THE EFFECTIVE REMOTE DEVELOPER

David Copeland

Director of Engineering, Stitch Fix

@davetron5000

4+ YEARS REMOTE

- 3RD DEVELOPER AT STITCH FIX

- WORK DAILY WITH DEVELOPERS, USERS, BUSINESS PEOPLE, VENDORS
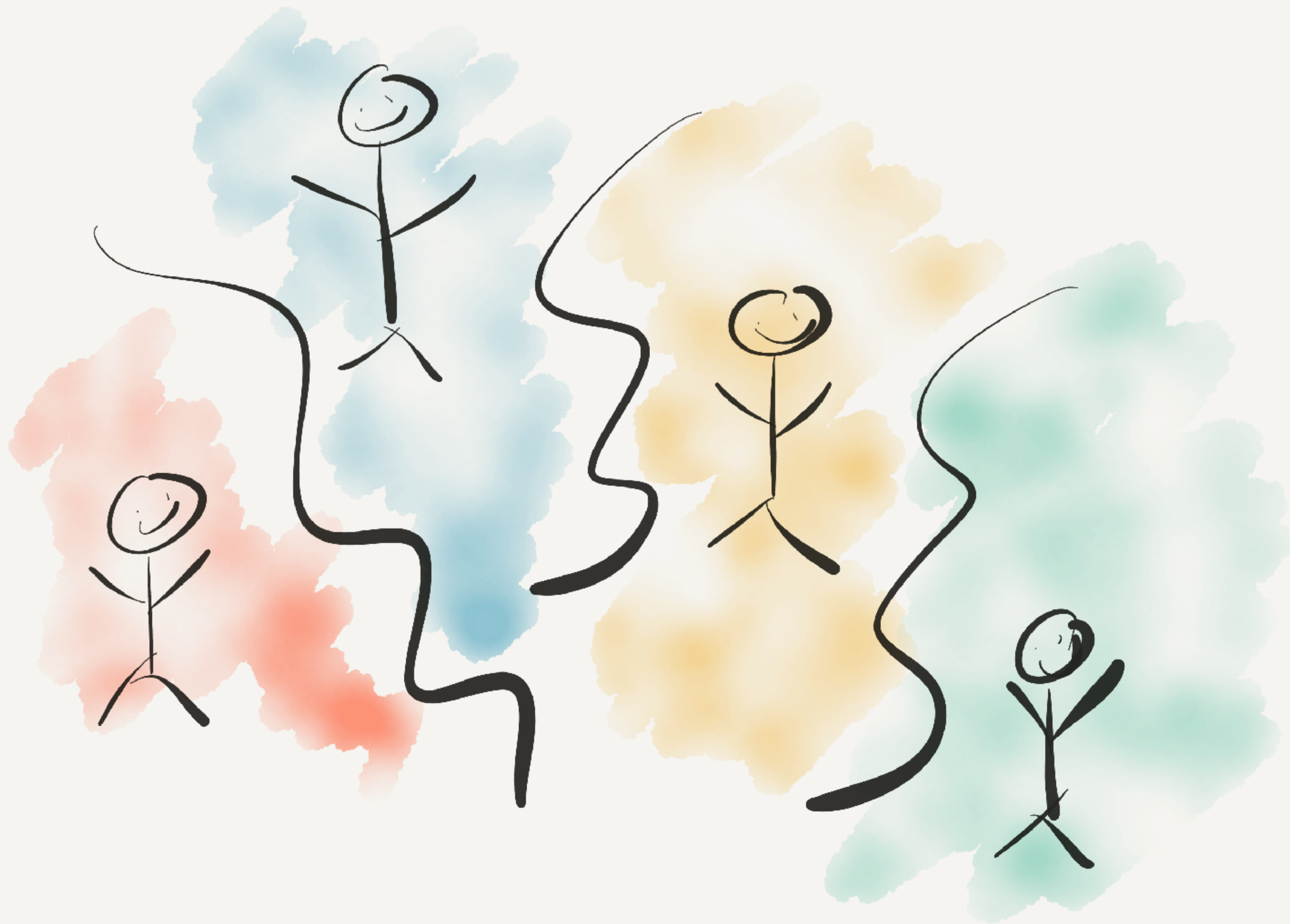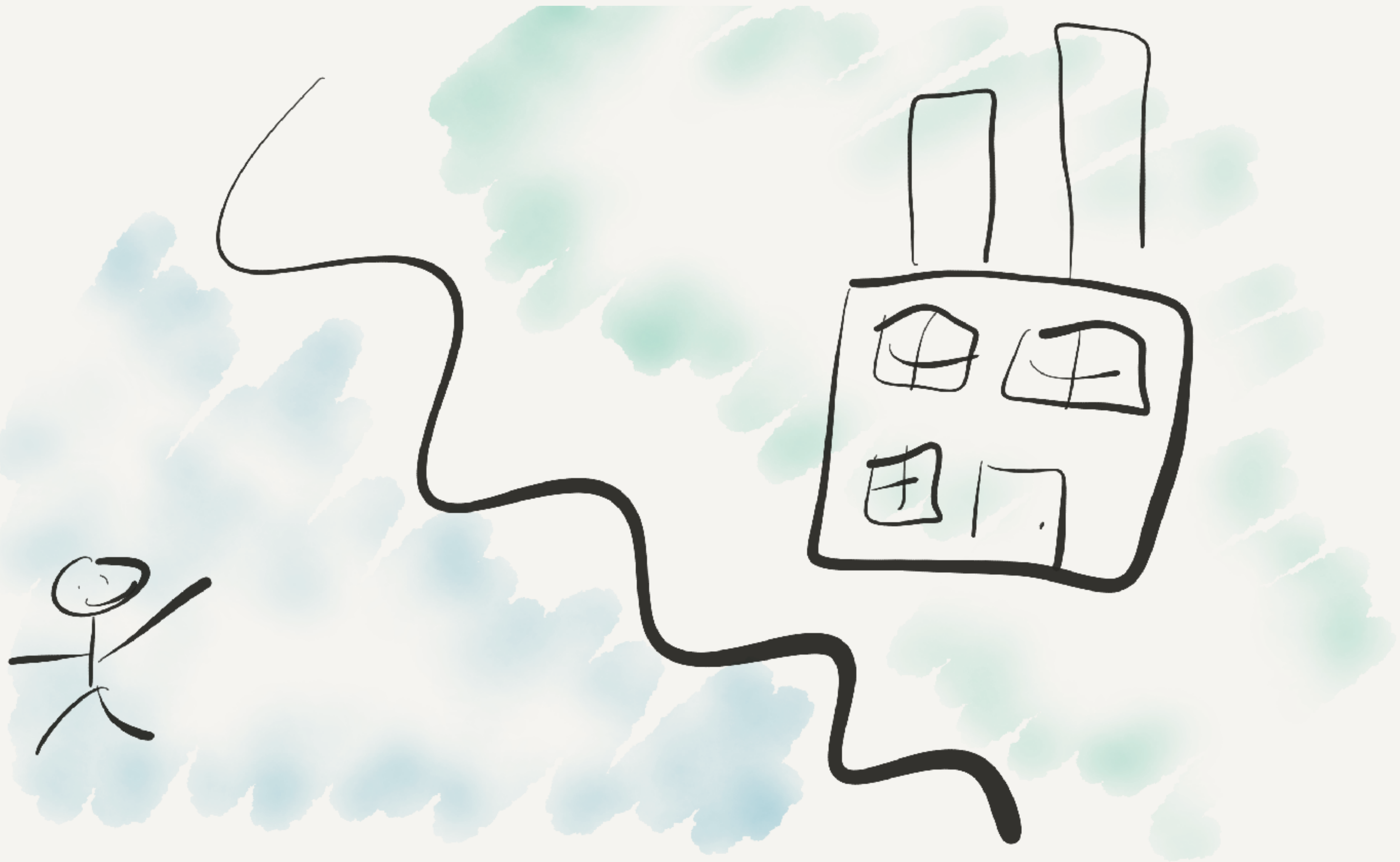
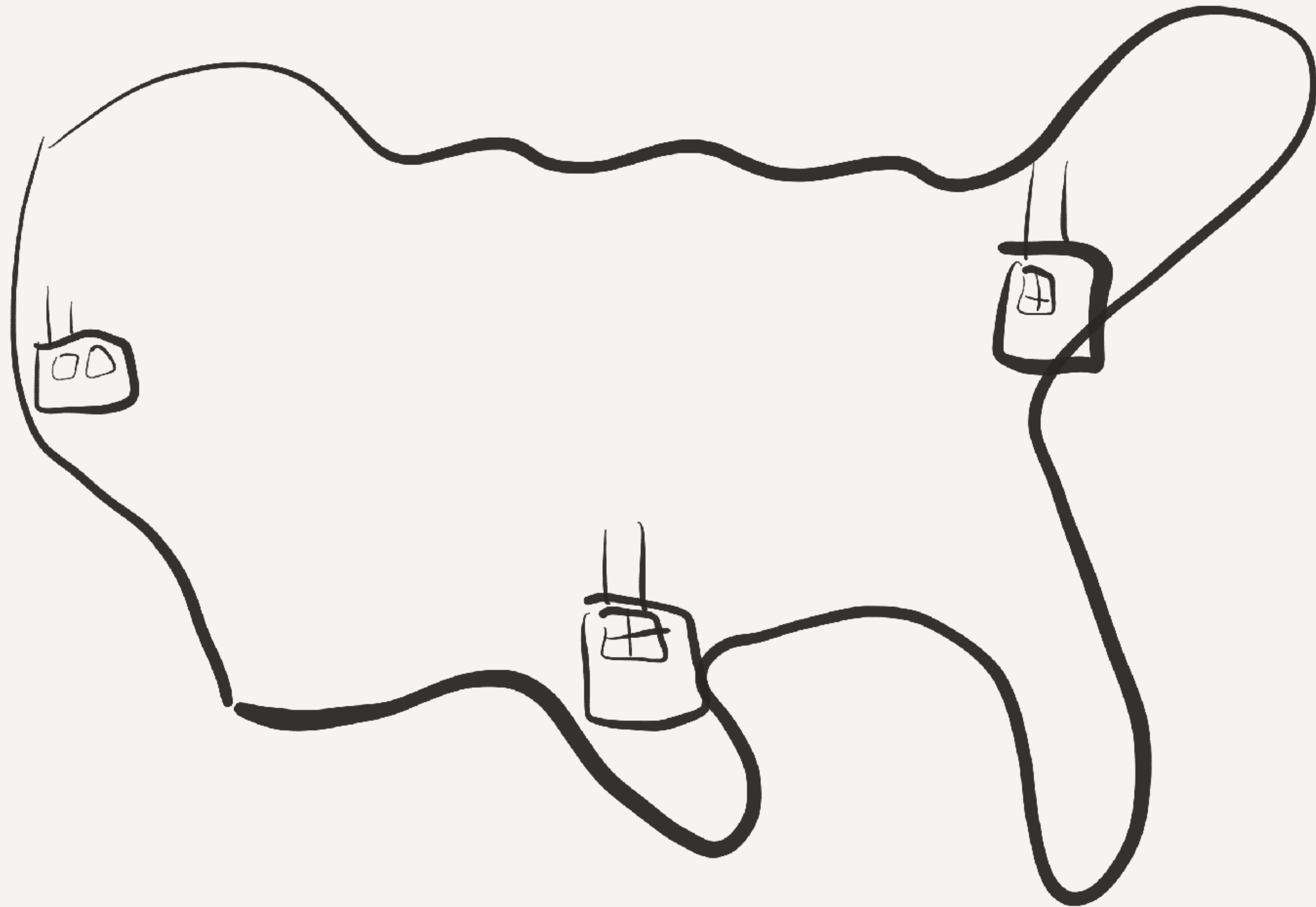- 95 DEVS: MOST WORK DONE REMOTELY

STITCH FIX

WHAT DO WE MEAN "REMOTE"?

"YOU DO NOT OFTEN INTERACT FACE-TO-FACE WITH THE PEOPLE YOU WORK WITH"

WHAT IS "EFFECTIVE"?

PRODUCING VALUE

AGENCY

INCLUSION

REWARDING

YOU DON'T GET THESE FOR FREE BEING CO-LOCATED

BUT THEY ARE HARDER TO ACHIEVE WHEN REMOTE.

IT'S NOT EASY—IT TAKES CONSTANT UPKEEP.

BUT, IT'S WORTH IT.

FREEDOM & FLEXIBILITY

COMPANY HAS ACCESS TO A WIDER POOL OF TALENT

BUILD & MAINTAIN TRUST

"THE HALF-LIFE OF TRUST IS SIX WEEKS"

(IT MUST BE CONSTANTLY REPLENISHED)

http://www.construx.com/10x_Software_Development/
Travel_Restrictions_and_Offshore_Development/

FOUR MINDSETS TO BUILD & MAINTAIN TRUST

COMMUNICATE **FREQUENTLY** & CLEARLY

BE **RESPONSIVE,** BUT SET BOUNDARIES

ASSUME GOOD **INTENTIONS**

HELP OTHERS HELP YOU

BASE LEVEL OF TECHNOLOGY

CHAT SYSTEM THAT'S EASY TO USE

(SO...NOT IRC)

VIDEO CONFERENCE THAT SUPPORTS MULTIPLE PEOPLE

(WEBEX MEETS THIS STANDARD :)

NON-SHITTY MICROPHONE

(YOUR LAPTOP'S MIC IS SHITTY)

OK, BACK TO TRUST

CODING

ASYNCHRONOUS

SYNCHRONOUS

SOCIALIZING

CODING

COMMUNICATE FREQUENTLY & CLEARLY

- TURN BIG PROJECTS INTO **SMALLER ONES**

- **SMALLEST VIABLE CHANGE**

- **WRITE** GREAT CHANGE REQUESTS

- LEARN TO **SCREENCAST**, LEARN TO DIAGRAM

BE RESPONSIVE, BUT SET BOUNDARIES

- PUBLICIZE YOUR WORKING HOURS

- WATCH FOR FEEDBACK...AND RESPOND!

- AVOID SPENDING HOURS HEADS-DOWN—DEVELOP SLAS FOR ALL FORMS OF COMMUNICATION AND RESPONSIVENESS

ASSUME GOOD INTENTIONS

- CODE REVIEW COMMENTS ARE COLD & HARSH

- THE REVIEWER IS JUST TRYING TO HELP

HELP OTHERS HELP YOU

- GO TO CHAT OR VIDEO

- COMMUNICATE HOW THEY COMMUNICATE BEST

- BE **SPECIFIC** IN WHAT FEEDBACK YOU WANT

ASYNCHRONOUS COMMUNICATION

COMMUNICATE FREQUENTLY & CLEARLY

- PROVIDE MORE CONTEXT

- READ WHAT YOU WRITE, LEARN TO REVISE (AT LEAST ONCE!)

- TYPOGRAPHY **Matters**

- LEARN (AGAIN) HOW TO DIAGRAM

BE RESPONSIVE, BUT SET BOUNDARIES

- ENGAGE AND GIVE FEEDBACK

- FEEDBACK LEADS TO AGENCY AND CULTIVATES LEADERSHIP

- DON'T FORGET **AFFIRMING** FEEDBACK!

ASSUME GOOD INTENTIONS

- ASSUME EVERYONE IS GOOD AT THEIR JOB

HELP OTHERS HELP YOU

- BE SPECIFIC IN WHAT FEEDBACK YOU WANT

SYNCHRONOUS COMMUNICATION

COMMUNICATE FREQUENTLY & CLEARLY

- BE PREPARED

- USE **NOUNS** INSTEAD OF PRONOUNS

- **PAUSE** AND ASK FOR FEEDBACK

BE RESPONSIVE, BUT SET BOUNDARIES

- PAY ATTENTION—DON'T MULTITASK

- JUMP IN WHEN YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY—DON'T BE AFRAID TO BACKTRACK

- YIELD THE FLOOR TO OTHERS EXPLICITLY

- DON'T BE A JERK. BE SELF-AWARE AND GET FEEDBACK OFFLINE

ASSUME GOOD INTENTIONS

- NON-REMOTES AREN'T ACCUSTOMED TO THIS

- DON'T FORGET: COMPUTERS ARE TERRIBLE AND NOTHING WORKS

HELP OTHERS HELP YOU

- POINT OUT A/V PROBLEMS, AND BE DIRECTIVE WITH SOLUTIONS

- ESTABLISH AN ALLY OR REGULAR BACKCHANNEL

SOCIALIZING

COMMUNICATE FREQUENTLY & CLEARLY

- MAKE SMALLTALK

- HAVE 1-1'S WITH NO AGENDA

BE RESPONSIVE, BUT SET BOUNDARIES

- ESTABLISH CLEAR TRAVEL EXPECTATIONS

- PUSH YOURSELF TO TRAVEL TO MEET OTHERS IN PERSON

ASSUME GOOD INTENTIONS

- IGNORANCE ISN'T A LACK OF CONSIDERATION

- LEARN TO BE OK MISSING HAPPY HOURS

HELP OTHERS HELP YOU

- SUGGEST WAYS FOR REMOTES TO SOCIALIZE

- ARRANGE FACE TIME OR MEET UPS—BRING YOUR BOSS A PLAN THEY JUST HAVE TO SAY "YES" TO.

TRUST

FOUR MINDSETS TO BUILD & MAINTAIN TRUST

COMMUNICATE **FREQUENTLY** & CLEARLY

BE **RESPONSIVE,** BUT SET BOUNDARIES

ASSUME GOOD **INTENTIONS**

HELP OTHERS HELP YOU

THANKS!

- WORK THIS WAY: MULTITHREADED.STITCHFIX.COM/CAREERS

- CONTACT ME: @DAVETRON5000

  NAILDRIVIN5.COM

- READ MY BOOK ON NON-CODING DEVELOPER LIFE SKILLS: THE SENIOR SOFTWARE ENGINEER: SWENG.ME

DAVID BRYANT COPELAND

The Senior Software
Engineer
A Guide for Making the Most of Your Career