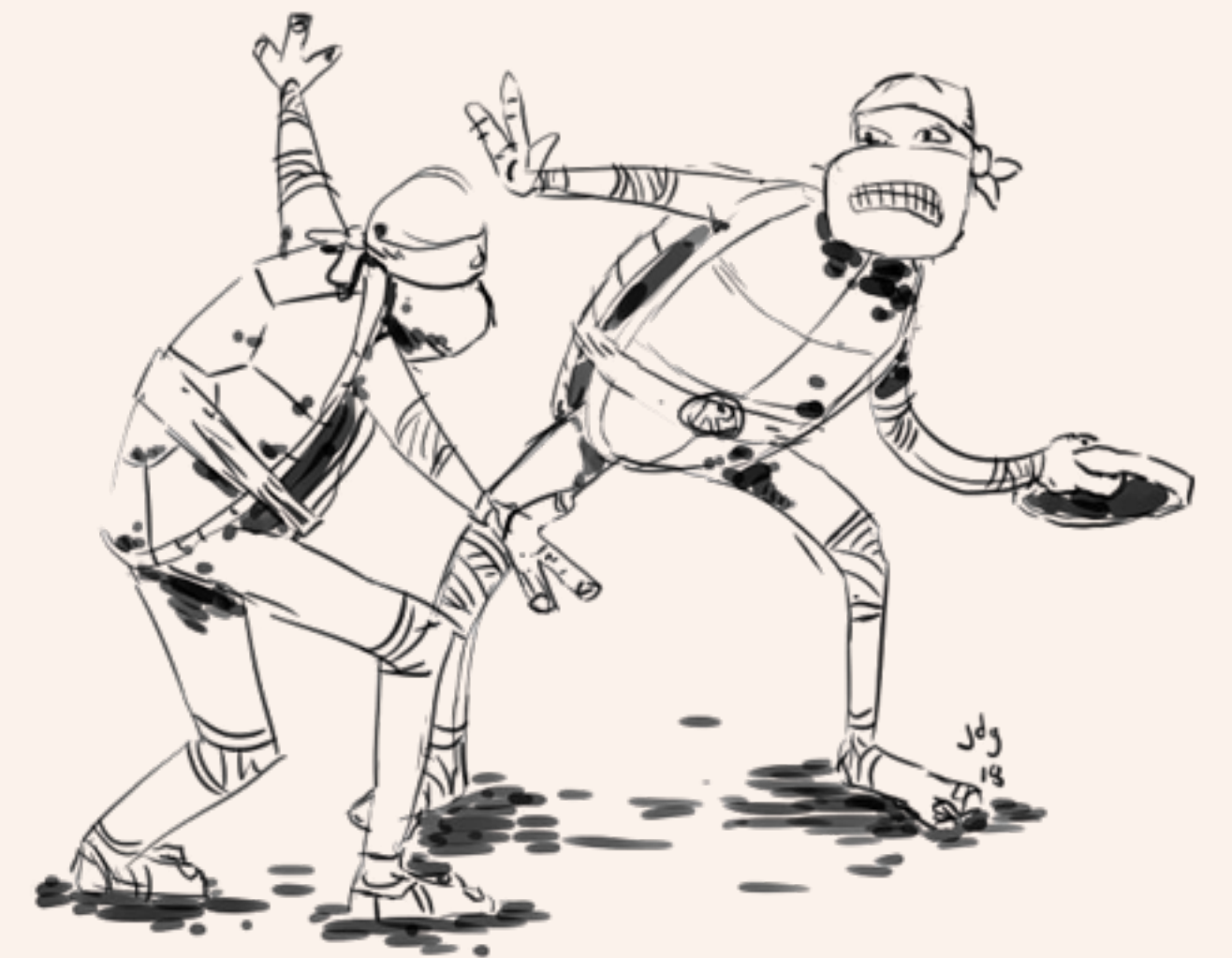


# Shaping your engineering culture

**Dolapo Falola - Head of Engineering, Browser Company**

# Once upon a time

a story about change



Unwritten rules and values, the norms, that drive behavior and actions

# Why is this important?

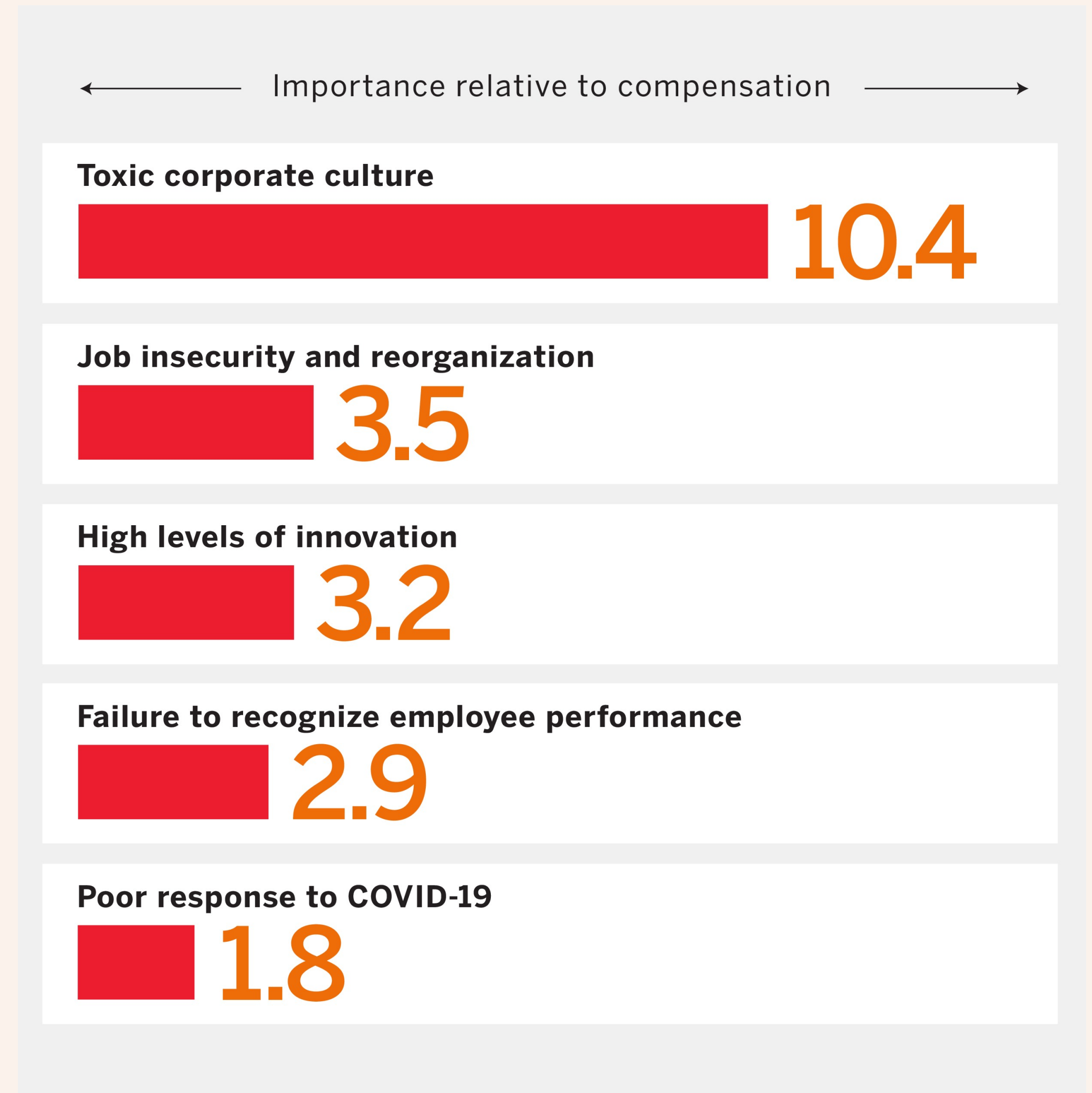
## a brief refresher, pt 1

- Toxic cultures are less effective
- Teams perform better when there's psychological safety
- “Culture eats strategy for breakfast”

# Why is this important?

## a brief refresher, pt 2

- People leave toxic cultures
- Culture contributes to attrition more than compensation



# Why is this important?

## a brief refresher, pt 3

- Potential hires will assess your culture
- Hiring becomes harder over time
- Building inclusive teams becomes harder over time

Universally held and strongly felt

# What is your current culture?

## quick examples

- Example - Personal space norms are unwritten but strongly felt
- Example - Transparency around development is usually felt
- Example - What guides prioritization
- What's an analog in your organization?



# What is your current culture?

are you in the know?

- It's hard to see a lot of behaviors as an org lead
- Your views are probably aspirational

# What is your current culture?

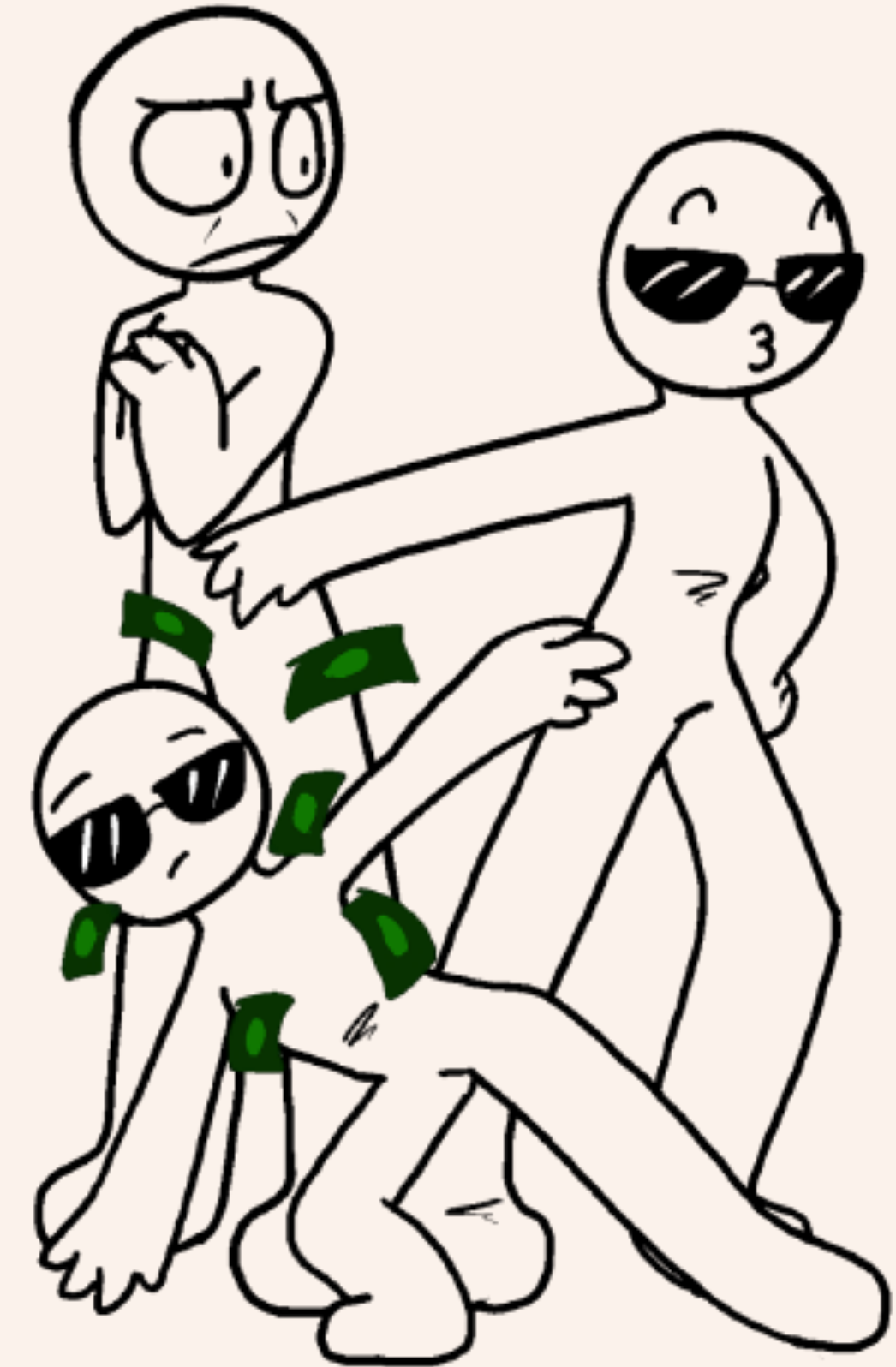
how do you find the truth?

- There aren't many shortcuts
- Get a representative sample or talk to everyone
- Anonymous surveys can work

# What is your current culture?

it may not match your aspiration

- Written values don't always match
- This is tension that needs to be resolved
- Check your incentives



Your role as a leader is to model and reward  
the behaviors you want

# How to shape your culture behaviors

- Leaders sometimes don't do as they say, eroding trust



# How to shape your culture

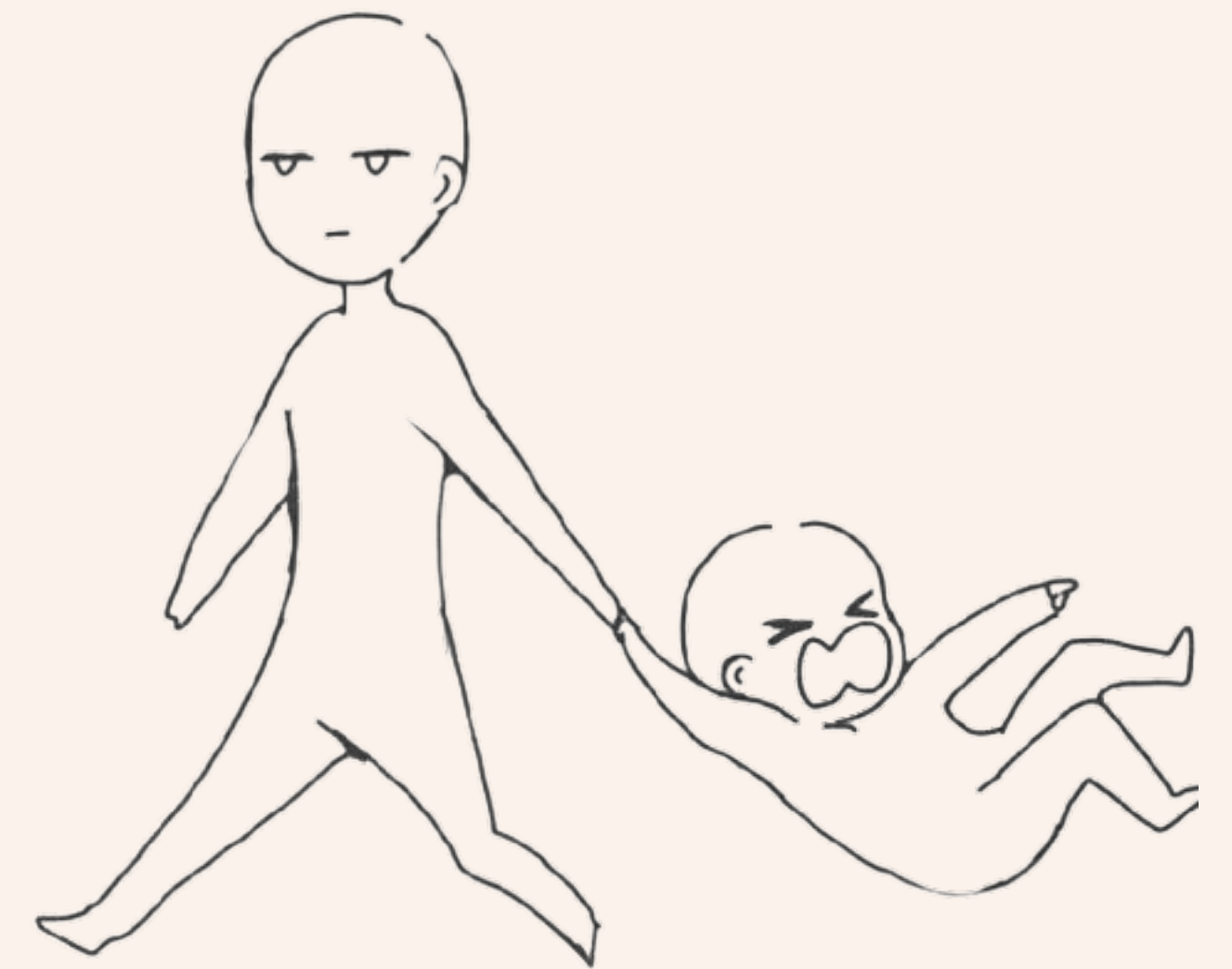
## incentives

- Engineers need to be rewarded for positive cultural behavior
- Do engineers get promos, fame, and fortune for doing “the right thing?”

# How to shape your culture

## change the team composition

- The people on your team may also need to change
- Hiring for your culture



# How to shape your culture

## change the team composition

- The people on your team may also need to change
- Coach or remove counter-cultural people





Culture, like everything else, doesn't stand  
still

**Fin**