Culture and happiness in a virtual team

Case study: C4 Media
Team Culture is

The emotional feeling you get working there
There is already a culture in your team
Good culture can be

Consciously Designed
Be a culture hacker

Own the feeling you are creating

Alignment and commitment to structure, practices, and mindset that deliver happiness
Dan Pink: What really motivates employees

Purpose
Mastery
Autonomy
+ 2 more in my opinion

• “A sense of progress” - Tony Shieh - Zappos
• “Team Feeling / Belonging” - Me
Culture as Code

• CULTURE is a shared mental model of “normal”
• Stories hold the cultural codes
• Shared values & understandings of “normal”
  –Dan Mezick
Running a complex team or organization co-located I shard

It’s even harder virtually!
THE 5 STAGES OF TRIBAL CULTURE

TEAM

STAGE 5
"LIFE IS GREAT"

INNOCENT WONDERMENT

the language revolves around infinite potential and how the group is going to make history - not to beat a competitor, but because doing so will make a global impact. this group is in competition with what's possible, not with another tribe

STAGE 4
"WE'RE GREAT"

TRIBAL PRIDE

people are fully themselves, & everyone seems happy, inspired, & genuine; the culture emphasizes shared core values and interdependent strategies; a 'we're great' tribe always has an adversary, & the bigger the foe, the more powerful the tribe

STAGE 3
"I'M GREAT (AND YOU'RE NOT)"

LONE WARRIOR

knowledge is power, so people hoard it; they have to win, and winning is personal; the mood is one of wanting help and support, yet being continually disappointed that others "don't have their ambition or skill"

STAGE 2
"MY LIFE SUCKS"

APATHETIC VICTIM

people are passively antagonistic; seen it all before and watched it fall; quietly sarcastic and resigned; judging, yet never interested enough to spark any passion

STAGE 1
"ALL LIFE SUCKS"

UNDERMINING

people are despairingly hostile, banding together to get ahead in a violent and unfair world

From Tribal Leadership, Logan, King & Fischer-Wright, 2006, HarperCollins
Attributes of great virtual teams

• Clear purpose and shared values
• Results oriented – established goal setting and review cycles
• Rhythms for planning and retrospective
• Metrics & key operational intelligence
• Visual Shared Dashboards / “situation room” reviewed regularly
• Social Channel for general information flow
• Clear communications channels
InfoQ.com

• 800,000 unique visitors/month
• 60 new content items published/week
• Available in 5 languages, managed by separate teams of staff and editors in:
  o China
  o Japan
  o Brazil
  o International (english)
  o France
QCon conferences
• 500-1200 attendees each
• 8 cities worldwide
Organization in 3 countries

12 Editorial teams worldwide

5 Editorial Committees
33 staff members across 6 countries
150 editors worldwide
60 QCon committee members across 5 teams
They all work distributed
Agenda

• What is culture
• Communications Channels
• Situation Room / Dashboards
• Metrics & Situational Awareness
• Rhythms for Review and Planning
• Core values and Purpose
• General Observations
Communications Channels
Being “In the office”

Be logged on and visible team IM tool when working
- Or explicit/transparent about when not working (and not online)
- If you’re off for an afternoon or not feeling well, let immediate peers know why

• Effects:
- Feeling of availability of your peers / lower barrier or shyness of contacting
- Respecting private time when not online
- Sense of connectedness
Clear communications channels

- Wiki’s for reference material & best practices
- Gdocs for temporal / project based work
- Synchronous channels
  - IM for quick 1:1 and group discussions
  - Voice / video calls
- Asynchronous channels
  - Email, basecamp, proj. mgmt. software, kanbans, dashboards
- Social network / water cooler – a missing link?
Social Network: the missing link
Even more effective than the water cooler

Facebook makes more efficient keeping in touch with your extended network, informally

Yammer / social networks do the same:
- Eliminate silo’s, isolation
- Encourage best practice sharing
- Spaces for creativity and thinking
- Opportunity to connect / emotional touch points
- **Reinforce purpose, mastery, sense of progress**
Effective use of Social Networks

*informal and small, like FB and twitter:*

**Do**

- Post things too small or too frequent for emails
- Updates, personal or work related
- Sharing insights and ideas
- Sharing successes
- Acknowledging peers

**Don’t:**

- Consider as replacement for emails
  - Not for-Must-read announcements (don't expect everyone reads)
  - Good for ‘quick early access’ updates
- Use for urgent problem solving
- Expect replies or reads immediately
- IM/group chat/IRC channels
- Don’t use for task delegation!
Situation Room / Dashboards

All the key objectives, metrics, tracking tools, in one place, accessible to all
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Company Top 5 Quarterly Objectives</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>hire a finance person</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>green - finance person hired and transition complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis of QCon NY 2012 feasibility and hire an events manager</td>
<td>Roxanne</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Super green - both done by end of Sept, one or other done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>redesign: re-skinning (new HTML, CSS)</td>
<td>Alex</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>super green: having all the new HTML/CSS, having the most parts ready; yellow: project front-end and artist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>implement trends driven taxonomy</td>
<td>Michael</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan for Incorporation in China</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>green is plan being executed to local legal</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Individual Objectives</strong></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| increase online ad revenue (half the group goal) | Roxanne | | | | Super green means 120% of goal (65% goal, red is 50%)
50-90% of goal (red is 50%)
Super green means 120% of goal (65% goal, red is 50%)
50-90% of goal (red is 50%)
|
| redesign: content type index pages implementation | Ellen | | | | super green: all implementations ready and all implementations ready, yellow, partial implementation, super green: solution is complete before end validated a solution is possible w/ Google &
|
| redesign: improvements to the search page | Alex | | | | |
| International franchise contract 2.0 | Floyd | | | | super green - new franchisee signed on, Gre contract completed |
| Research business vision documented and first phase milestones identified | Floyd | | | | super green - Resource starting to build out and first milestones identified through group |
| Create a quarterly newsletter to send to advertising clients and prospects | Roxanne | | | | Red haven't started. Yellow have a template quarter. Super green is getting it out before |
| Send Recruitment result and commitments to editors once/mo | | | | | green = emails sent out; yellow = tracking issue |
| Monthly report to editors thanking them & checking on commitments | | | | | green means feedback received, yellow means this action is taken as the end of each month |
| The objective of being 2 weeks ahead with sessions going live | Razvan | | | | yellow - only a week, a week ahead; green - than 2 weeks ahead; |
| Mail presentations authors published 4 weeks ago with stats & also mailed out PDF of slide deck | | | | | |

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*Note: The table contains objectives and status updates for the fourth quarter of 2011, including hiring a finance person, analysis of a conference proposal, redesign of website content, implementation of a taxonomy plan, and incorporation plans in China. Individual objectives include increasing online ad revenue, redesigning content type index pages and search page improvements, international franchise contracts, documentation and milestones, creating a quarterly newsletter, sending recruitment results, monthly reports, and publishing books.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Making Virtual and Remote Teams Shine</th>
<th>Track Host: Amr Elssamady</th>
<th>Director of Client Safety, Industrial Logic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Culture and tooling in virtual teams</td>
<td>Floyd Marinescu confirmed</td>
<td>Co-founder of InfoQ InfoQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Lean Apart: A Case Study in Agile UX Design for a Distributed Team</td>
<td>Jennifer Hayes &amp; Adam Archer confirmed</td>
<td>User Experience Designer at IBM IBM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Synergistic Effects: A mixed remote/inhouse team can be better than the sum of its parts</td>
<td>Dana Caulder confirmed</td>
<td>Sr Software Engineer at Genentech</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 TBD</td>
<td>Ashley Johnson confirmed</td>
<td>Senior Coach at Industrial Logic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 No formula for this</td>
<td>Tom Santero confirmed</td>
<td>Technical Evangelist for Basho</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scalability, Availability, and Performance: Putting It All Together</th>
<th>Track Host: Randy Shoup</th>
<th>&lt;mini bio of host&gt;</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Top 10 - Performance Folklore</td>
<td>Martin Thompson confirmed</td>
<td>CTO at Kixeye, former Dir. Google AppEngine and eBay Distinguished Engineer Kixeye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Lessons Learned at Google and Microsoft</td>
<td>Ivan Filho confirmed</td>
<td>Performance Lead at Google</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Everything I learned About Scaling Online Games I learned at Google and eBay: Scalability at KIXEYE</td>
<td>Randy Shoup confirmed</td>
<td>CTO of Tencent China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 possible - QZone from China - 700 million user site</td>
<td>Lei Chen confirmed</td>
<td>Dropbox Reliability Lead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Scaling Dropbox</td>
<td>Andrew Fong confirmed</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DeMystifying the API Lifecycle</th>
<th>Track Host: Jeevak Kasarkod</th>
<th>&lt;mini bio of host&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 What Makes a Great API?</td>
<td>John Musser confirmed</td>
<td>Founder, Programmable Web Programmable Web</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Evolution of the Netflix API</td>
<td>Ben Christensen confirmed</td>
<td>Senior Software Engineer, Netflix API Platform Netflix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 API Security and Federation Patterns</td>
<td>Francois Lascelles confirmed</td>
<td>Chief Architect Layer 7 Technologies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Redesigning PayPal APIs for scale and simplicity</td>
<td>Praveen Alavilli; Deepak Nadig confirmed</td>
<td>Praveen - Architect for Developer Products at PayPal, Deepak - Head of Platform Technology at PayPal Paypal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 The Magic Behind Enterprise Apps: How to expose Reliable, Scalable and Secure Enterprise APIs?</td>
<td>Blake Doumaee confirmed</td>
<td>INTEL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Scoreboards for transparency and alignment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>September Topics Scoreboard</th>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Leading Indicators</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Active Team</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Major Level</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Process &amp; Practices -Persona</td>
<td>2.5 / 3</td>
<td>5 / 2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>.NET Persona</td>
<td>4.25 / 3</td>
<td>2 / 2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Architecture - persona***</td>
<td>3 / 3</td>
<td>5 / 2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Java</td>
<td>3 / 3</td>
<td>0 / 2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ops and infrastructure – Persona</td>
<td>0.8 / 3</td>
<td>5 / 2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Focus Level</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Enterprise Architecture – persona***</td>
<td>2 / 1</td>
<td>3 / 2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>HTML 5 + Javascript</td>
<td>1 / 1</td>
<td>1 / 2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>NoSQL</td>
<td>0 / 1</td>
<td>1 / 2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mobile</td>
<td>0.75 / 1</td>
<td>0 / 2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Big Data</td>
<td>0.25 / 1</td>
<td>1 / 2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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## Editor Role Summary Scoreboard - Oct 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Authored</th>
<th>Connected</th>
<th>Reviewed</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Score</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jonathan Allen</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shane Hastie</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1530</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anand Narayanaswamy</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>1205</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abel Avram</td>
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<td>13</td>
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<td>Roopesh Shenoy</td>
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<td>Michael Floyd</td>
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<td>Werner Schuster</td>
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<td>Jeff Martin</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>Craig Smith</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>Charles Humble</td>
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<td>505</td>
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<tr>
<td>Srinu Penchikala</td>
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<td>Manuel Pais</td>
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<td>Boris Lublinksy</td>
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<td>Jeevak Kasarkod</td>
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<td>Kostis Kapelonis</td>
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<td>Richard Seroter</td>
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<td>270</td>
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<tr>
<td>JP Morgenthal</td>
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<td>Bienvenido David III</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alex Blewitt</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>Mark Little</td>
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<tr>
<td>Perry Reid</td>
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<td>Fabian Lange</td>
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**Legend**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>News</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Met News Writing Monthly Intent (over 75% to goal)</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virtual Panels/Q&amp;A Articles</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>60</td>
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</table>

**Connectors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Articles</th>
<th>News leads</th>
<th>New editors</th>
<th>Mini books</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Total score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jonathan Allen</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shane Hastie</td>
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<td>Michael Floyd</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bienvenido David III</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Team Totals:** 7, 29, 1, 0, 37, 11, 10
Using dashboards

- Alignment
- Triggering discussions
- Ongoing learning
- Unblocking / solving problems
- Self-motivation & positive peer pressure – nobody wants to be red

Reinforce:
- Purpose
- Mastery
- Autonomy (when accountability is clear)
- Sense of Progress
- Team feeling
- Transparency
Metrics & Situational Awareness

Does everyone know what’s going on?
### Editorial Metrics

Every team, sub-team, dept - should be tracking key metrics

#### Lagging indicators (content published)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>News - posted in last week</td>
<td>Roxana</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Articles - avg number of published per week last 4 weeks</td>
<td>Roxana</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>3.75</td>
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<td>4.5</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentations - published last week</td>
<td>Razvan</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books - published last 4 weeks</td>
<td>Ana</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of eMags published in last 4 weeks</td>
<td>Roxana</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews - published last week</td>
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#### Leading indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>News - actual posted last 4 weeks / commits total</td>
<td>Roxana</td>
<td>58/103</td>
<td>59/103</td>
<td>64/104</td>
<td>69/104</td>
<td>74/100</td>
<td>69/100</td>
<td>69/100</td>
<td>69/100</td>
<td>88/100</td>
<td>81/102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg number of articles / week scheduled for next 4 weeks</td>
<td>Roxana</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>3.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Metrics best practices

- Should be criteria for decision making / decision making
- Separate leading from lagging indicators
- Separate goals from general operational ‘keep the boat afloat’ numbers
Kanban for work in progress visualizations
All kinds of dashboarding software
## Scoreboards for transparency and alignment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>September Topics Scoreboard</th>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Leading Indicators</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Active Team</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic or audience</strong></td>
<td><strong>Average news/week</strong></td>
<td><strong>Articles published</strong></td>
<td><strong>Articles in pipeline</strong></td>
<td><strong>Recent News Ideas in JIRA</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Major Level</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process &amp; Practices - Persona</td>
<td>2.6 / 3</td>
<td>5 / 2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.NET Persona</td>
<td>4.25 / 3</td>
<td>2 / 2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architecture - persona***</td>
<td>3 / 3</td>
<td>6 / 2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Java</td>
<td>3 / 3</td>
<td>0 / 2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ops and Infrastructure – Persona</td>
<td>0.8 / 3</td>
<td>5 / 2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus Level</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enterprise Architecture – persona***</td>
<td>2 / 1</td>
<td>3 / 2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HTML 5 + Javascript</td>
<td>1 / 1</td>
<td>1 / 2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NoSQL</td>
<td>0 / 1</td>
<td>1 / 2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile</td>
<td>0.75 / 1</td>
<td>0 / 2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big Data</td>
<td>0.25 / 1</td>
<td>1 / 2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Scoreboards, dashboards and alignment

- Align on goals
- Align on progress
- Create mutual accountability
- Self-reporting creates autonomy, mastery
- Coach vs. manager relationship
- Team feeling – we’re in this together
Meeting Rhythms

Dashboards only as good as your meeting rhythms to discuss them
Planning and Meeting Rhythms – putting it all together

Meeting Rhythms... "Routine can set you free"

1. Standups – daily or twice weekly
2. Weekly dept or project calls
3. Weekly 1:1's
4. Quarterly planning and review
5. Annual meeting

"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then, is not an act, but a habit."

- Aristotle
Stand ups in a virtual context

• Daily, or at least bi-weekly
• Skype, google hangouts
• Feeling of connectedness daily – we’re in it together
• Sense of mutual accountability
• Ongoing mastery – learning about each other
• Ease of access – you know people will be there
• Kick off point to schedule additional calls
• Daily personal retrospective

A MUST HAVE
Standup Agenda Samples

1. What have I done since the last standup?
2. Where am I stuck?

1. What are my successes?
2. What are my priorities for today?
3. Where am I stuck?
Weekly Dept / Team Calls

Agenda:
1. Personal Check-in / good news
2. The numbers
3. Feedback
4. Solve Stuck Points on key objectives or metrics

Key tools:
- Metrics dashboards for numbers
- Yammer for feedback channels
- Dashboards for identifying ‘red’ objectives

Stand ups take care of status, weekly calls are for alignment
#feedback – transparently

Kevin Huo
#feedback Marketing managers from [removed] and [removed] told me that if they decide to cooperate with local tech media, they will only choose InfoQ China. In their thoughts, InfoQ China's readers quality is high, content is professional, work style is trustworthy.
21 minutes ago • Reply • Like • More

Floyd Marinescu
#feedback

I'm a big fan of infoq. However, I would like to watch the presentations on my iPad or iPhone. Sadly, the slides do not work on these devices (Flash based?). Is there a way to watch the presentations on iOS devices that I'm not aware of? Do you plan to publish an App?

Right now, I plan to capture the presentation with a screen capture program on my Mac and play it as video on my iPad. This is not very comfortable, but at least it should work.

Regards,
Tobias
6 hours ago • Reply • Like • More

Floyd Marinescu
He wants to do a mobile talk in your track and was worried it's not technical enough, was asking if we have video examples. Frank is working with him and I assume will iterate with you.
February 10 at 2:17pm • Reply • Like • More

Dionysios Synodinos: They have an awesome mobile portfolio,

Nitin Bharti
To All Company

As I reach out to some of our alumni to schedule testimonial interviews next week, I'm already getting some amazing feedback about our event:

"QCon is my #1 conference every year that I would go to if that were the only one I could attend." - Robert Blumen

"FYI qconsf is the only conference I consider "must" each year. All others are just nice to have. :)" - Michael Dowling

#feedback
Like • Reply • Share • More • November 8 at 8:42am
Weekly 1:1’s

- On a call, or automated with 15five
- Personal retrospective
- Weekly touch touch point
- Opportunity for problem solving, praise, transparency
Weekly 1:1 / Retrospective

- Reinforces:
  - Mastery
  - Autonomy
  - Purpose
  - Sense of progress
  - Connectedness / alignment

How was work this week? Any successes or accomplishments that you’re happy about?

- Immersed myself in Brasil incorporation requirements and sent off most of what the Brazil law firm needed.
- Unblocking the above two points plus the reskin app tour visual made it a great week!

March 27th at 6:41pm
Roxanne Beverstein: Can’t wait to see the app tour visual. When will you share it with us?

March 28th at 2:14pm
Floyd Marinescu: I haven’t made it yet, I just aligned with Blistian on where on the site it should appear.

Cristi Buta: Good progress for the reskin project this week. We’re on time with the latest action plan. Tweaks from revision 2 are addressed and breadcrumbs are in place.

March 27th at 6:42pm
Roxanne Beverstein: This is wonderful news and I appreciate Cristi posting an action plan for this project.

March 28th at 3:09am
Cristi Buta: Thanks Roxanne. We’re doing our best to get this project done ASAP. There are lots of small details to take care of so it’s not that simple ;).

Diana Baciu: A very busy as usual... focused mainly on QCons. I was able to get in touch with 21 NY based user groups. 6 of them already confirmed they are interested in spreading the word about QCon NY 2013. I still have 25 more user groups to contact.

March 27th at 11:48pm
Floyd Marinescu: Great work, this is really key for us to expand more into NY. I love that you’re getting groups to present our slides too.
Daily & Weekly Rhythms Review

- Standups for daily ‘status’ and daily retrospective
- Weekly Dept / Team calls for operational alignment and problem solving
- Weekly 1:1’s / structured as a retrospective for everything else
### Annual and Quarterly Planning Rhythm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Capabilities</th>
<th>Key Initiatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>3 Year Priorities</strong></td>
<td><strong>Annual Priorities</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Outstanding execution in every facet of our business.</td>
<td>1. Strengthen culture around Accountability and Mastery core values (excellence at execution)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Build a powerful brand</td>
<td>2. Improve culture &amp; planning for editorial so we are publishing the right topics &amp; more content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Innovate new features and services and enter new markets</td>
<td>3. QCon Execution: Develop in-house amazing conference organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Build an awesome culture with the right people.</td>
<td>4. InfoQ: design, features, testing processes to increase traffic, membership, conversions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Sustainable scalability of our business model</td>
<td>5. Marketing's role expanded to be more strategic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Quarterly Objectives

- Everyone thinks hard once a quarter:
- How did I do and what can we FOCUS on to grow the most this quarter?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quarterly Priorities</th>
<th>Who</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall Monthly Unique Visitors to 160K</td>
<td>Kevin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Advertisement Revenue Increase</td>
<td>Selina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video/Website watching experience for China readers</td>
<td>Kevin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase Content for each Persona</td>
<td>Frank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Find at least 2 new community editors for 5 hot topics</td>
<td>Frank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Company Top 5 Quarterly Objectives</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hire a finance person</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis of QCon NY 2012 feasibility and hire an events manager</td>
<td>Roxanne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>redesign: re-skinning (new HTML, CSS)</td>
<td>Alex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>implement trends driven taxonomy</td>
<td>Michael</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan for Incorporation in China</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual Objectives</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100K online ad revenue (half the group goal)</td>
<td>Roxanne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100K online ad revenue (half the group goal)</td>
<td>Ellen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>redesign: content type index pages implementation</td>
<td>Alex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>redesign: improvements to the search page</td>
<td>Alex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International franchise contract 2.0</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research business vision documented and first phase milestones identified</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a quarterly newsletter to send to advertising clients and prospects</td>
<td>Roxanne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send Recruitment result and commitments to editors once/mo</td>
<td>Roxanne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly report to editors thanking them &amp; checking on commitments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The objective of being 2 weeks ahead with sessions going live</td>
<td>Razvan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mail presentations authors published 4 weeks ago with stats &amp; also press releases</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Quarterly Objectives Best Practices

• Reviewed on weekly calls for status
• Align with annual priorities or SWOT
• Have clear success criteria
• Have an action plan / timeline
• All visible on central dashboard transparently

Reinforce:
• Autonomy
• Mastery
• Purpose
• Sense of progress
• Team feeling
Quarterly Review Meeting

• Celebrate successes
• Report on status of key projects
• Report on top priorities for next quarter

Reinforces:
• Sense of progress
• Mastery
• Team feeling
• Purpose
Quarterly Themes in a Virtual Team

• Choose a theme that aligns with quarter’s top priorities
• Choose one key metric
• Add graphical measure to your ‘situation room’/dashboard

• Rewards for quarterly themes:
  – Theme: improving accuracy
    • gift: steak knives sent to everyone
  – Theme: Mastery
    • Gift: $500 towards personal learning / amazon / gift certificate
Super transparency

“I know more about what my colleagues are doing in this company than other companies where my colleagues worked in the next cube”

- C4Media staff member

How is this possible?

• Meeting rhythms making transparent day 2 day and weekly work
• Dashboards identifying everyone’s measures and work
• Culture of Openness and transparency
Annual All-hands Meetings

2013: Ireland

2012: Spain
2011: Prague
2010: China
Regular face to face meetings

• Very important when onboarding
  – Schedule solid 1-2 day work-together/orientation
• Annual all-hands
• Preferably quarterly
Core values

The DNA of the group
Great teams hire and fire by their core values
C4Media’s Core Values

**Transparency** – Be transparent about process, status, expectations, your feelings, successes and failures.

**Integrity** - We do what we say, and we say what we do. We publish content our readers can trust. We fulfill our commitments to readers, customers, and each other. We act in the best interests of the company.

**Mastery**- We never stop learning and we strive to continually improve ourselves, our processes, and our company.

**Service** – The joy of serving others, we go above and beyond for our customers, for our readers, and for each other.

**Accountability** - Take ownership for results. We'll do what it takes to get things done and are very serious about our commitments

**Resourcefulness** - Find creative solutions to get things done, have a “can do” attitude.
How to acknowledge our core values on Yammer

Roxanne Beverstein

The IBM Partner Portal on InfoQ Brazil is performing very well and Simona has worked with Barbara to get all the tracking data live. Thanks to @Simona Bucur and @Barbara Campanini for doing such a great job. #corevalues=service

Nitin Bharti

Noticed that one of our content items was missing an important tag ("ALM"), with sponsorship implications. Reached out to @Roxana Bacila to have her add this and other missing tags. #corevalues=accountability

Jessie Jin

#corevalues=Accountability I've got a few documents from @Frank which @Nitin Bharti presented for us. It is meaningful for us to get ideas about how to calculate our resource and help customer to achieve their goals. Thanks to @Nitin Bharti.

Ellen Gould

#corevalues - Service, Transparency

Roxanne joined me on a call with @Floyd Marinescu to discuss best practices for generating leads in Japan. Japan is an important source of referrals for them.

Kevin Huo praised @Frank Ja

Frank sent a simple status Email to everyone, including me. He had reviewed the speaker's slides and some advice, and also told clients that he is working hard to invite some people join the open space. I think it is a good example for #corevalues: Mastery & Services. Thru this way, we can let our clients feel better, and also think we are helping them to ensure the quality of speech. That’s also our core value for them. ➔ All Company

Kathy Loucas

Thank you @Ellen Gould for creating and sending an invoice to McAfee at the last minute. The client needed an invoice sent to them before their end of day Monday and I was away from my computer. Ellen came through and created an invoice for the client using excel and past Invoices as examples so that the client could get what they needed. This is a great example of team work but also our core values: responsiveness and #service

What to include in a core value acknowledgement

1) The tag #corevalues
2) Which corevalue you are acknowledging
3) Who are you acknowledging
4) The story of how they exemplified our core values

Floyd Marinescu

#corevalues = "accountability"

@Dio Symondinos & @Adrian Serevilla worked worked late and tirelessly to assure that the related widget for eResearch renders correctly and no bugs are present. Lots of last minute adjustments and fixes deployed to assure a successful launch.
#Corevalues slide from the quarterly review meeting

- 56 acknowledgements done on yammer this quarter!
Core values story telling with posters at the annual meeting
Key core values to make virtual teams work

• Transparency
• Service
• Accountability
Purpose – the why?

Establish intrinsic value
Software is Changing the World
C4Media (InfoQ & QCon) Purpose

To facilitate the spread of knowledge and innovation in software development
Purposes Around the World

• **Apple**: To make a contribution to the world by making tools for the mind that advance humankind

• **Nike**: To experience the emotion of competition, winning, and crushing competitors

• **Sony**: To experience the joy of advancing and applying technology for the benefit of the public

• **Wal-Mart**: To give ordinary folk the chance to buy the same things as rich people
Purpose – doesn’t need to be lofty

• Walt Disney: To make people happy
• Zappos – Delivering Happiness

“What you believe” / what your team stands for
"you need to do stuff you are passionate about. The companies that work are the ones that people really care about and have a vision for the world so do something you like...

...a company is the best vehicle in the world to align a lot of people to achieve a mission"
Rod Johnson and Spring

- Created Spring: free open source software that competed with $20K/license software sold by billion dollar companies
- Sold SpringSource (a virtual company for much of it’s lifetime) in 2008 for hundreds of millions of dollars

“I think the biggest thing that keeps you going is conviction, the fact that you believe that what you are doing is not only eventually going to hopefully be profitable, but is actually worth doing, that it’s something that is really going in some little way to make the world a better place.” - Rod Johnson
Communicating purpose

InfoQ.com’s “About page” before our purpose:

About InfoQueue

InfoQ.com (Information Queue) is an independent online community focused on change and innovation in enterprise software development, targeted primarily at the technical architect, technical team lead (senior developer), and project manager. InfoQ serves the Java, .NET, Ruby, SOA, and Agile communities with daily news written by domain experts, articles, video interviews, video conference presentations, and mini-books. InfoQ launched June 8 2006. InfoQ’s primary mission is to contribute to the evolution of the communities we serve. InfoQ’s main differentiators/innovations include:

After:

Software is changing the world; InfoQ.com is an online news / community site that aims to empower software developers by facilitating the spread of knowledge and innovation in the enterprise software development community; to achieve this, InfoQ is organized as a practitioner-driven community service providing news, articles…
Communicating purpose

Description of a QCon, BEFORE:
QCon London is the sixth annual London enterprise software development conference designed for developers, team leads, architects and project management is back! There is no other event in the UK with similar opportunities for learning, networking, and tracking innovation occurring in the Java, .NET, Html5, Mobile, Agile, and Architecture communities.

QCon AFTER discovering our purpose:
Software is changing the world; QCon aims to empower software development by facilitating the spread of knowledge and innovation in the enterprise software development community; to achieve this, QCon is organized as a practitioner-driven conference designed for people influencing innovation in their teams: team leads, architects, project managers, engineering directors.
In quarterly and annual review calls

### Our Contributions

#### Weekly totals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Articles</td>
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<tr>
<td>News</td>
<td>74</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentations</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### Historical totals

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>News</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentations</td>
<td>2297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>723</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
General Observations
All virtual works better than partial

• Easy to keep everyone informed when everyone is virtual
• Everyone virtual = everyone accessing information consistently
• Special effort needed for partial-co-located teams to keep virtual peers feeling ‘in the loop’
  – Ensure key virtual stakeholders are kept informed and in the conversation
  – Maintain updates on key virtual channels even if repetitive
Virtual teams must be Results Oriented

Results are literally all you see

Self-motivation is required

Therefore – culture, happiness are essential
Diversity

Age, gender, culture - all are irrelevant in a virtual environment where results are what you primarily see and are shared core values unite us.
Managing a project on 1 hr/week

• With the right:
  – Metrics
  – Dashboards
  – Goals / personal accountabilities set
  – Team with shared values and sense of ‘why’
  – Planning and review rhythms

• A weekly call + standups can be all that’s needed to manage complex projects
My Role:

**CEO: Community Experience Officer**

Concerned with the experience of the:

- Employee community
  - Internal employees, editors, speakers
- Customer community
  - Reader, advertisers, attendees
- Investor community

Alignment of strategy to our purpose
Servant Leadership
Manage culture, motivation, purpose
Transparency and trust

Trust without transparency is foolishness
Trust with transparency is empowering
Process ownership vs. task execution

- Don’t delegate tasks, delegate responsibilities
- Don’t hire assistants, hire process managers
- Scale by offloading processes to new people
- Essential in a virtual team – nobody want’s to just ‘do tasks’
Dan Mezick – “The Culture Game”, Agile Boston Leader

Good Games have:
• A clear goal
• Clear rules, uniformly applied
• A Way to get feedback & track progress
• OPT-IN PARTICIPATION

Happiness Requires:
MANDATORY:
• A sense of control
• A sense of progress
OPTIONAL:
• A sense of belonging & membership
• A sense of collective purpose
Good Games Deliver Happiness

• **Control**: via clear goals, opt-in participation

• **Progress**: via the readily available feedback

• **Membership**: via everyone playing by the same rules

• **Purpose**: If the game is BIG ENOUGH, participants “locate themselves” in the story of the game
Good culture can be

Consciously Designed
Be a culture hacker

Own the feeling you are creating

Alignment and commitment to structure, practices, and mindset that deliver happiness
Questions?