



New Grads Becoming New SREs

Catalyzing a “Circle of Life” in Ireland

Jennifer Petoff

sre.google • twitter.com/googlesre



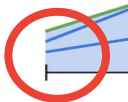
Site Reliability Engineering

Can we bootstrap new
grads into new SREs?

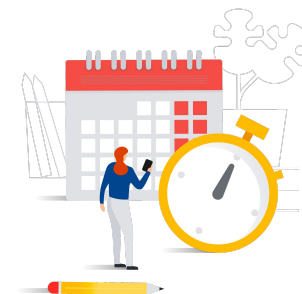
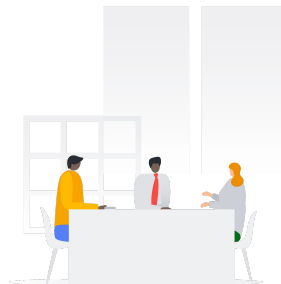


What was our starting point?

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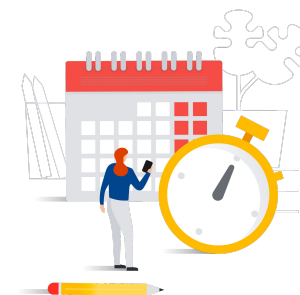
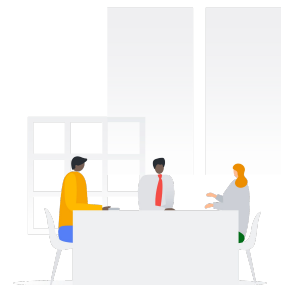
Key Challenges Identified



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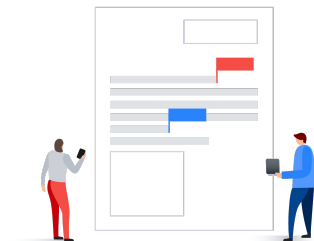
Applicants



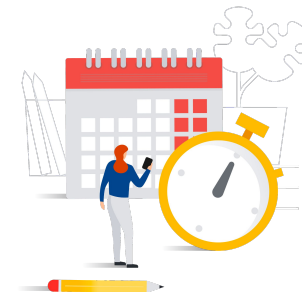
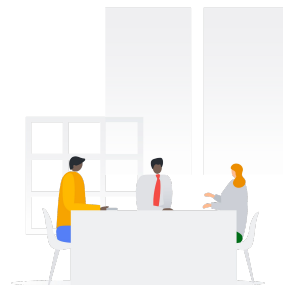
Key Challenges Identified



Applicants



Resume/CV Quality



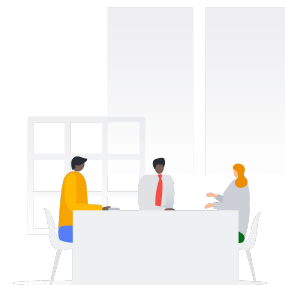
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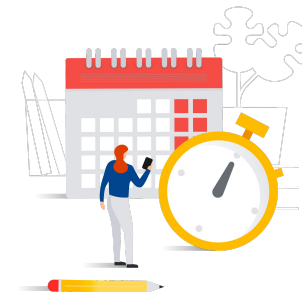
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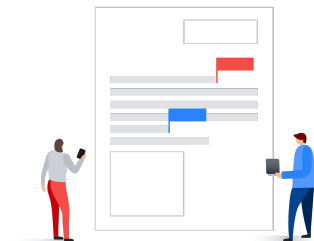
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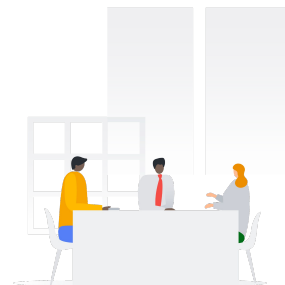
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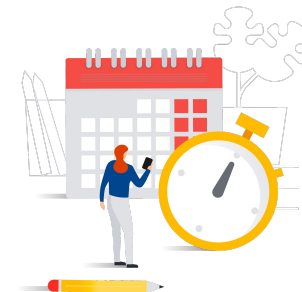
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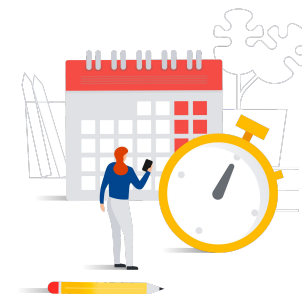
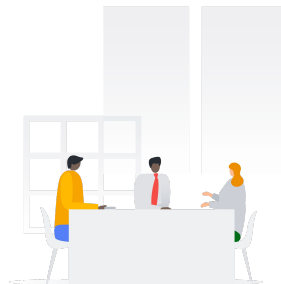


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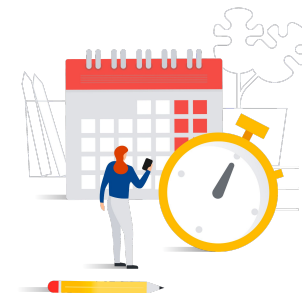
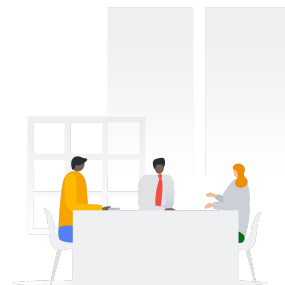
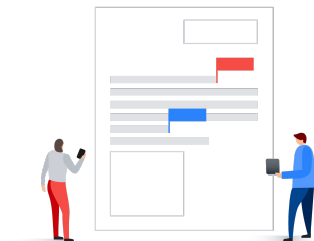


Bandwidth

Hypotheses Formulated



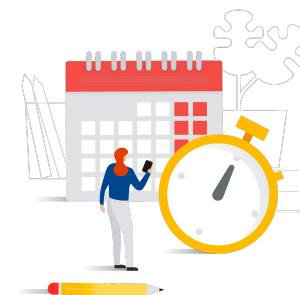
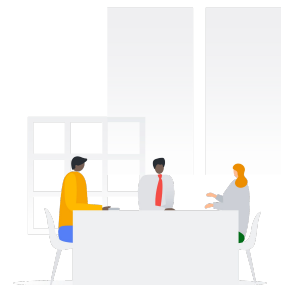
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Applicants

1. Students aren't aware that Google hires engineers in Ireland
2. Students are afraid of the interview process
3. Students don't know what SRE is

Hypotheses Formulated



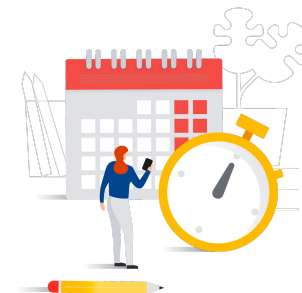
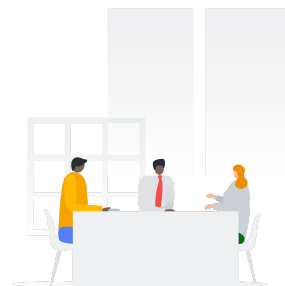
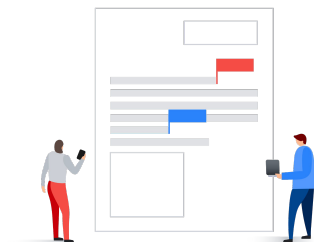
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Resume/CV Quality

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2. Students are not trained on how to write a compelling CV
3. Students are difficult to assess 'on paper'

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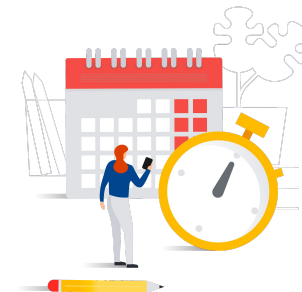
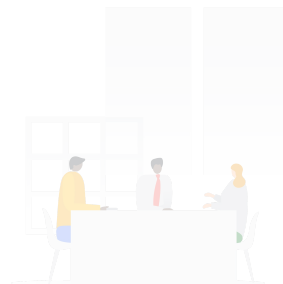
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Interviews

1. Students aren't getting practical coding experience outside of the classroom
2. Students not talking thru their thought process
3. Not enough experience coding 'on the spot'
4. Students get nervous

Hypotheses Formulated



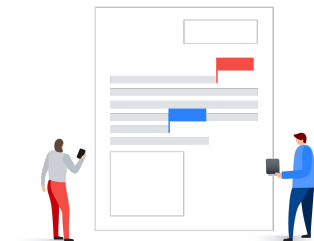
**Results will improve if
we invest more effort**

Proposed Solutions



Applicants

Large-scale Open House and Campus Tech Talks

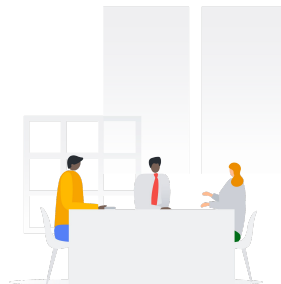


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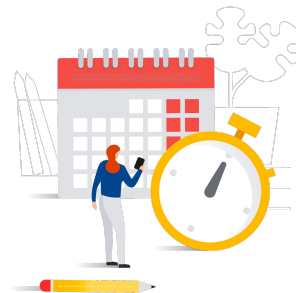
CV Skills Workshop

Algos Workshops and Code Retreats

Support Coding Competitions



Interviews



Focus on internships

Proposed Solutions



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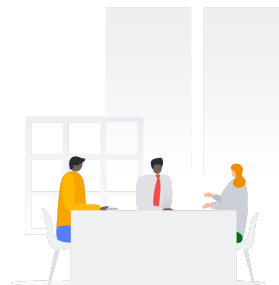
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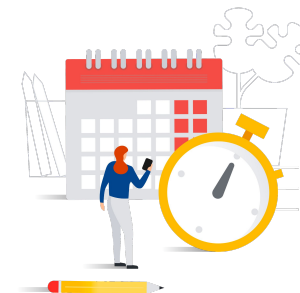
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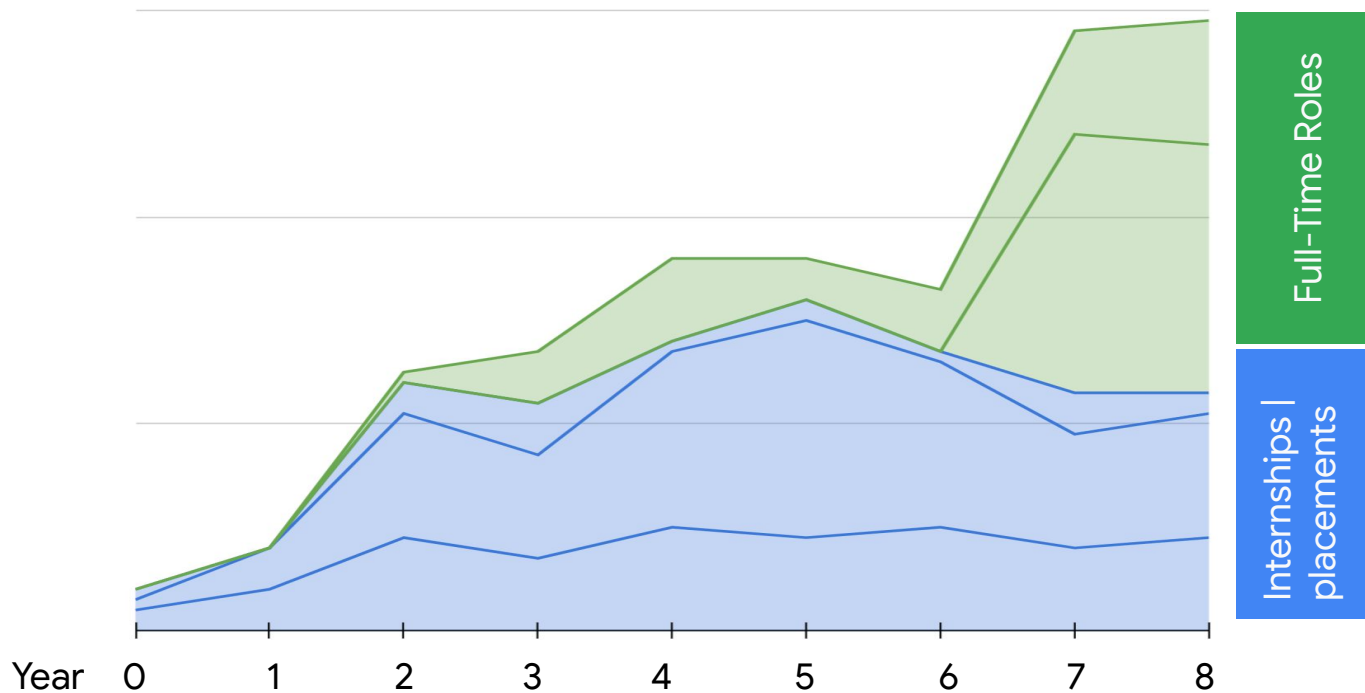
Bandwidth



Results will improve if
we invest more effort

How far have we come?

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What we learned (and who we met along the way)

1. Networks & social media are important amplifiers

Dedicated Hashtag

#GoogleTechIE gave students a channel to follow for information about events and placements.

Cultivating Contacts

among faculty and career services at universities and institutes of technology across Ireland helped get the word out.

Connecting on LinkedIn

encourage students to connect on LinkedIn to forge deeper connections and to drive awareness.

Taking Time to Reply

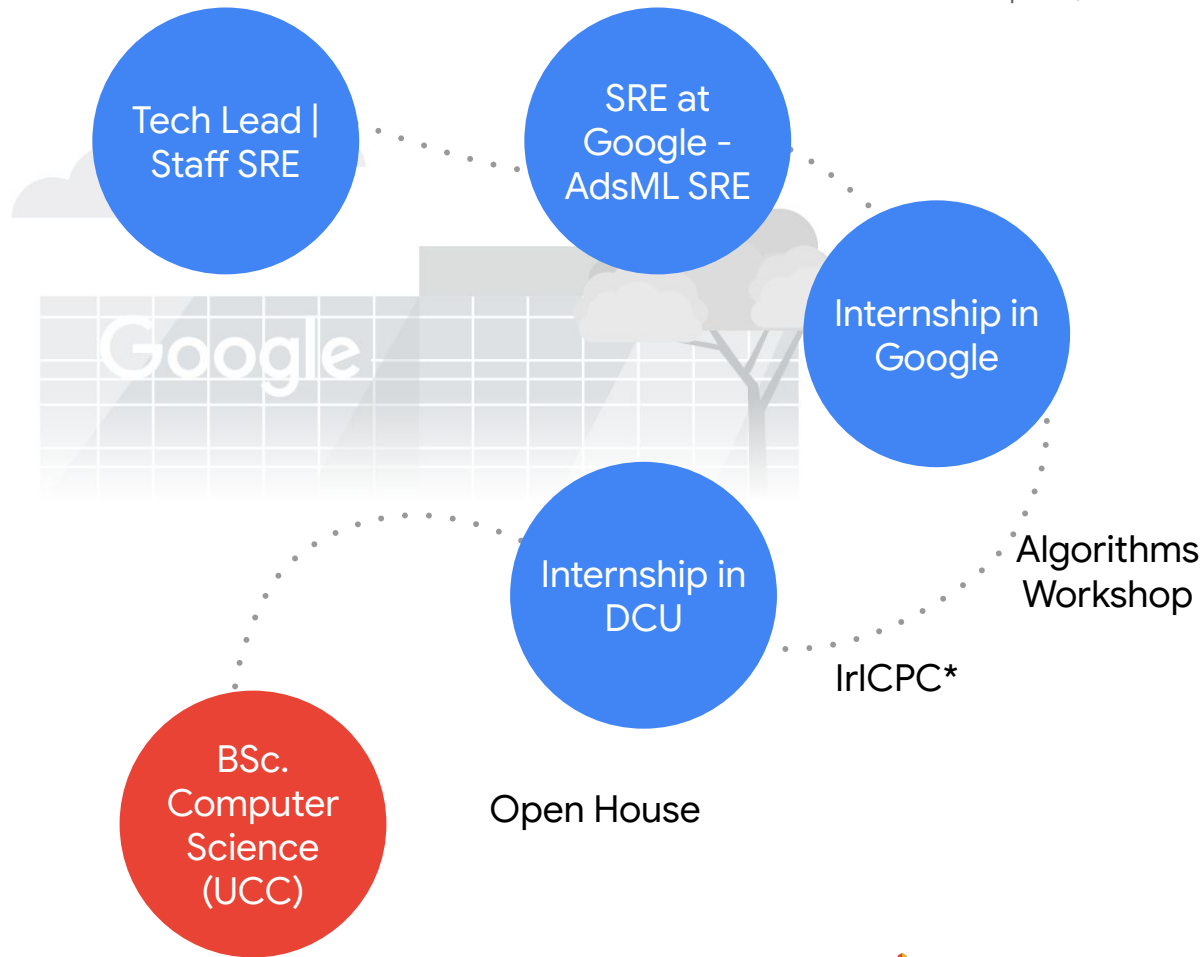
to inquiries from those who take the time to connect helps build trust and helps students feel supported.



Path to Google:

Adam

Google Dublin



* IrICPC = All Ireland Coding Competition

2. Accept a little bit of toil for the greater good

Treat people as individuals

Reply to inquiries, help where you can.

This is **not** a classic SRE “cattle not pets” situation.

Follow-up w/ successful students

congratulate those who get and/or accept an offer.

Follow-up with the others

who were not selected after interviewing or who declined your offer.

Keep meticulous records

to show incremental progress in the short term while recognizing that we are in this for the long haul.

3. Take steps to build a diverse pipeline

Look beyond the “top” schools

Cast a wide net and be inclusive about the schools you build relationships with. Don't just focus on the very top academic institutions

Partner with student groups

Research student groups aligned with populations under-represented in Tech.

Show up at events

e.g., Women in STEM events, International Women's Day Events.

Leverage employees from URGs

who can be role models to the students you'd like to recruit.



Path to Google:

Catalina

Google Dublin

2 years at
Google in
Oct 2023

Join full time
As Site
Reliability
Engineer

6 months SRE
internship @
Google Dublin

3 months SWE
internship @
Google Zurich

Intern @
Intel Ireland

3 months SRE
internship @
Google Dublin

Open House

Undergrad &
Masters in
Computer
Science

Algos
Workshop



4. Volunteers & role models are critical to success

Activate recent grads

e.g., host panel discussions with recent grads

Utilize alumni networks

e.g., appoint alumni champions to work with their schools

Inspire: “I could do that!”

Help current students see what’s possible and to see themselves in the volunteers sent to campus

Demystify what the role is like

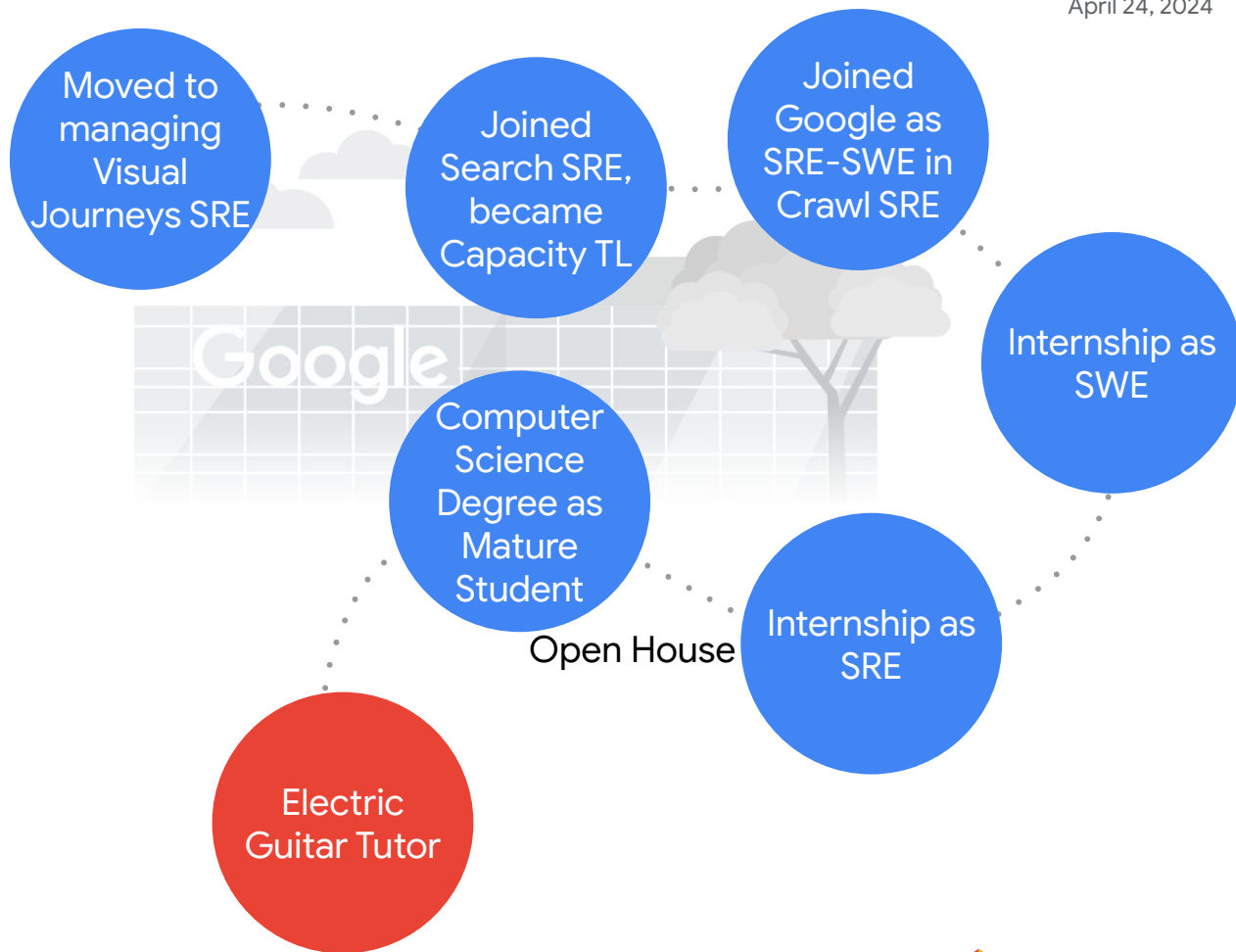
Engineering/SRE volunteers talk about what they do and help build excitement about internships and full time roles



Path to Google:

Daniel

Google Dublin



5. Be a good partner (but be willing to ‘go rogue’)

Make friends with your Staffing team

You need their expertise, their processes, and their support in order to be successful

Recruit a recruiter

to join your core team

Ask for forgiveness...

...rather than permission

Convince the skeptics

Understand why they are skeptical and then bring data that demonstrates small and steady progress.

6. Play the long game while demonstrating short term “wins”

Focus on intern recruiting

The stakes and barrier to entry tend to be lower. Placements give students hands-on experience that will help them be successful in industry once they graduate.

“Convert” your interns to full time hires

after one internship (or 3!) or even a few years after graduation.

Promote “feeder” roles

SRE might not be the right role for some students immediately after graduation. Are there other roles they may be more suited to now that may lead them to SRE down the road?

Communicate incremental progress

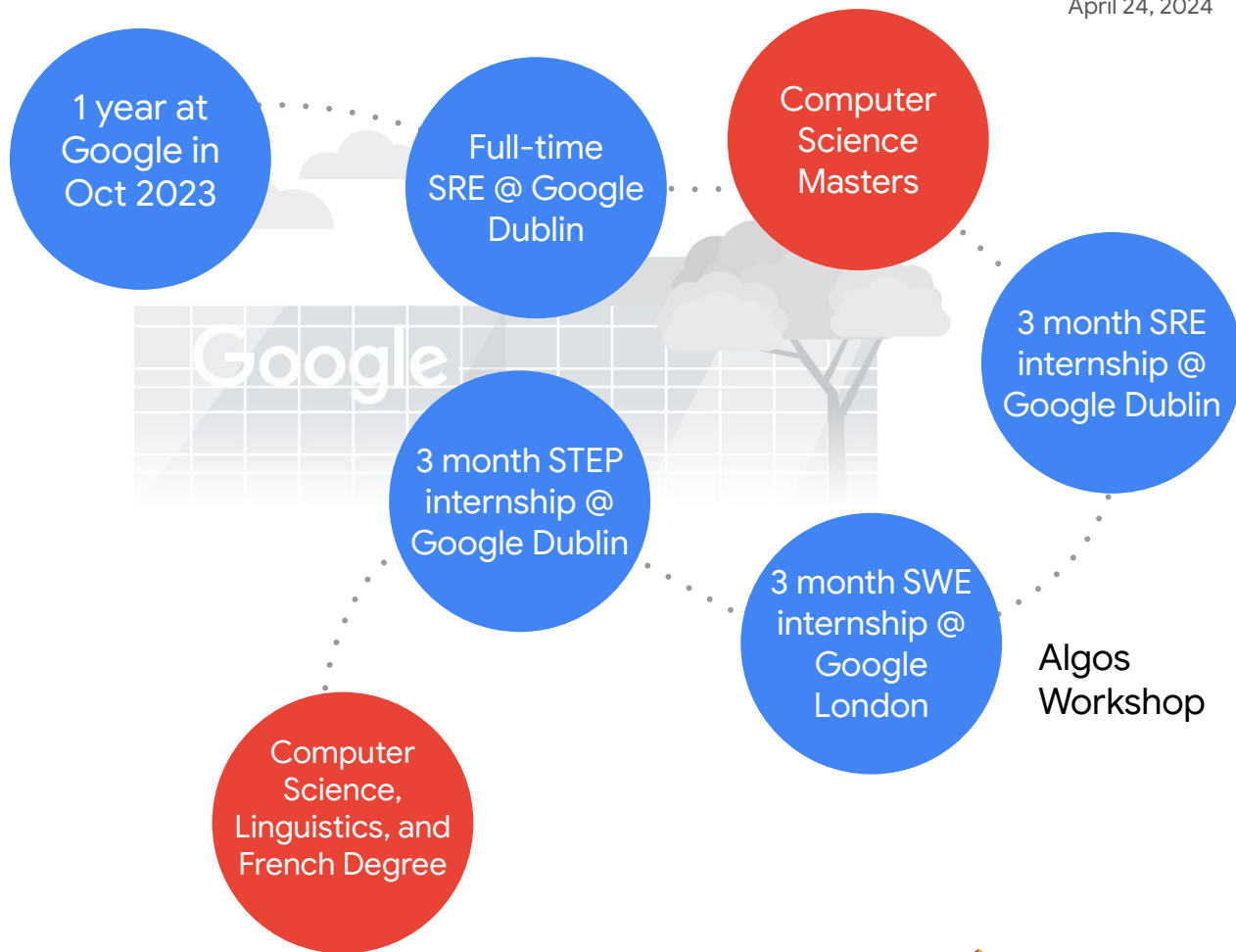
in driving applications... in number of interviews... in interns hired... in full time hires. Do this at least once a year.



Path to Google:

Sophie

Google Dublin



7. Take a broad view of success

Location

We were focused on recruiting *from* schools in Ireland, but success = placing a student anywhere in the world

Role

We were focused on recruiting for *SRE roles*, but success = placing a student in a wide range of engineering roles.

Timing

We were focused on recruiting *new grads* but success = hiring any students who engaged with our programs even after graduation.

Elevating the profession

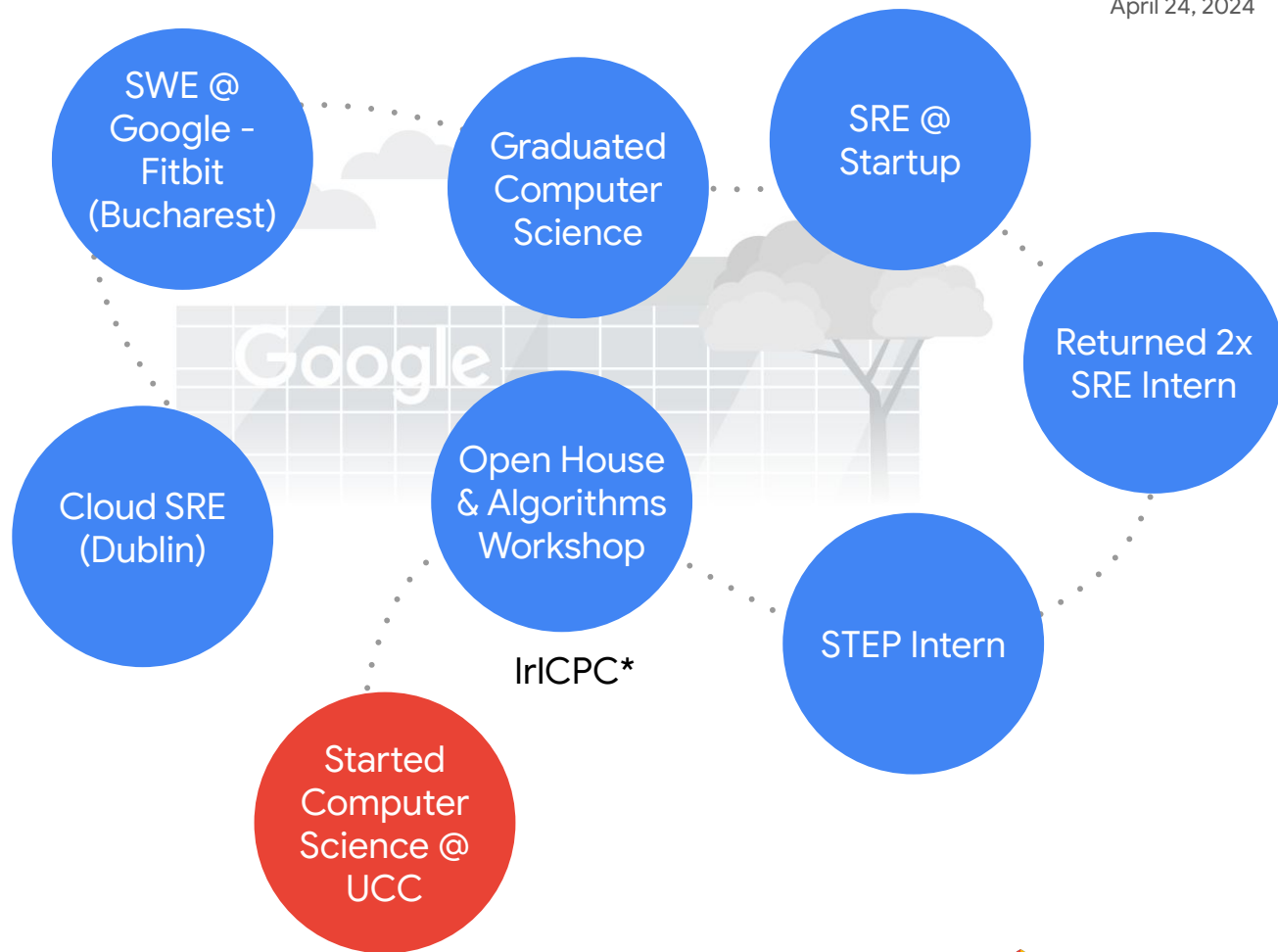
We were focused on recruiting *for Google*, but we considered it a success if a student pursued SRE as a profession *anywhere*.



Path to Google:

Aidan

Google Dublin





Path to Google:

Eimear

Xoogler, Dublin

General Technical
Director, Walt
Disney Animation
Studios
(Vancouver)

SRE Manager
@ Google
Ireland

SRE @
Google
Ireland

GoogleTechIE
Co-Lead

SRE @
Google
Ireland

MSc, Computer
Animation &
Visual Effects
(Bournemouth)

BSc,
Computer
Science, UCC

Open House

2x Women in Tech
focused events



8. Make it Self-Sustaining



Can we bootstrap new
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★ Yes!



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...but that isn't an insurmountable obstacle to new grad hiring

- Awareness raising + skill building = **A Winning Formula**

- **Can you bootstrap new grads into new SREs?**

yes! If you are willing to put in the effort...



SRE Classroom - sre.google/classroom

Tutorials



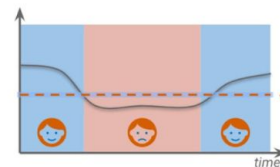
Distributed PubSub

Build a planet scale distributed PubSub system using NALSD principles. Learn about some foundational large system design principles and concepts. Topics include correctness, reliability, performance, different inter-system communication styles, and more. We introduce the problem requirements in detail and walk through an example solution.



Distributed ImageServer

Build a planet scale distributed ImageServer system using NALSD principles. Learn about some foundational large system design principles and concepts. Topics include sharding, replication, latency, load balancing, and more. We introduce the problem requirements in detail and walk through an example solution.



The Art of SLOs

The Art of SLOs introduces participants to concepts in measuring service reliability: Service Level Indicators (SLIs) and Service Level Objectives (SLOs), and gives them some hands-on experience with creating these measures in practice.



Jennifer Petoff

Director of Program Management,
Google Cloud Platform
& Technical Infrastructure...

