Remote control?

How to organize work in Corona times and what we can learn from Open Source communities

FrOSCon, August 23, 2020

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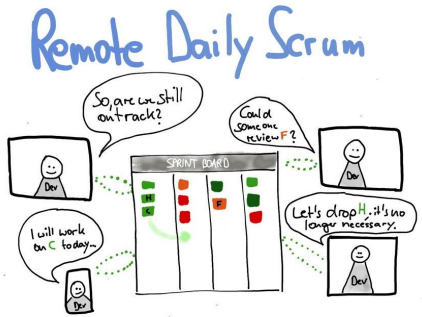
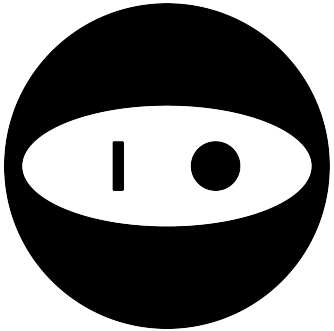
eye/o

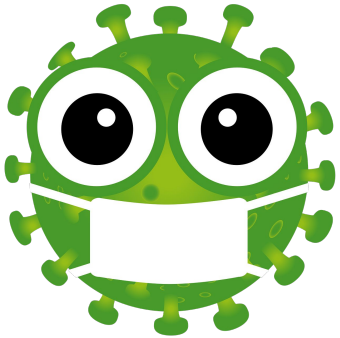
Remote collaboration in Open Source communities



Remote in companies - similarities and differences



Examples from a hybrid approach - pre-Corona



How to organize remote work in a global pandemic

Remote collaboration in Open Source communities

Developing software as an Open Source project requires the ability to involve any contributor irrespective of their

→ location,

→ timezone,

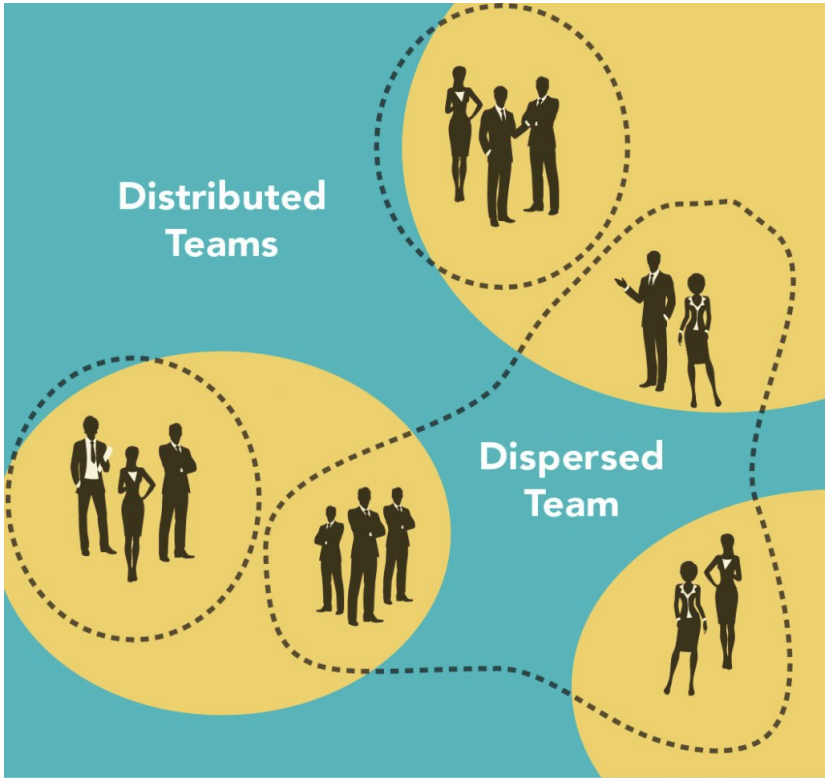
→ or working hours.

- Asynchronous
- Written
- Volunteers
- Tooling for collaboration and communication
- Yearly conferences
- Regular local user groups

“Doing remote” in companies

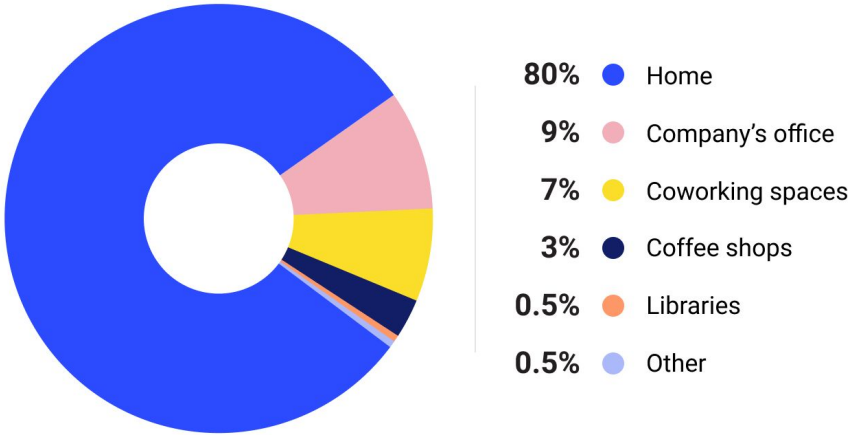
Varieties of remote work

Distributed vs. Dispersed



Varieties of remote work

Fully remote vs. Sometimes



Varieties of remote work

Settlers vs. Digital Nomads

Varieties of remote work

Fully-remote

Remote-first

Remote-friendly

Remote by default

Hybrid

Cool

Best talent

Diversity

Family-friendly

Inclusive

Eco-friendly

Cool

Best talent

Diversity

Family-friendly

Inclusive

Eco-friendly

Sucks

Remote to the team

Timezones

Crappy connection

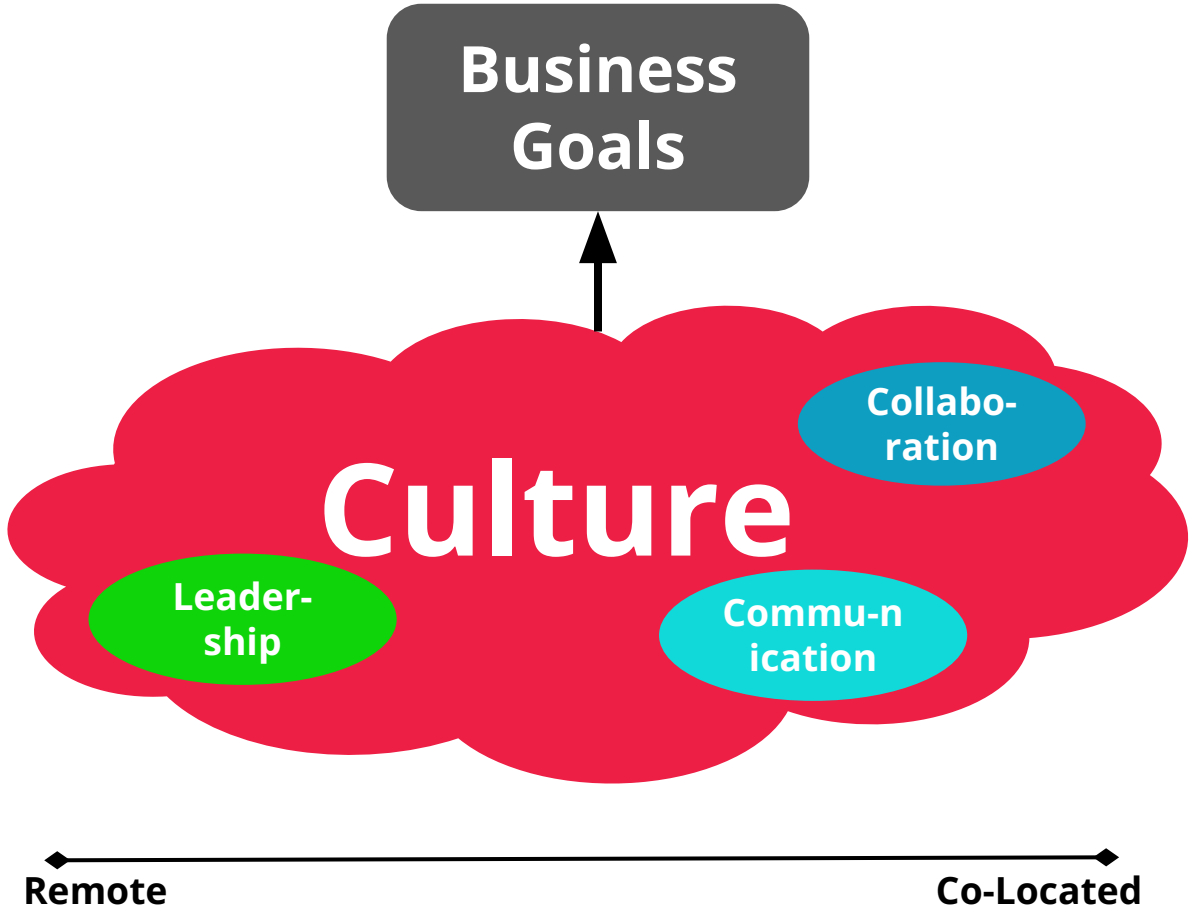
Conference calls

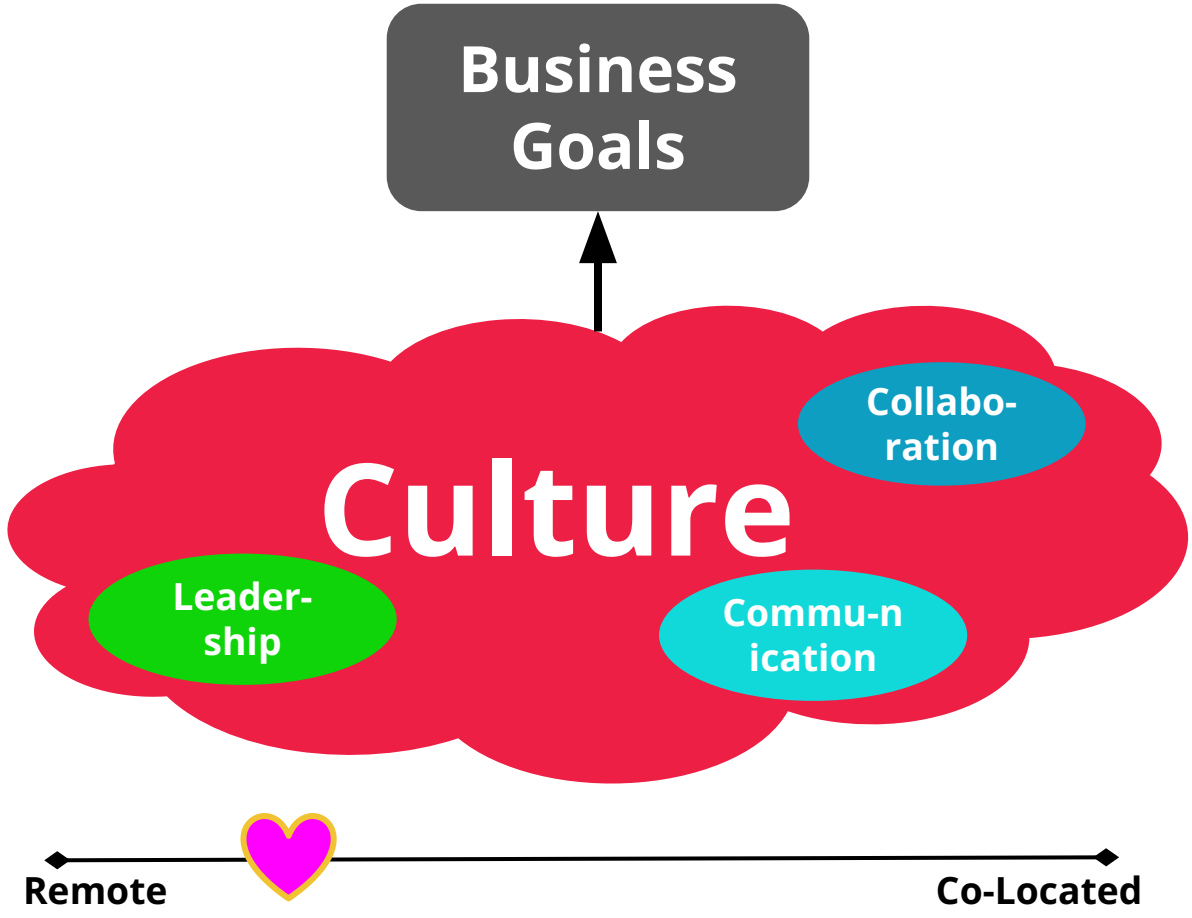
Loneliness

Why remote

- Global talent pool
- Lower salaries
- Mergers and acquisitions
- Closer to customers
- Diverse teams
- Happy workforce

Remote
Strategy


Business Goals
Culture
Collabo-ration
Leader-ship
Commu-nication
Remote
Co-Located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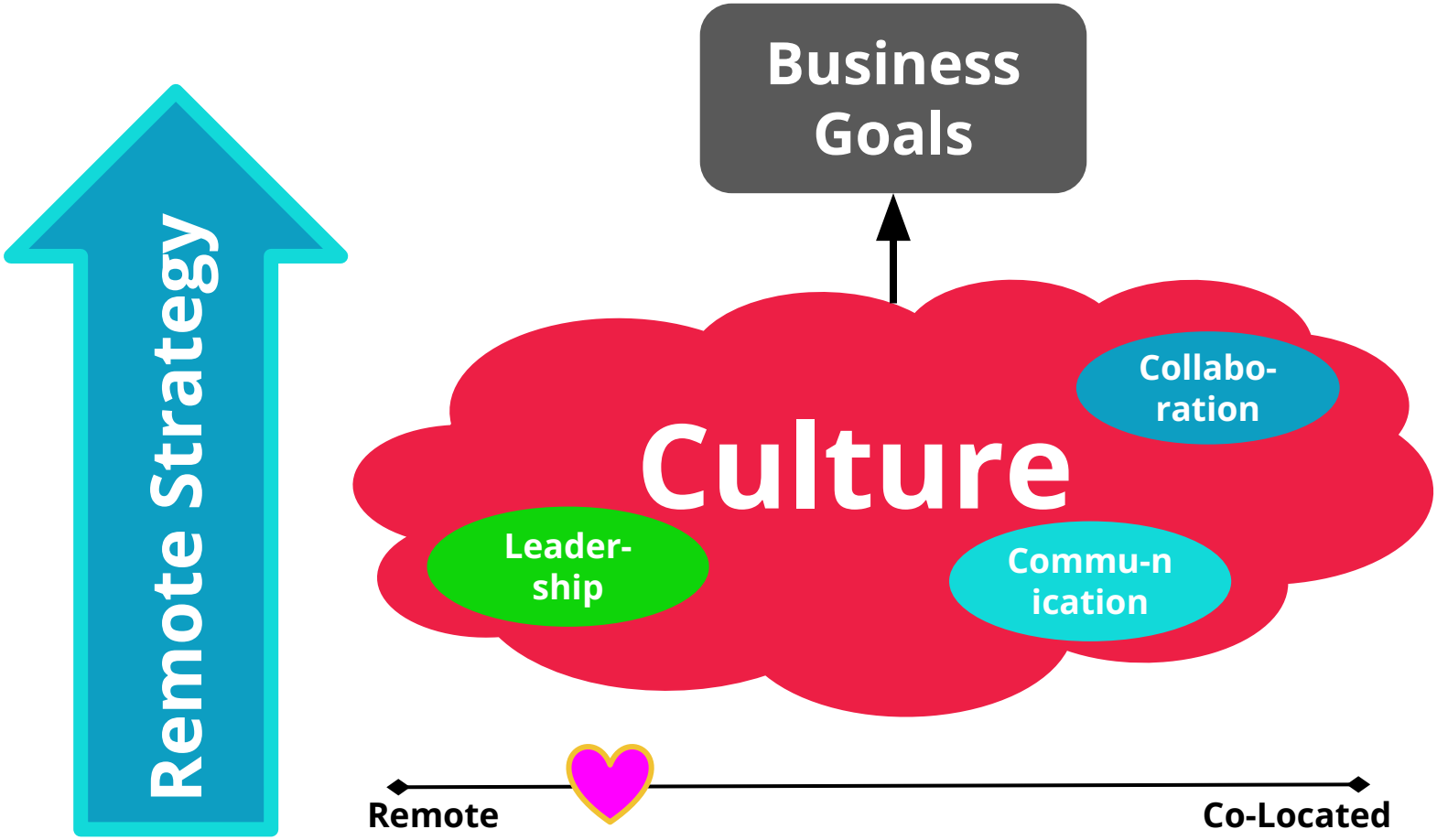

Business Goals
Remote Strategy
Culture
Collabo-ration
Leader-ship
Commu-n ication
Remote
Co-Located

- Hiring strategy
- Onboarding strategy
- Education and training
- Communication policies
- Team building
- Tooling (→ Privacy!)
- Remote facilitation
- Workplace experience

Remote strategy of Open Source communities

- Hiring strategy → Worldwide
- Onboarding strategy → RTFM
- Education and training → Code review, code sprints
- Communication policies → Netiquette, Code of Conduct
- Team building → Conferences, User groups
- Tooling (→ Privacy!) → Git{Hub,Lab}, mailing lists…
- Remote facilitation → Async communication

Examples from a hybrid approach - pre-Corona

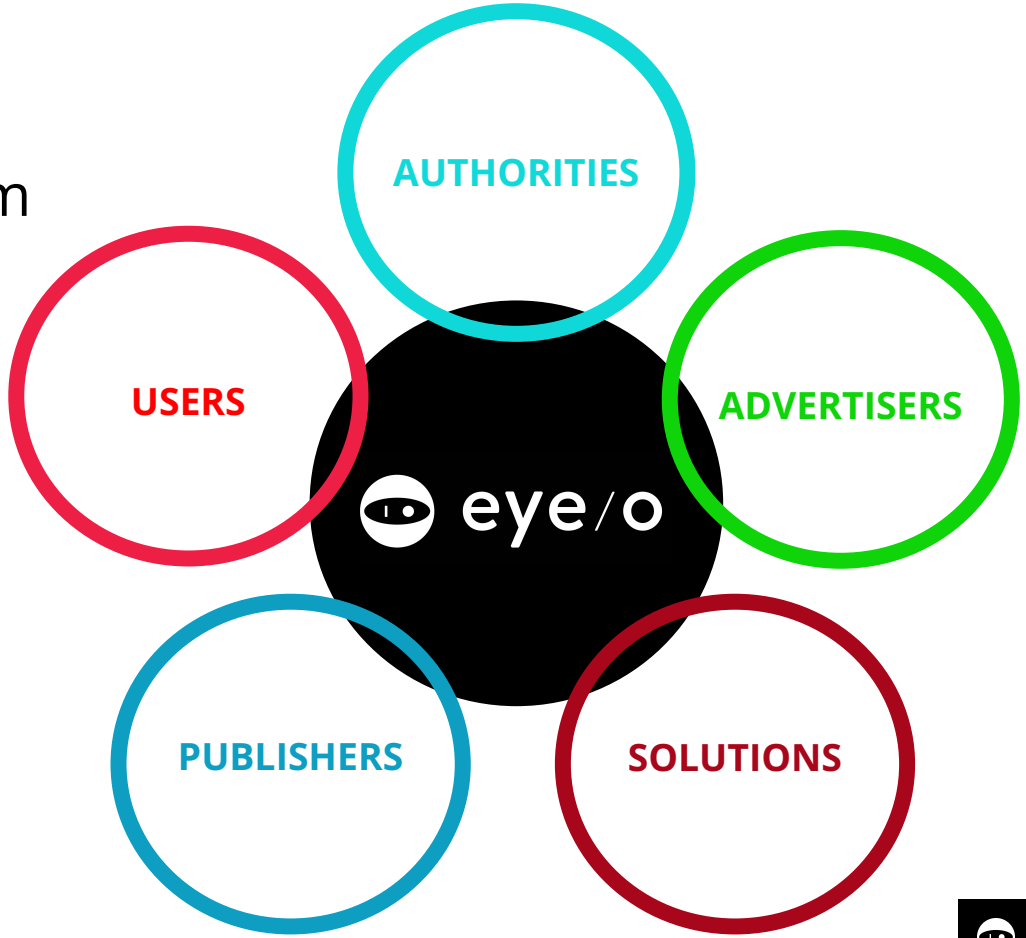
eyeo… Who?

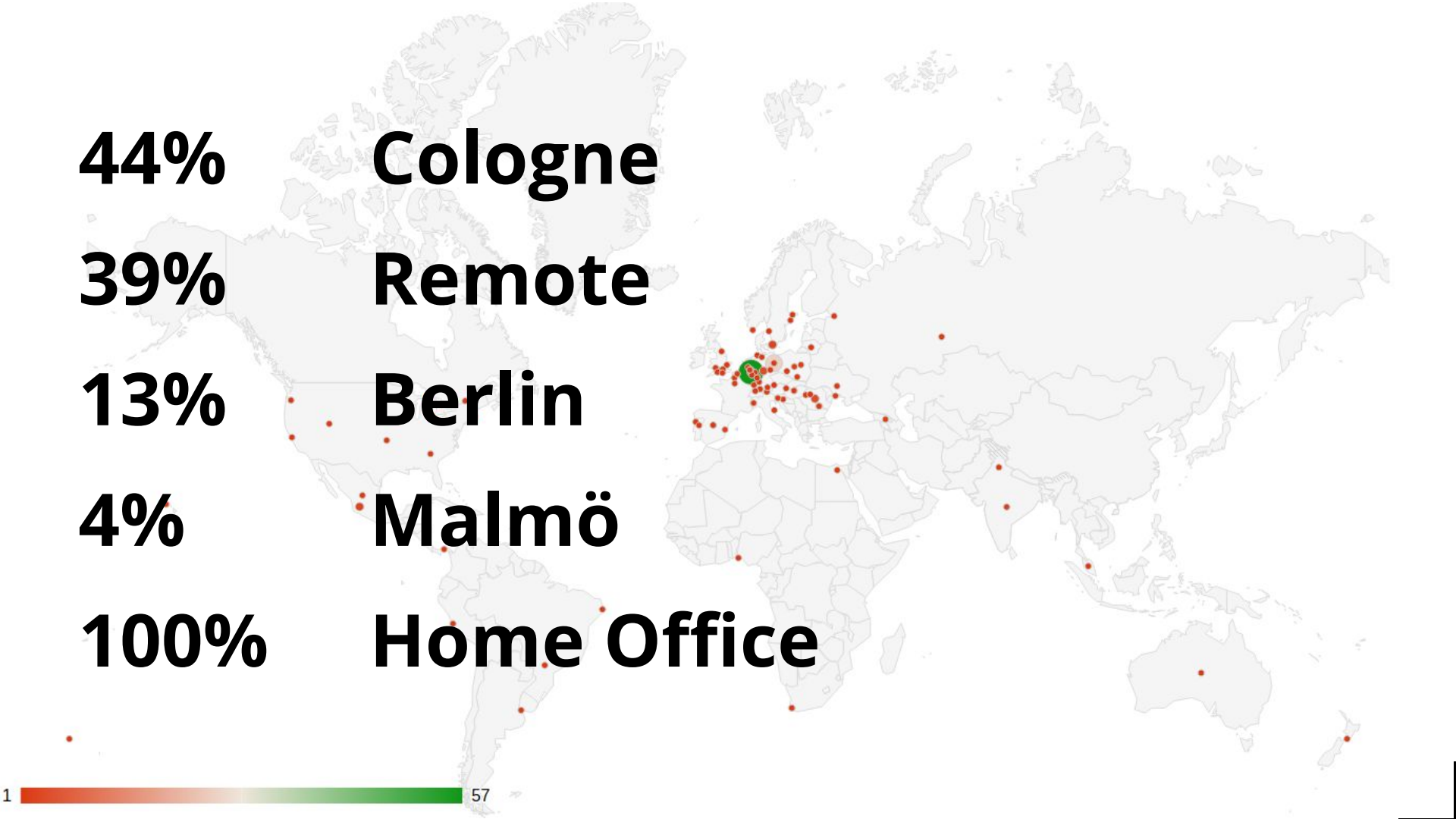
Open source

Most popular browser extension **worldwide**

#1 ad blocker

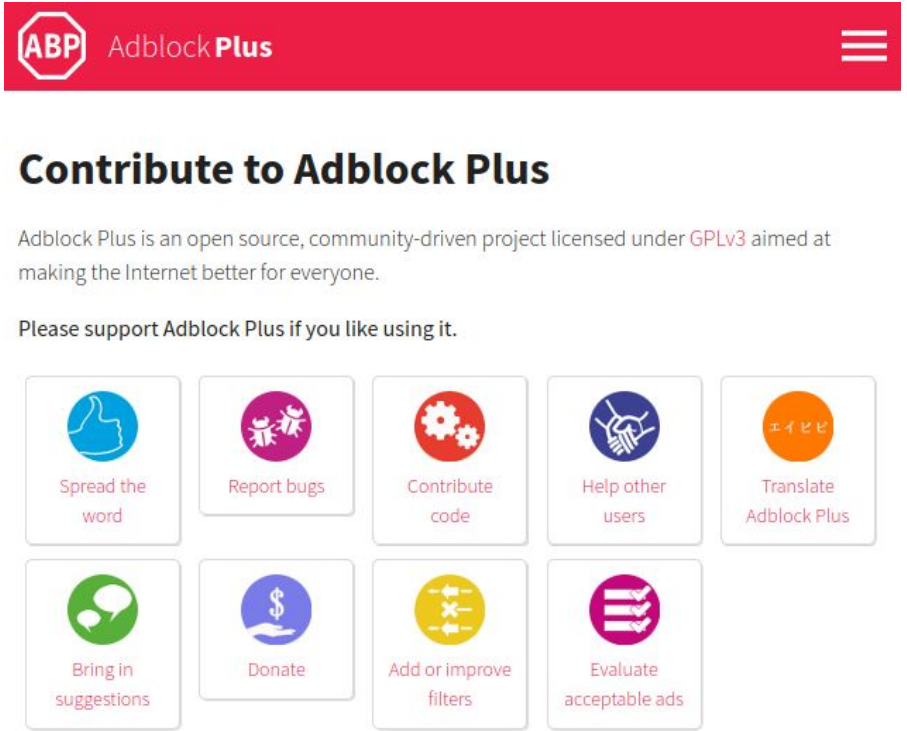
We create a
sustainable and fair ecosystem
by building, monetizing
and distributing
ad blocking technologies
for everyone and everything
online.




44% Cologne
39% Remote
13% Berlin
4% Malmö
100% Home Office
1
57

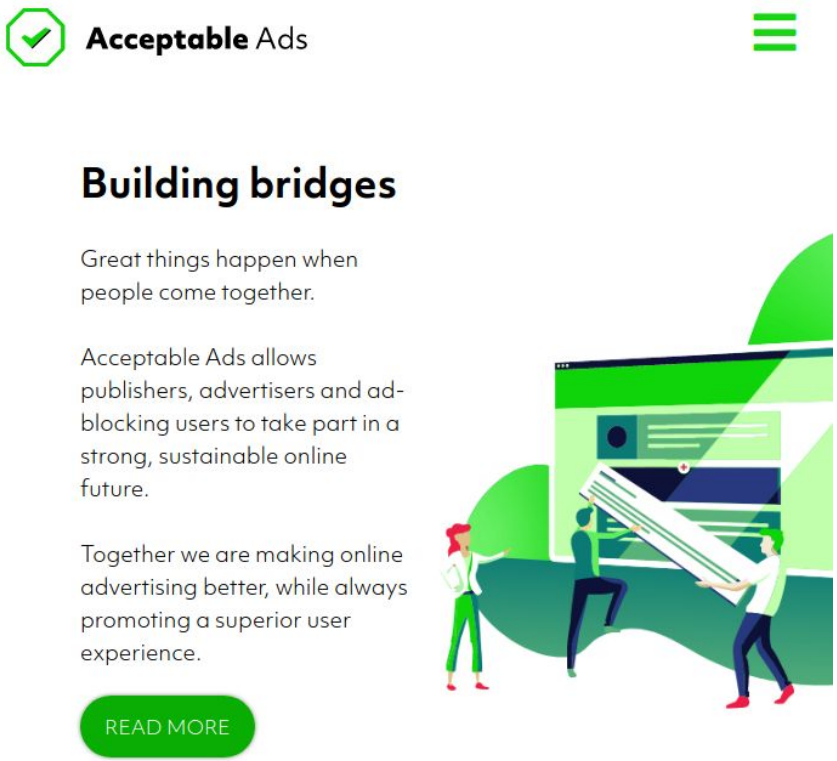
Remote at eyeo - “Open Source heritage”

- Public asynchronous written communication
- Public documentation
- Public work tracking
- Individual working hours
- Free choice of topics to work on



Clash of cultures - Building a for-profit business on an Open Source project

- Public tooling vs Business confidentiality
- Long waiting times vs Agile flow
- Individualism vs Team work



eyeo's Remote Strategy

Remote Fitness

Tooling

Workplace experience

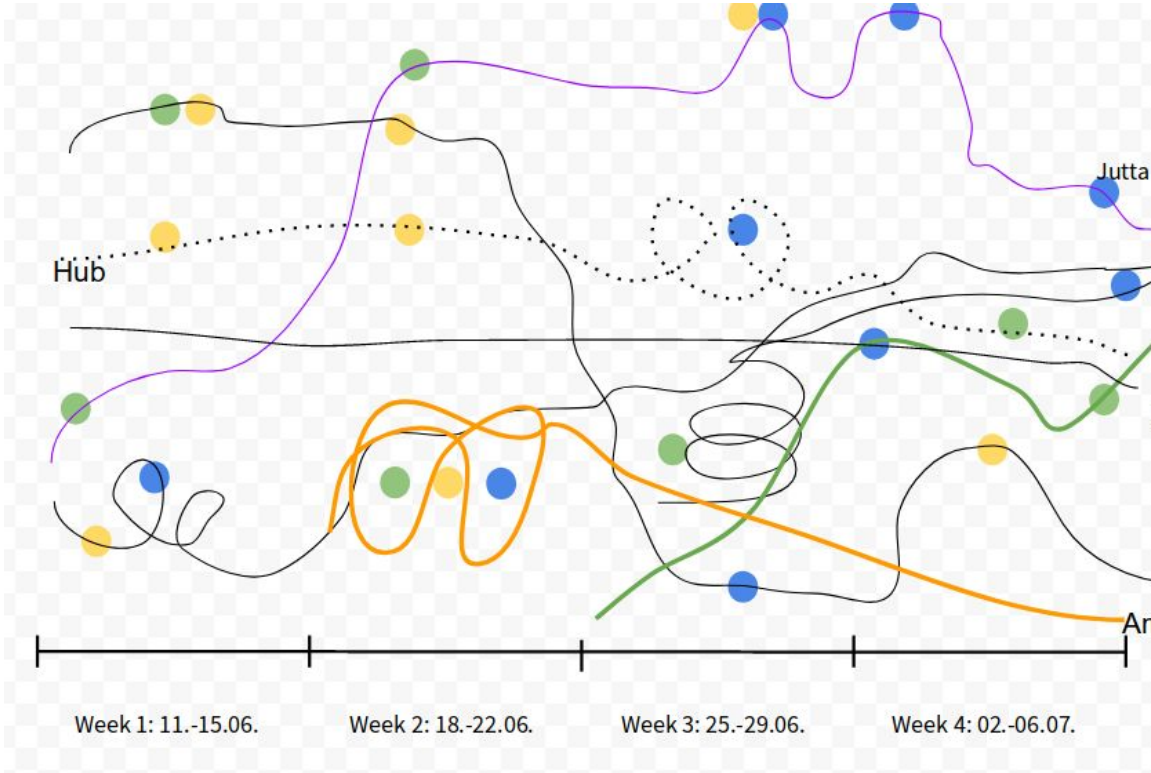
Trust building

Remote Fitness

Tooling

Studio
Kitchen
Lobby
Breakout Room
North Sector
Conference Room
Caroline
Jenny
Jon
Jane
Devin
Travis
West Wing
Brian
Emma
Breakout 1
Library
Laura
Scott
The Flats
Josue
Rachael
Homebase
Megan
Joe
The Core
Chill Zone
Creative
Breakout 2
Breakout 3
Coffee Break
Silent Den
Open Space
Gene
Steph
Tyler
Aaron
Tom
Ryan
Rec Room
Adrienne
Al
Eric
Media Lab
The Loft
Focus Room

Trust Building



Workplace Experience

How to organize remote work in a global pandemic

What happened

- End of Feb: 1st encounter with infected person
- March 7: Closing Cologne office
- March 14: Closing all offices; Travel ban
- Lockdowns and curfews
- Schools and kindergartens closed
- 12 people quarantined, 3 positive
- All in-person company and team events canceled

Crisis management

Goal:

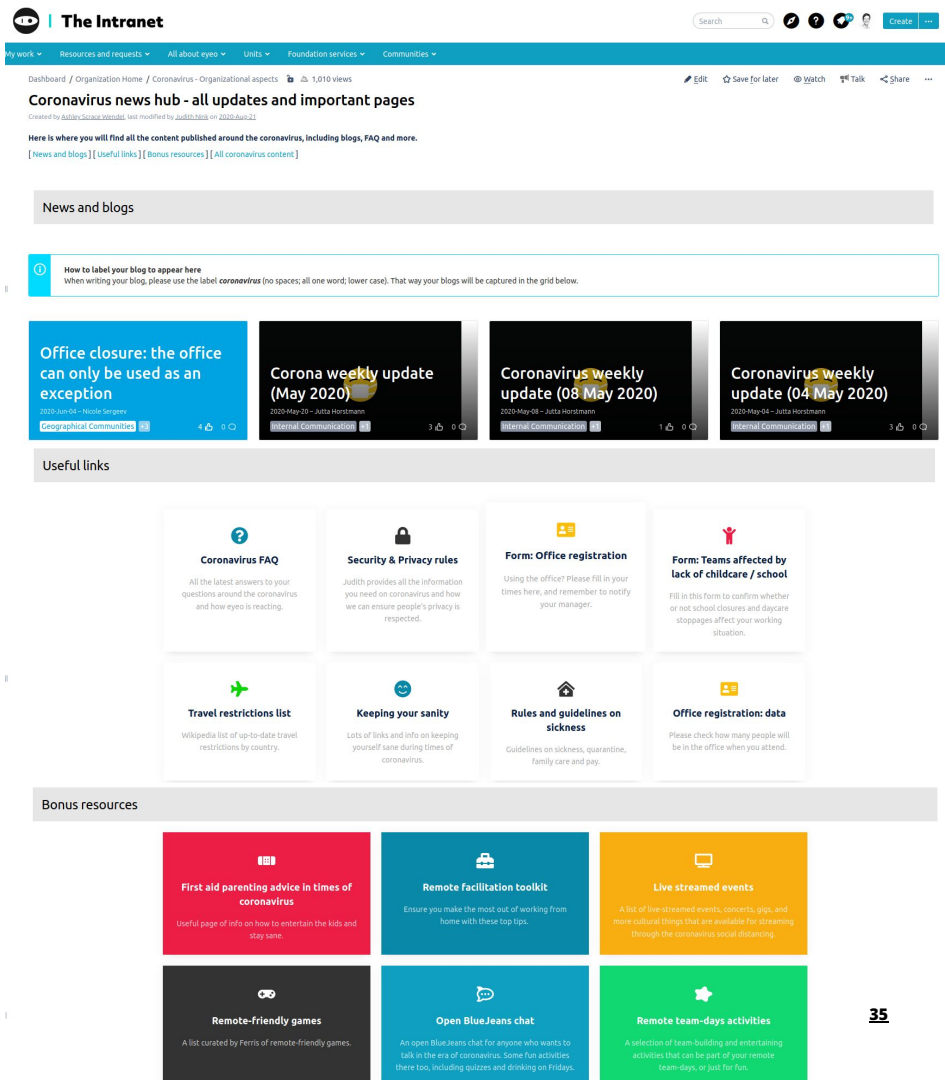
Keep everybody safe

Keep productivity up

1. Set up Corona Task Force
2. Set up communication and information channels
3. Set everybody up for “new normal”
4. Create emergency plans
5. Learn & improve

Communication

- Mailings
- Intranet: Weekly updates
- Corona News Hub
- FAQ
- #coronavirus Channel
- AllHands presentations

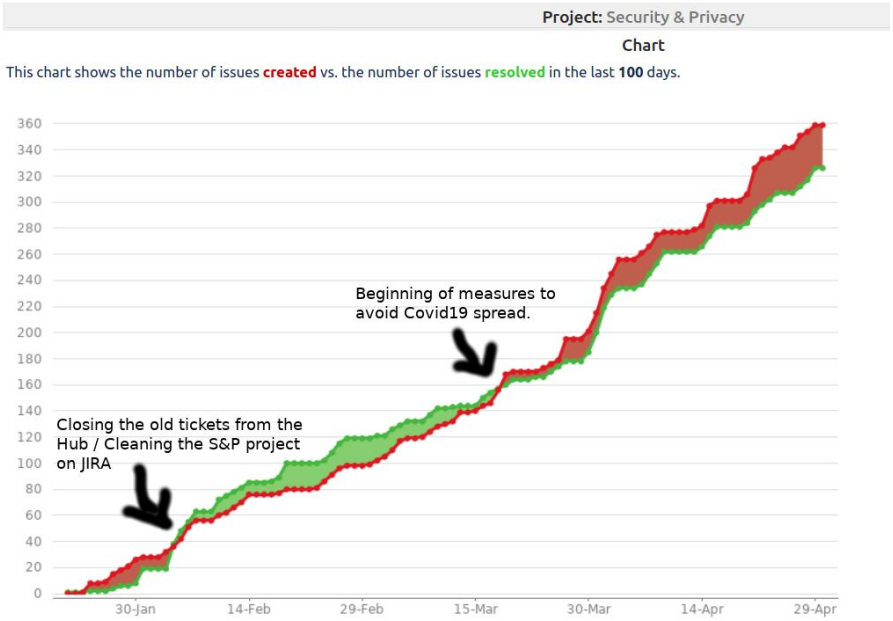


Set everybody up for “new normal”

- 2 Corona Community days
- Get equipment from the offices
- 100€ extra office allowance
- Ensure tools’ scalability
- Corona Family Care

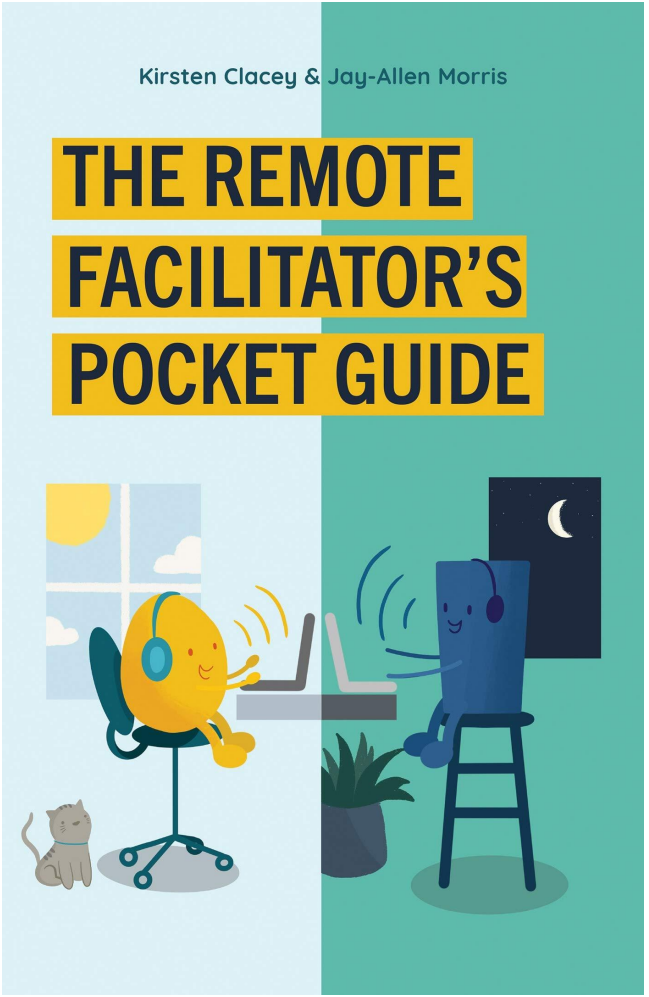
Improve tooling

- Video call: More connections
- Ensure scalability and stability
- 24/7 helpdesk
- Better chat tool: Mattermost
- Whiteboard / flipchart tool: Mural
- Games
- Security & Privacy!



Ensure team collaboration

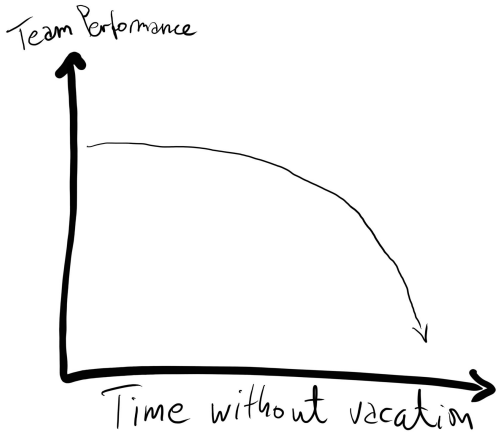
- Daily in-person standups
- Team agreements
- Remote facilitation trainings
- Remote team days

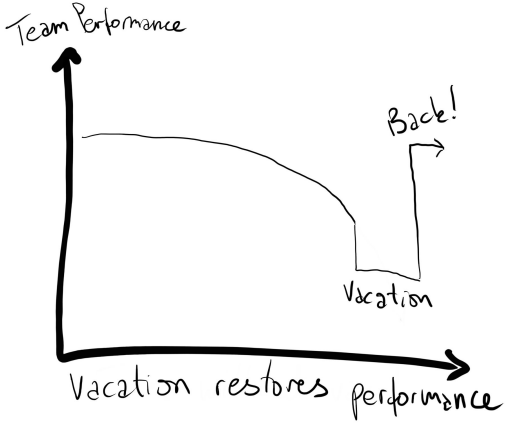


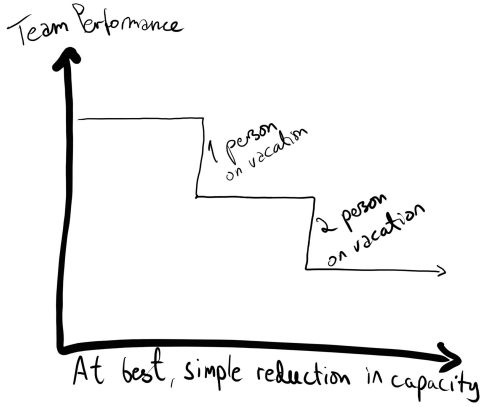
Keep us together as a company

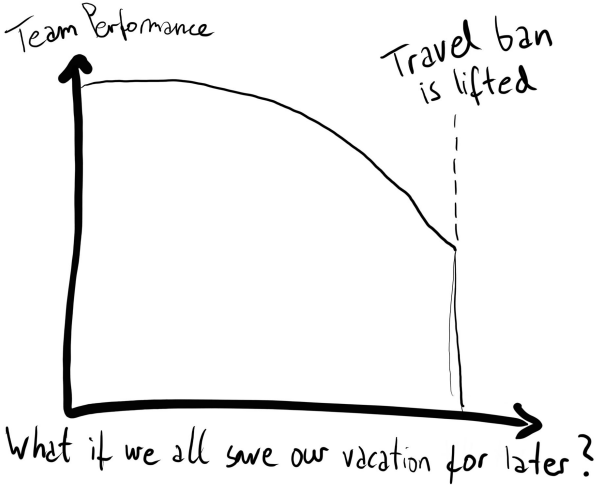
- #coronavirus channel
- Blogs
- Always-on video call
- Virtual drinks
- Online lunches / games
- Cross-company “Summer week”
- Cross-company “Hackathon”
- “Happy Hour” for serendipity

Vacation / Staycation

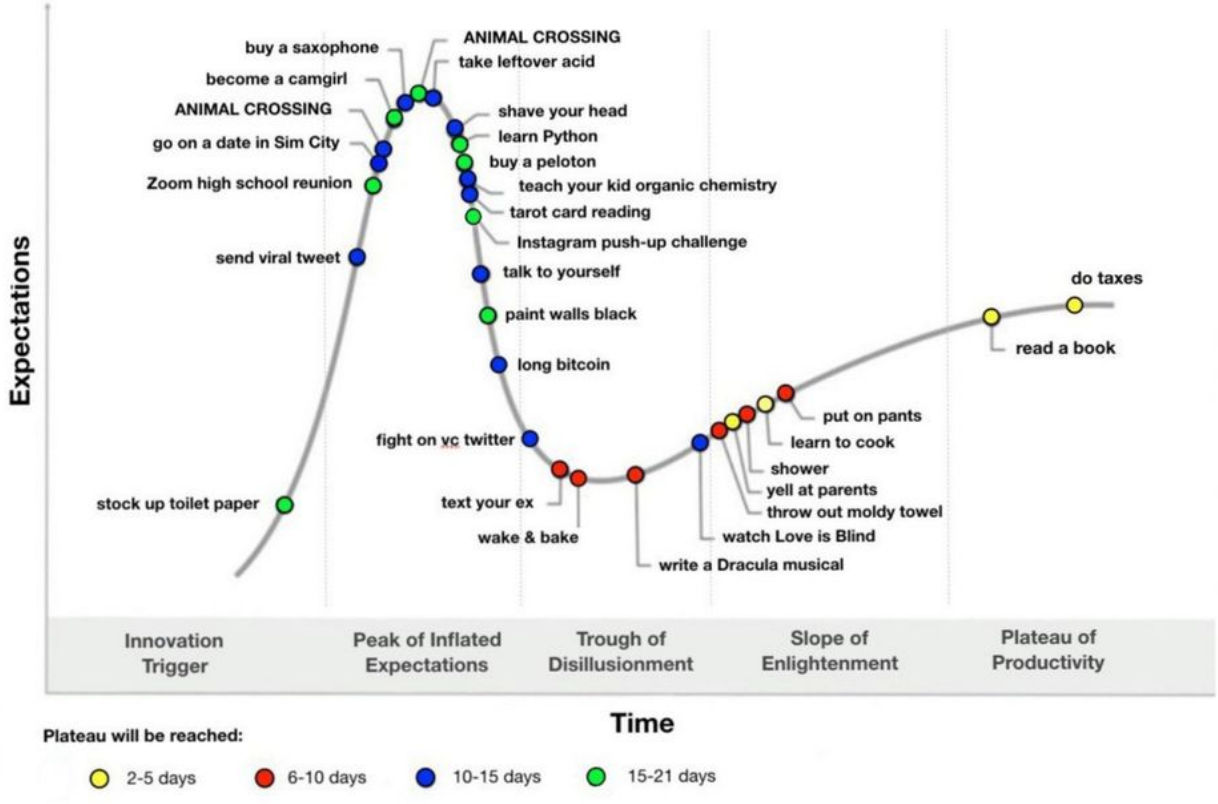






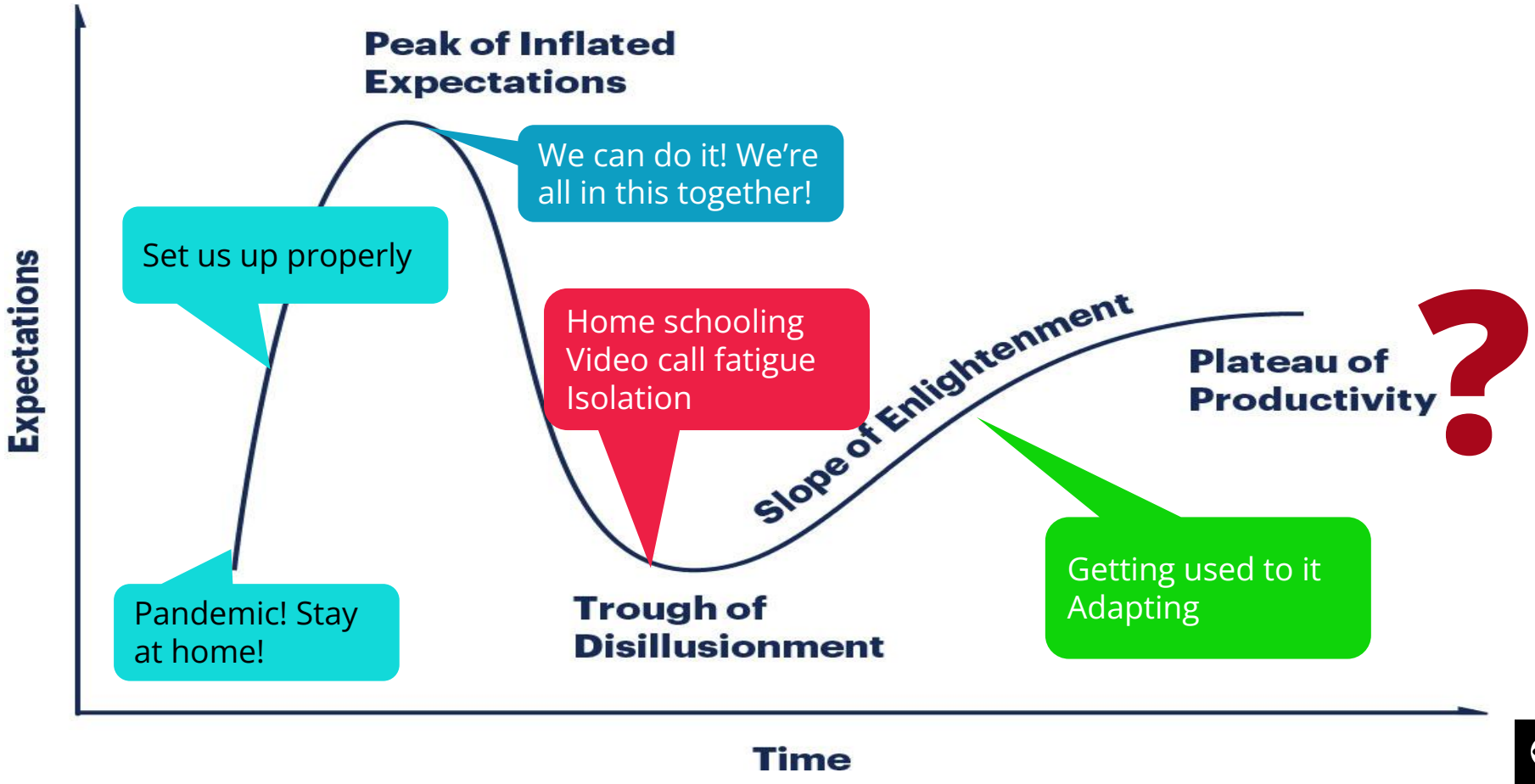


Gartner Hype Cycle for Emerging Quarantines, 2020



Source: Gartner
ID: 370115

eyeo Corona mood curve



Aren’t we there yet…?

- Lock down
- Curfew
- Kids at home
- Caring for parents
- Trying to achieve goals
- Covering for colleagues

Working Remotely – COVID-19 Principles

1. You are not “working from home”, you are “at your home, during a crisis, trying to work”.

2. Your personal physical, mental, and emotional health is far more important than anything else right now.

3. You should not try to compensate for lost productivity by working longer hours.

4. You will be kind to yourself and not judge how you are coping based on how you see others coping.

5. You will be kind to others and not judge how they are coping based on how you are coping.

6. Your team’s success will not be measured the same way it was when things were normal.

Mental Health Support

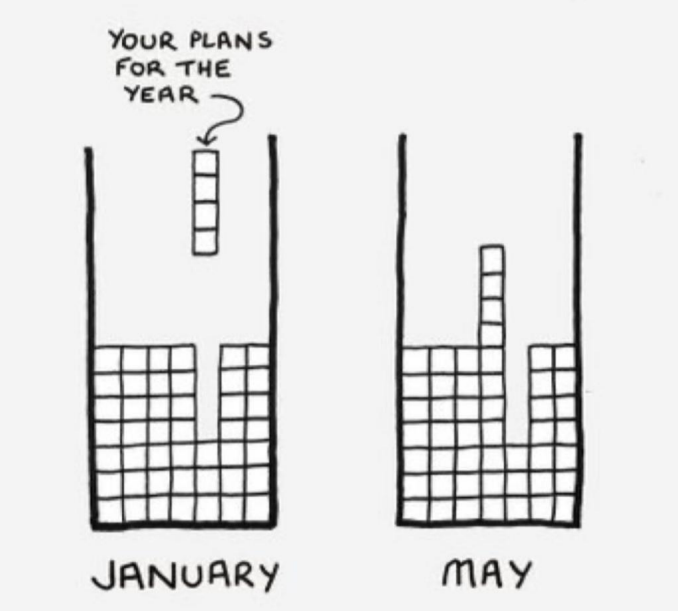
- Online Yoga - twice/week
- Online meditation - daily
- Leadership trainings
- InstaHelp & therapist
- Keep 2019 vacation days
- Descoping & de-parallelizing
- Re-opening the offices?

Office Re-Entry?

- Re-Entry Plan - since April
- Involve Medical and Workplace Security advisor
- Innovation Jam project

What's next?

- Aug: In-person Team Days pilot
- Sep: Corona Office Re-Entry?
- Sep: Influenza vaccinations
- Oct: Remote Ad Blocker Dev Summit
- Oct: Next cross-company remote event?
- Dec: Christmas party - in person?



Old normal	COVID-19 times
Video calls: 150 people in same call	Video calls: 150 people in same call
Onboarding: 2 weeks in Cologne	Remote onboarding
eyeo lunch crew	Remote lunch time together
After hour beer on the office terrace	Virtual drinks
Meet at the coffee machine	Always-on video call; Random chat-roulette
Flipcharts and whiteboards	Mural: Virtual whiteboards, post-its...
Summer week	June Remote Event
Hackathon	Remote Hackathon and Innovation Jam
Yoga in the offices	Online Yoga
Board game night	Lunch games - Jackbox, Drawful...

Take-Aways

Take-Away #1

Working remotely under normal circumstances is different from during a pandemic.

Take-Away #2

Be approachable.
Share your stories.
Stay kind.

Take-Away #3

Nothing beats an in-person encounter.

Thank you.

Questions?

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