

# ENGINEERING MIND

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INNOVECS



## LEADING

Lessons from  
engineering's finest

Are you ready to take your engineering  
career to the next level? Then you've come  
to the right place.

## THE WAY:

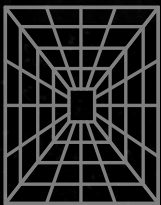
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS



**Eoghan cuts the ribbon** 5

**9 Daily Habits of a Successful Engineering Leader** 8

by Andrew Komarov,  
Software Architect (Solution)

**Riders on the Storm:  
Leading an Engineering  
Team Through Turmoil  
Towards Triumph** 16

by Cheslav Novytskiy,  
Engineering Manager

**Inspo: Our Picks and  
Must-Follows** 24

**Leading By Letting Go.  
How To Quit Disturbing  
Your Engineering Team  
From Growing** 26

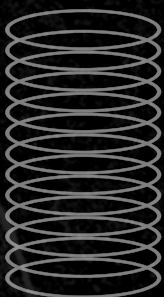
by Taras Lazoriv,  
Advanced Software Engineer

**The Delivery Director's  
Take: Insights and Opinions** 34

by Andrii Poddubnyi

**Infoshare 2023: A sneak  
peek into a high-profile  
tech conference** 37

**Innovecs Career Watch** 38





## DEAR READERS,

We're thrilled to present the very first issue of Engineering Mind – a digital magazine that delves into the fascinating world of engineering culture. As a technology company, we recognize that culture is the glue that keeps us all connected, inspired, and on the same page. It's what makes us Innovecs, and we're eager to share our knowledge and experience with you.

This inaugural issue is all about «Leading the Way: Lessons from engineering's finest.» We've spoken to top industry leaders who know what it takes to foster a shared vision and maintain consistent behavior, even in the face of challenges. We've uncovered how they hold their teams accountable, and how they keep everyone motivated and on track.

Our goal is to give you a practical guide to engineering culture, one that will help you and your team take on the world. And that's not all – we're aiming to start a conversation, to spark new ideas, and to create a community that's passionate about engineering culture.

So, come join us on this journey, and let's discover the magic of engineering culture together with Engineering Mind!

Sincerely,  
Natasha Yatsuliak  
Editor-in-chief

**EOGHAN O'DONNELL**  
Chief Delivery Officer  
at Innovecs



Welcome to the first edition of Innovecs digital magazine about engineering culture and leadership! Any dictionary will tell you that culture is about shared beliefs and values. For me, it's unequivocally the uniform and unapologetic desire to win as one team. Go big or go home!



In order to win we want the best co workers, the best services our clients can buy, the best benefits our company can offer, the best technology, the list goes on. However, what we really want to do is inspire loyalty. Everyone should feel like they want to be part of the winning team.



I believe that everyone has a particular and unique value they bring to Innovecs. From risk takers to evangelists, technologists to strategists, together we all face peaks and troughs that form a landscape of respect, appreciation, trust, and empowerment. Together we must communicate, teach, promote and delegate.

We are all humans with emotional attachment. It's these emotions that we must nurture and develop which will fuel the aspirations of those around us to build a collective belief in our values.





# 9 DAILY HABITS OF A SUCCESSFUL

# ENGINEERING LEADER

**J**ust like Rome wasn't built in a day, you don't suddenly wake up in a new role. Obviously, there is a certain day in your timeline when you are assigned to it, but usually, the transformation takes place smoothly and gradually. You begin to fulfill your senior duties little by little until someone decides that you are finally ready and makes it official. I've always realized that being a senior is a huge responsibility; hence there will be less mercy for mistakes. Again, when you seamlessly develop in this direction, it goes well without any unpleasant surprises.

Overall, the tech titles, specifically divisions into middles, seniors, and juniors, are rather vague and conditional. Probably the most exciting thing about career growth is when you come face to face with a new, large, and complex project, and your superior goes: «That's it, you're in charge now, go for it.» The thrill of it motivates you to try everything by your own hands and make decisions that benefit not only yourself but other people as well. Some of the new tasks used to rattle me, and I doubted and questioned my abilities many times. Nevertheless, I approached the unknown in small and unhurried steps. In this matter, fear needs to be tamed.

## ANDREW KOMAROV

Software Architect (Solution)  
at Innovecs

### 17+ YEARS IN TECH

### 8+ YEARS INNOVECSER

Responsible and result-oriented person. He takes any complex problem and quickly transforms it to elegant and excellent solutions. Add to it excellent personal skills such as humor, positive thinking and mood and you get an ideal team player who can lead the team to solve any challenges.

Kitchen alchemist who whips up heavenly dishes.



# 1. TIME MANAGEMENT AND BALANCE

Regarding time management in a senior position, it all goes back to an increased degree of responsibility. And, accordingly, here comes the understanding that all your efforts are aimed at keeping the customers satisfied as much as possible. If you are junior or middle, you can shut down your laptop at 6 PM and walk away without a twinge of conscience. Whereas in my shoes, it is necessary to follow through whatever it takes. Also, you must have a clear idea of what deadlines you meet and which you don't and be transparent about it.

Customers tend to highly appreciate instant replies. Therefore, as a senior, I equipped my phone with all the essential apps to be in touch, even while at a supermarket. I don't mean to say that work has become 24/7; however, sometimes it gets pretty close to it. Being on your toes the majority of the time, sooner or later makes you decide what balance is for you: where exactly you draw the line between work and personal issues and maintain good relations with customers and teammates. By the way, the latter can sometimes do something after hours and count on your help. And if you are always there when they need you — this will never be taken for granted.

## 2. PLANNING

My traditional workday begins as follows: I open my laptop in the morning and start viewing messages accumulated overnight. Working in a global tech company implies you have your clients and colleagues scattered in over 10 locations around the world, and all the processes must work nicely regardless of the time zones and cultural contrasts. I have urgent communication channels and secondary ones, such as a mailbox. After reading, reacting to, and replying to messages and memos, I proceed to my calendar and learn the schedule for the day. Before joining meetings, there is always something to refresh, prepare arguments or answers for, read and memorize or remind me of.

Afterward, I join morning syncs where we discuss who does what and when the tasks are due. The rest of the day is dedicated to the project activity itself — from various incoming requests to descriptions of some processes and documentation.

# 3. STRATEGIC PROCESSES AND ACTIVITIES

One of my main responsibilities is developing a strategy for the entire project. That is, what we will write and how, what we will deploy it on, what infrastructure will look like, what we need, and what we don't need. In terms of project activities, in general, everything is simple and predictable, but sometimes there are some unplanned activities, such as pre-sales or, for example, a request: «Talk to these guys at 1 AM because they are in Australia». Things just need to be done.

Plus, there are activities aimed at developing the company's processes. That is, some process documentation has to be designed in tight cooperation with CTO. Together, we come up with ideas to standardize it all and implement it in other teams — thus, we make sure no one resorts to shooting in the sky along the way. When a new project comes in, we have a ready-made template and provide clear-cut guidance on what should be done and how.

# 4. PRIORITIZING AND SAYING «NO»

I have many tasks and responsibilities: developing some solutions in advance, preparing proposals, monitoring implementation, constant contact with the team, controlling who is doing what, at what stage, when it will be completed, and what our next steps are. In addition, I work closely with the customers: what we use and why, how effective and productive it will be, and how much money we will spend on it in the end. Sometimes I have to evaluate the convenience of solutions from the end user's viewpoint. And, of course, managerial tasks are ceaselessly raining on me. Obviously, I can't be in all places at once.

Without prioritization and the ability to say «no,» one will probably feel like a hamster in a wheel, let alone declined performance quality. Prioritizing means keeping your mind cool and structured. When receiving an invitation to a meeting, it is worth analyzing whether your presence would be valuable and selected time slot would bear fruit. But you just cannot say «nope,» and decline the invitation without explanation. Respectful interaction with your teammates is, above all, taking the time to support your decision with rationale.



# 5. REST AND RESET

You might find yourself find in a situation where you are deeply immersed in a big important task that does not work. And even after you have tried everything, it just does not look good enough to you. In that case, I prefer to cut myself some slack and let it go for a while. Sometimes, a good sleep works miracles for me: a nighttime rest streamlines and organizes information, and when morning comes, I usually have several fresh ideas on how to handle the task. So, instead of torturing myself for hours, I wake up and get everything sorted in five minutes. For a perfectionist, having something going off the plan is annoying. However, subconsciousness often produces resolutions that cannot emerge under pressure or stress.

For me, a mind reboot necessarily requires some kind of change of scenery. It may not be lying on a beach in the tropics. Chopping wood somewhere in the country would be a perfect reset for me — there has to be a change between mental and physical activity. Going to the mountains for at least a couple of days can be refreshing for the brain and pleasantly exhausting for the body. I often returned so physically tired that I needed nothing but a comfortable armchair and a laptop to return to normal. In an office-based mode, my company provided me with an array of communities where I could play table tennis or just have a coffee break watching someone doing it for me. Now, as I work from home, I tend to join my favorite communities online and entertain myself when I need to recuperate.





I truly believe that everything can be learned and there are no hopeless people; it's just that some need more time to comprehend something.

Basically, the sky is the limit if you are passionate. Nevertheless, crucial qualities and skills do not come out of the blue; you either have to copy someone's behavior or try to figure it out yourself by trial and error, moving towards the ideal option.

Consistency goes a long way on a path to seniority, as does adherence to certain rituals and patterns typical for your position.





## 6. EDUCATION AND SELF-GROWTH

I'm currently preparing for Azure and Amazon certifications. Education in the tech domain is a mandatory ongoing process because you can fall far behind in a dynamic environment. From my point of view, I should do more than that; it is just that you have to somehow coordinate your learning with useful activities that bring profit to the company. The technological and informational dimensions are fast-paced, and we must choose at least one area and advance in a given direction.

For me, self-education takes place in many forms and is rather a natural process similar to consuming sunlight or water. Knowledge always comes with hunger to it. I want a stake, and after I sink my teeth into it — there comes a feeling of fulfillment. I crave my dish, and then I then relish it. Gaining knowledge is something that should not be postponed.

In my opinion, learning on your own is boring, and when there is some kind of competition, it becomes a little more fun. Running alone is almost meditative, and when someone runs behind or in front of you, especially with a stick, then somehow motivation gets stronger. My company organized structured courses, where they check my homework every week. This is exactly what I need.

## 7. REMOVING DISTRACTIONS

Scrolling newsfeed uncontrollably takes a big chunk of time. There are a lot of dramatic events and calamities happening around the globe we need to be aware of. However, when consuming information almost mechanically, we do not have time to analyze it and give it the benefit of the doubt. Therefore, we just absorb it as it is. Such a distraction paired with reduced motivation will inevitably lead to being out of focus and decreased efficiency. Having exciting tasks that keep you up at night does not let procrastination get the better of you.



## 8. MAKING TIME FOR YOUR TEAM

Superb performance requires much more than a mere understanding of responsibilities; there has to be unity of hearts and minds. Devoting a couple of hours to my team would be simply not enough; therefore, my entire working day belongs to them. My primary duty is to maintain a very close connection with my people, and systematic team building activities play a huge role in establishing a trustful and safe environment. Besides scheduled meetings, syncs, and brainstorming sessions, a large number of issues are resolved during informal gatherings.

For me, a team implies friendship and partnership. It does not mean that you can hire a team of buddies just to hang out together and forget about the job. I believe it is essential to have like-minded people on a team, the ones you find interesting outside of work. Teamwork makes the dream work, and these are not empty words: when everyone sincerely enjoys each other's company and anticipates the next working day, it's priceless. Shared values and a common mindset are the glue that helps sustain morale and keep the team together even in the most turbulent times.



## 9. ENJOYING YOUR WORK

«The most important thing is to love what you do. For me, the most interesting and enjoyable part of my job is to see complete and beautiful solutions, which are effective and workable, the ones that make you feel proud. In other words, a sense of accomplishment is what makes me happy. Especially it pertains to complicated tasks that I hesitated to get down to for a while or lacked belief in my abilities and successful execution. The feeling of fulfillment charges your inner battery and inspires you to take on even more responsibility and challenge yourself.»

Given that my team is far more than just colleagues, each fuels my interest in work. In remote and hybrid work models, there are many ways to build bonds with human beings and find touch points. You can exchange memes in chats or have a good laugh at various situations happening during the day. Closeness comes in many forms, and it is essential in any manifestation. We all come from different backgrounds and upbringings and make different life choices. Being on the same page in fundamental matters is like the first handshake that paves the way to solid relationships. That's exactly what the people-first stance is for me, and it is the only right way to go.





# RIDERS ON THE STORM: LEADING AN ENGINEERING TEAM

# THROUGH TURMOIL TOWARDS TRIUMPH



CHESLAV NOVYTSKYI

Engineering Manager  
at Innovecs

9+ YEARS IN TECH

4+ YEARS INNOVECSER

Has unlimited prospects, a chic combination of soft and hard skills, and, most importantly – cool introspection – the key to success and reaching heights. This is a vivid example of a person when diligence and a people-oriented mindset (vs. policy-oriented) help build great teams and achieve unbelievable results.

Embraces a people-first philosophy. Has a natural empathy and genuinely cares about nurturing the growth of others.

What kind of leadership do people need in challenging times when the atmosphere is far from calm? What do teams expect from their manager? There is no single answer here because everything depends on the nature of the crisis. Some practitioners argue that instead of vision per se, teammates need some kind of "holding," which is the ability to acknowledge people's emotions and give them a sense of context and reality against all odds. I believe that vision is always needed even during difficult stages, but perhaps not as far-seeing as usual. As the project progresses, there are goals and objectives and a certain distance that needs to be covered.

But when, for instance, war comes to a country, your vision is blocked by the questions «Will there be work tomorrow?» or «Will there be tomorrow at all?». In such a coordinate system, a vision has a small focal length, but it requires transparency and clarity.



## FUELING MORALE

Under stress, a person's cognitive flexibility is reduced, which means the perception of information is somewhat distorted. We have to be mindful of what and how we tell our teammates and how we ourselves, as leaders, show our flexibility. The first thing I considered necessary was to convey to the employee that everything one does, matters a lot.

Yes, we all found ourselves in a dire situation, but we share much more than that – we have a common passion. And if there are things that prevent us from doing it, our task is to help each other deal with everything that stands in our way. Plus, we all perfectly realize the truth: the client is not to blame for the fact that we have a crisis. Each of us is responsible for the success of the project. And the universal understanding of our duties and obligations does not allow everything to fall apart. Therefore, it needs constant replenishment.

In our team, a persistent reminder of the importance of our work for the client and ourselves worked perfectly. At the same time, of course, there were cases when the internal resource dried up, and people communicated their fatigue. First of all, you need to give the teammate the opportunity to rest and only afterward analyze and discuss the causes of fatigue or burnout. When a person acknowledges their state and comes to the leader with this, in no case should one devalue a person's feelings, saying: «Nah, come on, you are fine.» Let a colleague recuperate. Even when letting someone go on a two-week vacation, try to keep in touch delicately and find out whether rest helps or additional time is needed. After vacation comes to an end, you can tackle the root cause of the problem with renewed vigor.

Imagine that you find yourself in an environment where your emotional state is being hit by external circumstances beyond your control. In addition, they do not stop and will surely surround us for some time. I, as a manager, do not think that here you can solve anything by talking the talk. The problems of people who experience hostilities are deep-seated; they need to be worked out with specialists.

## EMOTIONS: CALMING THE WATERS

Since the end of February 2022, I have observed a whole range of feelings and emotions of my people. But most of all, I had to deal with fear, and this fear had many faces: fear due to a lack of understanding of what was happening, uncertainty about tomorrow, and sometimes even today. For the first six months, all people's questions boiled down to one thing: «what will happen next?». I cannot say that today we know much more or are more certain. But, due to our nature and internal national settings, we are wired to get used to things and adapt.

Of course, the team was quite rightly worried about how things would be with the work and whether everyone would be able to keep it. Now there are other questions about whether there is connection, electricity, or any communication. If there is no network either at home or in the office, what can be done to establish a working mode?

The first month was the most difficult because the fear was primitive — people simply feared for their lives. And hand in hand with this feeling came a number of other emotions, including irritability. Nevertheless, all experiences motivated people to get in touch more often and join calls and meetings. We organized separate sessions where we just talked and shared our affairs and who felt what. The remote mode was supplemented by evacuation and resettlement; people were even more scattered across regions and countries. Everyone had their own story and their hardships, and everyone should definitely be heard. No one wanted to fight their own fight alone.



## AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP AND TRANSPARENCY

Of course, there are always things that shouldn't be said out loud or shared with the team. Let's say there is a team that works, and you, as a leader, need to save it. People do not need to know now that if this unity is not maintained, the client will leave. In such an environment, the focus should shift to the people themselves and the importance and timeliness of each of them.

Here we are talking about balanced truth, that is, communicating the things which will not add even more stress. This leads us to the topic of communication with people. There is a difference between reporting a fact; let's compare: «If your performance goes down, it will affect the team» and «If your performance goes down, everyone will be fired.» Same idea, but various wrapping.

My approach now is that I have become more interested in the burning, pressing problems of each teammate. If, in normal times, such communication comes down to a brief conversation about the state of affairs, today, it is talking about security, the benefits of civilization, the presence of warmth, shelter, and essentials. Whether everyone has a place to go in case of a blackout.

In general, transparent leadership is a must at all times; it is unlikely to change from external circumstances. This is also an internal attitude, which in turn is based on three pillars. First, a sense of balance. There are no perfect

companies where the sun always shines; there are always cloudy days and storms. Here, too, you need to maintain a balance because sometimes the team reacts painfully to negative information, which affects the overall mood. So here, sometimes, the leader must show support for the team and, perhaps, even this vibe. At the same time, you will then be able to navigate all this energy in a certain direction.

Second, honesty matters a big deal in terms of expectations from the employee. A person should have a clear idea of what the company expects, and if the expectations are not met, then one has the right to honest feedback on this matter. And the third is consistency and commitment to yourself, your ideals, and your approaches. In fact, I think that in a crisis, a manager should not invent anything new or make dramatic changes. The main thing is to be true to yourself.

Of course, an individual approach to everyone has a place to be, and it is mandatory. Another thing is that it should not radically differ from person to person or between teams. Whatever teams I worked with, I followed my established outline, adapting where necessary to the client, business, or any other stakeholder. But there is only one single vector reflecting how you choose to interact with the environment. seated; they need to be worked out with specialists.

## SELF-LEADERSHIP, INSPIRATION, AND WORK ON MYSELF

Now, I have no official mentors, although structurally, there are people I report to. I constantly watch my leaders; there are things I like and use in my team in the future. There are types of communication and leadership styles that are not close to my heart, and I will not practice them. I experiment a lot, test approaches, and see what works and what doesn't. For my self-development as a leader, in my opinion, the most important thing is to work with a growing number of people. In general, each person, except for yourself, is a new separate experience that you require. For each specific case, you find a code.



«I draw inspiration from my colleagues at work. One of these people is Andrii Poddubnyi, Software Development Director. I learned a lot from him, and I think it shows. There are many teams that respect him and drive inspiration from him, who have grown under his leadership and work consistently and effectively. I think his phenomenon is rooted in being brutally honest. People hear from him exactly the truth they need to hear. Thanks to him, I also learned about the reverse side of sole decision-making, felt all the pitfalls, drew conclusions, and built my culture.»



# CHESLAV NOVYTSKYI



Engineering Manager



## TABOO: SOMETHING THAT IS ALWAYS BEYOND THE PALE

There are things that I, by virtue of my business ethics, will never allow myself, and no circumstances will affect this. I can't imagine myself saying the phrase, «Your problems are not that serious.» Now in our realities, there are no small or insignificant issues. You never know what is really hidden under this thick layer of emotions.

I, as a leader, have no right to belittle the significance of everything human, either in thoughts or conversation. If a person completely trusts you and comes to share, this requires a reverent attitude. People are very good at feeling when they are not as important as they would like to be.





## Andrii Adamovich

CEO, Aestas IT  
[@codingandrey](#)

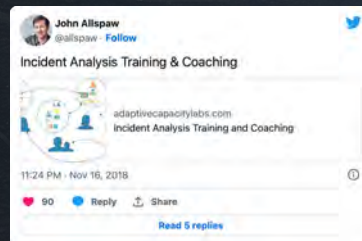
While «Automate all the things» has become something of a cliché, the truth is that achieving automation is easier said than done, particularly when there are complex decisions involved. Fortunately, Adamovich's «Extreme Automation» workshops are tailor-made to help organizations navigate this challenging terrain, offering invaluable insights on what is possible and how to get there. And if you're looking for a quick and easy way to stay up-to-date on his ideas, then look no further than his Twitter feed. Best of all? It won't cost you a dime.



## John Allspaw

Cofounder, Adaptive Capacity Labs  
[@allspaw](#)

Allspaw, the former Senior Vice President of Infrastructure at Etsy and Engineering Manager at Flickr, was a pioneer of the DevOps and continuous delivery movements that have become standard practice today. But his contributions to the world of tech go back even further, to his days at Friendster, where he helped lay the groundwork for the social media revolution we know today.



## Joe Colantonio

Founder, Test Guild  
[@joecolantonio](#)

With over 23 years of experience in software quality and performance, Colantonio decided to leave his leadership position at GE Healthcare to pursue his own venture full-time. That venture was The Test Guild, a startup focused on organizing online testing conferences that showcase the latest innovations and emerging voices in the field. Thanks to his extensive knowledge and expertise, Colantonio has become a must-follow figure for anyone looking to stay ahead of the curve in the fast-moving world of software testing.



# INSPO:

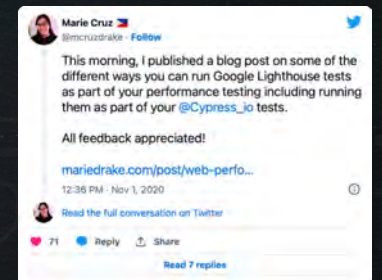
## OUR PICKS AND MUST-FOLLOWS

This section is all about sharing our team's favorite influencers that inspire us and help us stay up-to-date with industry trends. This time, we fetched a list of 10 engineering leaders to follow on Twitter.

## Marie Drake

Principal test automation engineer, NewsUK  
[@mcruzdrake](#)

Drake approaches performance testing from a more traditional angle, examining everything from accessibility and usability to client-side performance and overall testability. With a unique focus on the UK software testing community, Drake brings a fresh perspective to the field that is quite distinct from the typical American approach to performance engineering. Whether you're based in the UK or simply interested in exploring new ideas and approaches to testing, Drake is a thought leader worth following.



## Charity Majors

Cofounder/CTO, Honeycomb.io  
[@mipsytipsy](#)

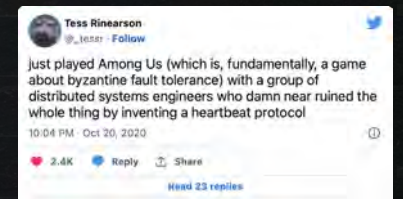
As a co-author of «Database Reliability Engineering», this tech specialist has shifted her focus to Honeycomb, where the goal is to provide real-time access to the application's internal state. Beyond simply identifying when and what went wrong, she aims to explore the "why" behind system failures, and shares her insights on observability and modern infrastructure on her Twitter feed.



## Tess Rinearson

Vice president of engineering, Interchain  
[@\\_tessr](#)

Rinearson tweets about solving complex engineering problems in distributed systems, particularly those related to data processing. She gained recognition for her clear explanation of bitcoin and blockchain, taking readers beyond the basic level without overwhelming them with technical jargon. Her expertise extends beyond blockchain and into the broader field of distributed computing.





# LEADING BY LETTING GO. HOW TO QUIT DISTURBING YOUR



**TARAS LAZORIV**

Advanced Software Engineer  
at Innovecs

**11+ YEARS IN TECH**

**4+ YEARS INNOVECSER**

Taras makes things happen. Very good at communications, business-oriented and open to new approaches and ideas. Proactive, talented and fast. Ambitious human being with boundless energy.

A pistol range aficionado, driven by a passion for precision and a relentless focus on hitting targets.

# ENGINEERING TEAM FROM GROWING

## INTERPRETING LEADERSHIP: NATURE VS. NURTURE

Is leadership a part of DNA or an acquired feature? I think it's 50/50. Clearly, certain predispositions have a place to be. Nevertheless, a person does not become a world-class athlete, having only a penchant for sports: a champion's life is actually hard work. I am positive that growing up matters a lot: methods of bringing up, surrounding people, places, and things, encouraged and extinguished initiatives. A background sets our threshold, where, as it seems, we should dwell humbly without looking beyond.

As a child, I always looked for loopholes, invented scenarios, and organized some sort

of action, which I needed badly. To pull it off, I had to find a company of like-minded people, convince them, pitch, and sell them the idea of the entertainment I wanted. I simultaneously developed in several areas: I learned what to say so that people would agree with me, sorted out the logistics, and drew an action plan. And also, it was necessary to find ways of getting away from parental punishment, which is typical for children's mischief. I was driven by perseverance and invested my energy and impulse into it. Perhaps this is the essential input data defining the career path, and the external circumstances come into play afterward.





## MOMENT «X» OR WHERE THE LEADER BEGINS

Sometimes, the growth opportunity arises when there is no position, but there is one single initiative of yours to become, for example, a lead. That's exactly my case.

Over the years, I realized that I wasn't a professional at that time, but I had a chance and will. Many have gone through a similar story at the beginning of their career, which, in my opinion, is the local specifics of the market. I became a real leader well after that when I delved into hands-on management: I provided a high level of construction and organization of processes. I needed constant feedback and devoted a lot of time to one-to-one calls and code reviews. My self-discipline helped me to single-handedly grope for different leadership aspects.

At my current place of work, my growth picked up the pace and got easier. I consciously pursued the senior position because I knew what I wanted: to walk this journey with a mentor. Being dedicated to the professional development of the mentees, a mentor pulls you up on all vital topics, pays a lot of attention, and gives you the necessary boost. As you grow, finding a mentor becomes harder and harder. Even if I were offered to work under the supervision of my mentor and play a supporting role, I would agree because now I understand well what it means to be a leader and how much effort and soul the profession demands. seated; they need to be worked out with specialists.



## THE MAIN CHALLENGE IS TO LET GO

Even after five years in the leading position, I continue to improve this skill to this day.

There is always a temptation to show, explain, or even spell things out, but this is not always a necessity. Helping to develop means not interfering with self-comprehension of a profession, stuffing bumps, and grasping the important lessons. From a team lead's viewpoint, there are two extremes: micromanaging and doing everything for everyone, or paying no attention to people at all and letting everything take its course. The first option is naturally closer to my heart; however, I am sure there has to be a balance here.

«The ability to loosen the grip is probably the most difficult: letting go of the processes and observing from afar takes courage. Many managers tend to think that they need to keep their eye on employees and do someone's work because it's faster — this applies to both coding and managerial tasks. I am often drawn to do the work for a junior, spending minutes instead of hours or even days.

## SPEAKING OF BALANCE: DOES THE LEADER HAVE ONE?

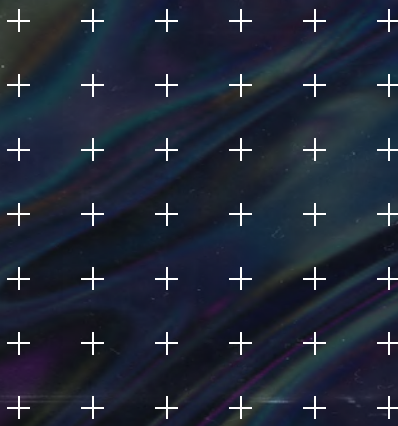
Working day limits are necessary primarily for systematizing. Being available 24/7 means my mailbox and messengers will ding in the morning, afternoon, evening, and night. My seemingly harmless sleep will result in a bunch of unanswered letters of various criticality. By setting boundaries, we can increase the entire team's productivity and work as one.

Recently, I listened to a speaker who emphasized the importance of clear boundaries and work/life balance. It was quite funny because I knew his working day was never less than 14 hours. I allow myself to work after hours, not because I take on a lot, but because I enjoy it. It is never an end in itself.

I had a lot of pet projects that I ceased to update at some point. And all because I satisfied all my ambitions at work. It's not

It's a challenge you have to deal with. But the point is that people must learn. The more independence you provide as a leader, the more the team gives back. You can delegate more complex things that require a lot of time, moral and physical resources. Just learn to let go: instead of watching, give others the opportunity to take the initiative.»

difficult for me to visit a project on Saturday and see how everything works. That gives me food for thought, which transforms into ideas and proposals for discussion. My team's support helped bring many of those ideas to life; I can always rely on my people.



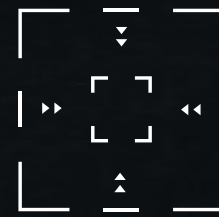
## HELPING BY GETTING OUT OF THE WAY

The development of team members stems from a close connection. Everyone is special, with their own background, mindset, and mentality. There is no single path since each human being is a unique combination of preferences, propensities, and interests. Excellent performers may constantly take the initiative within one definite area. In this case, forcing them to regroup and do things that are unnatural for them would be a wrongdoing. An individual approach to everyone is the key to healthy team growth.

Moreover, it is important to be able to articulate mistakes. When working with a person, the emphasis should not be on the error as such but on the solution. For instance, something went wrong, and part of the code didn't work. Instead of focusing on the wrongness of some action, I reflect on my personal experience. That is, what I did when I faced such a problem, why my solution did not lead to the desired outcome, and what I tried to do differently. I also highlight the bonus of a certain decision since we can introduce an update besides mere fixing. That is to say, I depict my path from A to Z in living colors, and afterward, a person might want to follow it, or maybe do it even better.







As a leader, you can't have a problem with a teammate knowing more than you. Some managers are hostile toward superior employees. Driven by the fear of being replaced, managers tend to restrict such teammates, thus stealing a chance to prove themselves. This kind of reaction is mainly rooted in upbringing, growing up, and the process of formation as a person and a pro.

In my opinion, the leader's task is to encourage and feed the teammates' sense of self-sufficiency to scale infinitely. Being a leader is not the pinnacle, there is always room for development. Seeing people evolve quickly inspires and pushes me to work on myself. Leaders always stay in tune: the growth of subordinates means you need to grow even faster to lead them.





LETTING GO OF PEOPLE AS WELL

Obviously, throughout my career path, I had to say goodbye a lot. The very conversation about dismissal is not as hard as deciding within yourself. Normally, the working process entails gripes and criticism since everyone is learning, and many skills and approaches need to be improved. The task of a leader is to give timely feedback, thereby fixing something and making things better.

I had a case when my tireless feedback did not change a thing. Time went by, bringing zero progress. I realized giving tasks made no sense, as the results were never there. In other words, distrust in a specialist is not cool. I felt it was my duty to do everything possible and impossible to trace the weak points, level them up, and put them on the right track. Each time I gave yet another last chance (that's just me, I sincerely believed it would work out). But the person also made the decision — not to change whatsoever. Therefore, I had no other option but to let him go. To be completely honest, my conscience did not torment me because I knew I had done everything what was in my power.

But this scenario is applicable to a small team of 5-10 people. If you have a staff of 200 employees, the value of such a decision declines because you do not have constant communication with everyone. The larger the scaling, the fewer connections are personal, and it's much easier to accept less than 100% work. It's a business, and it's not worth it. You, as a leader and as a mentor, always want to reveal paths for development and tell about your own, but from a business perspective, it's easier to just hire someone new, motivated, and inquisitive.

MENTORSHIP AS A HANDSHAKE OF TWO SPIRITS

A mentor is someone easy to communicate with and interesting to be around outside of work. Mentoring is all about complete trust. You need to be able to admit a mistake, accept and own it, voice your concerns and not be afraid to sound silly. There should be no fear in expressing your thoughts — only absolute transparency. Of course, such contact presupposes mutuality. Magic will not happen if the mentee voices an opinion

and the mentor sneers at it. Effective work with a mentor is based on empathy, which immediately makes it clear whether this is your mentor or someone else's.

Before joining my company, I had three offers in my hands, and all three interviews were scheduled for the same day. During the first one, I felt I was in charge because I asked dozens of questions, not the other way around. The second interview had nothing memorable, it was typical. At my current place of work, my interviewer helped me answer and finished some phrases for me. I was stunned because besides asking me, they also intended to teach me a little and explain some stuff. For me, it was a pretty good sign. I thought: if they wanted to make me one iota better after barely meeting me, then what would happen if I joined them? That feeling is priceless. In ten years, I've only experienced this twice.

The intent to help ascends to a certain corporate culture and the win-win philosophy established across the organization. There is a clear idea that giving a person everything and even more always yields a good result because that's how cause and effect work in real life. I know many people who have advanced simply by being exposed to new things. Seniors became architects because they were inspired to approach the unknown.

A COUPLE OF TIPS FOR THE NEWBIES

First, do not be afraid of responsibility. You assume a role and are held accountable for the result, and people, by and large, do appreciate it. If everything goes well, you rise in the eyes of your teammates. And if not, your task then is to analyze, own your mistakes and draw conclusions. The second key point is leveling up communication skills. To evolve and develop others, a leader must be able to interact with people: understand the way of thinking, what plans and ambitions one has, and collect feedback. Soft skills will never lose their significance. And third, navigating the business. A technical lead knows exactly what the organization is aiming for and what its tasks are; works for the benefit of the business, and always take into account its requirements. And everything else depends on the team and the vibe of the company, which together form a leader's home front.

ANDRII PODDUBNYI

Software Development Director

10+ YEARS IN TECH

4+ YEARS INNOVECSER

There are many teams that respect Andrii and drive inspiration from him, who have grown under his leadership and work consistently and effectively. His phenomenon is rooted in being brutally honest. People hear from him exactly the truth they need to hear.

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TURN THE PAGE AND DIVE IN



# THE DELIVERY DIRECTOR'S TAKE:

## INSIGHTS AND OPINIONS

I can't stress this enough: people are more important than processes. A nominal toxic employee approaching me with a problem sees me, first of all, as a person, just like I do. They listen to me when I say that the situation is not worth it. They come to Andrii, the human being, not the manager. And when you just come to a manager, who wishes nothing but to keep you quiet, there will be no solution, motivation, or productivity. With a human approach and environmentally friendly communication, you can order chaos.



The darkest hour is just before dawn. Self-analysis comes to the leaders' rescue in the most challenging times when there is a clear awareness of the negative in their lives. If you know what black is, you'll figure out how to come to grey and then to white. In this world, you must learn to let go of people and situations with an easy mind. If there is an area that keeps you up at night, you can nail it. I can't help quoting Varian Wrynn from the Warcraft universe: "We forge our own destiny" No one will seal your fate but yourself.

Your task as a leader is to find an approach to each individual. You need to be tougher with some and more delicate with others; some decisions need to be literally brought on a silver platter. One way or another, you need to be able to predict a person's reaction, knowing where the boundaries are. There are people who require excessive praise. At the same time, I do not respect, and neither do I practice hypocrisy, but if I say that something is good, then it really is.

## LEADERSHIP: A BLESSING OR A CURSE?

Leadership does not always come with a «+» sign: some inject something good and create, while others consistently destroy everything from the inside. Each company's task is to identify leaders, understand their roles and position, and methods of encouragement and attention.



## BY ANDRII PODDUBNYI

**The «How to Become Leader» courses and books are designed for those who will never become one. A certificate on offset paper and painstaking notes are good for nothing. Leadership is a nature, a way of thinking, a state of mind, you name it. Such a person recognizes their own abilities, whatever the activity is.**

## BARRIERS TO GROWING

The inability to accept your mistakes is a barrier to a true leader. I can also be stubborn and tenacious. But, nevertheless, I can easily reconsider everything and take the side of my colleagues. **The older I get, the more I listen.** Obstinacy is development's enemy. A lack of desire to work and internal drive also block a manager's advancement. The growth process stops when one decides to dwell in the comfort zone. In addition to natural talent, a person can quickly learn everything, and boredom is a possibility at some point. In this case, ambitions come to the rescue — not trampling on others, but simply becoming the best version of yourself.

## THE POWER OF A MENTOR'S BELIEF

I always found people who had faith in me in spite of everything, which greatly boosted my development. My caring mentors were always around to guide and direct me. They instilled a leadership core in me and taught me how to communicate properly with people, be persistent, and even be somewhat cold-blooded. Thanks to mentor support, I learned what is crucial in development, and what is secondary. In addition, I was taught how to work with a business and interact with clients. I was like a sponge: I absorbed only positive experiences and always perceived only the bright side of things.

## PEOPLE AND VIBE

Exceptional teams are made of like-minded people. They are on the same wavelength and there is no need to break each other, to impose a certain worldview, culture, or values — these are shared in the first place. Instead of reshaping someone who doesn't fit, find a new person who initially matches with the whole team.

## ECOSYSTEM AS A MINDSET

For me, there is no separate company, client, or team. I can't work on one component because imbalance will follow and disrupt the puzzle. I deal with an integral ecosystem. Perceiving the picture as a whole is an important and difficult skill not given to all managers. At the same time, your task as a leader is to always be yourself, and to be consistent as a human being.

«We grow the client, and the client grows us» — a phrase that is forever imprinted in my memory, was said by my manager 3 years ago. We created a solid product, a meaningful solution that ensures long-term growth, and while doing so, we improved ourselves. You give the client more value, which opens up more opportunities.

## COMMUNICATION ABOVE ALL

From the beginning, I knew that communication was the key. Not contracts, and bureaucracy, but the art of communication — this has become my motto. There were ups and downs and failures, and in all situations, language was the most effective tool to solve them. Trusting and friendly relationships with colleagues and customers are the single possible working culture for any business. Bureaucracy is usually doomed to failure. Papers themselves do not solve anything, they only secure. You need to be able to negotiate.

I clearly realized that being a leader is totally my thing. Communication with people, the degree of responsibility, decision-making, working with teams and clients — I genuinely enjoyed all that.



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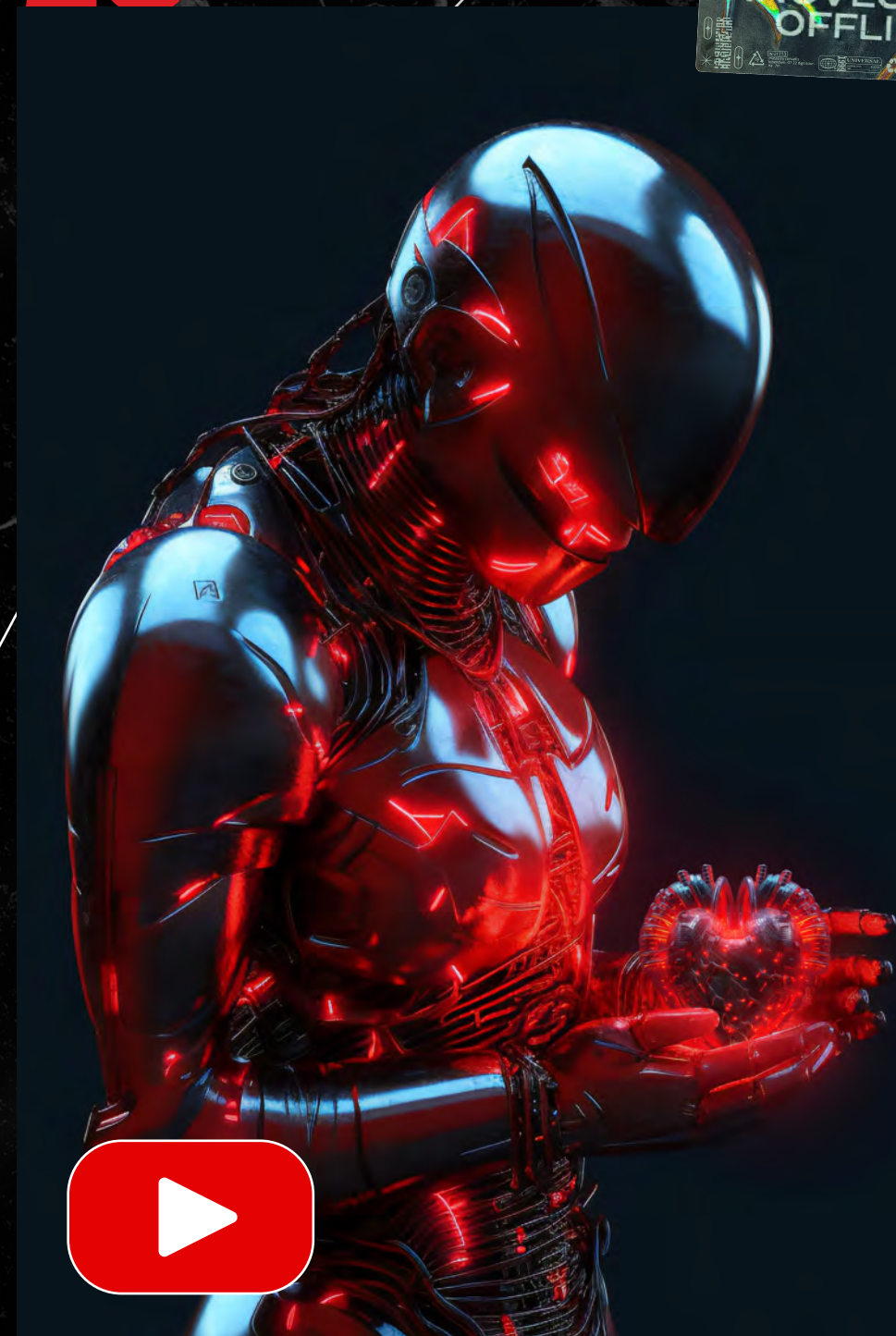


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# INFOSHARE 2023



A SNEAK PEEK INTO



HIGH-PROFILE TECH CONFERENCE

Once again, Innovecs is proud to be a participant in the Infoshare conference, one of the biggest tech and startup events in CEE. The event brings together software developers, business leaders, startupper, investors, marketers, and technology enthusiasts to celebrate the digital world, connect, and learn

from each other. At Infoshare, attendees share their stories, knowledge, and experiences to make their ideas happen. As a company, we are consistently showing up at the best prominent events worldwide to learn, inspire, and grow our network.



# INNOVECS CAREER WATCH

GET THE INSIDE SCOOP  
JOB OPENINGS

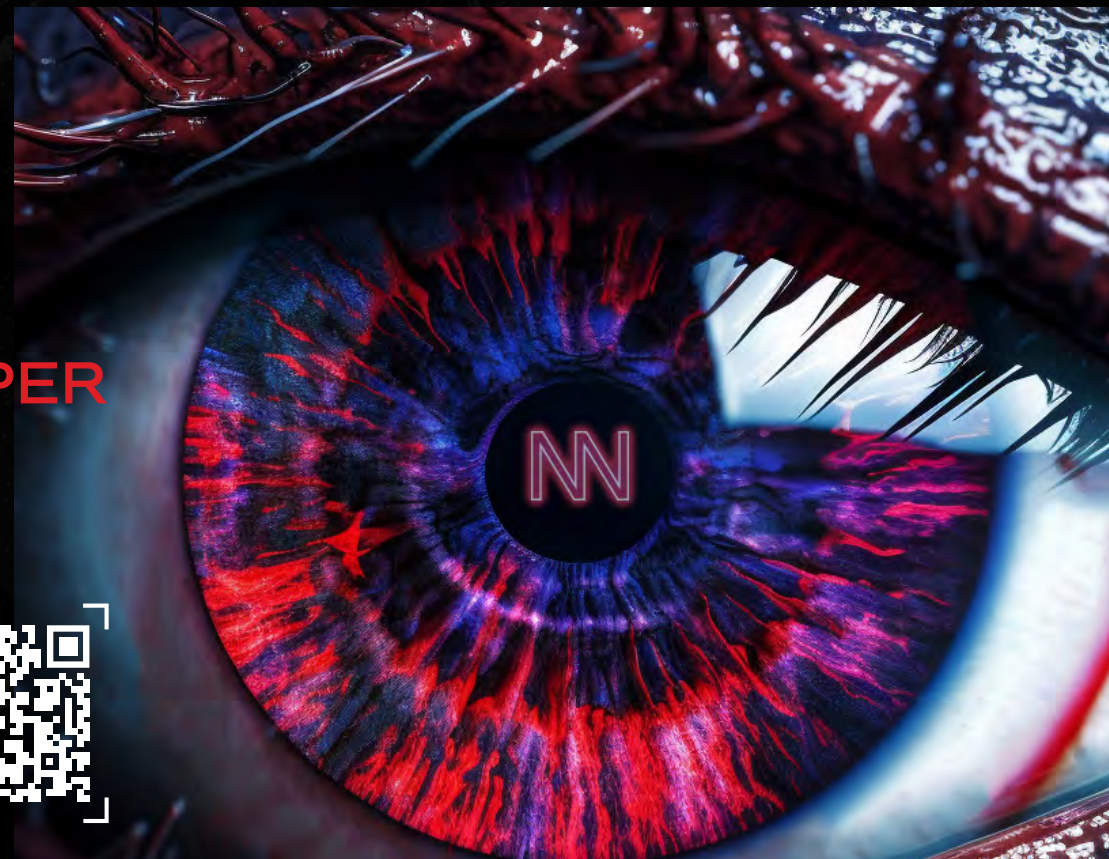
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