

Justin Foley

VP of Engineering · Columbus, Ohio

16 years building systems, teams, and the outcomes they drive

design / build / ship / scale

Engineering executive leading 40+ engineers across five product lines at Later, an AI-native creator marketing platform. I meticulously craft operational conditions that cultivate joy and productivity, and tie engineering to business results, from ground-up platform rebuilds to board-level AI strategy. Founder instincts, operator discipline.

16+ years building · **100+** engineers led · **25+** products shipped

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PHILOSOPHY

Complexity begets complexity, simplicity begets elegance.

Belief: density over headcount · **Substrate:** trust, autonomy, joy · **Loop:** ship / measure / learn

Five great engineers beat twenty good ones. Every time, per dollar. Top talent is the cheapest thing you can buy, so I hire slow, pay up, and hold the bar high. If you optimize for cost per head, I am the wrong hire.

The 10x engineer is not a myth. Trust, autonomy, real problems: give people those and the output follows. I build the substrate before the sprint board, the conditions that make great work ordinary instead of heroic.

Relationships are the foundation; the rest is plumbing. I sequence by cost of delay, measure in net profit impact, and shrink the batch until feedback comes fast. Ship the smallest bet that teaches you something. Kill what the data kills, fund what it proves. Expect me to push your thinking past where it stops.

GIGS

Later

VP of Engineering · 2025 to present · Remote

Promoted to VP in three months, the fastest in company history, after inheriting an org mid-turnover and rebuilding the system that produces engineering output. Lead 40+ engineers across five product lines, three layers deep to the IC, with director-, principal-, and architect-level direct reports; own engineering's AI strategy at the board level. Later is an AI-native creator marketing platform: \$2.4B+ annual GMV, 3,000+ brands, and 180,000+ creators, backed by Summit Partners.

AI & ARCHITECTURE

- Shipped **Later EdgeAI**: semantic creator matching across 16M+ profiles on a custom SurrealDB knowledge graph. Sub-ms queries; collapsed 10-minute workflows to seconds. The company's first major AI capability and lead marketing feature: recentered the brand on AI and became our dominant answer to the AI question every 2025 client was asking, lifting deal closures and deal size.
- Built the engineering intelligence platform across 20 teams: real-time health, quality, productivity, CapEx, and AI effectiveness. Killed manual spreadsheet audits; showcased to Summit Ventures and earned external investor validation.
- Stood up a Go MCP server and docs monorepo (manifests, C4, cross-repo synthesis) queryable from any IDE, closing a SOC 2 architecture-diagram gap in the process.
- Driving the agentic dev-tooling thesis as the company's engineering AI strategy.

MEASUREMENT & BUSINESS IMPACT

- Built Linearbot, an opinionated layer over Linear, GetDX, and AI tooling metrics that systematized our way of improving team flow. Engineers got transparent feedback and WIP-constraint protection from over-subscribing; product and business got velocity-based progress and projections. It took emotion out of prioritization, exposed unfocused "yes to everything" patterns, and drove laser focus across the product org.
- Built an R&D capitalization methodology Finance adopted, surfacing \$3M+ in EBITDA through improved CapEx categorization; GetDX called the approach "lightyears ahead."
- Quantified AI adoption impact across an 80-engineer org (GetDX, Q1 2026): ~25K engineering hours reclaimed annually, roughly 12 FTE of capacity and ~\$2.3M in loaded cost.
- PR throughput up 73% and defect ratio down 2.3 points in a single quarter (GetDX, Jan to Apr 2026).

OPERATING MODEL & CULTURE

- Shipped the Engineering Operating Framework: WIP limits, protected capacity, technical veto, fixed-time/variable-scope. Put tech debt on the board agenda.
- Replaced status meetings with agent-friendly writing and POCs: "a POC is worth a thousand meetings" is now org shorthand.
- Operated engineering through the Mavely post-acquisition integration into the unified Later platform, a growth-equity-backed M&A environment.

HIRING & TALENT

- Redesigned hiring end to end: killed take-homes, AI-graded screens, live coding with AI. Hundreds of interviews and dozens of hires; three in my first 90 days while onboarding.
- Coach leaders, not just ICs: a director toward VP readiness, a staff engineer to promotion, a TPM into staff-executive positioning.

- Treat retention as a systems problem (DX data, Culture Amp, financial modeling at the exec table); retained 100% of core critical talent through the turnaround.

PARTNERSHIPS

- Founder-level partnerships with SurrealDB, Encore.dev, and GetDX.

Shopmonkey

Engineering Manager • Product Manager • 2023 to 2025 • Remote

- Built enterprise messaging infrastructure (NATS streaming, AWS SES, Telnyx): real-time notifications, email, and SMS at scale.
- Shipped a multi-provider payment platform (Finix, Stripe) and a subscription engine for multi-company franchises; ran hundreds of merchant migrations.
- Turned around a high-risk v1 to v2 migration of the core platform thousands of repair shops run on, coordinating across departments; led technical due diligence on BNPL integrations (Sunbit, Affirm).

Filevine

Lead Senior Software Engineer • 2021 to 2023 • Remote

- Led **Filevine's** largest feature team (billing, timekeeping, activity, tags) on the regulated legal-practice-management platform; recruited and hand-picked the team, including a top company engineer and a star designer.
- Rebuilt the tagging system end to end: swapped the engine mid-flight and migrated every customer.
- Built the contenteditable engine behind Filevine's notes (caret management, TreeWalkers); led the frontend in Svelte with the org's first unit tests, Storybook, and a custom state-management pattern.

iVueit

CTO • 2018 to 2021 • Columbus, Ohio

- Led a ground-up platform rebuild on Go, gRPC, IaC, and Svelte; cut over with minutes of downtime.
- Migrated the legacy app to AWS and built a legacy-DB API that unlocked customer automation and new revenue. Redesigned admin and end-user flows to cut manual work and fraud.
- Partnered with founders on sales, fundraising, and strategy.

ModWeb

Founder • Principal Consultant • 2014 to present • Columbus, Ohio

One partner who sells, scopes, designs, builds, and ships. Since 2014 I have owned the full SDLC end to end across dozens of engagements: B2B sales and contracts, architecture, delivery, and the strategy work with founders, CEOs, and CTOs that decides what gets built and why. Zero to one is the specialty, carrying an idea through validation, architecture, and launch.

The work spans utilities, fitness, civic, nonprofit, and social: utility account automation for **Nationwide Energy Partners**, a Lean Six Sigma platform for **MaxPT**, a realtime workout UI for **Complete Fitness & Performance**, a **Jack Welch** interactive video wall at **Sacred Heart University**, the Mergeln social video platform, a grants CRM for Culture Works, and web work for the **City of Westerville**.

Earlier

2010 to 2014

- **Dropoly**: CTO and first technical hire, 2011 to 2014. Built a predictive home-energy model on NOAA data; pivoted into K-12 energy education sold through utility partnerships.
- **Epic Systems**: Developer, 2010.

TECHNICAL DEPTH

Architecture & AI: Knowledge graphs (SurrealDB), Vector embeddings, Agentic / semantic search, MCP, Distributed systems, Event streaming (NATS), gRPC

Cloud & Infra: AWS, IaC, Docker, CI/CD

Languages: TypeScript/JavaScript, Go, Bash

Data: Postgres, MongoDB, CockroachDB, MySQL

Frontend: Svelte (since 2019), React, Tailwind, Flutter

Leadership: Org design, Engineering operating models, R&D capitalization, Hiring systems, Technical sales, Public speaking

COMMUNITY

Westerville Web

Founder • 2017 to present • Westerville, Ohio

Monthly tech, design, and business meetup. 1000+ members, 35+ events, 47+ speakers.

WestCowork

Founder • 2018 to 2021 • Westerville, Ohio

Built a coworking space in Uptown Westerville in an old Masonic Temple.

SPEAKING

Emcee

60+ Events • 2017 to present

Grab the mic, energize the room. Available.

Agentic DX

Conference · 2026 · Vancouver, BC

One path from spec to production, whether a human or an agent drives it. The substrate agents run on is the binding constraint, and good for people, decisive for agents.

Measuring Engineering Impact

Summit Ventures · 2026 · Private

Invited talk in the Summit portfolio expert series on measuring engineers with an opinionated layer over Linear, GetDX, and AI tooling metrics. Summit CTO Tim Kohn said it raised the bar for future talks.

Generate All The Things

NewRX · 2018 · Newark, Ohio

Generative app scaffolding in React, Redux, Meteor.

Groovin with Bodymovin

Westerville Web · 2017 · Westerville, Ohio

Pure SVG animation in React with Bodymovin.

Finite State Gumball Machines

St. Paul School Code Club · 2017 · Westerville, Ohio

Finite state machines via interactive gumball-machine exercise. Young minds, blown.

Meteor Magic

Pillar Plugged In · 2016 · Columbus, Ohio

Technical inception via slide deck. Live deployment as performance art.

COMPETITION

Omnibus

GiveBackHack · 1st Place · 2016 · Columbus, Ohio

Realtime COTA bus tracking MVP application.

LocalFlow

Startup Weekend · 3rd Place · 2015 · Columbus, Ohio

Local guides build activity sequences for unique experience flows through a city.

EDUCATION

M.S., Computer Science

University of Dayton · 2012

Focus: graph algorithms and computational reflection.

B.S., Computer Science

Math minor · University of Dayton · 2010