Is Our Team as Resilient as Our Systems?

effie mouzeli

SREcon22 Amsterdam
@manjiki

Site Reliability Engineer

Site Reliability Engineering
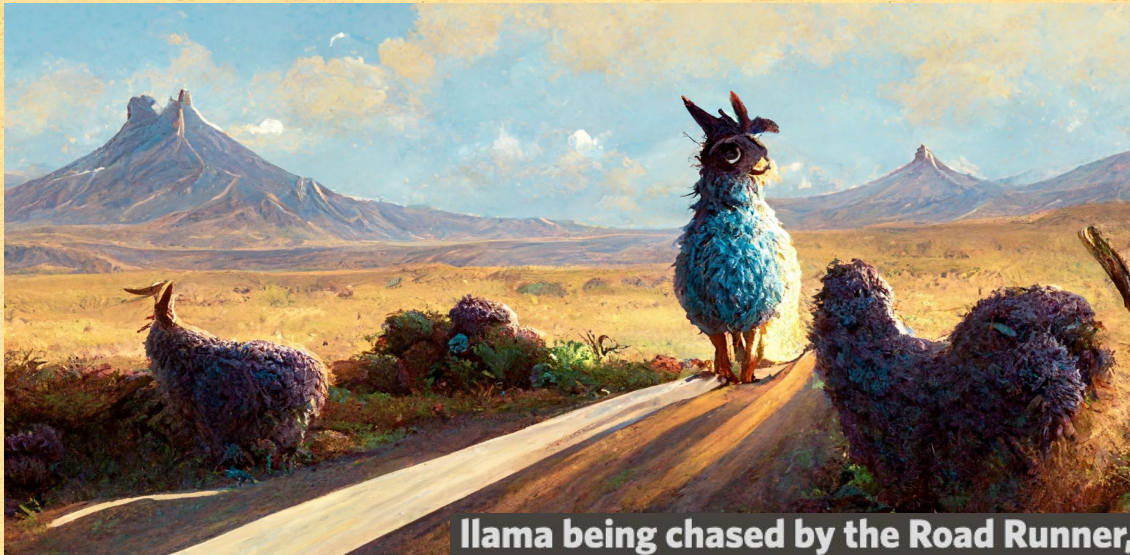
Views Are My Own

lonely llama enjoying the view of Grand Canyon while having a cocktail,

SRE

SRE = ACME*

llama being chased by the Road Runner,

* A Colleague that Makes Everything

What makes an SRE team less inclusive, Sustainable, and safe

Poor Onboarding

❋ One onboarding fits all

❋ Hiring faster than we can onboard

❋ "Will learn on the job"

❋ No onboarding process revision and/or retrospective

@manjiki

llama boarding a cruise ship

Expectations & Assumptions

※ Same expectations from different people ※

※ Assumed knowledge ※

※ "Work harder" ※

※ Longer tenure, more assumptions ※

※ Fear of getting caught ※

Tribal Knowledge

※ Undocumented knowledge

※ Includes technical debt, and bad habits

※ May become lost

@manjiki

a tribe of llamas talking about tribal knowledge

super hero llama saving Amsterdam at night

Super Heroes

- ※ Pick up more work

- ※ Pick up the HARD work

- ※ Intimate knowledge of the infra

- ※ Are expected to step up

- ※ Unwillingly, prevent growth

batman llama saving amsterdam at night

Super Heroes

※ Pick up more work

※ Pick up the HARD work

※ Intimate knowledge of the infra

※ Are expected to step up

※ Unwillingly, prevent growth

Generational Gaps

- ※ NOT about age ※

- ※ People hired at different "eras" of the org ※

- ※ Generations have similar habits, and run on different gears ※

- ※ Different treatment by the org ※

llama leader, van gogh

Off, Leadership

✳ Louder voices are more heard

✳ Opportunity to push personal agendas

✳ Team gets used to self-managing & self organising

@manjiki

Team growing, but not scaling

Power & knowledge imbalance

Super heroes still carry the team

Low bus factor

Low confidence

Lack of initiative, creativity, and
sense of responsibility

We can do Better!

Knowledge is KEY

※   Create a safe for learning environment※

※   Our paths are not the same ※

※   We are equal, but different ※

Address Knowledge Gaps

※ SRE curriculum

※ Provide courses or create them

llama teaching algebra to children in a school classroom

mentor llama and student in ancient egypt

Mentorship & Sponsorship

※ Incentives to promote mentoring

※ Mentoring hours or office hours

※ Team sponsors each other

※ Knowledge index

Pairing

✴ Do pair site reliability engineering

✴ Share tools and processes

✴ Builds trust, creates bonds

✴ Best things come in pairs

two llamas giving a rock concert at Live 8
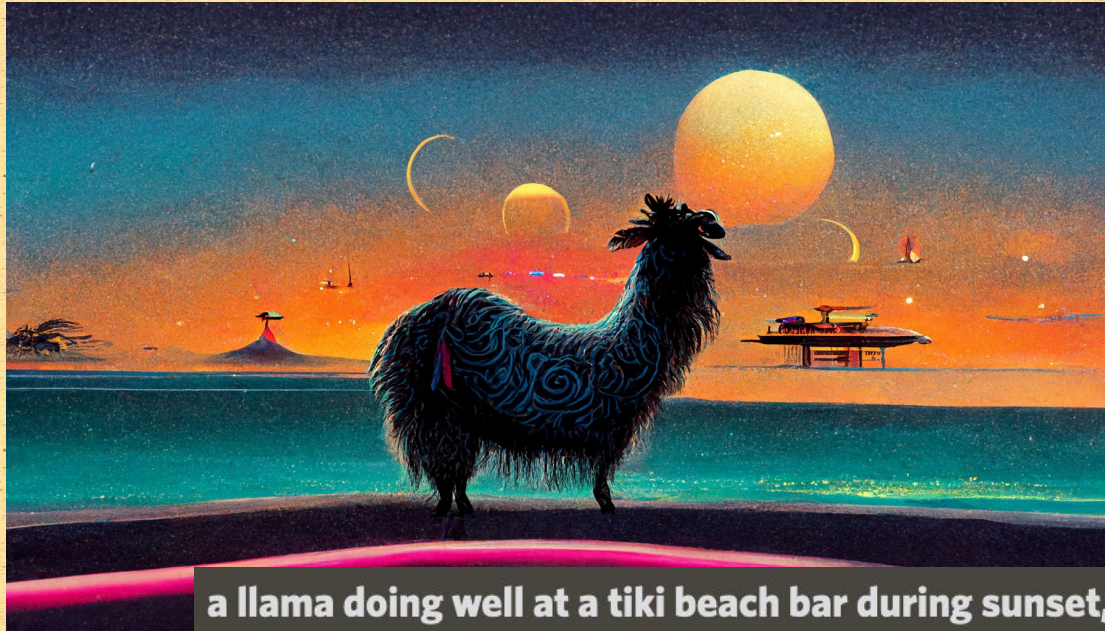
Expose members to their Surroundings

※ Make a short visits to other teams ※

※ See how they work ※

※ Interface with, form relationships ※

※ Learn! ※

llama watching Great Expectations at a summer cinema
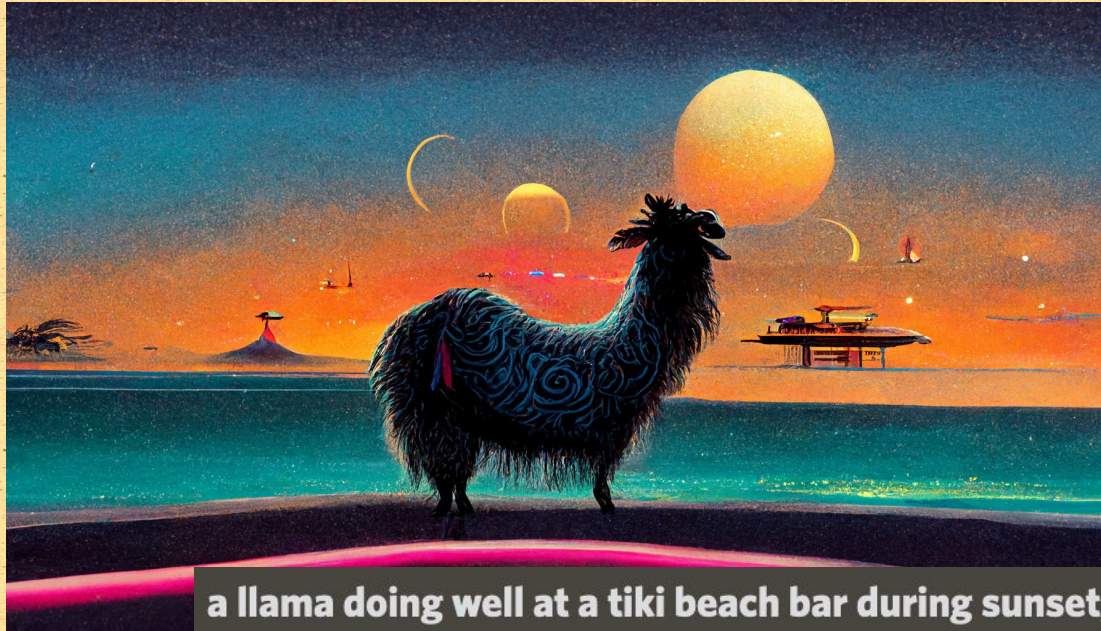
Realistic Expectations

- ※ Bear in mind different backgrounds

- ※ Career milestones

- ※ Be explicit of what's expected

This can go Well!

a llama doing well at a tiki beach bar during sunset,

This can go Well! *

a llama doing well at a tiki beach bar during sunset,

* with some management buy-in

Thank You!

All images were generated by the Midjourney Bot
https://www.midjourney.com/home/

SREcon22 Amsterdam
@manjiki

Is Our Team Resilient ?

- ※ Poor onboarding
- ※ Unrealistic expectations and assumptions
- ※ Tribal knowledge
- ※ Super Heroes
- ※ Generational gaps
- ※ Lack of leadership

- ※ Knowledge is Key
- ※ Address knowledge gaps
- ※ Mentorship & Sponsorship
- ※ Pairing
- ※ Expose members to their surroundings
- ※ Realistic Expectations

@manjiki