Jonathan Lister Parsons
CTO

QCon 2020 – Stories from the BeeHive

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CTO
Hello!

I’m Jonathan, CTO @ PensionBee
This talk - Stories from the BeeHive

...is not a talk about building technology

...is a talk about using technology

It is really a talk about culture
A few things to get off my chest

Business is the best place to create meaningful change

Culture makes the biggest difference

Good technology underpins good culture
Let’s get a little bit meta

Every day…

The sum of everyone’s actions

= an economy

Photo credit: @gsfc on Flickr
If we want a better tomorrow

We need to achieve meaningful change

We need to understand where meaningful change comes from

This is not just about GDP – but it affects that too
Meaningful change

Will

Ability

Tools

Culture
Tools = technology

“Technology is crystallised knowledge”

– @csugden
The human technology stack

- Start of human history
- Start of human culture
- Your hands
- Your voice + other people’s hands

Time

Level of development

~1800

MAGIC

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Culture is lagging behind

Level of development

~1800

Time

Technology of wizards

Culture of war & scarcity

MAGIC

MEH

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So here’s our CMO in an inflatable unicorn
Story time – making it real

01 The story of the 1-star review
   What's my purpose?

02 The story of Happiness!
   What's my progression?

03 The story of a robot named Armie
   Putting up with the productivity status quo
The story of the 1-star review

What's my purpose?

Cultural problem #1
In a world where technology is blamed for dehumanising people

Your tools can humanise your customers
Side point:

Rituals
- Stand-up
- Show ‘n’ Tell
- Book club
- Code club
- Lunch ‘n’ Learn
- Diversity calendar
- Donut time!
- ...

- Project scoping
- Kick-offs
- Multi-disciplinary teams
- Pairing
- Retrospectives
- ...

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The story of Happiness!

What's my progression?

Cultural problem #2
Happy team = happy customers
When one team is 50% of the company, how can they all progress?
Giving the right tools to the right people

Business Analysts  Developers  Marketeers
The story of a robot named Armie

Putting up with the productivity status quo

Cultural problem #3
Broken processes...

Moving your pension can take 6 months. You could fly to Mars in that time.
Broken processes...

This is one month’s worth of inbound post

Yes, really
This is not just for customers
BeeStorm!

Collects internal feedback

Helps prioritise based on impact

People can see what’s happened to their feedback
Productivity is life or death
In summary

01. Culture is the most important thing you have to drive meaningful change

02. Technologists have the power to build tools to make your culture scale
The Ask

Find a cultural problem.

Fix it.

Repeat.
Pensions made simple.