It Takes Two to Make a Thing Go Right:
Support for Junior Developers in the Workplace

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Why Hire Junior Devs?

- Challenging to find senior developers

- Cost benefits

- Productivity benefits

- Seniors were once juniors too

- Consistent cultural environment

- Loyalty

"The bottom line is that for most products, seeking out rockstar senior engineers is like hiring Picasso to paint your apartment"

\- Quote by Avi Flombaum

Dean of The Flatiron School
& CTO of Designer Pages

Mentor Questions

- Are there things I do that make your job of managing/mentoring me easier?

- Is there more I can do to help make your job of managing/mentoring me even easier?

- Is there anything else you'd like to add?

Junior Questions

- Do you feel supported at work? Please elaborate.

- Do you have any suggestions for your mentors/managers on additional ways they can support you?
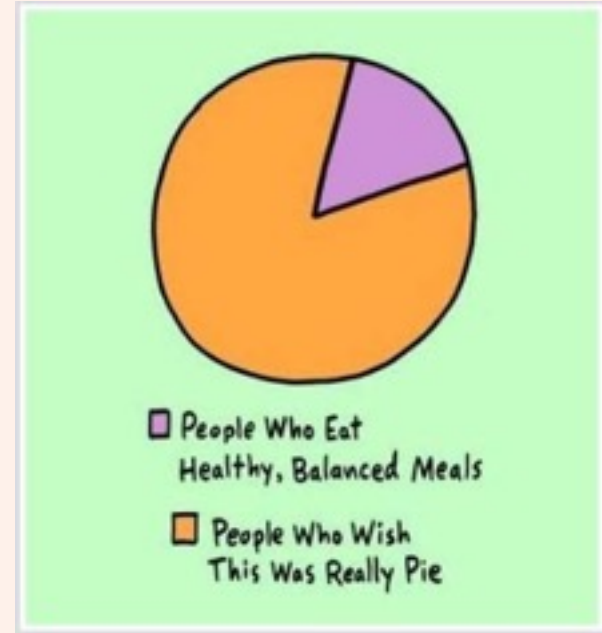
Feedback Stats

Employees in the company:

- Largest was 5000+ employees

- Next largest had 600+ employees

- Most were in the 20-50 and 50-100 range

- Two with less than 20 in the office

60% SaaS & 30% Agencies

1 entirely remote, a couple with remote mentoring, the rest work in the same location

4 Support Categories

1. Organization & Communication

2. Courage & Confidence

3. Golden Rule

4. Question-friendly Environments

♪ It's Peanut Butter Jelly Time! ♫

Huh?

It's Not Easy Being Green

- "Too green" can be confused with lack of context.
- Misunderstanding around "common sense"
- Importance of details and sequential order
- Empathy and compassion for those who are learning.

It's Not Easy Being Green

Impostor Syndrome: A collection of feelings of inadequacy that persist despite evident success.

Decision fatigue: The deteriorating quality of decisions made by an individual after a long session of decision making.

4 Support Categories

1. **Organization & Communication**

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Organization & Communication

Organizations:

- Have an on-boarding process

- Establish best practices

- Recurring one-on-one check-ins

- Communication tools

- Consider titles

Organization & Communication

IT DOESN'T TAKE SUPER POWERS TO BECOME MORE ORGANIZED.

Juniors:

- Take notes

- Keep a record

- In-person follow ups

- Take initiative

More on Communication

Mentors & Juniors:

- Be open to feedback, and willing to grow

- Frequent contact

4 Support Categories

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Courage & Confidence

Mentors:

- Be kind and approachable

- Opportunities for exploration

- Establish goals

- Inclusion

- Hire 2+ juniors at the same time

Courage & Confidence

Juniors:

- Be positive and enthusiastic

- Practice patience with yourself

- Learn balance

- Help each other

- Share successes and failures

- Job ownership

4 Support Categories

1. Organization & Communication

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3. **Golden Rule**

4. Question-friendly Environments

"Treat others the way ~~they~~ **want to be treated"**

"Different people learn very differently and it's not always easy for mentors to determine what approach is best. If you know what works for you - it helps everyone to share that!"

- A ThinkShout mentor

Golden Rule

Mentors & Juniors:

- Articulate your needs

- Practice patience and kindness

- Equal accountability

4 Support Categories

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4. **Question-friendly Environments**

Question-friendly Environments

Organizations:

- Assign mentorship roles to appropriate individuals

- Pair a senior with a junior developer

- Encourage questions

"Continue to ask questions, there are no dumb questions; programming is huge and there is so much to know. Not one person, no matter how senior they are, knows everything. So, it can help them too to ask questions."

<div align="right">- Mentor, from peer feedback</div>

Question-friendly Environments

Juniors:

- Practice courtesy and respect for other's time and attention

- Work to solve a problem beforehand

- Take time to reflect on what you've learned

- When in doubt, ask

"You have the opportunity to train exactly the programmers you want to work with for a lower cost than you might think. Which is a massive win for your company."

- Justin, works in DevOps for Airbrake.io

(And a massive win for your juniors, too!)

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