

# Do Repeat Yourself

## How to move from **Development** into Leadership

Luke Stringer, @lukestringer90. September 5th 2023. iOSDevUK, Aberystwyth.



# Hi, I'm Luke



I'm an iOS Developer from Sheffield  
I work for **AND Digital** as a **Tech Principal**

I go by *@lukestringer90* online



# Hi, I'm Luke



I'm an iOS Developer from Sheffield  
I work for **AND Digital** as a **Tech Principal**

I go by *@lukestringer90* online



1. Developer Life

2. Opportunity to Lead

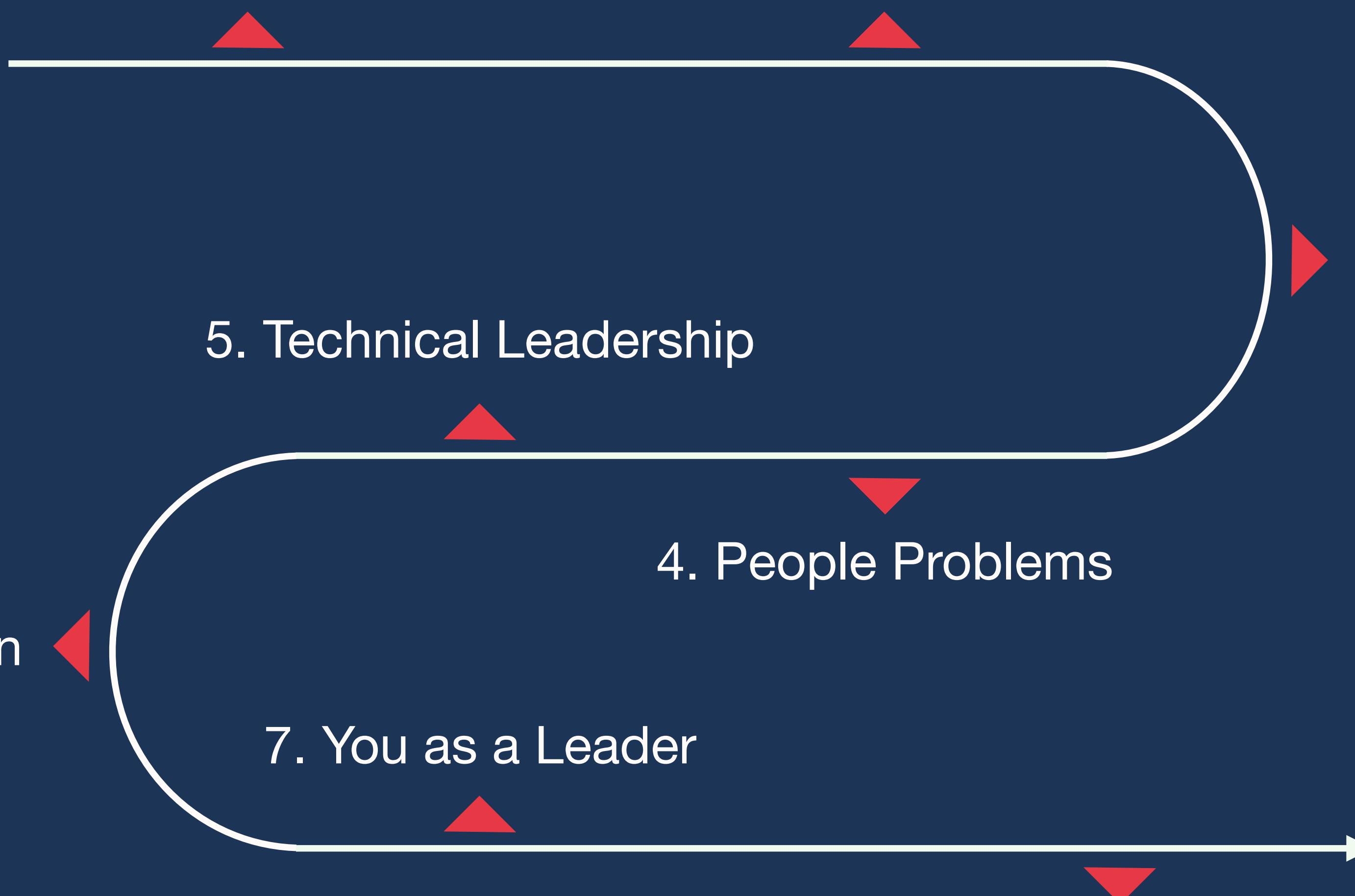
3. First Steps

5. Technical Leadership

6. Communication

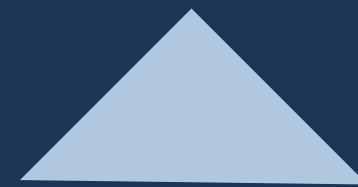
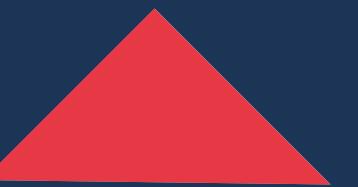
7. You as a Leader

8. Finding Peace





# 1. Developer Life



## 1. Developer Life



Code compiles

**Clear outcomes**



Tests pass

App is released



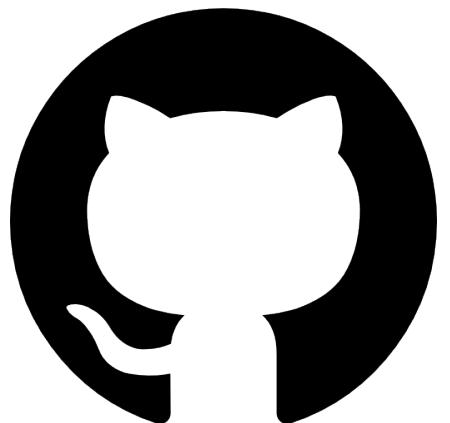
PRs approved

App is improved

Code is merged



Individual Contributor



## 1. Developer Life



### Clear outcomes

Code compiles

Tests pass

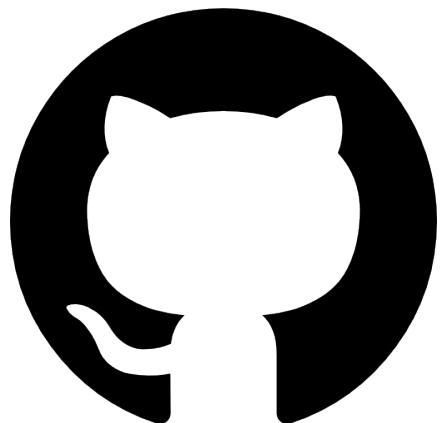
App is released

PRs approved

App is improved

Code is merged

Individual Contributor



## 1. Developer Life



### Improving your developer skills

Course, tutorials, books

Side projects

Code review

WWDC content



Individual Contributor

## 1. Developer Life



**Strong peer group**

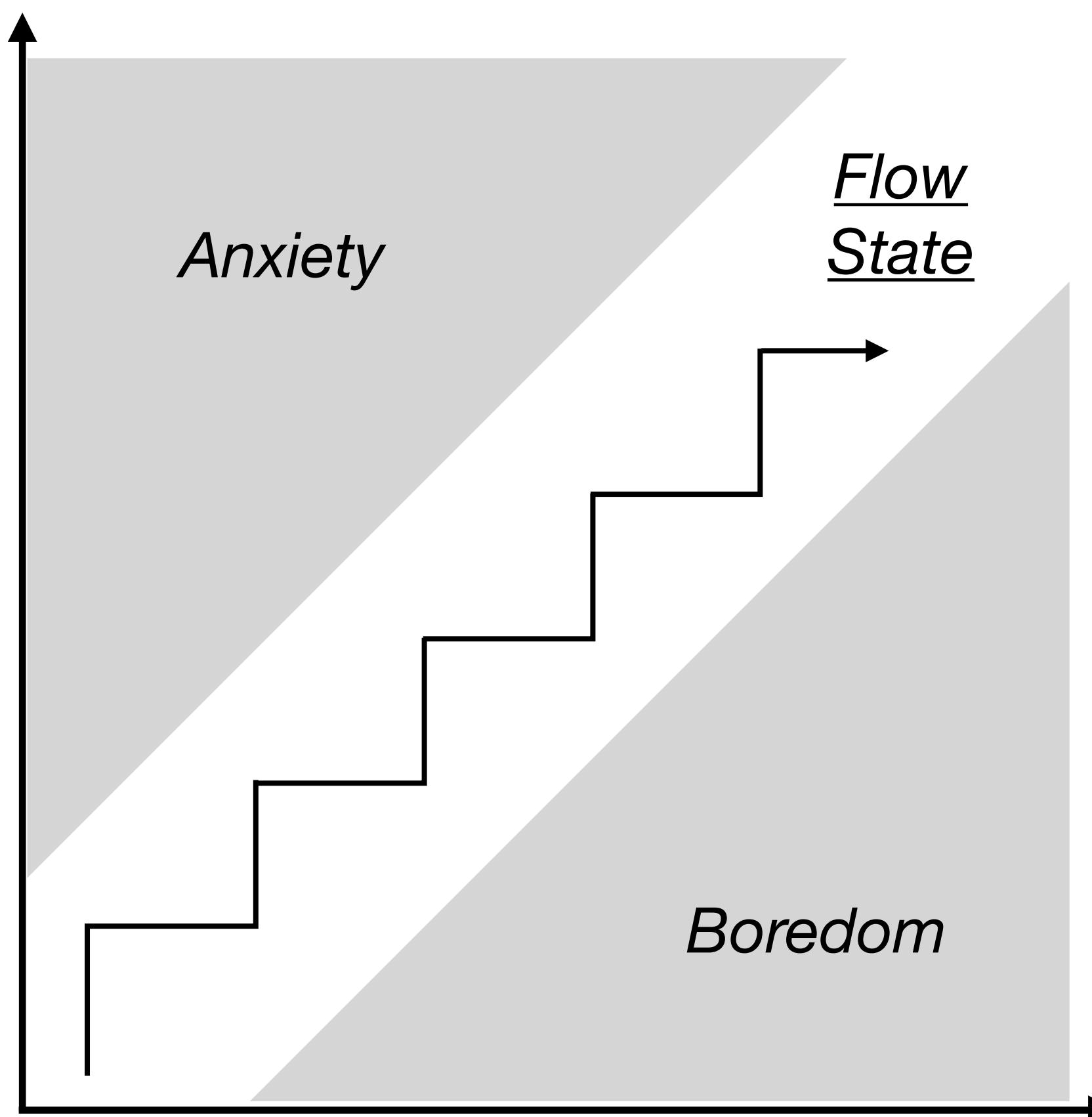


Individual Contributor

## 1. Developer Life



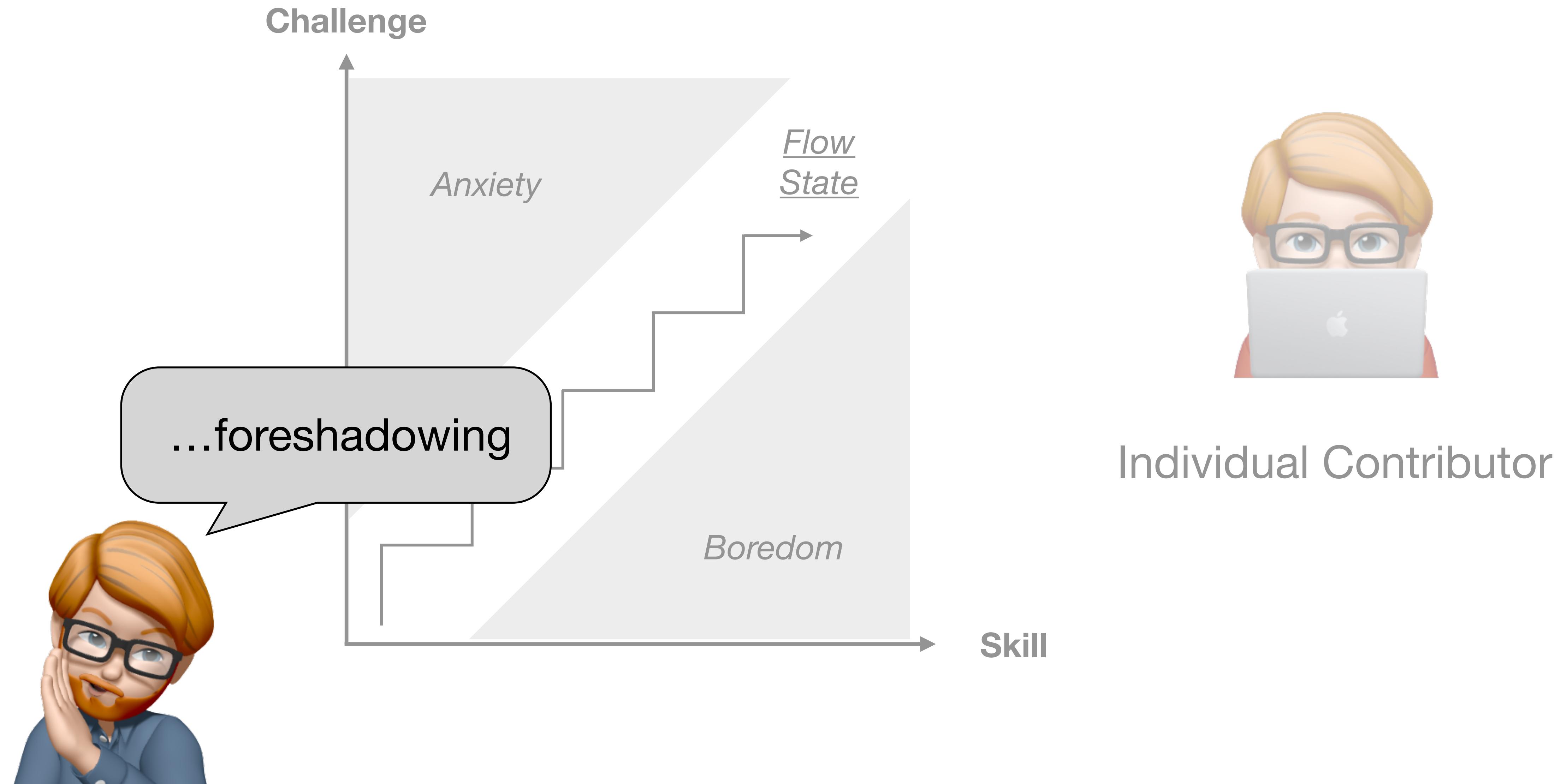
**Challenge**



Individual Contributor

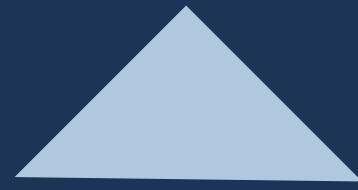
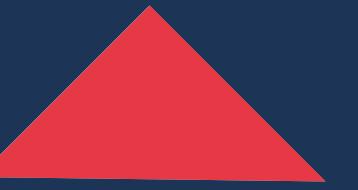
**Skill**

# 1. Developer Life



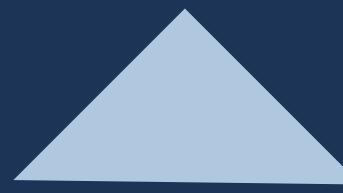
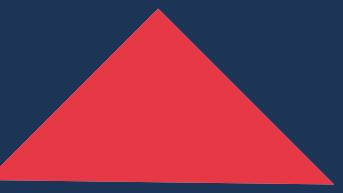
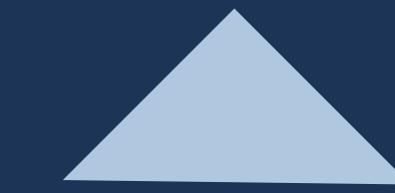


# 1. Developer Life





## 2. Opportunity to Lead



## 2. Opportunity to Lead



### A new role



Internal promotion

Your boss leaves

A new team is created

Leadership opportunity at a different company

## 2. Opportunity to Lead



### **Reasons for moving**



Want a new / more challenge

Bored of just writing code

Solve problems you have seen as a developer

More influence

Avoid regret at not taking the opportunity

## 2. Opportunity to Lead



*(not so good)*

### **Reasons for moving**



You are a good developer, so you must be a good leader (right?)

Business thinks you are the only person who can lead a team

It's the only route for progression and promotion

*...ahem... more money*

## 2. Opportunity to Lead

---

(not so good)

### Reasons for moving



You are a good developer, so you must be a good leader (right?)

Business thinks you are the only person who can lead a team

It's the only route for progression and promotion

...ahem... more money



Michał Waśniewski

## 2. Opportunity to Lead

---

(not so good)

### Reasons for moving



You are a good developer, so you must be a good leader (right?)

Business thinks you are the only person who can lead a team

It's the only route for progression and promotion

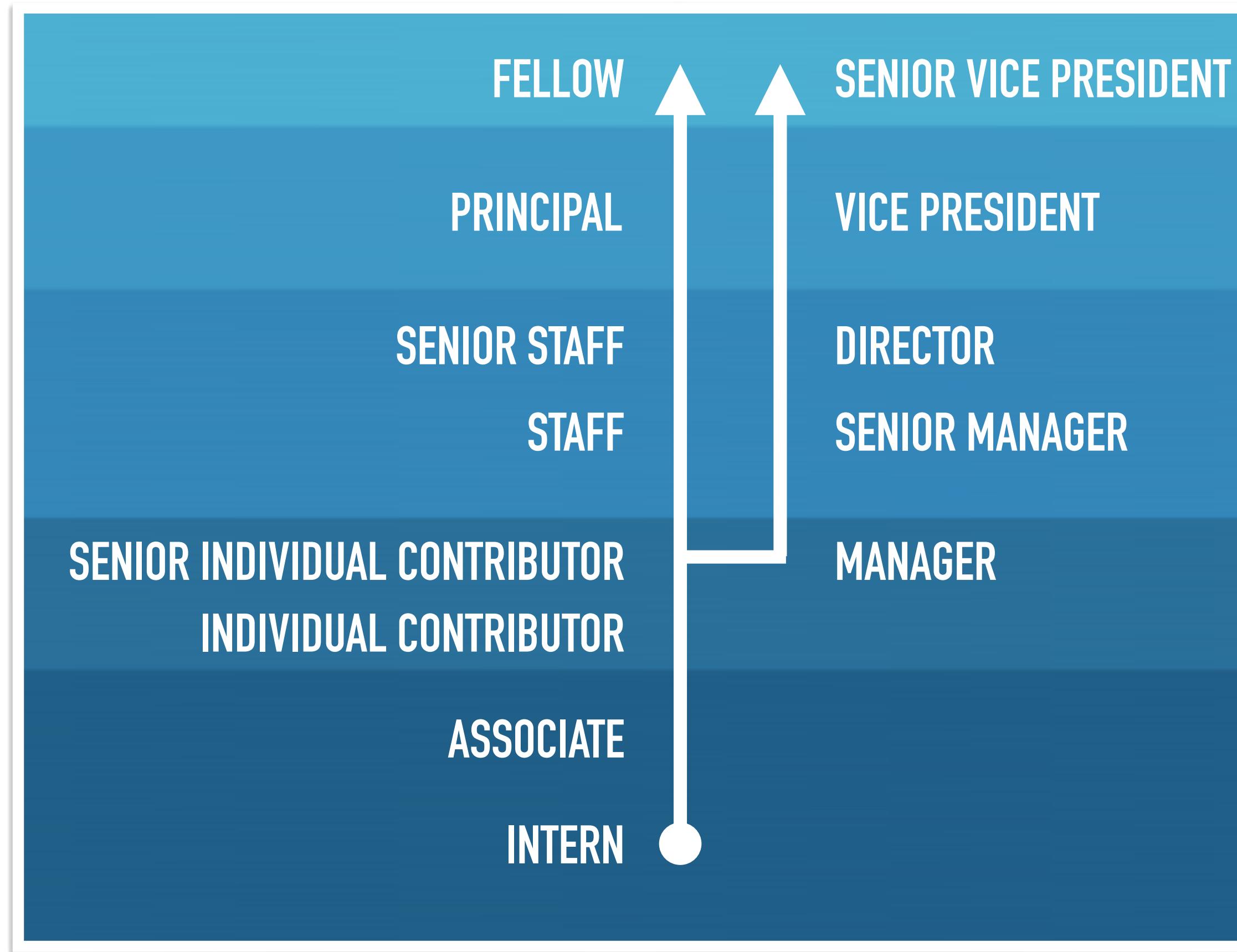
...ahem... more money

Leadership / management isn't the only path for progression



Michał Waśniewski

## 2. Opportunity to Lead



Leadership /  
management isn't  
the only path for  
progression

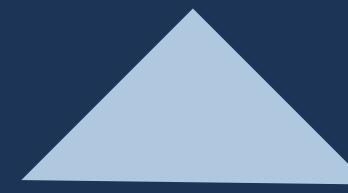
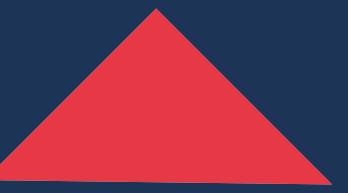
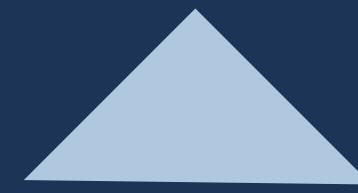
Becoming an iOS developer, again  
iOSDevUK 2022

Michał Waśniewski





## 2. Opportunity to Lead





## 3. First Steps

### 3. First Steps



**Excitement!**



**Anxiety!**



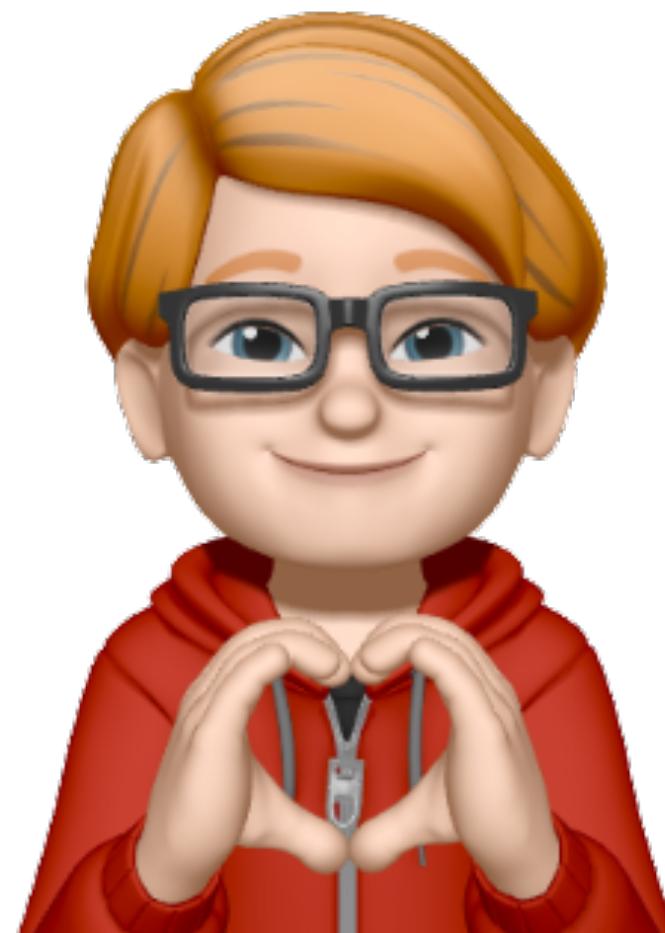
Thrilled at the opportunity

...but feelings of being  
an imposter

### 3. First Steps



**Excitement!**



**Anxiety!**



This is totally  
normal

Thrilled at the opportunity

...but feelings of being  
an imposter



### 3. First Steps



## High expectations



From the business

From your team

From yourself

### 3. First Steps

---

#### High expectations



From the business

From your team

From yourself

#### Be realistic

You can't change everything right away

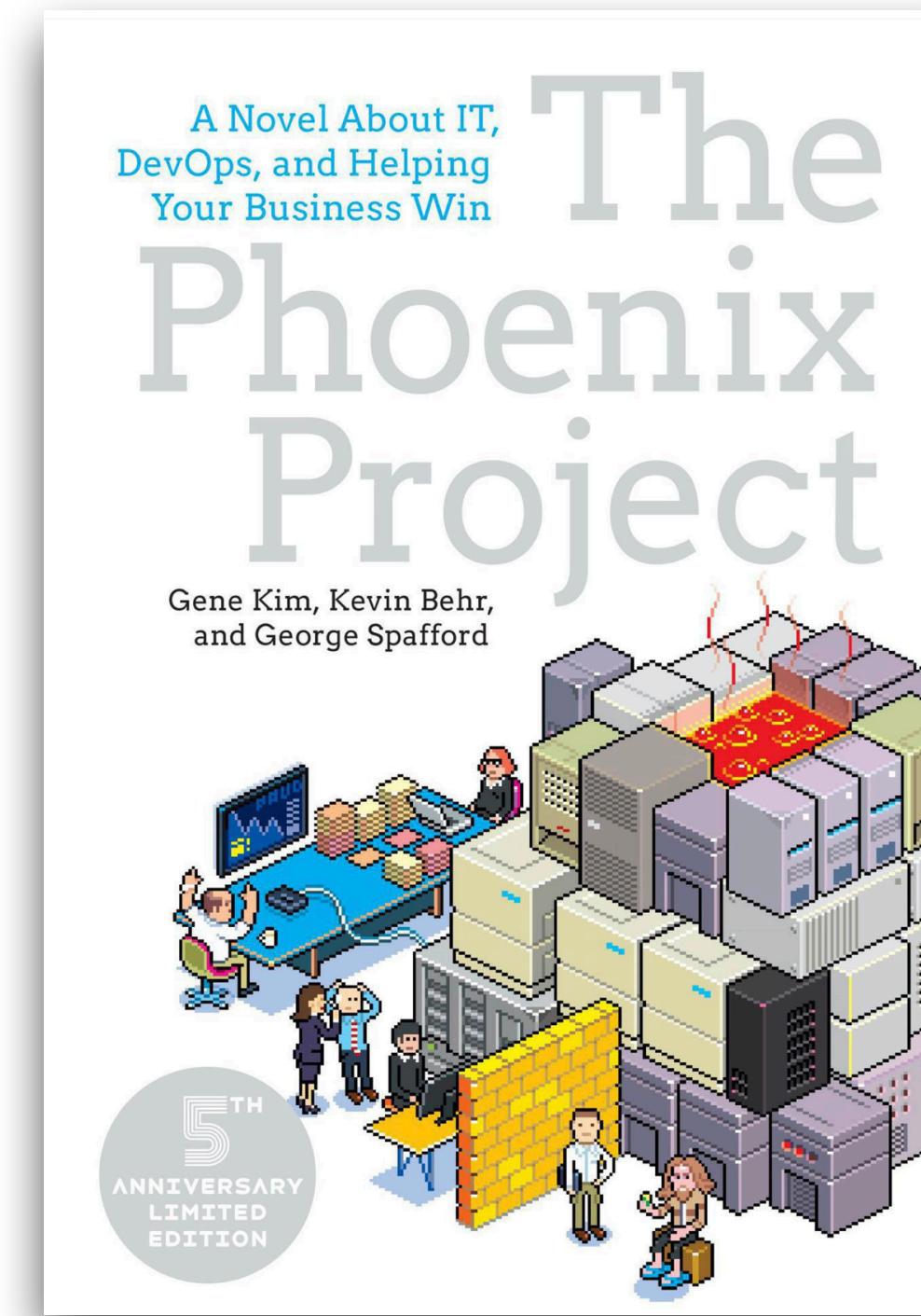
You need to find your feet

Set expectations accordingly



### 3. First Steps

---



Be realistic

You can't change everything  
right away

You need to find your feet

Set expectations accordingly



### 3. First Steps



## Unfamiliar Territory



You were a peer, now a boss

People will now look to you for  
answers and direction

But you are missing information  
and clarity yourself

Uncertainty and ambiguity

### 3. First Steps

---

#### Unfamiliar Territory



You were a peer, now a boss

People will now look to you for answers and direction

But you are missing information and clarity yourself

Uncertainty and ambiguity

The best leaders are comfortable being themselves

Get used to uncertainty

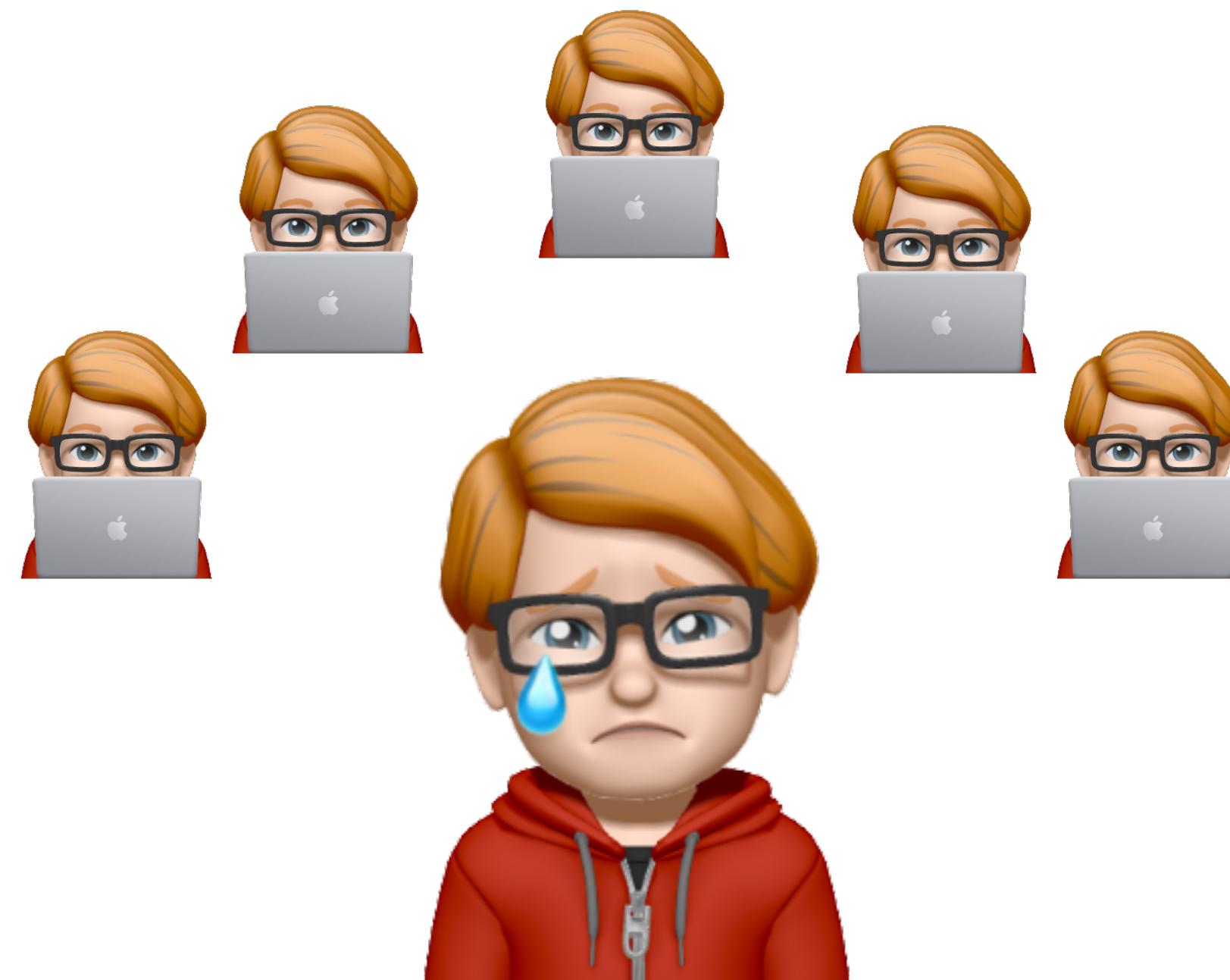
Don't worry about what you cannot control



### 3. First Steps



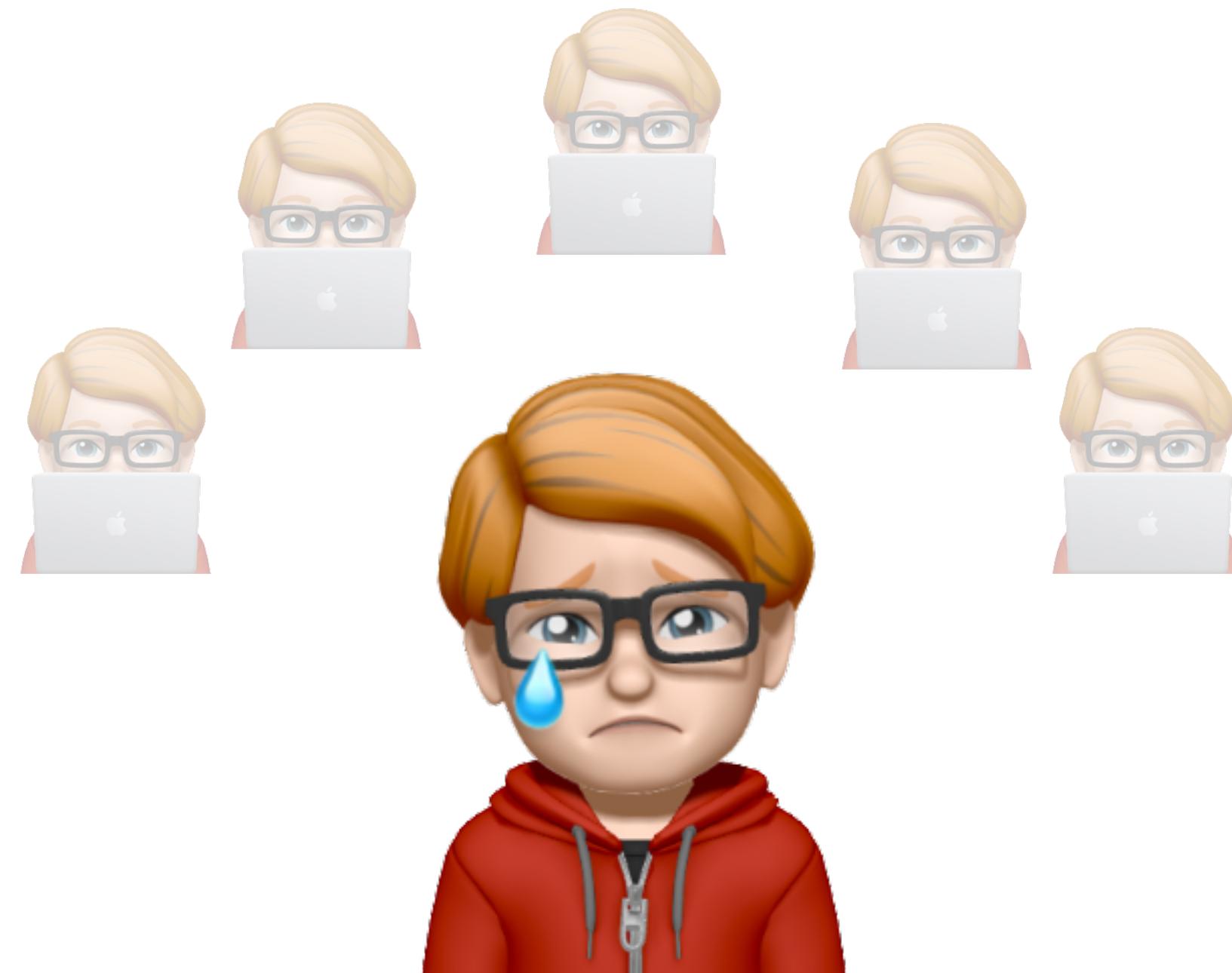
**Loss of your peer group**



### 3. First Steps

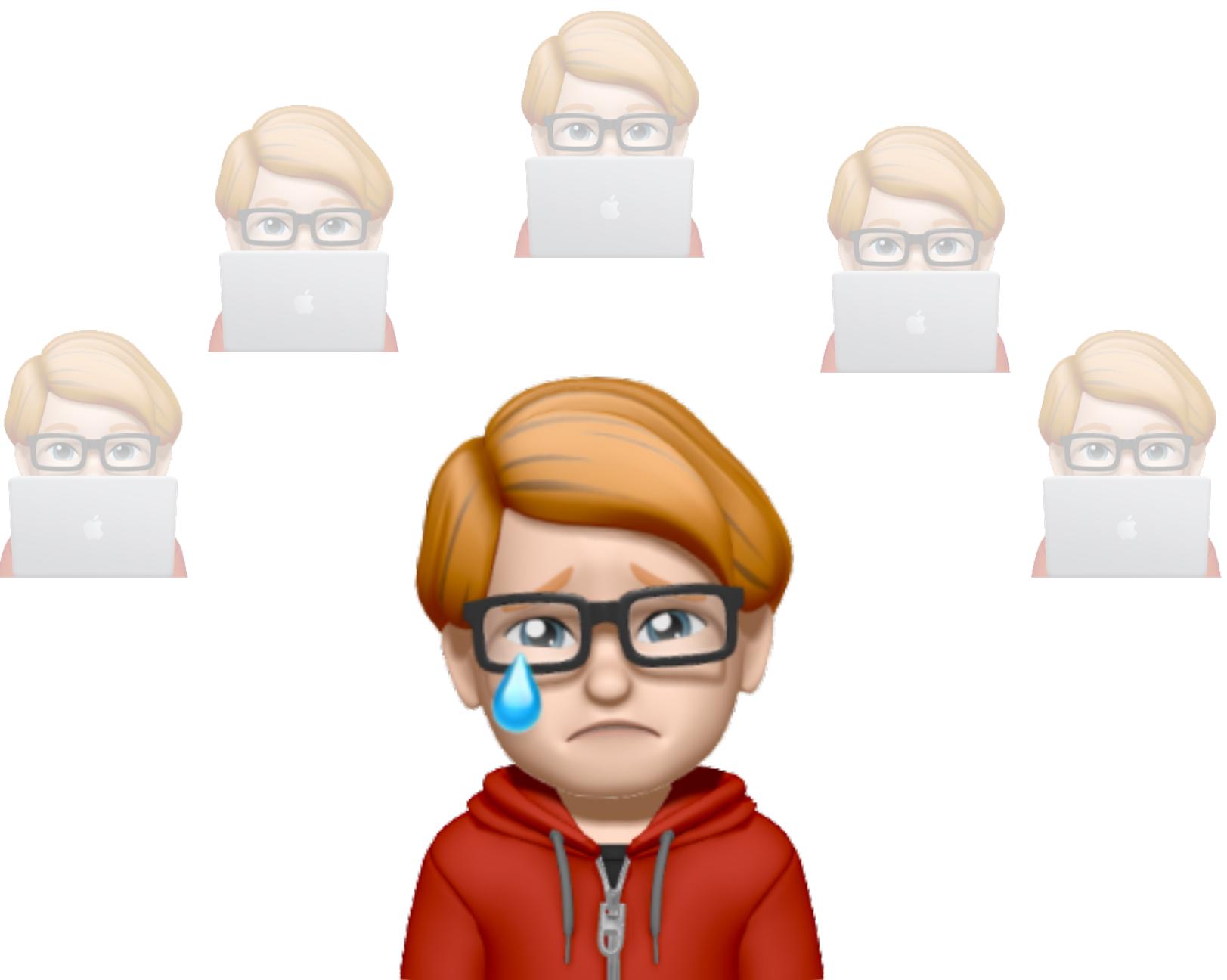


#### Loss of your peer group



### 3. First Steps

---



#### **Loss of your peer group**

You now have a  
different peer group

Technical  
Leadership

Engineering  
Management



### 3. First Steps

---



You now have a different peer group

Technical Leadership

Engineering Management





## 3. First Steps



## 4. People Problems

## 4. People Problems



### 1-2-1 meetings



What should to ask?

Sometimes they are  
uncomfortable and  
awkward

They don't seem very  
effective

## 4. People Problems

---

### 1-2-1 meetings



What should to ask?

Sometimes they are uncomfortable and awkward

They don't seem very effective

Ask what they want to discuss

Also prepare what you want to discuss

Choose the right open vs future closed

Have a few ice breakers / prompts



## 4. People Problems

---

### 1-2-1 meetings



What should to ask?

Sometimes they are uncomfortable and awkward

They don't seem very effective

Get to know people

Not always be about work

Sometimes people are awkward, including you!

Take notes, so you can track progress and effectiveness



# 4. People Problems



# Note Taking During One on Ones

09 October 2017

I've been experimenting with various note taking strategies when having my regular 30 minutes one on ones (1:1s) with my team. After a few tries I think I've found one that fits the way I operate. Of course this is not meant to be used as is, since note taking is quite personal. However there might be something interesting to you! Of course j

## # Why I Try To Av

## Focus And Discussion

Adding a laptop to a 1:1 makes it easier to switch between tasks. I might want to do something else, like check my email or respond to messages. Focused on the current conversation, I can quickly switch back to the laptop and continue the discussion.

Another problem is that it can sometime make sure depending on the room situation the other person. It feels more



# Get to know people

# Not always be about work

Sometimes people are  
awkward, including you!

Take notes, so you can track progress and effectiveness



## 4. People Problems



### **Dealing with conflict**



Within your own team

Between you and your team

Between your team and another

Between you and the business

Feeling stuck in the middle

## 4. People Problems

---

### Dealing with conflict



Within your own team

Between you and your team

Between your team and another

Between you and the business

Feeling stuck in the middle

Doing the right thing is hard

Have empathy, and be fair

Have a plan, but prepare to think on your feet

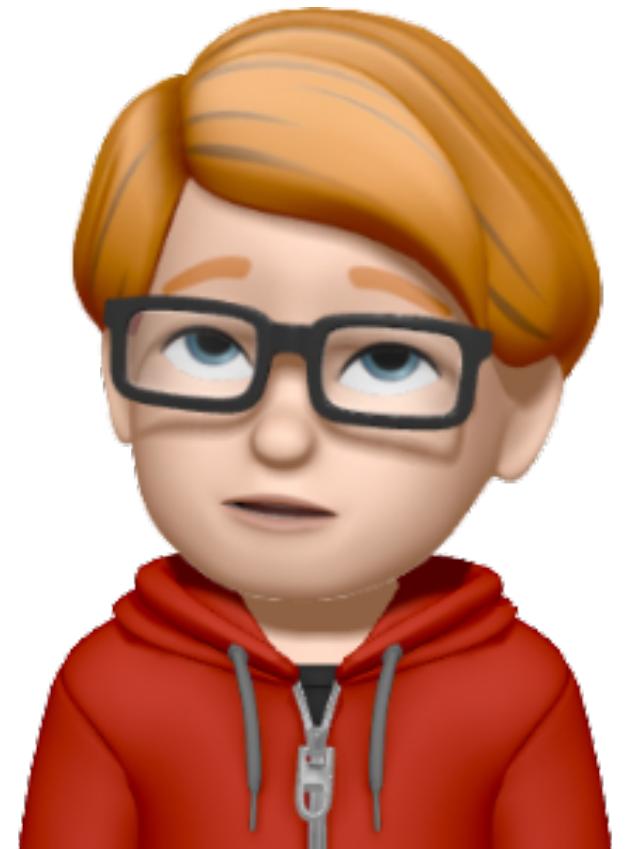
Ensure you have support; confide in other leaders



## 4. People Problems



### Growing a team



How do I manage people with different skills and seniority?

Am I spending too much time on problems?

Am I nurturing talent?

## 4. People Problems

---

### Growing a team



How do I manage people with different skills and seniority?

Am I spending too much time on problems?

Am I nurturing talent?

Have confidence in your technical skills

You now have different responsibilities, and not everyone will understand



## 4. People Problems

---



### Growing a team

How do I manage people with different skills and seniority?

Am I spending too much time on problems?

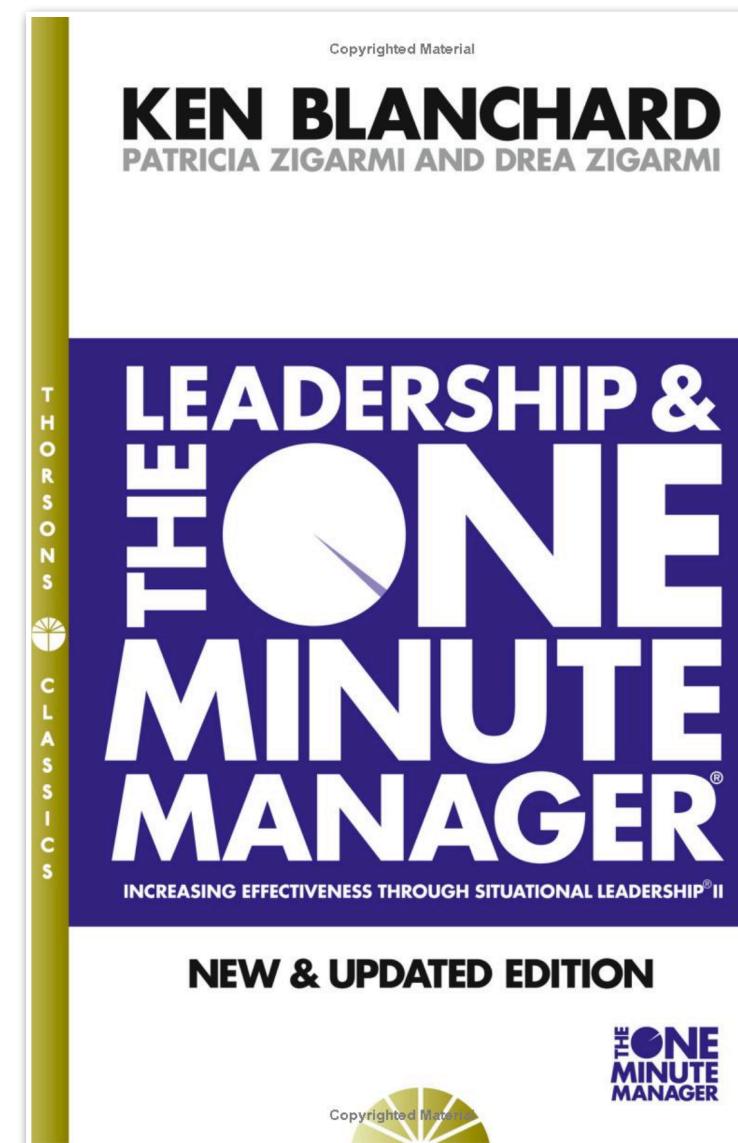
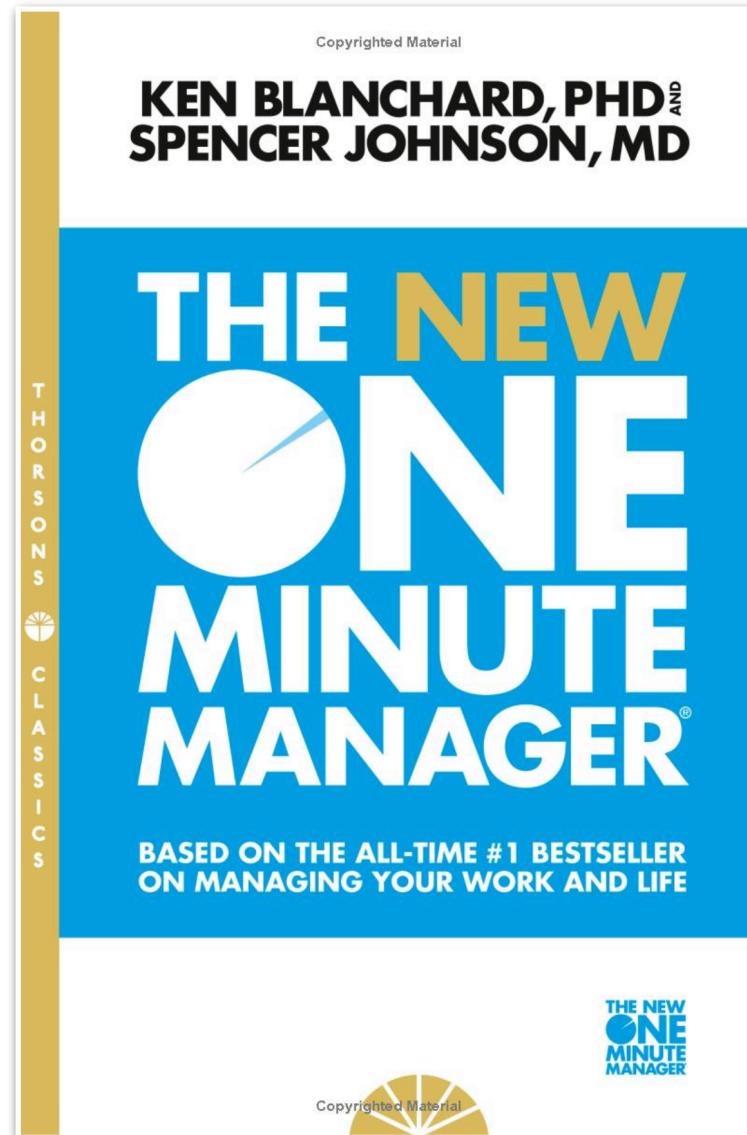
Am I nurturing talent?

You are no longer building software, you are building a team

Do not neglect rising stars

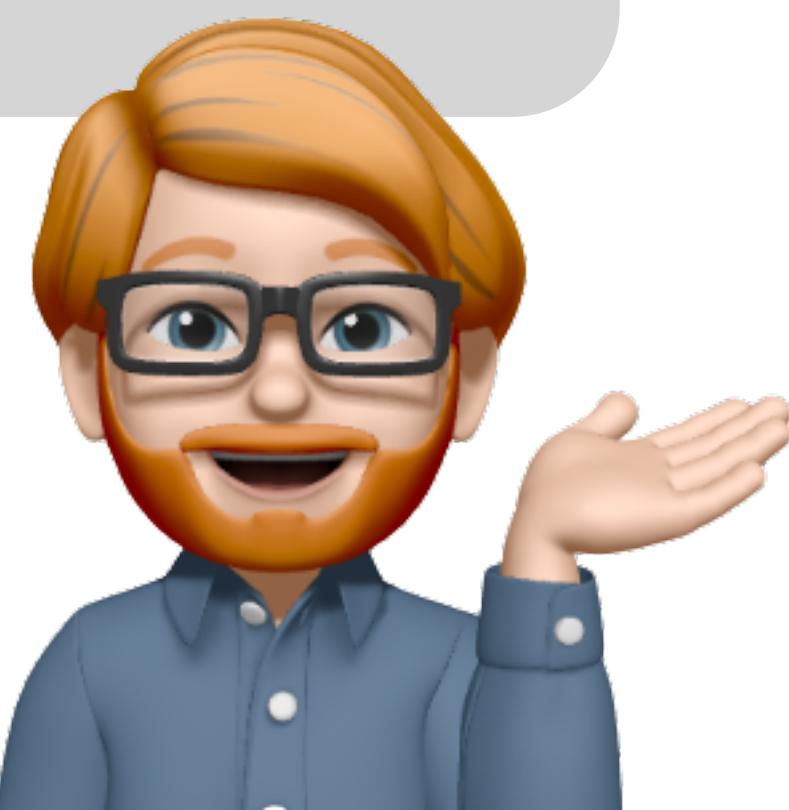


## 4. People Problems



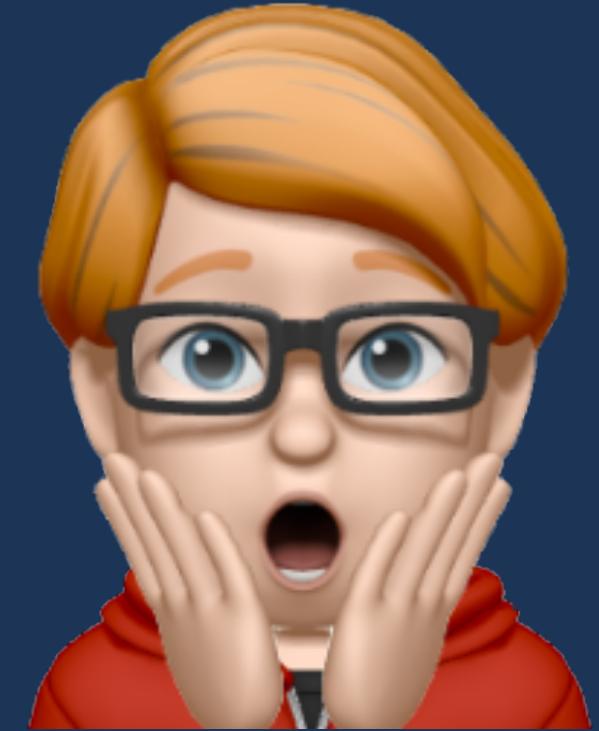
From The One Minute Manager

*"Goals Begin Behaviours  
Consequences Maintain  
Behaviours"*





## 4. People Problems

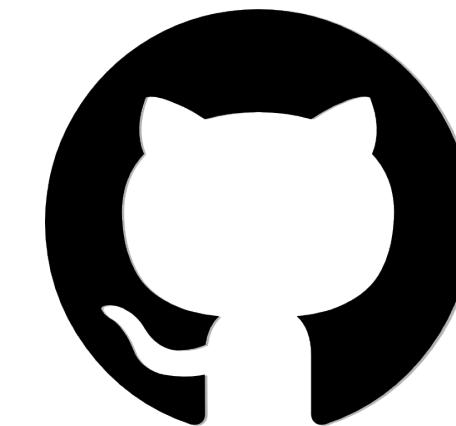
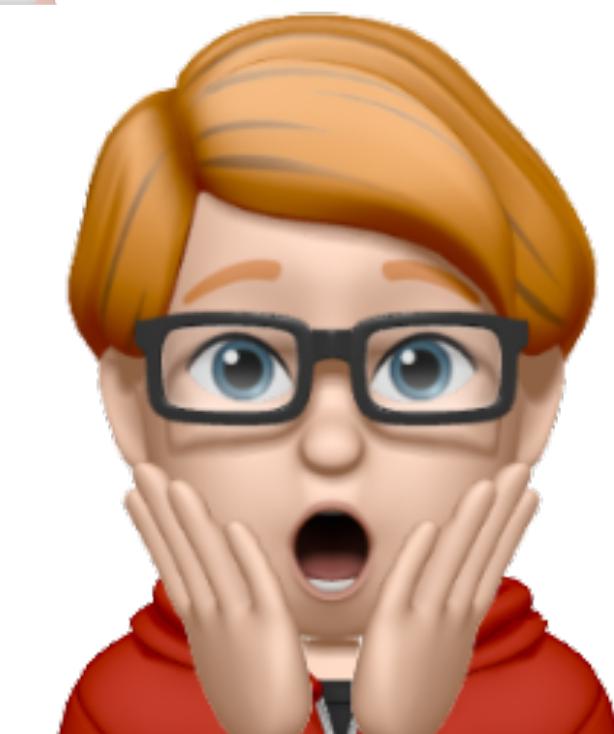
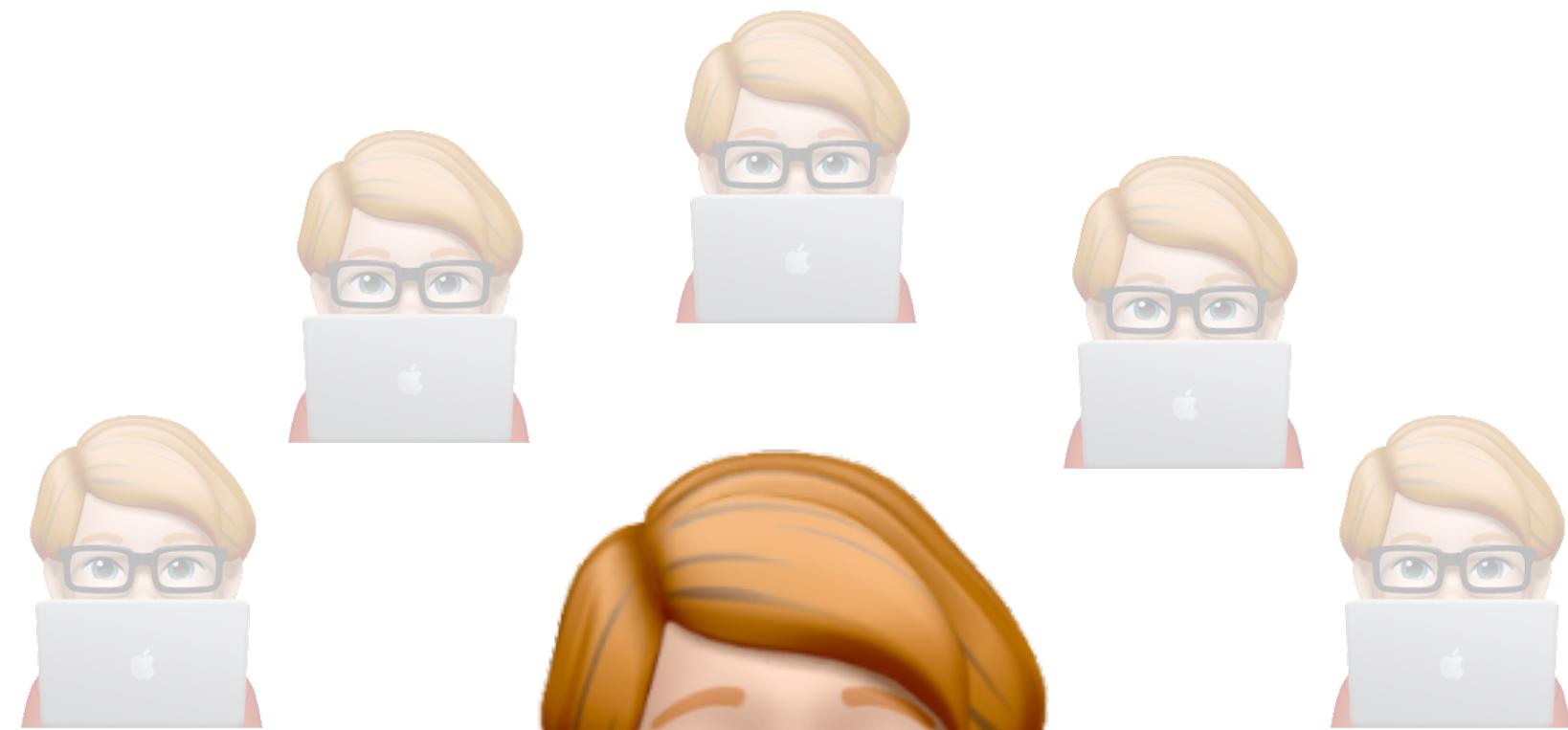


## 5. Technical Leadership

## 5. Technical Leadership



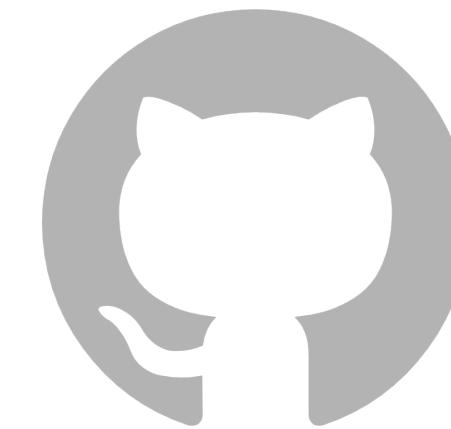
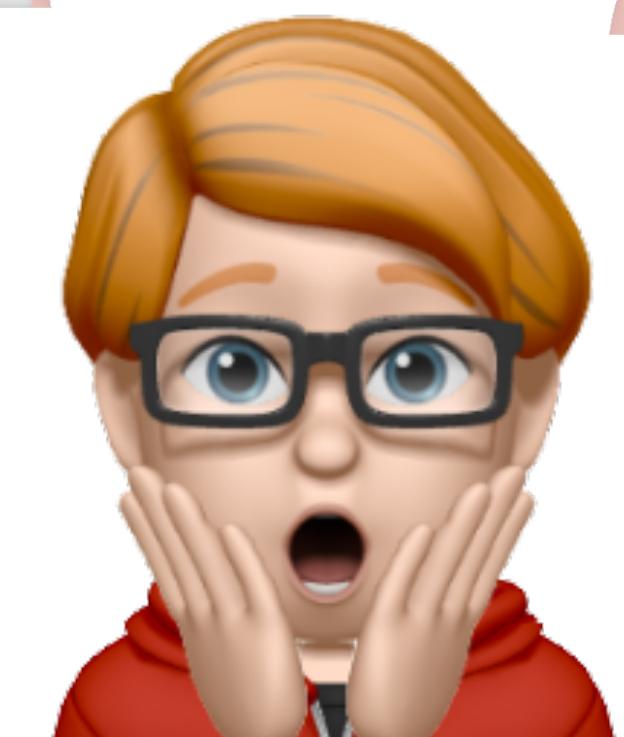
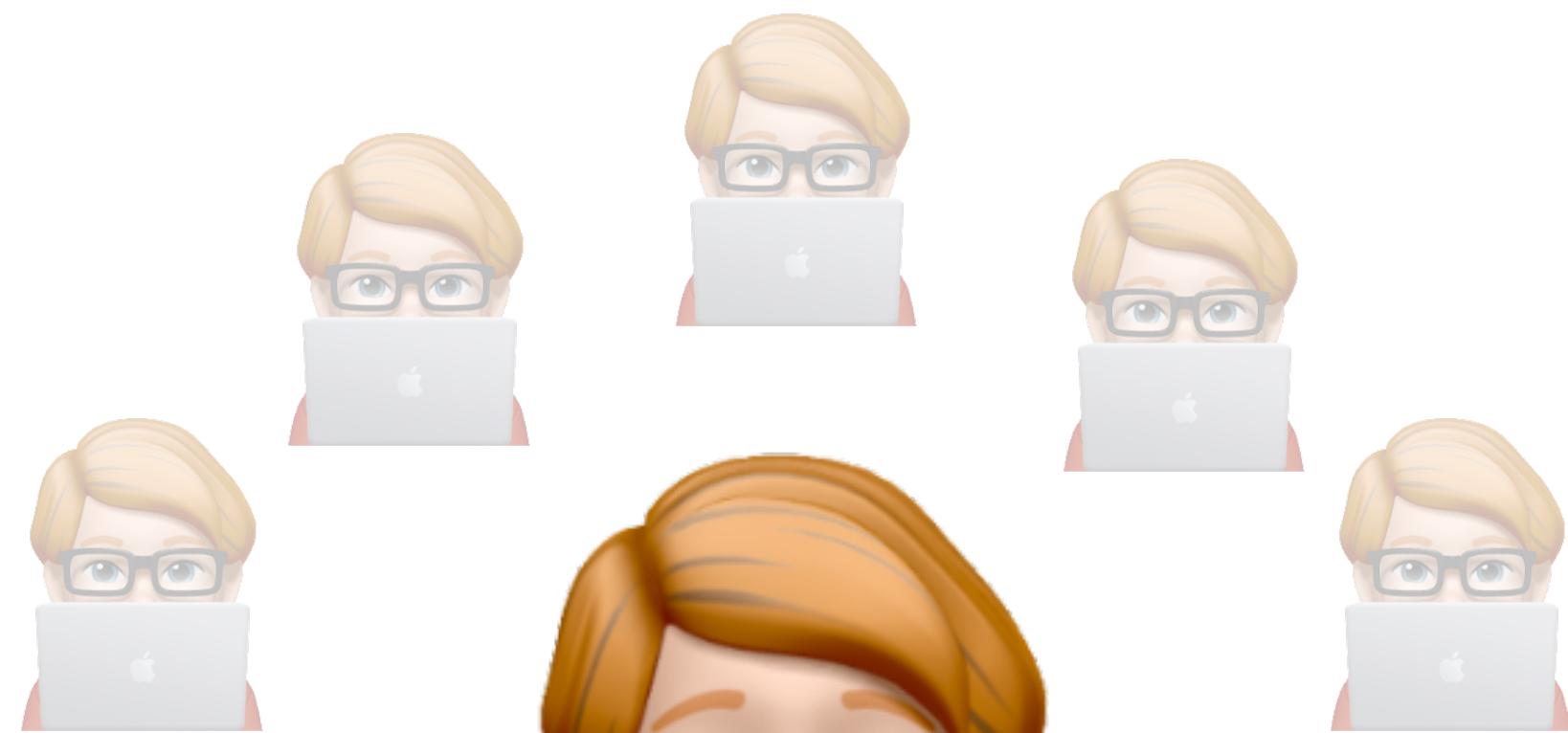
**Loss of your technical chops**



## 5. Technical Leadership



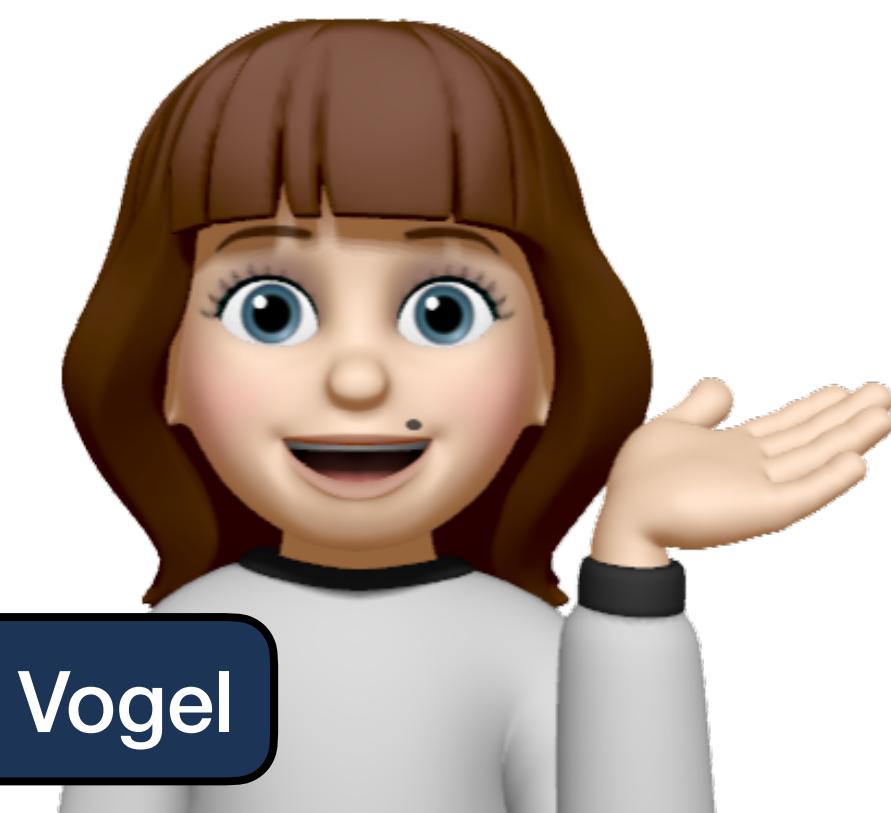
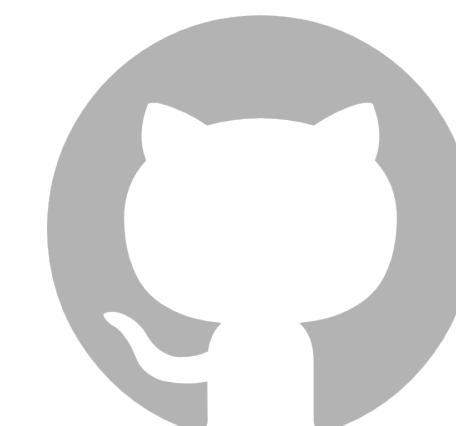
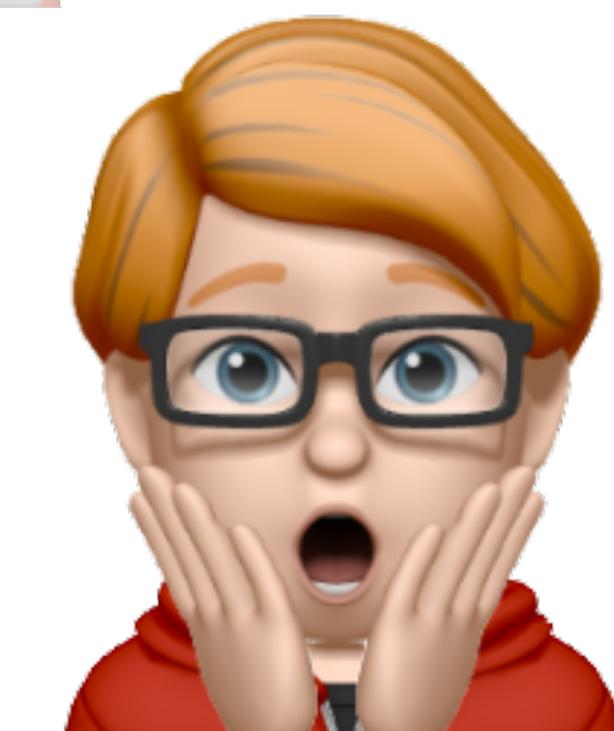
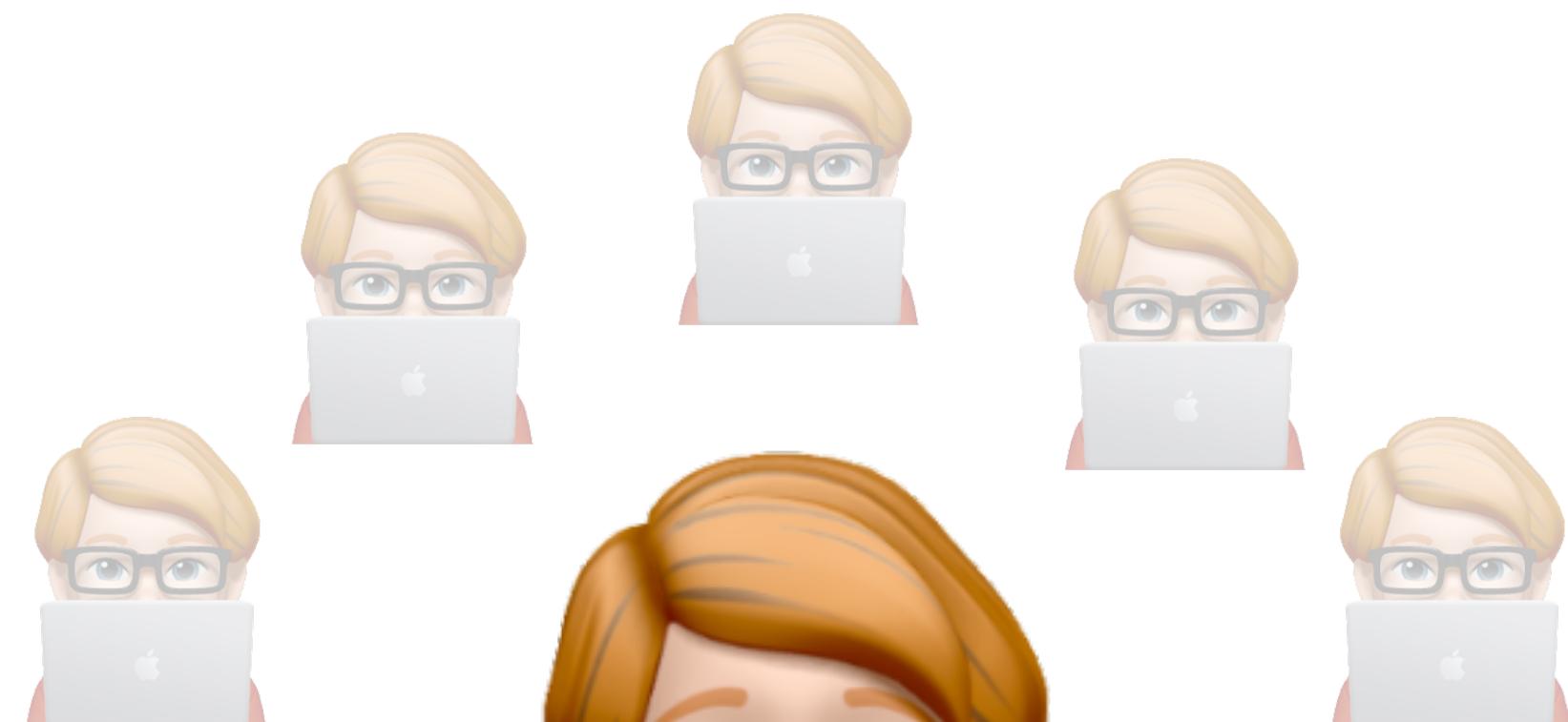
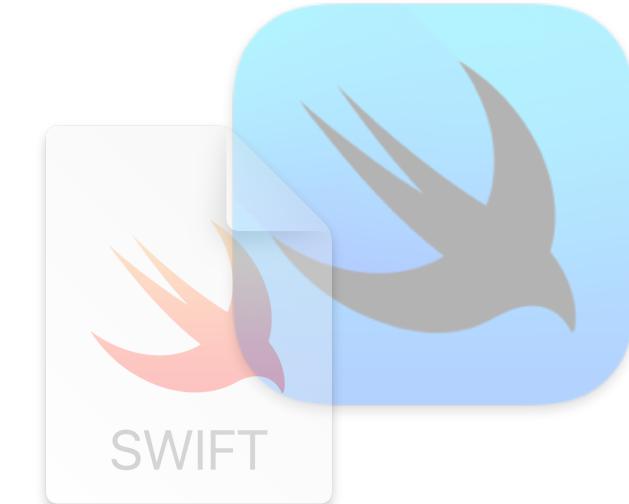
**Loss of your technical chops**



## 5. Technical Leadership



**Loss of your technical chops**



Leah Vogel

## 5. Technical Leadership

### Loss of your technical chops

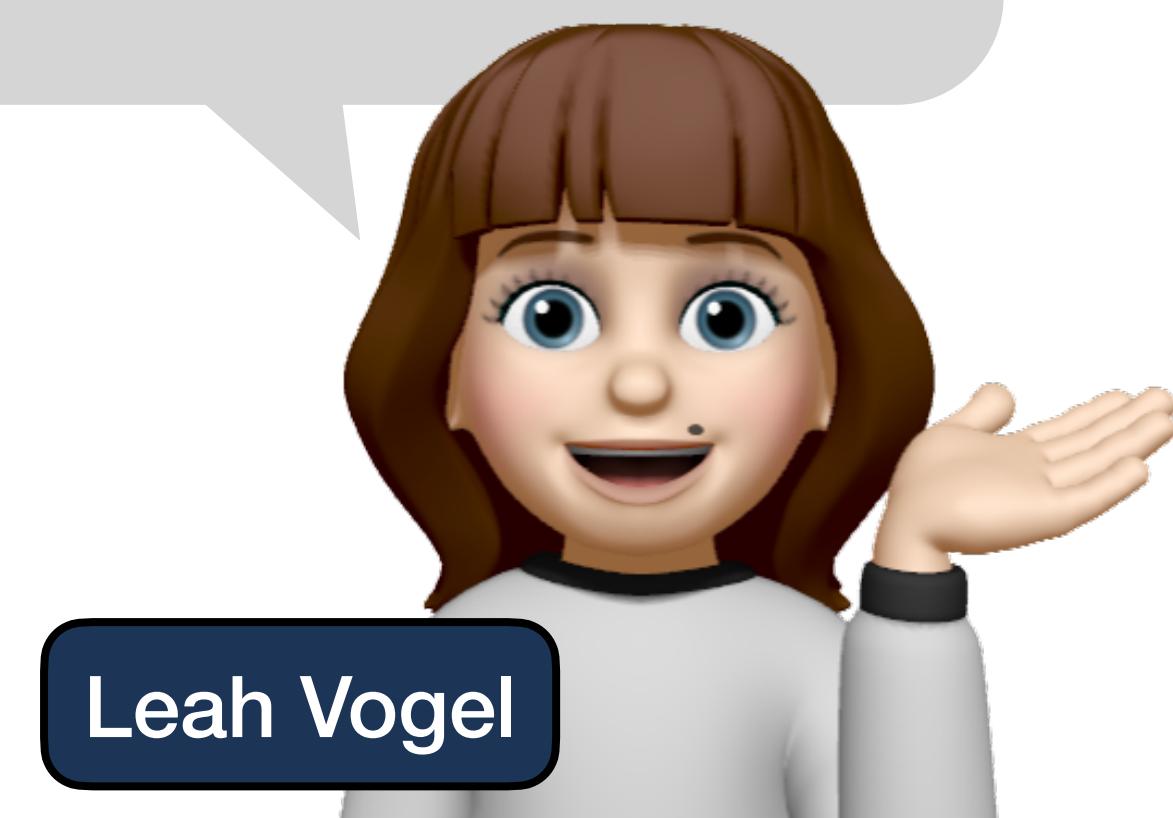


You don't have to 100% lose them

Not hands on, but *hands warm*, development

Take yourself out of the critical path

Work on bugs, experiments, code review



Leah Vogel

## 5. Technical Leadership

### Loss of your technical chops



Watch WWDC

Attend conferences, meetups

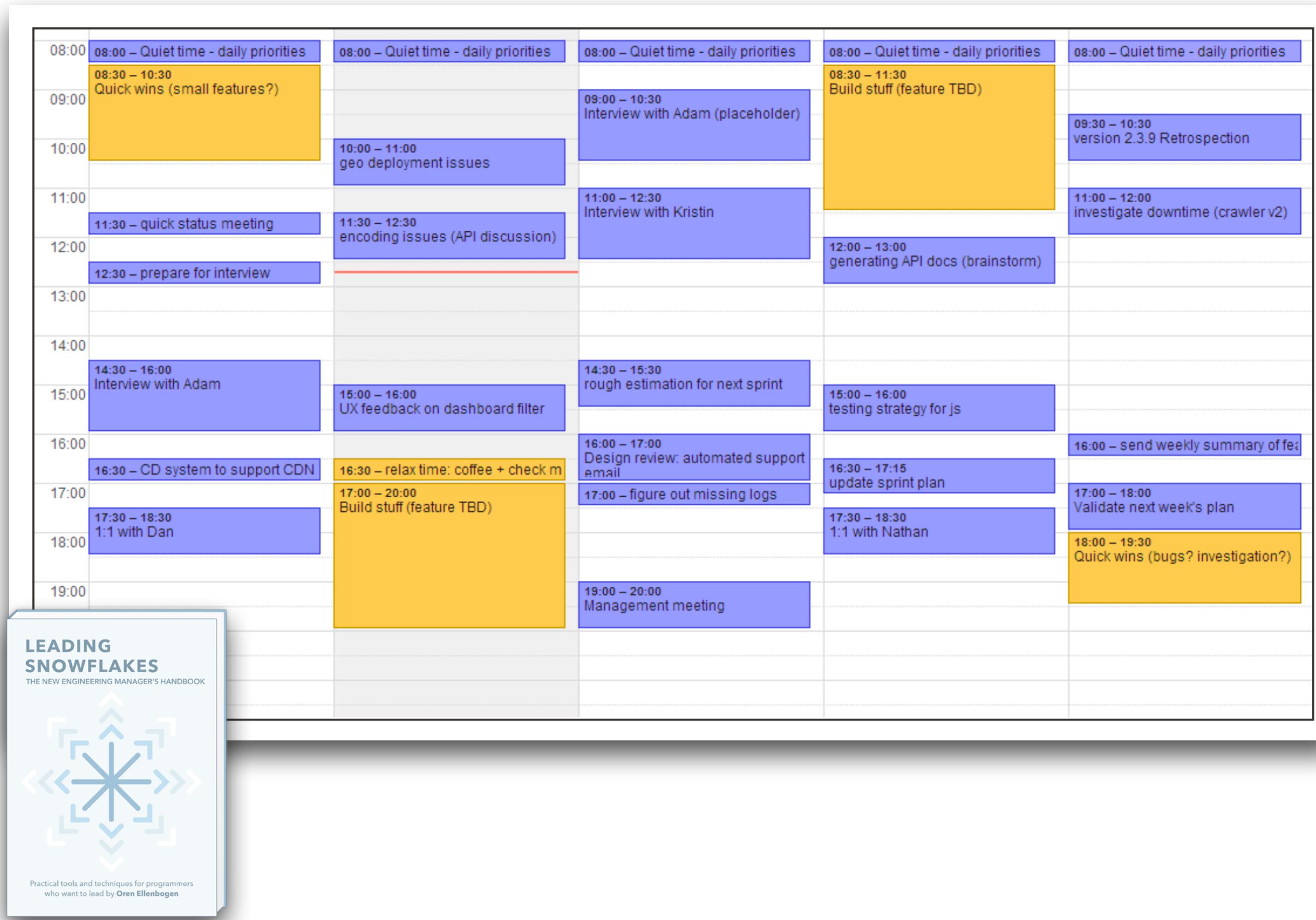
Discuss code with devs

Keep an area of expertise;  
Provisioning, Git, CI/CD, Regex



## 5. Technical Leadership

### Switch between “Manager” and “Maker” modes



Use the maker calendar



## 5. Technical Leadership

### Loss of your technical chops



Trust your team

Your ignorance is now a super power to ask *stupid* questions

Normalise for juniors or introverts

Builds a shared understanding



## 5. Technical Leadership



### **Being technical enough**



I don't have time to keep  
up to date

I'm getting rusty

My technical opinions  
won't be respected

## 5. Technical Leadership



### Being technical enough



I don't have time to keep up to date

I'm getting rusty

My technical opinions won't be respected

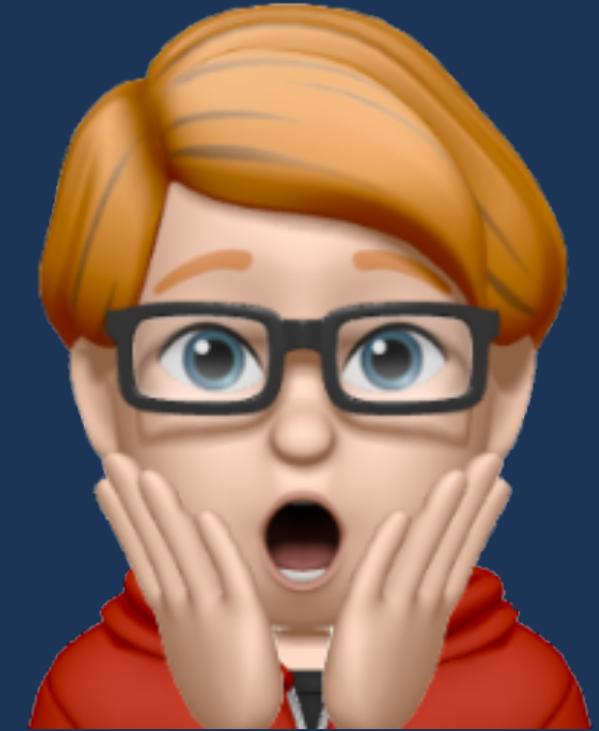
Accept others will know more, seek their help and they will appreciate it

Identify, measure and prioritise risks

Stand up for tech debt

Champion broader engineering principles





## 5. Technical Leadership



## 6. Communication

## 6. Communication



### Talking

...to techies



...to non-techies



## 6. Communication



### Talking tech to non-techies



Giving the right level of detail

Making people care about tech issues

Getting buy-in from non-technical stakeholders

## 6. Communication



### Talking tech to non-techies

Giving the right level of detail

Making people care about tech issues

Getting buy-in from non-technical stakeholders

Make it tangible; money, time, reputation, customer satisfaction, speed

Back it up with data and precedent

Employ metaphors, diagrams, presentations

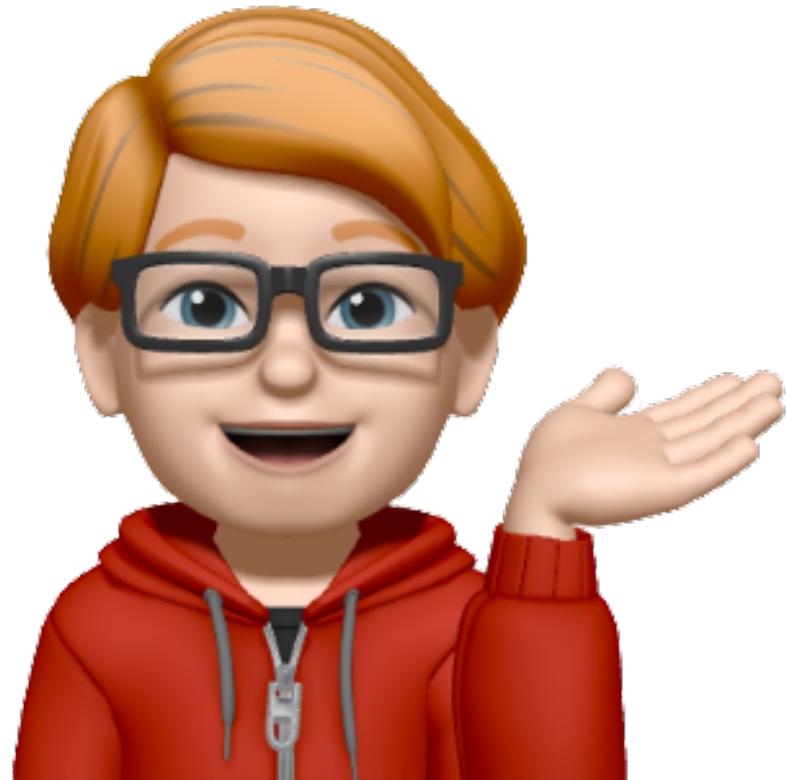
You are the voice of “tech”



## 6. Communication



### **Talking non-tech to techies**

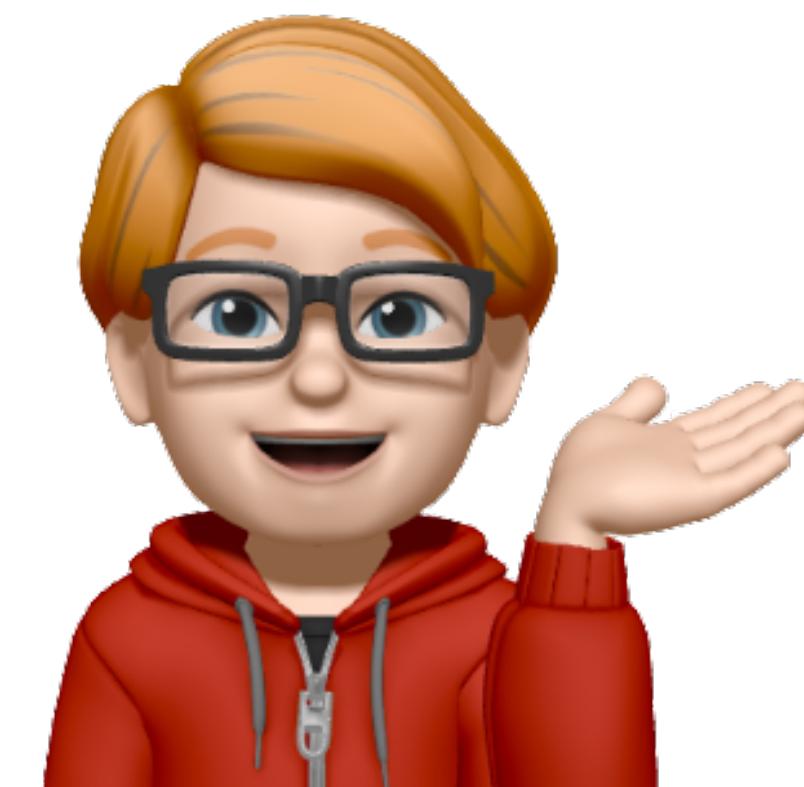


Making people care  
about non-tech issues

Policy changes

Important but  
uninteresting news

## 6. Communication



### Talking non-tech to techies

Making people care  
about non-tech issues

Policy changes

Important but  
uninteresting news

Explain the effects, now and into  
the future

Use same language as wider  
company communications

Be clear and honest

You are the voice of “the business”

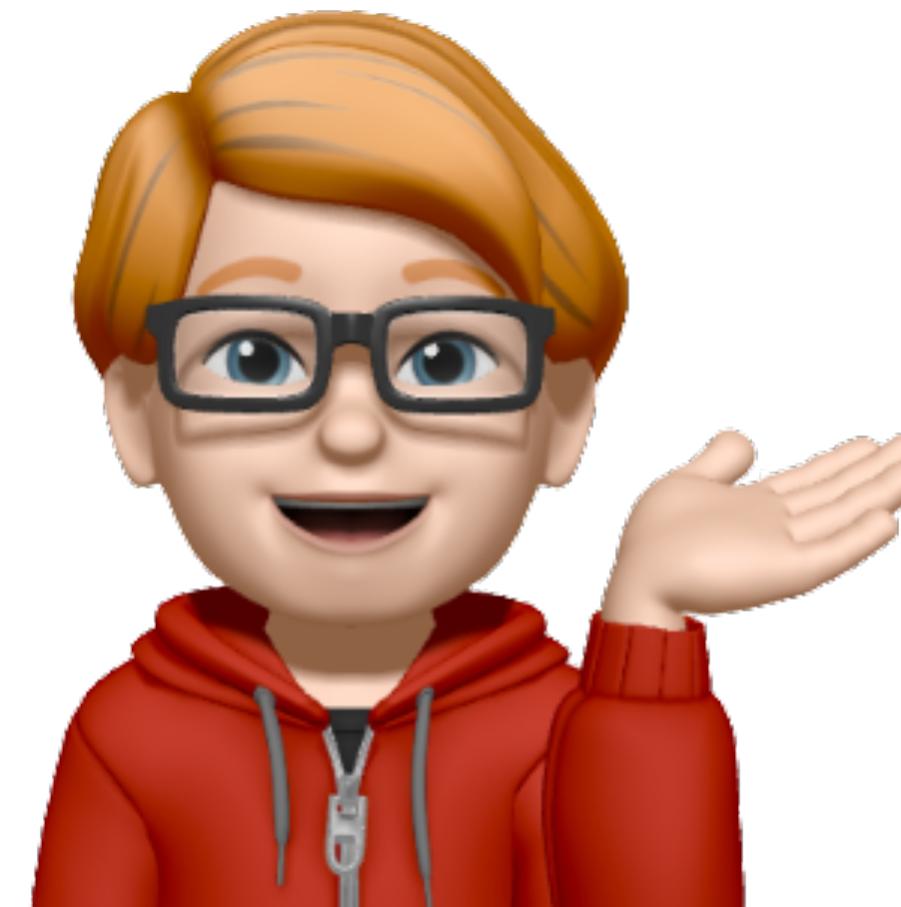


## 6. Communication



### Talking

...to techies



...to non-techies



## 6. Communication

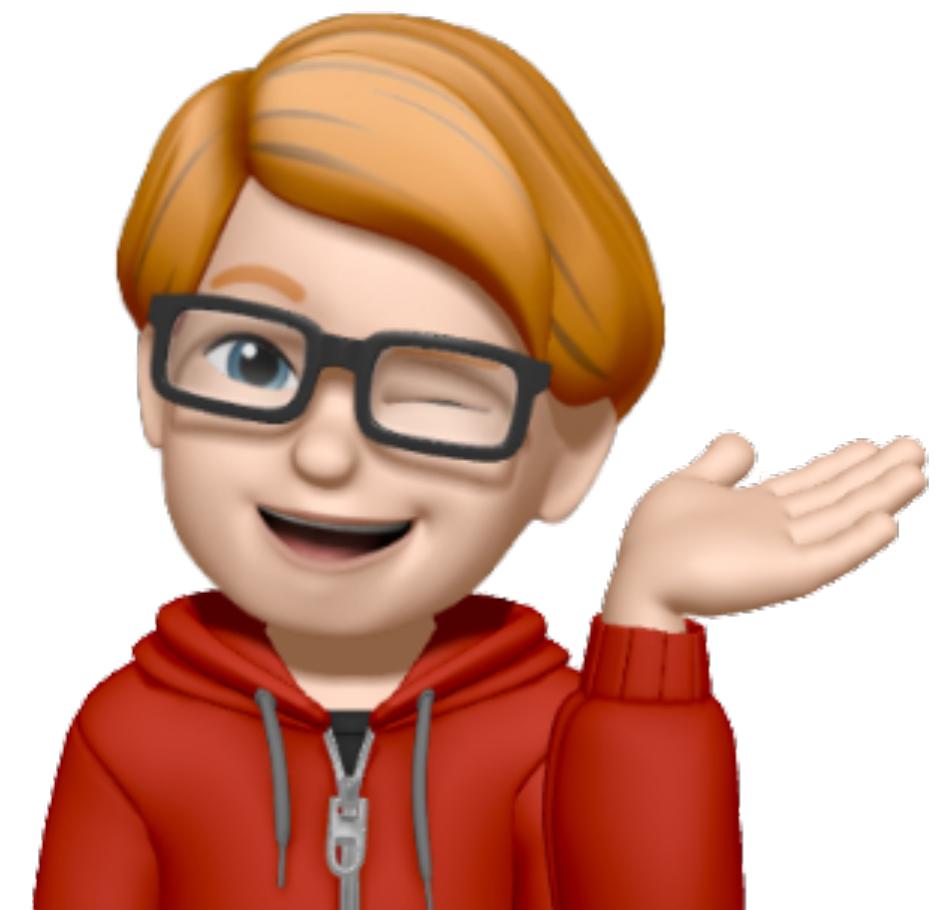


### Talking

...to techies



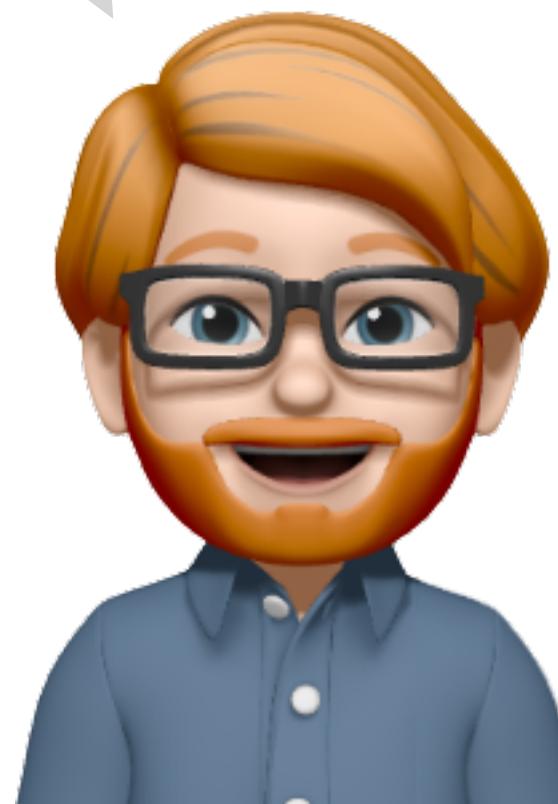
...to non-techies



You are the “glue”

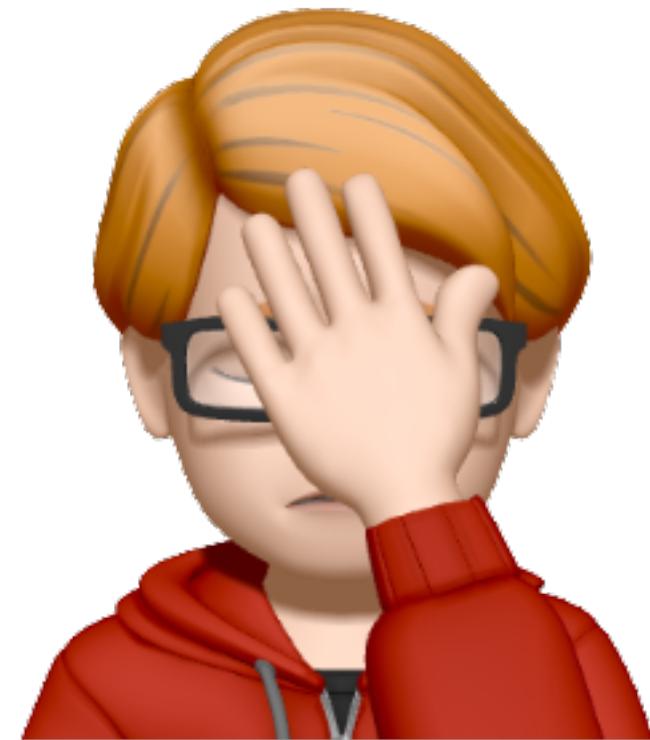
Be consistent

Adapt your message  
as needed





### **Being effective**



Why are my changes not embedded?

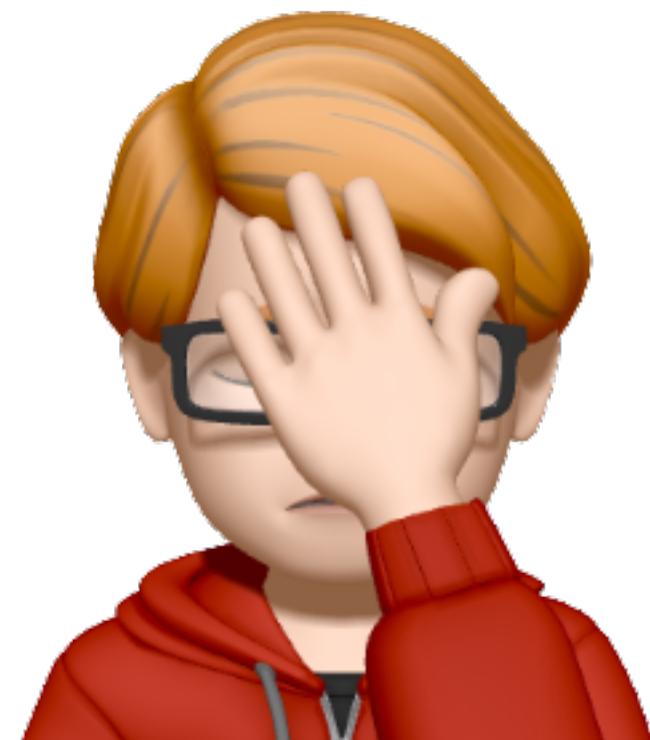
Why am I misunderstood?

Why do people forget what I've said?

Why must I repeat myself?



### **Being effective**



Why are my changes not embedded?

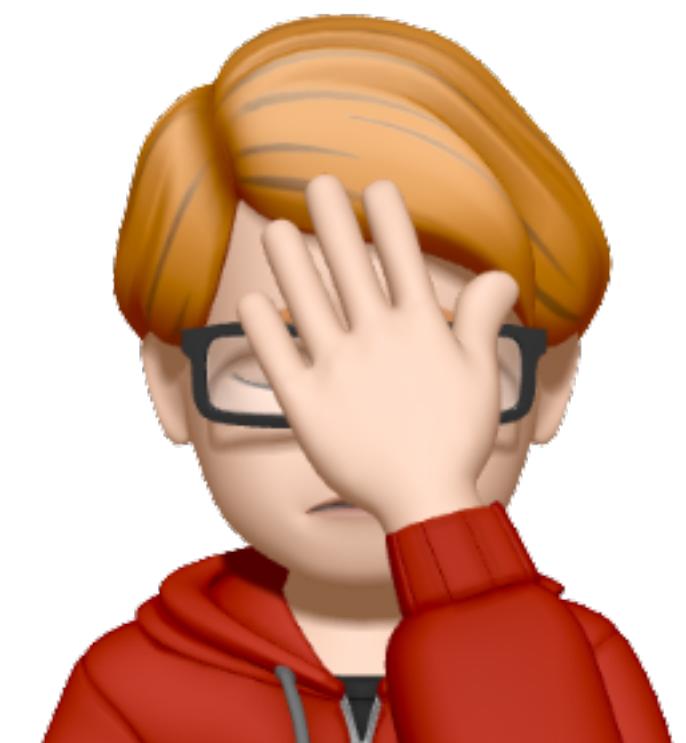
Why am I misunderstood?

Why do people forget what I've said?

Why must I repeat myself?

Have you understood and remembered everything your boss has told you?!





### Being effective

Why are my changes not embedded?

Why am I misunderstood?

Why do people forget what I've said?

Why must I repeat myself?

Do Repeat Yourself

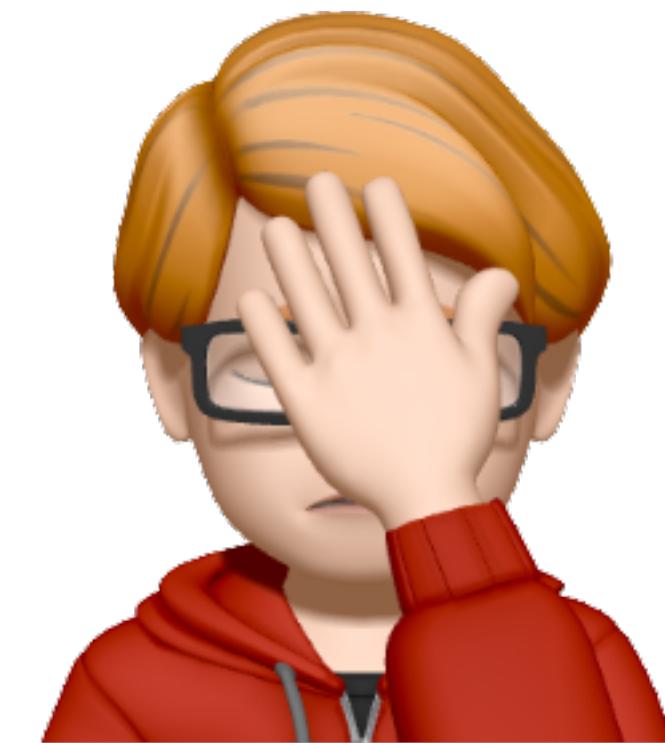
Be forgiving to others and yourself

Grab people's attention

Inject some personality with emojis, memes, gifs



## 6. Communication



### Being effective

Why are my changes not embedded?

Why am I misunderstood?

Why do people forget what I've said?

Why must I repeat myself?

Take your time; clarity is paramount

Connect what you are saying to a larger narrative or strategy

Use all forums & tools;  
1-2-1s, team meetings,  
Slack, email etc

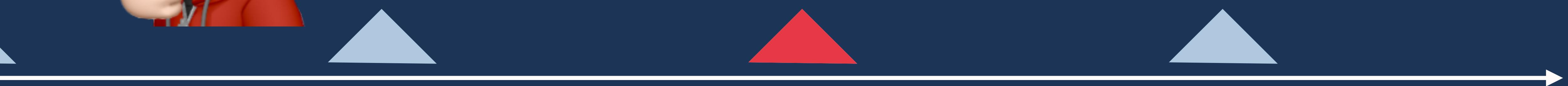




## 6. Communication



## 7. You as a Leader





### **Being organised**



Tracking many different,  
sometimes unrelated, projects

Urgent vs important  
prioritisations

Remembering yours and others  
actions, and the deadlines

Dealing with context switching



### Being organised



Tracking many different,  
sometimes unrelated, projects

Urgent vs important  
prioritisations

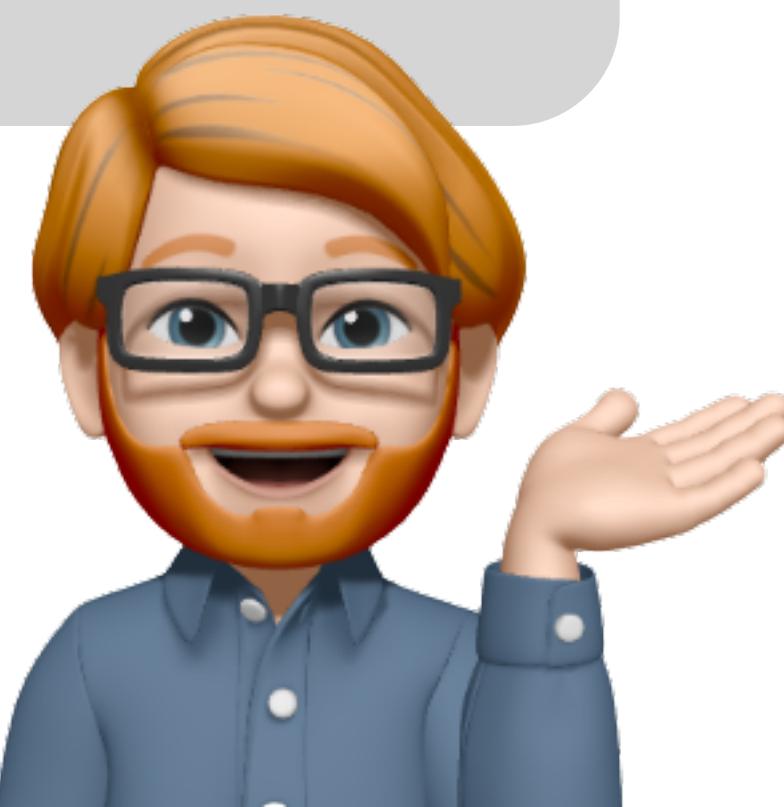
Remembering yours and others  
actions, and the deadlines

Dealing with context switching

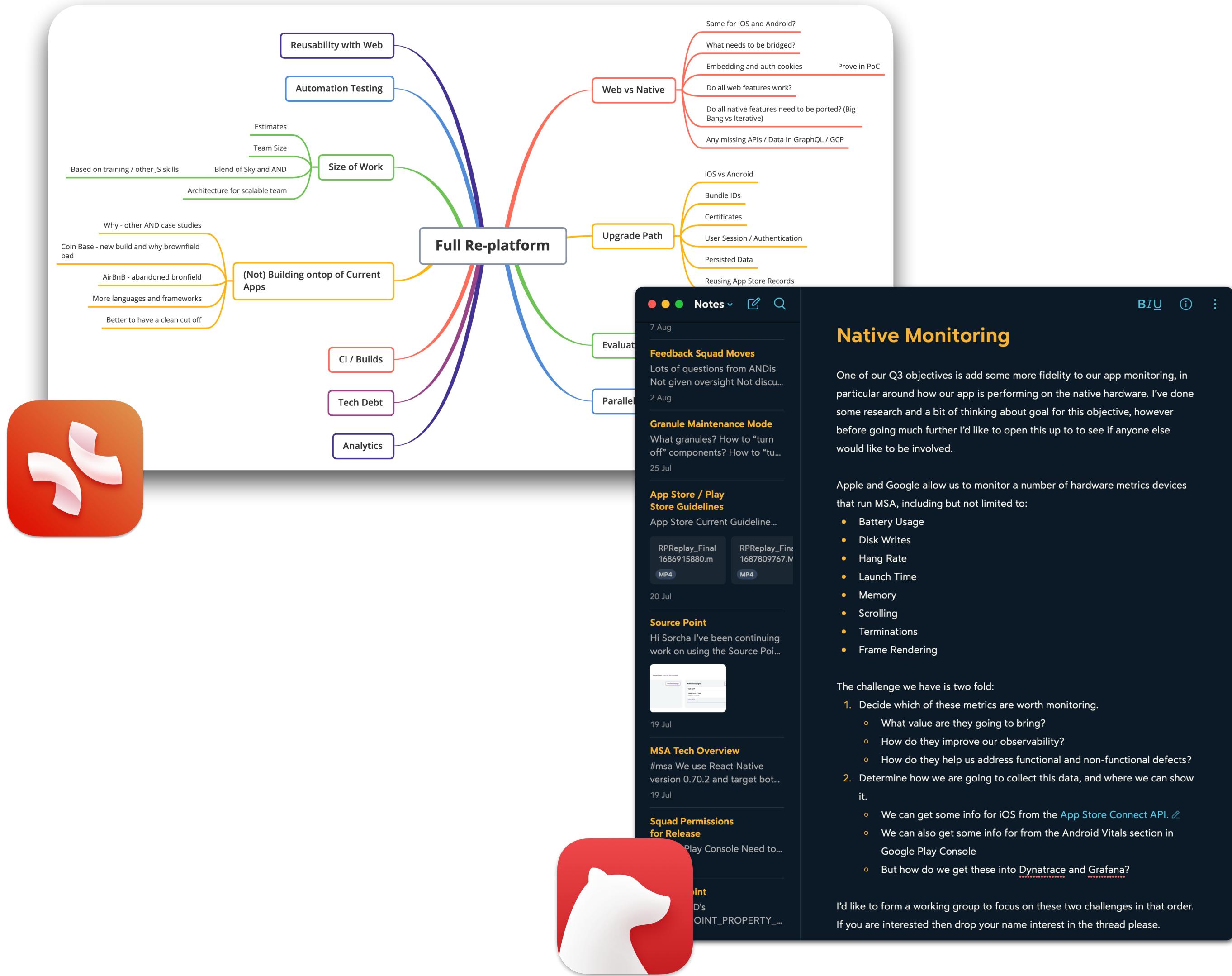
Find a tool or process that  
works for you

I use;

- Hand written notes
- Four colour pen
- Things for todos
- Bear for .md typed notes
- XMind for mind mapping



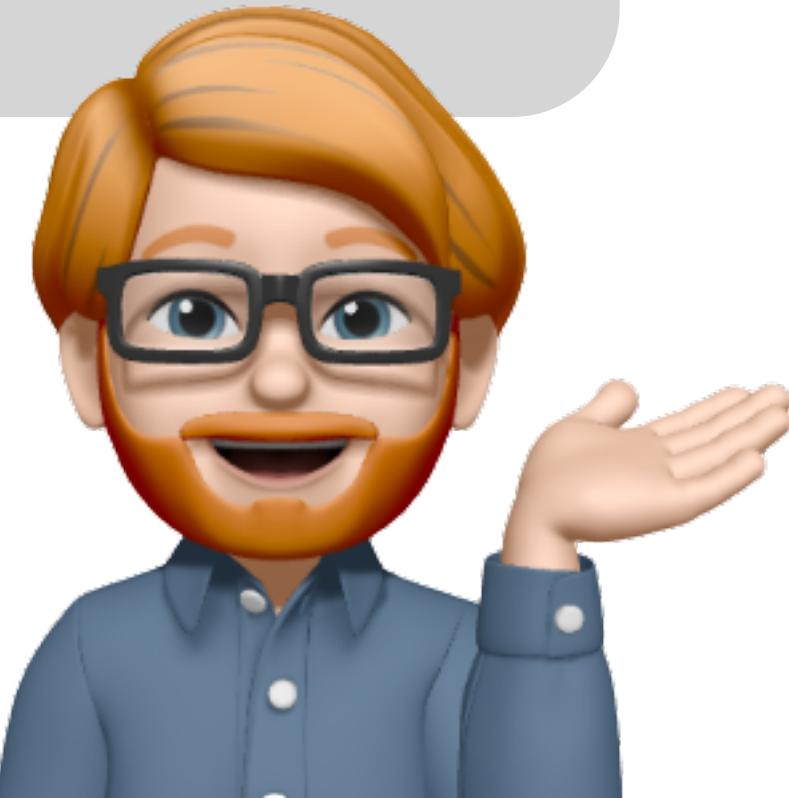
## 7. You as a Leader



Use a mind map (notepad, whiteboard, digital) to get stuff out of your head

Create connections and areas of similarities

Turn these into actions



### Being organised



Tracking many different,  
sometimes unrelated, projects

Urgent vs important  
prioritisations

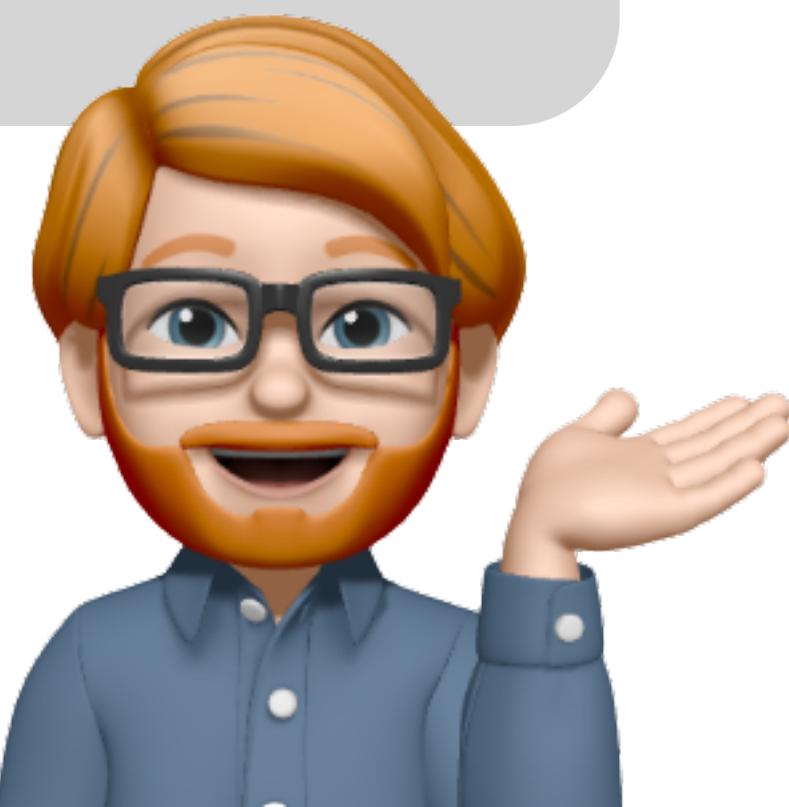
Remembering yours and others  
actions

Dealing with context switching

Spend time curating and  
refactoring your calendar

Look ahead to make sure  
you are prepared

Get good with your app of  
choice; I use Fantastical





### Being organised



Tracking many different,  
sometimes unrelated, projects

Urgent vs important  
prioritisations

Remembering yours and others  
actions

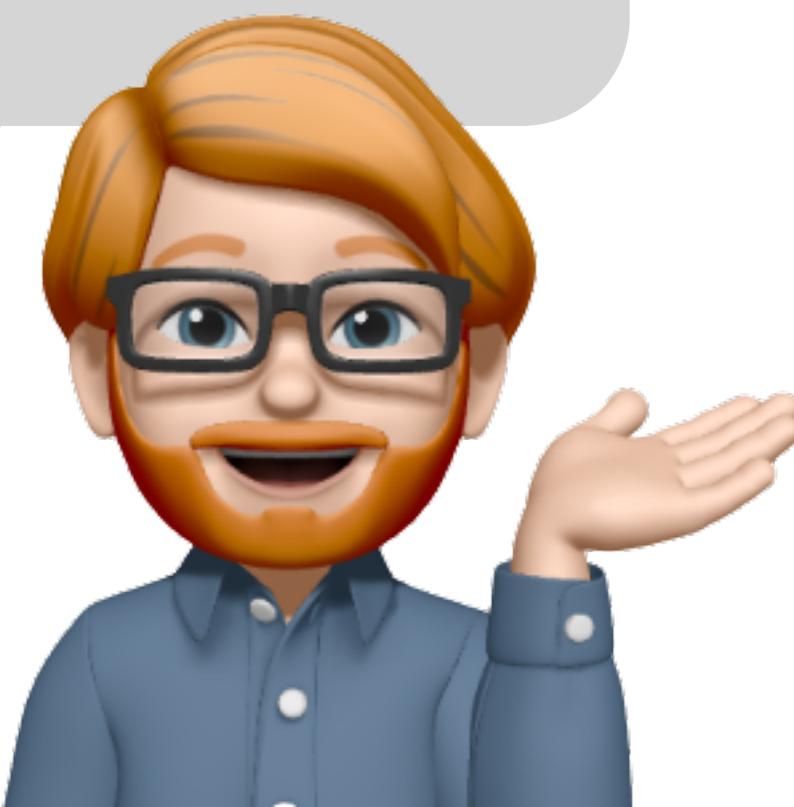
Dealing with context switching

Manage your context  
switching

Book time in with yourself  
to do *your work*

Mute Slack, email etc for  
Flow State work

Use a Pomodoro timer





## Feeling overwhelmed



Doing “people stuff” is draining

When to be cautious vs acting swiftly

Perfectionism in my work

Everyone needs me, and there is no time for my work



### Feeling overwhelmed



Doing “people stuff” is draining

When to be cautious vs acting swiftly

Perfectionism in my work

Everyone needs me, and there is no time for my work

Don’t do back to back 1-2-1s

Learn from your mistakes, but realise inaction is also an action

Use an MVP approach, and iterate





### Feeling overwhelmed



Doing “people stuff” is draining

When to be cautious vs acting swiftly

Perfectionism in my work

Everyone needs me, and there is no time for my work

Practise and be kind to yourself

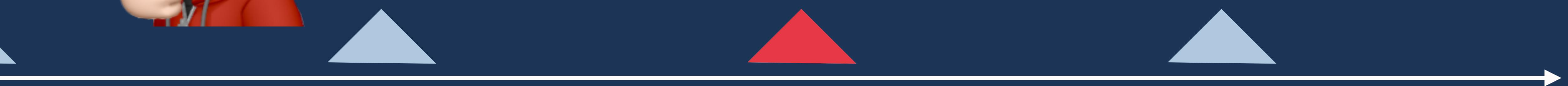
Say No and be clear on what your priorities are

Find the right work-life balance





## 7. You as a Leader





## 8. Finding Peace





## **Be selfish**

For your team to be effective, you need to be effective

Protect your time

Say No

*No Agenda?  
Then No Attenda*

You need space to think, and find your flow state





## **Be realistic**

A leader's role is diverse, evolving and multifaceted

Building people and teams is hard, but hugely rewarding

Your feedback loop is slower, so give yourself time

You cannot just watch a video / read a book on leadership, you have to do it





## **Be kind**

Find a way to switch off from work

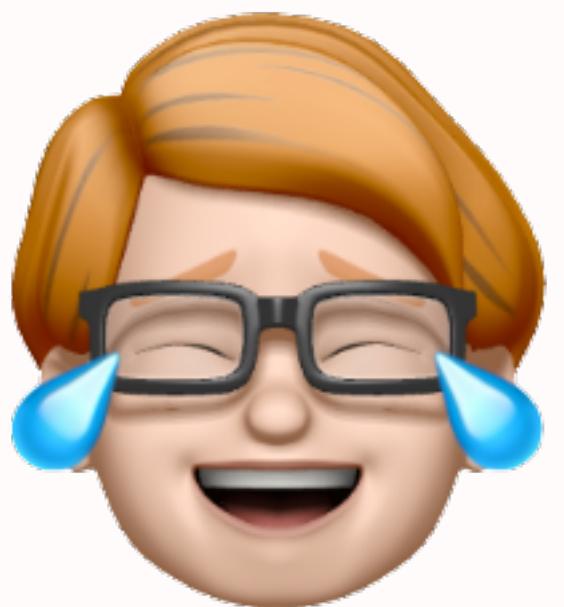
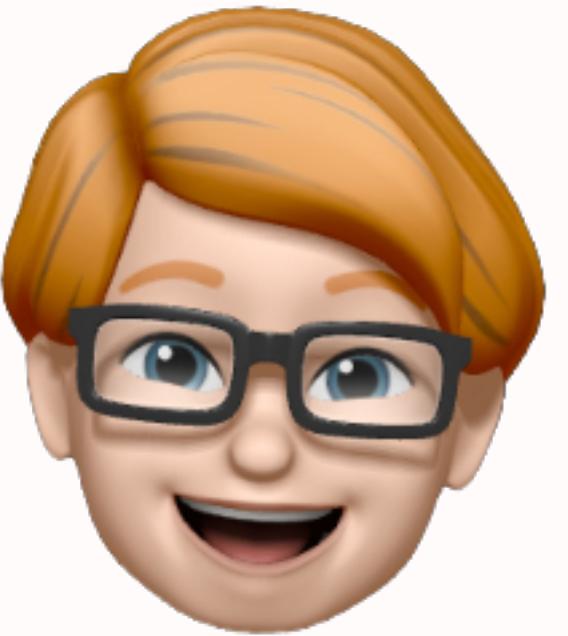
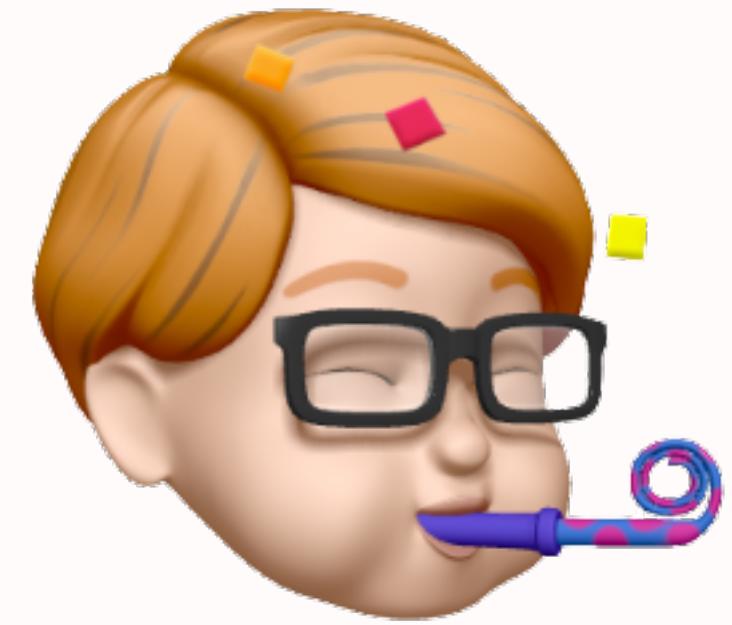
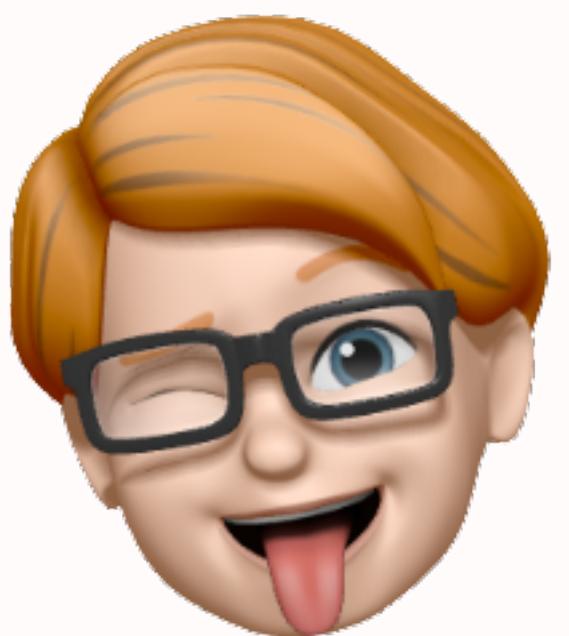
Recognise you are a team contributor, and this adds immense value

Be the role model you would want yourself

Talk about wellbeing, and normalise it



**Have fun!**





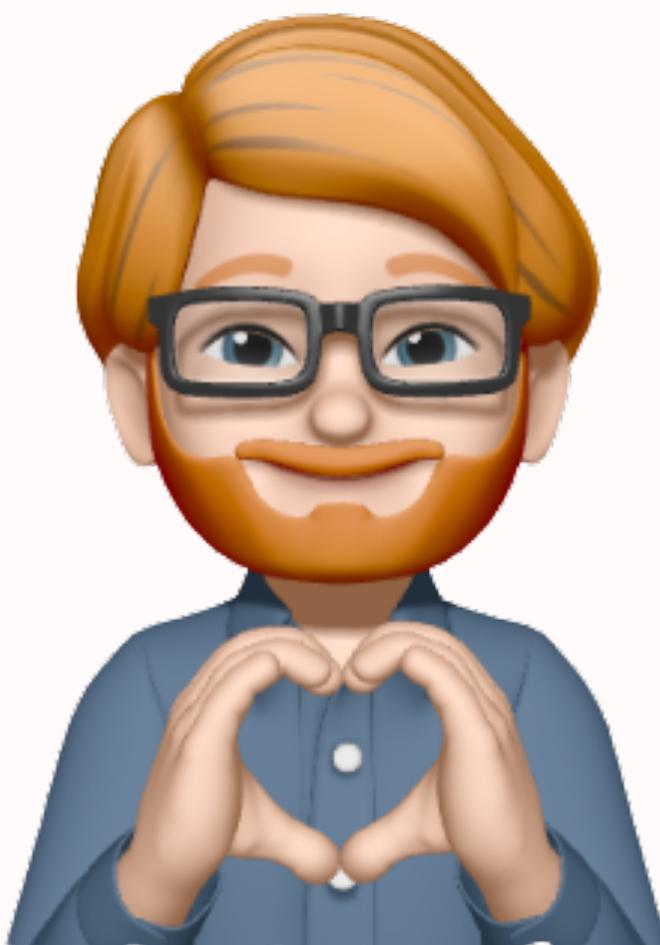
## 8. Finding Peace





The Future...

The Future



Talk about your experience

Help create a Leadership Pathway

Mentor others

Create a Manager README

The screenshot shows a digital interface for creating a Manager README. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for FEATURES, USE CASES, COMMUNITY, and LOGIN. Below the header, a profile section features a circular photo of a man with glasses, identified as Luke Stringer, Tech Principal @AND Digital, updated April 28, 2023. To the right of the profile, it says '3-8 Years of managerial experience' and 'M Manager'. On the far right are buttons for 'Share this Readme' and 'Copy link'. The main content area has a title 'MANAGER README' and a table of contents on the left with numbered items from 1 to 8, each linking to a specific section. The first section, 'Motivation for this document', contains text about working together in a team and the document's purpose. The second section, 'My Background', discusses technical expertise in mobile development, specifically native iOS development, mentioning Objective-C, Swift, UIKit, and SwiftUI. It also notes experience with Android and React Native developers. The third section, 'My Personality Quirks', is partially visible at the bottom.

- 1. Motivation for this document
- 2. My Background
- 3. My Role
- 4. My Expectations
- 5. How I Communicate
- 6. How I do Meetings
- 7. My Work Hours
- 8. My Personality Quirks

#### Motivation for this document

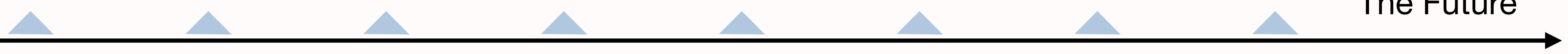
There is a good chance you are reading this document because we are working together in a team, or we will be doing so at some point in the future. We may be colleagues fulfilling similar roles, or I might be working as your tech lead or manager. This document aims to give you an overview how to best work with me. I'll explain what my current role entails, what I value and expect from others, and in turn what you can expect from me.

#### My Background

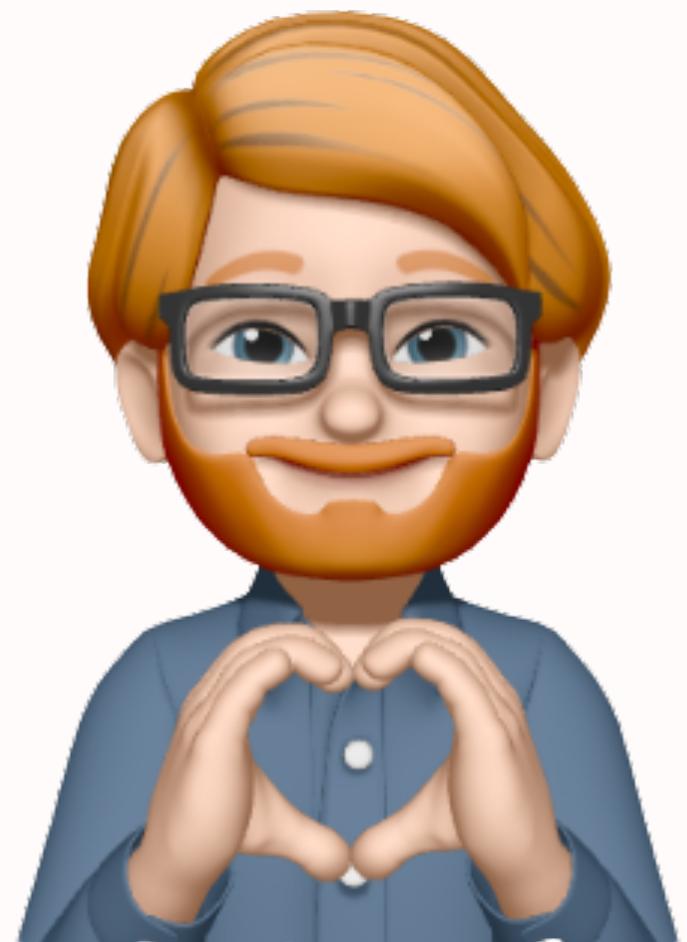
My technical background is in mobile development, specifically native iOS development. I started building apps around 2009 with the iPhone OS 3 SDK. I've written apps with Objective-C and Swift, using both UIKit and SwiftUI. I've also worked closely with native Android developers and React Native developers, and although I've not shipped my own production code with these frameworks I have a good grasp of what they entail.

One technical subject I try to maintain expertise in is version control with Git. (Past colleagues have noted that I was at my happiest when I was drawing a branching diagram.) If you want some support with using Git, whether it be solving merge conflicts, undoing an error, or just trying to figure out what could have led to some weird problem, I'm always happy to assist.

Along with my direct experience of writing code I have also spent roughly half of my career doing "people things". Whether this be Engineering Management, Line



The Future



Talk about your experience

Help create a Leadership Pathway

Mentor others

Create a Manager README

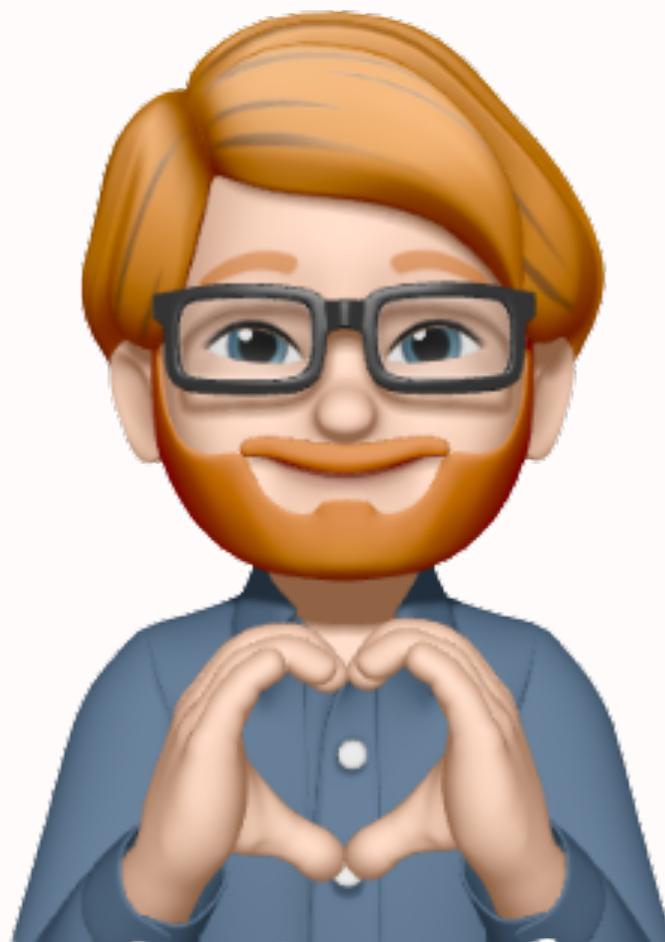
Or...

Start the cycle again

Go back to being a developer



The Future



Talk about your experience

Help create a Leadership Pathway

Mentor others

Create a Manager README

Or...

Start the cycle again

1. Developer Life



Go back to being a developer



1. Developer Life

2. Opportunity to Lead

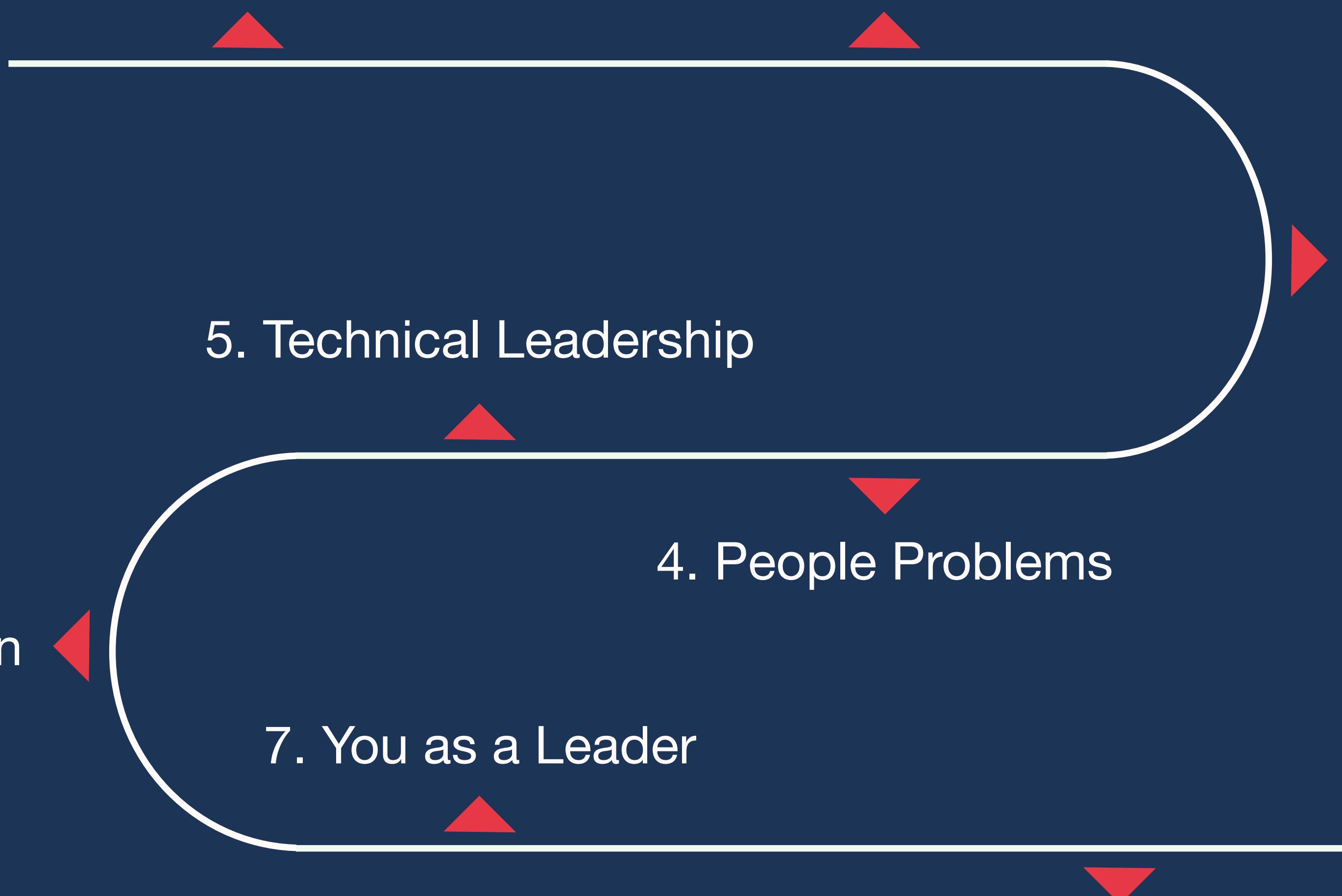
3. First Steps

5. Technical Leadership

6. Communication

7. You as a Leader

8. Finding Peace





## Books

- [The One Minute Manager](#)
- [Leadership and the One Minute Manager](#)
- [The First 90 Days](#)
- [The Phoenix Project](#)
- [Leading Snowflakes](#)



## Online Resources

- [Note Taking During One on Ones](#)
- [My Manager README](#)



## Community

- [LeadDev](#)
- [Software Lead Weekly](#)



## Talks

- [Becoming an iOS Dev, again](#)  
[by Michał Waśniewski](#)
- [Next Step: Management?](#)  
[by Leah Vogel](#)



## Tools

- [Things](#)
- [Bear](#)
- [Xmind](#)
- [Fantastical](#)



## Contact

- [lukestringer90 online](#)
- [stringer.dev](#)
- [luke@stringer.dev](mailto:luke@stringer.dev)

# Do Repeat Yourself

How to move from **Development** into Leadership

Luke Stringer, @lukestringer90. September 5th 2023. iOSDevUK, Aberystwyth.