scaling tech stacks, scaling tech teams

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Outline

• intro - agile, devops, cloud native, IoT, digital transformation,... !!
  – we love it all!
• it’s all about productivity - more tech output, faster cycle times
  – so the hardest parts are about people - tech is people
• five stories around three themes
  – communication - how to get more of it
    • MORE of it! wider & deeper
  – collaboration - how to get more of it
    • MORE inclusive - check in, follow up
  – teamwork - how to get more of it
    • cross-discipline, cross-silos
• tools - as a means to an end
productivity
five stories
one - slack
game changing (for us) was that we got all these changes at once

look for magic in the changes, not in the tools
two - over-communicate
lots of ways to communicate
even when communicating electronically, there is still a person on the other side of the communication
the more senior you are, the more information flow is THE key to decisions, to execution, to participation, to engagement, to results
three - silos
silos can be efficient
allow focus within
enable clear
communication &
delivery across
perhaps your experience with corporate silos is darker...
but remember that silos are filled with people
four - inclusion
lots of ways to communicate
five - looks like
“you’re really an engineer? but you talk so good”
- real people @ trade shows say this to me (not just one)
“you’re really an engineer? but you talk so good”
- real people @ trade shows say this to me (not just one)
gratuitous clouds

(that didn’t fit other parts of the stories)
CREDITS

Thanks to the Linux Foundation for giving me the chance, and the stage, and the microphone to tell my stories.

The font is Roboto, because Arial wasn’t working for me - but it’s ok, I checked with the twitter and they advised me that it would work out fine.

All artwork is from pexels.com, with specials thanks due to #WoCinTech. Thanks also to Jopwell, Burst, ELEVATE, rawpixels, Gabi, Sarah, Recal, Ruxury, Markus, Jia, Narcisa, Vlasov, LeBoutillier, pixabay, Field Engineer, neosiam, rasik, Min, Sharon, Helena, Ithalu, and Fox.

Special thanks to all my great friends, colleagues, and collaborators over so many years. Without y’all, my stories would be much shorter and so much more boring.

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The growth of cloud and related internet-scale technologies over the past 5 years (10 years. 20 years!) has accelerated the pace of innovation within both the technology world and among civilian companies. The ability to quickly & smoothly plug together a variety of powerful technologies to build a new application or technology stack has sped up time-to-solution in amazing ways. As a result, in many organizations, the challenge and bottleneck has moved to teams and to collaboration. The ability for teams to work together efficiently, effectively, and rapidly is at a premium. Communication, collaboration, and cross-disciplinary teamwork are more important than ever as innovation cycles shrink from years to months and from months to weeks. We really need our teams to work together as smoothly and efficiently as our technologies do. Powerful tools and tooling exist to assist us in collaboration, coordination, and iteration. That means that all the raw material for efficient & effective collaboration is within everyone’s reach.
Luckily, powerful tools and tooling have been built to assist us in collaboration, coordination, iteration - slack, git, github, jenkins, jira, and wiki to name just a few - all of which can be used within an organization and across organizations. The open source models of interaction and community have also been spread far and wide with great success. That means that all the raw material for efficient and effective collaboration and high productivity is within everyone’s reach if we can harness it.

This talk will tell stories from experience and observation of how even in the presence of new tech and new tech tools, gaps continue to exist in communication and collaboration, as well as how these gaps can be overcome. You probably have your own horror stories of mis-communication and mis-collaboration and the goal of this session is to share stories of positive changes with large positive impacts in both productivity and in business results. Technology is easier when we work together.
Erik Riedel, PhD is a regular speaker on both technical and cultural topics. He has worked for over twenty years as an engineer and over fifteen years as an engineering leader. He is currently Senior Vice President of Engineering at IT Renew, building out the Sesame line of compute & storage solutions. He was most recently Senior Director of Engineering at Dell/EMC where he and his team built two generations of market-leading scalable storage products with 1000s of worldwide customers in all industry verticals. Over the past ten years (twenty years) he has watched new technologies create cultural and organization change with many of these customers, and he has watched and guided similar changes within the organizations that he has built and led. He has built teams and he has monitored, managed, and mentored teams. He has built alliances and partnerships within the corporate structure and across the industry in open source and standards activities. He splits his time between technical and non-technical contributions, feeling comfortable with both the propeller-heads and the pointy-hairs.
two more stories
six - diligence
seven - growth