

Leading with Heart

As technology professionals, we've been trained to solve problems with our brains.

But it's the heart muscle we need to develop to become leaders.



I'm Adrienne Shulman

- 20+ years building Enterprise SaaS
- Engineering, management and senior leadership roles
- PASSIONATE ABOUT DEVOPS!
 - Introduced devops mindset & practices to multiple teams over the past several years
 - Team performance increased every time | Promoted 2x in 2 years
 - Happiness increased
 - IT Revolution/Devops Enterprise community is the BEST



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New Leadership Opportunity:

Head of IT for a
\$5B global
Enterprise SaaS
Company

Context: Growth had been slowing for a few years. Acquired our biggest competitor 18 months earlier. People & teams were integrated, but not systems & technology. Everyone blamed IT for making their jobs difficult and forcing them to work with 2 of everything. Systems integration was one of the most important initiatives for the company.

Why me: I was a known quantity, a respected leader in the Engineering org with a reputation for being technical and accomplishing things.

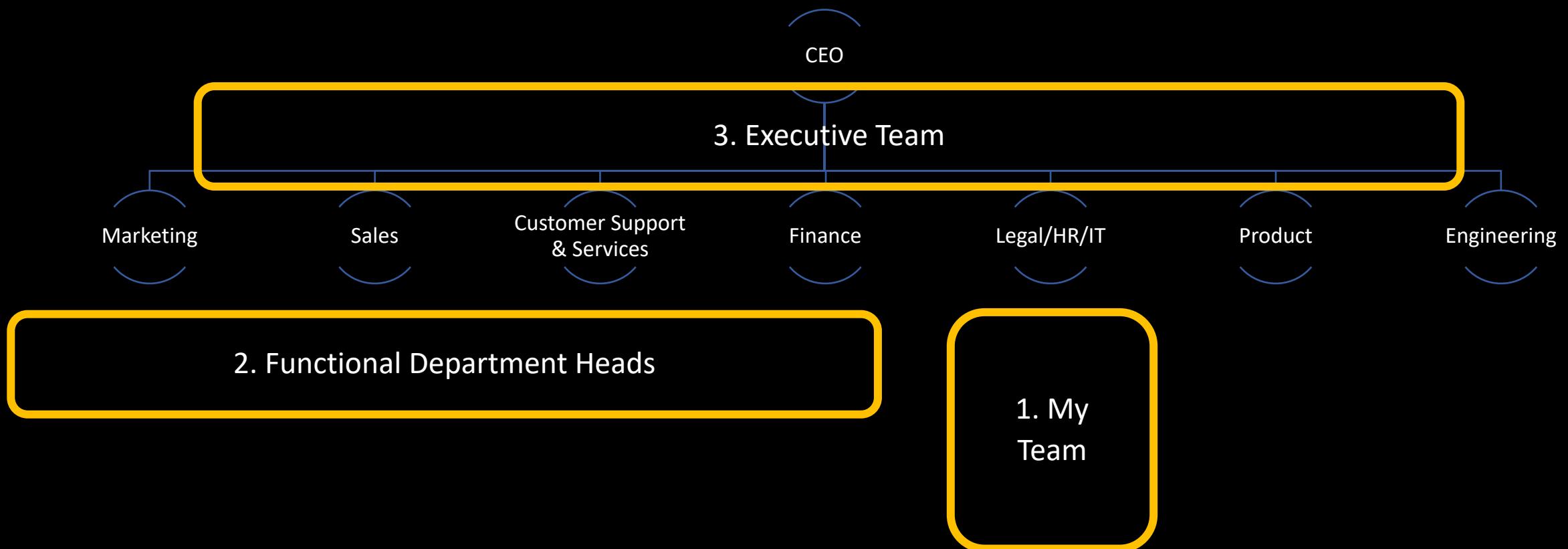
"Adrienne was put in charge of a critical IT initiative at an executive level because of her technical expertise and background..." – Phil S., CEO

Mandate: Finish the systems integration work.

And I was handed a Gantt chart and told "You just need to execute."

Step 1: Talk to key stakeholders

Traditional siloed org chart organized by function



Here's what I heard

Peers: No Trust

- IT doesn't understand what we do in marketing, sales, finance, etc.
- Recent projects went poorly, low quality, rollbacks, delays



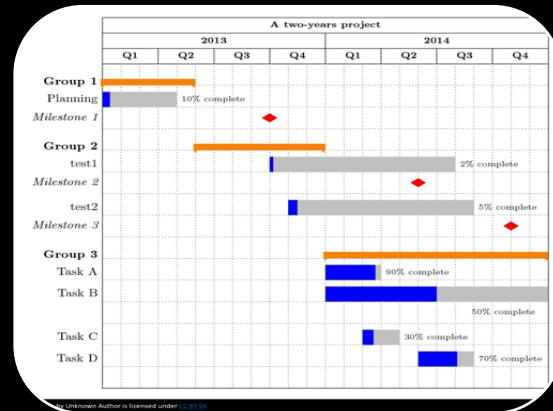
Team: No Accountability

- We're the real heroes. The business isn't technical, they are hard to work with, they don't appreciate our greatness.



ELT: No Patience

- "It's not your fault. You weren't here but enough already. This has to get done."
- Reminded me of the plans and dates they've been promised



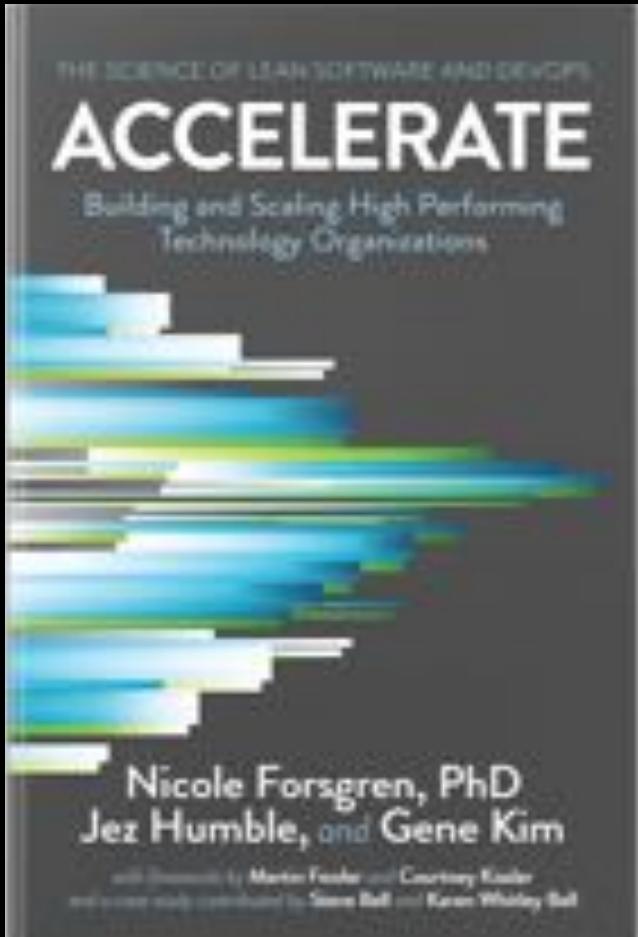
Drama, Dysfunction, Deadlock

"When Adrienne took the role leading our GBO organization *the functional and technical teams were at each other's throats...*"

– Chris, Senior Vice President, Global Field Operations

The job of a leader is not to [do the thing],
nor is it to tell people to [do the thing],
but to **create the environment** where [the thing]
can be done.

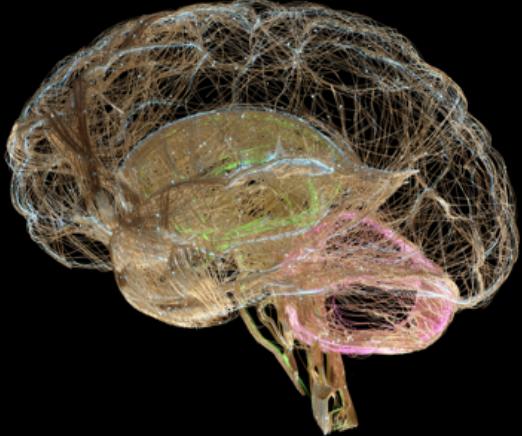
Luckily for us, we know what the right culture looks like!



Pathological (Power-Oriented)	Bureaucratic (Rule-Oriented)	Generative (Performance-Oriented)
Low cooperation	Modest cooperation	High cooperation
Messengers "shot"	Messengers neglected	Messengers trained
Responsibilities shirked	Narrow responsibilities	Risks are shared
Bridging discouraged	Bridging tolerated	Bridging encouraged
Failure leads to scapegoating	Failure leads to justice	Failure leads to inquiry
Novelty crushed	Novelty leads to problems	Novelty implemented

Generative organizations focus on the mission and accomplishing goals.

Brain vs. Heart



Above everything else,
you look for the logical,
best, technical solution



Above everything else,
you put people first.

Peers

Break down silos

- Change perception from IT Project → Business Optimization Initiative to create #OneTeam
- Be explicit: “I want to make you successful. I want to collaborate.”
- Brought problems to each other, not to our bosses.
- Modeled behavior/led by example: no more drama.

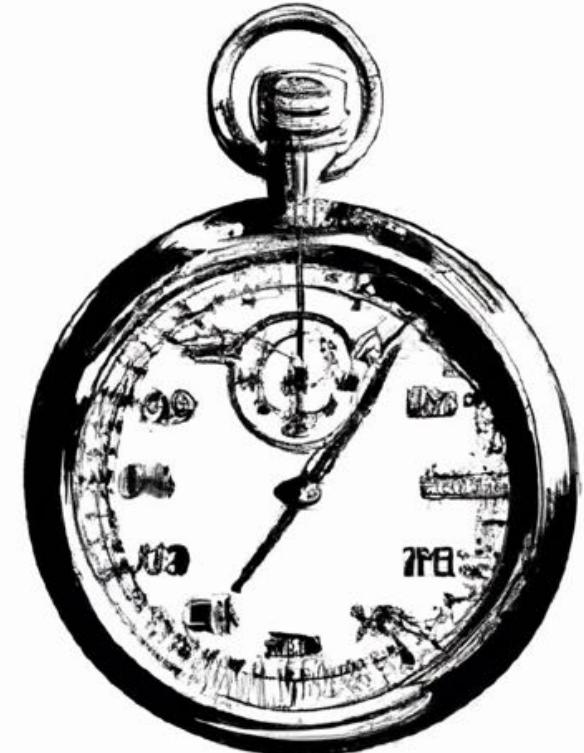


We all win, or we all fail.

My Team

Change incentives and how we work

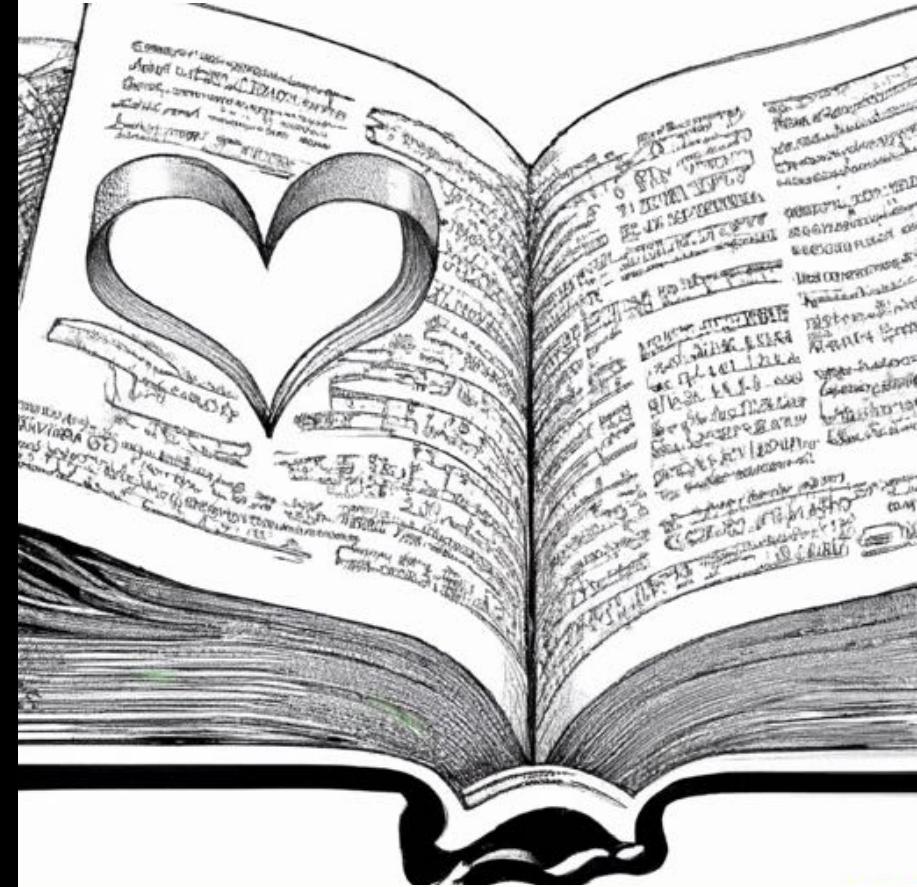
- A new vision
 - The only thing that matters is creating value for our company.
 - Value defined together with our business partners.
 - Progress over perfection.
 - Have to be willing to try.
- Be patient. It takes time to build trust. Not everyone wanted to stick around for the journey.



Executive Leadership Team

Tell my story

- Used IT Revolution/Devops Enterprise
 - Community: We aren't unique.
 - Books: Sooner, Safer, Happier and Accelerate – There are methods and patterns.
 - Helped with my credibility, which leads to trust.
- Because I had alignment, the VPs from each functional department all told the same story.



Here's what happened

Over a 3 month period, #OneTeam went from a slogan to reality. We asked for help...and got it. We broke deadlock and created momentum by working small. People were happier.

By leading with heart, we could now follow up with brain work.

"Adrienne was put in charge of a critical IT initiative at an executive level because of her technical expertise and background, but it was her ability to influence key stakeholders from different departments that was her superpower." – Phil S, CEO

"When Adrienne took the role leading our GBO organization the functional and technical teams were at each other's throats. We were making little progress on improving our processes or systems. Adrienne asked the team for a bit of time to understand how we got here before suggesting a path forward. What she was actually doing during her assessment period was building a relationship and trust in both teams that resulted in a single team view when she rolled out her plan."

– Chris, Senior Vice President, Global Field Operations

How can the DevOps Enterprise Community help?

- Devops makes it easy and safe to deploy code quickly, allowing organizations to get feedback faster to solve customer problems better.
- Devops typically addresses technical constraints. I'd love to see our community further explore how culture contributes to flow. My story was one such example.
- We have an uphill battle. We're fighting human psychology. But we can lead the way. How can we turn soft skills into hard skills and normalize a new leadership style for the modern age.



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#DOES22Heart



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Your brain is useful.
But your heart is
important.

- Head Lama



Erdene Zuu Monastery, the oldest Buddhist temple in Mongolia

#DOES22Heart



“In the past jobs were about muscles, now they’re about brains, but in the future, they’ll be about the heart.”

- *Minouche Shafik*

Director of the London School of Economics

</Lead With Heart>

#DOES22Heart