

Pasta – A stretched analogy

How to cook a good system administrator.

The conflict

- Developers vs System Administrators – constant change vs the need for stability.
- Why we need formally trained people – there is little formal discipline in the field.
- Why we don't have them – the role has been traditionally filled by mustangs.

Evolution

- Hack job – doing what is required, regardless of repeatability.
- Jack of all trades – used to do everything.
- Specialization – then they did one thing.
- Corporate IT guy – Then they did nothing.
- All of the above.....

What you need to know

- Politics
- Time Management
- Conflict Resolution
- Documentation
- Finance
- Technology (optional)

- How do you train the guy that “likes” computers to be an effective sysadmin?

Hard Skills (the easy stuff)

- Server hardware (it isn't always a commodity)
- Networking (moving stuff)
- Storage (data is growing really fast)
- Open Source Software (it just works)
- Virtualization (the foundation of the cloud)
- Automation (do you really want to do stuff twice)
- Provisioning and maintenance
- Security (really important when you forget it)

Soft Skills (or the time sink)

- Communicating limitations
- Allocating scarce resources
- Managing the project managers
- Begging for help
- Prioritization
- Understanding what is critical
- Negotiation with developers

Who you should hire

- The classical geek (culturally as well as technical) – you have to know who Frodo is....
- Rulebreakers (within reason) – identify what is wrong and fix it ... rule makers
- Makers and tinkerers – curiosity is central to troubleshooting.
- Conclusion – the next generation