

P O R T F O L I O
ASYNCHRONOUS TEAM
CULTURE: SLACK CHANNELS

Leadership

TRENT RHODES



ASYNCHRONOUS TEAM CULTURE: SLACK CHANNELS

SITUATION

The organization shifted to 100% remote work during the COVID's emergence. This enabled team members to be recruited from all over the country. I took on the manager role around this time.

CHALLENGE

With everyone in different locations and no physical office to sync, team culture risked being diffused by the distance. It was also an opportunity to recreate what team culture could look like for the web development coaching team.

In the past, those of us working locally could sit in the same office and have several opportunities to chat on cases, pass on knowledge and strengthen rapport. Much could be exchanged just by taking 15 minutes to go out for a snack at the store or focus time in one of the work rooms.

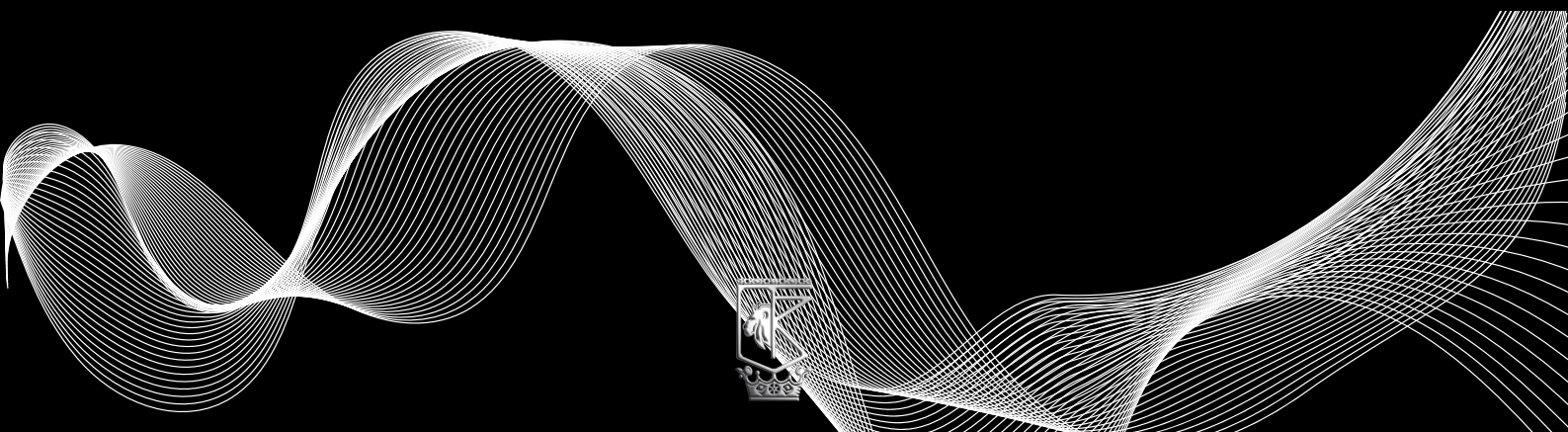
ACTION / REFLECTION

I aimed to replicate this experience and use technology to advantage, to create the kind of rapport that would be in person. I also thought about time zone differences. This led me to consider the importance of asynchronous communication and accessible tools for organic live and asynch.

I used Slack, our primary communication tool to create themed channels enabling interaction with specific focuses. I observed the team enjoyed sharing information, collaborating, having fun, getting to know each other beyond work responsibilities. It was important to have channels that could encourage these energies.

1- The first was Coach Café, a space for the team to communicate on all things non-work related. Often this included desserts, birthdays, travel pictures, you name it.

2- The next was a team-oriented channel. I created a web development channel for the coaches I managed. This would enable the team to have communication specific to the program, exchange ideas relevant to our program experiences. Also helped to keep the content focused and avoid loss.



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ACTION / REFLECTION

3- I also created two separate web development coach channels, one for the full-time team and part-time university team. Each team could present their thoughts specific to the program. At that time we had a distinction between the curriculum for university, core full-time and part-time clients. This distinction prompted the need to have different conversations. Learner projects also differed. With the eventual program streamline, these two channels weren't as necessary but remained.

4- I created a web development resources channel to include any important links for us to keep so that information doesn't get lost in our other channels. It was a benefit for focusing where team members shared information and commented. It was also easier for me to grab those resources and upload them to our Monday board archive and job leads Email. Source types included job leads, programs, interesting posts.

5- The most recent Slack channel I created involved celebrations. It was important to have a way of concentrating the energy for acknowledging positive team contributions.

The team was already doing this, complementing each other and giving praise for support. But there wasn't a special place for that information to be housed. The celebrations channel would have served two purposes. The first was a central place for recognition. Second: those recognitions could be shared into the larger channel that was for the entire full staff involved celebrations.

This would enable me and the rest of the team members on Web to use them for testimonials, on their portfolios, forms of recommendation, etc.

