Twitter Thread by Jason Yip



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Some thoughts on remote working...

Remote makes communication skills more critical. Some of this is valuable anyway (clarity, conciseness, logical structure) but can be compensated for with co-location. Some of this is easy with co-location but becomes difficult with remote (non-verbal cues, humanisation).

Externalise everything. People can't read your mind, especially with reduced non-verbal cues, nor can they remember everything. Get it of your head into something other people can interact with. Words and pictures, not just words. Logical structure, not just a freeform dump.

No unwritten rules (GitLab), AKA a simpler expression of Kanban's "make process policies explicit".

Distribute decision-making with decision rules/guard rails. This is an example of "no unwritten rules". At larger scales, I expect "just trust people to make good decisions" leading to either a mess or indecision.

Public silence means private conjecture (Basecamp). Essentially the importance of transparency but also directly addressing "elephants in the room".

3 collaboration modes (Automattic): real-time/synchronous (fuzzy front end, coordination); asynchronous (parallel effort, decoupling); storage/reference. I'm reluctant to say asynchronous is default given pairing/mobbing.

Watch the baton, not the runners. That is, focus on the flow and interruption of work OVER the flow and interruption of individuals.

Ad-hoc, on-demand interactions for timeliness; scheduled, regular interactions for ease of coordination.

Aggressively deliberate meeting design (whether to have it, who attends, when it occurs, how it's structured). Always consider the trade-off between ensuring a diverse perspective and time taken.

The appropriate time/effort taken depends on the type of decision. High impact, irreversible decisions deserve more time; low-impact, reversible decisions deserve less time.

Make your product development lifecycle/rhythm explicit, including when people should be involved. Another example of "no unwritten rules".

Prefer direct communication over intermediaries (Basecamp). I normally describe this as "shortening the gap between problems and problem-solvers" but also refers to peer-to-peer coordination between problem-solvers.

Make social connection deliberate to make building affective trust deliberate. This includes both regular, scheduled activities as well as potentially "automated serendipity" (automatic social questions, fika bot, etc.)