

Total number of on-call pages per day

Build a data-driven on-call workflow with Atomic Habits



<https://streamlinehq.com>

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[in](#) [t](#) [d](#) @biancacostache

On-call at Adobe

You develop it & own it in production.

<https://blog.developer.adobe.com/>

- ◆ Schedule: follow-the-sun || 24/7
- ◆ Duration: 1 week || custom
- ◆ Work: on-call only || sprint + on-call
- ◆ Roles: primary only || primary + secondary



<https://streamlinehq.com>

About me

- 10 years of Software Engineering
- 7 years at Adobe Digital Experience
- P99 worldwide real-time services
- In a close, yet not always effective, relationship with on-call



What defines an effective on-call workflow?

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A continuous cycle of services breaking down, alerts firing during off-hours, no space for improvement.

Learned helplessness

What defines an effective on-call workflow?

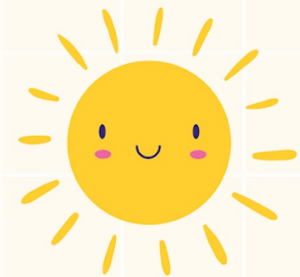


A continuous cycle of services breaking down, alerts firing during off-hours, no space for improvement.

Learned helplessness

An iterative data-driven process, which creates space for learning and improvement.

Shared accountability & empowerment



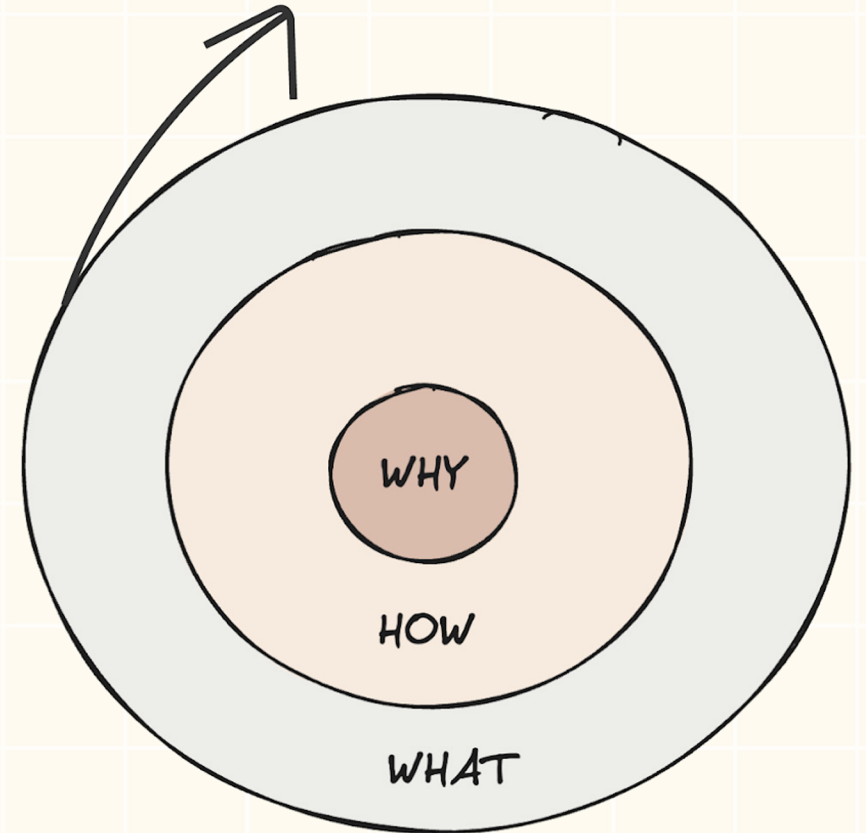


How do you build an effective on-call workflow?

Why is on-call that bad in your team?

How can you improve it?

What are the results of your actions?



 Start with Why

Case study: living on the Edge with on-call



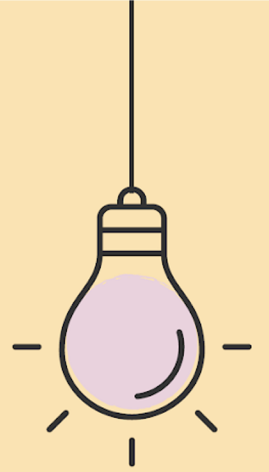
- ◆ 60 Billions requests / day
- ◆ Worldwide deployments
- ◆ *P99.9* availability
- ◆ 100x enterprise customers

Case study: living on the Edge with on-call



Weekly on-call stats

- ◆ Mean number of pages per day: 5
- ◆ Mean time to resolve: 15 minutes
- ◆ Mean no. of interrupted nights: 4
- ◆ Mean time to fall asleep again: ?



Gergely Orosz 

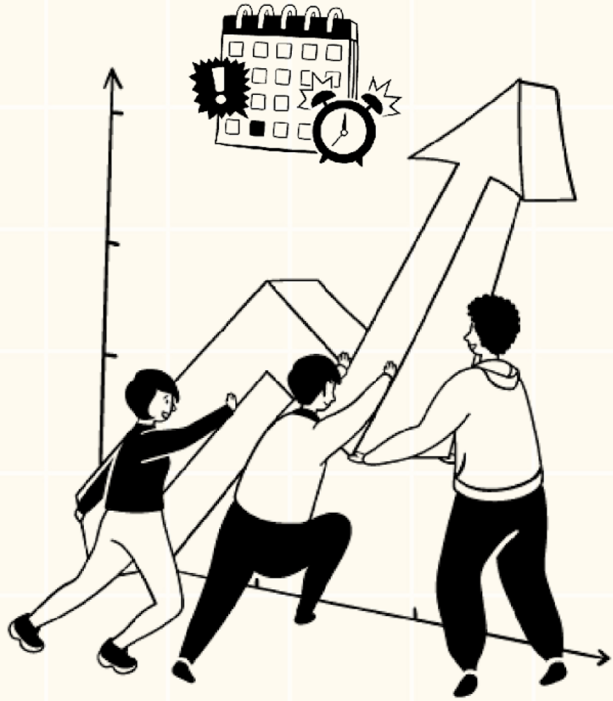
@GergelyOrosz



People don't just leave managers: they leave shitty oncall rotations as well.

WHY

Remember Covid?



- ◆ 100% remote work transition
- ◆ 100% real-time traffic increase
- ◆ New 24/7 on-call rotation
- ◆ A team going through the forming phase

WHY

A series of bad on-call team habits

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Siloed knowledge

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Alerting disconnected from service level targets

WHY

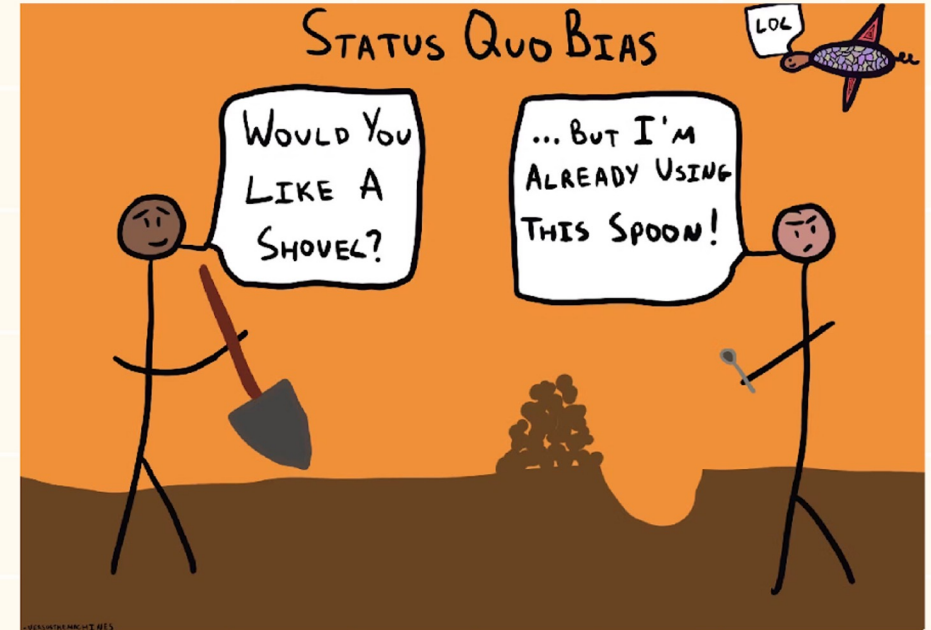
A series of bad on-call team habits

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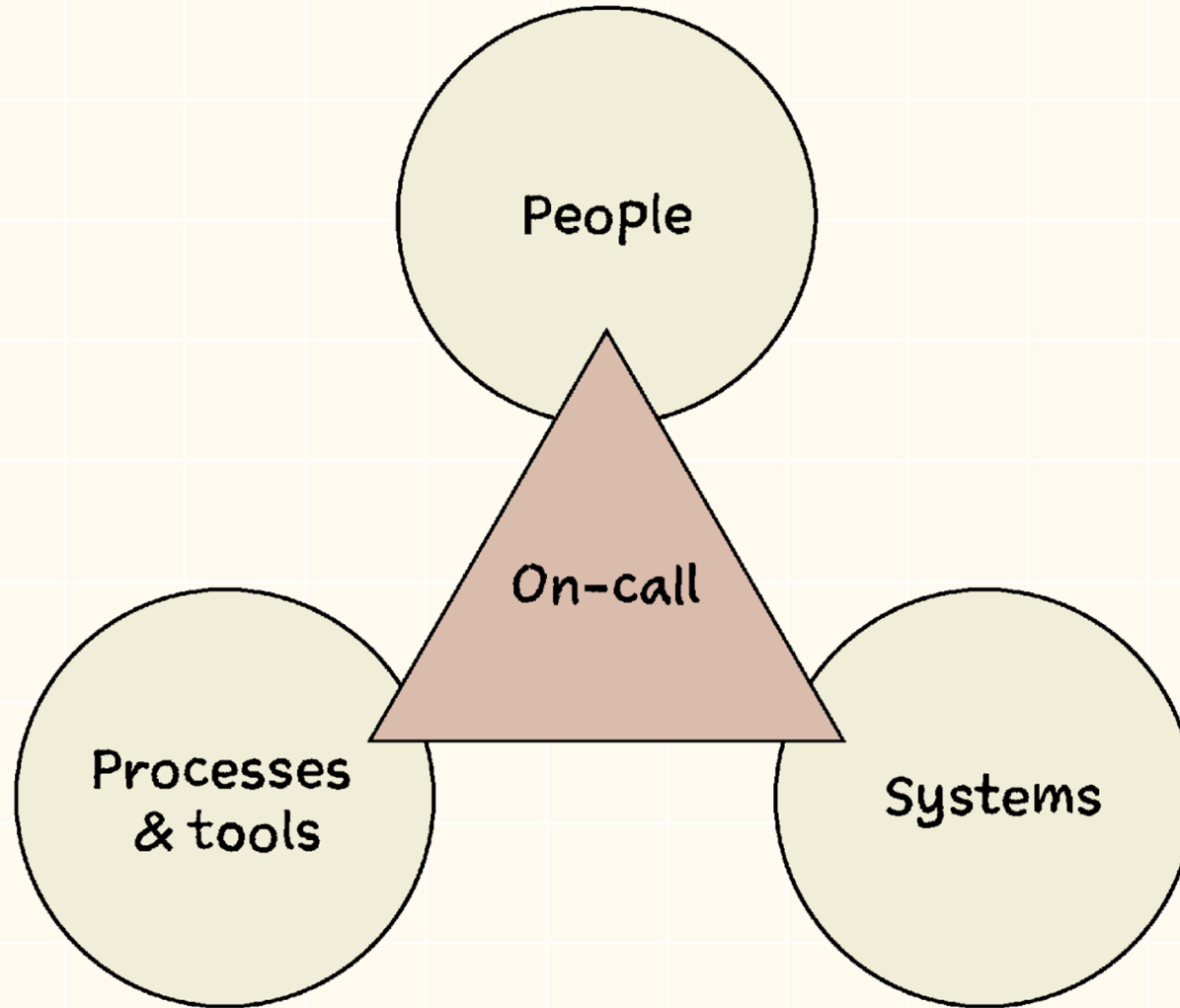


<https://thedeclaration.com/biases/status-quo-bias>

WHY

"On-call is a socio-technical problem"

-- *Charity Majors*

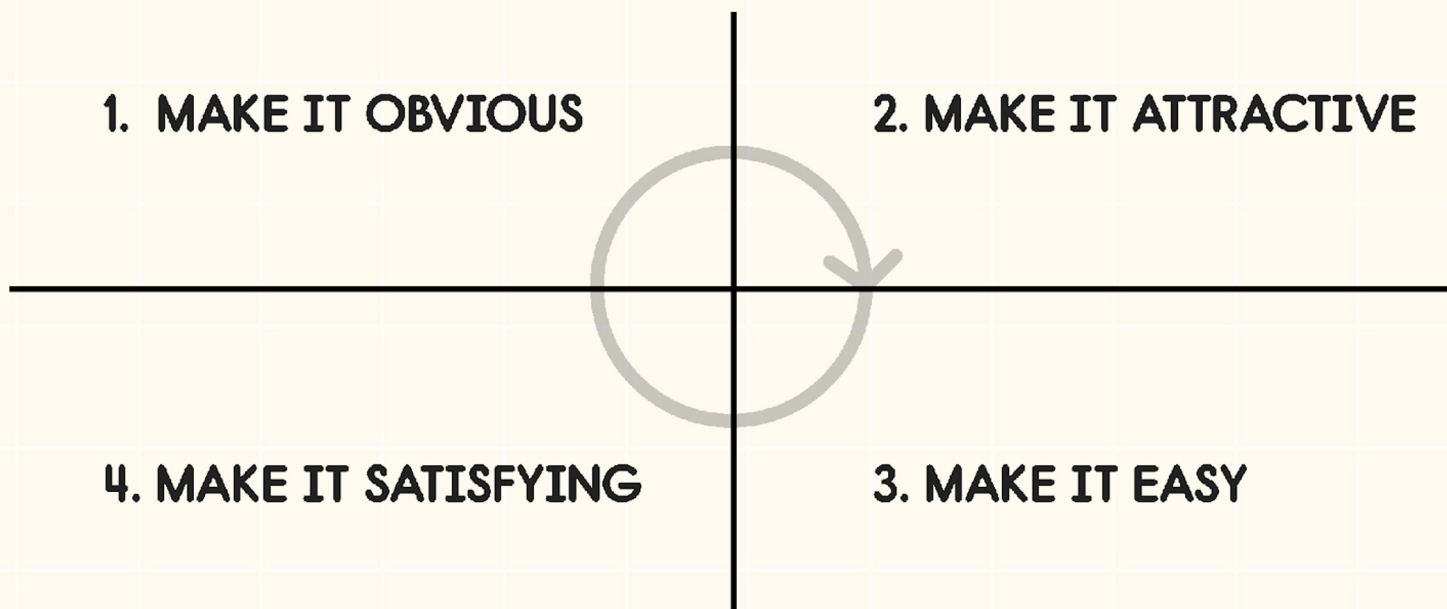


HOW

Replace the bad on-call habits with good ones



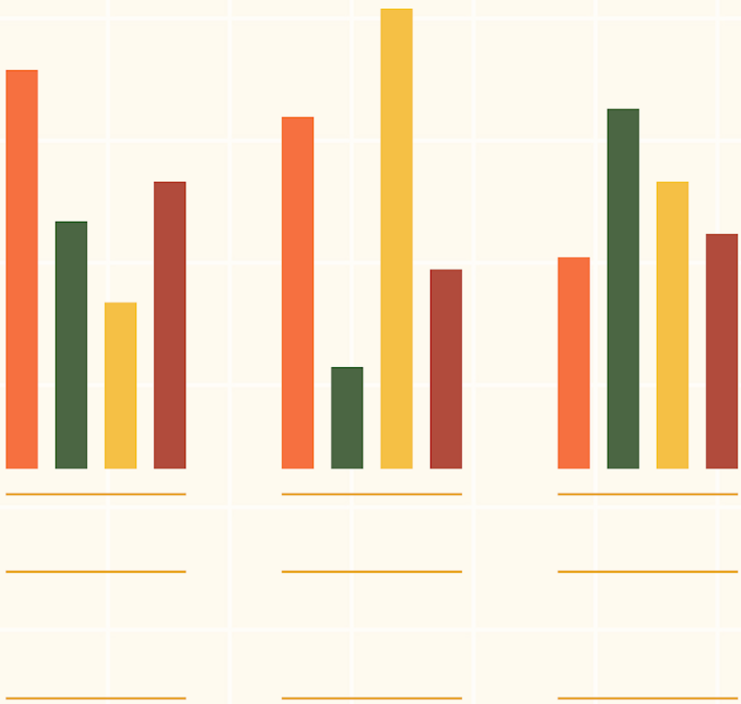
Atomic Habits



HOW

Make it obvious: collect on-call incidents data

ID	Fired at	Alert	System	Assignee	RCA



Valuable on-call charts:

- Incident count by service per week/ month
- Incident count by business flow per week/ month
- On-call interruptions in hours by business / off-hours interval
- Engaged vs. Snoozed incident time

Ultimately, everything that helps you get clarity

HOW

Make it attractive: empower your team with the ability to act

- ✦ The team prioritizes the on-call action items based on the on-call charts.
- ✦ On-call action items belong to a designated on-call backlog integrated in the team's roadmap.
- ✦ Primary on-call rules of engagement:
 - 1) tackle production issues & facilitate the incident RCA
 - 2) work on the on-call backlog during business hours
 - 3) focus only on on-call, delegate other tasks

Make it easy: create space for on-call reflection

Driver: the previous on-call engineer

Participants: the on-call team

Schedule: 30-60', at the end of each on-call rotation

Pre-work:

- the on-call backlog reflects the completed/new on-call AIs
- RCA is filled in for all the previous on-call incidents

Outcome: the next on-call engineer is empowered to take over the rotation with clarity and the ability to act next

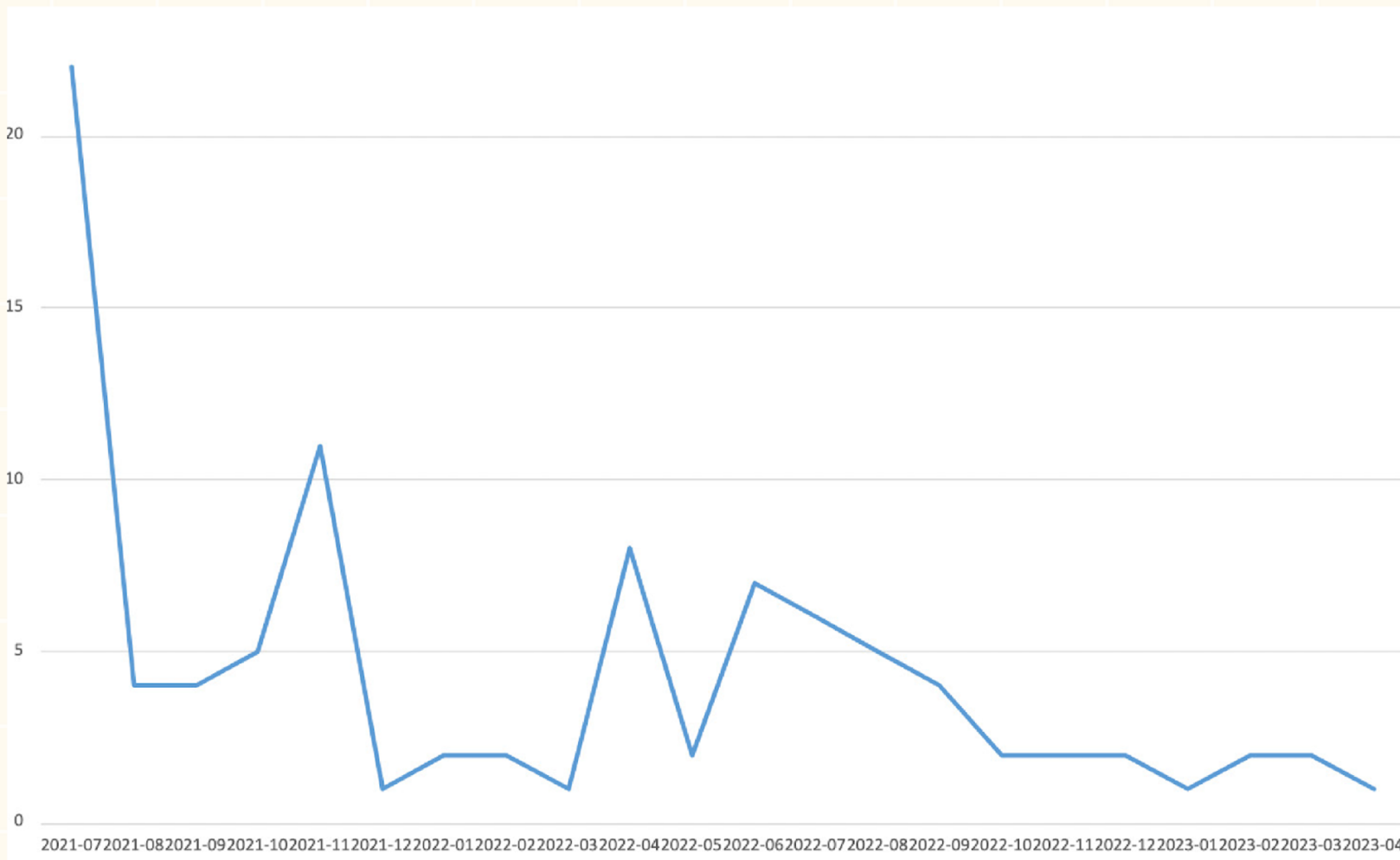
Agenda:

- review the latest on-call data trends
- discuss the last rotation incidents root cause and actions
- prioritize what's next to make it better



HOW

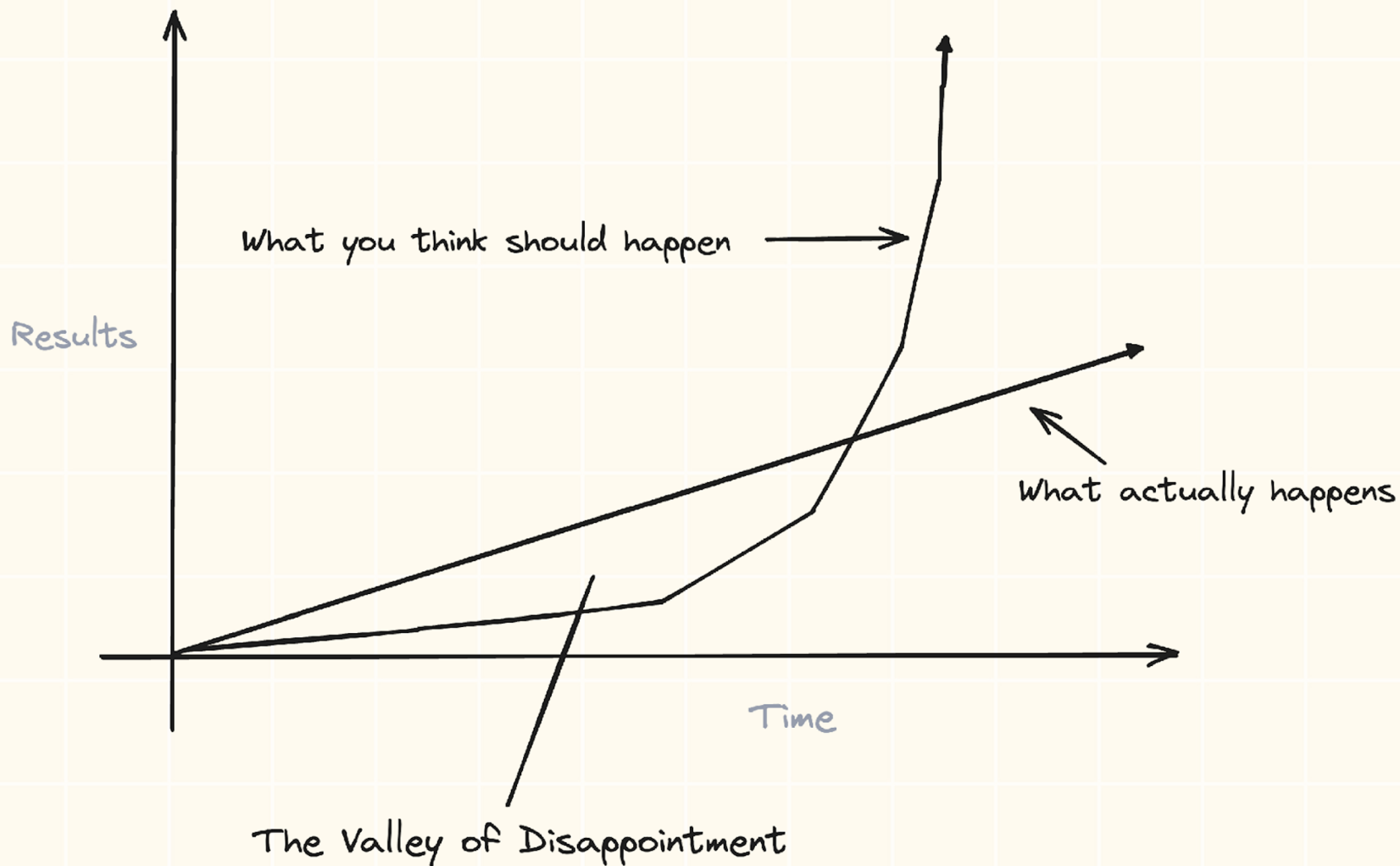
Make it satisfying: let the data reward you

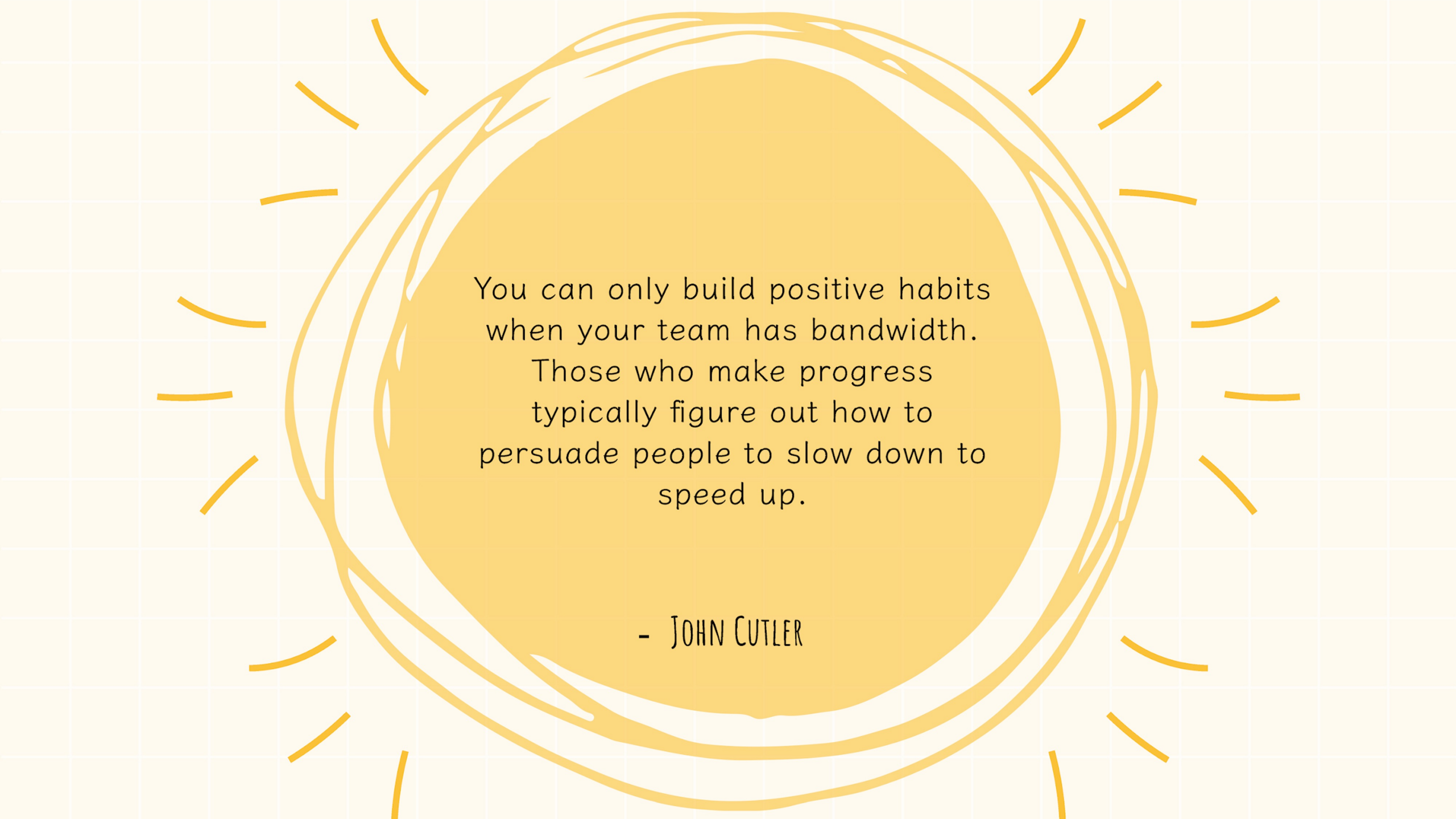


Total number of pages per month by service **Blue**

WHAT

Results are not immediate, but (negative) feelings are





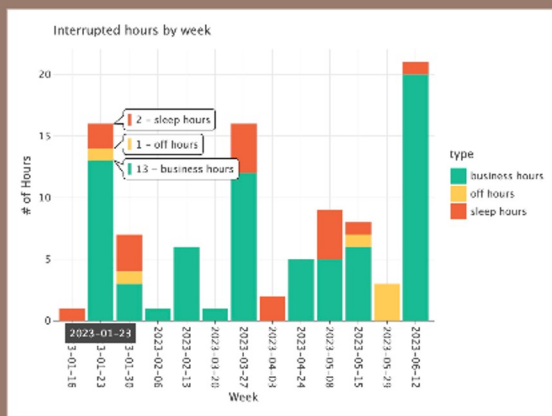
You can only build positive habits
when your team has bandwidth.
Those who make progress
typically figure out how to
persuade people to slow down to
speed up.

- JOHN CUTLER



Starter pack for your data-driven on-call

```
>_ git clone on-call-analysis
```



1 Store all incident details in one single on-call log



2 Find anything related to past on-call events within seconds




3 Plot on-call log data to meaningful charts within seconds



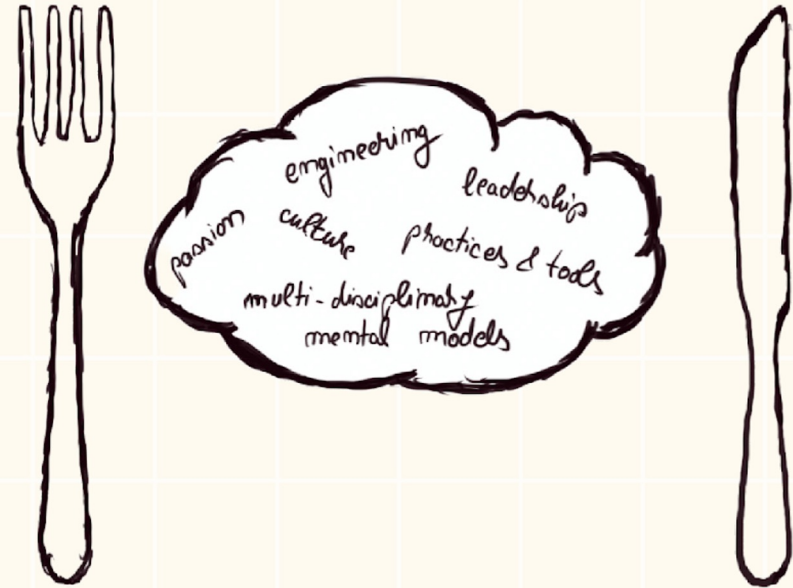
4 Diagnose your team's on-call effectiveness with data visualisation



GenAI powered insights

 <https://github.com/Happy-Friday-Food-for-Thought/on-call-analysis>

THANK
YOU!



Happy Friday Food for Thought

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