### **ELIMINATING HERO CULTURE**

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### What is Hero Culture?

Teams or individuals working long hours to get the job done – because, and often ostensibly, because others in the organization do not have the knowledge, judgment, experience, training or skills to do the job. The transformation from a **hero culture** to a business process based operating **culture** is difficult.



## First let's start off as leaders asking ourselves some questions. Do you have people on your team that are any of the following?

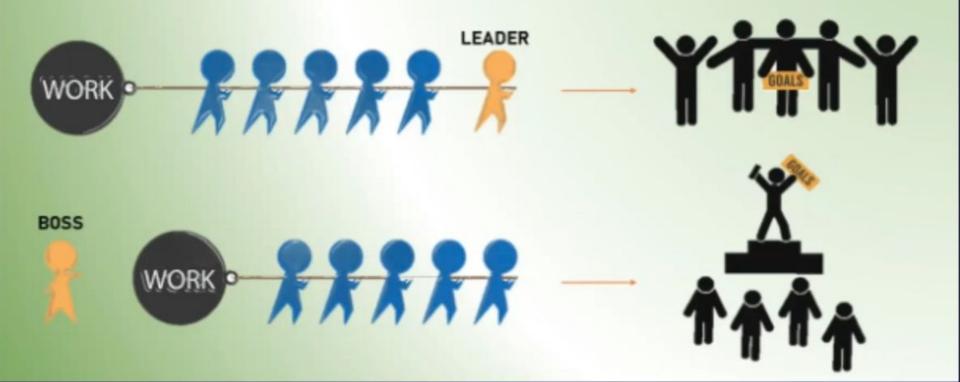
- Considered the "go-to" person
- 2. Team is in a "freeze" when a single individual is away
- Attend mostly every meeting because their attendance is "mandatory"
  - Are overworked and overloaded all the time
  - Have explosive attitudes as a result of being overworked
  - 6. Pull over 60+ hours a week, and that is a norm for them
  - 7. Have lost PTO due to not being able to take time off work
  - 8. Are the lead for every project, and the resource for most teams
- They're not only the teams go-to person but they're also the managers go to person because they get so much done and they're considered "irreplaceable"

SURPRISE. You have fostered a "HERO Culture"

That's okay, we're about to fix that by identifying, understanding and moving to solution because the consequences.....



### Are You a Leader or a Boss?





## So now that you've asked yourself some valid questions, let's discuss the environment that Hero Culture creates:

- Lack of Knowledge transfer- also known as technical debt, this can become very extreme
  - There is no common or mutual understanding amongst the team, nobody ever knows what anyone is doing
- Imposter syndrome of employees whom are not deemed the "heroes"
  - Promotions are slow due to everyone be judged against the "hero"
    - Team becomes a dumping ground
      - Burnout of all team members

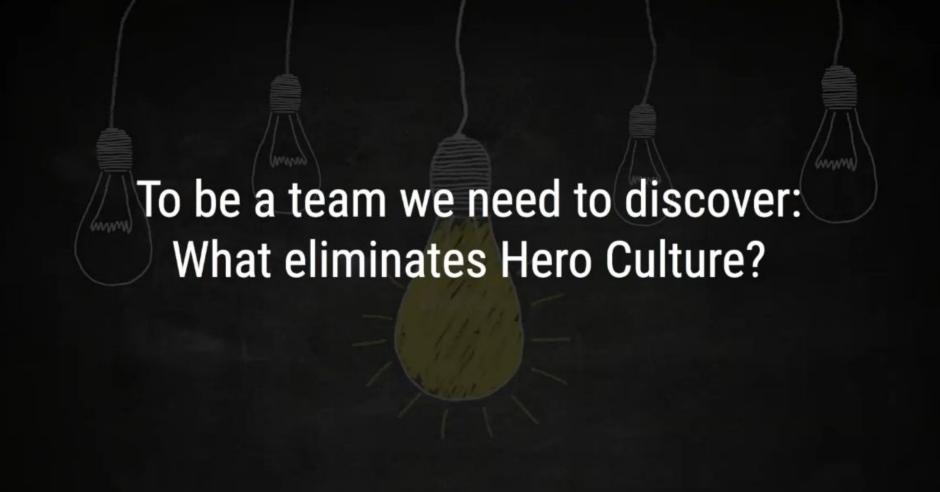
Now That You've Identified Who The Heroes Are: We need to understand they're heros for a reason. Giving them the benefit of the doubt and assuming they allude great attitudes--these individuals have done great work, contributed a great deal to companies and the tech space. They should be allowed the same respect and grace and other individual contributors.

### **TEAMWORK**

Alone we can do so little.

Together we can do so much.

Helen Keller



#### Policies and Processes

If you keep heroes and their way of work, the longer they stay the harder to change.BUT REMEMBER if you tried to get rid of those practices quickly, you put yourself and the company in an ultimate risk!

So let's start the process by offloading....

- Make documentation MANDATORY
- Create weekly knowledge transfer meetings for the team to get together
- Never have only one person on a project
- PAIRED PROGRAMMING IS A REQUIREMENT
- Onboarding processes should be changed
- Reviews should be heavily based on those who practice team work and mentorship

#### Policies and Processes, Cont.

- Regardless of who your hero is, they should be treated with respect while transitioning them out of their reputation
- Change processes that eliminate loopholes
- Ask the Hero, "How can we best distribute this work to others?"

Takeaways:

- PLAN
- Processes and Improvement
- Identify the heros EARLY
- Make collaboration apart of development plans and review
- Be respectful, heroes are human too
- Remember, nothing happens over time. Change takes time!

# TEAMWORK **MAKES THE** DREAM WORK.