The Myth of the "Genius Programmer"

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EuroPython

These are my opinions...

Google

Quotes

“Can you guys please give Subversion on Google Code the ability to hide specific branches?”

Some Dude at Google I/O, 2008

“Can you guys make it possible to create open source projects that start out hidden to the world, then get ‘revealed’ when they’re ready?”

Some Other Dude at Google I/O, 2008

“Hi, I want to rewrite all my code from scratch, can you please wipe all the history?”

Some Guy on our mailing list

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Can you spot the theme?

The Genius Myth

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“There’s a pervasive elitism at work in the programming community. Add anonymity to the mix, and everyone is suddenly elite.”

Kyle K (Commenting on Ben’s Blog)

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Why do people buy products endorsed by celebrities?

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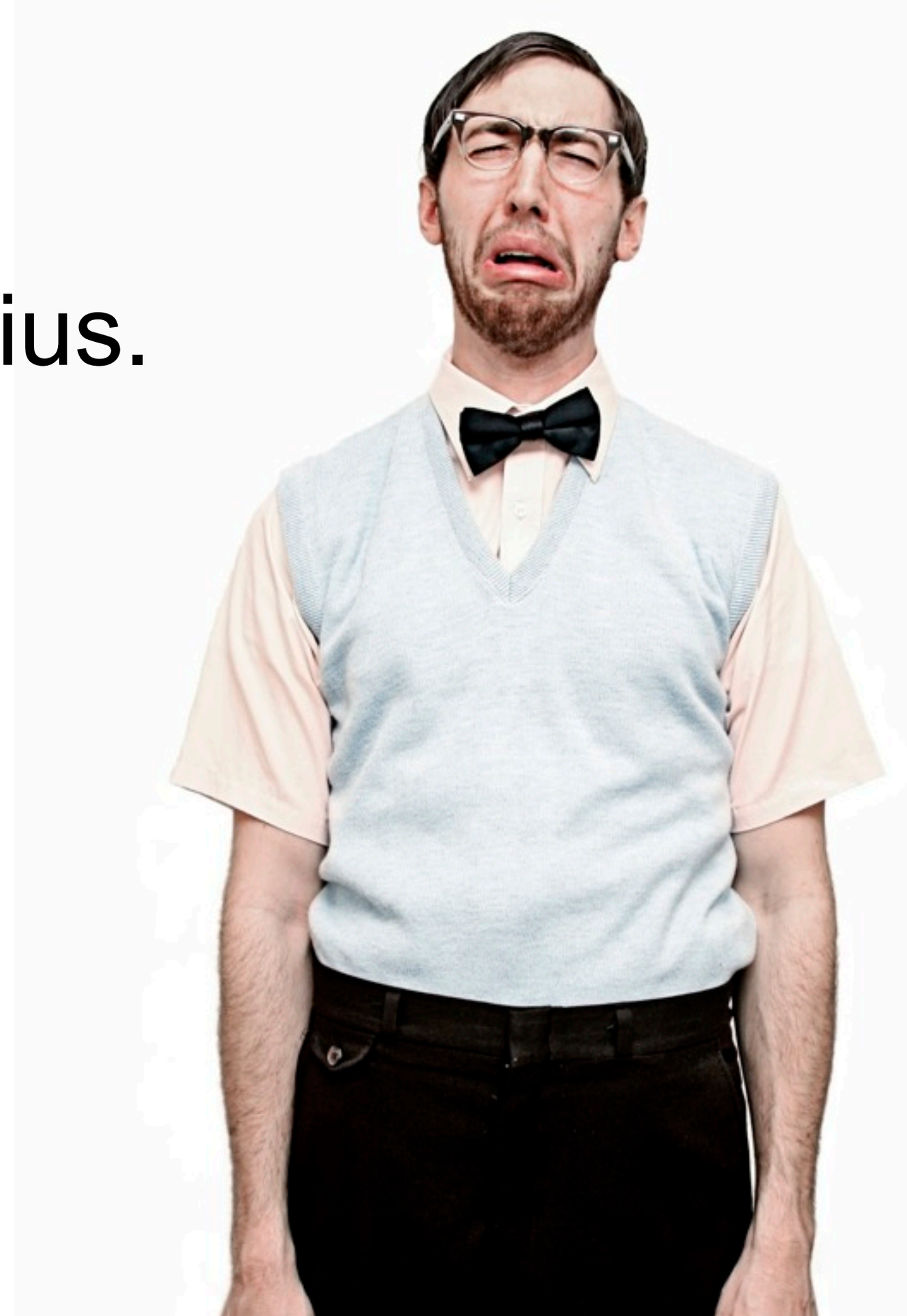
There is no genius.



Insecurity

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It Inhibits Progress

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No, really,
It Inhibits Progress

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“You are not a beautiful or unique snowflake. You're the same decaying organic matter as everything else.”

Tyler Durden, *Fight Club*

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Avoiding the Trap

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Lose the Ego

Criticism is not Evil

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Embrace Failure

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Iterate Quickly

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Practice is Key

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Be a Small Fish

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Be Influenced

Google

Be Vulnerable

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Tools Matter

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“You cannot apply a technological solution to a sociological problem...”

Internet Adage

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...usually

…but default behaviors matter a lot.

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Examples

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Moral

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When Do I Collaborate?

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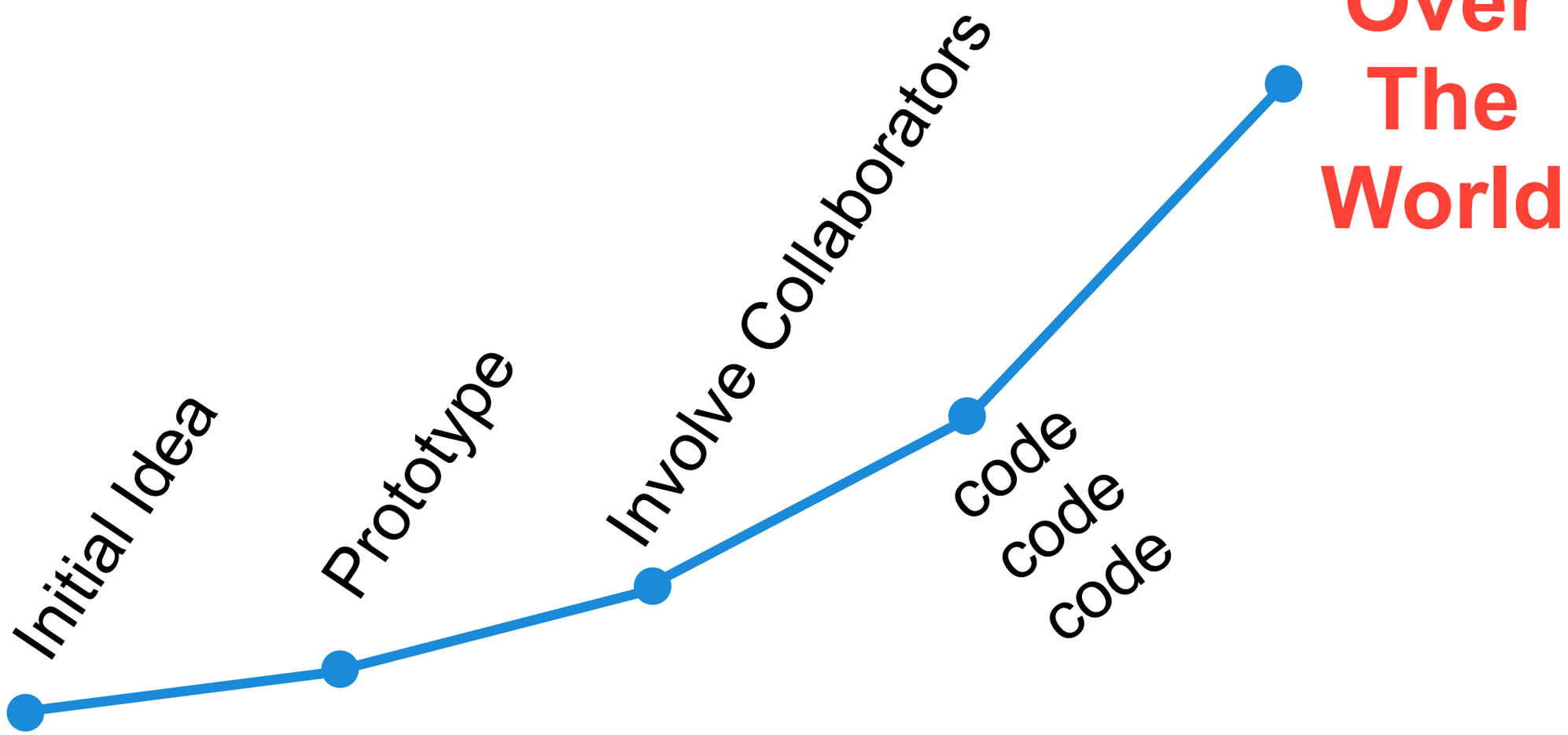
Project Evolution



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Where should the third milestone go?

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Too late

Too early

Sweet Spot!

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Case Study: Subversion

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Case Study: Ben & Fitz

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Obligatory Summary Slide

Don’t try to be a genius

Collaborate early and often

Pay attention to default tool behaviors

Pay attention to timing

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But here’s the secret...

...if you do all these things

People Will **Think** You're a Genius

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Q&A

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