Adam Keys

Portland, Oregon - 214-213-6650 - adam@therealadam.com - https://therealadam.com/about/

Proven software engineering manager and force multiplier building excellent cross-functional software teams for 7+ years. Building early stage and scale-up SaaS web applications for more than 20 years. Significant contributor to multiple successful exits.

My principles for building successful SaaS teams

🌲**Grow**: Give direct reports autonomy to solve problems and support them when ambiguity or blockers arise. Use 1-1 meetings to build bi-directional trust with my team. Hire well to raise the ceiling on a team's capacity and capabilities.

📈**Create**: Create a feedback loop early and use it to grow impact. High-functioning individuals and teams own projects end-to-end. Writing is thinking; encourage written collaboration as the default.

🏋️**Coach**: Team leadership is like editing a piece of writing; always iterating and clarifying. Select projects for their impact, but maintain quality and attention to detail. Individuals share status asynchronously; teams collaborate, coordinate, and make decisions synchronously.

📆 **Manage:** Vaguely defined work is a fact of life, so collaborate to gain clarity. If I can't split large projects into coherent milestones, I may not understand them. It's risky to lack a plan.

🚀**Ship**: Release early, iterate often. Measure whenever possible, and go with an educated guess when you can't. Consistent delivery cures most problems. Systems thinking helps me and my teams understand coupling and second-order effects.

Pingboard / Engineering Manager / Apr 2018 - Aug 2024 / Acquired by Workleap

- As a people manager, I led a team of 2-6 full-stack developers. Over my tenure, I hired four developers, and coached and promoted five developers. I doubled the size of our support engineering team and freed up product engineers by hiring junior developers and mentoring them to handle complicated customer support issues.
- As a people manager, I collaborated with other stakeholders to define our software and product development process. Proposed and implemented multiple principles from Shape Up and Extreme Programming. This built trust with product managers by making our cycle time more predictable. We reduced our cadence from six weeks down to two weeks, while maintaining less than one failed change per month.

- As a manager, I led and coordinated our support engineering effort. This collaboration between product, support, and development teams maintained a support NPS between 8 and 9 (out of 10).
- As an engineering lead, my teams shipped: new functionality to web and mobile, customer data integrations, internal customer support, data engineering and analytics, and technology stack upgrades. Taken together, these efforts led to hundreds of new customers year over year.
- As an engineering lead, I collaborated across the organization to design, implement, ship, and support a new billing and subscriptions model. Migration of customers from older plans resulted in 10%-50% revenue growth per customer.

ShippingEasy / Senior dev. / Mar 2016 - Mar 2018 / Acquired by Stamps.com

- Built out inventory management functionality, allowing the company to expand beyond the fulfillment market. Included reporting, integrations with Amazon and other e-commerce platforms. This improved retention on large accounts by 20%.
- Improved reliability and performance of Shopify integration. This was the most lucrative and highest volume integration. This reduced maintenance, compute, and support cost of the integration by 33%, improving per-transaction margin.

LivingSocial / Senior dev, manager, architect - Jan 2012-Mar 2016 / Acquired by Groupon

- As a tech lead manager on a team of 5 developers, I coached two developers up to a senior promotion. Mentored two developers from bootcamp program to full product team members.
- As a software architect, I documented a hybrid monolith+service-oriented architecture and did glue work to help teams collaborate on reducing coupling to monolithic databases and applications. This work facilitated an engineering-wide re-org that aligned a dozen teams into five “work streams” that better aligned engineering with business objectives.
- As a developer, I prototyped platform-as-a-service infrastructure, extracted services from a monolith application, and built self-service deployment tooling for developers. This reduced turnaround to deploy new applications by several days and improved performance of the consumer application by 20% for landing page views.

Gowalla / Senior developer / January 2010 - Dec 2011 / Acquired by Facebook

- Built an internal timeline platform API service (Chronologic) on Cassandra, released as open source. Integrated Chronologic into main Gowalla web app and supported developers/designers building upon it. This reduced API request times by 25% and reduced load on the application database by 50%.
- Ported high-traffic/large-data services to Redis and addressed slow database queries to improve performance and resilience. This reduced database disk requirements by 50%.
- Supported community of internal and external developers with public and internal web APIs. These facilitated best-in-class first-party mobile applications and a vibrant community of dozens of independent developers building upon Gowalla's product.

Previously

Developer at: FiveRuns, PureDiscovery, Tyler Technologies, RE Technologies. Intern at Texas Instruments and Brainfood Inc. (2000-2010)

Education: Bachelor of Arts, Computer Science/Computer Engineering at Southern Methodist University.

Skills

Ruby on Rails (15+ years), Ruby (15+ years), JavaScript (10+ years), Node, PHP, Go, Clojure, Python, Java, C#, VBScript, C, MySQL, PostgreSQL (10+ years), Redis, Cassandra, ElasticSearch, machine learning, semantic search, Agile methodology and project management, Extreme Programming, developer coaching, development & product roadmapping, product development, distributed systems, data structures and algorithms, Linux, performance management, engineering management, data structures and algorithms, DevOps practices.