# Open Source Community Antipatterns

Ted Leung



#### The Goal is



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A level playing field so that merit and "innovation happens elsewhere" can prevail



#### Areas

- Governance
- Communication (of governance)
- Culture/Environment
- Merit
- Decision Making
- Leadership
- Balancing Forces



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#### Governance

# Badly Sized Governance

- Too little is bad
- But too much is also bad
- Look at the US government. Who trusts that or any other big government to get things done?

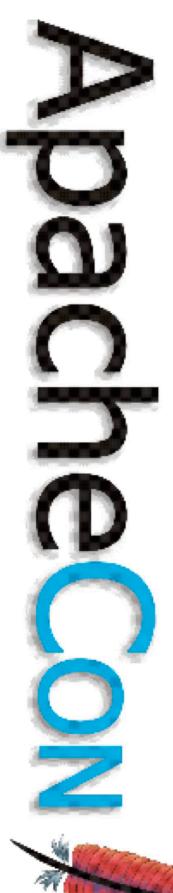




### Freeze Your governance

- The only right governance is the one you have
- Be aware of other governances

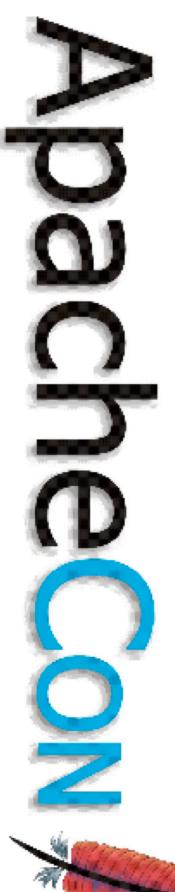




### Fail to document clearly

• how the governance operates





# Rely on Legal Mechanisms

• for the goal of community control / ownership







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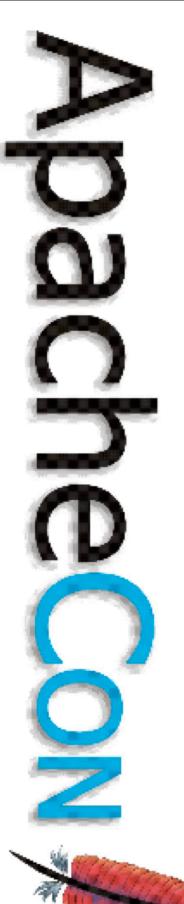
#### Communications



# Keep things private

• This is the root of all evil when it comes to building communities





# Be restrictive about approved media



#### Culture

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# Don't actively pass the culture on

- Fail to inculcate culture / way of doing things
- Say "how" but not "why"
- Starfish and the Spider





# Rules not guidelines

- Insist on rules without principles
- Prefer rules and not principled guidelines



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# Be privilege and not responsibility oriented

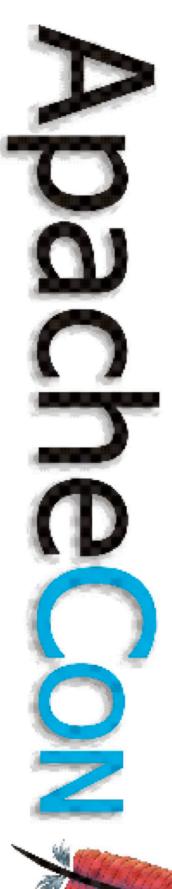
• people seek privileges as opposed to responsibility



# Build a talk-o-cracy not a doocracy

• Doing is more important than talking





#### Make criteria arbitrary or vague

- for success, advancement, inclusion
- capricious, secret or otherwise arbitrary



# Keep it professional

- That's a bunch of hooey
- Talk like a human not a droid or lawyer





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# Make an environment unfriendly to

- Women and minorities
- And non-english speakers
- The goal is a level playing field

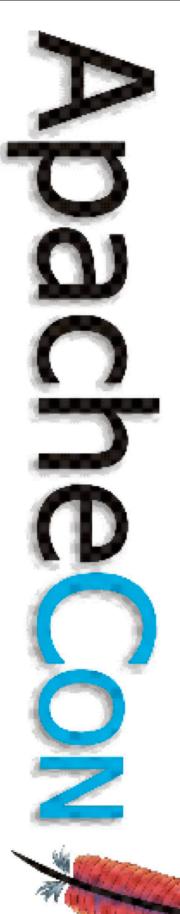




# Don't be respectful

• This should be an explicitly stated norm





### Geographical Colocation

• is an antipattern





#### Merit

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#### Believe that merit is

• absolute and absolutely measurable



#### Define Merit

• along a single or small number of dimensions



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### Change the rules

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- Constantly
- Unpredictably



### Decision Making

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# Use lots of procedures

• Have different decision making styles/ procedures for different contexts



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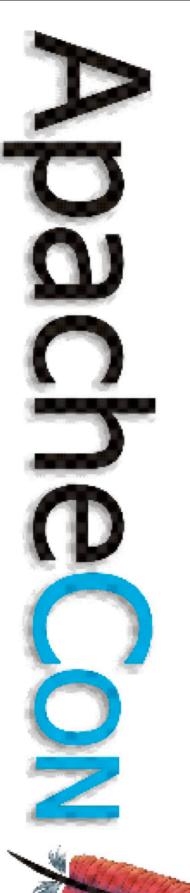
#### Leadership

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#### Ignore the need for leadership

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#### Try to "manage"

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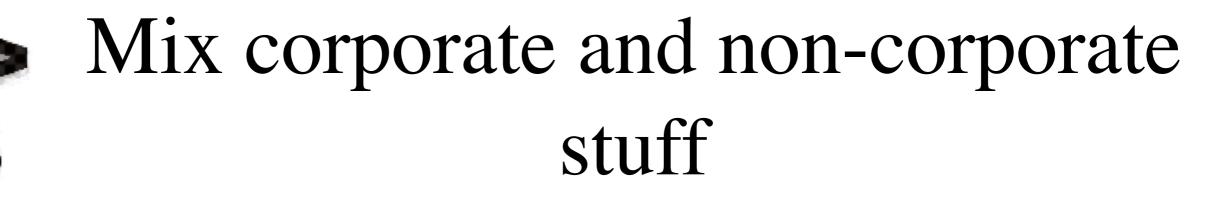
#### **Balance** Forces

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#### Be Partisan

- Make sure that one or more parties
- Obtain the majority of the benefit / benefit disproportionately





• Like NDA's



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#### Other

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# Make community building someone's job

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# Fail to apply open source tools to the governance itself

• Accountability for governance/foundation tasks





# Don't fight centralization

- The trouble starts when there are resources to manage/allocate
- Property rights (too much ownership)

