On the herding of cats

Georgia Public Library Service
Who's who

- Administrative Lead
  - General direction
  - Political translation
- Team Lead / Project Manager
  - Coordination
  - Set expectations
- Developers / Domain Specialists
  - Technical decisions
- Your customers!
  - The reason you are there
Defining Goals

- Long term
  - Flexible and general time-lines
  - Over-arching framework
  - Functionally dependent Milestones
Defining Goals

- **Medium Term**
  - Soft deadlines – weeks or months +/- 1
  - Full team functional deliverables
Defining Goals

- Short term
  - Short cycles – week at most
  - Individual technical deliverables
Developer Do's

**Do:**
- Discus everything until all stakeholders understand the issues
- Question every assumption
  - For instance, a standard is useful only if it's in use elsewhere too
- Build technical consensus
- Bring on the numbers
- Push up
- Push back
- Call shenanigans
Developer Don'ts

• Do Not:
  - Leave your ego at the door, but ...
  - Let your ego rule you
  - Take management support for granted
  - Mistake discussion for consensus
  - Forget to bring the numbers when pushing up (or back)
And finally ...

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Don't fear a fight!
Administration Do's

• Do:
  - Listen to everything your engineers have to say
  - Advocate for the customers (to the engineers)
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  - Listen to your engineers (yes, it's here twice)
Administrative Don'ts

- Do Nott
  - Force hard long-term time-lines
  - Require non-optimal working environment
  - Be afraid to adjust the team
  - Discount empirical evidence
  - Believe the hype
Customer Do's

- Do:
  - Participate from the start
  - Be honest with initial feedback
  - Ask for clarification if something is confusing
Customer Don'ts

- Do Not:
  - Make assumptions about functionality
  - Avoid “touchy” subjects
  - Worry about looking ignorant (you're not supposed to know about programming)
Meetings

- As often as needed and no more
- Do it until it's done
- Include deliverables stakeholders and no one else

And, of course...
Tools / Environment

- Telecommuting
  - Spontaneous meetings are BAD
- Control over development equipment
  - Use the right tool for the job
- No language or tool mandates!
  - The right tool is whatever gets things done
Results Measurement

- Were short, medium term goals on time?
- Did the general long term time-line slip?
- Functionally complete?
- Customer acceptance?

Most importantly, Working Code Wins!
Thank you for your time!

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