

HOW TO BECOME A DISTRIBUTED COMPANY

A step-by-step guide



Twin Cities Drupal Camp
Friday June 7, 1–1:45pm



WHO AM I?

WE CREATE AND CARE
FOR DRUPAL-POWERED
WEBSITES.



WE VALUE

Honesty

Mindfulness

Sharing

Speaking Plainly

CAVEAT!
YMMV

YMMV

We didn't plan it
Retrospective 20/20
Story of evolved

OWNING AN OPEN PLAN OFFICE SPACE

Starting in 2011



ALL THINGS CHANGE

**Different people, more complex
work, larger budgets, evolution of
the tools we used**

FAST FORWARD TO 2016

**One bad client, much company
introspection & a set of values**

A row of soldiers in a trench, holding shields with a red dragon on a black and white chevron pattern. The shields are arranged in a line, and the soldiers are holding them up. The background is a cloudy sky.

TCDRUPAL 2016

KNOW YOURSELF FIRST

<https://t7.io/kyf>

STEP 0

Decide you're going to try.

STEP 1

**A team culture that
supports a sense of trust.**

UMMM YEAH...

**HOW'S THAT TPS REPORT
COMING ALONG?**

FIRST INKBLING...



STEP 2

Define why

WHY?

- **We didn't have a single reason**
 - Snow commutes are a time suck
 - Parking in the North Loop was **much** harder
 - DrupalCon excited me (timing)
 - It felt like our next step (squishy)
 - Others were doing it (never a good reason)
- **Try! Back out if needed (luxury)**

STEP 3

Support your team

TEAM SUPPORT

- **Dedicated work space at home**
 - Sensitive, e.g. no available space
- **A great chair**
 - or standing desk
- **High speed internet**
- **Real time chat and video**
 - Pay for it

TEAM EXPECTATIONS

- Keep each other informed
- Group chat, use video
- We're adults, so let people make decisions. And mistakes.
- Live your values, make decisions based on them.

STEP 4

Experiment!

EXPERIMENT

**Everyone works from
home every Friday.**

ITERATE

- **Added a second day**
 - Wednesdays and Fridays
- **Felt wrong**
- **Kept two days**
 - Switched to Tuesdays and Thursdays
 - Linear bad
- **This went on for months**



STEP 5

Don't get comfortable

NOT. SO. FAST.

- Coasting hybrid for months!
- Someone thought otherwise
- Request to be full time remote
 - Working well so far
 - Improved productivity
 - Reduced distraction
 - Commutes in the snow suck

**I COULDN'T
SAY "NO"!**

STEP 6

Make a decision

WE REALIZED:

- **No reason to be bound physically to office**
- **No client had visited us in the last two years**
- **We owned the office, no lease considerations**

DEFINE YOURSELF

- **Co-located**
 - Have offices, physically present
- **Co-located, remote first**
 - Have offices, but flexible on remote
 - Great example is Github
- **Distributed**
 - Everyone is remote

SOMEONE MAKES THE CALL



THE STEPS

1. A culture that supports trust
2. Define why
3. Support your team
4. Experiment!
5. Don't get comfortable
6. Make a decision

SOME CHALLENGES

- **Work space at home**
- **Isolation, mental health**
- **Culture, sense of trust**
- **Prioritization**
- **Benefits and taxes**
- **Work-life focus**

ADVICE

- Invest in the right tools
- #attendance
- 30min rule: ask for help
- Go to video ASAP
- Work in the work space, keep hrs
- Change your scenery



@DAPHNETHE DOX

THANK YOU!

Questions?