

Creativity sustains the craft:  
Adventures in pairing with a machine

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Poll

Raise your hand if you have  
had a tool powered by an LLM  
write code for you.

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# 74%

Of developers report that they plan to actively  
upskill in AI-assisted coding tools and technologies

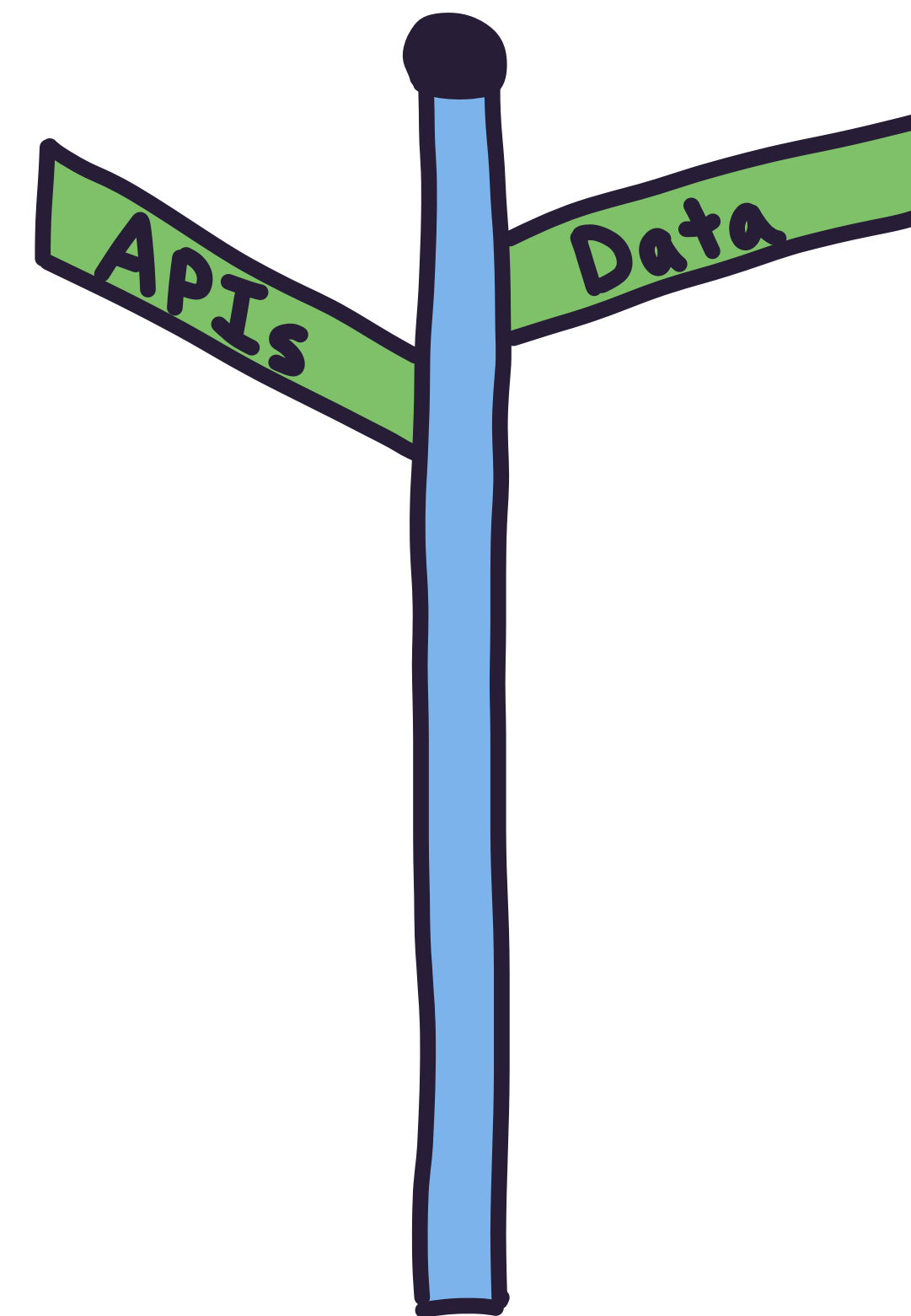
from the Developer Success Lab

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 Hi, I'm Taylor!

Empowering developers to easily  
deploy their ideas to the web

My personal  
work thesis



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# The Struggle

# What is creativity?

"ability to produce work that is both novel (i.e., original, unexpected) and appropriate (i.e., useful, adaptive concerning task constraints)"

- Sternberg and Lubart (1999)

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# Research

Most of the research focuses on generally exercising creative muscles in the context of work.

- Better mood
- Greater life satisfaction
- Lower perceived stress



# Research

## Creativity, Generative AI, and Software Development: A Research Agenda

- Creativity could be a powerful differentiator
- Too much of the research is on productivity
- Explores both the possible risks and benefits
- People are already using it, so we need to understand and help shape it

Creativity



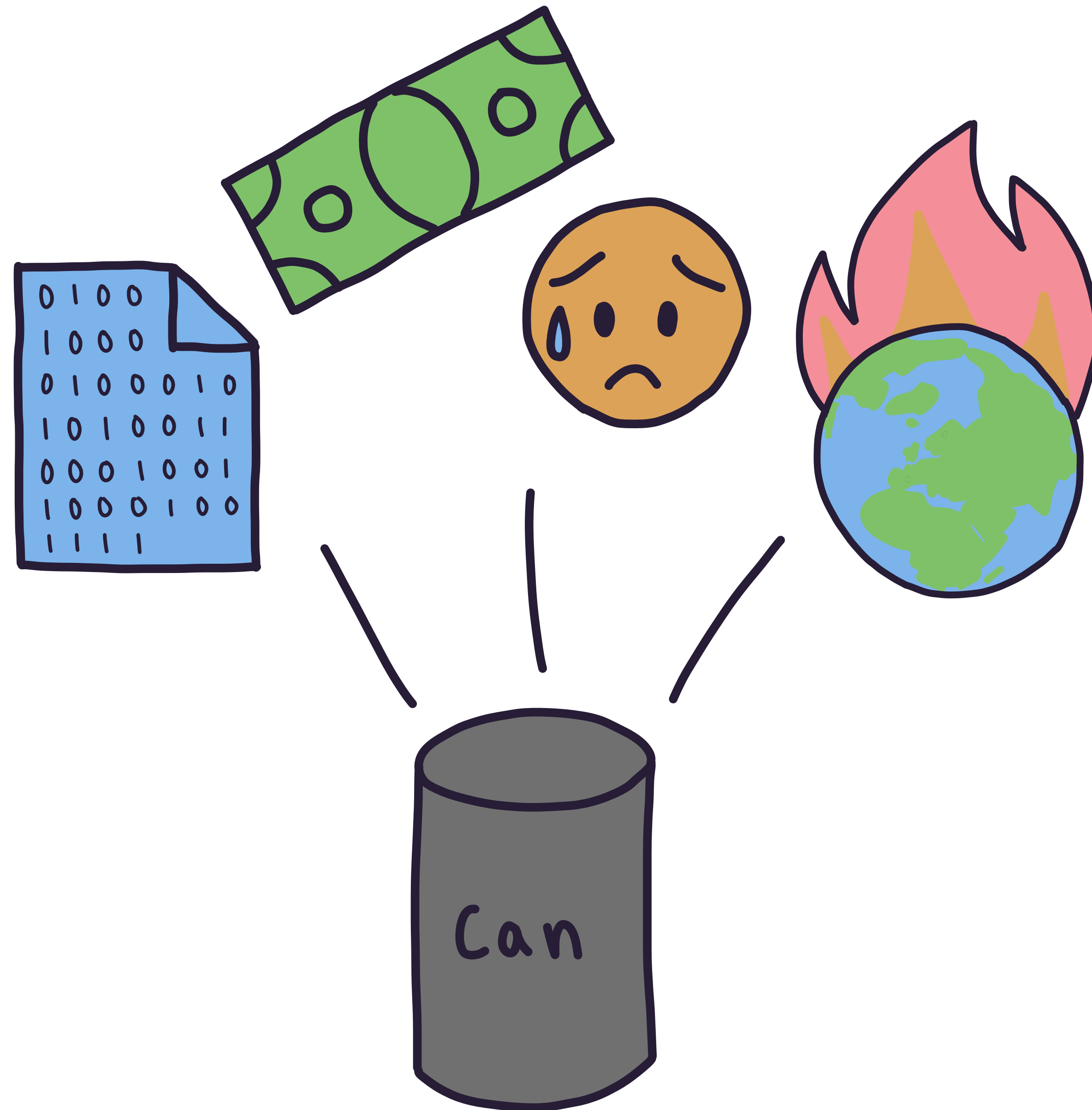
There's a lot  
in here!



Sustainability



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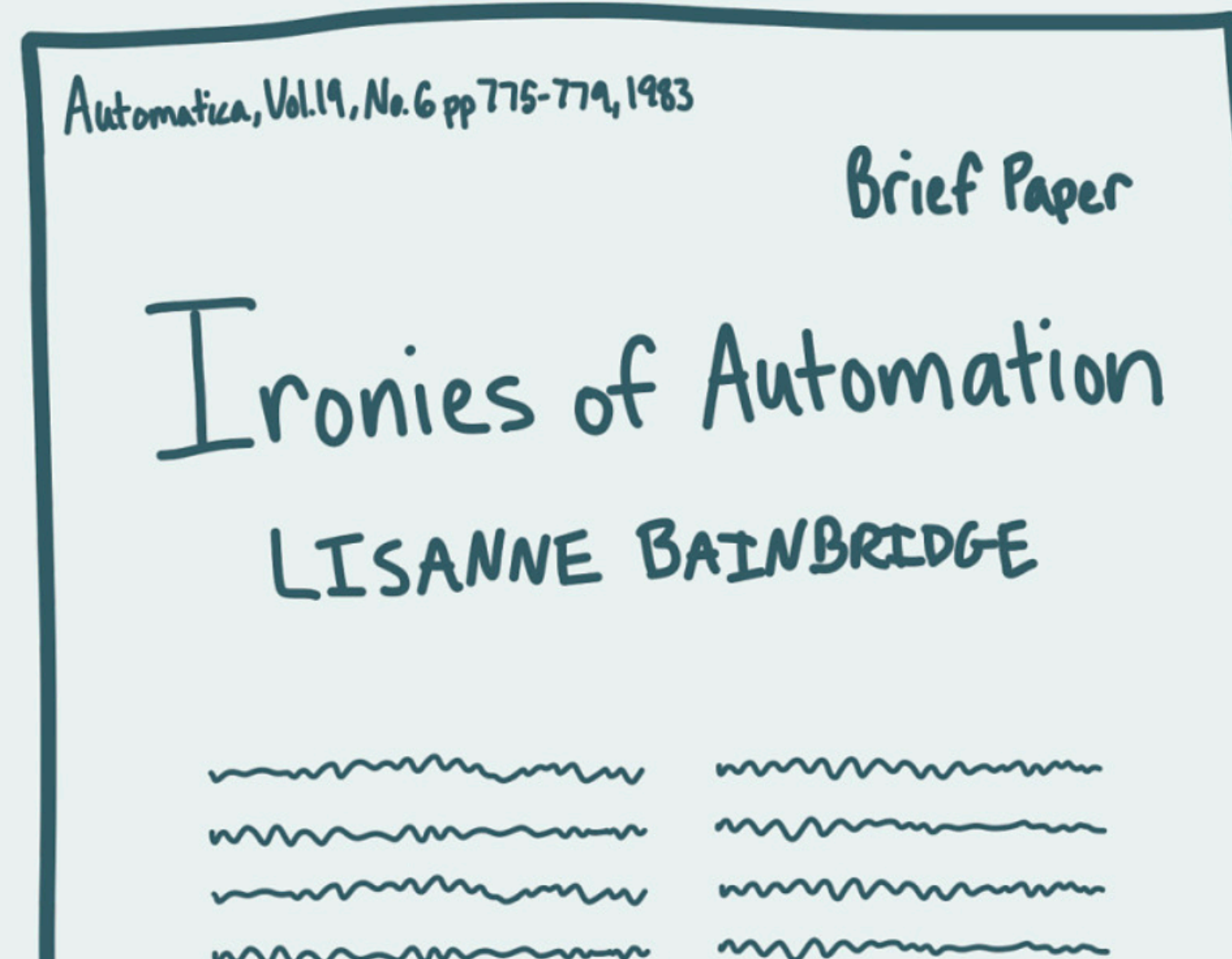
# AI Skill Threat

"When developers fear that those skills that have contributed to their success as code writers may become obsolete, thus threatening their identities as software practitioners" from the Developer Success Lab

45% showed evidence of worry, anxiety, and fear about whether they could succeed in this era with their current technical skill set



"This paper suggests that the increased interest in human factors among engineers reflects the irony that the more advanced a control system is, so the more crucial may be the contribution of the human operator."



The good,  
the bad,  
the ugly

# My experiences with AI-assisted programming

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# Examples

- Pyenv example
- Work with sitemaps, Google Analytics
- Testing JS framework features
- Little goofy games
- iNaturalist API fun sites
- Custom alt text generator
- Random data exploratory sites
- Patio weather site
- lly → Astro site migration
- Custom garden planner



This is not vibe coding.\*

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→ This is a  
blank page.

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More ambitious projects > "one shot" party tricks

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There is always room for humans

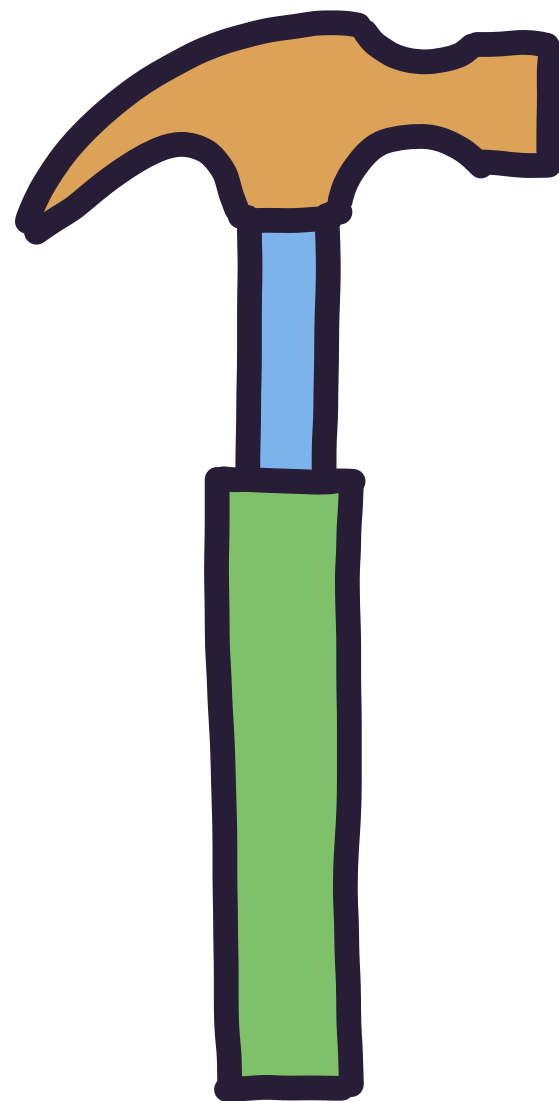
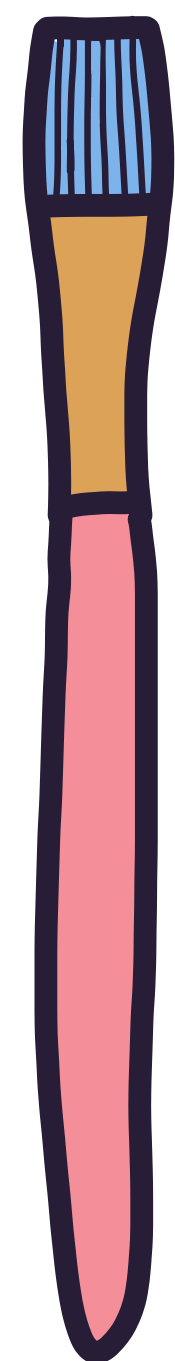
What I'm hearing:

"the tools act like junior developers"

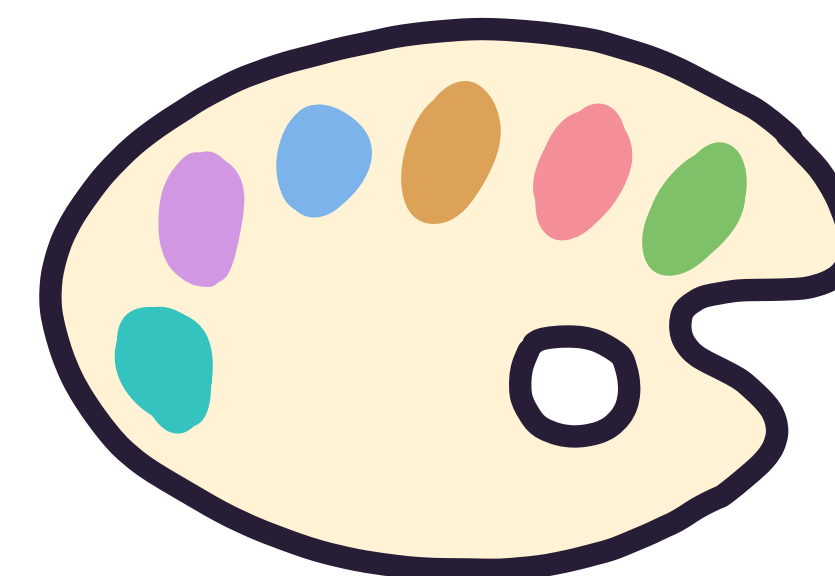
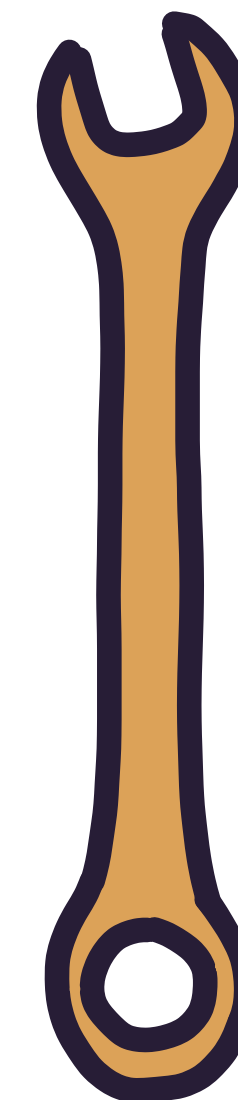
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0 to 1000, but less 1000 to 1M+

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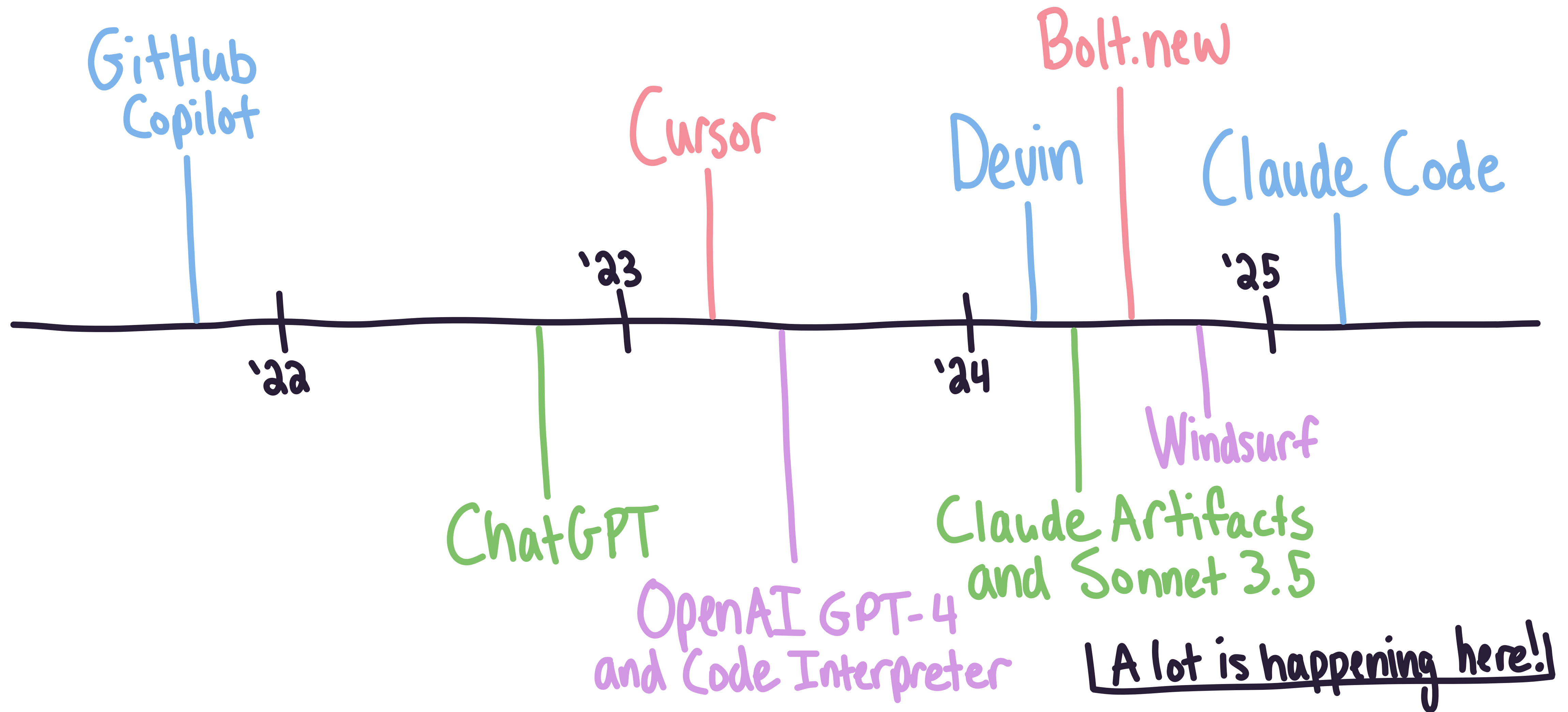


# Tools



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# Bolt.new

**bolt**



New! Introducing Figma to Bolt

## What do you want to build?

Prompt, run, edit, and deploy full-stack **web** and **mobile** apps.

How can Bolt help you today?



Import from Figma

Build a mobile app with Expo

Start a blog with Astro

Create a docs site with Vitepress

Scaffold UI with shadcn

Draft a presentation with Slidev

or start a blank app with your favorite stack



# Windsurf

Explorer

new-website

> \_data

> \_includes

> admin

> pages

> posts

> speaking

> static

JS .eleventy.js

.eleventyignore

.gitignore

.nvmrc

404.md

favicon.ico

LICENSE

netlify.toml

package.json

README.md

robots.njk

tags.njk

yarn.lock

> Outline

> Timeline

## Windsurf

### Getting started with Windsurf

☒ Code with Cascade

⌘

L

☐ Open Command Palette

⇧

⌘

P

50% done

Change keybindings

Code with Cascade

⌘

L

Edit code inline

⌘

I

Cascade | Write mode (⌘.)

+

↺

⋮

×

### Write with Cascade

Kick off a new project or make changes across your entire codebase

I would like to add an email newsletter subscription form to the top of the blog index page. I want it to be powere|

Write

Chat

⋮

Claude 3.7 Sonnet

⌵

?

@

Image

> 0 available MCP servers

?

Configure MCP

#### Past Conversations

Adding Newsletter Subscription Form

9s

I want to add a new feature to this existing website. I want ...

2m

Tell me about this website.

3m

Show 6 more...

AI may make mistakes. Double-check all generated code.

<<

main

↺

0

0

0

Teams Ultimate

Windsurf - Settings



# Windsurf

The screenshot displays a web development environment with three main panels:

- File Explorer (Left):** Shows a project structure with folders like `_data`, `_includes`, `assets`, `components`, `layouts`, `_site`, `admin`, `node_modules`, `pages`, `posts`, `speaking`, `static`, and files like `.eleventy.js`, `.eleventyignore`, `.gitignore`, `.nvmrc`, `404.md`, `favicon.ico`, `LICENSE`, `netlify.toml`, `package-lock.json`, `package.json`, `README.md`, `robots.njk`, and `taas.njk`.
- Code Editor (Center):** Displays the content of `inline.js` within the `assets > js` directory. The code includes:
  - Initialization of `netlifyIdentity` with an `init` event listener.
  - A `login` event listener that sets `document.location.href` to `"/admin/"` when triggered.
  - Newsletter form handling using `document.addEventListener('DOMContentLoaded')` to select the form, validate it, and prevent default submission.
  - Form data collection and email retrieval.
  - A comment `// Show loading state`.
- Terminal (Bottom):** Shows the output of Eleventy commands, including file writing progress and a final summary: `[11ty] Copied 45 files / Wrote 60 files in 0.31 seconds (5.2ms each, v2.0.1)`.

On the right side of the image, there are three code blocks with 'Copy' and 'Insert' buttons, containing terminal commands:

```
npm run watch
```

or directly with npx:

```
npx eleventy --serve
```

2. Build the site for production:

```
npm run build
```

or directly with npx:

```
npx eleventy
```

Below these blocks, there is explanatory text and a chat interface:

Based on the package.json file I examined, the `watch` script will start Eleventy in watch mode, which will rebuild the site when files change. If you add the `--serve` flag (which isn't in the default scripts), it will also start a local development server.

Once the server is running, you should be able to access your site at `http://localhost:8080` (the default Eleventy port). There, you'll be able to see the blog page with the new newsletter subscription form we added at the top.

Would you like me to help you with anything else regarding the newsletter form or running the site?

Done

Ask anything (⌘L), @ to mention code blocks

Write Chat ... Claude 3.7 Sonnet

Other tools I've found interesting:

- Claude Code
- Cursor
- GitHub Copilot update
- Cline (Apache 2.0)

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## General tips:

- Bad prompts → Less good code out
- Testing - functionality and performance
- Ask for example code, prototypes, and options
- Model choice, but also limits, cutoff dates, and costs

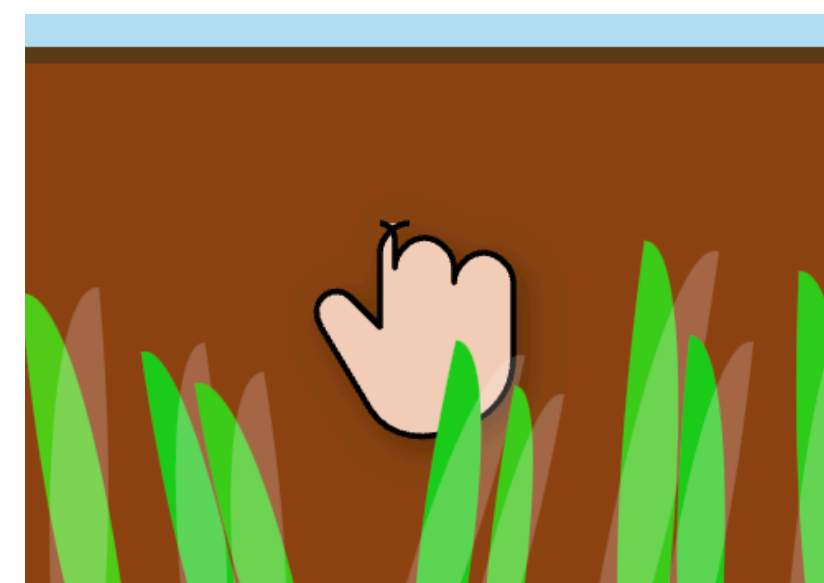
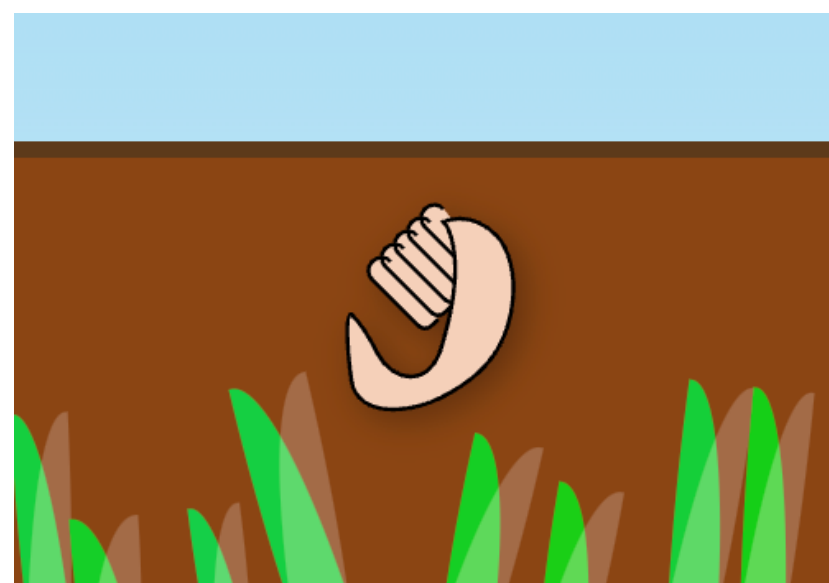
Where they struggle



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# Hands!



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UX  
DX  
AX

What is Agent Experience?

Holistic experience AI agents have when interacting with a product, platform, or system

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As you go through these tools you  
start seeing the AX opportunities everywhere

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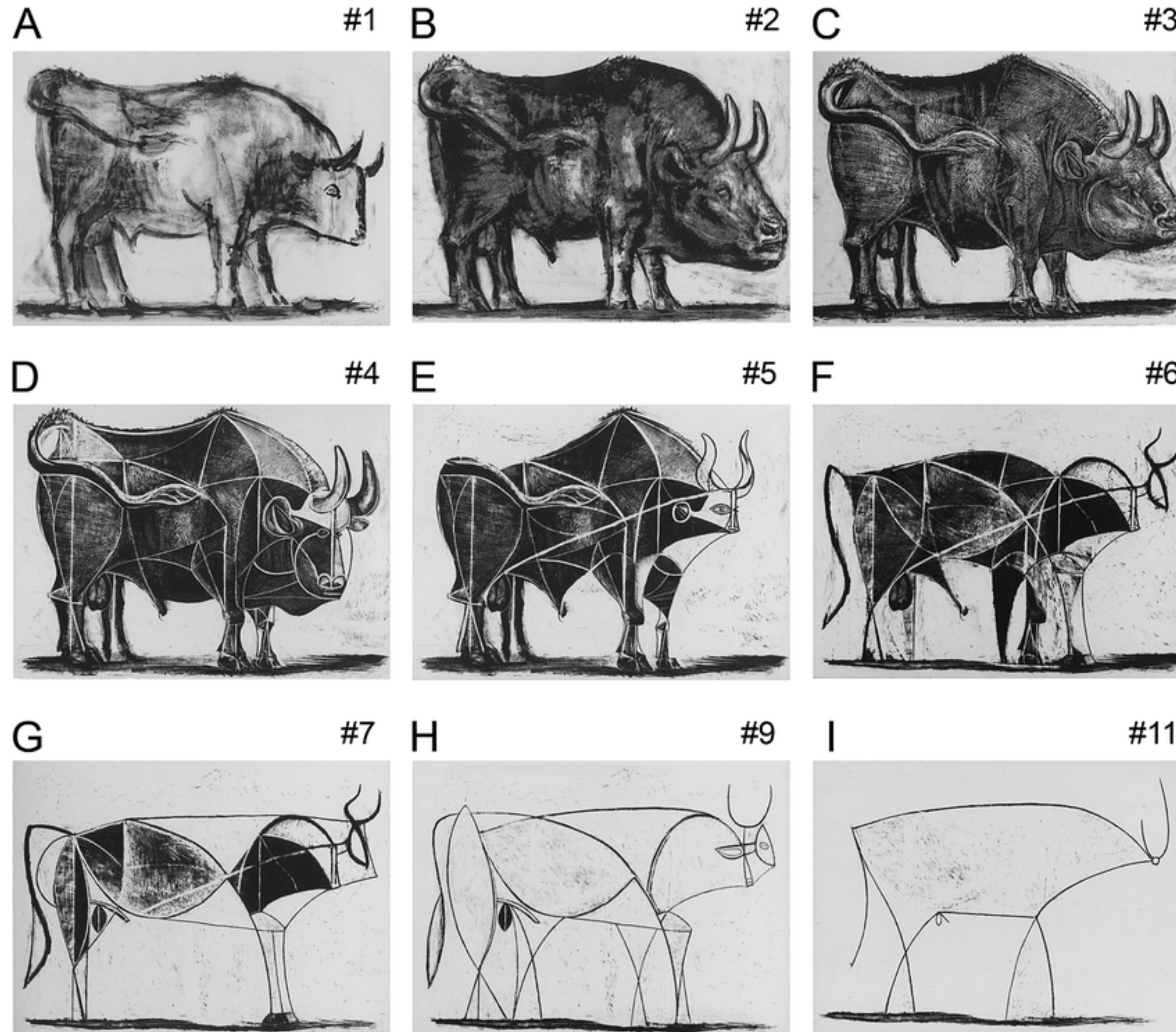


New skills? Time?



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Many of the skills that developers already have:

- Able to understand code quality
- Security best practices
- How to scale and low level systems engineering
- How to debug and with AI tooling
- What are the "right" questions, and how to "poke" holes
- Collaboration skills
- How to create learning cultures

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# Other technical skills\*:

- What should you build?
- Can you articulate what you want to build?
- Can you scale it?

\*that are sometimes not called "technical"

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Go try them out!

If AX is something you are  
working on, let me know!

And remember...

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Make time to touch grass.

Resources

Coming  
soon! ↙

agentexperience.ax

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