HACKERNOON

A hacker, a hipster and a hustler walk into a bar

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On building the right team for tech disruption

In any line of work, there are different careers for different skill sets and ambition levels. One thing that I learned is that building a team for tech disruption takes a very distinct DNA from most jobs.

> Influential people are never satisfied with the status quo. They're the ones who constantly ask, 'What if?' and 'Why not?' They're not afraid to challenge conventional wisdom and they don't disrupt things for the sake of being disruptive; they do it to make things better. — Travis Bradberry

Aiming to disrupt a market is a big deal. Doing it with the wrong people is next to impossible. As an innovator, either in a small startup or as part of a larger organization, you know that odds are against you from the get go.

As a Startup Founder, CTO and Tech Advisor, one of the key aspects of my job has been to assemble teams. Specifically, teams whose culture, skill set and DNA is all about innovation and even disruption. I learned that you need to bring together the genius of three very distinct profiles to beat those odds and built disruptive products.

Hackers define new boundaries

Innovation is mostly driven by technology breakthroughs and, as such, anyone who is able to create new tech products is at high demand. The best software developers are often misunderstood by the not-so-tech-savvy folks, since they come up as introverts with weird ideas. Although, startups and big companies alike need these hackers to come up with the tech implementations of their innovative ideas. Even beyond that, any company depends on the curiosity and ingenuity of these individuals to come up with new possibilities, to leverage new untapped (and sometimes barely tested) technology stacks or frameworks. Only by incorporating that appetite for novelty and (calculated) risk you can set

new boundaries for what's possible and end up bringing new value propositions to the market.

Hipsters defy the status quo

Creating new experiences that capture people's attention and keep them engaged has always been a great challenge. In this world of shrinking attention spans and increased technology possibilities, it's an even greater challenge. Disruptive experiences are not just about design. It's about usability. It's about mechanism design and game theory. It's really about taking users to a new level of possibilities. Startups have embraced the hipster mindset from the very beginning, and that's the core of their disruption. Corporates still perceive hipsters as weird individuals with a vision of the world that's too far away from the status quo. That's actually a good thing and a key ingredient for disruptive innovation. It's time to empower those who have the genius of coming up with massively better experience with potential to disrupt markets and improve the lives of a lot of people. Any project with appetite for disruption needs to bring in and empower those people.

Hustlers keep the ball rolling

As in James Carse's book, there are finite and infinite games. For hustlers there isn't a final deadline or a point where they win and it's over. Quite the opposite, they hustle to keep playing, and winning means growing their teams and increasing the resources to keep playing and upping their game. The game of bringing innovation to the market and make it spread globally is a never ending game, it's a moving target constantly pushed forward by new technology innovations and new business models. Hustlers are not only startup founders and self made millionaires. Anyone

who champions innovation needs to hustle to gather the resources, even in larger corporations where budgets need to be fought for. Any team depends on these hustlers, and hustlers depend on the hackers and hipsters on their teams.

Success is only created by the right mix of genius

Hackers, Hipsters and Hustlers are pieces of a puzzle, and in each innovation scenario the puzzle requires different amounts of each type of genius. In deeply technical projects, hackers are the most needed resource, while for customer centric challenges having great hipsters are a must. Hustlers need to exist in every project, but they need to be highly adaptable since the challenges they face to keep the ball rolling come in diverse forms and shapes and tend to change every other day, depending on internal and external factors. It's the key task of the leaders in the organization to bring together the right people and to inspire them to challenge existing boundaries and create awesome products.

The right team with the right mindset becomes a disruptive SWAT team

Robert Kennedy said "There are those that look at things the way they are, and ask why? I dream of things that never were, and ask why not?". I love that one, and totally abide by those guidelines. As an innovation stakeholder in your company, that's the unique mindset you need to bring together in your team. They need to be highly skilled in the first place, but they need to be dreamers also, they need to create new solutions for old problems. Either you find that unique sauce within your organization or need to bring in strategic external partners who provide you with this edge. This is a key ingredient in your formula to create disruption.

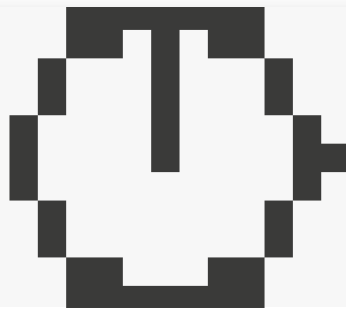*This post was originally published here.*

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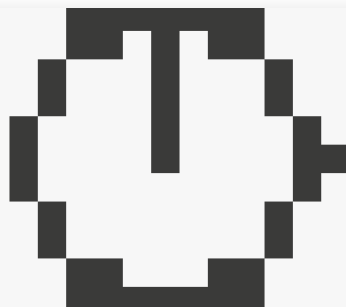
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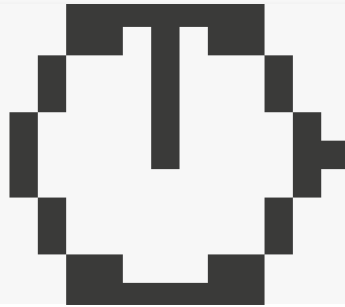
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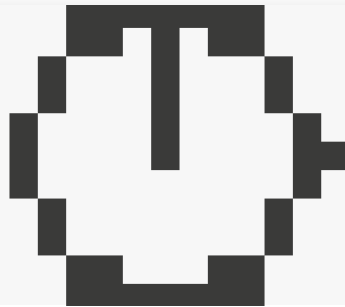
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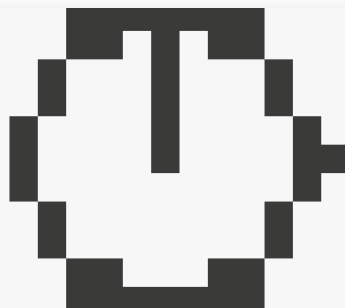
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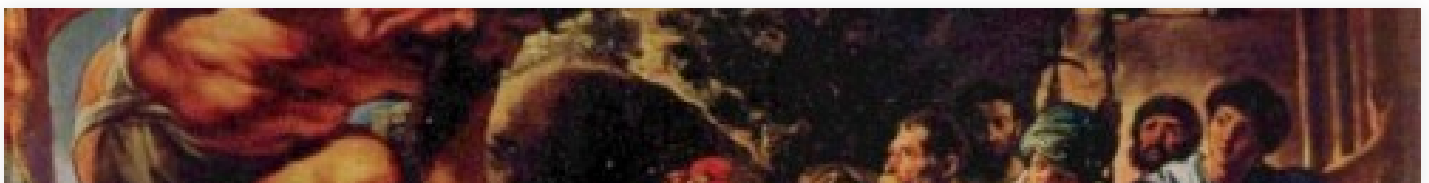TOPICS OF INTEREST

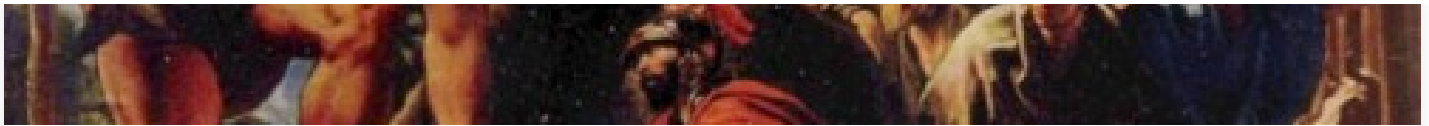☑ Software Development   ☑ Blockchain Crypto

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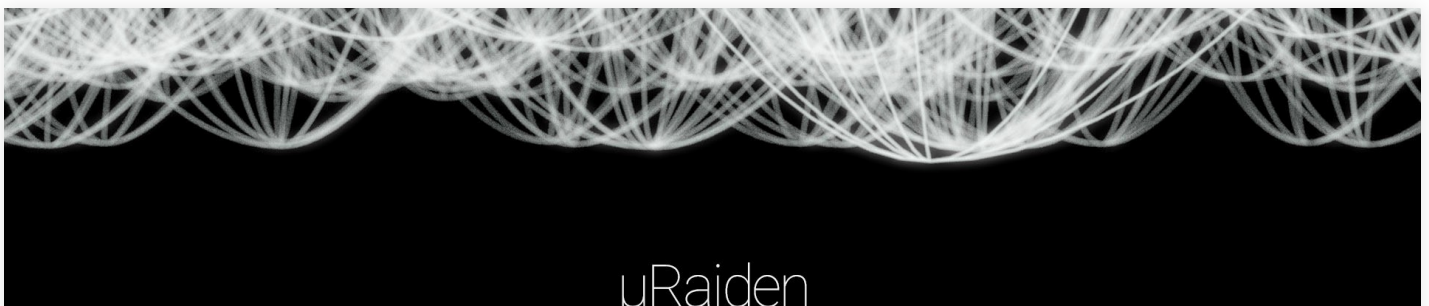
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