Twitter Thread by Arnav Gupta



Arnav Gupta
@championswimmer

Ok weekend thread ■ time ■

Since college days, I have launched 4 products (2 fail + 2 sold), started up thrice (1 failed, 1 sold, 1 running), lead a team at a $1B+ startup and worked as lead engineer at a Fortune 100 giant

Here are some learnings (tech/management/product)■

Everything is a people problem. Always. 100% of the time. It isn't the code, the market, the product fit, the idea, the money. None of that.

BUT BUT BUT, do not blame 'a person' for it. That's a cop out. Fix it structurally, in the process, so it isn't repeated.

The single short term fix for 99.99% problems is money.

From cofounder problems to team bandwidth, to bad code. More money can stop a leaving cofounder from leaving, let you hire more people, or scale your server 10x.

It is a bandaid. Fix it properly eventually though.

The one, and the only, just the only ever reason - for growth of people, for stagnation of people, for all things good and bad in your career - is your communication skill.

You can articulate well, you will do better in life. If you can't you'll be treated like trash.

There is no such thing as an "incompetent" worker, only incompetent managers.

If someone is given a task beyond their capacity, whose fault ?
If someone is overpaid while hiring, whose fault ?
If someone's performance isn't tracked, or feedback given, whose fault ?

The one lowest cost, most fun-filled, entertaining, and yet surprisingly effective way to understand corporate culture better and grow in the corporate workplace faster is to read Dilbert. Go through the archives and read all of Dilbert comics.

No, seriously! Not kidding.

There are 2 modes of working - robot mode and involved mode.

Robot mode = you want to be paid X dollars for Y hours and fulfill all the requirements

Involved mode = you want to be part of ideation stage, put your inputs in, discuss differences, and see impact of your work

1/4

Some people are robot, some are involved. Some tasks need robots, some need involved people.
Same person can be robot at one place, involved at another, or robot today, involved tomorrow.

But doing a work meant for robot in involved mode (or vice/versa) will be disaster.

2/4

Involved mode people often think lowly of robot mode people (= what is it a work worth doing if you're not even using your brain).

Robot mode people enjoy peace of mind and laugh at involved mode people because of their work-life-balance, and how.

3/4

I have parallelly worked in robot mode at one workplace while in involved mode in another place.

Both have their pros and cons, and own satisfaction and joy. Nothing to be made fun of. Different modes work out well for different situations and stage in life. Respect both.

4/4

Often a tricky call when hiring = take loyal/sincere/dedicated person vs take the most meritorious/intelligent/talented one.

It is very simple. Hire for merit for the skills you can judge, hire for sincerity in other verticals.
When you can't judge, you can trust sincerity.

It is called "give and take" and not "take and give" for a reason.

Want a raise? First deliver a fantastic product launch, then immediately as for the raise.

Want to assign someone a big project? Give them a big bonus first, then assign it to them.

Occam's Razor = the simplest explanation is correct

Hanlon's Razor = if something is wrong, it is by mistake, not someone deliberately sabotaging it

Wayne Dyer = between being right and being kind, be kind and you'll always be right

Win at work with these 3 principles. Always

Especially for tech people = learn to "zoom out"

It is easy to get into functional vs OOP, architecture discussions, coding practices. BUT WAIT.

Zoom out for a second. What does the product need? What does the user need? How does the software need to work? Only that matters

When we look at MacOS vs Windows, or Android vs iOS, or picking any product. We care about these things, mostly in this order

- easy to access
- easy to learn
- does what it says
- fast enough to not frustrate me
- no surprise bugs
- reliably recover from failures

Build that!

1. Great design, great copy, slick UI - these things bring people in. These 'entice' and 'seduce' people.

2. Speed, recover from failures, Just Works™ - these keep people here, make them lazy to leave, hook them

If people not coming, focus on 1, if not staying, focus on 2.

I ramble on about many of these learning in my podcast that I started recently. Check the episodes out
https://t.co/eZq4CWEYf7

If you liked the thread, you'll love the podcast.