

Atkins Group Day 2 Discussion

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1. What are some new opportunities (tools, processes, training) to improve productivity?

- Containers – There's an argument to be made that they are inflexible and sometimes overused, but other members of the group find them to offer solutions to improve productivity. A lot of discussion about overhype and that containers are often used in situations where they are not necessary. Important to use in the correct situation.
- All third party software is developed by teams that are similarly fallible, which can be a challenge when introducing new opportunities to a team.
- Open source software, but can run into the challenges in the above point.
- Everything that can be automated should be automated.
- A focus on better architecture can greatly improve performance.

2. How can you introduce opportunities into your work, team and community?

- When introducing a new opportunity, success has been had when a certain "champion" within the team is pushing for the change.
- Always a lot of up front work to get used to a new tool or process. Having a clear example that can show the use of the tool/process often makes teams more receptive to the idea as they can see the value of it.

3. What are the prerequisites to improvement?

- Willingness to take on the work required to make the improvement.
- "Perfect is the enemy of good". Must be willing to take the wins that you can get, can't go in expecting a catch-all improvement.
- Necessary to give thought to the payoff relative to effort. Look for low hanging fruit that is easy to make improvements on.

- For highly critical industries (example of aircraft), there's less willingness to adopt new technologies as there is always a risk associated with using something that hasn't fully proven itself.

4. As a member of academia/industry/lab institution, what would you like to learn or convey to other communities?

- Academia always wants to hear from industry what they are looking for out of graduates as students are more likely to take it to heart if they hear it directly from industry rather than just faculty.

- Industry looking for students who are willing to learn topics that go beyond solely what is taught to them.

- That not every problem in industry is an idealistic problem, often need to find dirty solutions.