

Study on human factors and team culture to improve pager fatigue

Daria Barteneva
Microsoft Azure



Who is Daria?

Where

Russia->Portugal->Ireland

Education

Applied Mathematics/Computer Science/Artificial Intelligence/Music

Work

Senior Software Engineer @ Microsoft Azure

Disclaimer

Not a doctor / all opinions are my own



Agenda

On call – why, where and how?

Happy teams – 7 common behaviors

Call for action!



A Look at Incident Response

Incidents affect responders

- 79% of survey respondents felt stress after incidents
- 69% of respondents felt moderate or high stress
- 52% said it affected mood
- 48% said it affected concentration
- 38% said it affected sleep
- 38% said it affected their ability to be social

@jaimewoo
incidentlabs.io

Source: Catchpoint 2018 SRE Report

(The dreadful) On call!

You are not alone



...The median interval between pages across all specialties was 22:30 min... ([source](#))



...firefighters showed high levels of physiological stress (...) when compared to normative healthy population... ([source](#))



...46% of the officers had above average chronic fatigue score and nearly 40% reported feeling drained... ([source](#))



“It’s work, there are nothing you can do, just deal with it...”

On call reflects our engineering culture!



Unpopular opinion but *someone* needs to say it and I'm going to be that person today:

If the idea of being "on-call" sucks to you, it means you're responding negatively to a *symptom*

The cause is more systemic and more a reflection of the team/org's basic engineering prowess

5:46 PM · Feb 9, 2018

♡ 112 💬 45 people are Tweeting about this

Source: [Cindy Sridharan](#)



Seriously, "on-call" isn't this silo'ed thing - it's a reflection of your entire engineering culture *and* skills - beginning from how your services are built, how they are tested, how they are run, how they are monitored, how they are maintained, how they are debugged ...



Replying to @skamille @jmickey_ and 2 others

b/c "on-call" is a reflection of *several* things involving both skill ("prowess") as well as culture/priorities. the resilience of the systems themselves, monitoring + alerting, automation, time to recovery and how these things are prioritized, measured + iterated on (culture)

4:05 AM · Feb 10, 2018



♡ 20 👤 See Cindy Sridharan's other Tweets



ARE YOU HAPPY?

YES!!!



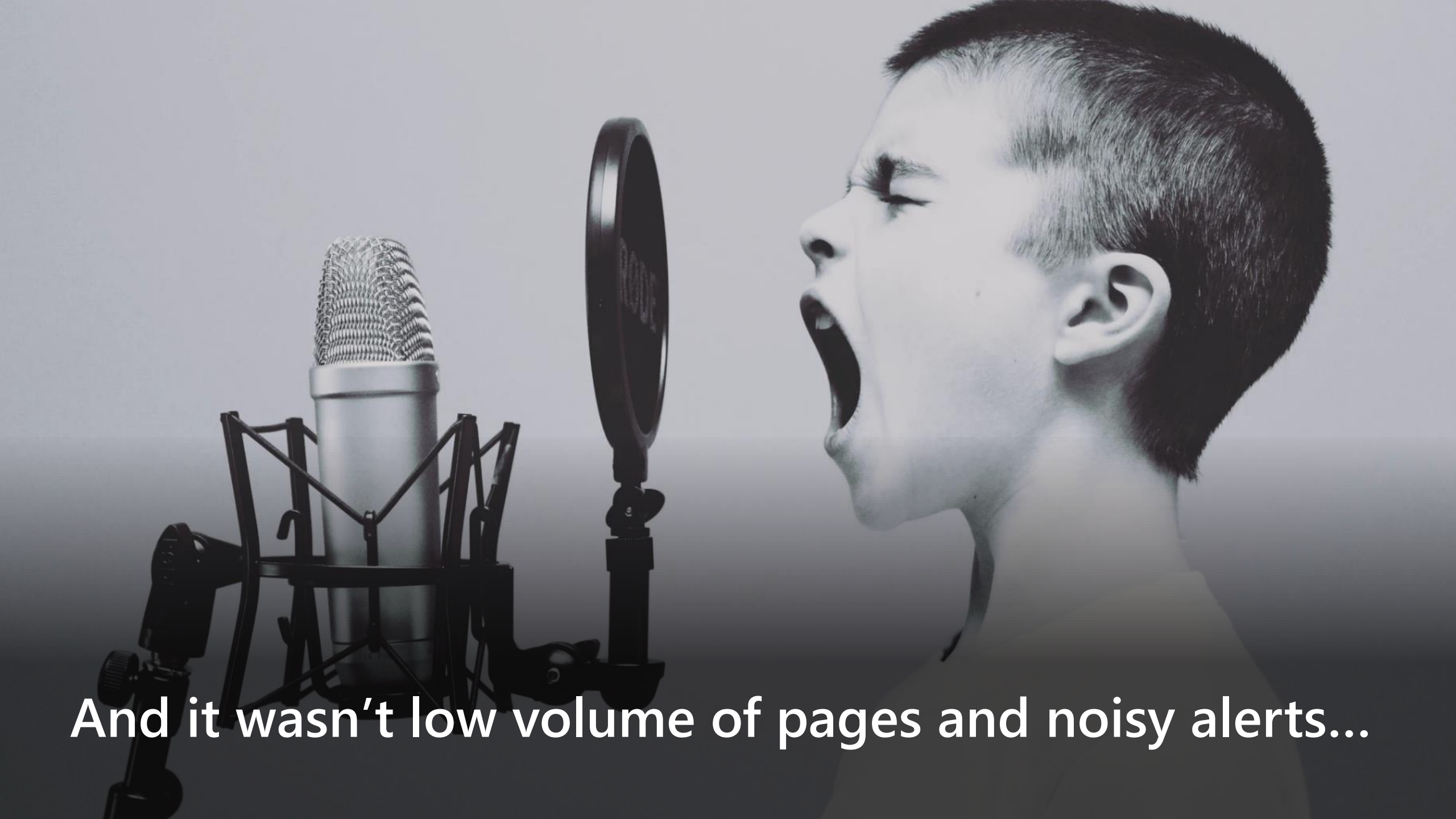
No....



What makes happy team (and on call) – happy?



Let's talk about 7 commonalities among happiest teams...

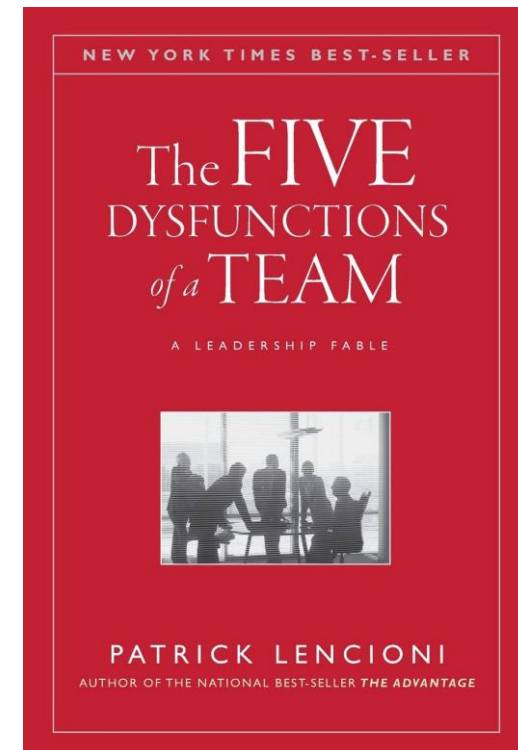


And it wasn't low volume of pages and noisy alerts...



...It was a team culture!

“The Five Dysfunctions of a Team”, Patrick Lencioni



“...make them <your team> feel safe and secure so that they can take greater risks by building psychological safety—meaning that your team members feel like they can be themselves without fear of negative repercussions(...).“

“Software Engineering in Google” by T. Winters, T. Manshreck, H. Wright, published by O’Reilly Media



Blameless culture: It's ok to fail!



Technical literacy and hands-on experience.



Onboarding. Training. Documentation.

*“The single biggest problem in **communication** is the illusion that it has taken place.”*

George Bernard Shaw

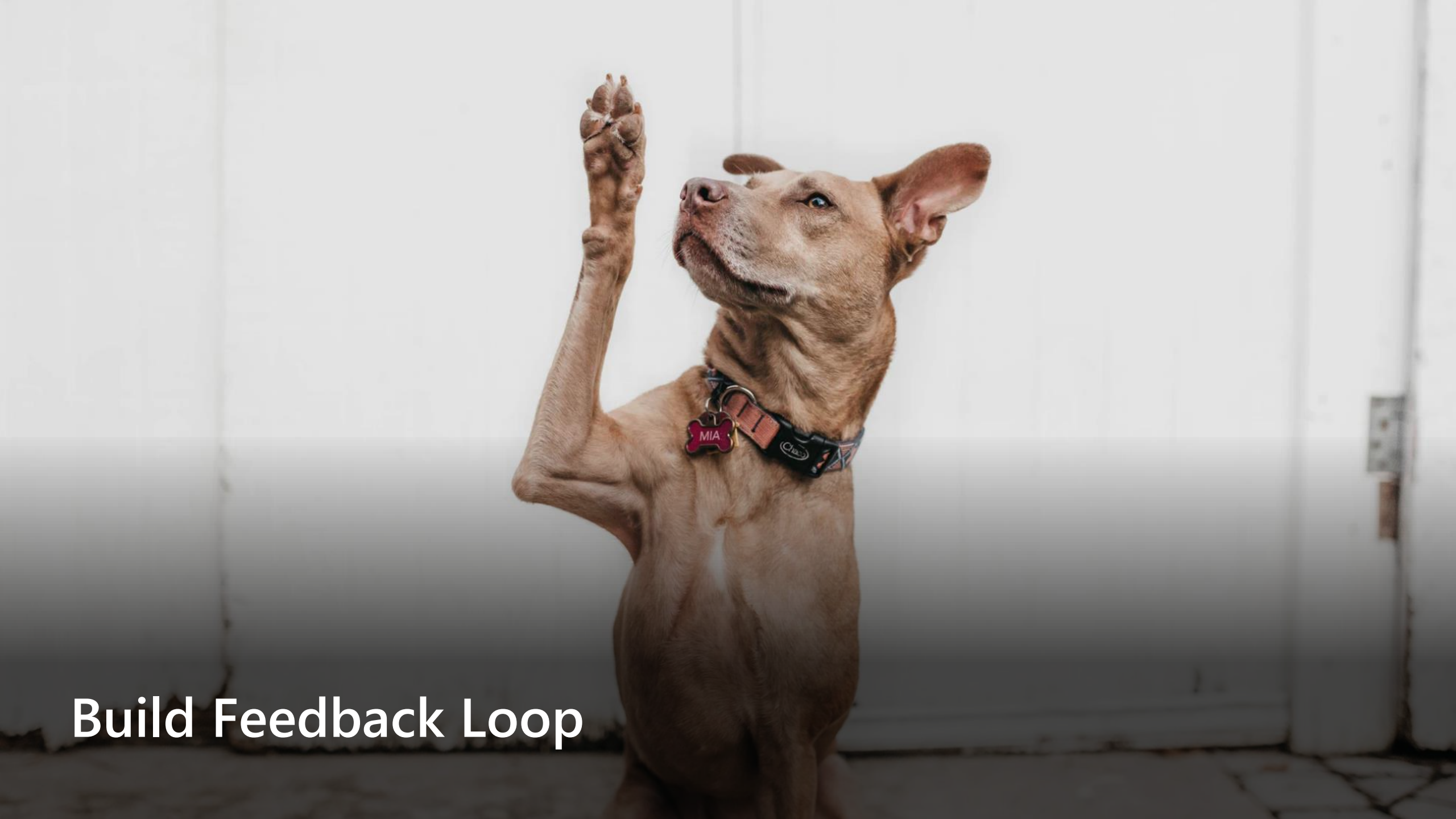


Communication and Collaboration

Accountability is the glue that ties commitment to the result
Bob Proctor



Establish Accountability & Ownership



Build Feedback Loop

“Empathy is proactive perspective-taking and problem-solving.”

Andrea Goulet

Empathy!





And remember...

Each one of us is an agent of change!

Write Troubleshooting Guides!

Build feedback loops (survey?
Interviews?)

Communicate! A lot!

Take ownership of a problem

Build horizontal workstreams –
connect across teams

Practice empathy

Build trust – be consistent

Praise successes

Failing is a way of learning (fast)

Share your experience (Case
Study, Brownbag, Demo)

Find a mentor

Become a mentor



Thank you!

All pictures (except my photo and book cover) are from unsplash.com

Twitter @DashaRV

Ikigai

A JAPANESE CONCEPT MEANING "A REASON FOR BEING"



SOURCE: dreamstime

TORONTO STAR GRAPHIC

And invest in yourself...
...so you can change the world around you!

Image: Toronto Star