Exercise 3.3: Case Study: Scaling Platform Team at PETech

At PETech, a captivating journey unfolded when a platform engineering team was born from the vision of abstracting essential capabilities. Their knack for value simulation was spot-on—calculating a promising value-to-cost ratio of 1.5, indicating an expected return of $1.50 for every dollar invested.

With 23 eager teams awaiting the benefits of these platform capabilities, concerns loomed about scarce capacity. Shifting mindsets among specific teams posed a more significant challenge than anticipated, hindering complete buy-in and adequate funding. The platform engineering team initially drew financial support from Team Amulet, armed with a dedicated team of 14 developers managing three interrelated microservices.

Budget constraints made hiring a technical product manager unfeasible. Instead, they invested in one lead DevOps engineer, Emma, who brought five years of hands-on experience in build and release using Jenkins. Her leadership skills, honed as a team lead managing code compilation, integration, and unit tests, were instrumental. Emma's proficiency in Python and Jenkins secured her spot as the lead for PETech's budding platform engineering team.

Joining Emma were four diverse DevOps engineers, each skilled in PowerShell automation, open shift administration, AWS DevOps suite, and Azure Resource Manager/Bicep templates. This strategic mix covered critical aspects—automation, container orchestration, pipelines, and infrastructure provisioning.

If you advise PETech in its platform journey, what are the acceptable patterns and unacceptable antipatterns in the following areas?

1. Hiring and team setup
2. Planning and execution
3. Team empowerment

What did the PETech leadership do right? What could they have done differently?

What did Emma do well? What else could she have done better to enable scaling the platform capabilities*?*

Solution

The questions posed in Exercise 3.3 require subjective opinions from you. Once you develop the response, identify a peer of yours and set up some time to explain the scenario. Once you explain the scenario, describe your approach to them and brainstorm ideas on what they would have done differently from how you suggested the solution.