

An Interview With Thomas

with Miles Fidino and Thomas Denning

Miles:



I have been curious about what you personally do besides Tinypulse (Our company's anonymous survey/idea tool) to maintain and open line of communication with those that you work with.

Thomas:



Honestly, I just try to be as approachable as possible. I like to sit with everyone and make it known that I'm available whenever they need me. Everyone here is always flexible throughout the day, and I try to reciprocate that flexibility as much as possible.

Miles:



What you do to ensure the people that you have the opportunity to sit down with feel heard?

Thomas:



People feel heard when they see change happen based on their feedback and comments. It is important for me to deliver as much as possible to the team, otherwise the good feedback will stop flowing. If something can't be acted on right now, I try to make it known to them so there isn't anything lost in silence.

Miles:



How do you make sure the people at pdx.net feel valued at work? Do you go out to lunch with them, have group discussions, implement ideas they have?

Thomas:



All of the above. I think feedback should be constant, though I can be kind of a no-news-is-good-news type. Longer term, I like people to become the "owners" of specific things, be they certain technologies, or certain processes.

I personally get a lot of value out of being the owner of a process, refining it and perfecting it while seeing the fruits of my labor. Our team is made up of a lot of people who have expert level knowledge in this field, and want to put that to

use. Giving them something to own gives everyone an avenue to improve the way we do things, and bring positive changes to the whole team.

Miles:



Now that we have gotten to know a bit about your process at work, I'd like to ask you some personal questions to understand who you are better.

Could I ask a little bit about your background, how you got into IT, when and why you joined Portland Internetworks?

Thomas:



I started out in a really horrible call center MSP doing something like 40-50 calls a day, and pretty much swore off the MSP life all together. After a few years of doing "corporate" IT support I met Doug, came to PDX, and haven't looked back.

Miles:



What is your hands down favorite thing to do on the weekend?

Thomas:



Anything with my family really. We're all looking forward to some warmer weather so we can get outdoors and go camping. I expect we'll be doing a lot of that this year!

Miles:



If money weren't an object where would you take your family?

Thomas:



I don't know if there is one destination, but a tour of Europe would be pretty high up on the list.