
How do I convince my boss to use my favourite FP language?

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Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Know The Subject Matter	1
Ask the Right Question	1
Not the Wrong One	1
How do I entertain professional programming practices?	2
Establish the Common Premises	2
Most People are Well-Intentioned	2
Other Common Premises	2
Where Will I Find \$LANGUAGE Developers to Maintain It?	2
Inadvertent Audacity	2
So what then?	2
Bullying	2
Remember Most People are Well-Intentioned	2
Parody	3
A. Tony Morris – PGP Key	3
B. Licence	3

Introduction

I am often asked this question. It is difficult to answer succinctly, but it is nevertheless an important question and so deserves a comprehensive answer.

Know The Subject Matter

- It is important to understand both the subject matter that you are arguing for and **most importantly**, arguing against.
- Study, study, study, introspect *with honest intention*.
- By understanding the subject matter well, you can leverage your opponent's existing knowledge to solve a familiar problem.

Ask the Right Question

Not the Wrong One

- Who cares about your favourite functional language?
- You *should not* care because it gives rise to a conflict of interest.
 - Your employer is not interested in entertaining your fantasies and you shouldn't expect otherwise.
 - Your employer is interested in solving problems efficiently and effectively.

- Turns out, functional programming happens to kick serious arse when it comes to this objective!
- You wish to entertain professional programming practices. Does your patsy?

How do I entertain professional programming practices?

- Let us not give emphasis to programming languages – they are irrelevant to the common interest.
- Let us focus on *the functional programming thesis* itself and what it provides.

Establish the Common Premises

Most People are Well-Intentioned

- For example, few people will protest adherence to the Do not Repeat Yourself (DRY) principle.
- Well, that is, right up to the point that you reveal the fact that functional programming monopolises this idea. Has your opponent accidentally invented functional programming?
- Relentlessly stay on track with the common premise. That way, you ensure *honest discourse*.

Other Common Premises

- Reasoning about code in isolated, independent units, leading to improved readability.
- Independently examinable code provides re-usability. There are countless examples of this in the APIs of Java, C#, Ruby, etc that you may draw on.

Where Will I Find \$LANGUAGE Developers to Maintain It?

Inadvertent Audacity

- This question immediately assumes that it is already possible to find developers who "know \$MORE_FAMILIAR_LANGUAGE" easier.
- An enormous majority of programmers know very little about the programming language with which they work.

So what then?

- This implies that knowledge of the programming language is vastly over-estimated in its importance to productivity, since developers are already productive with an extremely poor understanding of their programming language.
- ...to such an extent that we should dismiss it.
- ...and parody it by observing its arbitrariness. "Where will I ever find a developer who is familiar with leaving line 68 blank!?"

Bullying

Remember Most People are Well-Intentioned

- ...but that doesn't mean they won't deploy bullying tactics

- A response to assist in dealing with fear
- Empathy and patience but also zero-tolerance
- Manifests as (often transparent) fallacies – too many to list

Parody

- Finally, whenever you come against bullying or denial, parody it
- Make fun of it and do it relentlessly, with the intention of provoking introspection
- Violation of the contract of intellectual discourse is an unfortunate possible outcome, but be prepared for it
- Importantly, declare victory and move on

A. Tony Morris — PGP Key

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