

APPROACHING DEVREL AS AN EDUCATOR



@NODEBOTANIST

WHOAMI

- » @nodebotanist
- » Agender (they/their/them pronouns)
- » IoT addict and author (Kassandra Perch)
- » DevRel for 5 years

**THERE ARE LOTS OF
SIMILARITIES BETWEEN
DEVREL AND TEACHING
(THERE ARE ALSO, OF COURSE, DIFFERENCES)**

THE SIMILARITIES WITH TEACHING IN A FORMAL SETTING

- » The topic is set in advance
- » Many ways to learn
- » Questions, questions

THE TOPIC IS SET IN ADVANCE

- » Users have a good idea what they are setting out to learn
- » For each piece of content, you can set pre-reqs and level of knowledge

DIFFERENT WAYS TO LEARN

- » Requires us to create many different kinds of content
- » You want to engage with as many learning styles as possible
- » You want your content to have a cohesive style and message across mediums

QUESTIONS ABOUND

- » Users will always have questions, and that's great!
- » You want to know what those questions are...
- » ...and respond to them as quickly as possible

THE DIFFERENCES WITH TEACHING IN A FORMAL SETTING

- » It's much harder for users to engage you directly
- » Your users will come from an extremely broad range of skill sets, time commitments, and levels
- » Your users won't come in batches

THE DIFFICULTY WITH USER ENGAGEMENT

- » Users tend to engage with your content directly, and with you indirectly if at all.
- » Your engagement with users tends to be asynchronous in nature
- » Users don't always know how to communicate questions or feedback

THE SPECTRUM OF USER SKILL AND TIME

- » You'll have users ranging from brand new to full knowledge
- » You'll need to know how to get them where they're going without getting in their way
- » Your content needs to be navigable

HOW TO USE THE SIMILARITIES TO YOUR BENEFIT

- » Create content that engages different ways of learning
- » Keep your documentation centered around your product, but also technologies related to your product
- » Consider common pitfalls and questions and prepare to offer this information in advance

REFRESHER: MAIN TYPES OF LEARNERS

- » Auditory
- » Visual
- » Kinesthetic

CREATING CONTENT THAT ENGAGES ALL

- » Your usuals: written docs, tutorials, videos
- » Streaming
- » Webinars
- » Games/At-your-own-pace workshops

MOVING INTO RELATED TECHNOLOGIES

- » Pulls in users trying to learn about related tech towards your product
- » Helps newer users keep up with your product without feeling lost
- » Helps you keep a good eye on the changing tech around your product

PREDICTING QUESTIONS AND PITFALLS

- » Make sure in your non-real-time content to include the answers to common questions
- » Add these in in a way that won't block your power users, but will give new users a path to follow
- » Make sure to keep these up to date and do the work to keep that content relevant

HOW TO NAVIGATE THE DIFFERENCES

- » Find as many ways as you can to allow your users to contact you in as direct a manner as possible
- » Create experiences that allow power users to jump ahead without leaving new users behind
- » Make that time to first hello world as short as possible to get users in the right place quickly

FINDING WAYS TO ENGAGE YOUR USERS

- » Create open spaces for your users to contact you: GitHub (drop ICE), Slack, message boards
- » See how users solve each other's problems, and let that advise your content
- » Create power users in your community and enable them-- it's worth the extra time.

BUILDING A COHESIVE EXPERIENCE FOR YOUR CONTENT

- » Keep a cohesive goal in mind that each piece of content fits into
- » Build paths; link your content together and help users find the path that suits them
- » Curate and actively hone your paths and overall vision regularly to avoid a tangled jungle

**BUILDING CONTENT
THAT INVITES USERS TO
LEARN**

NEVER LEAVE YOUR USERS HANGING

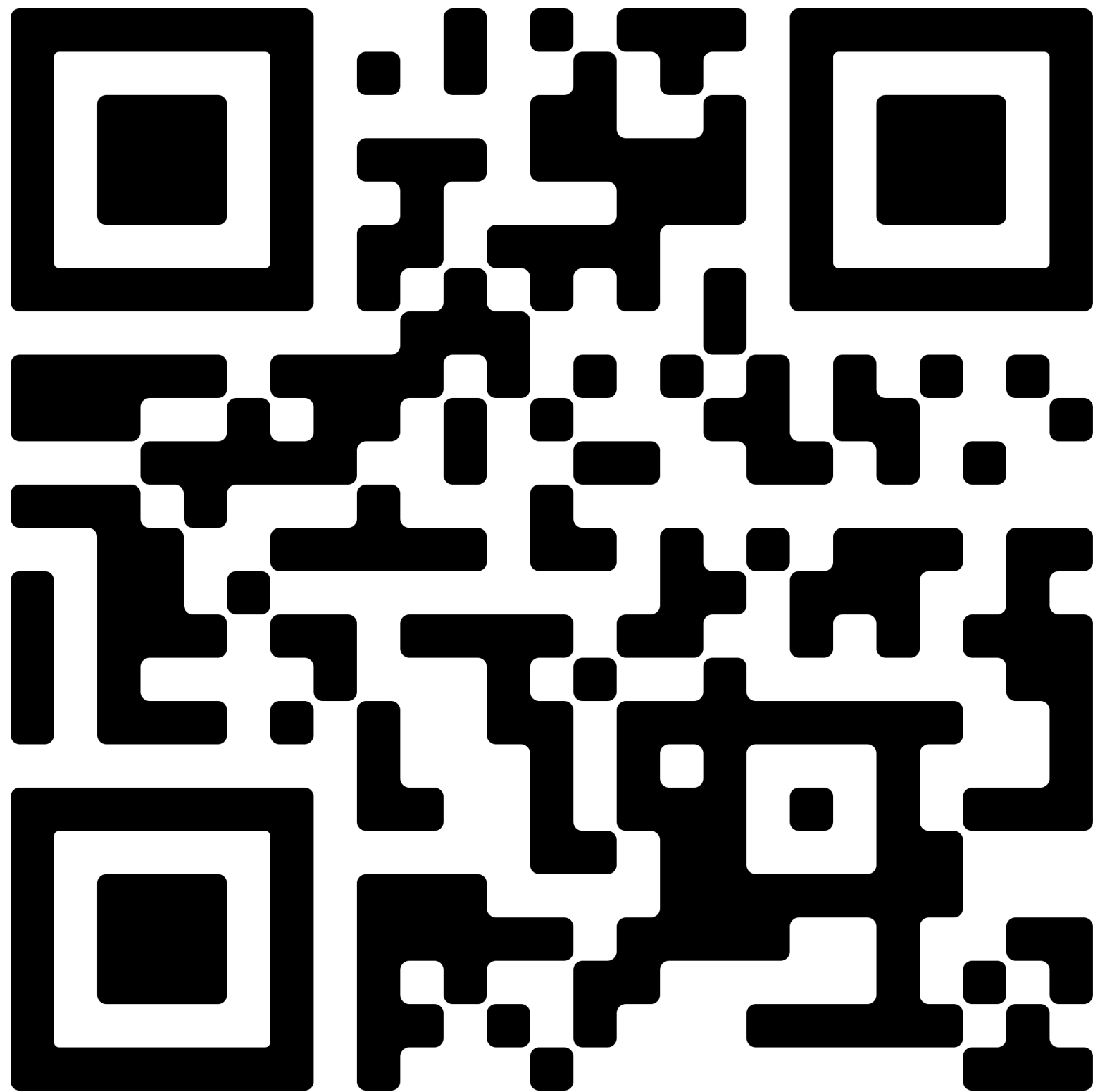
- » Always have another piece of content to consume, even if it's not yours
- » Have real calls to action-- not just 'sign up for our newsletter'
- » Make yourself available to users for feedback

GIVE USERS PROJECTS TO EXPLORE, TEAR APART, AND MODIFY

- » Treat demos like legos-- make them modular, easy to dissect, easy to augment
- » Build repositories of these demos that solve many common user problems
- » Let users contribute to these repositories and build the next wave

EXAMPLE: THE CLOUDFLARE WORKERS DOCUMENTATION

A BRIEF ASIDE



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THANK YOU FOR LISTENING!



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