

3 Mistakes I Made as an Engineer, but Had To Become a Manager To See



Ryan Peterman

9 hr ago



I was shocked at how obvious my mistakes as an engineer became after my perspective changed. Taking on manager responsibilities for the first time revealed mistakes I had made as an engineer. Here are the top three things I could only see after becoming a manager.



Things only become clearer with a change in perspective

People problems are as important as “real” problems

Over the years, I've seen several engineers on other teams become less productive and then leave the company because they weren't happy. Each time, I didn't pay attention and stayed focused on my projects.

As a manager, I now have a higher-level view of how everyone is doing. It's much more obvious how people problems affect the team even before anyone decides to leave.

Having motivated, happy teammates is critical to getting things done. For that reason, people problems are just as important as problems with the code itself.

Hiring well is one of the best uses of your time

I always ignored hiring when I was an engineer. It felt like a side hobby compared to shipping projects that had business impact. After hiring 3 engineers last year and seeing the impact they are having, I'm shocked at how wrong I was.

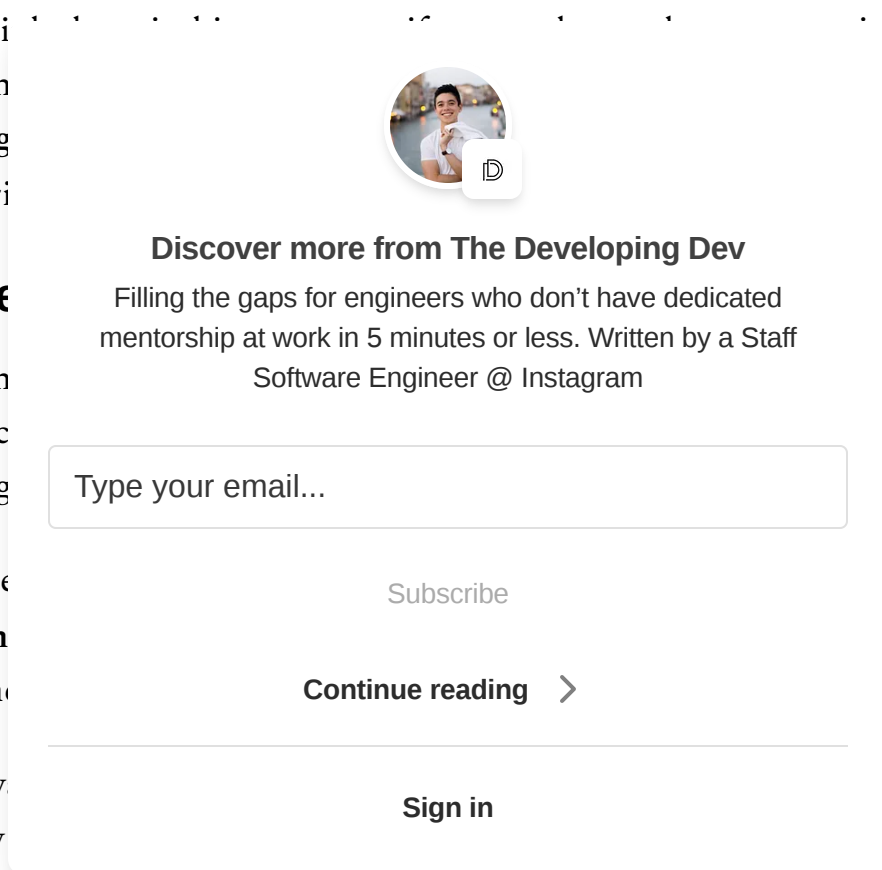
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Junior engineers often focus a little too much on just the code. There are plenty of other areas where a small time investment will go a long way. Learn from my mistakes to get ahead of this.

Over to you: How would you rate yourself when it comes to these? Are you blind like I was?

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Thanks for reading,
Ryan Peterman

3 Comments



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Ivan Huang Writes The Software & Data Spectrum 5 hr ago Liked by **Ryan Peterman**

I've heard from others that it's important to have soft skills (communicating, connecting with others, etc) with technical skills. Just having technical skills really isn't enough to become great.

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1 reply by **Ryan Peterman**



Jack Smith 31 min ago

One mistake I made that I don't make now that I became a business owner is that you always need to ask yourself -- does what I'm doing generate sales and profits or not. Otherwise, why am I doing it in the first place?

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