

Let's manage a team!

Co-ordination in Drupal project

I'm

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What is management

- Building a team
- Planning
- Politics
- Personal Growth

Why I want to talk about it?

- I'll discuss managing a team and some similar stuff you might have faced in day to day management.
- I want to give people some idea of what I have learned in my last 2 years managing teams.
- I'll help you think what management style is right for you.

Emphasis on your team!

- You're team will be the most important part of getting work done.
- Entrust
 - *If you can't Entrust, well, I would start looking for other positions.*
- Those who are assigning you work have Entrusted you the amount of work they think your team can handle. The expectation is you are there to facilitate.

Team: Engage talent

- Take your time and think before you start making a team.
- If you have reservations about a candidate, don't hire them.
- If you are telling yourself or anyone else these things, don't engage them:
 - “I'm on the fence with them”
 - “I'm just not sure”
 - “I wanna see what else is out there”

Team: Evaluation

- Be honest when you describe the job.
- A development job building intranets and marketing sites for your small clients is not “Working with companies from small businesses to Fortune 50 enterprises, working directly with some of the world’s largest brands”. It won’t take long to figure out the truth and there are people out there who love churning out small sites to support marketing campaigns.

Team: Employment Brand

- News Flash: People in the IT community talk to one another, if your company gets a bad rep it will get harder to find talent!
- Do the little things:
 - take team out to lunch
 - Take them for a small trip's
 - Protect them from the politics swirling above them
- You don't have to act excited about everything and put on a happy face but you do have to defend your team and do your best to give them fulfilling and interesting work that will allow them to grow their skills.

Team: Trust but verify

- It's a delicate balance but you have to trust your team.
- If you're not getting what you want, don't be bashful about explaining your expectations.
- Keep your standards high.

Team: They are Human not resources

- When dealing with your team members, remember they are Human. Treat them with dignity, respect and remember their dreams are not yours and that is okay.
- Treat them like adults and expect that behavior.

Team: Weed for growth

- You will have to fire someone, sadly these are you're team members not your friends.
- When you do don't fool yourself into thinking the team will be mad at you, they knew that person wasn't working out.
- Document your case, then just pull the trigger.

Team: They will follow you

- If you are focused on you team and they trust you they will consider following you to the next gig. Nothing empresses an employer more than you opening up your rolodex to pull out a name for an open position.

Planning

- You have a huge vision for your team.
- But: About 50% of what you plan on will work like you planned.
 - About half the projects you are expecting will come through. Bring the team in on your vision but with the appropriate context.
 - Be realistic with the people requesting work. You have competing priorities.

Planning: Resources planning

- Make sure the work you have can be accomplished by the staff you have.
- If you don't have the skill set plan extra time for training/learning or outsource part of the work.
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Planning: Estimates

- People are terrible estimators!
- People are very optimistic about their skills!
- Developers are a special breed of people, they're even worse estimators.
- Keep a record (anecdotal or written) of you team's estimate accuracy.
- Use the records to develop multipliers do better estimates.

Planning: Dedicate time

- You will need to set aside time to plan weekly (I like Mondays).
- Have a task management system (and embrace it)
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Politics

- The reality is there's about a 90% chance you will be in the middle of a group of people with whom you will have to negotiate. This is what politics means for a manager in a company.
- Example: clients, bosses, staff, end users, auxiliary players: HR, InfoSec, Facilities, etc...

Politics: Build relationships

- Take the time to get to know you co-workers and their bosses.
- If you work with someone a lot, go out to lunch with them.
- If you are going between meetings with someone and grabbing a coffee offer to grab them one also.
- You don't have to like people to build a long term working relationship with them.

Politics: Don't burn bridges

- No matter how tempting it is don't burn bridges, people may forgive but they will not forget.
- If you have an issue you can't seem to solve and a boss, punt the issue to your boss. Let them deal with it. Keep in mind if your boss is worth their salt they have likely been building the same type of relationships and can help you smooth it out.

Politics: Favors are a good thing

- When you can help people out with the small favors:
 - Warn people something is coming down the pike
 - Let them borrow some of your teams time when you can
 - If they take care of you, do the same for them

Politics: Stuck in the middle

- This is where the term “middle management” comes from.
- You will have bosses telling you to work faster, a team telling you are asking too much, HR telling you to have the team attend trainings and do their annual evaluations, Finance telling you to turn in expense reports faster, people calling off sick, etc...
- You have to figure out how to keep everyone happy

Personal Growth

- Your ability to do your job is going to be based on a combination of hard and soft skills.
- The soft skills will become more important as you are in charge of larger and larger teams.
- Your ability to think on your feet and synthesis information will be more important than your ability to write code or architect solutions.

Personal Growth: Mental Health

- Focus on sleep!
 - No more late night work, you won't be able to get it out of your head.
 - No late night drinking (water, alcohol, coffee etc...). Unless you like to get up in the middle of the night.
 - No screens in bed (I'm not sure how I feel about Kindles here).
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Personal Growth: Mental Health

- Get a Hobby, not writing code. It's more important than ever to get some space from your job. If you code do it in something unrelated to work.
- Personally:
 - Traveling, adventure sports, gardening
 - Consider meditation, it really works.

Personal Growth: Learning

- Read tech blogs
- Read news
- Read business rags (ie Economist, Wall Street Journal, Bloomberg Business Week)
- Just Read! Read! Read!

Tip: Accept responsibility

- Sad truth is you will have to admit to your mistakes, and those of your team.
- If you can't handle failure, I would think twice on relying on people to do the work for you.
- Make mistake every day but don't repeat that same.

Tip: know your management style

- Know how you like to manage and explain this to your team, bring it up in interviews.
- Learn from your boss experience
- Understand your boss management style