

THE PERKS AND PITFALLS OF

**BUILDING REMOTE FIRST
TEAMS**

AGENDA

- ▶ Who am I?
- ▶ Perks and Pitfalls
 - ▶ Short term survival
 - ▶ Long term sustainability
- ▶ Manager Perspective



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ME



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WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ME

- ▶ Sundance
- ▶ 60#s
- ▶ 7 years old
- ▶ Rescue
- ▶ Golden Retriever/Irish Setter



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WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT WORK ME



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WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT WORK ME

- ▶ Curious, worked across a lot of levels
- ▶ Started working in US Defense, all local
- ▶ Worked in the Middle East for a few years
- ▶ Grew from leading local teams, to remote ones

Raytheon

 Palantir

yelp 

 netlify



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netlify

- ▶ First employee, 3.5 years now
- ▶ HQ is in Bay Area
- ▶ ~60% of the company remote
- ▶ 9/11 are remote in my dept

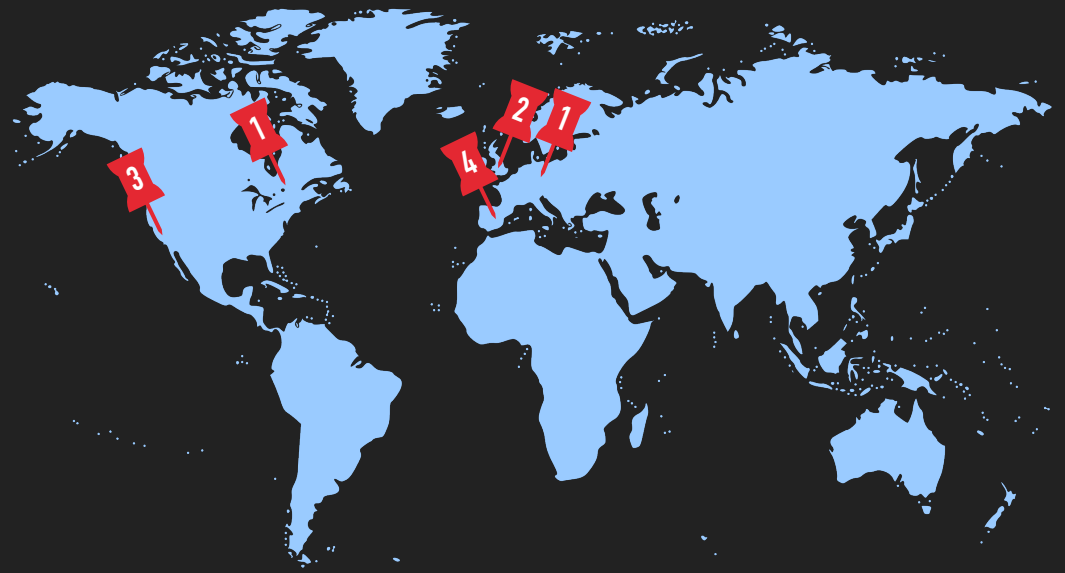


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netlify

- ▶ Build some cool tech
- ▶ Build remote eng culture
- ▶ Timezone doesn't determine skills
- ▶ Focus on: Inclusion, Coverage, Pace
- ▶ Web is global, why not us?



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PERKS

- ▶ No commute
- ▶ Flexible schedule
- ▶ Distraction free



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PITFALLS

- ▶ Isolation
- ▶ Blurry work/life line
- ▶ Blocked constantly



MAKING IT BETTER

- ▶ Develop Regional Autonomy
- ▶ Build community outside your team
- ▶ Fight the Hero culture, help people be offline
- ▶ Clarify responsibility



BUT LIKE, HOW?



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CROSS TEAM

- ▶ Random connections
- ▶ Conferences
- ▶ Informal team chats



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IGNORE THINGS

- ▶ @ people always
- ▶ Set your working hours
- ▶ Don't DM, use channels
- ▶ Specify urgency



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DOCUMENT MORE

- ▶ I know, cliché
- ▶ Share the Why
- ▶ Brainstorming docs



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PERKS

- ▶ Global company pool
- ▶ Long term flexibility



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PITFALLS

- ▶ Lack of career growth
- ▶ Second class citizen
- ▶ Imposter syndrome



PERKS

- ▶ Global company pool
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~~PITFALLS~~ RISKS

- ▶ Lack of career growth
- ▶ Second class citizen
- ▶ Imposter syndrome



MAKING IT BETTER

- ▶ Trust people, not characters
- ▶ Inclusion
 - ▶ Ideas come from anyone
 - ▶ All voices are heard
- ▶ Celebrate the smallest of things



BUT LIKE, HOW?



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BUT LIKE, HOW?

- ▶ Be supportive, and say it out loud (especially managers)
 - ▶ #celebrate & #thanks channels
- ▶ Overshare - email **everyone**, not just engineering
- ▶ Regular unstructured idea talks
- ▶ Company wide scheduled remote days



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MANAGER PERSPECTIVE

- ▶ Foster culture of:
 - ▶ Trust
 - ▶ Autonomy
 - ▶ Accountability
- ▶ Hiring is hard
- ▶ You don't scale

HOW?

- ▶ Clear policies & job descriptions
- ▶ Team writes project docs
 - ▶ Clear scope (especially what is NOT)
 - ▶ Clear ownership
 - ▶ Iterable approach
- ▶ Balance staffing across TZs (level & roles)





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