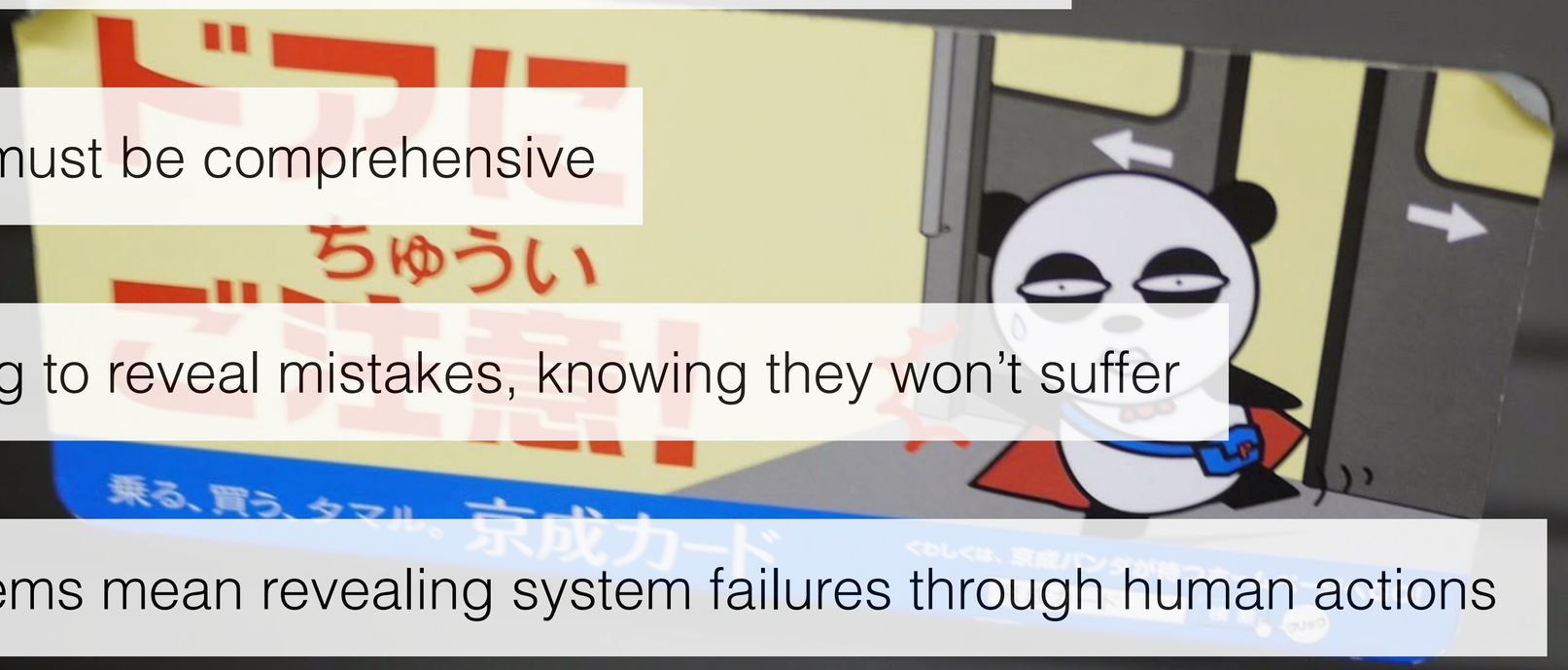
Blameless post-mortems mean revealing system failures through human actions



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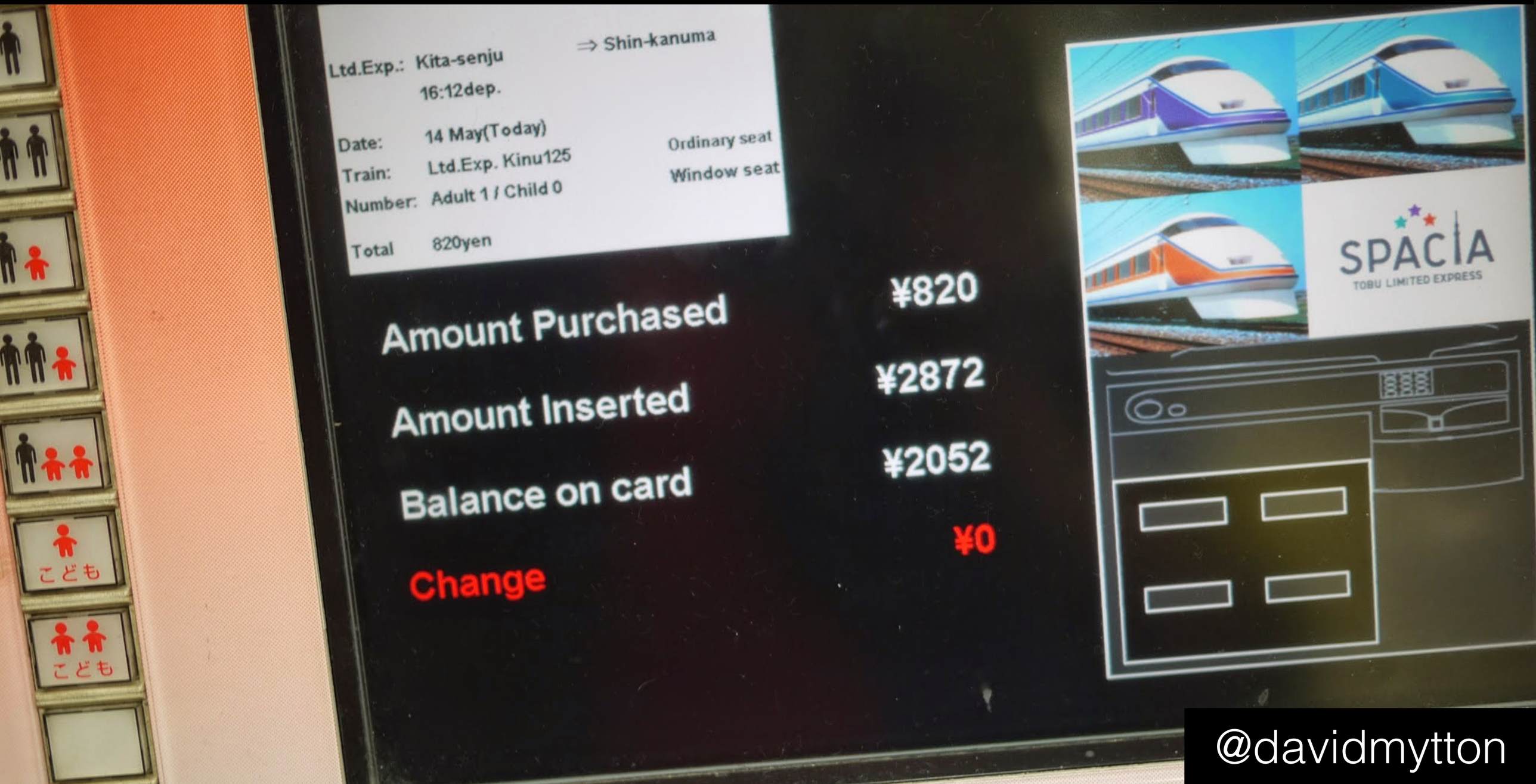

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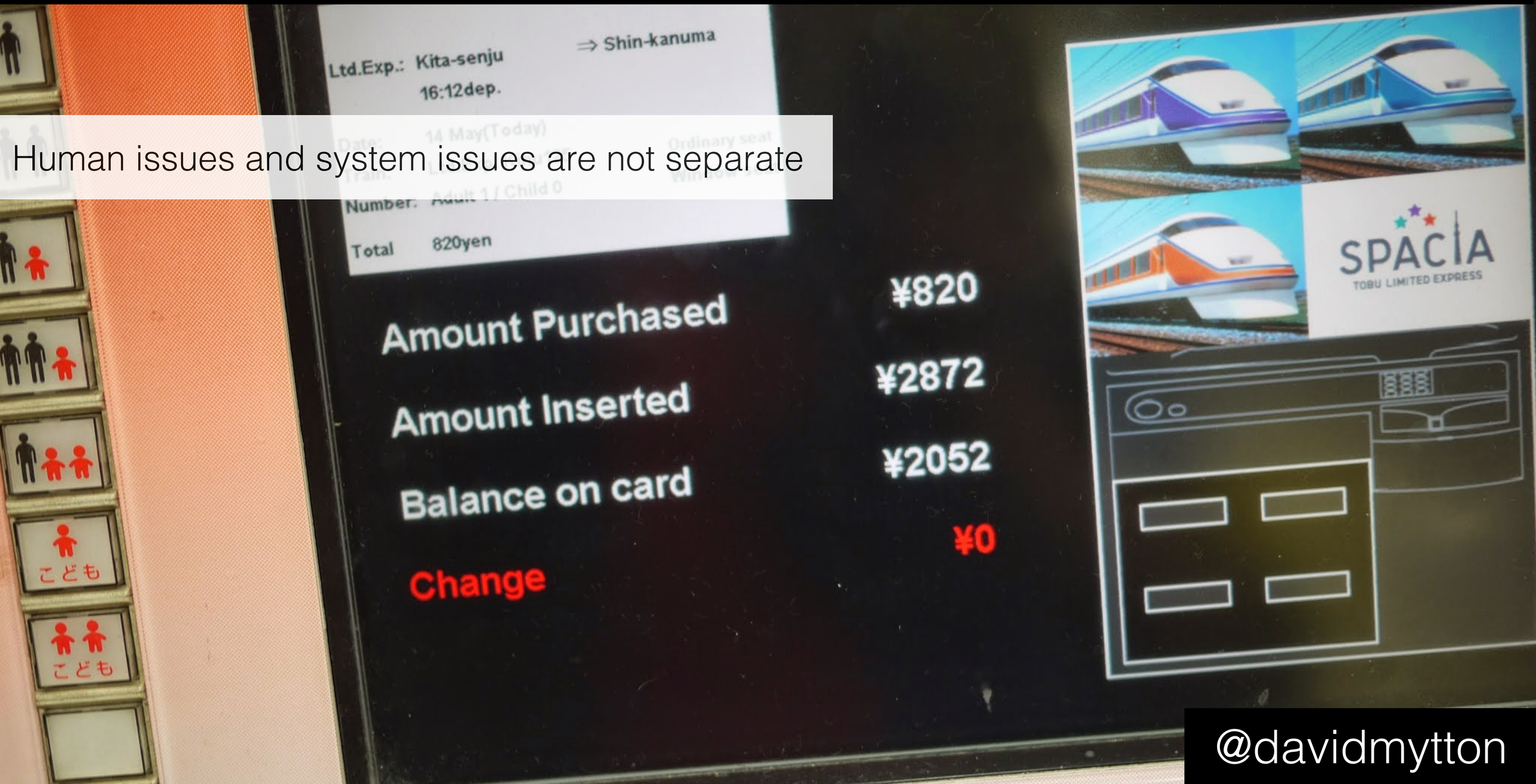

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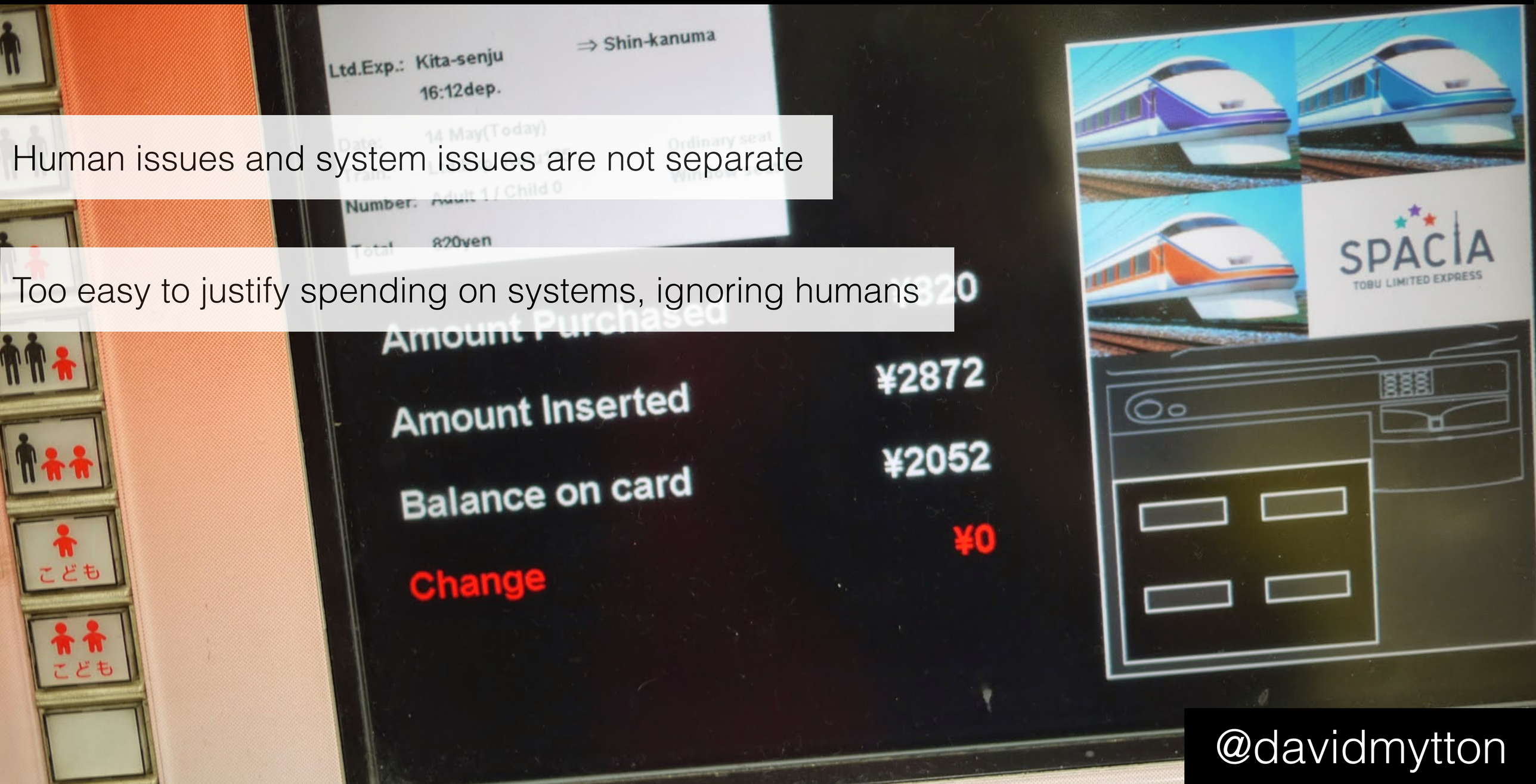

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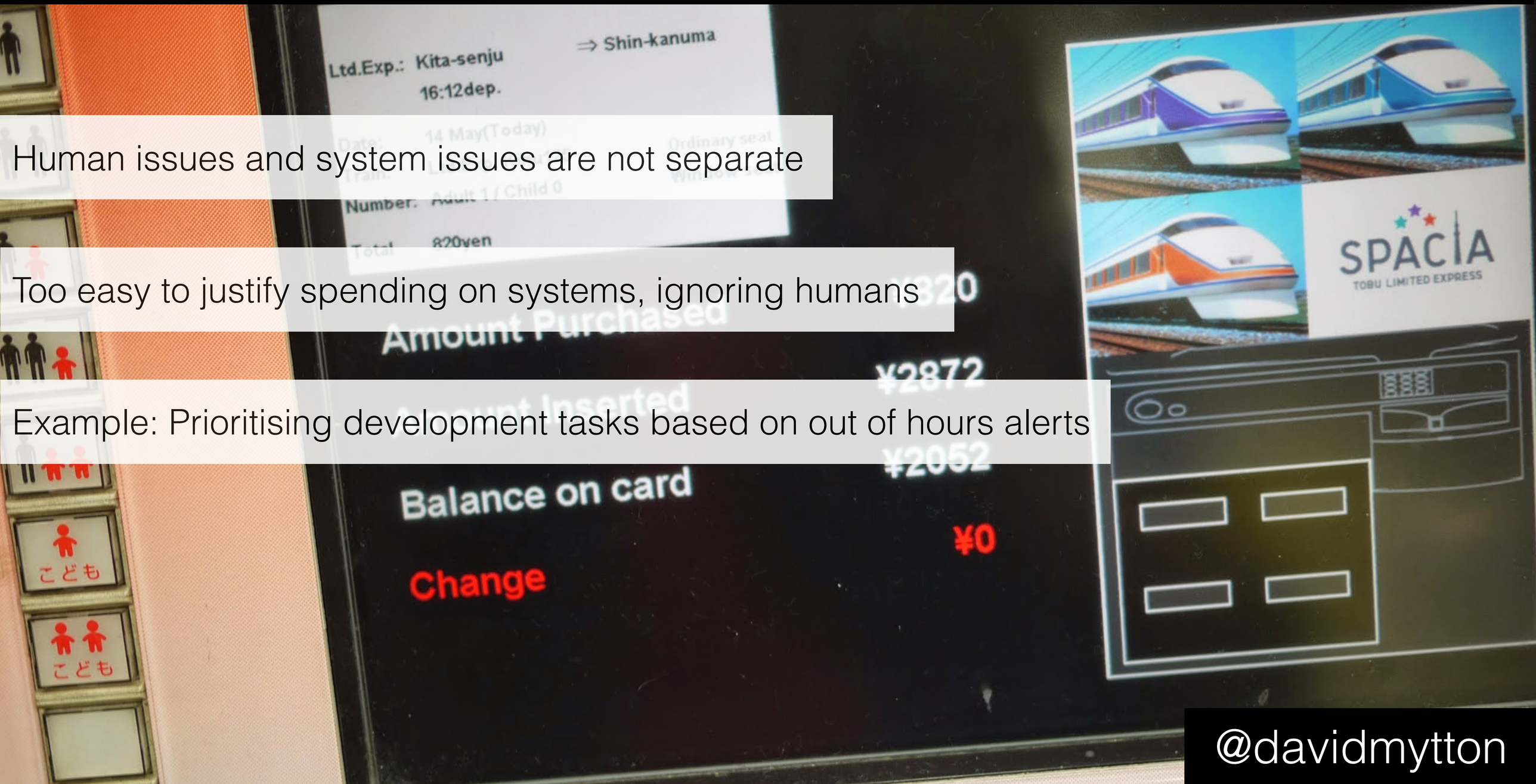

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Example: Prioritising development tasks based on out of hours alerts

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Human health is directly related to business health

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How long could your business run without people?

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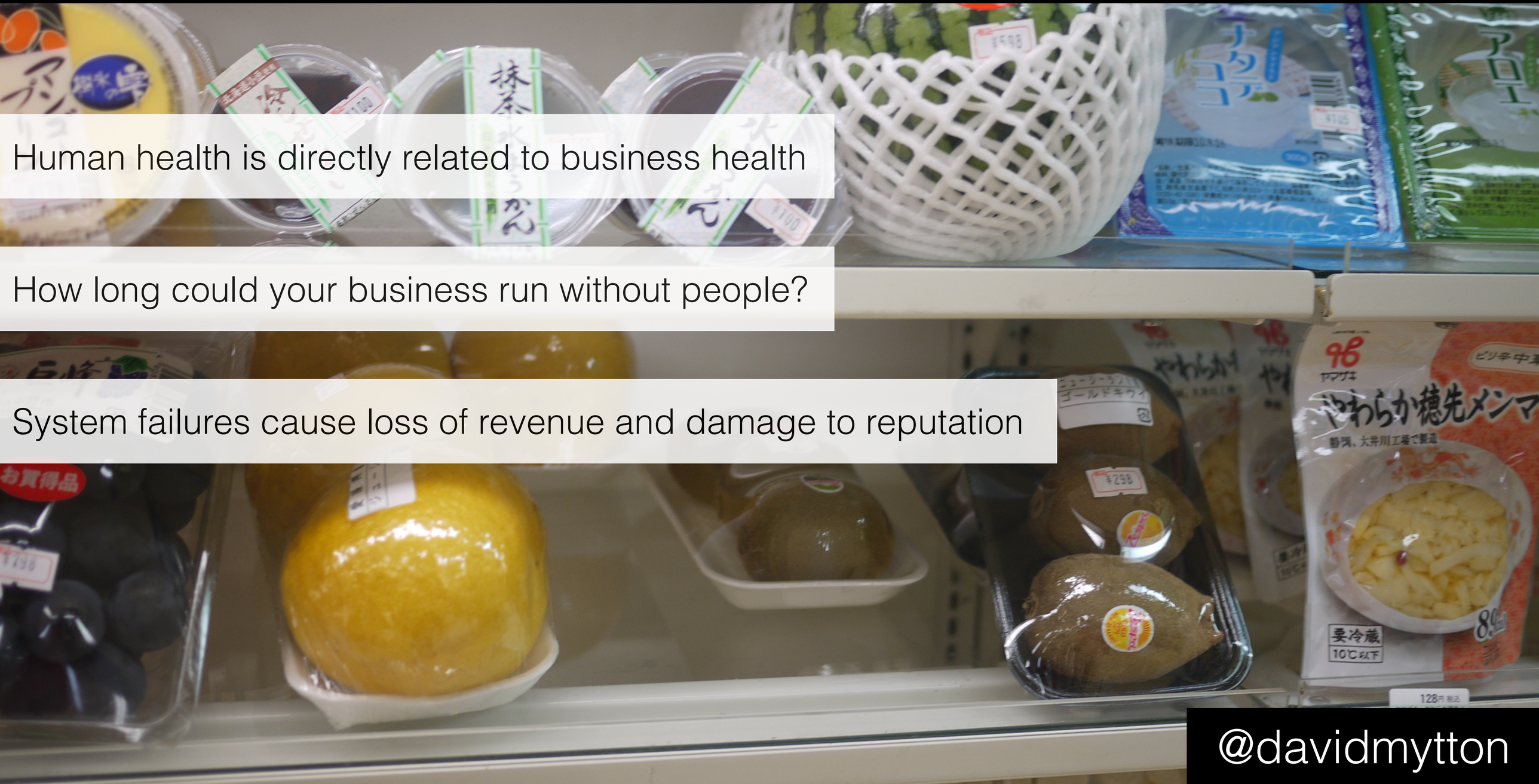

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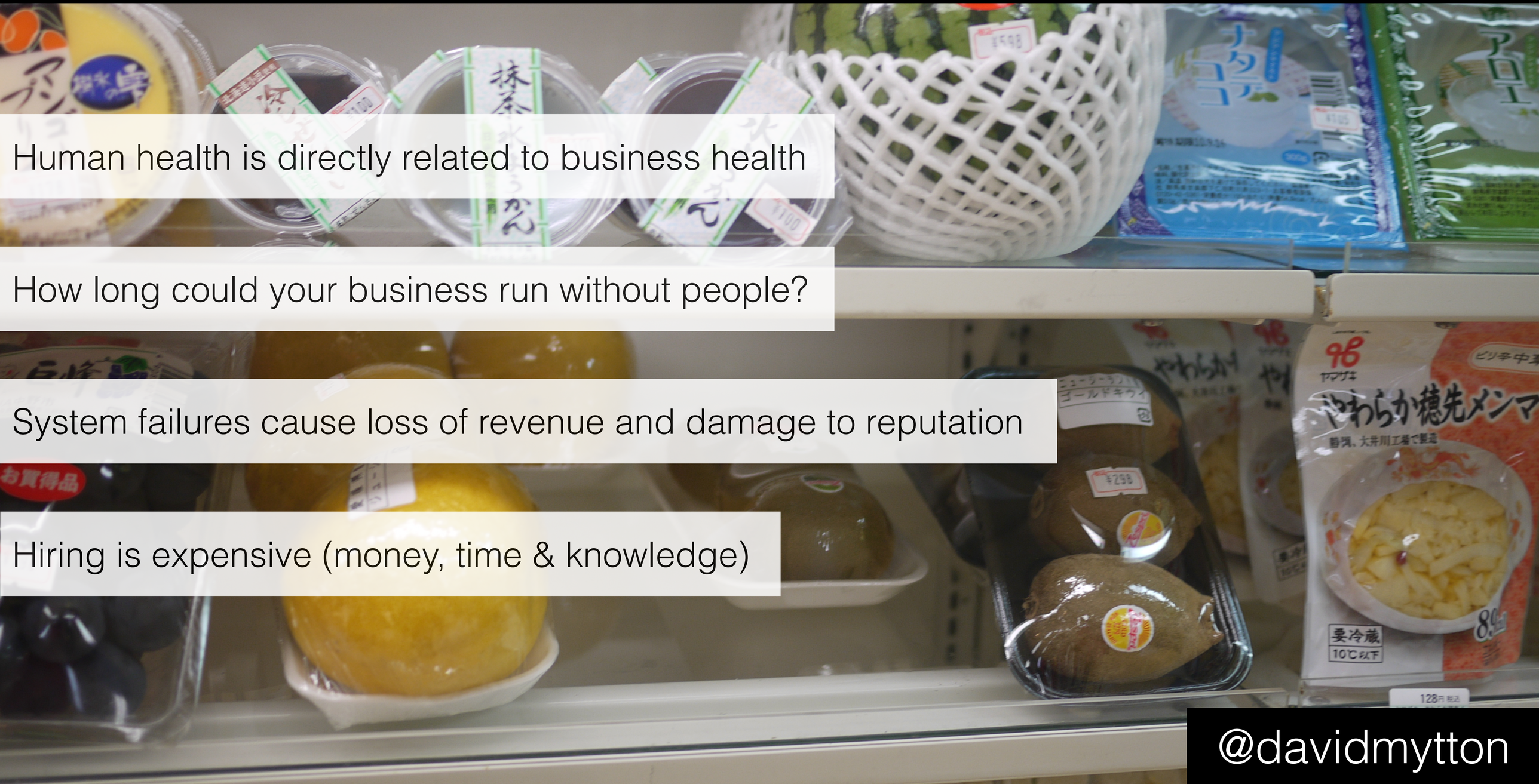

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Looking after your team is just good business

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Humans & systems are the same in terms of level of impact

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But why do we run businesses?

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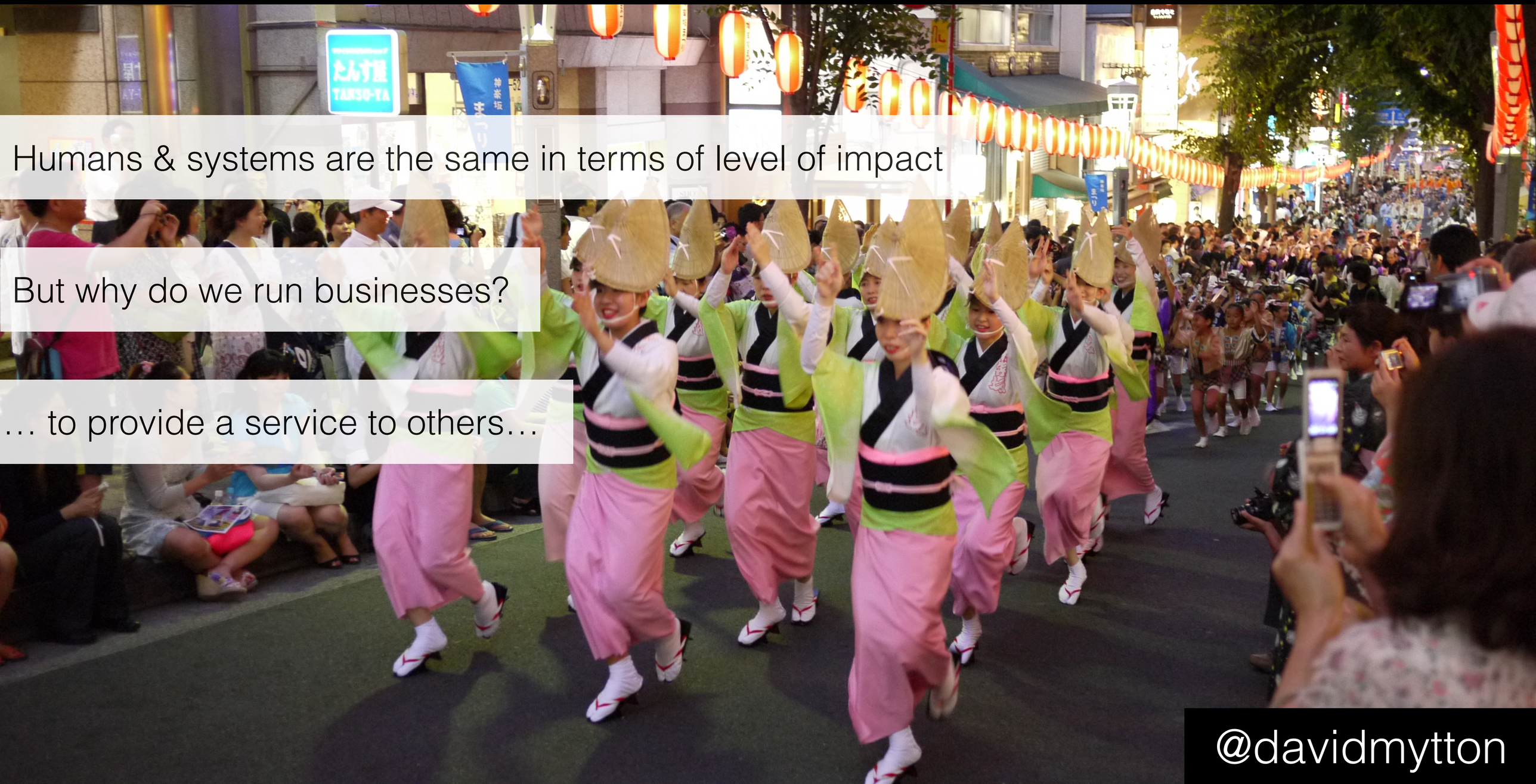

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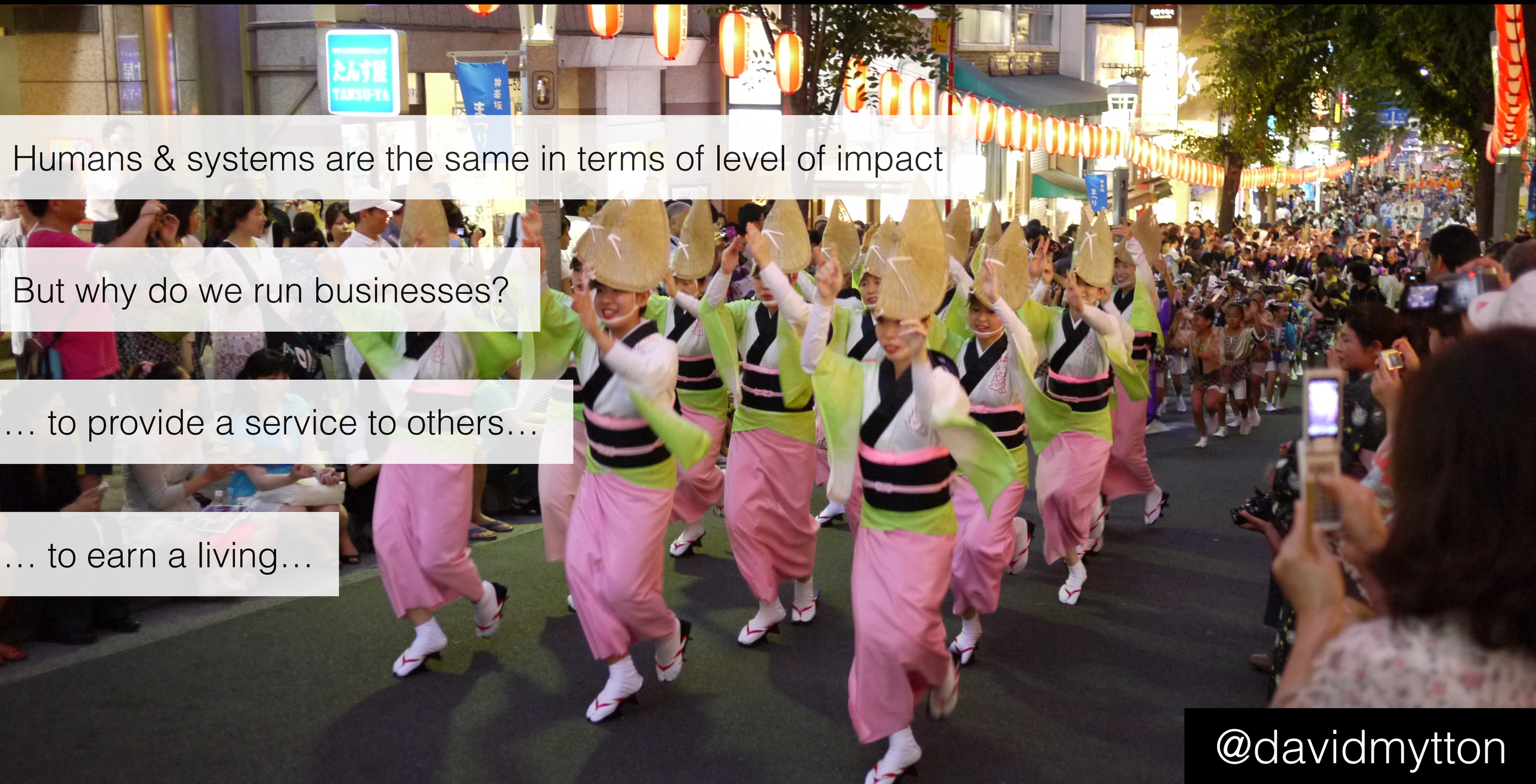

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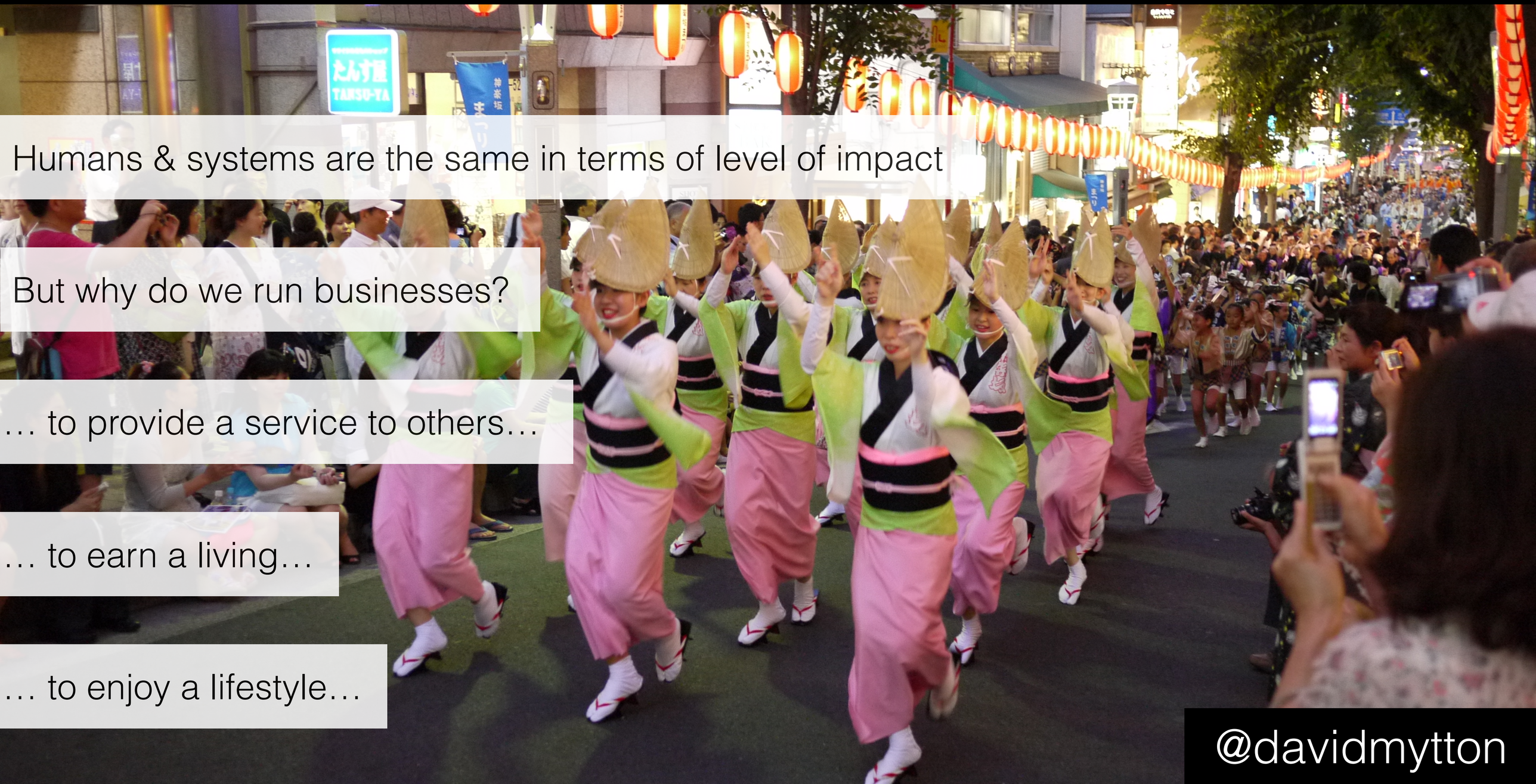

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… to provide a service to others…

… to earn a living…

… to enjoy a lifestyle…

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Improving life for your team is easy to justify - hiring & retaining

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Poor working environment, being woken up, blame…

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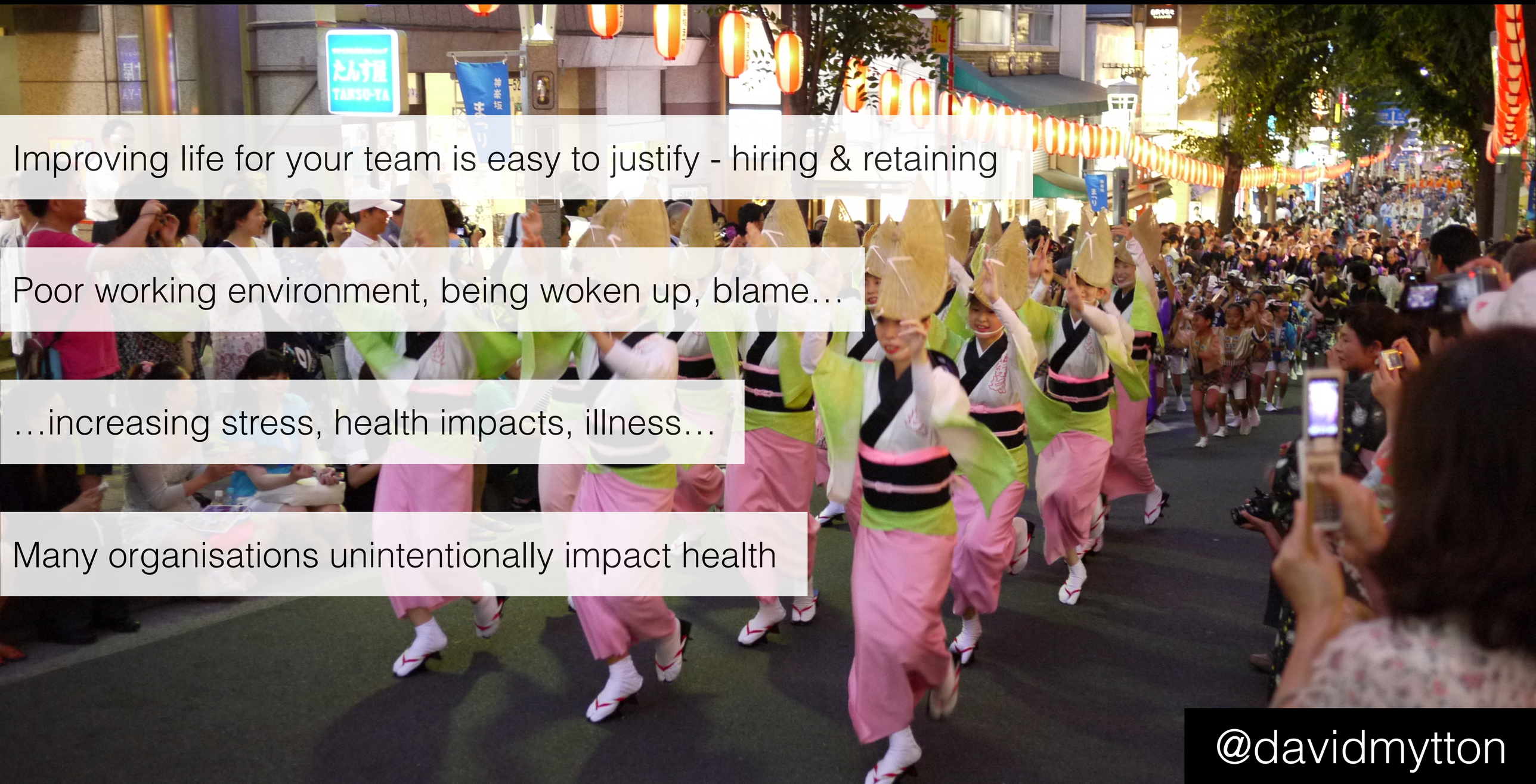

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Many organisations unintentionally impact health

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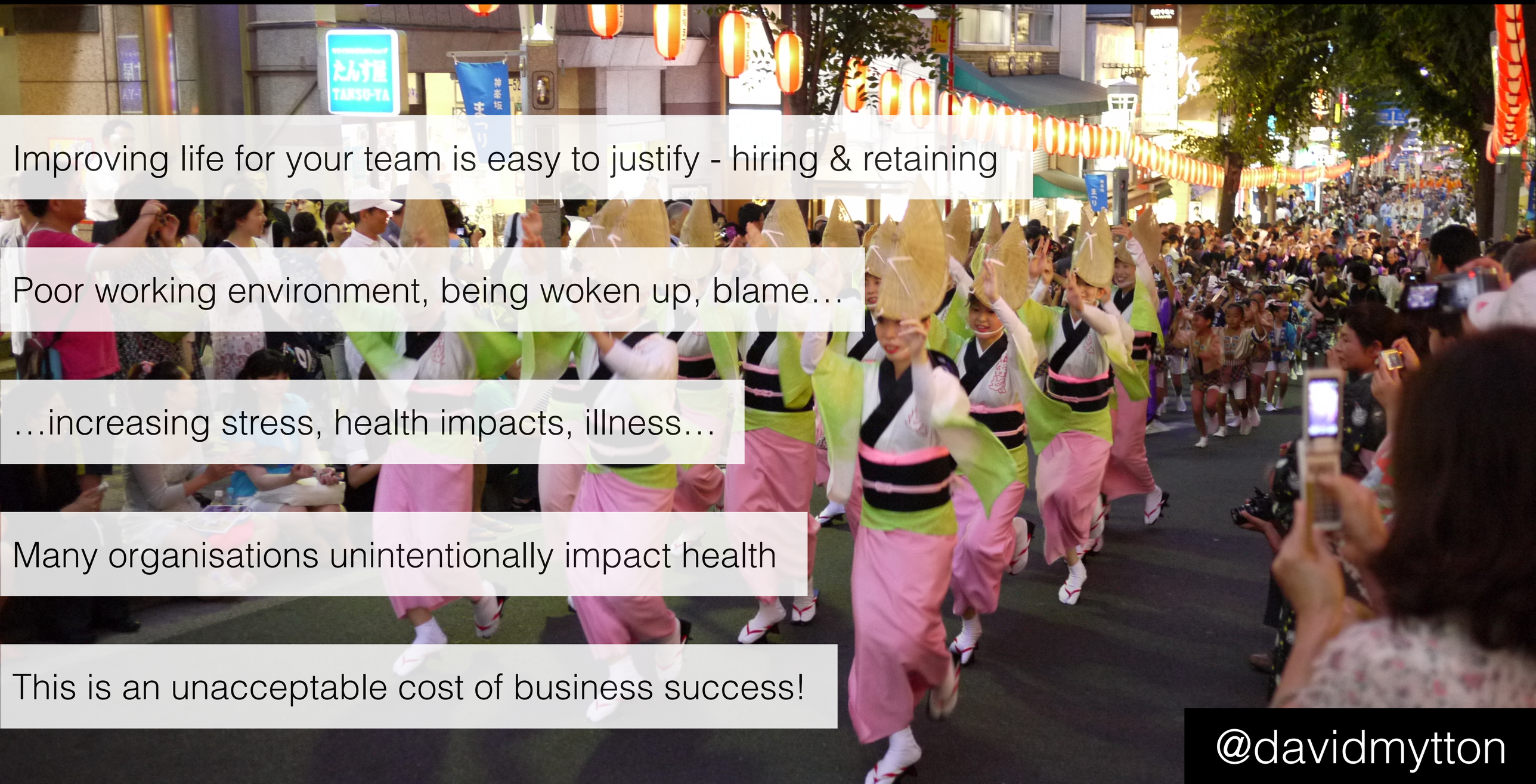

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This is an unacceptable cost of business success!

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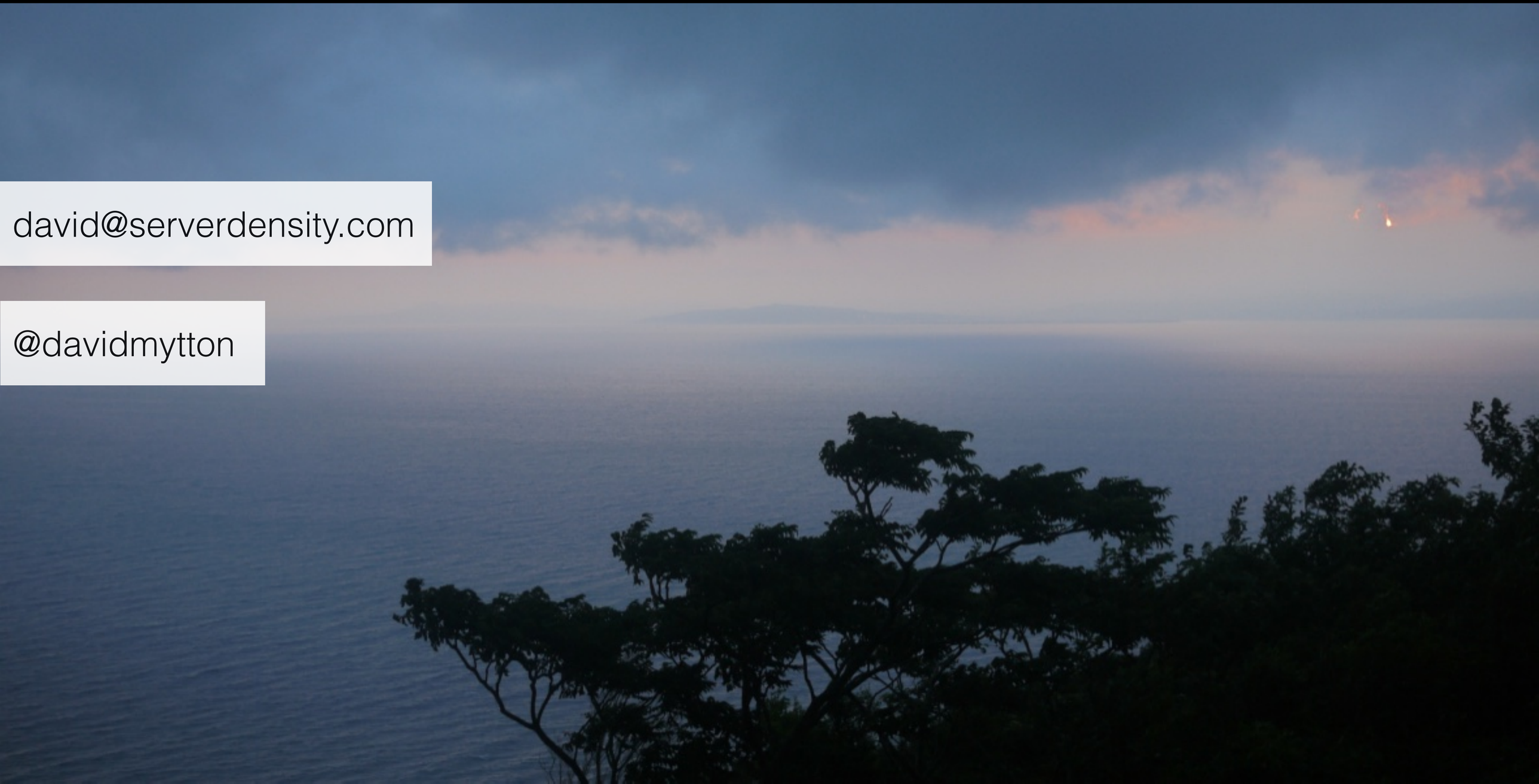

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