**Addressing Team Challenges and Calling for Unity**

2024-02-05

Dear TFR,

I want to start off by saying I’m immensely proud of the progress this team has made with management, design, and diversity. This group of leaders and team members are accomplishing things I could only wish for when I previously led the team.

As a current member of your team, previous leader, and the “ol’ dog”, I have an obligation to call attention to things that significantly impact the team’s success. This year I’ve experienced being a neutral party for many leads and members to express their frustrations about the project and towards each other. Concurrently, I see the annual and day-to-day struggles of building a racecar, having walked in many of your shoes.

Throughout the year, there has been a great amount of success with design. Only recently has the team encountered true hardships. While making a mistake is excusable, there has been a worrisome amount of oversight with accountability. The overall effect can burden members with extra work, timeline issues, and a feeling of disrespect. I would like to respectfully mention a few critical events that have not received the attention they deserve:

1. “Wheels-on-the-Ground” deadline has been missed
2. Chassis has failed SES, potentially needs major reconstruction

I feel for the team, as these challenges pose huge setbacks moving forward.

More importantly than any technical hiccup, though, is how effectively the team can operate. This team is full of friends, colleagues, and in a way, co-workers. Difficult times push people to their limit, and it is easy to become frustrated with one another. Right now, the team needs a shoulder to lean on more than ever before. There is no amount of technical support one person can provide that will alleviate tension within the team.

I’ve listed a few things that I currently see plaguing the team’s spirit and workflow:

* Frustration and lack of direct communication is ripping the team apart
* Catastrophes are not being clearly addressed to the team by the accountable person(s)
* Root causes need to be determined together by the team, or problems will continue

These are just FSAE things. We’ve all contributed to them. I certainly know that I have.

On the bright side, there are solutions. Up until this point, the team has not required such a diligent approach to listening to one another and problem solving. Solutions lie within understanding that. **I urge you to come together as leaders, document the problems publically, and find a solution that works for everyone. This cannot wait.**

I believe in you all and I trust that the team will persevere.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my thoughts.

With warm regards,

Jakob