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# Talking With Tech Leads From Novices To Practitioners

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 Atlas of the Heart

*Talking With Tech Leads  
 From Novices To  
 Practitioners*

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## REYNA HERRERA

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Reclaiming Conversation Little, Brown  
 Finalist for the 2011 Pulitzer Prize in  
 General Nonfiction: "Nicholas Carr has  
 written a *Silent Spring* for the literary  
 mind."—Michael Agger, *Slate* "Is Google  
 making us stupid?" When Nicholas Carr  
 posed that question, in a celebrated  
*Atlantic Monthly* cover story, he tapped  
 into a well of anxiety about how the  
 Internet is changing us. He also  
 crystallized one of the most important  
 debates of our time: As we enjoy the Net's  
 bounties, are we sacrificing our ability to  
 read and think deeply? Now, Carr expands  
 his argument into the most compelling  
 exploration of the Internet's intellectual

and cultural consequences yet published.  
 As he describes how human thought has  
 been shaped through the centuries by  
 "tools of the mind"—from the alphabet to  
 maps, to the printing press, the clock, and  
 the computer—Carr interweaves a  
 fascinating account of recent discoveries  
 in neuroscience by such pioneers as  
 Michael Merzenich and Eric Kandel. Our  
 brains, the historical and scientific  
 evidence reveals, change in response to  
 our experiences. The technologies we use  
 to find, store, and share information can  
 literally reroute our neural pathways.  
 Building on the insights of thinkers from  
 Plato to McLuhan, Carr makes a convincing  
 case that every information technology  
 carries an intellectual ethic—a set of  
 assumptions about the nature of  
 knowledge and intelligence. He explains  
 how the printed book served to focus our

attention, promoting deep and creative  
 thought. In stark contrast, the Internet  
 encourages the rapid, distracted sampling  
 of small bits of information from many  
 sources. Its ethic is that of the  
 industrialist, an ethic of speed and  
 efficiency, of optimized production and  
 consumption—and now the Net is  
 remaking us in its own image. We are  
 becoming ever more adept at scanning  
 and skimming, but what we are losing is  
 our capacity for concentration,  
 contemplation, and reflection. Part  
 intellectual history, part popular science,  
 and part cultural criticism, *The Shallows*  
 sparkles with memorable  
 vignettes—Friedrich Nietzsche wrestling  
 with a typewriter, Sigmund Freud  
 dissecting the brains of sea creatures,  
 Nathaniel Hawthorne contemplating the  
 thunderous approach of a steam

locomotive—even as it plumbs profound questions about the state of our modern psyche. This is a book that will forever alter the way we think about media and our minds.

**CTOs at Work** McGraw Hill Professional  
This fast-paced action novel is set in a future where the world has been almost destroyed. Like the award-winning novel *Freak the Mighty*, this is Philbrick at his very best. It's the story of an epileptic teenager nicknamed Spaz, who begins the heroic fight to bring human intelligence back to the planet. In a world where most people are plugged into brain-drain entertainment systems, Spaz is the rare human being who can see life as it really is. When he meets an old man called Ryter, he begins to learn about Earth and its past. With Ryter as his companion, Spaz sets off an unlikely quest to save his dying sister -- and in the process, perhaps the world.

**Feed** Penguin

"In a time in which the ways we communicate and connect are constantly changing, and not always for the better, Sherry Turkle provides a much needed voice of caution and reason to help explain what the f\*\*\* is going on." —Aziz Ansari, author of *Modern Romance*  
Renowned media scholar Sherry Turkle investigates how a flight from conversation undermines our relationships, creativity, and productivity—and why reclaiming face-to-face conversation can help us regain lost ground. We live in a technological universe in which we are always communicating. And yet we have sacrificed conversation for mere connection. Preeminent author and researcher Sherry Turkle has been studying digital culture for over thirty years. Long an enthusiast for its possibilities, here she investigates a troubling consequence: at work, at home, in politics, and in love, we find ways around conversation, tempted by the possibilities of a text or an email in which we don't have to look, listen, or reveal ourselves. We develop a taste for what mere connection offers. The dinner table falls silent as children compete with phones for their parents' attention. Friends learn strategies to keep conversations going when only a few people are looking up from their phones. At work, we retreat to our screens although it is conversation at the water cooler that increases not only productivity but commitment to work. Online, we only want to share opinions that our followers will agree with – a politics that shies away from the real conflicts and solutions of the public square. The case for conversation begins with the necessary conversations of

solitude and self-reflection. They are endangered: these days, always connected, we see loneliness as a problem that technology should solve. Afraid of being alone, we rely on other people to give us a sense of ourselves, and our capacity for empathy and relationship suffers. We see the costs of the flight from conversation everywhere: conversation is the cornerstone for democracy and in business it is good for the bottom line. In the private sphere, it builds empathy, friendship, love, learning, and productivity. But there is good news: we are resilient. Conversation cures. Based on five years of research and interviews in homes, schools, and the workplace, Turkle argues that we have come to a better understanding of where our technology can and cannot take us and that the time is right to reclaim conversation. The most human—and humanizing—thing that we do. The virtues of person-to-person conversation are timeless, and our most basic technology, talk, responds to our modern challenges. We have everything we need to start, we have each other. Turkle's latest book, *The Empathy Diaries* (3/2/21) is available now.  
**Scaling Teams** "O'Reilly Media, Inc."  
Whether we're buying a pair of jeans, ordering a cup of coffee, selecting a long-distance carrier, applying to college, choosing a doctor, or setting up a 401(k), everyday decisions—both big and small—have become increasingly complex due to the overwhelming abundance of choice with which we are presented. As Americans, we assume that more choice means better options and greater satisfaction. But beware of excessive choice: choice overload can make you question the decisions you make before you even make them, it can set you up for unrealistically high expectations, and it can make you blame yourself for any and all failures. In the long run, this can lead to decision-making paralysis, anxiety, and perpetual stress. And, in a culture that tells us that there is no excuse for falling short of perfection when your options are limitless, too much choice can lead to clinical depression. In *The Paradox of Choice*, Barry Schwartz explains at what point choice—the hallmark of individual freedom and self-determination that we so cherish—becomes detrimental to our psychological and emotional well-being. In accessible, engaging, and anecdotal prose, Schwartz shows how the dramatic explosion in choice—from the mundane to the profound challenges of balancing career, family, and individual needs—has paradoxically become a problem instead of a solution. Schwartz also shows how our obsession with choice encourages us to

seek that which makes us feel worse. By synthesizing current research in the social sciences, Schwartz makes the counter intuitive case that eliminating choices can greatly reduce the stress, anxiety, and busyness of our lives. He offers eleven practical steps on how to limit choices to a manageable number, have the discipline to focus on those that are important and ignore the rest, and ultimately derive greater satisfaction from the choices you have to make.

**Measure What Matters** MIT Press

There's a saying that people don't leave companies, they leave managers. Management is a key part of any organization, yet the discipline is often self-taught and unstructured. Getting to the good solutions of complex management challenges can make the difference between fulfillment and frustration for teams, and, ultimately, the success or failure of companies. Will Larson's *An Elegant Puzzle* orients around the particular challenges of engineering management—from sizing teams to technical debt to succession planning—and provides a path to the good solutions. Drawing from his experience at Digg, Uber, and Stripe, Will Larson has developed a thoughtful approach to engineering management that leaders of all levels at companies of all sizes can apply. *An Elegant Puzzle* balances structured principles and human-centric thinking to help any leader create more effective and rewarding organizations for engineers to thrive in.

**Out of My Mind** Penguin

From the duo behind the massively successful and award-winning podcast *Stuff You Should Know* comes an unexpected look at things you thought you knew. Josh Clark and Chuck Bryant started the podcast *Stuff You Should Know* back in 2008 because they were curious—curious about the world around them, curious about what they might have missed in their formal educations, and curious to dig deeper on stuff they thought they understood. As it turns out, they aren't the only curious ones. They've since amassed a rabid fan base, making *Stuff You Should Know* one of the most popular podcasts in the world. Armed with their inquisitive natures and a passion for sharing, they uncover the weird, fascinating, delightful, or unexpected elements of a wide variety of topics. The pair have now taken their near-boundless "whys" and "hows" from your earbuds to the pages of a book for the first time—featuring a completely new array of subjects that they've long wondered about and wanted to explore. Each chapter is further embellished with

snappy visual material to allow for rabbit-hole tangents and digressions—including charts, illustrations, sidebars, and footnotes. Follow along as the two dig into the underlying stories of everything from the origin of Murphy beds, to the history of facial hair, to the psychology of being lost. Have you ever wondered about the world around you, and wished to see the magic in everyday things? Come get curious with *Stuff You Should Know*. With Josh and Chuck as your guide, there's something interesting about everything (...except maybe jackhammers).

**The Working Woman's Guide to Overthrowing the Patriarchy** Simon and Schuster

In a future where most people have computer implants in their heads to control their environment, a boy meets an unusual girl who is in serious trouble. [Talking with Tech Leads](#) Dorset House Publishing Company, Incorporated Malcolm Gladwell, host of the podcast *Revisionist History* and author of the #1 New York Times bestseller *Outliers*, offers a powerful examination of our interactions with strangers and why they often go wrong—now with a new afterword by the author. A Best Book of the Year: The Financial Times, Bloomberg, Chicago Tribune, and Detroit Free Press How did Fidel Castro fool the CIA for a generation? Why did Neville Chamberlain think he could trust Adolf Hitler? Why are campus sexual assaults on the rise? Do television sitcoms teach us something about the way we relate to one another that isn't true? *Talking to Strangers* is a classically Gladwellian intellectual adventure, a challenging and controversial excursion through history, psychology, and scandals taken straight from the news. He revisits the deceptions of Bernie Madoff, the trial of Amanda Knox, the suicide of Sylvia Plath, the Jerry Sandusky pedophilia scandal at Penn State University, and the death of Sandra Bland—throwing our understanding of these and other stories into doubt. Something is very wrong, Gladwell argues, with the tools and strategies we use to make sense of people we don't know. And because we don't know how to talk to strangers, we are inviting conflict and misunderstanding in ways that have a profound effect on our lives and our world. In his first book since his #1 bestseller *David and Goliath*, Malcolm Gladwell has written a gripping guidebook for troubled times.

**A Novel** "O'Reilly Media, Inc."

A rallying cry for working mothers everywhere that demolishes the "distracted, emotional, weak" stereotype and definitively shows that these

professionals are more focused, decisive, and stronger than any other force. Working mothers aren't a liability. They are assets you—and every manager and executive—want in your company, in your investment portfolio, and in your corner. There is copious academic research showing the benefits of working mothers on families and the benefits to companies who give women longer and more flexible parental leave. There are even findings that demonstrate women with multiple children actually perform better at work than those with none or one. Yet despite this concrete proof that working mothers are a lucrative asset, they still face the "Maternal Wall"—widespread unconscious bias about their abilities, contributions, and commitment. Nearly eighty percent of women are less likely to be hired if they have children—and are half as likely to be promoted. Mothers earn an average \$11,000 less in salary and are held to higher punctuality and performance standards. Forty percent of Silicon Valley women said they felt the need to speak less about their family to be taken more seriously. Many have been told that having a second child would cost them a promotion. Fortunately, this prejudice is slowly giving way to new attitudes, thanks to more women starting their own businesses, and companies like Netflix, Facebook, Apple, and Google implementing more parent-friendly policies. But the most important barrier to change isn't about men. Women must rethink the way they see themselves after giving birth. As entrepreneur Sarah Lacy makes clear in this cogent, persuasive analysis and clarion cry, the strongest, most lucrative, and most ambitious time of a woman's career may easily be after she sees a plus sign on a pregnancy test.

**The Rise of Addictive Technology and the Business of Keeping Us Hooked** PublicAffairs

#1 New York Times Bestseller Legendary venture capitalist John Doerr reveals how the goal-setting system of Objectives and Key Results (OKRs) has helped tech giants from Intel to Google achieve explosive growth—and how it can help any organization thrive. In the fall of 1999, John Doerr met with the founders of a start-up whom he'd just given \$12.5 million, the biggest investment of his career. Larry Page and Sergey Brin had amazing technology, entrepreneurial energy, and sky-high ambitions, but no real business plan. For Google to change the world (or even to survive), Page and Brin had to learn how to make tough choices on priorities while keeping their team on track. They'd have to know when

to pull the plug on losing propositions, to fail fast. And they needed timely, relevant data to track their progress—to measure what mattered. Doerr taught them about a proven approach to operating excellence: Objectives and Key Results. He had first discovered OKRs in the 1970s as an engineer at Intel, where the legendary Andy Grove ("the greatest manager of his or any era") drove the best-run company Doerr had ever seen. Later, as a venture capitalist, Doerr shared Grove's brainchild with more than fifty companies. Wherever the process was faithfully practiced, it worked. In this goal-setting system, objectives define what we seek to achieve; key results are how those top-priority goals will be attained with specific, measurable actions within a set time frame. Everyone's goals, from entry level to CEO, are transparent to the entire organization. The benefits are profound. OKRs surface an organization's most important work. They focus effort and foster coordination. They keep employees on track. They link objectives across silos to unify and strengthen the entire company. Along the way, OKRs enhance workplace satisfaction and boost retention. In *Measure What Matters*, Doerr shares a broad range of first-person, behind-the-scenes case studies, with narrators including Bono and Bill Gates, to demonstrate the focus, agility, and explosive growth that OKRs have spurred at so many great organizations. This book will help a new generation of leaders capture the same magic.

**The Age of Surveillance Capitalism** Harper Collins

Scott Donaldson, Stanley Siegel and Gary Donaldson interview many of the world's most influential chief technology officers in *CTOs at Work*, offering a brand-new companion volume to the highly acclaimed elite *At Work* books including *Coders at Work*, *CIOs at Work* and *Venture Capitalists at Work*. As the words "at work" suggest, the authors focus on how their interviewees tackle the day-to-day work of the CTO while revealing much more: how they got there, how they manage and allocate projects, and how they interact with business units and ensure that their companies take advantage of technologies, teamwork, and software development practices to respond to organizational needs and improve employee productivity. Surveying a variety of unique corporations, *CTOs at Work* offers insights into the present and future of CTOs in organizations around the world. Other books in the *Apress At Work Series*: *Coders at Work*, Seibel, 978-1-4302-1948-4 *Venture Capitalists at*



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Getting Things Done Talking with Tech Leads  
 From Novices to Practitioners  
 A totalitarian regime has ordered all books to be destroyed, but one of the book burners suddenly realizes their merit.  
Multipliers "O'Reilly Media, Inc."  
 "Johnson and Suskewicz have raised a battle cry for the kind of leadership we need in these uncertain times." -- Sandi Peterson, Member, Board of Directors, Microsoft  
 We all know a visionary leader when we see one. They're bold and prophetic and at the same time pragmatic. They don't just promote change--they drive it, while inspiring and mobilizing others to do the same. Visionaries like Steve Jobs and Jeff Bezos possess a host of innate qualities that make them extraordinary, but what truly sets them apart is their ability to turn vision into action. In *Lead from the Future*, Innosight's Mark W. Johnson and Josh Suskewicz introduce a new way of thinking and managing, called "future-back," that enables any manager to become a practical visionary. Addressing the many barriers to change that exist in established organizations, they present a systematic approach to overcoming them that includes: The principles and mind-set that allow leadership teams to look beyond typical short-term planning horizons  
 A method for turning emerging challenges into the growth opportunities that can define an organization's future  
 A step-by-step approach for translating a vision into a strategic plan that teams can align around and commit to  
 Ways to ensure that visionary thinking becomes a repeatable organizational capability  
 As practical as it is inspiring, *Lead from the Future* is the guide you and your team need to develop a vision and translate it into transformative growth.  
An Organic Problem-solving Approach  
 HarperCollins  
 The software development ecosystem is constantly changing, providing a constant stream of new tools, frameworks, techniques, and paradigms. Over the past few years, incremental developments in core engineering practices for software development have created the foundations for rethinking how architecture changes over time, along with ways to protect important architectural

characteristics as it evolves. This practical guide ties those parts together with a new way to think about architecture and time.  
*How Google Runs Production Systems*  
 Simon and Schuster  
 Make workplace conflict resolution a game that EVERYBODY wins! Recent studies show that typical managers devote more than a quarter of their time to resolving coworker disputes. The *Big Book of Conflict-Resolution Games* offers a wealth of activities and exercises for groups of any size that let you manage your business (instead of managing personalities). Part of the acclaimed, bestselling Big Books series, this guide offers step-by-step directions and customizable tools that empower you to heal rifts arising from ineffective communication, cultural/personality clashes, and other specific problem areas—before they affect your organization's bottom line. Let *The Big Book of Conflict-Resolution Games* help you to: Build trust Foster morale Improve processes Overcome diversity issues And more  
 Dozens of physical and verbal activities help create a safe environment for teams to explore several common forms of conflict—and their resolution. Inexpensive, easy-to-implement, and proved effective at Fortune 500 corporations and mom-and-pop businesses alike, the exercises in *The Big Book of Conflict-Resolution Games* delivers everything you need to make your workplace more efficient, effective, and engaged.  
*Why We Sleep* O'Reilly Media  
 Ray Kurzweil is the inventor of the most innovative and compelling technology of our era, an international authority on artificial intelligence, and one of our greatest living visionaries. Now he offers a framework for envisioning the twenty-first century—an age in which the marriage of human sensitivity and artificial intelligence fundamentally alters and improves the way we live. Kurzweil's prophetic blueprint for the future takes us through the advances that inexorably result in computers exceeding the memory capacity and computational ability of the human brain by the year 2020 (with human-level capabilities not far behind); in relationships with automated personalities who will be our teachers, companions, and lovers; and in information fed straight into our brains along direct neural pathways. Optimistic and challenging, thought-provoking and engaging, *The Age of Spiritual Machines* is the ultimate guide on our road into the next century.  
**Software Engineering at Google**  
 Oxford University Press

Over the last 25 years, India's explosive economic growth has vaulted it into the ranks of the world's emerging major powers. Long plagued by endemic poverty, until the 1990s the Indian economy was also hamstrung by a burdensome regulatory regime that limited its ability to compete on a global scale. Since then, however, the Indian government has gradually opened up the economy and the results have been stunning. India's middle class has grown by leaps and bounds, and the country's sheer scale—its huge population and \$2 trillion economy—means its actions will have a major global impact. From world trade to climate change to democratization, India now matters. While it is clearly on the path to becoming a great power, India has not abandoned all of its past policies: its economy remains relatively protectionist, and it still struggles with the legacy of its longstanding foreign policy doctrine of non-alignment. India's vibrant democracy encompasses a vast array of parties who champion dizzyingly disparate policies. And India isn't easily swayed by foreign influence; the country carefully guards its autonomy, in part because of its colonial past. For all of these reasons, India tends to move cautiously and deliberately in the international sphere. In *Our Time Has Come* Alyssa Ayres looks at how the tension between India's inward-focused past and its ongoing integration into the global economy will shape its trajectory. Today, Indian leaders increasingly want to see their country feature in the ranks of the world's great powers—in fact, as a "leading power," to use the words of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Ayres considers the role India is likely to play as its prominence grows, taking stock of the implications and opportunities for the US and other nations as the world's largest democracy defines its place in the world. As she shows, India breaks the mold of the typical "ally," and its vastness, history, and diversity render it incomparable to any other major democratic power. By focusing on how India's unique perspective shapes its approach to global affairs, *Our Time Has Come* will help the world make sense of India's rise.  
*Design Justice* Simon and Schuster  
 Why does poor software quality continue to plague enterprises of all sizes in all industries? Part of the problem lies with the process, rather than individual developers. This practical guide provides ten best practices to help team leaders create an effective working environment through key adjustments to their process. As a follow-up to their popular book,

Building Maintainable Software, consultants with the Software Improvement Group (SIG) offer critical lessons based on their assessment of development processes used by hundreds of software teams. Each practice includes examples of goalsetting to help you choose the right metrics for your team. Achieve development goals by determining meaningful metrics with the Goal-Question-Metric approach Translate those goals to a verifiable Definition of Done Manage code versions for consistent and predictable modification Control separate environments for each stage in the development pipeline Automate tests as much as possible and steer their guidelines and expectations Let the Continuous Integration server do much of the hard work for you Automate the process of pushing code through the pipeline Define development process standards to improve consistency and simplicity Manage dependencies on third party code to keep your software consistent and up to date Document only the most necessary and current knowledge

Fahrenheit 451 "O'Reilly Media, Inc." A leading philosopher takes a mind-bending journey through virtual worlds, illuminating the nature of reality and our place within it. Virtual reality is genuine reality; that's the central thesis of Reality+. In a highly original work of "technophilosophy," David J. Chalmers gives a compelling analysis of our technological future. He argues that virtual worlds are not second-class worlds, and that we can live a meaningful life in virtual reality. We may even be in a virtual world already. Along the way, Chalmers conducts a grand tour of big ideas in philosophy and science. He uses virtual reality technology to offer a new perspective on long-established philosophical questions. How do we know that there's an external world? Is there a god? What is the nature of reality? What's the relation between mind and body? How can we lead a good life? All of these questions are illuminated or transformed by Chalmers' mind-bending analysis. Studded with illustrations that bring philosophical issues to life, Reality+ is a

major statement that will shape discussion of philosophy, science, and technology for years to come.

*The Last Book in the Universe* W. W. Norton & Company

Are you running retrospectives regularly? Perhaps you run retrospectives once a week, or fortnightly. Do you feel like you could be getting more out of your retrospectives and fuelling continuous improvement in your teams? You may already find retrospectives valuable, but suspect there are ways of making them better. This book condenses down eight years of experience working with the retrospective practice within the context of real agile teams. It offers you practice advice on how to make your retrospectives even more effective including topics such as: Best methods to prepare for a retrospective Picking just the right materials Facilitating retrospectives with ease Dealing with common retrospective smells Retrospectives in different contexts including distributed, large and small groups A checklist for preparation Ensuring retrospectives result in change

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