

Ambiguous Ambition: Lessons From a Year of Leadership

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Black Python Devs, Regional Executor: North America [2025]

New Role, Same Community

- Two people had been responsible for all of it, everywhere
- That had become far too much for them handle alone
- So the work got split up by region
- **North America was mine**

The Roadmap

- There had been events sponsored the year before
- I wasn't held to doing the same thing
- If anything, I was encouraged not to
- **Whatever roadmap existed, I'd been handed a lighter and told to burn it**

What I Knew Starting Out

- I didn't know what the year would hold
- I didn't know what requests would come across my desk
- I didn't know what the day to day would look like
- **I knew I had to decide for myself**

Things My Parents Told Me



Lesson One: It's Who You Know

Each Community Is Its Own World

- Online first is a strength: Discord allows bonds across time zones
- I had no DevRel background and no relationships in those rooms
- I couldn't get to know the local communities from the outside

So I Showed Up

- PyCascades, PyTexas, PyCon US, PyOhio, PyBay
- **I paid my own way to as many as I could get to**



The Actual Job

- I was never going to have all the answers
- Honestly, I didn't want them. That isn't the job.
- "You should ask so and so about that"
- **That only works if you know people**

A Question I'm Still Thinking About

- "Would BPD show up to this conference, support this community, if I were the only member here?"

Yes

- You're part of our community
- We want your local community to thrive for you

That's the whole point

Lesson Two: Just Keep Living

The answer to everything

Not Everything Makes Sense Without the Experience

- "Why watch a game when you already know the score?"
- **Just keep living**

Everything Costs Something

- The proposal: bring high school students to PyCon US
- The part really highlighted throughout the pitch was that it could cost BPD nothing
- The cost was time and people.
- **I had to say no**

Travel Requests

- Sometimes it costs more than we budgeted, which is easy to explain
- Sometimes the money is there and the paperwork won't clear in time
- You have to be okay with people not liking your no
- **"Just keep living."**

Lesson Three: "Where Are You Going?"

"Crazy."

Marketing

- Designing it. 👎
- Ordering it. 👎👎
- Guessing quantities with no baseline to guess from

The thing I liked least took the most of me



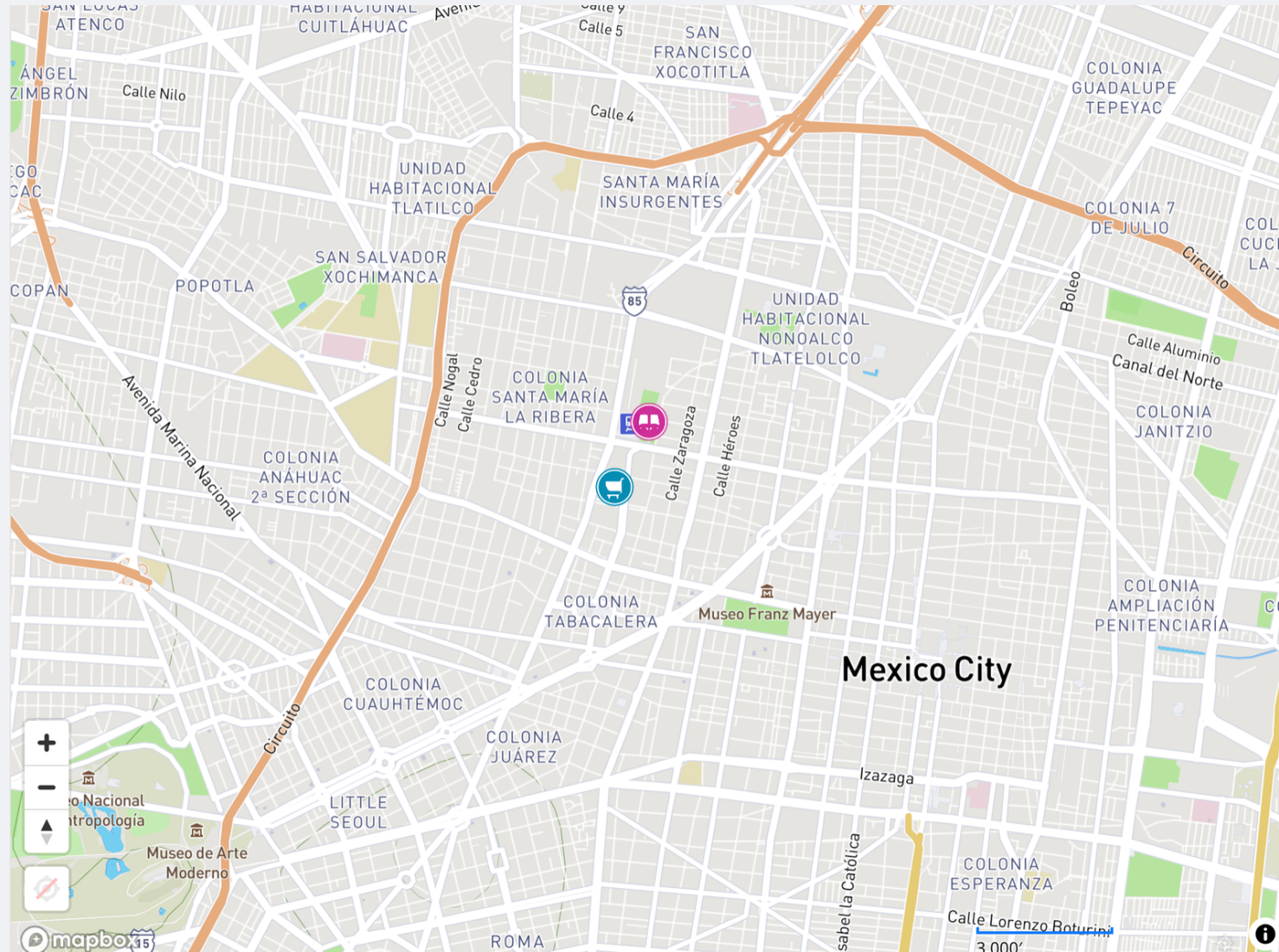
Resetting Before PyCon: Mexico City

- Lucha Libre
- Museums
- Food
- And accepting I wasn't going to see all of it





Because Walmart Was Next Door



Because I Needed Swag For PyCon



Nobody Tells You the Tank Is Empty

- This is a volunteer position and I still work full time
- The rest of life does not slow down to accommodate any of it
- **Things you used to do easily start taking everything you've got**

PyOhio 2025

- "I owe you something, but I've been burnt out and I don't remember what it is"
- "I think I owe **you** something, but I've been burnt out"

What We Take From That

- It's okay not to enjoy everything you have to do
- A lot of the effort goes into things nobody ever sees
- **Including the people you're doing it for**

Why Do It? Just Keep Living

The work made a difference
Even the parts I couldn't stand

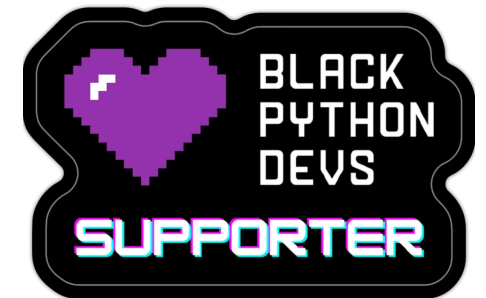
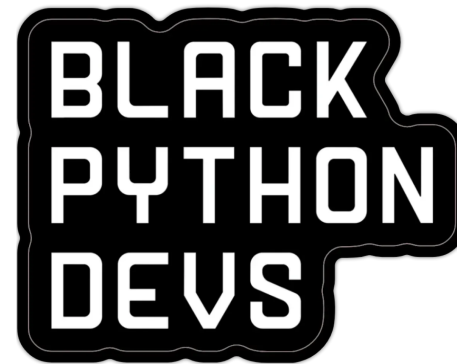
Stickers

- Did I loathe designing them? Yes.
- Was it worth it when somebody loved one? Yes.
- Did that make the next round of making sticker easier?

Not even a little.

The Sticker That Made It Easier

- "I can't put that on my work laptop"
- That's not a problem with the design
- **I couldn't have discovered that in a discord survey**



Why Do It? It's Who You Know

There's a real difference between believing your work matters and knowing that it does.

Outside My Region

- PyDay Santo Domingo
- Ubuntu Tech
- Django Girls Colombia
- **None of it was planned. All of it happened because I met people.**



Everyone Here Is a Person First

- Some have been here for years. Some are just passing through.
- Some weeks people are dependable. Some weeks they're flaky.
- **That's worth remembering**



Keep Doing It Anyway

- You don't have all the answers
- You don't enjoy all of it
- Most of your work isn't seen
- Meet people
- Say the hard no
- **Be ambitious when the path is ambiguous**

Like My Dad Always Says Just Keep Living

Thank you

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