BUILDING REMOTE FIRST TEAMS

THE PERKS AND PITFALLS OF
AGENDA

- Who am I?
- Perks and Pitfalls
  - Short term survival
  - Long term sustainability
- Manager Perspective

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WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ME
WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ME

- Sundance
- 60#s
- 7 years old
- Rescue
- Golden Retriever/Irish Setter
WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT WORK ME

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WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT WORK ME

- Curious, worked across a lot of levels
- Started working in US Defense, all local
- Worked in the Middle East for a few years
- Grew from leading local teams, to remote ones
First employee, 3.5 years now

HQ is in Bay Area

~60% of the company remote

9/11 are remote in my dept
First employee, 3.5 years now
HQ is in Bay Area
~60% of the company remote
9/11 are remote in my dept
» Build some cool tech
» Build remote eng culture
» Timezone doesn’t determine skills
» Focus on: Inclusion, Coverage, Pace
» Web is global, why not us?

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PERKS

▸ No commute
▸ Flexible schedule
▸ Distraction free
PERKS

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▸ Flexible schedule
▸ Distraction free

PITFALLS

▸ Isolation
▸ Blurry work/life line
▸ Blocked constantly
MAKING IT BETTER

▸ Develop Regional Autonomy
▸ Build community outside your team
▸ Fight the Hero culture, help people be offline
▸ Clarify responsibility
BUT LIKE, HOW?
CROSS TEAM

- Random connections
- Conferences
- Informal team chats

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**CROSS TEAM**

- Random connections
- Conferences
- Informal team chats

**IGNORE THINGS**

- @ people always
- Set your working hours
- Don’t DM, use channels
- Specify urgency

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CROSS TEAM

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IGNORE THINGS

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DOCUMENT MORE

- I know, cliché
- Share the Why
- Brainstorming docs

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PERKS

▸ Global company pool

▸ Long term flexibility
PERKS

- Global company pool
- Long term flexibility

PITFALLS

- Lack of career growth
- Second class citizen
- Imposter syndrome
PERKS

» Global company pool
» Long term flexibility

PITFALLS RISKS

» Lack of career growth
» Second class citizen
» Imposter syndrome
MAKING IT BETTER

▸ Trust people, not characters
▸ Inclusion
  ▸ Ideas come from anyone
  ▸ All voices are heard
▸ Celebrate the smallest of things
BUT LIKE, HOW?
BUT LIKE, HOW?

- Be supportive, and say it out loud (especially managers)
  - #celebrate & #thanks channels
- Overshare - email everyone, not just engineering
- Regular unstructured idea talks
- Company wide scheduled remote days

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MANAGER PERSPECTIVE

- Foster culture of:
  - Trust
  - Autonomy
  - Accountability
- Hiring is hard
- You don’t scale

HOW?

- Clear policies & job descriptions
- Team writes project docs
- Clear scope (especially what is NOT)
- Clear ownership
- Iterable approach
- Balance staffing across TZs (level & roles)