Exploring Leadership, Management, and Mentorship
In Open Source

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Hello.
Hello There.

Why

Get Started.

Let’s

Hello.
Who am I? Just Who am I?
SENIOR DIR., UX PLATFORM
GoDaddy
SENIOR DIR., UX PLATFORM
GoDaddy
ON THE INTERNET THEY CALL ME @INDEXZERO
BOARD MEMBER, OPENJS FOUNDATION
FORMERLY FOUNDER at NODEJITSU
Creator of ...
Creator of ...

- winston
- forever
- http-proxy
- nconf
Creator of ...

and

literally

hundreds more
npm i -g footage \\
&& footage indexzero
npm i -g footage
&& footage indexzero

130 million ...

... last month ...
I know a few things about Open Source.
What am I going to talk about?

1. Breaking down Agile Software development
2. Inner Source: Open Source *methodology*, by default.
3. On Value Systems and incentives.
4. Moving mountains of code vs. the long tail in Open Source.
5. Why does this matter? Recapping key takeaways.
AGILE SOFTWARE
... "Agile" Software Development ...

... trust me. I know this feel.
Process

lots of

Process
New Feature Requests
AND PEOPLE

lots of

PEOPLE
Junior? Senior?

Product Manager
Junior? Senior?

Product Manager

Project Manager

Ops / ITSec
The labor is specialized.
How is Open Source any different?
(Different) Process

but still lots of Process
1. Decision Making
2. Contributions
3. Releases
4. Support
AND SO
MANY MORE
PROCESSES
... PROCESS!
AND PEOPLE

even more

PEOPLE
I WILL NOT
“Every good work of software starts by scratching a developer’s personal itch”
In other words: there is no specialization by default.
Open Source methodology by default
See... what had happened was
WE NEVER CLOSE
IN EARLY 2015 nodejitsu WAS acquired by GoDaddy
At the time I was thinking...
What is Open Source... internally on a company scale?
Practically implementing Inner Source at GoDaddy™
UX Platform?
GoDaddy Experience System

The GoDaddy Experience System is a comprehensive and growing set of tools to deliver GoDaddy experiences. It includes design and code to help designers design and coders code, with responsive, mobile first components built with an international audience in mind.

Enter a keyword here

I'm a Designer

Let's Design Stuff

I'm an Engineer

Let's Build Stuff

HELPFUL ARTICLES & RESOURCES

Sketch Design Library quickstart
Contribute to the UX Platform
All of our cross-cutting user experience technology, a bit more than just our design system.
Any UI Platform is a single-point of failure
Any UI Platform is a single-point of failure for both customer experience AND developer experience.
All of these requests are coming (mostly) from other JavaScript developers.
This is madness!
Thrown over the fence

This is madness!
WHY

should work be
WHY should work be any different?
"Any organization that designs a system (defined broadly) will produce a design whose structure is a copy of the organization's communication structure."

— Melvyn Conway, 1967

BETTER KNOWN AS CONWAY’S LAW
Code ownership is an anti-pattern for any organization.
What would open source do?
what would you do? TRY TO MAKE EVERYONE A CONTRIBUTOR
WHAT DOES
INNER
SOURCE
LOOK LIKE?
That is a GOOD QUESTION
Management is crucial support
"To start, press any key."
Where's the "any" key?
ENTRY POINT

Treat every FIRST INTERACTION as though IT COULD BE a FIRST INTERACTION.
Start with a foundation of contributor support.
Start with a foundation of contributor support.

We treat contributors like team members.
Code reviews, ad-hoc Q&A,
and onboarding using Slack & Github
If you can make time to contribute then your problems are our problems.
When you are done & the PR is merged
When you are done & the PR is merged

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We take over bug fixes and other support
the small module is most easily understood
DEFINITELY LOST
Shifting towards an Inner Source based model is fundamentally changing how work is done at GoDaddy.
Inner Source has proven very effective.
*Inner Source* has proven *very effective.*

Total contributors ~40% Front-End Engineers
On value systems and incentives
Why are YOU doing what YOU are doing?
Hopes & Dreams
JUST HOW do people get BETTER?
Everyone mentors someone else
We make value-based decisions
How recognition matters vs. what is recognized
Paradox of Creator vs. Maintainer
Accept that all contributors create value
IT’S NOT JUST ABOUT CODE.

Accept that all contributors create value

kentcdodds/all-contributors
prioritize being INCLUSIVE TO basically everyone
I wish I was the monster you think I am.
It’s all about CONFLICT for serious...
“Every Open Source governance model is a shallow wrapper (defined broadly) to a basic conflict resolution strategy."

— Anonymous
Moving mountains of code
Let’s talk about GOVERNANCE
Democracy. NOT meritocracy
Meritocracy is a lie.
Meritocracy completely ignores basic power & social dynamics inherent in all human relationships.
How about we just say COMMITTEE BASED?
WITH THE EXCEPTION
OF A “CLASSIC” BDFL STRUCTURE
IT’S ALL COMMITTEES

source: Harvard Law School, ‘17
SERIOUSLY. THIS IS WHAT WE CONSIDER “MERITOCRACY”

source: Harvard Law School, ‘17
Hierarchy is implicit.

source: Harvard Law School, ‘17
General Circle

Highest governing body, where project founders, project circle team leaders, and representative contributors from each project circle sit.

Technical Project Circle A

Community Circle

Technical Project Circle B

Subcircle A

Subcircle B

KEY

Paired arrows represent double linkage between circles (one circle leader, one circle representative).
**General Circle**

Highest governing body, where project founders, project circle team leaders, and representative contributors from each project circle sit.

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**Technical Project Circle A**

**Community Circle**

**Subcircle A**

**Subcircle B**

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**SIMILAR TO BUT NOT EXACTLY NODE.JS’ GOVERNANCE MODEL**

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**KEY**

Paired arrow between circles (one circle leader, one circle representative)
Let’s talk about COMMITTEES?
IMPLICATIONS of lazy consensus

/** ‘contributor’ !== ‘martyr’ **/
Um, we have sort of a problem here.
What about the MANAGERS?

Um, we have sort of a problem here.
The long tail of Open Source
The long tail of Open Source... the average project is TINY.
Moving mole-hills of code.
Guess what? It’s **GOVERNANCE** again.
the classic HOT POTATO governance model
Turns out that: **PUBLIC SHAMING** does NOT work
is this project ABANDONED?
is an anti-pattern
Coping with burnout
LEARNING to handle growth effectively gets EASIER.
LEARNING to handle growth effectively gets EASIER. I PROMISE IT IS TRUE.
Why does THIS MATTER?
Open source? Think about managers.
REMEMBER! There is no specialization by default.
Uh, yeah.
Incentives are the driver.
REMEMBER! The labor is specialized.
Recapping
Recapping the key take aways
GET LEADERSHIP BUY-IN FOR INNER SOURCE

TREAT EVERYTHING LIKE THE FIRST TIME

VALUE CONTRIBUTORS LIKE YOUR TEAMMATES

RECOGNIZE & ITERATE ON INCENTIVES
THINK ABOUT MANAGERS IN OSS
CREATE TIME BOXED ACTIVITIES
COMMUNICATE ROADMAPS
MENTOR THE NEXT YOU
MAY THE SOURCE BE WITH YOU

SLIDES WILL BE POSTED ON TWITTER SHORTLY – FOLLOW ME @INDEXZERO

THANKS FOR LISTENING!