## Mentoring and Coaching Junior Engineers

Insights from a Career Changer

Verena Traub JUG Saxony Day 2024





## Hi, I'm Verena 👋





Cloud Consultant & **DevOps Engineer** @ b'nerd



**HR & Tech Recruiting** 



Web Development



Cloud / k8s / IaC



### What's in for you today...

- Experiences from "both sides"
- Tips & Tricks for Mentoring & Collaborating
- X Bashing & Complaining



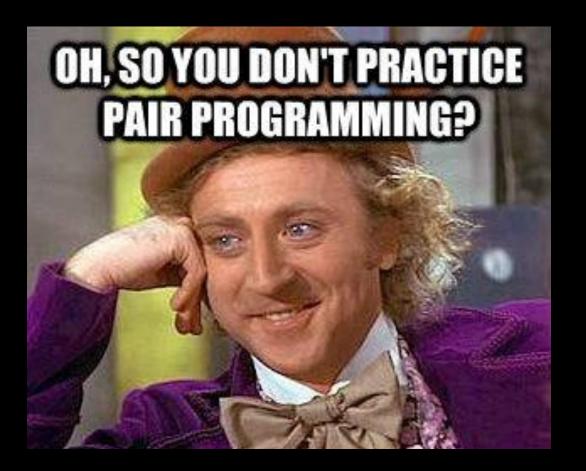




### What makes a good mentor...

- Eagerness & the skill to share own knowledge
- Empathy & patience
- Ability to give regular, constructive feedback





"Let me quickly show you ..."





# We learn best when working on a task or topic ourselves.



"Well, you just need to ..."





Prefer a discussion about possible solutions over sharing the solution right away.



"Now we have to put a map there in line 27."

"Errr ... A map ... (?!?!?)"

"Yeah, just there in line 27."

"Hmm... A map ..."

"Yeah, just put an object in there."





Think of technical terms as a kind of new language the Junior is still in process of learning.



"Ah, that was the error, let me just ..."





Interpreting & troubleshooting errors is an essential skill - and needs to be learned.



## "Why is your IDE so weird? Let me fix that."





Don't over-optimize.



"Have you checked the docu?"









# Never forget how much more experience you have.



Bonus 💡

As a Junior, the more you know, the more you know what you don't know.



Bonus

There is only a thin line between a positive challenge - and challenging too much.

Talking about this line is worthed.



Bonus 9

## We learn most from mistakes we make ourselves.







### How to pair with a junior developer

#### **Prioritize learning over productivity**

Yes, you could probably complete this task faster on your own.

If you've chosen to pair on it, it's because you are wisely prioritizing your junior's future productivity. Over the long term, leveling up a team member is worth more than completing today's task.

You're likely to learn from this experience as well. If you take your pair's questions seriously, you might find yourself discovering holes in your knowledge, or uncovering assumptions you didn't know you had.

If you're under too much pressure to prioritize this learning, don't pair.

#### Understand they're probably nervous

Most people find it intimidating to pair with someone with more experience.

This can happen even if you're extremely friendly, or have known each other a long time.

Assume your pair is at least a bit nervous.

#### Realize fear disrupts thinking





### Thanks for listening 🙏





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