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I think the most obvious and most common antipattern that I contribute to is Geek Hazing. As soon as I read about it, I immediately recognized it as a behavior that I employ in some of my projects. Most of the time, I don’t do it to be malicious or make a new team member go through any sort of hazing, but rather out of convenience for me. While I want new engineers to learn and improve, I often do not have the bandwidth to correct all of their mistakes and explain better solutions. For example, a recent intern who was hired full-time joined one of my current projects. He was certainly a strong engineer for being a new grad, but I was balancing two other projects, so I was hesitant to assign new features to him as I know that I would have to read carefully through it and go over it with him. I ended up assigning mostly bug fixes and refactors. More recently though, as the summer ended and my other projects slowed down, I assigned him a new feature because I had more time to analyze and provide feedback on his work. The feature took two extra weeks to deploy because of this, but I think it put him in a much better position to develop the next feature without so much hand-holding. Admittley, I wish I had gone through earlier in the summer so that he would’ve been able to take on more work during the summer. I think that in the future, I am going to be more cognizant of assigning bigger tasks as early as possible that will allow for new team members to excel on a faster timeline.

The above situation is representative of how I apply Geek Hazing most of the time without realizing it. There is one instance that I can think of where I contribute to Geek Hazing on purpose. On another one of my current projects, there is this engineer that I do not feel is good at their job. I am afraid to assign tasks with any sort of importance because I know that not only will I have to go back and do the work myself, but I will have to fix everything that the task touches. I know this doesn’t quite fit into the Geek Hazing antipattern exactly because this person isn’t a new team member anymore, but I recognize that I am employing the same techniques I would use for a new hire with this individual. I think that the best way for me to address this would be to do one of two things, either finally address the problem and assign the heavier tasks and just suffer through the growing pains or have a conversation with the project lead to address my concerns. I’m hesitant to do either because I don’t really have a lot of time to do the first option and I am not comfortable speaking negatively about my colleagues to others that may have an impact on their career. This is a one-off case, so I don’t know exactly how I would handle it in the future, but I think I will try to address the situation ahead of time before I develop a working relationship with the other person.