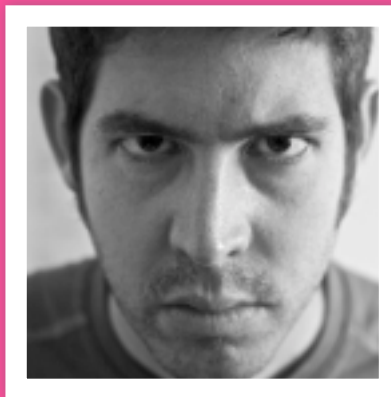




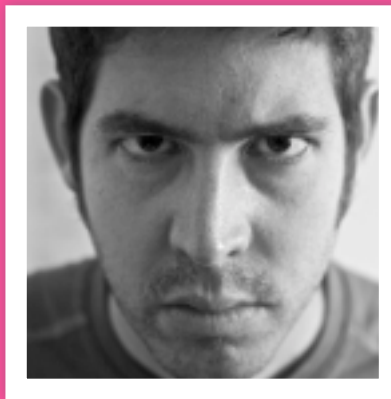
HOW  
**GITHUB**  
WORKS

THE  
STORY  
BEGINS  
WITH

# 4 FOUNDERS IN A COFFEE SHOP

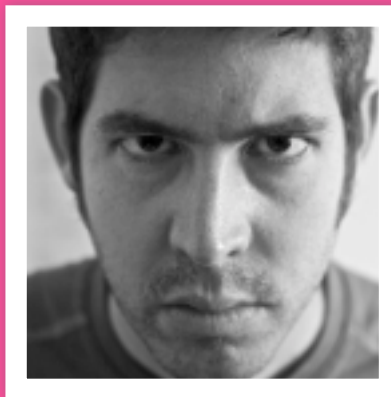


# 4 FOUNDERS IN A BAR

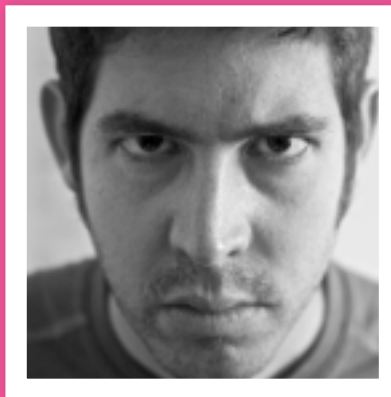




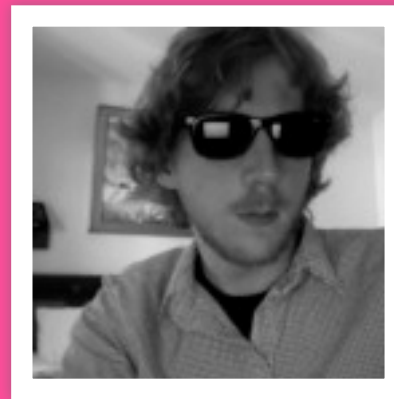
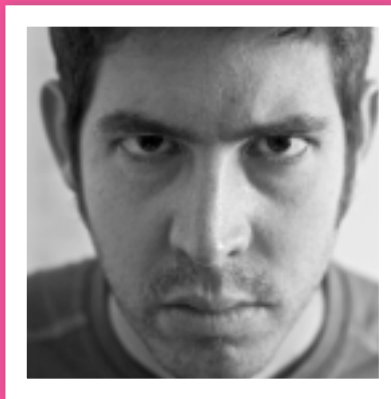
# 4 FOUNDERS IN A RESTAURANT



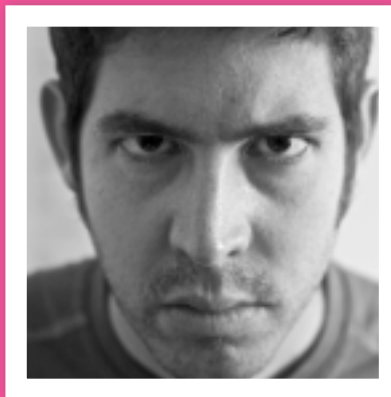
# 4 FOUNDERS IN A PLANE

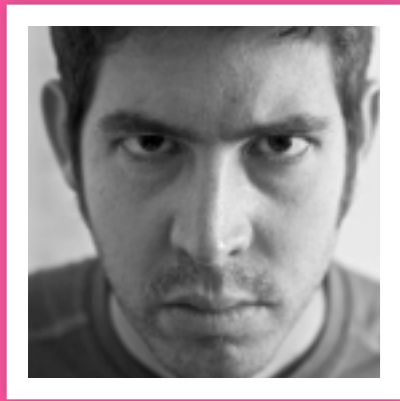


# 4 FOUNDERS IN A JAIL CELL

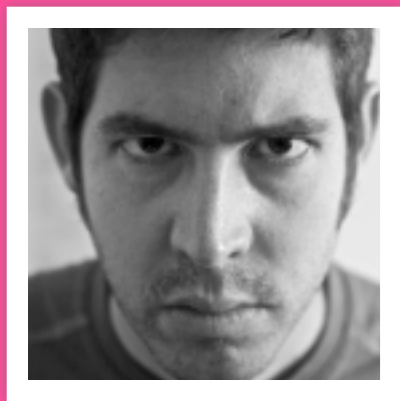


# 4 FOUNDERS IN A SOMEWHERE





NO OFFICE



HAD OTHER JOBS



THIS WAS THE START OF **github**



**GITHUB WAS FORCED TO BE**

**DISTRIBUTED**

**FLEXIBLE**

**HAPPY**

**TURNS OUT,  
GREAT WAY TO WORK**

**THIS TALK**

IS KIND OF ABOUT

**GITHUB**

BUT IT'S REALLY ABOUT  
**IMPROVING YOUR COMPANY**

**@HOLMAN**







HOW **GITHUB**  
**WORKS**

[ZACHHOLMAN.COM/POSTS/HOW-GITHUB-WORKS](https://zachholman.com/posts/how-github-works)



..... HOURS ..... ARE .....  
BULLSHIT



WORKING

9.....TO.....5

**DOES NOT WORK**

**CRAFTING CODE IS A**  
**HUGELY CREATIVE ENDEAVOR**

**YOU CAN'T FORCE  
CREATIVITY TO HAPPEN  
BETWEEN 9 AND 5.**

THE BEST SOLUTIONS HAPPEN WHEN  
YOU'RE IN THE ZONE

# OUR OFFICE

EARLY BIRDS  
NIGHT OWLS  
NINE-TO-FIVERS  
INTERNATIONAL EMPLOYEES  
TRAVELING EMPLOYEES

EMBRACE FLEXIBILITY





**WORKING LONG HOURS  
ISN'T A BADGE OF HONOR**

**...IT'S A BADGE  
OF FOOLISHNESS**



ALL-NIGHTERS ARE A RECIPE FOR  
REDOING EVERYTHING AGAIN LATER

# MARATHON CODE SESSIONS

DRAIN YOU MENTALLY  
LEAD TO POOR CODE QUALITY  
IMPACT FUTURE CODE

WE LET GITHUBBERS WORK

WHEREVER AND WHENEVER

THEY WANT TO WORK

WE WANT TO GET

**THE BEST WORK**

FROM OUR EMPLOYEES

THAT HAPPENS WHEN THEY ARE

**HAPPY, FRESH, AND CREATIVE**

# FAMILIES



# github



**@MADDOX**  
NEW DAD, MAY 26



**@MOJOMBO**  
NEW DAD, **SOON**



**@XPAULBETTSX**  
NEW DAD LATE 2012



**@BETHNEWLAND**  
NEW MOM 2012ISH





GITHUB  
FAMILY

**BE A FAMILY COMPANY**



**BEING LESS HOUR-CENTRIC =  
MORE FAMILY-FRIENDLY**

**HAPPY FAMILIES,**  
**HAPPY COWORKERS**

**HAPPY COWORKERS,**  
**PRODUCTIVE COMPANIES**

**TRUST**  
**YOUR EMPLOYEES**

**YOU HIRED THEM, AFTER ALL**

**TRUST** EMPLOYEES,  
HELP THEM OUT,  
THEN **VERIFY** THEY'RE DOING THE WORK.

**THIS REQUIRES COMMUNICATION**

**ARE THEY COMMITTING?**

**ARE THEY PARTICIPATING?**

**WHAT'S THEIR CODE LOOK LIKE?**

**HOURS ARE BULLSHIT**

---

**WORRY ABOUT GOOD WORK**



BE

ASYNCHRONOUS



# ASYNCHRONOUS

A DISTRIBUTED WAY OF GETTING THINGS DONE



**GEOGRAPHICALLY-DISTRIBUTED**



**ATTENTION-AWARE**



**TEAM-ORIENTED**



**MINIMAL PROCESS**



★ SAN FRANCISCO

GITHUBHQ



Turns out,  
the world is larger than  
just **San Francisco.**



WE WANT TO HIRE THE BEST

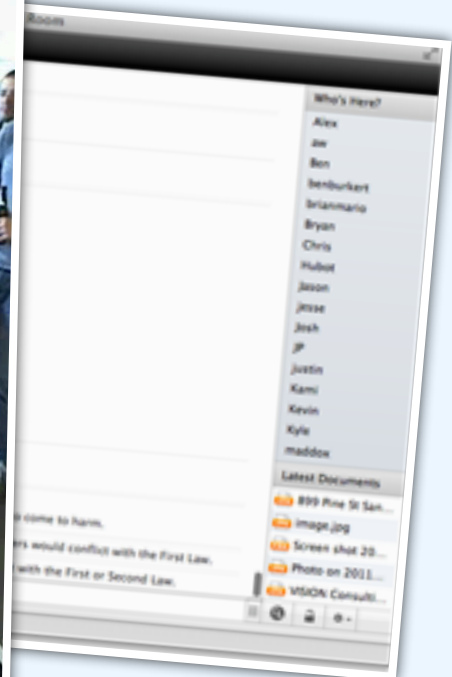


**DISTRIBUTED WORK**  
**NEEDS TO BE A PRIORITY FOR US**



FLEXIBLE HOURS  
HELP WITH FLEXIBLE LOCATION 

# LIMIT REQUIRED IN-PERSON CONTACT



CHAT

BEER:30



FACETIME

RECORDED TALKS



SUMMIT 2010



SUMMIT 2011



GITHUB SUMMIT 2012



GET PEOPLE  
MEETING IN  
REAL-LIFE!

ENCOURAGE  
STRUCTURED TEAM BUILDING



**GEOGRAPHICALLY-DISTRIBUTED**



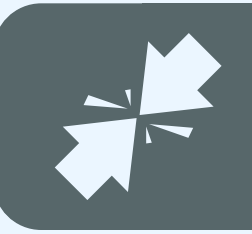
**ATTENTION-AWARE**



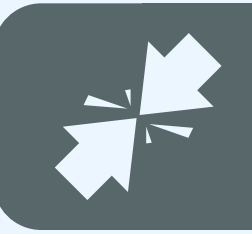
**TEAM-ORIENTED**



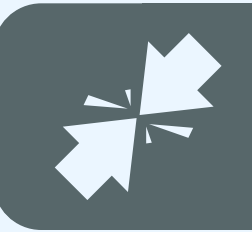
**MINIMAL PROCESS**



WE WANT DEVELOPERS  
IN THE ZONE™

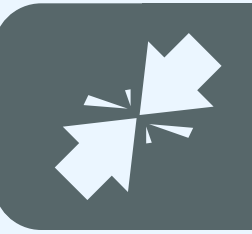


**MINIMIZE DISTRACTIONS**  
**THE ZONE IS DIFFICULT TO RE-ENTER**

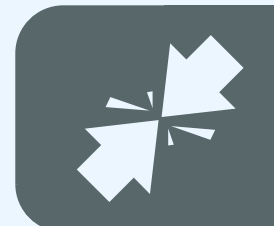


**NO TECHNICAL MEETINGS**

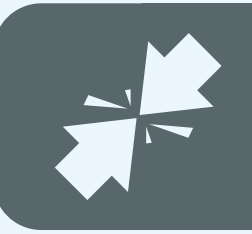
**NO STANDUP, DAILY, OR PLANNING MEETINGS**



**NO IN-PERSON DISTRACTIONS**  
**INSTEAD, PING OVER CHAT**

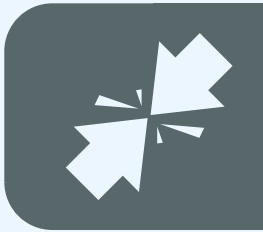


**NO MANAGERS**  
**THEY JUST DISTRACT**



**WE CAN WORK THIS WAY BECAUSE:**





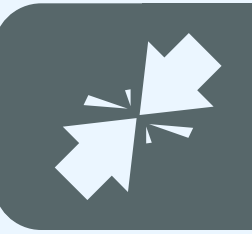
**PRODUCT  
COMPANY**

**DOGFOOD**

**FULL  
OWNERSHIP**

**PROFITABLE**

**github**



**EACH COMPANY IS DIFFERENT**  
**FIND OUT WHAT WORKS BEST FOR YOURS**



**GEOGRAPHICALLY-DISTRIBUTED**



**ATTENTION-AWARE**



**TEAM-ORIENTED**



**MINIMAL PROCESS**



# github

TEAMS

github:mac

github:help

github:shop

github:enterprise

github:gist

github:[redacted]

github:[redacted]

github:pages



SMALL TEAMS LET YOU MOVE  
**QUICKLY & INDEPENDENTLY**



# 30 ≠ ROOMS:

THE DANGER ROOM  
THE SERIOUS ROOM  
THE ENTERPRISE ROOM  
THE DESIGN ROOM  
THE SUPPORT ROOM  
THE INTERNAL ROOM  
THE NATIVE ROOM  
THE (REDACTED) ROOM  
THE MOBILE ROOM  
THE OPS ROOM  
THE NOTICES ROOM  
THE (REDACTED) RO



SMALL TEAMS LET YOU  
**FOCUS**



GEOGRAPHICALLY-DISTRIBUTED



ATTENTION-AWARE



TEAM-ORIENTED



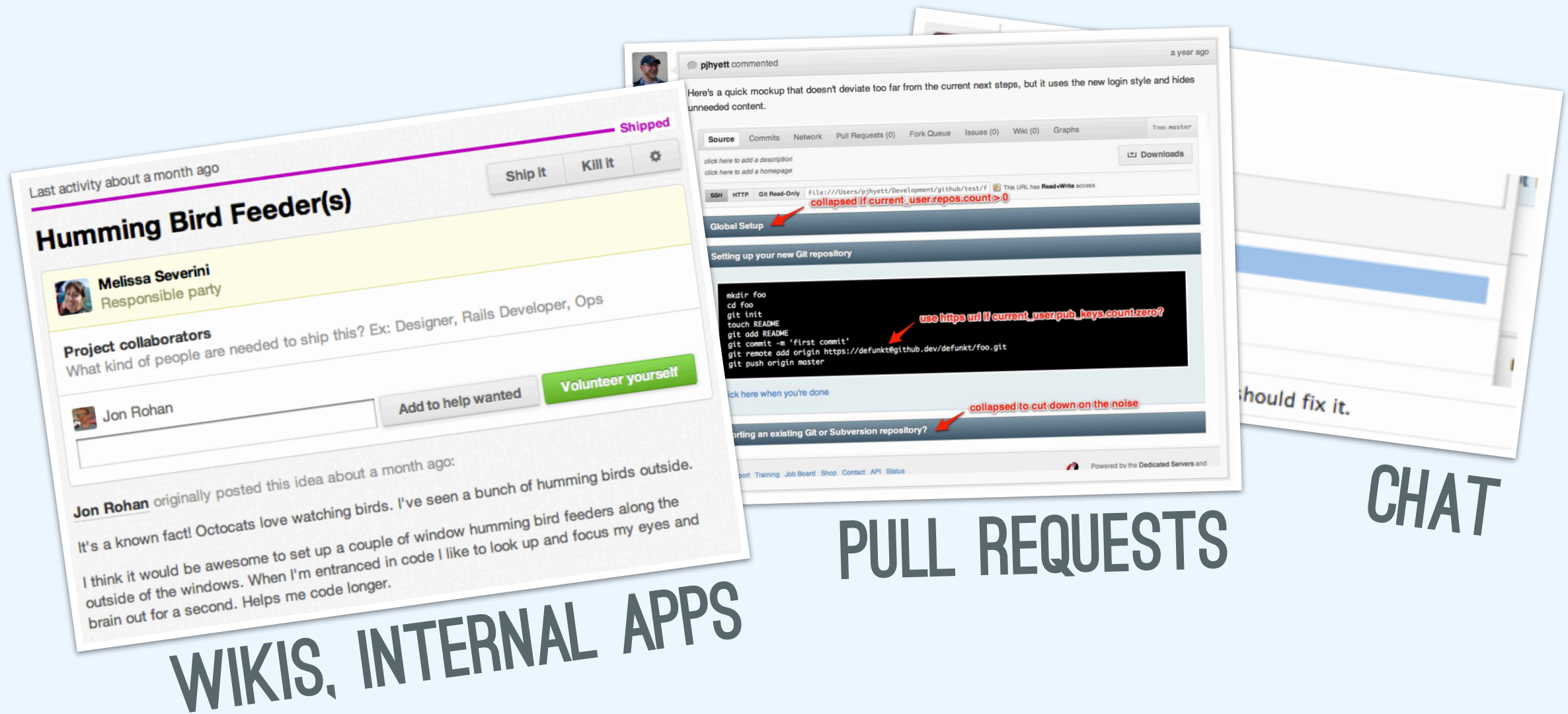
**MINIMAL PROCESS**



**HOW DO WE ACTUALLY DO ALL THIS?**

**PLAN - BUILD - SHIP**

# SHOW IT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE



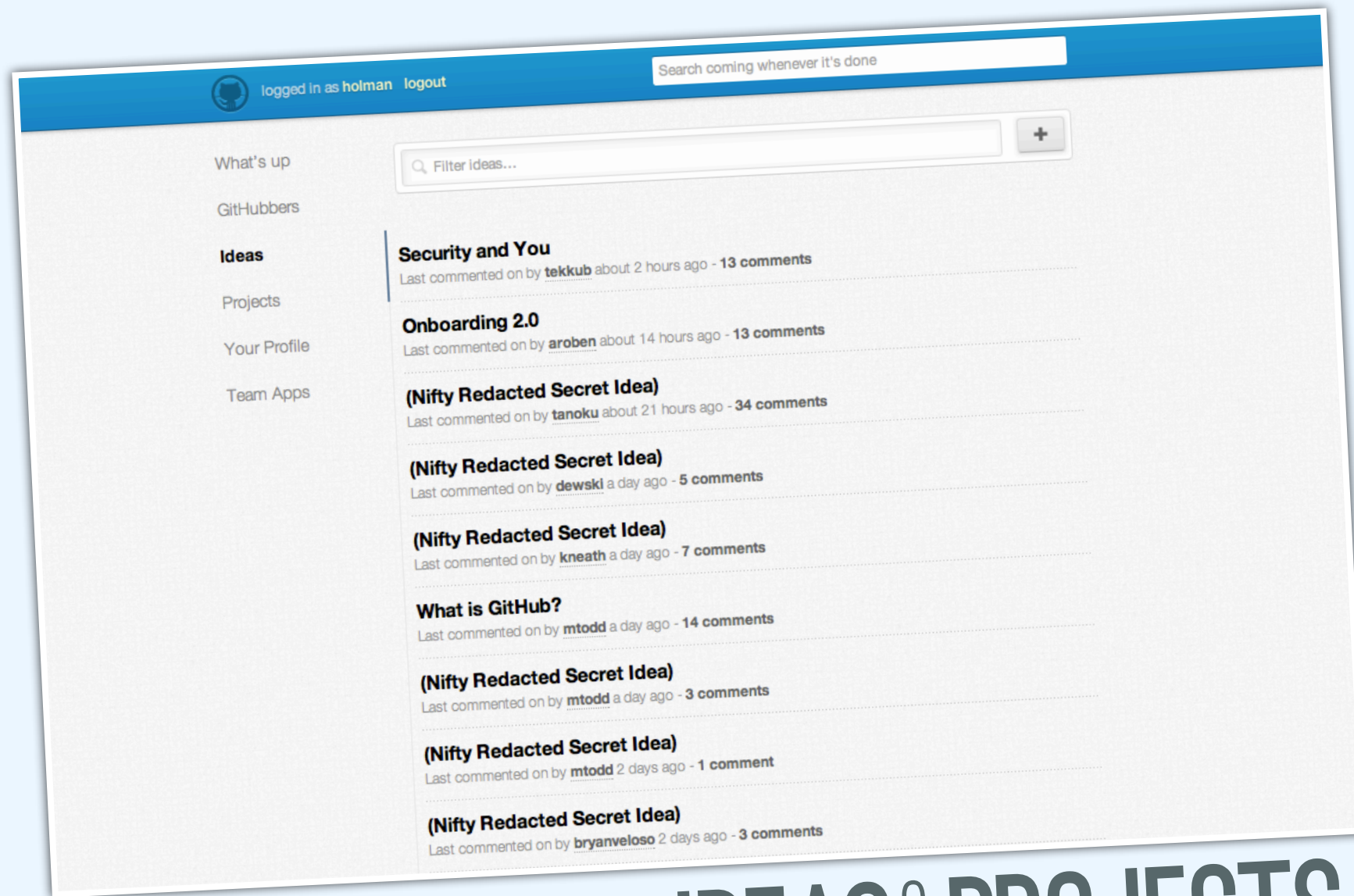
## PULL REQUESTS

## CHAT

## WIKIS, INTERNAL APPS

# MAKE IT OKAY TO SAY "NO"

# PLAN



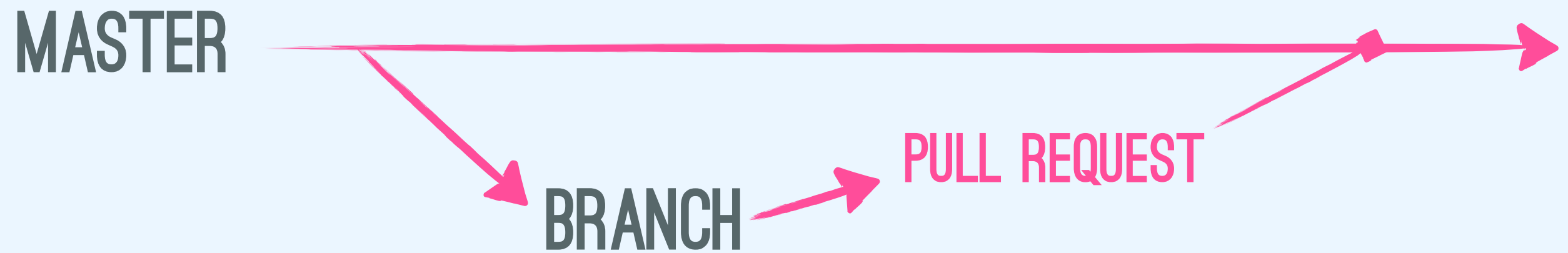
EVERYONE CONTRIBUTES

SEE STATUS UPDATES

AVOID ABANDONMENT

# IDEAS&PROJECTS

## SIMPLE BRANCHING



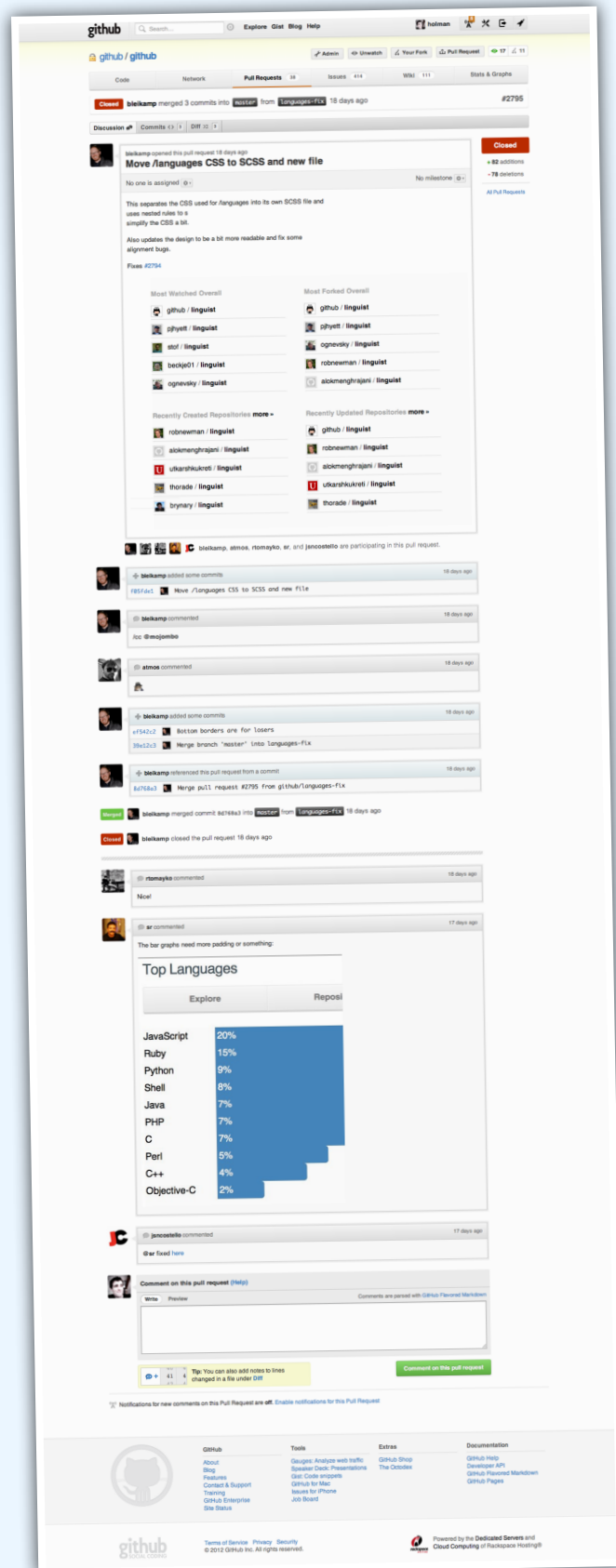
# SIMPLE BRANCHING

DESIGNER FRIENDLY  
("NON-TECHNICAL")

SIMPLE **BRANCHING**

SIMPLE **ROLLBACK**

**PARTIAL DEPLOYS** **STAFF-ONLY**  
**SPECIFIC SERVERS**  
**SPECIFIC PROCESSES**

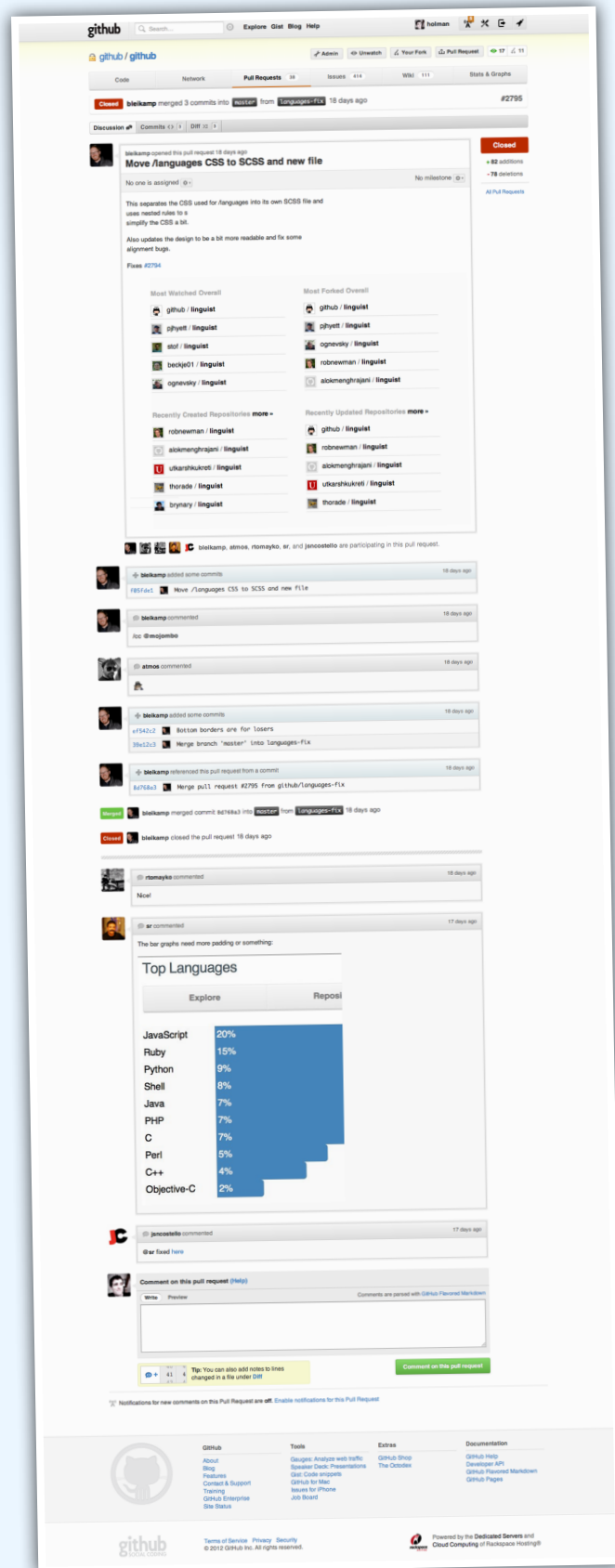


PULL REQUESTS ARE  
**DISCUSSIONS**  
 THAT IMPROVE  
**CODE QUALITY**



# BUILD

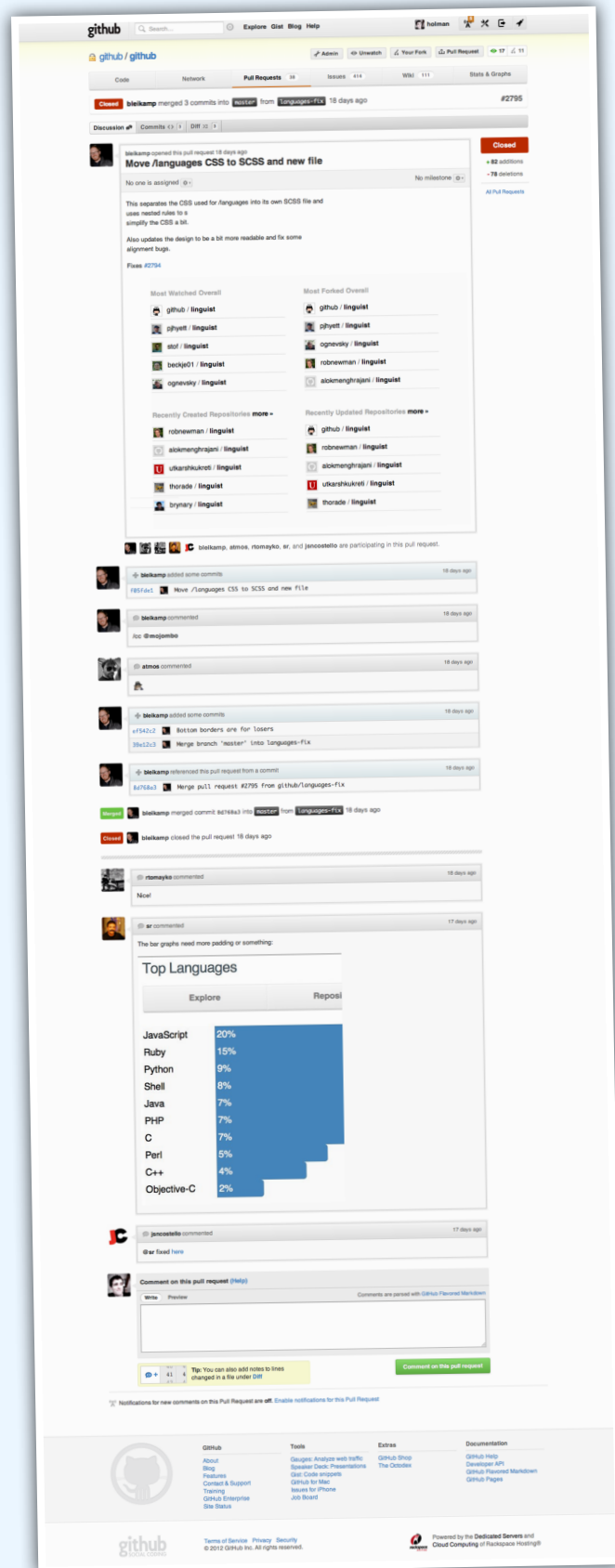
31



PUSH BRANCH  
GET FEEDBACK  
MAKE IMPROVEMENTS  
MERGE BRANCH

# BUILD

31



ASYNCHRONOUS, NON-INVASIVE  
EXTREMELY VISIBLE FOR YOUR ORG  
ONE-CLICK MERGE BUTTON  
REPLACES TRADITIONAL CODE REVIEW

SHIP



SUPER**FAST**TESTS



14000 ASSERTIONS IN  
**200 SECONDS**

*(STILL NOT FAST ENOUGH)*



A SLOW TEST IS  
**A REGRESSION**

**YOU DON'T NEED DISTRACTIONS**

---

**YOU DON'T NEED TO BE  
IN THE SAME COUNTRY**

---

**YOU REALLY DON'T  
NEED A LOT OF  
PROCESS**



OPTIMIZE ..... FOR .....  
HAPPINESS



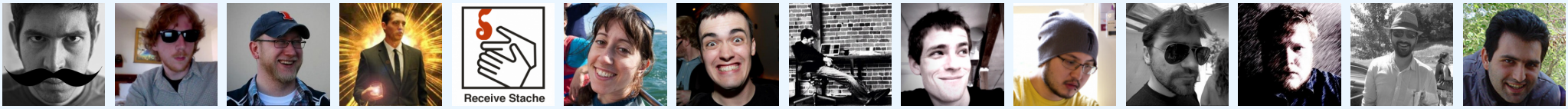
2008



2009



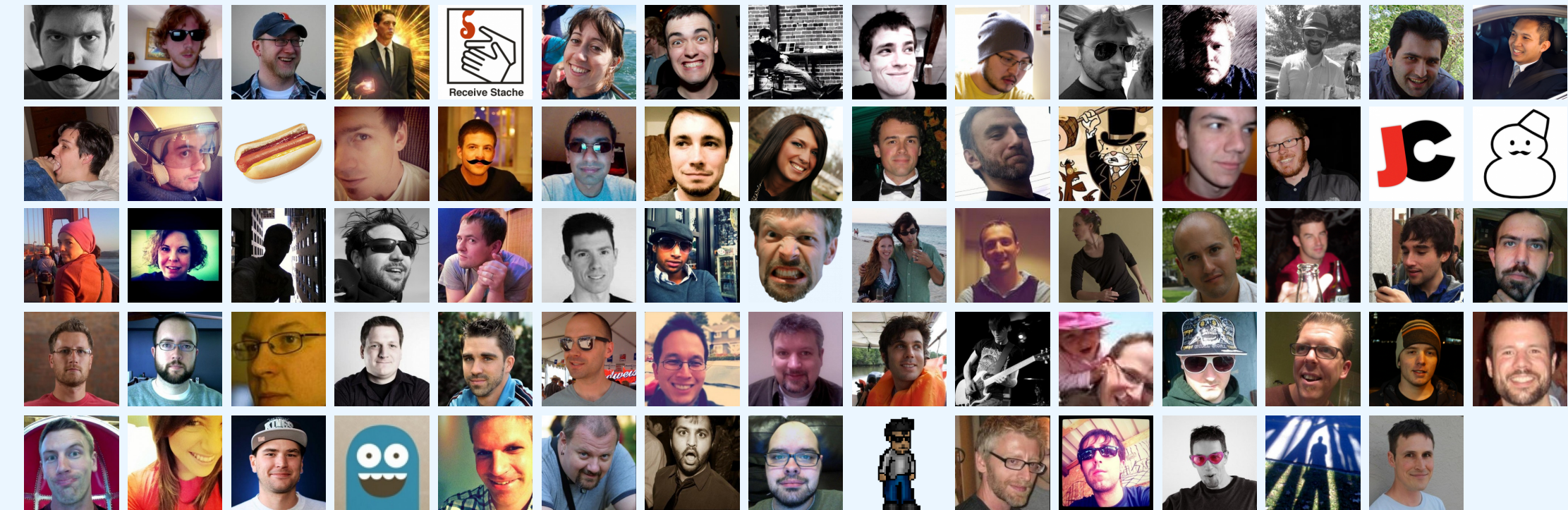
2010



2011



MAY 2012



githup



EMPLOYEES

83

EMPLOYEES WHO HAVE LEFT

0

github

THIS REQUIRES

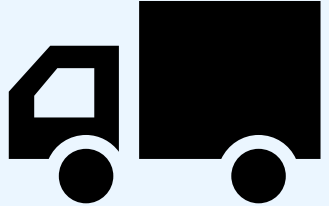
A HAPPINESS-ORIENTED WORKPLACE

EMPLOYEE BURNOUT

LEADS TO UNHAPPINESS AND TO LEAVING

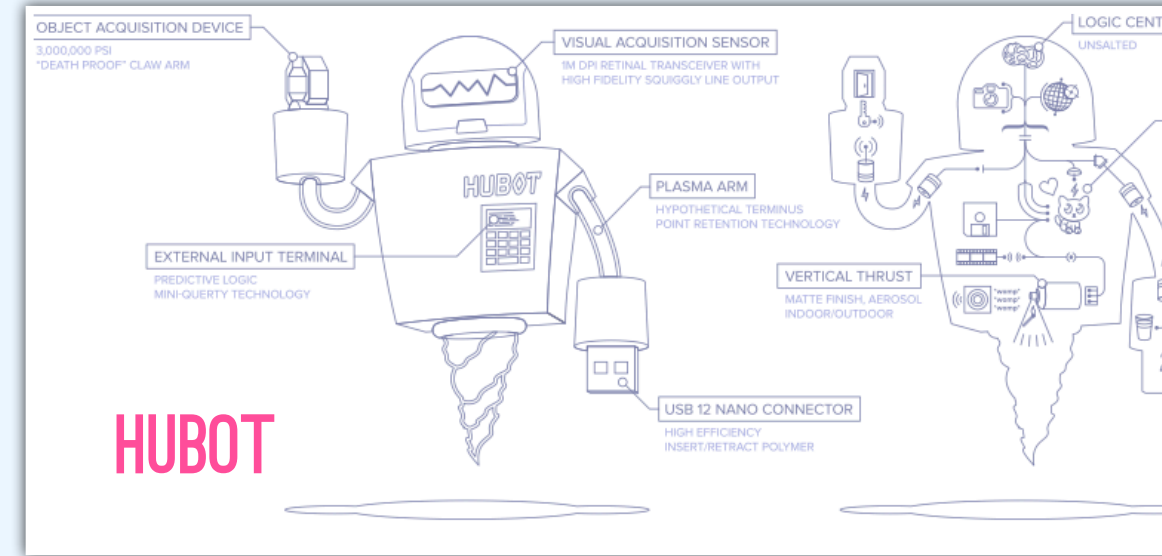
EXPLORATION 

FREEDOM 

 A solid black icon of a truck, showing the cab and a rectangular trailer, positioned to the left of the text.

SELF-DIRECTION

# EXPLORATION



# SHARED SIDE PROJECTS

halp Search

Triage (1) Waiting (2) Neglected (84) Reminders (1)

**INTERNAL APPS**

Hello, @holman

**North American Scum**  
by LCD Soundsystem  
from Sound Of Silver

★ download song

**PLAY**

QUEUE HISTORY Search

LCD Soundsystem  
**Tribulations**  
★ download song remove from queue



**EXPLORATION** 

**KEEP EVERYONE LEARNING**

**KINDLES&EBOOKS**

**ARDUINO LESSONS**

**SPANISH TUTORING**



EXPLORATION 

## NETWORKING

ACCEPTED TO SPEAK AT A CONFERENCE?  
GITHUB PAYS FOR YOU AND A TRAVEL BUDDY

## MARKETING FOR GITHUB

DRINKUPS, YOUR TALK

## MEET PEOPLE

POTENTIAL HIRES, SOCIALIZING IS FUN

EXPLORATION 

BURNOUT HAPPENS WHEN YOU'RE NOT  
**PERSONALLY GROWING**

**FREEDOM** 

**NO SET HOURS**

**FREEDOM** 

**NO MANAGERS**

**FREEDOM** 

**NO MEETINGS**

**FREEDOM** 

**NO NEED TO BE IN OFFICE**

# NO VACATION TRACKING

 **SELF-DIRECTION**

**WORK ON**  
**THINGS THAT INTEREST YOU**



# SELF-DIRECTION

WE HAVE TEAMS, BUT TEAMS SHOULD BE  
**EASY TO MOVE BETWEEN**

**KEEP YOUR EMPLOYEES**

REALLY  
REALLY  
REALLY  
**HAPPY**



**BE  
FLEXIBLE**



**BUILD A COMPANY**  
YOU WANT TO WORK FOR



PUSH FOR  
**HAPPINESS**



**THANKS.**



ZACHHOLMAN

ZACHHOLMAN.COM/TALKS @HOLMAN