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# From Engineer to Manager

The Journey From Doing to Delegating

Tobias Morrison, Sr. Mac Enterprise Engineering Lead, Tamman, Inc.
Crafted for MacAdmins 2023

Hello World… I'm Tobias Morrison

I have 20+ years experience as a Mac Platform Administrator and 10+ years leading teams. When my head isn't buried in command prompts or framed in a video call window, you'll find me playing with my 4 children, memorizing line and songs for an upcoming stage performance, playing music, or solving a Rubik's Cube.
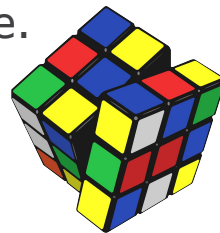
01

What could go wrong with approaching management from an engineering perspective

02

Taking accountability for my own management missteps

03

Resetting expectations of how to better manage engineering teams

04

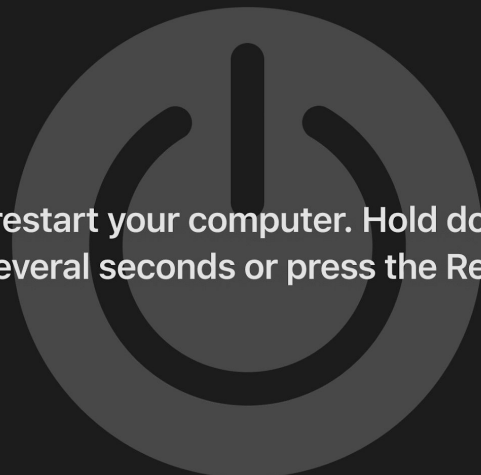How to best support your team as a manager

By a show of hands

What could possibly go wrong?

As an engineer, let's build a great solution to help my team, and help others help their teams… how hard could that be?

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Primary objective failure

GOAL(s): Provide quality leadership to my team… and not embarrass myself.

Share my personal journey, experiences & missteps

- What's gone off the rails?
- Where I've got my footing?

You need to restart your computer. Hold down the Power button for several seconds or press the Restart button.
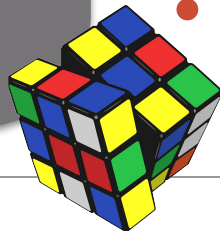
SOURCE: nektony.com

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Battling my neurodiversity

My brain deploys 'success counter-offensive' measures

- Advantages & disadvantages
- Outlines, learning & research
- Decide it's all trash & panic
- Solve a Rubik's Cube
- Change direction
- Piecemeal a way forward that works for me

SOURCES: It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia (FX / Hulu), pixabay.com

Management comes in many varieties
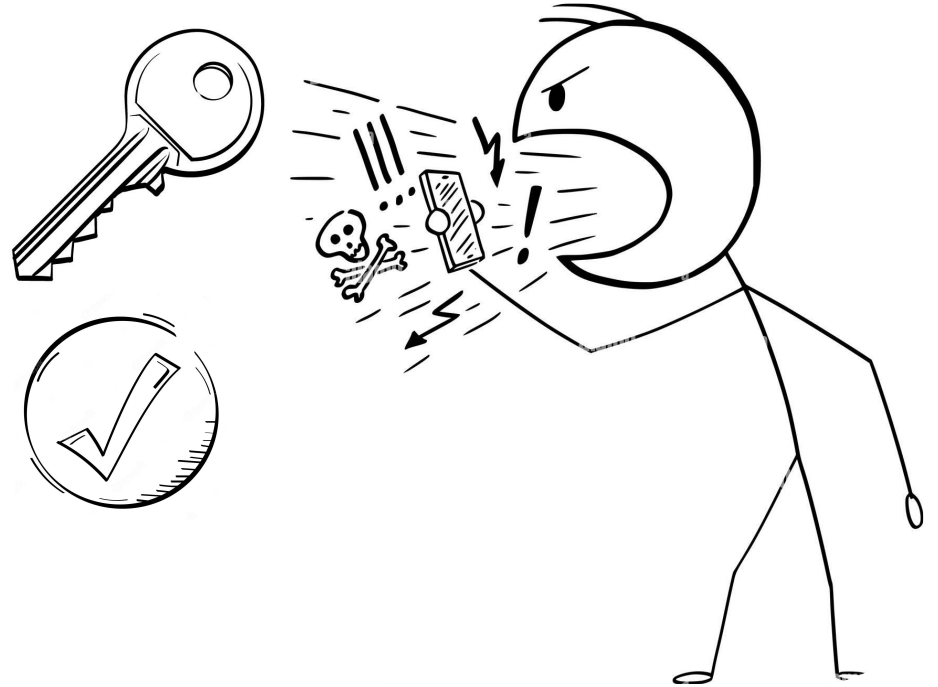
My past 'management' roles:

- Assistant Store Manager
- Business Manager
- Client Experience Manager
- Service Desk Manager

SOURCES: heartcraftythings.com, freepik.com, alamy.com, freeimages.com

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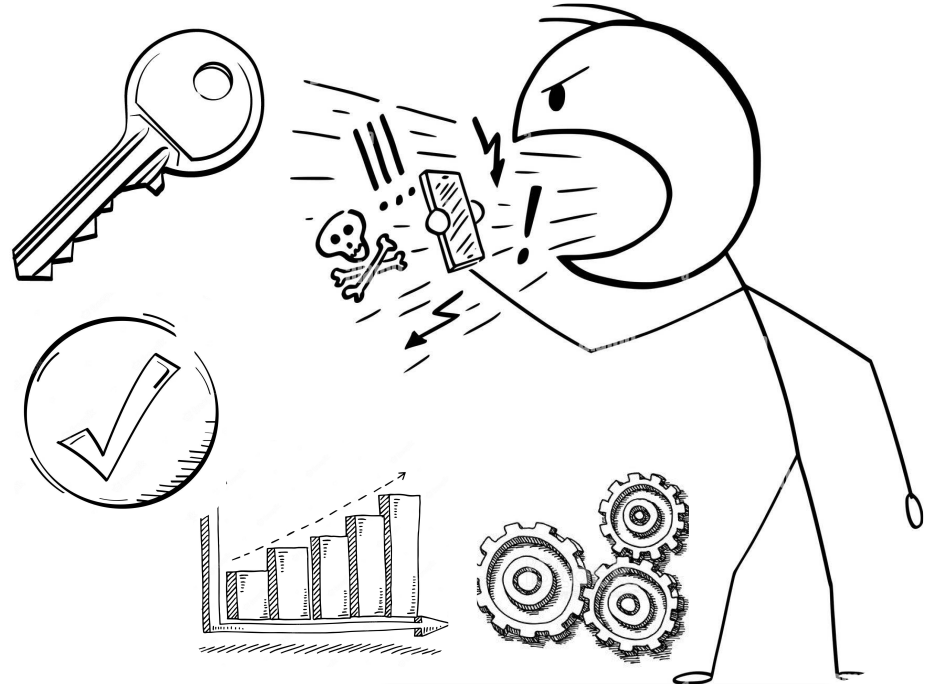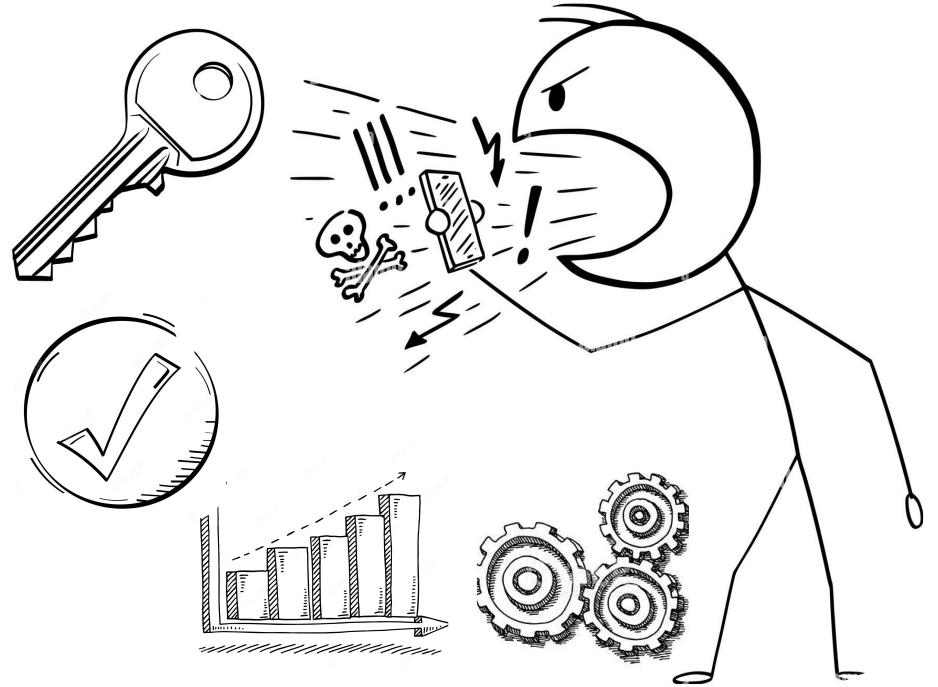- Client Experience Manager
- Service Desk Manager

¯_(ツ)_/¯

Simply, there are two core elements

People – to succeed as a manager, you need to have the constitution to deal with feelings, motivations, and needs

Uncertainty – do you have the propensity to move forward into the future with imperfect or unknown information?

SOURCES: Francesco Ciccolella from newscientist.com / citylikeyou.com

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What I for sure got wrong!

Easy wins aren't always so quick or easy…

Sauntering in, completely ignorant

SOURCE: quickmeme.com

Things I heard from my new team:

- Entirely too many meetings
- No one can get anything done
- Resisting modernizing systems
- Distributed teams does/not work
- We have/don't have that culture
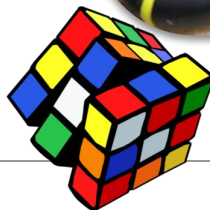- We've tried that in the past

The Workload Fallacy

Management != bolt-on to current role;
if attempting to tackle both roles…

- New duties cannot be crammed in
- Your personal output quality & quantity WILL decline
- You will overcommit yourself
- Likely to be an ineffectual leader

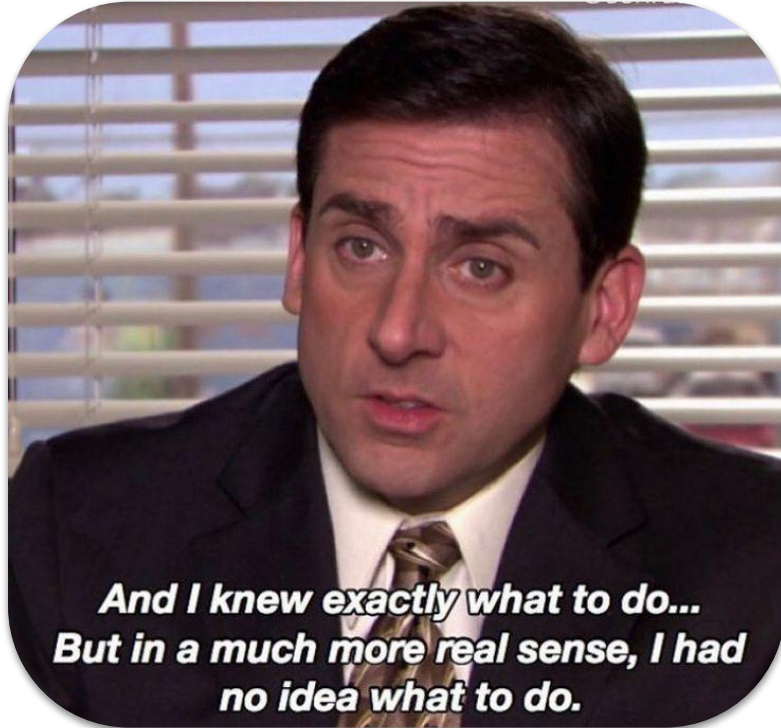**Priorities:** regularly check-in with, support & empower your team

SOURCE: survivalsullivan.com

Some changes seem obvious, right?!?!

And I knew exactly what to do...
But in a much more real sense, I had
no idea what to do.

Many of my missteps include:

- Taking action too quickly
- Walking in with changes in mind
- Seeking confirmation (bias)
- Deciding, but not listening
- Making assumptions
- Not creating a feedback loop
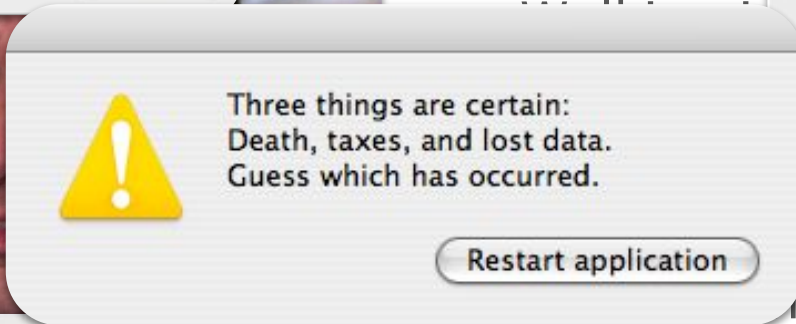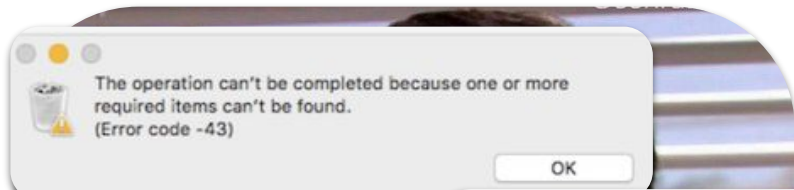- Making the problem about me

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SOURCES: quickmeme.com, reddit.com

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Resetting my expectations

Management isn't a promotion…
It's a career reset.

Getting back on track!

"TALK LESS, SMILE MORE"

Listening is a skill you need to develop and nurture. First step, stop talking.

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Good meetings have an agenda, stay on course, end on time or early. Lights, camera… **oh… ok, no cameras**.

SOURCES: pinterest.com, timetackle.com, linkedin.com

Getting back on track!

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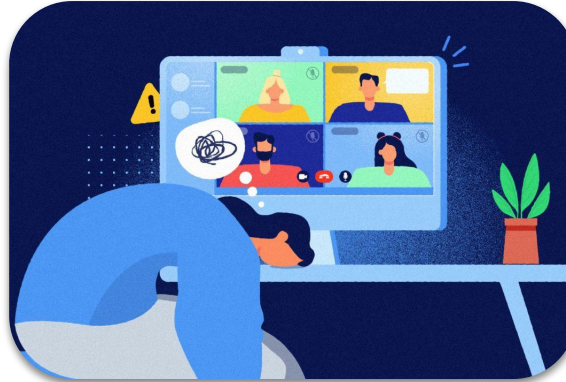Good meetings have an agenda, stay on course, end on time or early. Lights, camera… **oh… ok, no cameras**.

Reevaluate what non-engineering output looks like. **Delegate, your life depends on it.**

SOURCES: pinterest.com, timetackle.com, linkedin.com

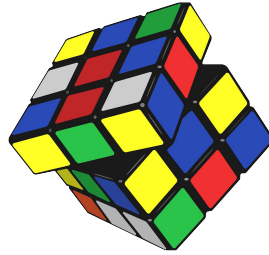# It's harder than you might think

Engineer to manager pitfalls:

- Limited overlap in core skills
- The itch to do what is no longer your responsibility
- Not learning to delegate & say 'no'
- Building relationships with other managers
- Limited/No leadership training

SOURCE: vintagenewsdaily.com

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Facing a whole new set of problems

Sooner or later, you'll have to accept:

- Your performance is judged by the success of your team
- Most or all your team's technical skills will surpass yours
- To deliver the right products and info to to the right people, you need to expand your sphere of influence

I TALK TO THE ENGINEERS SO CLIENTS DONT HAVE TO
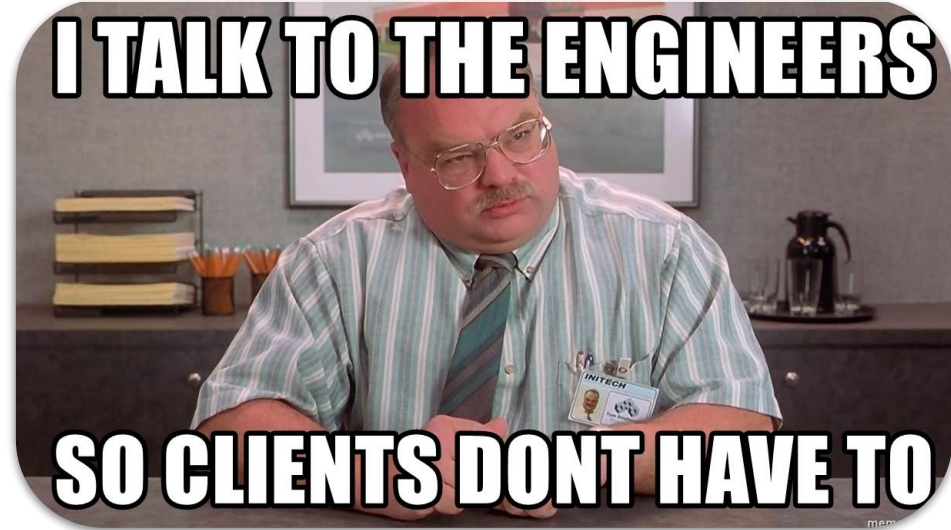
SOURCE: memegenerator.net

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Should I make the move to management?

Peter Principle is real!
Being very competent at your last role != success at the next level.

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Are you cut out for this? You'll **engineer less**, **advocate more** & **put others before yourself.**

SOURCES: pix4free.org, foodland.com, foxtrot.com, canva.com, chieflearningofficer.com

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Without leadership, Manager is just a meaningless title. Your team doesn't work for you, **you serve them**.

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Slow down; get more done

Support & empower your team:

- Practice servant leadership
- Great leaders create leaders
- Listen first
- Follow through
- Set a good example
- Be unbusy

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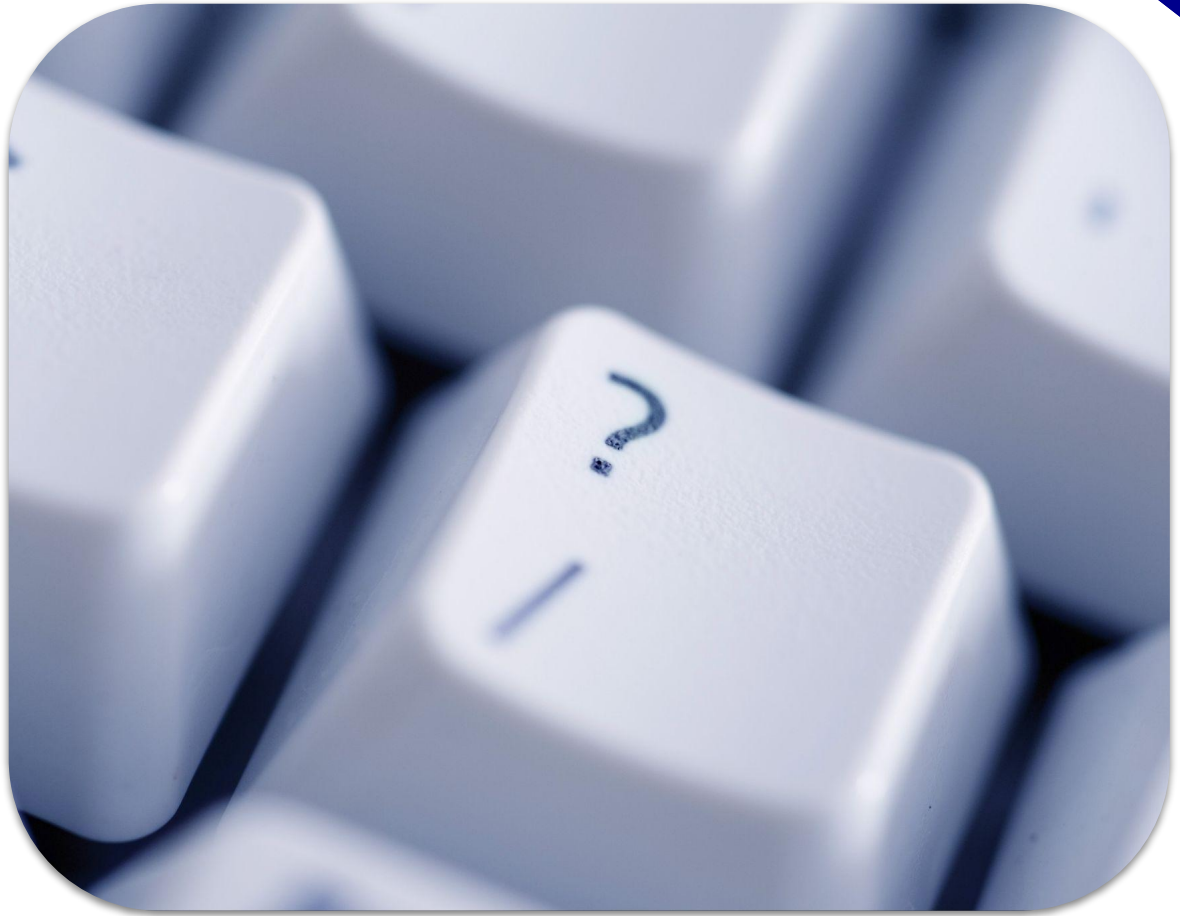- Follow through
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Well supported people, support people well.
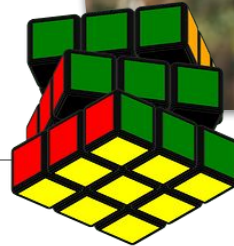
04

Any questions?

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If nothing else, remember that…

As a manager, your job is to…

- listen
- care for your team
- delegate the best work out
- remove obstacles & protect them
- assist them across the finish line
- empower them to be better
- create a team of leaders

SOURCE: travelers.com

Thank You!

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Your feedback is very welcome: https://bit.ly/psumac2023-156

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