shopify

Speaker

(Dr.) James Stanier

Director of Engineering

Our onboarding program

How we onboard remotely in four weeks

Coming up

What is onboarding?
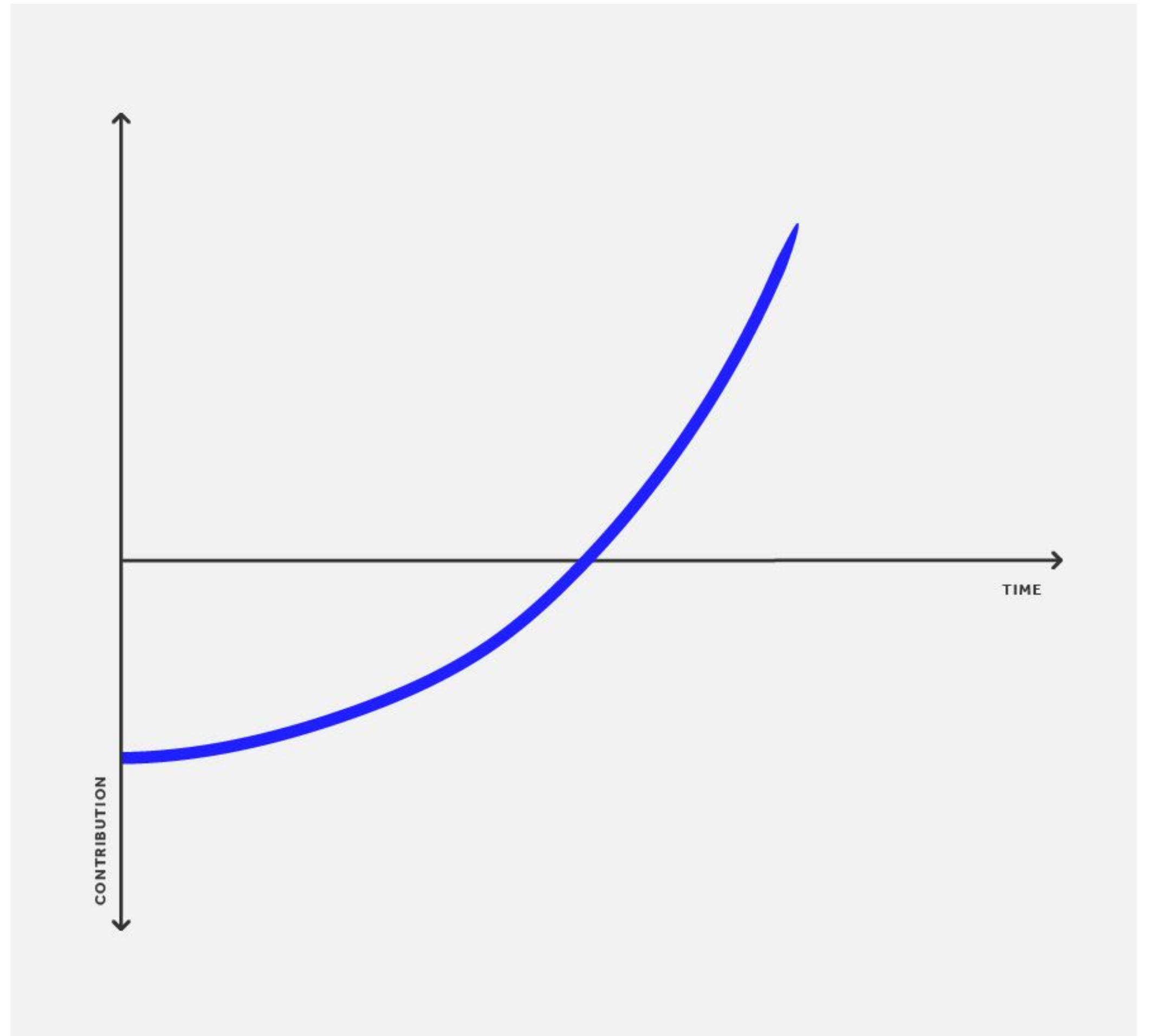
Onboarding is…

Essential

- Great onboarding reduces the time that it takes to get to net positive contribution
- A one-time-only opportunity

A funnel

- Generic → specialist
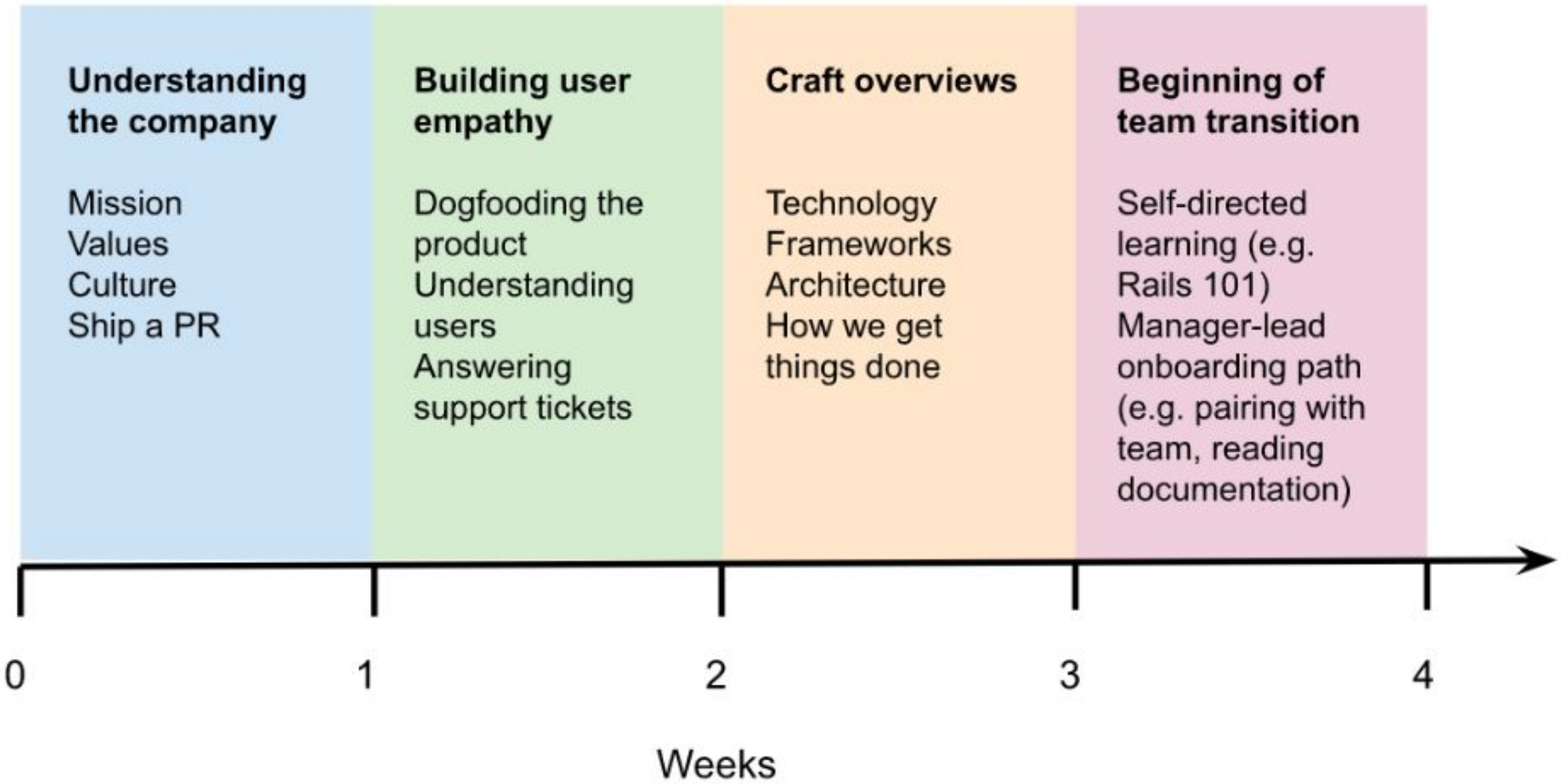- Centralized → decentralized

Accelerate through the curve

The Engineering Manager, **The Contribution Curve**

Shopify's four week program

4 weeks

Understanding the company	Building user empathy	Craft overviews	Beginning of team transition
Mission Values Culture Ship a PR	Dogfooding the product Understanding users Answering support tickets	Technology Frameworks Architecture How we get things done	Self-directed learning (e.g. Rails 101) Manager-lead onboarding path (e.g. pairing with team, reading documentation)

0   1   2   3   4

Weeks

Generalism   **Specialism**

Passive   **Active**

Me x Lead Dev, **How to onboard remote staff in 4 weeks**

Structure

- **Day 1**: assignment to onboarding cohort
- **Weeks 1 and 2**: onboarding relevant to every employee
- **Week 3:** onboarding specific to a craft
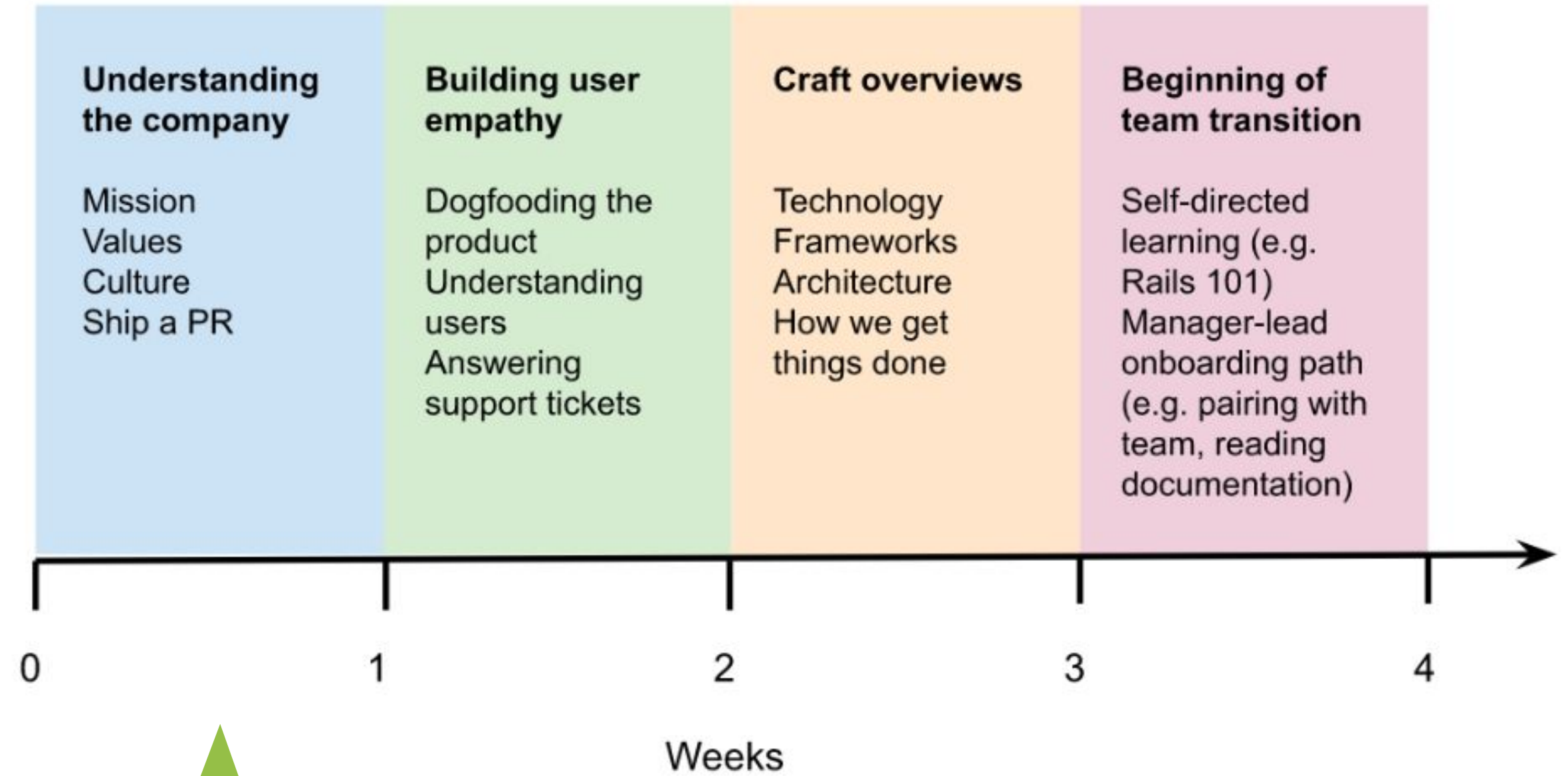- **Week 4:** onboarding specific to team transition

Generalism   →   **Specialism**

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Week 1: understanding the company

Week 1

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Weeks

Me x Lead Dev, **How to onboard remote staff in 4 weeks**
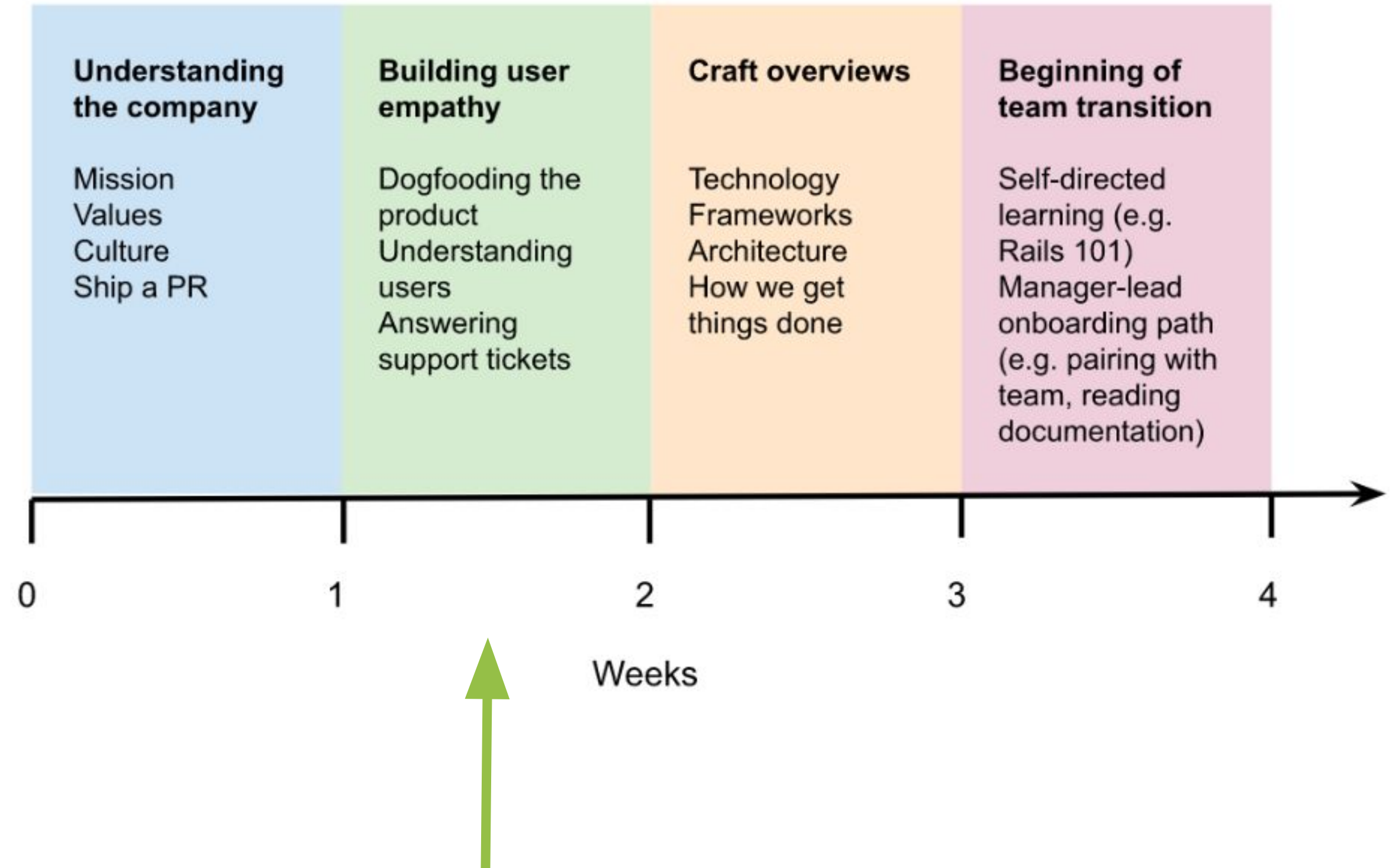
Week 1: activities

- **Icebreakers:** get to know your cohort
- **Mission**: why are we here?
- **Values**: how do we work together?
- **Culture**: how do we treat each other?
- **Ship a PR**: yes, to production!

Think variety: individual, group, text, video, presentations

Week 2: building user empathy

Week 2

Understanding the company

Mission
Values
Culture
Ship a PR

Building user empathy

Dogfooding the product
Understanding users
Answering support tickets

Craft overviews

Technology
Frameworks
Architecture
How we get things done

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Weeks

Me x Lead Dev, **How to onboard remote staff in 4 weeks**
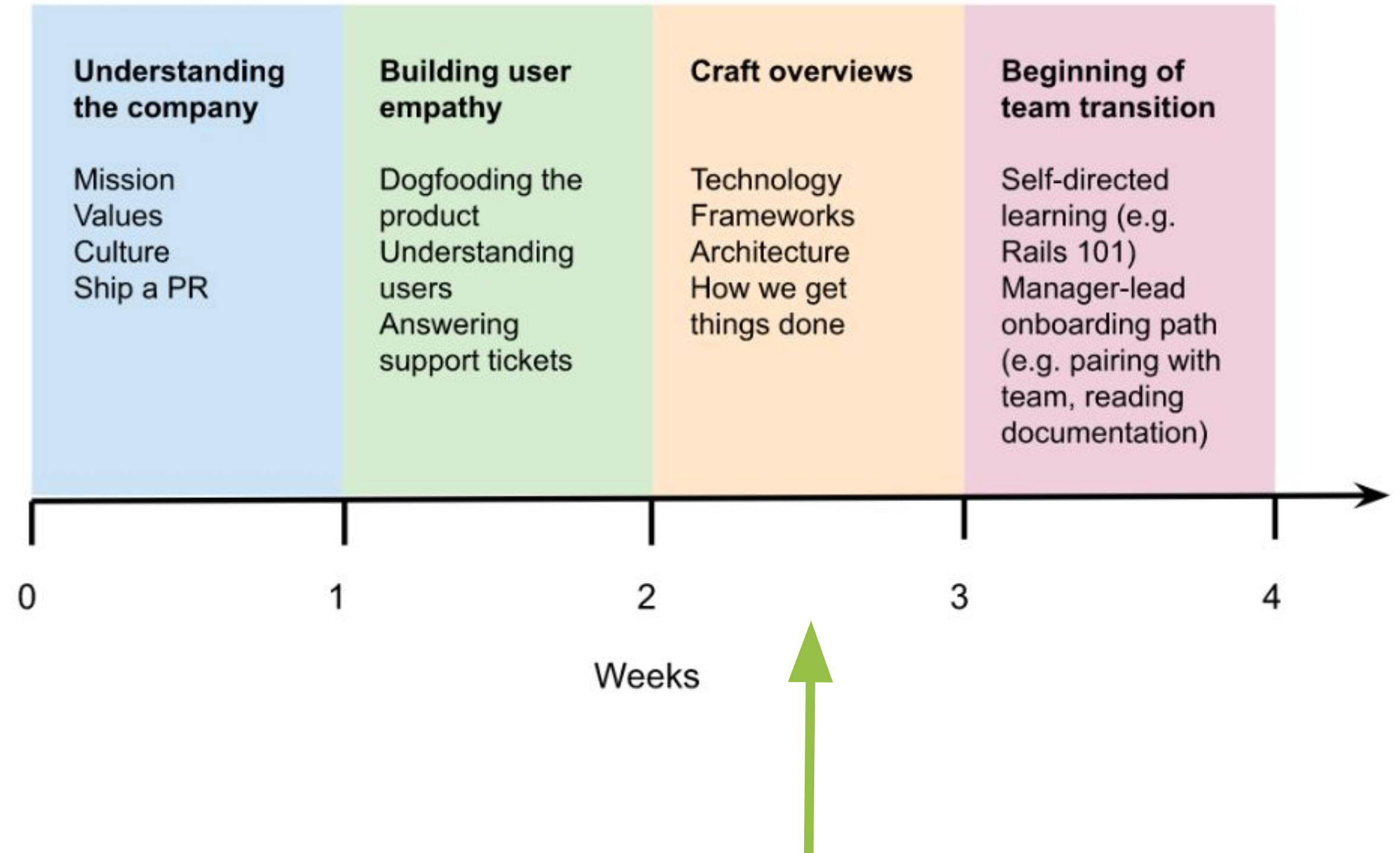
Week 2: activities

- **Dogfooding:** build your own store
- **Understanding users:** complete non-trivial briefs
- **Answering support tickets:** listen in to calls, join the front line

Think realism: how can new employees immerse themselves and feel the impact of the company they work for?

Week 3: craft overviews

Week 3

Understanding the company

Mission
Values
Culture
Ship a PR

Building user empathy

Dogfooding the product
Understanding users
Answering support tickets

Craft overviews

Technology
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Weeks

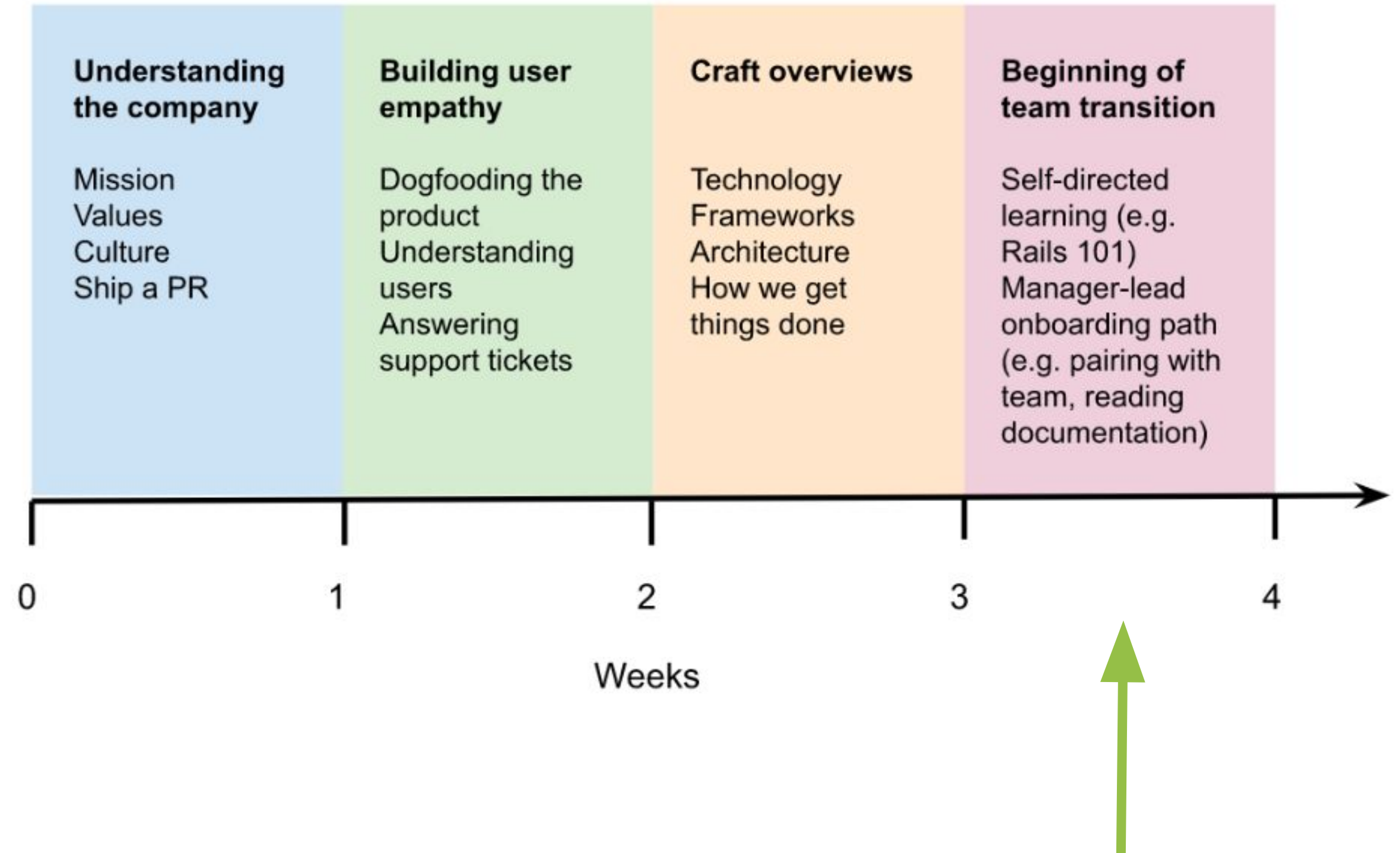Me x Lead Dev, **How to onboard remote staff in 4 weeks**

Week 3: activities

- **Technology choices:** what languages are used where and why?
- **Frameworks:** what is the standard green path stack?
- **Architecture:** how are the important pieces structured?
- **How projects get done:** what is the lifecycle of a project?

Think individualism: ramp down group activities, increase self-study blocks with check-ins

Week 4: transitioning to your team

Week 4

Understanding the company

Mission
Values
Culture
Ship a PR

Building user empathy

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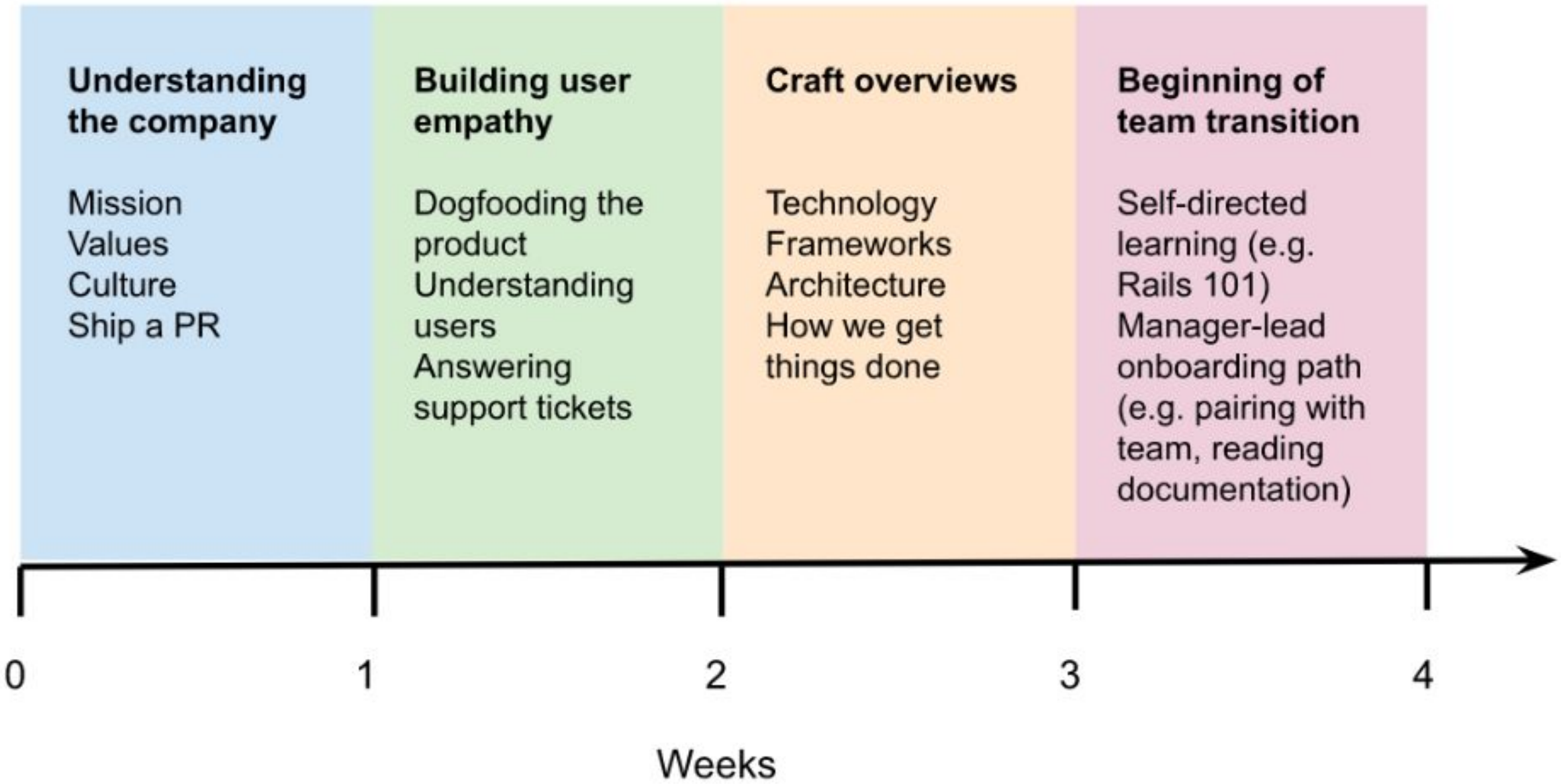Me x Lead Dev, **How to onboard remote staff in 4 weeks**

Week 4: activities

- **Self-directed learning:** space to do bootcamp courses
- **Manager-lead onboarding:** tailored to the individual

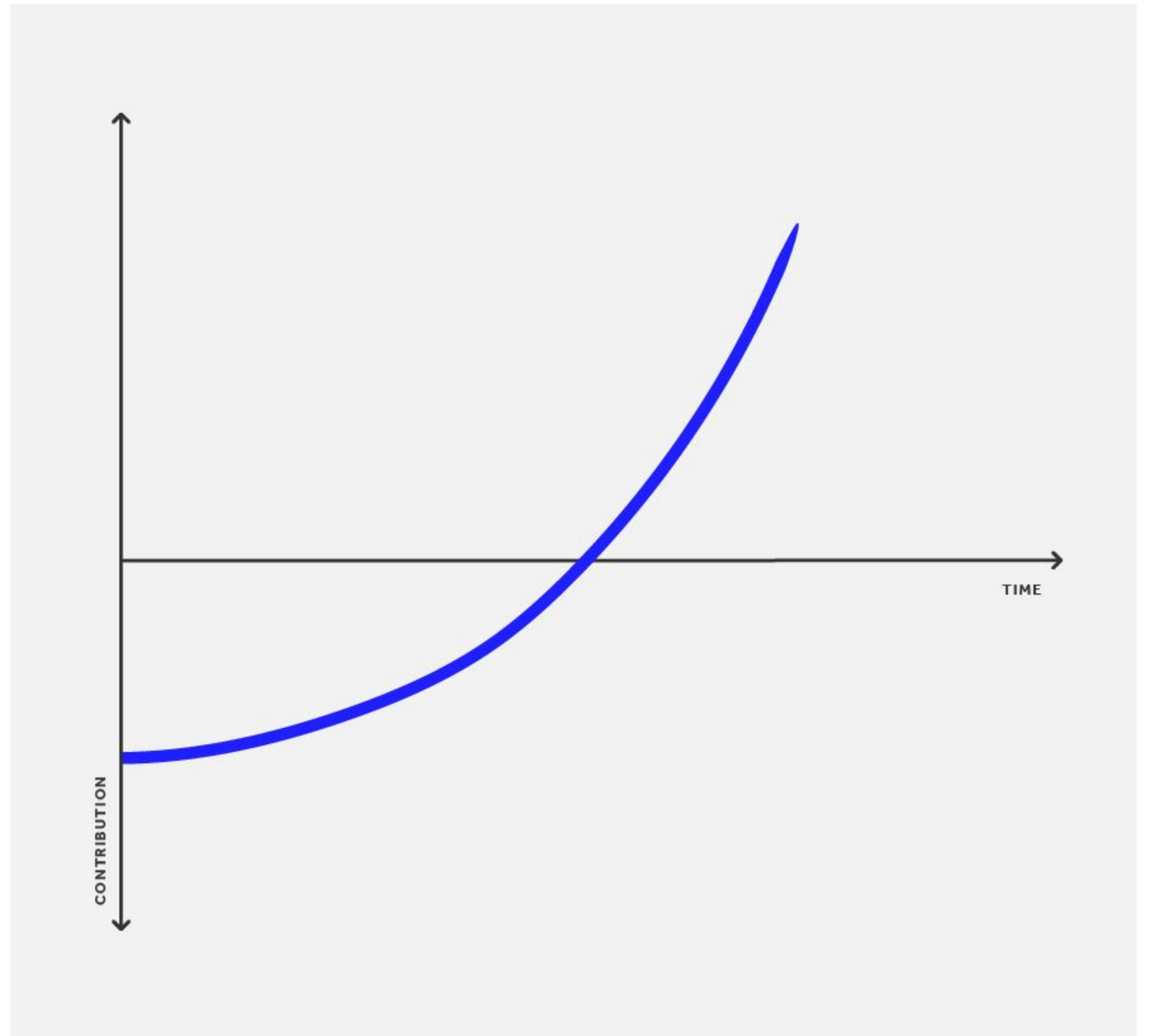**Think integration:** how can the new engineer be part of the team from next week?
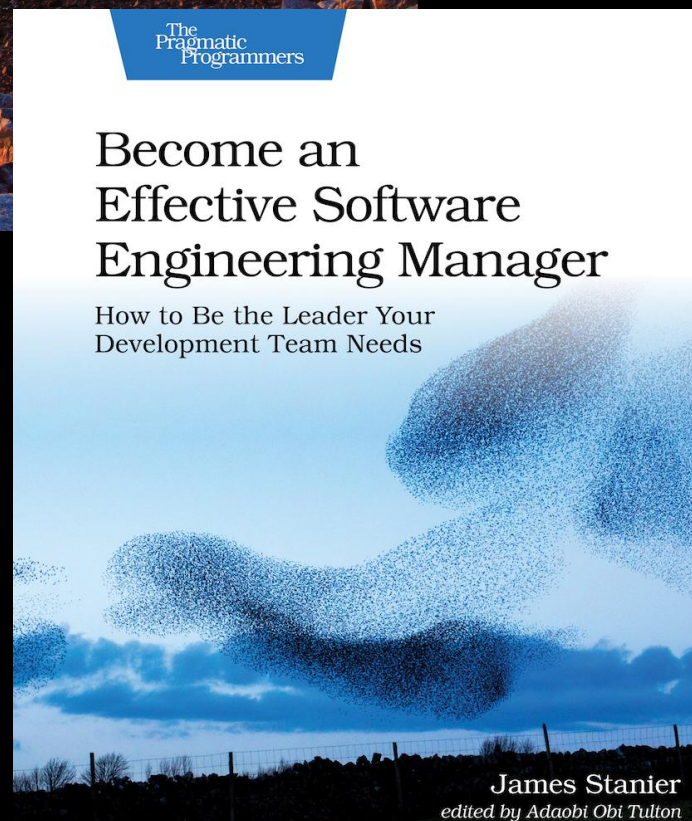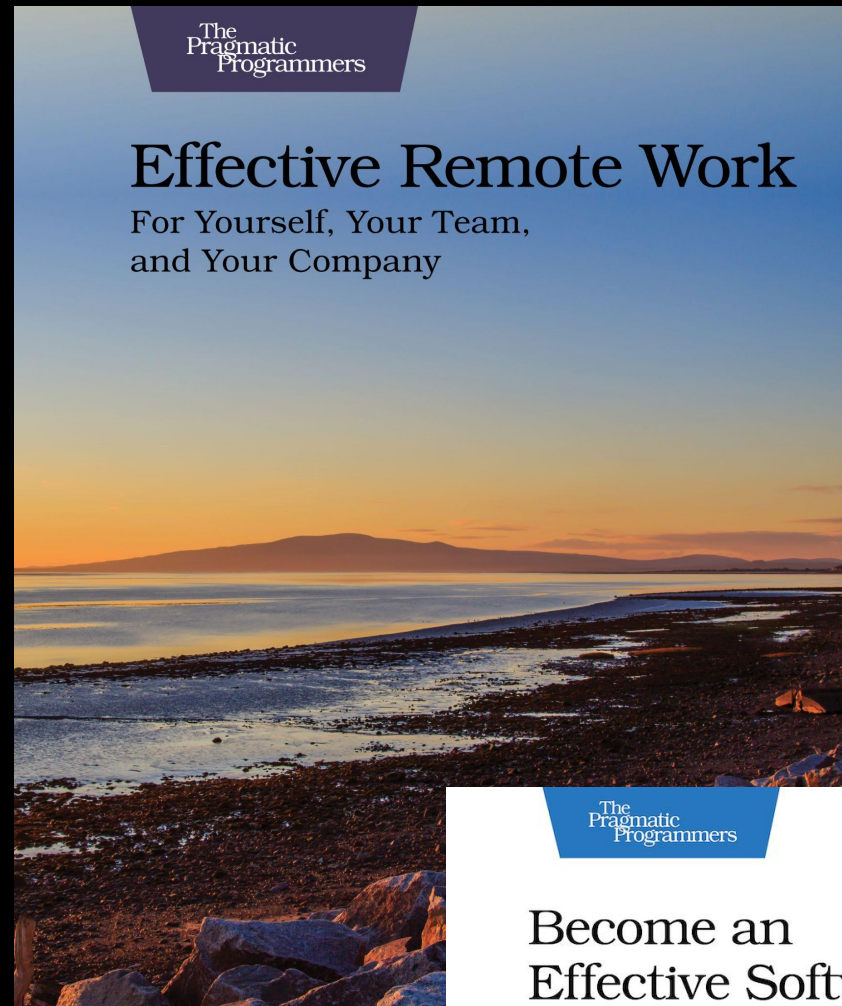
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Thank you!

Always happy to chat

- **@jstanier** everywhere
- theengineeringmanager.com

I wrote a book on remote work

- It's called **Effective Remote Work**

...and on eng management!

- **Become an Effective Software Engineering Manager**