MENTORSHIP, AND RESTARTING CIVILIZATION FROM SCRATCH

If we lost everything, and had to restart civilization from scratch, could we do it?
REVOLUTION

2 seasons, 2012-14, NBC
What if everything as we know it stopped working, and we had to make do with what was left - or recreate everything from scratch?
Jeremy Meiss

circleci

Director, DevRel & Community

@IAmJerdog
How did the ancients pass on what they knew to the next generation?
Orality - thought and verbal expression in societies where the technologies of literacy (especially writing and print) are unfamiliar to most of the population.

- Wikipedia
Orality gave us the stepping stones that allowed us to get where we are today, it was a necessity for the growth of civilization.

- Couch, Carl J.,

Information Technologies and Social Orders
Storytelling and the Lakota People
from the Chickasaw Nation
from the Luritja people
Oral tradition is a form of human communication wherein knowledge, art, ideas and cultural material is received, preserved, and transmitted orally from one generation to another.

- Wikipedia
Apprenticeship
CLICKBAIT
“After the fall of the great Egyptian, Mayan, and Roman empires we had evidence and examples of their engineering achievements all around us. But aqueducts or senate buildings are worthless without a society around them to maintain, contextualize, and protect them.

- Alexander Rose

Executive Director, Long Now
Coaching vs. Mentoring
Coaching versus Mentoring

Short-Term

Coach

Skills, knowledge, behaviours competencies

Mentor

Opening Perspective and horizons

Long-Term

Image credit quiettenacity
Mentoring 🌟
Practical steps to mentoring / being mentored
For the mentor...
Understand why you are / want to be a mentor

I LOVED being a mentor. Here are my tips and tricks:

1. Always understand the why. Why you? What skills do you have as a mentor and why has the mentee chosen to work with you? Is this knowledge something that you actually think you possess? If not, be upfront about it.
Hard to identify mentee’s ways of learning, but essential

Jason St-Cyr
@StCyrThoughts
Unknown

Replying to @IAMJerdog

Something that I find challenging in mentoring is switching modes based on the needs of the individual. Some people want to know how you did something, some people want to brainstorm and figure it out...

Trying to determine what's needed is definitely a big challenge!

1:18 PM · Jun 21, 2022 · Twitter Web App
Set a timeline and an outcome you both want to see

2. Set a timeline and set what outcome you and the mentor want to see from it. The mentor should be advancing skills they already have (communication, educating). The mentee should have a tangible outcome, i.e., to get a new job offer within 3 months.

I mentored/managed someone to the point of them asking for a different lead, bc I pushed them toward goals the way I would have wanted, were I in their shoes.

I didn’t know enough to mentor them toward what they wanted in the way they wanted.

Ruined things for both of us.
When setting up meetings with your mentee...

1. Set focused topics for when you meet with mentee towards that desired outcome

3. Mentor should set what topic they will focus on in every meeting. Do not leave it to chance. If the outcome is to get a new job, each meeting should focus on 1 small step towards that goal: Session One: Discovering your talents, Session 2: Identifying roles etc.
When setting up meetings with your mentee...

2. Recap what was discussed / learned after each session.
When setting up meetings with your mentee...

3. Keep a shared doc of meetings notes and progress.

Finally: Track progress in a shared doc. Pause/cancel mentorship if parties miss or turn up late regularly. Always leave on good terms, “Be kind on your way up as you’ll meet them again on your way down” 😊😔

11:49 AM · Jun 21, 2022 · Twitter Web App
It’s OK to not know

I had the opportunity to mentor a college student a few years ago. One of the things I remember telling her during one of our first meetings was that it’s perfectly acceptable to say you don’t know something, especially during an interview.

3:56 PM · Jun 11, 2022 · Twitter for Android

model behavior. +1 to @garethgreenaway - model that it’s ok to say I don’t know in any situation. model how they should ask for help and how to share information and how to interact with teammates and how to give props to folks and how to connect folks with other folks. 5/?

4:58 PM · Jun 11, 2022 · Twitter Web App
Use questions to shape decision-making, not robots

1. Get around biases for assumed knowledge
2. Understand their thought process
3. Identify gaps
Can't save someone from stupid mistakes, but can tell them how you fixed them.
Pair with mentee, think out loud, try wild ideas, fail together, and debug together

Beth Qiang
@bethqiang

pair with mentees. probably spend very little time with your own hands on the keyboard and much more time thinking out loud. consider wild ideas and why they may or may not work. try some stuff together and more importantly, fail together. 2/?

Beth Qiang
@bethqiang

include them in your own debugging sessions. I’ve been told by SO MANY less experienced engineers that it’s enormously helpful to see the steps I take and thoughts I have as I’m debugging. even if/when I’m flailing around and feel like I have no idea what I’m doing. 3/?

4:57 PM · Jun 11, 2022 · Twitter Web App
Normalize "I have no idea WTF I am doing"

(also, it’s good for them to see that sometimes you, a more experienced engineer, have no idea what you’re doing. normalize that.) 4/?

4:58 PM · Jun 11, 2022 · Twitter Web App

show them that yes, I do in fact still look up syntax for “simple” things (e.g. Array.slice) and the difference between flexbox’s align-items and justify-content every time. 9/?

5:00 PM · Jun 11, 2022 · Twitter Web App
Model how to get others promoted

Beth Qiang
@bethqiang
Unknown

model how to get folks promoted. once upon a time, I was put up for a promotion and @mercedesodes was one of the folks who wrote a mini-essay detailing why I should be promoted with very specific evidence and projects to back it up. 6/?

2:59 PM · Jun 11, 2022 · Twitter Web App

Beth Qiang
@bethqiang
Unknown

she sent it to me for review prior to submitting, which whether intentionally or not, gave me an example to work off of for the mini-essays I now write for other folks to support their promotions. 7/?

2:59 PM · Jun 11, 2022 · Twitter Web App

Beth Qiang
@bethqiang
Unknown

I also send these to those folks to review before submitting, and hopefully when it comes time for them to write mini-essays of their own for other folks, they have an example to work off of. 8/?

2:59 PM · Jun 11, 2022 · Twitter Web App
Show you aren't finished learning

Beth Qiang
@bethqiang
Unknown

less experienced engineers have plenty to teach/share too - just because I have more technical experience doesn’t mean I can’t learn from them. Point out when they’ve taught you something new. 10/?

3:00 PM · Jun 11, 2022 · Twitter Web App
Help them share to a broader audience - if they desire

encourage them to give lightning talks or give conference talks or write blog posts or etc. about things. help them put together said talks/posts/etc. help them publicize it and if possible, be there as a friendly face in the crowd. 11/?

3:00 PM · Jun 11, 2022 · Twitter Web App
As a mentee...
It’s OK to not know

Gareth J. Greenaway
@garethgreenaway
3:56 PM · Jun 11, 2022 · Twitter for Android

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Beth Qiang
@bethqiang
4:58 PM · Jun 11, 2022 · Twitter Web App

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Come prepared with what you want to learn, questions you want answered.

David G. Simmons
@davidgsloT
Unknown

Replying to @IAmJerdog

I ask mentees to come prepared. Write up a list of things you want to learn, areas you think you might be weak in that you’d like to improve, etc. come to your meetings with me prepared with questions, topics, etc.

2:01 PM · Jun 25, 2022 · Twitter for iPad
Specific takeaways... for white males

for white men reading along - this means investing time into underrepresented/marginalized folks, and not just women and POC, but ex-incarcerated folks, first gen college students (or didn't go to college at all), single parents, etc. 16/?

making the industry more diverse and representative shouldn't be a burden that the diverse and underrepresented solely bear. 17/?
Specific takeaways... for non-white males

speaking especially as a non-white woman: seek out folks who may have a similar background as you, and ask for their help and advice. 13/?

that’s not to say that if they’re a non-white woman, they shouldn’t seek out mentorship from white men. I’ve learned a lot from some very amazing, wonderful, patient, supportive, aware, and kind white men. 14/?

but, there’s a special kind of community and kinship and vulnerability that’s almost immediately present with folks who are more like you. 15/?
A bit on mentorship wins and failures
You can't mentor someone to success

Dan Moore
@mooreds
Unknown

Replying to @mooreds and @IAmJerdog

I also tried to mentor someone who had been hired incorrectly (in part due to my feedback). Tried to mentor them so the co could retain. No matter how much time I gave, it didn't work.

They departed and are successful elsewhere.

You can't mentor someone to success.

8:27 PM · Jun 11, 2022 · Twitter Web App
The good and the bad, together

What good mentorship does:
- builds confidence
- empowers you to be more you
- reduces barriers

What good mentorship doesn't do:
- teaches mimicry of mentors skills
- ignores nuance of mentees experience
- forces one "right" path
Remember people are humans with feelings and personal lives.

Having managed teams for 20+ years the best thing I’ve learned is remember people are humans who have feelings and personal lives. While we’re often told to leave those at home, the best orgs embrace them. 1/3

2:24 PM · Jun 11, 2022 · Twitter for iPhone

Years ago, a junior coworker was falling far behind at work. I asked that they be put on my team rather than being fired. After a long, careful, private convo I leaned of a major, difficult, time-consuming personal issue. 2/3

2:26 PM · Jun 11, 2022 · Twitter for iPhone

We arranged scheduling, meetings, deliverables around the personal issue. Previous annual review was bottom 20%. That year was top 10% - in a firm of over 20k ppl - while being happier & more productive. Proudest achievement of my career. 3/3

2:31 PM · Jun 11, 2022 · Twitter for iPhone
So what are some of the takeaways from all this?
Always be learning
Mentorship isn't always from older to younger

Ben Greenberg
@RabbiGreenberg
Unknown

Replying to @lAmJerdog

Mentorship isn't always an older to younger phenomenon.

I've received mentorship from people far younger than me, and hopefully given some good advice to people older than me.

7:39 AM · Jun 21, 2022 · Twitter for Android
Make yourself available - people are looking

"Mentorship is a right and a duty." --@edasque

#monktoberfest

8:56 AM · Oct 3, 2019 · Twitter Web App

How to find a mentor. I never had one. Struggled my whole career to learn lessons that probably could’ve been taught easily or earlier on. I still feel lost even though I have to help others

8:53 AM · Jun 12, 2022 · Twitter Web App
Recognize as a Mentor when it's time to pass the baton - make a connection for the Mentee

Mentees need intros and access to people and companies.
A quick note on sponsorship
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MENTORS</th>
<th>SPONSORS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>people who can give us</td>
<td>people who help us find new opportunities and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>helpful advice</td>
<td>improve the visibility of our work</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Have you tried applying to speak at conferences and meetups already?

I recommended you for this speaking gig! Can you do it?

Illustration by Catt Small
Mentorship vs Sponsorship

• Mentors are mirrors that help define your dream, your strengths, advise and guide.
• Sponsors act as spotlights, creating luck by lifting others into new spaces

Scott Hanselman at RenderATL 2022
If you're a 'senior' or 'staff' or 'principle' or 'distinguished' engineer, you'll do well by reading this. Mature engineers lift the skills and expertise of those around them.
Mature teammates list the skills and expertise AND NAMES of those around them.

- Lara Hogan,

What does sponsorship look like?
@Jo_Miller mentors give me perspective, but sponsors give me opportunity. I find having both v helpful.
Marginalized people are **over-mentored**, and **under-sponsored**.

- Lara Hogan,

*What does sponsorship look like?*
Thank you to:

- Rachel - @sundyclan
- Beth - @bethqiang
- Cecilia - @ceceliacreates
- Heidi - @wiredferret
- Erin - @erinmikail
- Jason - @StCyrThoughts
- Dan - @mooreds
- Tamimi - @TweetTamimi
- Gareth - @garethgreenaway
- David - @davidgsIoT
- Ben - @RabbiGreenberg
- Jason - @2jase
- Ross - @datahowler
Thank You.

For feedback and swag: circle.ci/jeremy