THE BLACK MAGIC

ENGINEERING MANAGEMENT

Growing a start-up requires individual and organizational change, here are some helpful approaches.

Thrilled to be here…

- FIRST TIME IN SPAIN
- FIRST NON-TECHNICAL TALK
- FIRST VELOCITY CONFERENCE
- RENEWED NERVOUSNESS ON STAGE

ABOUT ME

COMPANIES

- OSAF
- SLIDE
- MOZILLA
- SAUCE LABS

JOBS

- QA ENGINEER
- WEB DEVELOPER
- JAVASCRIPT ARCHITECT
- AUTOMATION MANAGER
- DIRECTOR OF WEB DEV
- VP OF ENGINEERING

LIFE

- FROM CASCADIA
- HAPPILY MARRIED
- TRAVEL, SKI, SAIL
- ~9 YEARS OF SF

GH: github.com/admc
TW: twitter.com/admc

SAUCE LABS

Open Sauce

447 Device/OS/Browser Platforms

appium

This talk was fully written on Thursdays and Sundays.

- CONFERENCE DRIVEN { DEVELOPMENT }

So what happened?

- SAID "**NO**" TO MANAGEMENT
- I HIRED A BUNCH OF AWESOME PEOPLE.
- STARTED ASSIGNING THEM TASKS.
- …
- **TODAY**

"One of the great things about building a tech company is the amazing people that you can hire."

— Ben Horowitz, The Hard Thing About Hard Things: Building a Business When There Are No Easy Answers

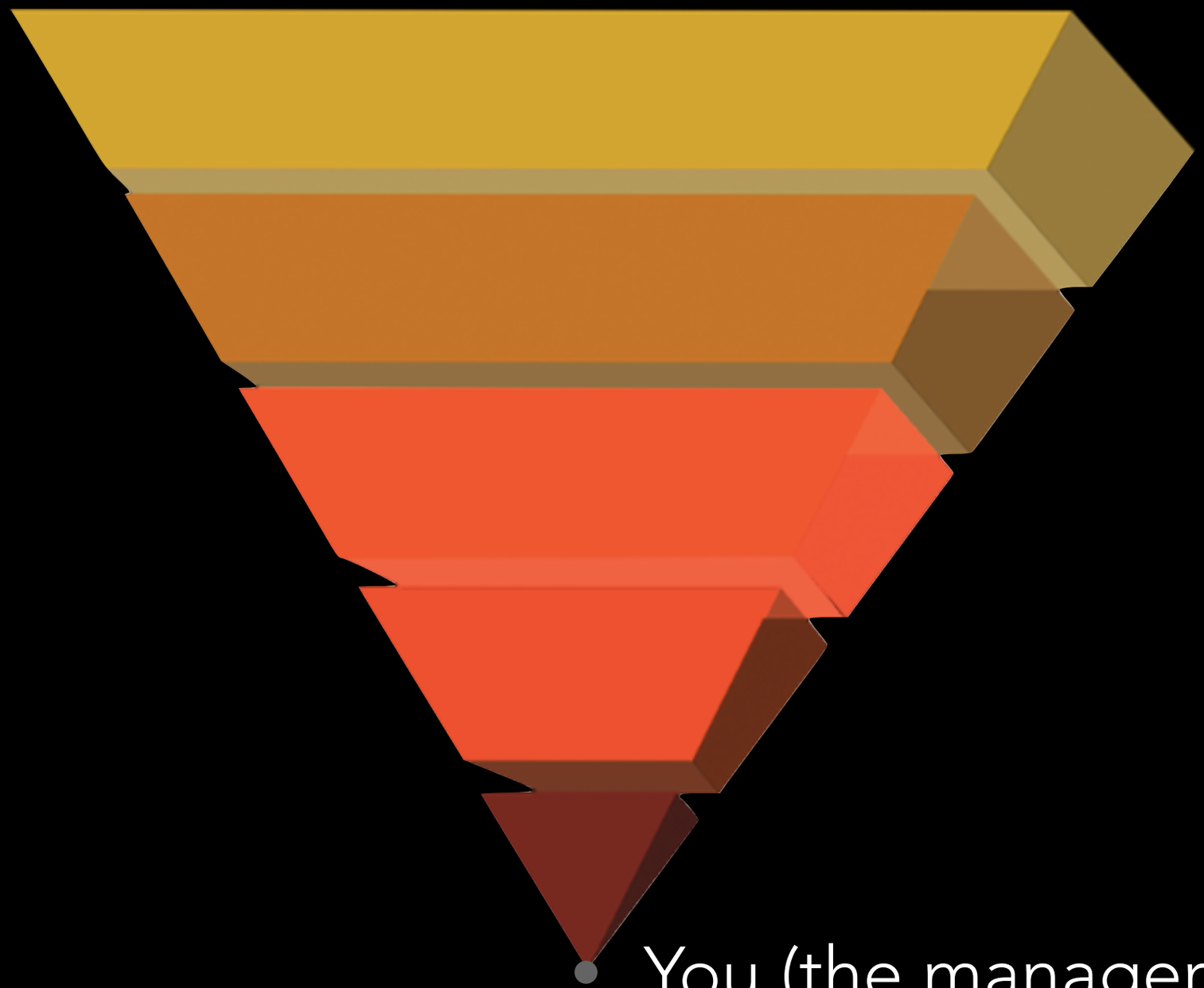
BLACK MAGIC?

"The manager's function is not to make people work, but to make it possible for people to work."

— Tom DeMarco, Peopleware : Productive Projects and Teams

I enjoy optimizing people, more than code.

INVERTED PYRAMID



You (the manager!)

Engineering Management is…

- UNINTUITIVE
- INDIVIDUALIZED
- CONSTANTLY ITERATING
- ABOUT PEOPLE
- OFTEN AN ANTI-PATTERN

DEAR ENGINEER,
WELCOME TO MANAGEMENT.

Success in engineering management doesn't just happen, it's like anything else, your have to geek out on it to be awesome.

STEP 1: Know yourself.

- TIME MANAGEMENT
  - CALENDAR & EMAIL & THINKING
- HOURS OF SLEEP
- WHEN ARE YOU AT YOUR BEST
- FIGHTING OR FLIGHTING
- HAPPY, LEARNING, GROWING?
- CAN YOU SCALE?
- CONSTANT REFLECTION

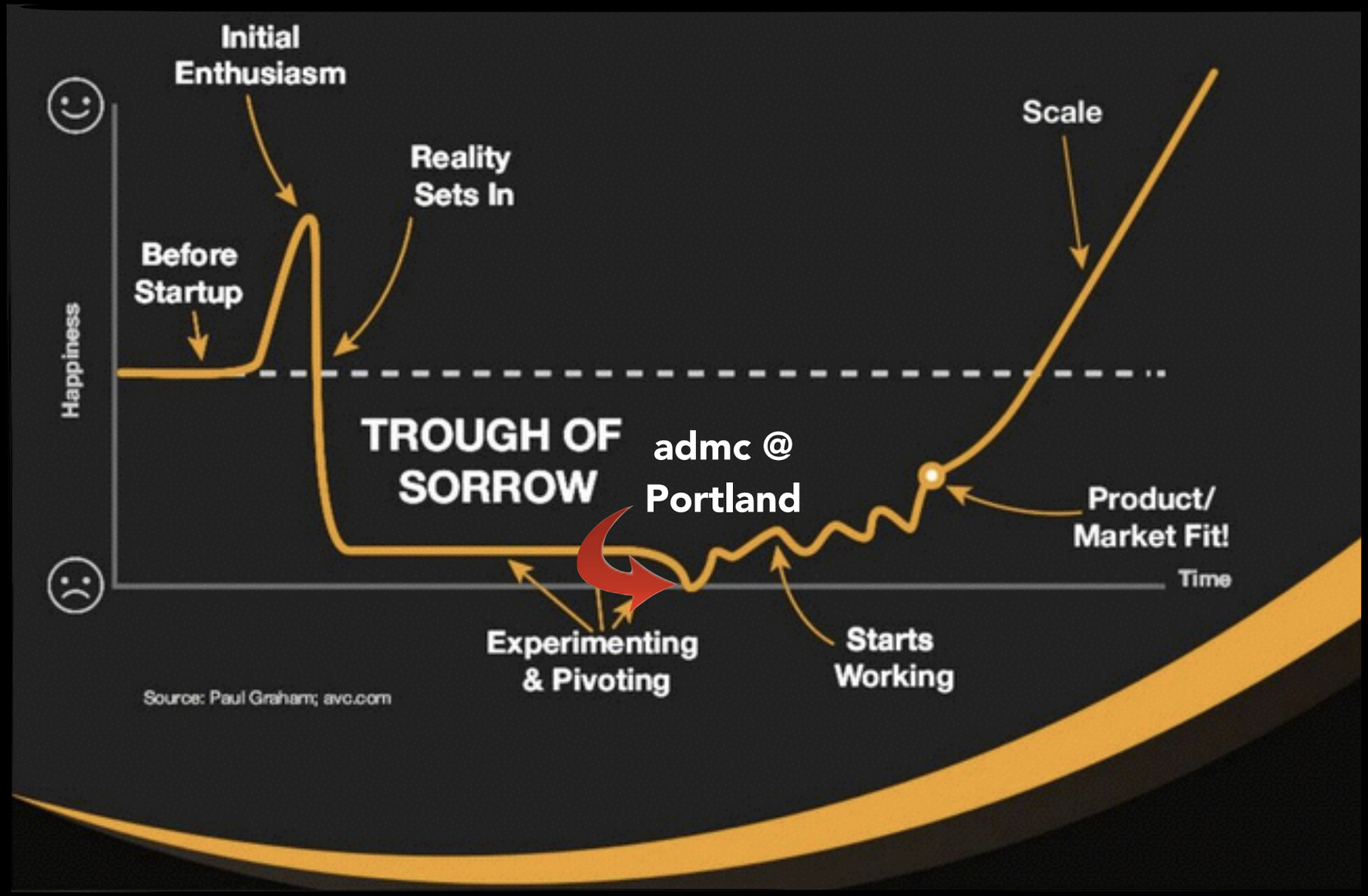
STEP 2: Get help, immediately.

- SEEK OUT MENTORS
- READ BOOKS
- SOLICIT FEEDBACK, LISTEN.
- COUNT ON SR TEAM MEMBERS
- GET A COACH
- YOU WILL FAIL, ACCEPT AND MOVE ON.

Marc: “Do you know the best thing about startups?”
Ben: “What?”
Marc: “You only ever experience two emotions: euphoria and terror. And I find that lack of sleep enhances them both.”

— Ben Horowitz, The Hard Thing About Hard Things: Building a Business When There Are No Easy Answers

STARTUP CURVE



“The fundamental response to change is not logical, but emotional.”

— Tom DeMarco, Peopleware: Productive Projects and Teams

THE EVOLVING ROLE

- **DISCOVERY**
  - LEAD BY EXAMPLE
  - TAKE ON RESPONSIBILITY
  - BE AN AGENT OF CHANGE
- **SURVIVAL**
  - TECH CRUNCH
  - STRUCTURAL GROUND WORK
  - CONTROLLED CHAOS
  - PRODUCT EXPERIMENTATION
- **GROWTH**
  - CULTURE
  - PROCESS
  - HIRING & RECRUITING

FLYING SAUCERS

COMMUNICATION

- REVISIT EVERY TIME YOU DOUBLE
- ENGINEERING ALL HANDS (MONTHLY)
- ENGINEERING MGMT MEETING (WEEKLY)
- TEAM STAND-UP'S (WEEKLY)
- SCHEDULED 1:1 (WEEKLY, OR BIWEEKLY)
- SLACK, EMAIL, LUNCH, GTALK, SKYPE, HANGOUT
- DON'T GET CRUSHED BY **MEETINGS**

VALUE SYSTEMS

- PROVIDE ORDER AND COHESION
- DECISION SYSTEM, BLURRED LINES
- RE-VISITED, ADAPTED, HONORED
- EXIST FROM INSIDE OUT

OUR VALUES

- EXCELLENCE AND PERSONAL GROWTH
- TRUTH AND TRANSPARENCY
- IT'S OKAY TO BE WRONG; NOT STAY WRONG.
- INTEGRITY
- RESPECT

https://saucelabs.com/our-values

“Visual supervision is a joke for development workers. Visual supervision is for prisoners.”

— Tom DeMarco, Peopleware : Productive Projects and Teams

CULTURE

- UNIFIED MISSION AND PURPOSE
- TRUST AND RESPECT
- FREEDOM TO INNOVATE
- LONG TERM INVESTMENTS
- FUN AND CHALLENGING
- CELEBRATE WINS

We made a video. I revisit it often.

BALANCE

- BREAKS AFTER BIG PUSHES
- TECH CRUNCH ALL NIGHTERS...
- PRIORITIZATION
- SAYING “NO”
- REAL VACATIONS
- REAL BOUNDARIES (24/7 EMAIL)

Respectful

Knowledgeable

Tenacious

Helpful

What is a "Sauce Developer"?

Pragmatic

Driven

Balanced

Humble

Patient

Decided at an 8 hour offsite.

HIRING

- CULTURAL FIRST, TECHNICAL SECOND
- BE CREATIVE AND OPEN MINDED
- QUALITY OVER QUANTITY
- SLOW AND STEADY WINS THE RACE
- TRUST YOUR GUT

Hiring is long term planning, and will slow you down.

“One of your many jobs as manager is information conduit, and the rules are deceptively simple: for each piece of information you see, you must correctly determine who on your team needs that piece of information to do their job.”

— Michael Lopp, Managing Humans: Biting and Humorous Tales of a Software Engineering Manager

MIDDLE MANAGEMENT
PASSING THE WORK ON TO YOU
quickmeme.com

ORG STRUCTURE

- DO YOUR HOMEWORK
- CROSS FUNCTIONAL PROJECTS
- CROSS FUNCTIONAL TEAMS
- DIS-ORG CHART
- EVOLVING GRAPH, NOT TREE

http://pando.com/2013/02/28/why-yammer-believes-the-traditional-engineering-organizational-structure-is-dead/

RULES TO LIVE BY...

- DEFINE & STATE YOUR GOALS
- HAVE A VISION
- MAKE DAILY PROGRESS
- THE CALM, INDICATES A STORM
- WHISKEY

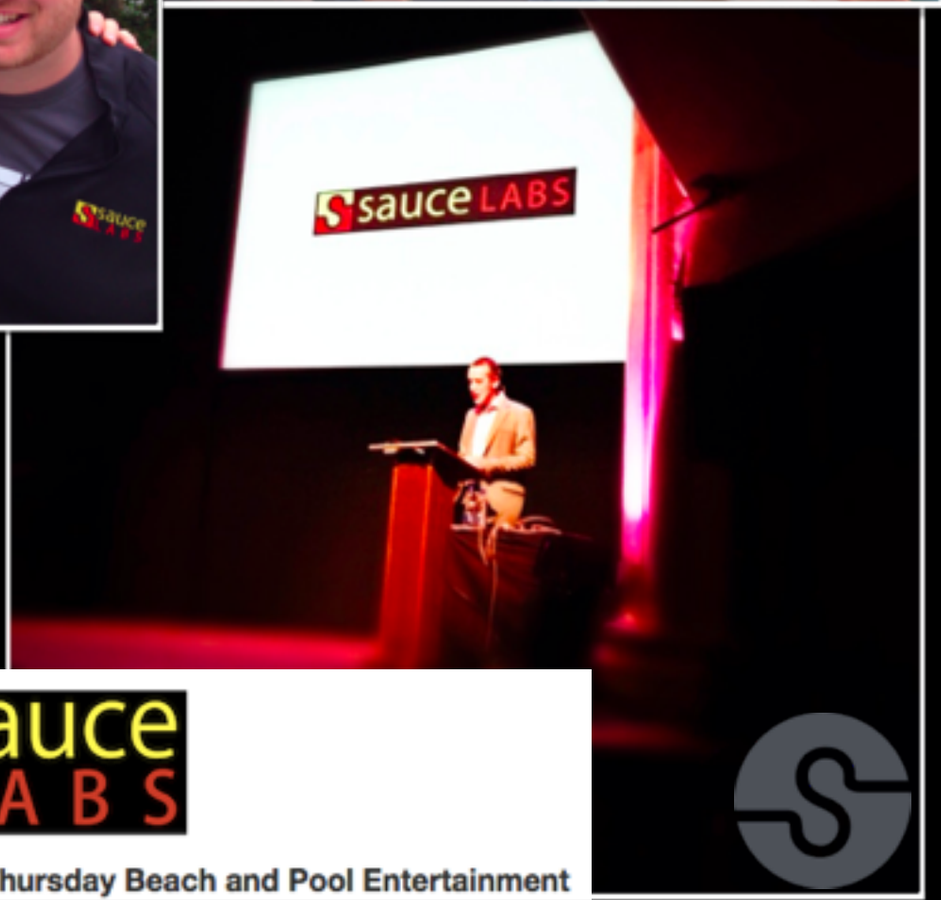
Are people happy on your team?

MISCONCEPTIONS

- THE JOB OF A MANAGER
- MANAGERS AND CODING
- MANAGERS VS LEADS VS PM'S
- MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE
- CTO VS VPE VS CHIEF ARCHITECT
  - PEOPLE && ARCHITECTURE

Manager...

STAY AWESOME



sauce LABS

Sponsoring Thursday Beach and Pool Entertainment

MY KINDLE

- MANAGING HUMANS
- PEOPLEWARE
- HOW NASA BUILDS TEAMS
- THE HARD THING ABOUT HARD THINGS
- SHOGUN: A NOVEL OF JAPAN
- THE 48 LAWS OF POWER

We are hiring @ Sauce Labs

- WEB DEVELOPMENT
- DISTRIBUTED SYSTEMS
- MOBILE AND HARDWARE HACKERS
- SYS ADMIN, SYS ENGINEER
- NETWORK ENGINEERING

THANKS!

MY OFFICE HOURS AT VELOCITY.EU:
18-11-2014 11:15 - 11:50 CET (35 MINUTES)
ROOM: TABLE B (SPONSOR PAVILION)