How to be dispensable

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How to be indispensable

• Use a language that no-one else knows
• Hack straight into prod and make sure it’s not in version control
• Be path critical on every Gant chart
• Never document anything – or document everything so thoroughly no-one can face reading your 1,000 page epic
• Make sure no-one knows how to test your code (including you)
• Use obscure language corners and rely on specifics of this compiler version
Further details

• What have I left out?
  • http://c2.com/cgi/wiki?GetRidOfIndispensableProgrammerAsQuicklyAsPossible
  • http://c2.com/cgi/wiki?JobSecurity
Conclusion

• "If a programmer is indispensable, get rid of him as quickly as possible."
  – Gerald Weinberg in The Psychology Of Computer Programming

• "Corollary: If you yourself suspect you are becoming indispensable, use your awesome powers to immediately make yourself dispensable. Find and train understudies."
How to be dispensable

• Pair programme or get your work code reviewed – everything you do will be understood by someone else
• Anyone else can carry on with your work tomorrow (including you) – CI, in version control, minimal wiki page, visible TODO list
• Communicate with your team
• Be positive
• Be a friend
Conclusion

• “If you can't be replaced, you can't be promoted.”
http://programmers.stackexchange.com/questions/48697/should-a-programmer-be-indispensable

• “If you’re dispensable your team can do without you, but they’d rather not”