

Why contribute to open source?

*The strategic benefits of contributing to open source for
individuals & organizations*



**OPEN
SOURCE
101**

Tobie Langel (@tobie)
Principal, UnlockOpen

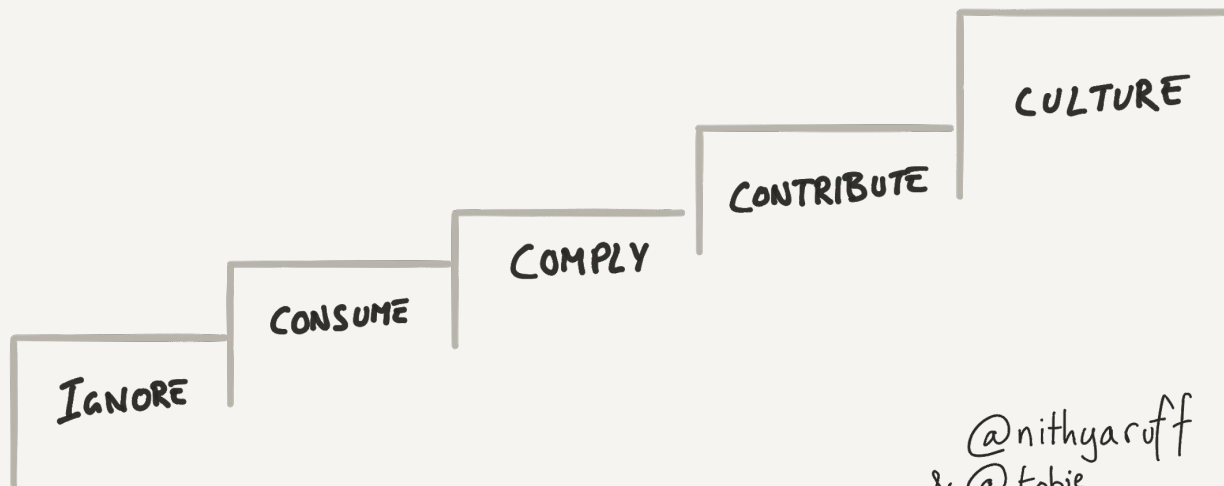
Original motivations

- Intrinsic motivations.
- “Scratching your own itch.”
- Hobbyist and hacker culture.
- Focused on building tools for their personal usage.
- Reputation as a currency (for sharing).
- Community.
- Practitioners are a somewhat homogeneous group.

What changed?

- Massive growth of tech.
- Massive adoption of open source.

The open source journey

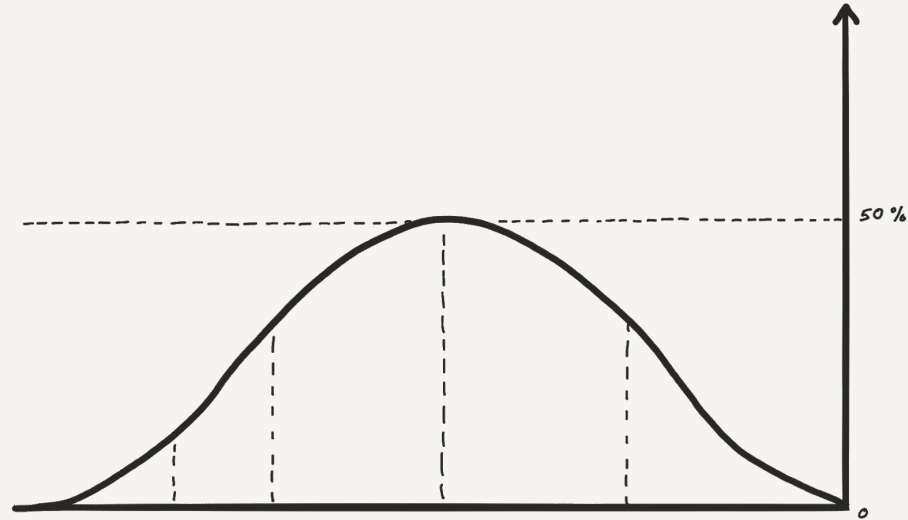


@nithyaruff
& @tobie

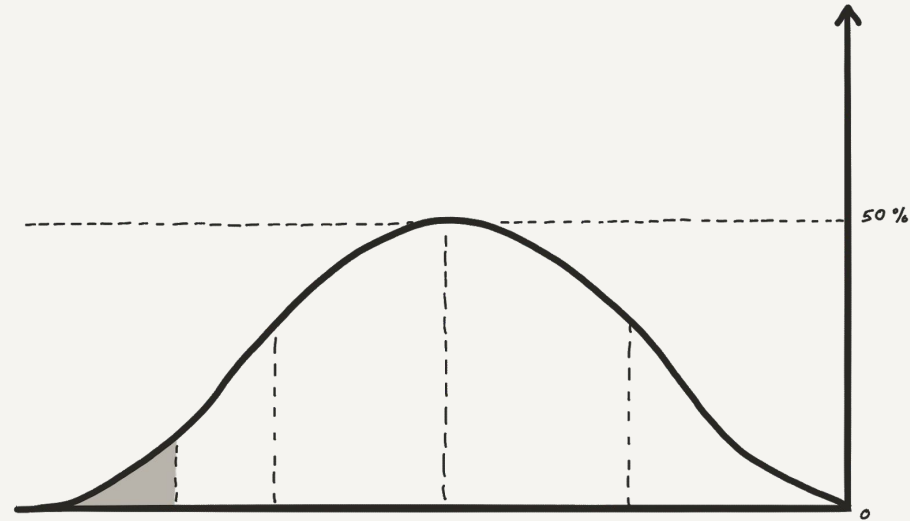
Which basically translates to

- **Ignore:** *“Open source is for hippies, we’re doing real business here.”*
- **Consume:** *“Open source is ‘free.’ Let’s use it!”*
- **Comply:** *“Oh, there’s a license? Let’s get a lawyer.”*
- **Contribute:** *“Might as well upstream that fix so we don’t have to maintain a fork.”*
- **Culture:** *“Wow, the model of building open source software works better! Let’s adopt that, too.”*

Technology adoption lifecycle

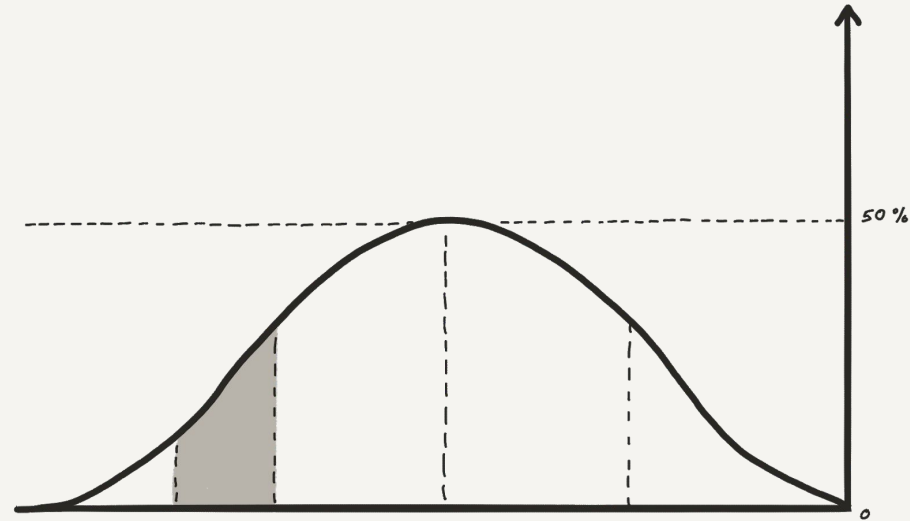


Innovators



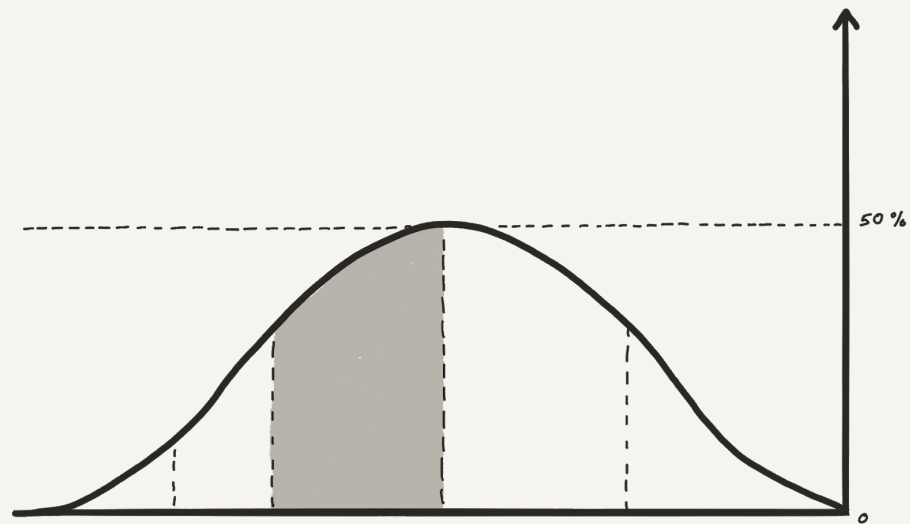
2.5%

Early adopters



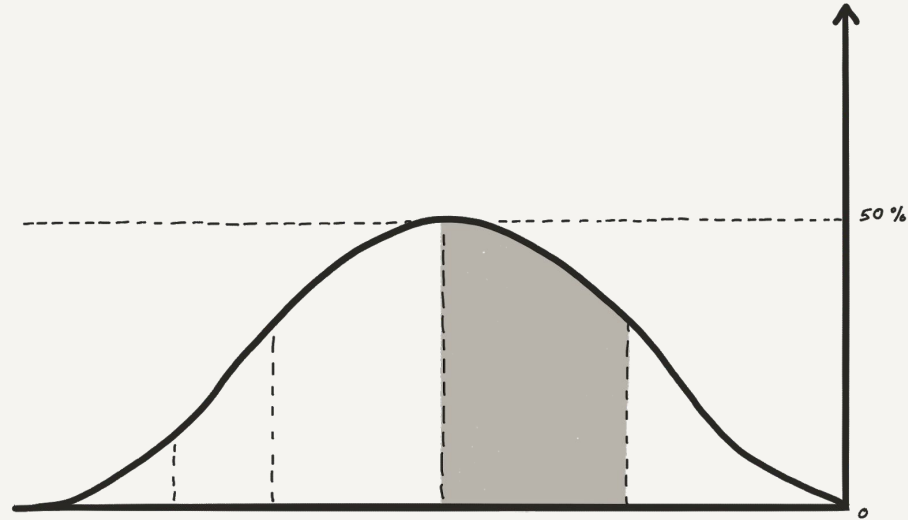
13.5%

Early majority



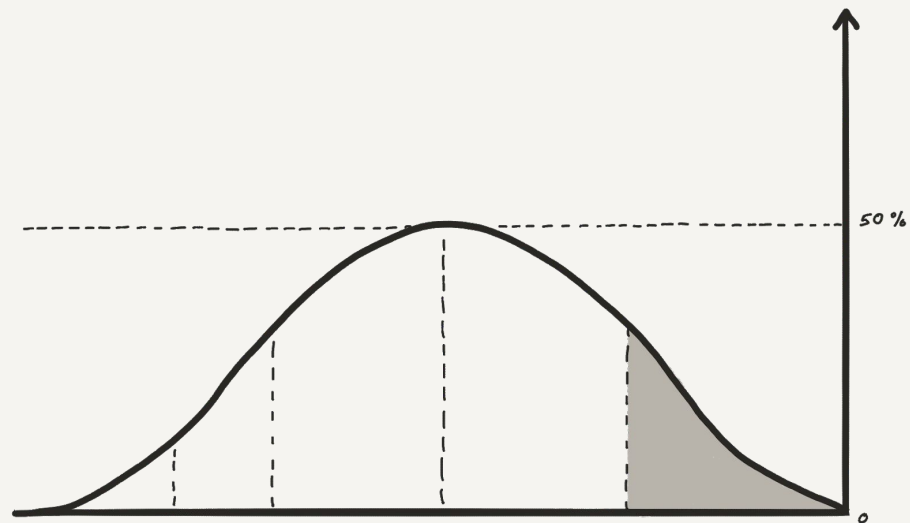
34%

Late majority



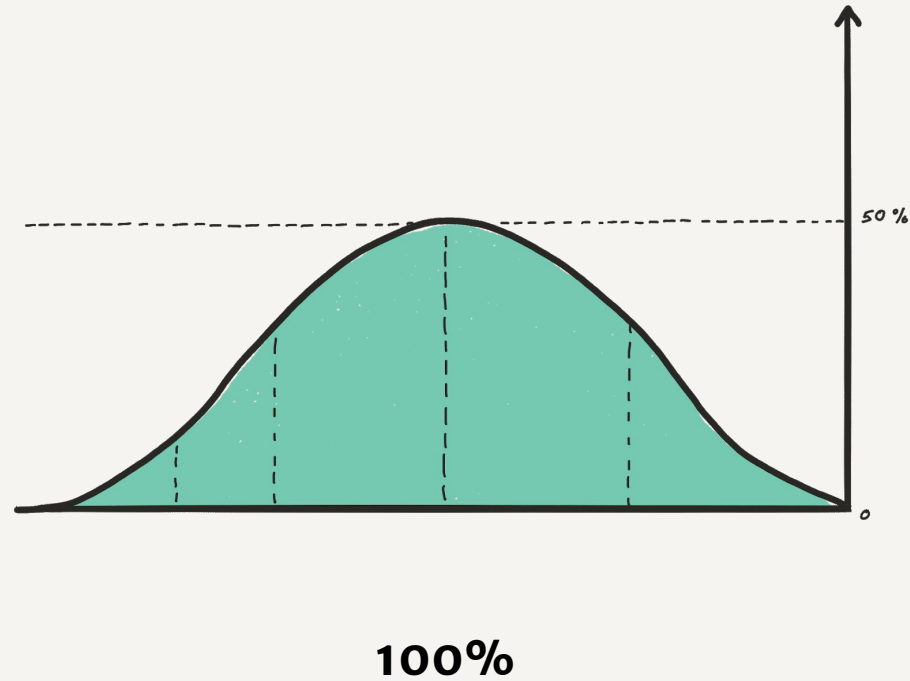
34%

Laggards

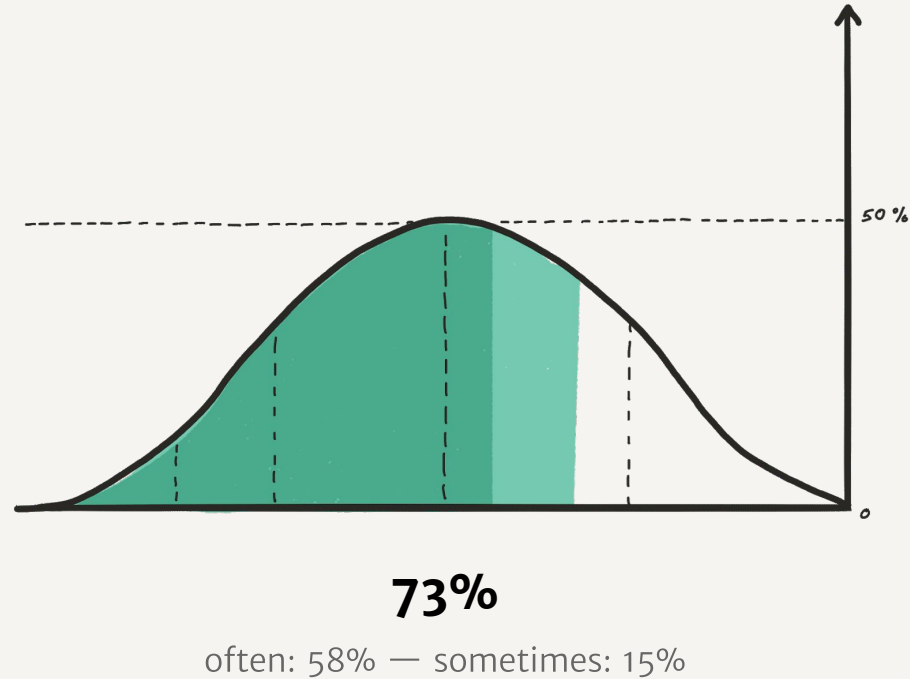


16%

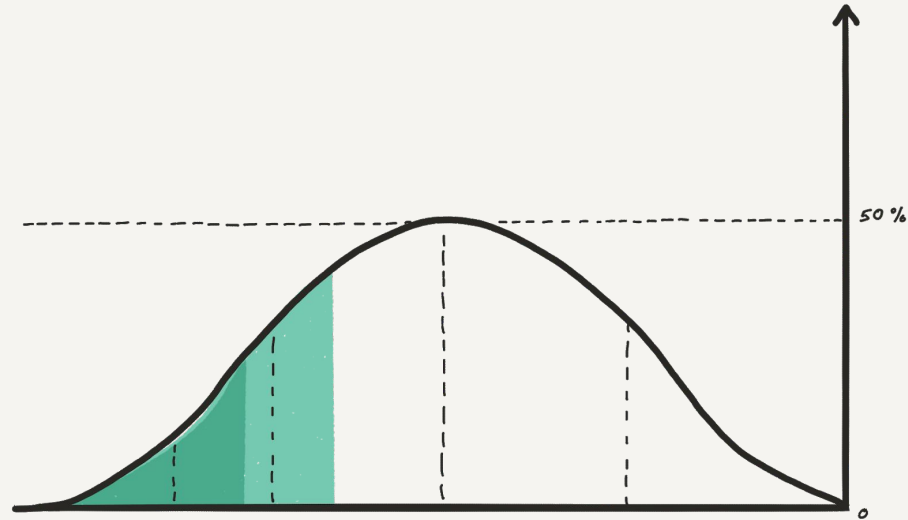
Consume



Comply (use in products)



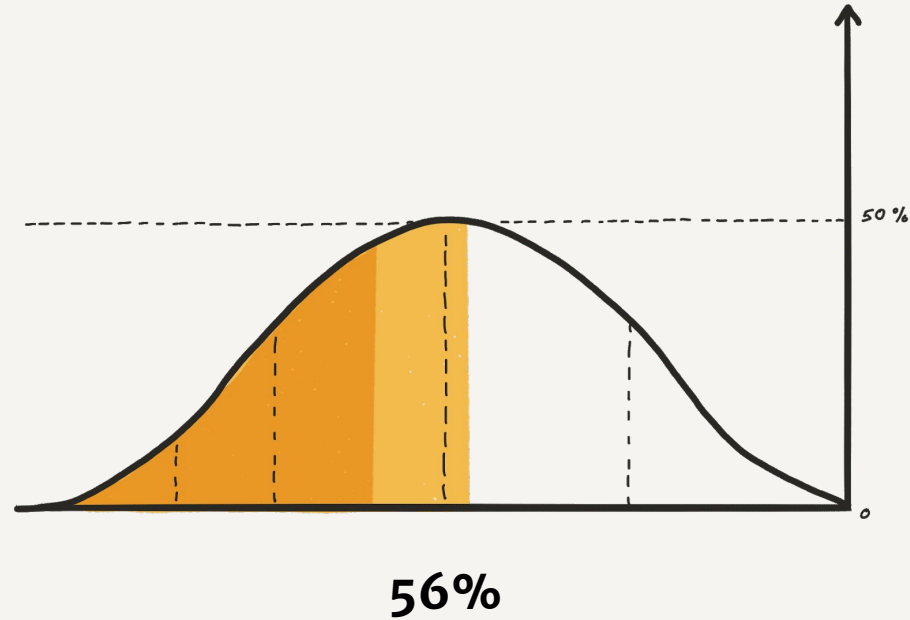
Contribute



29%

often: 10% — sometimes: 19%

Contribute



often: 28% — sometimes: 28%

Industry: tech

Source: "Open Source Programs in the Enterprise - 2019" Survey

**OK... but concretely, what does
this mean?**

A very different context

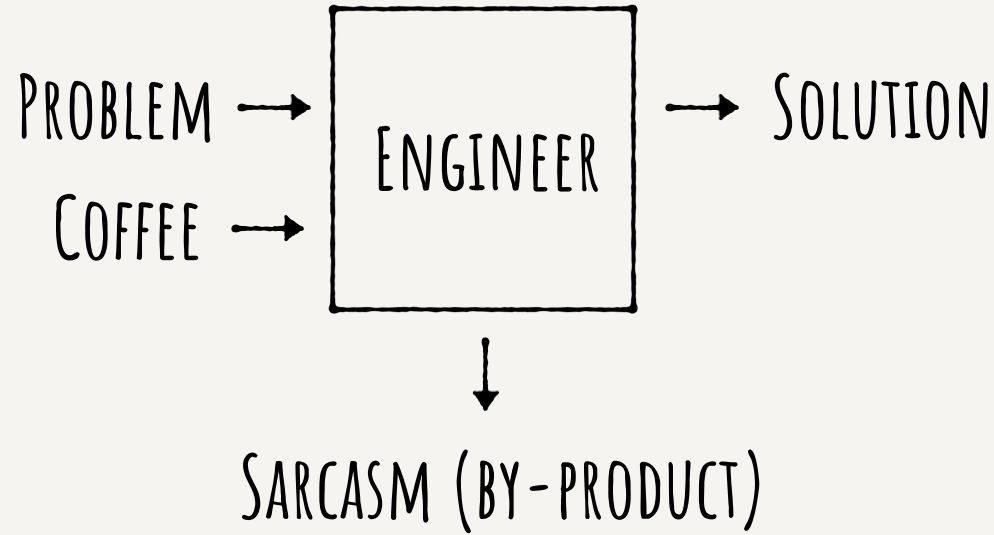
- Software is everywhere.
- Open source is mainstream.
- Widely adopted and used by corporations.
- Comparatively huge and diverse population of developers (~20+ million and growing).
- Open source is increasingly professionalized (e.g. 93% of contributions to Linux are done on the job).

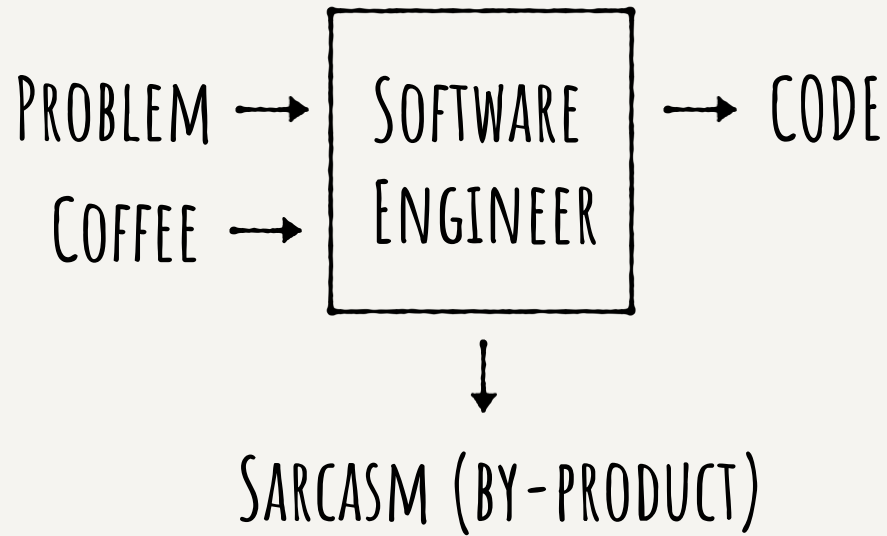
New context means new (additional) motivations

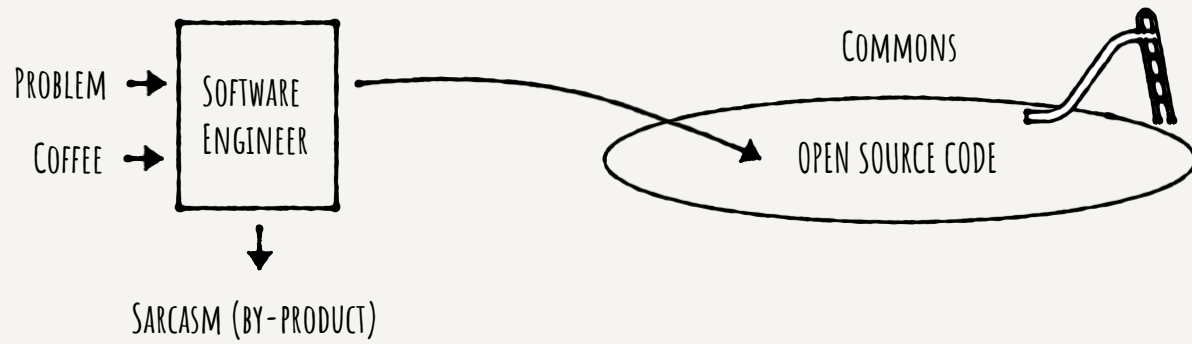
- Doesn't invalidate initial motivations.
 - *Community is still as valuable as before, for example.*
- Initial motivations aren't necessarily shared by everyone anymore... and that's OK!
- We can be more intentional about the *why*, because that makes it easier to justify involvement/investment, and as a result makes it more sustainable.

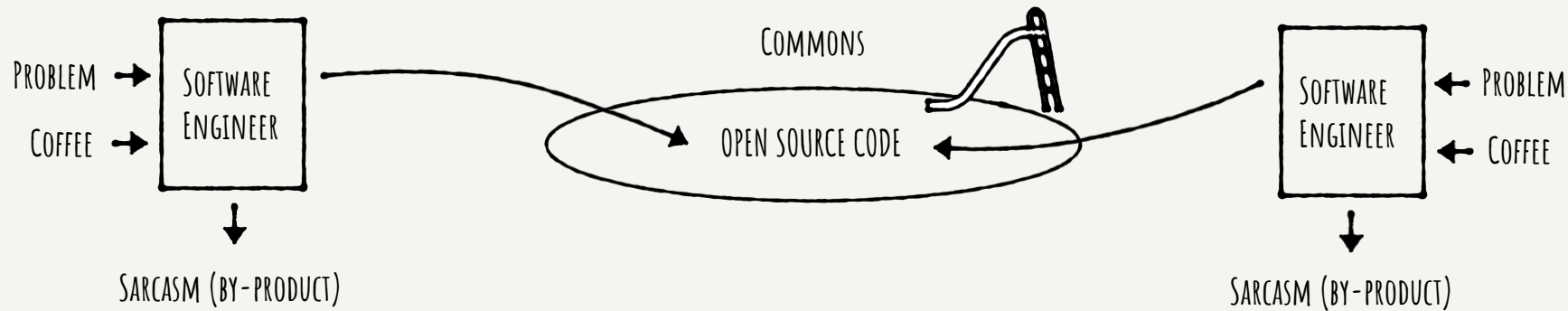
Understand today's motivations

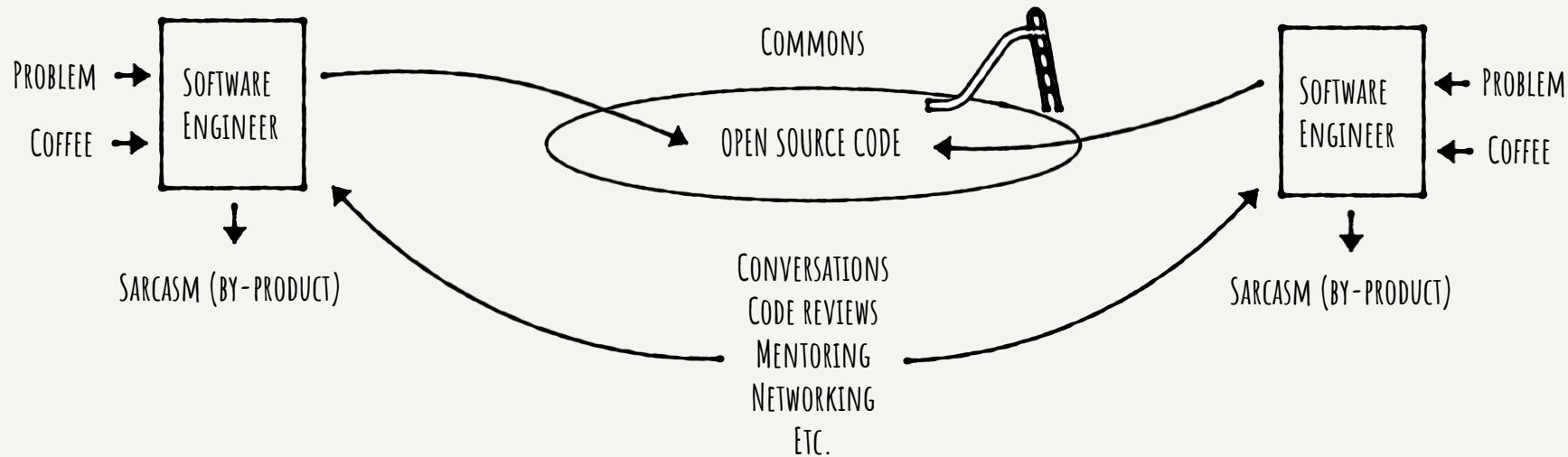
For both individuals & organizations.

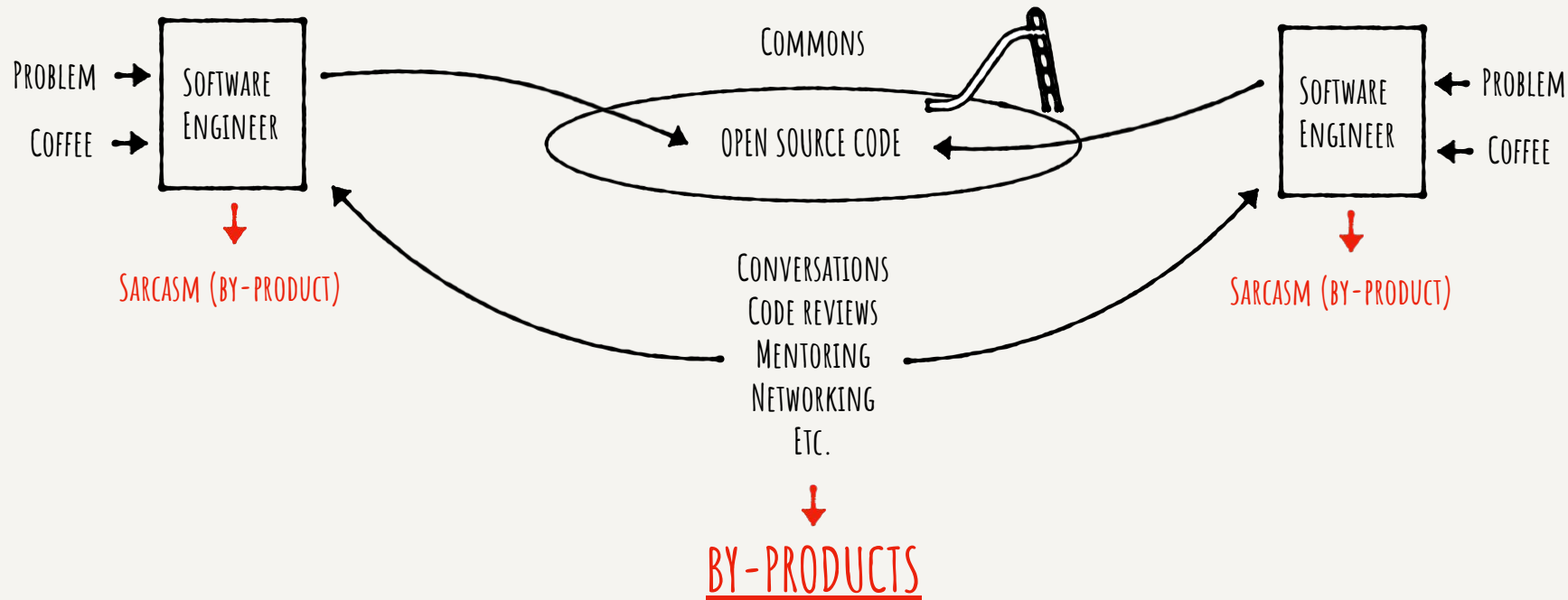


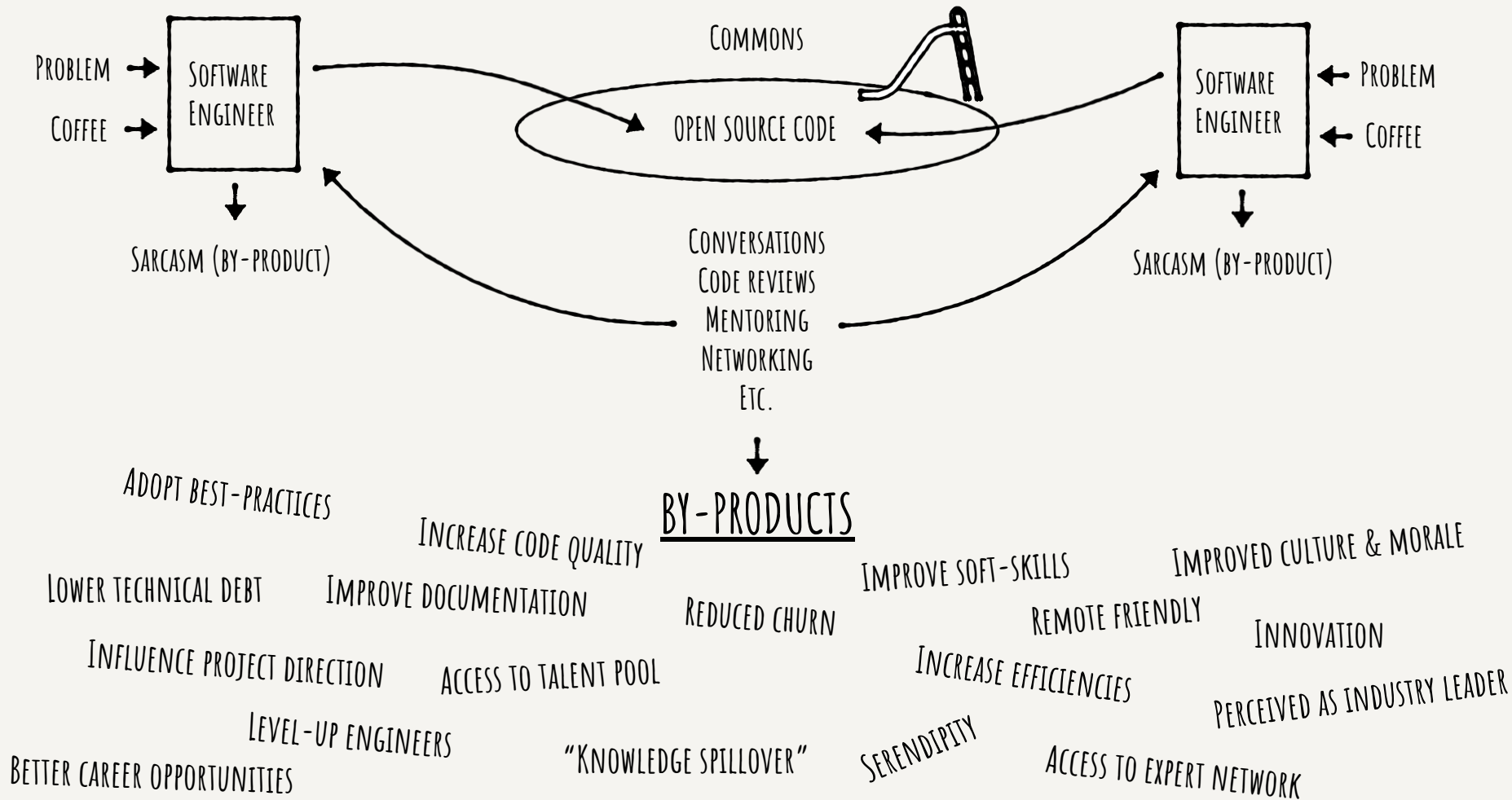














BY-PRODUCTS

PROJECT



IMPROVE DOCUMENTATION

INCREASE CODE QUALITY

LOWER TECHNICAL DEBT

INFLUENCE PROJECT DIRECTION

INDIVIDUAL



LEVEL-UP ENGINEERS

ADOPT BEST-PRACTICES

IMPROVE SOFT-SKILLS

ACCESS TO EXPERT NETWORK

BETTER CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

TEAM



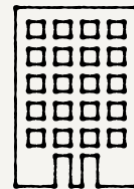
INCREASE EFFICIENCIES

SERENDIPITY

INNOVATION

"KNOWLEDGE SPILLOVER"

ORGANIZATION



IMPROVED CULTURE & MORALE

PERCEIVED AS INDUSTRY LEADER

ACCESS TO TALENT POOL

REMOTE FRIENDLY

REDUCED CHURN



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Open source is a career booster

- Your Github profile is your resume.*
- Great way to kickstart or level up a career.
 - *Over half of the respondents to GitHub's 2017 survey claimed open source was somewhat or very important in getting their current role.*
- You have to commit (pun intended).
- Don't be opportunistic.
- **Problem:** inherently favors the privileged.

** Yes this is a problem, we'll get back to it!*

How can companies help with this?

- Professionalize open source.
- Proactively help underrepresented minorities contribute.
- Have their back. Invest in proper policy to protect them when they contribute.

What do companies get out of helping?

- Increased diversity *at every rung* of the career ladder.
- Decrease wage gap.
- A stronger open source culture.

Benefits for companies

- Second-order benefits
- Operational benefits
- Strategic benefits

Second-order benefits

AKA by-products

Apache foundation's: "Community > Code"



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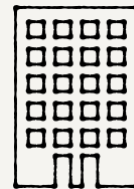
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2×

TWICE AS EFFICIENT

Contributing firms capture up to 100% more productive value from usage of open source than their free-riding peers.



Source: Franck Nagle, [Learning by Contributing](#), 2017.



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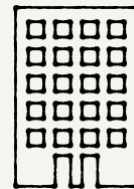
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75%

75% of facebook's new engineering recruits mention facebook's open source program as a key reason they accepted their offer



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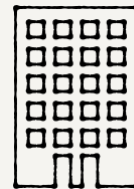
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“But we also noticed some effect that we didn’t expect. All the public visibility [sponsoring Webpack] have given us lead to a situation where we suddenly became one of the most interesting companies to work for as a JavaScript developer. [...]”

“We’ve hired a lot of really great engineers who mentioned during their job interview that our sponsoring for Webpack was one of their primary motivations for applying, [...]”

—Patrick Gotthardt, Lead JavaScript Architect,
Trivago, 9 July 2018.

Operational benefits



Payback Technical Debt

Economic

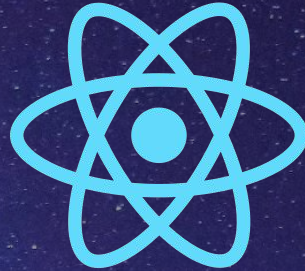


Web browsers

Leverage external contributions



React Router



Redux













React Ecosystem

Strategic benefits



On-ramp developers

Commoditize Your Complement

Company	Focus	Complement
		
		
		
		



Thank you!



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Principal, UnlockOpen
tobie@unlockopen.com
unlockopen.com

Q & A

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Principal, UnlockOpen
tobie@unlockopen.com
unlockopen.com