Building a successful remote culture with ownership
Ownership through Bankruptcy
Hello!

I am Sue Nallapeta

VP of Engineering at Apartment List.

Previously at Zoosk, Blackhawk Network, Kodak Gallery.
Key ingredient to achieving ownership is having a clear goal. As companies grow, distance to the goal increases.
Meet Sam

- Grew from an Individual Contributor to a Director
- Launched several successful products
Meet Sam

- Grew from an Individual Contributor to a Director
- Launched several successful products
- All of this, being remote!
Is remote hard?
It is only a 55% problem.
Albert Mehrabian’s 7-38-55 Rule

- Body Language (55)
- Tone of Voice (38)
- Words (7)

Perception of a person
Body Language
Body Language = TCP
Body Language = Trust + Culture + Process
How do we build Trust?

- Goals
- Communication
- Autonomy
How do we build Trust?

Goals

Communication

Autonomy
Drake Equation

\[ N = R^* \times f_p \times n_e \times f_i \times f_c \times L \]

- **Number of technologically advanced civilizations in the Milky Way galaxy**
- **Rate of formation of stars in the galaxy**
- **Fraction of those stars with planetary systems**
- **Number of planets, per solar system, with an environment suitable for life**
- **Fraction of suitable planets on which life actually appears**
- **Fraction of life-bearing planets on which intelligent life emerges**
- **Fraction of civilizations that develop a technology that releases detectable signs of their existence into space**
- **Length of time such civilizations release detectable signals into space**
Drake Equation – Ecommerce site

Revenue =

Number of new users who visit the site
X Users who register
X Number of photos uploaded
X % of products in cart
X Price per item
X % of carts that get to checkout
X % of checkouts that complete
How do we build Trust?

Goals

Communication

Autonomy
How do we build Trust?

Goals

Communication

Autonomy
How do we build Culture?

- Inclusive Environment
- Career Growth
- Recognition
How do we build Culture?

- Inclusive Environment
- Career Growth
- Recognition
How do we build Culture?

- Inclusive Environment
- Career Growth
- Recognition
Career growth funnel at Apartment List

1. Mastery
   - Demonstrating knowledge in their discipline

2. Ownership
   - Values team success over individual success

3. Leadership
   - Holds themselves and others accountable

4. Impact
   - Continuously improve themselves, team and the company
Career Progression

- Principal Software Engineer: SE6
- Staff Software Engineer: SE1, SE2, SE3, SE4, SE5
  - Software Engineer 1: SE1
  - Software Engineer 2: SE2
  - Senior Software Engineer 1: SE3
  - Senior Software Engineer 2: SE4
  - Software Engineer 5: SE5
How do we build Culture?

- Inclusive Environment
- Career Growth
- Recognition
How do we build Process?

Hiring

Architecture

Dependencies
How do we build Process?

Hiring

Architecture

Dependencies
How do we build Process?

- Hiring
- Architecture
- Dependencies
Path to scaling remotely

Remote Friendly
Primarily work out of HQ but build light-weight touchpoints to integrate remote team members

Remote Only
Completely spread out employees with no HQ. Remote becomes the mindset

Remote First
Build a team around a workflow that embraces the concepts of remote work regardless of where the employees are located
Facts evolve over time, problems change over time, we have to remember to reset often.
Thanks!

Any questions?

You can find me at:

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Credits

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- Photographs by Unsplash