

Mad Skillz: Become the Best in the World

The traits and mad skillz Drupal shops and development teams want you to have. And developers want to master.

Diana Montalion Dupuis : @dianadupuis

Director of Professional Services
Developer / Hiker / Bookstore fan

Four Kitchens: @fourkitchens

DrupalCamp Stanford 2012



Mad Skillz

Mad Skillz

- 18 categories

Mad Skillz

- 18 categories
- There are more

Mad Skillz

- 18 categories
- There are more
- They are *all* debatable

Mad Skillz

- 18 categories
- There are more
- They are *all* debatable
- We won't debate them here

Mad Skillz

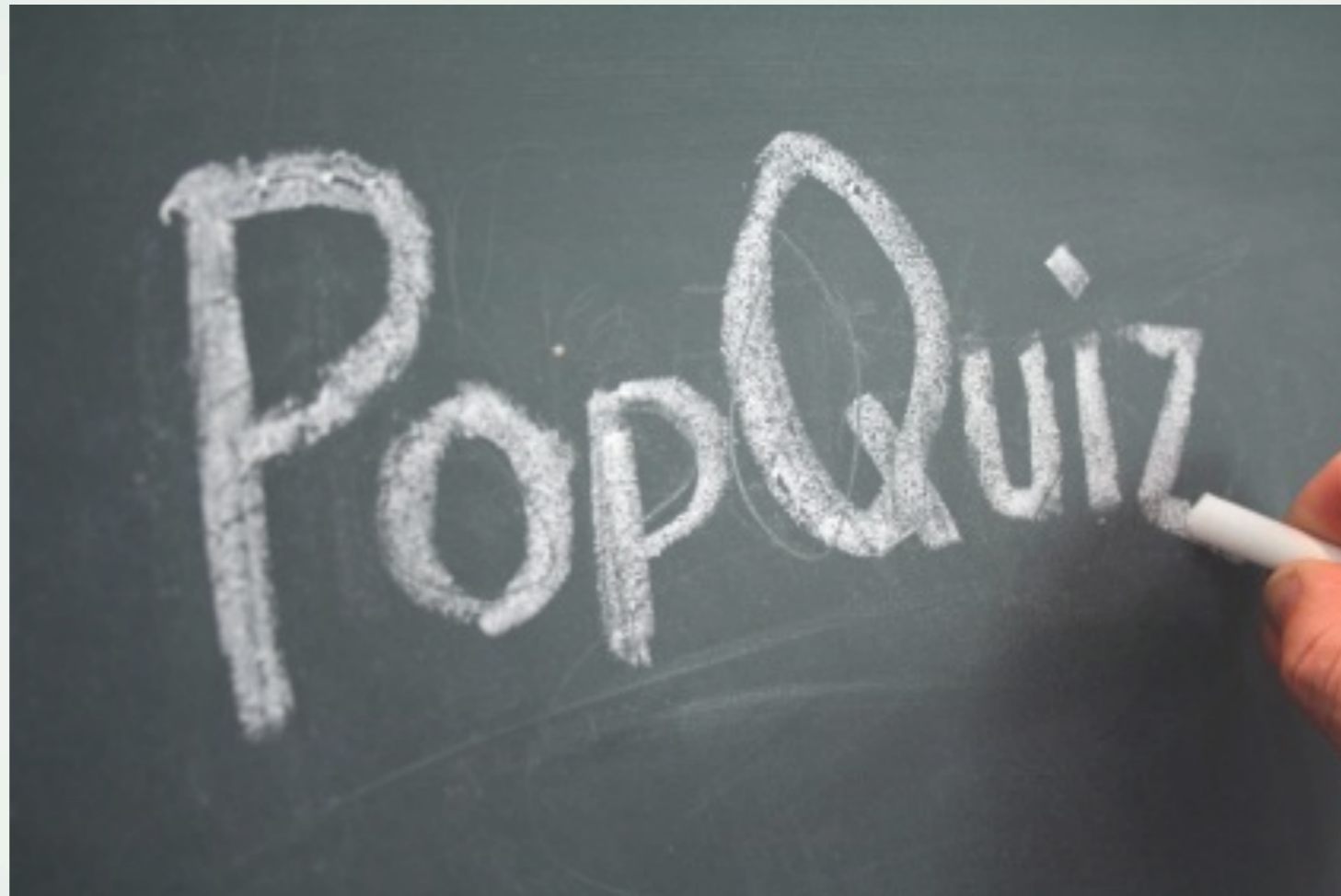
- 18 categories
- There are more
- They are *all* debatable
- We won't debate them here
- Beginner, intermediate, and advanced

Mad Skillz

- 18 categories
- There are more
- They are *all* debatable
- We won't debate them here
- Beginner, intermediate, and advanced







Self-assessment Experience

Skill set: has the right skills for us to use.
Personality: will fit into our culture.
Passion: wanting to make a positive contribution
from the outset.

-- Paul Bateman
Technology Director
The Economist online

The Best

The Best

- I don't mean better than everybody else

The Best

- I don't mean better than everybody else
- Those are the poor souls infected with the geek disease



ARROGANCE

A strange disease that makes everybody sick,
except for the person actually afflicted with it.

motifake.com

FOUR
KITCHENS 

**A valued and valuable
member of a talented
team.**

Most Essential Skill?

Most Essential Skill?

- PHP & MySQL

Most Essential Skill?

- PHP & MySQL
- HTML5

Most Essential Skill?

- PHP & MySQL
- HTML5
- An encyclopedic knowledge of Drupal hooks

Most Essential Skill?

- PHP & MySQL
- HTML5
- An encyclopedic knowledge of Drupal hooks
- LAMP stack sys admin

Most Essential Skill?

- PHP & MySQL
- HTML5
- An encyclopedic knowledge of Drupal hooks
- LAMP stack sys admin
- Community involvement

Most Essential Skill?

- PHP & MySQL
- HTML5
- An encyclopedic knowledge of Drupal hooks
- LAMP stack sys admin
- Community involvement
- Other

Good Person Skillz

@55h013

If you are hiring for the short term you need someone who has work skills: building content types, views, knows modules.

If you are hiring for the long term you need someone who has life skills: resourceful, positive attitude, enjoys learning.

In all cases communication skills and personality are important. I follow a "3 hour rule" of "if I'm stuck in an airport for 3 hours with this person will that be exciting, indifferent or a problem." It has to be exciting or at least on the high end of indifferent.

-- Greg Knaddison

Growing Ventures Solutions Owner (previously) and
Director of Security Services @ Acquia (currently)

Good Person Skillz @ 4K

Good Person Skillz @ 4K

- Communication skillz

Good Person Skillz @ 4K

- Communication skillz
- Teamwork skillz

Good Person Skillz @ 4K

- Communication skillz
- Teamwork skillz
- Cultural fit

Cultural Fit

Cultural Fit

- Curiosity and passion

Cultural Fit

- Curiosity and passion
- Takes responsibility and ownership

Cultural Fit

- Curiosity and passion
- Takes responsibility and ownership
- Cool person (Web Chefy)

Cultural Fit

- Curiosity and passion
- Takes responsibility and ownership
- Cool person (Web Chefy)
- Unselfish

@55h013

I think the best developers are the ones who believe in the projects they work on. Passion can substitute for a lot of experience and if a developer cares about their work they will almost always do much better work than those that don't care (even if they happen to be a technically stronger developer).

-- Matt Cheney
Managing Partner: Chapter Three

Getting Mad Skillz

Getting Mad Skillz

- Become expert in what you love

Getting Mad Skillz

- Become expert in what you love
- Brand yourself according to your strengths

Getting Mad Skillz

- Become expert in what you love
- Brand yourself according to your strengths
- Do the minimum of what you hate

Getting Mad Skillz

- Become expert in what you love
- Brand yourself according to your strengths
- Do the minimum of what you hate
- Create alliances to compensate for weaker skillz

Getting Mad Skillz

- Become expert in what you love
- Brand yourself according to your strengths
- Do the minimum of what you hate
- Create alliances to compensate for weaker skillz
- Develop skillz you either like or need

Getting Mad Skillz

- Become expert in what you love
- Brand yourself according to your strengths
- Do the minimum of what you hate
- Create alliances to compensate for weaker skillz
- Develop skillz you either like or need
- Constantly develop skillz you don't yet have

Getting Mad Skillz

- Become expert in what you love
- Brand yourself according to your strengths
- Do the minimum of what you hate
- Create alliances to compensate for weaker skillz
- Develop skillz you either like or need
- Constantly develop skillz you don't yet have
- *Never be the smartest person in the room*

Mad Skillz

Mad Skillz

- HTML

Mad Skillz

- HTML
- CSS

Mad Skillz

- HTML
- CSS
- Javascript

Mad Skillz

- HTML
- CSS
- Javascript
- PHP

Mad Skillz

- HTML
- CSS
- Javascript
- PHP
- Databases

Mad Skillz

- HTML
- CSS
- Javascript
- PHP
- Databases
- Dev Ops

Mad Skillz

- HTML
- CSS
- Javascript
- PHP
- Databases
- Dev Ops
- Sys Admin

Mad Skillz

- HTML
- CSS
- Javascript
- PHP
- Databases
- Dev Ops
- Sys Admin
- Performance and Scalability

Mad Skillz (2)

Mad Skillz (2)

- Drupal Site Building

Mad Skillz (2)

- Drupal Site Building
- Drupal Development

Mad Skillz (2)

- Drupal Site Building
- Drupal Development
- Drupal Theme Development

Mad Skillz (2)

- Drupal Site Building
- Drupal Development
- Drupal Theme Development
- Visual Design

Mad Skillz (2)

- Drupal Site Building
- Drupal Development
- Drupal Theme Development
- Visual Design
- IA

Mad Skillz (2)

- Drupal Site Building
- Drupal Development
- Drupal Theme Development
- Visual Design
- IA
- UX

Mad Skillz (2)

- Drupal Site Building
- Drupal Development
- Drupal Theme Development
- Visual Design
- IA
- UX
- Open Source Involvement

Pop Quiz!

How mad are your skillz? Each category earns up to three points. You earn the number of points that represent your highest level in each category.

Pop Quiz!

How mad are your skillz? Each category earns up to three points. You earn the number of points that represent your highest level in each category.

- 0 if no skillz in that category

Pop Quiz!

How mad are your skillz? Each category earns up to three points. You earn the number of points that represent your highest level in each category.

- 0 if no skillz in that category
- +1 for beginner

Pop Quiz!

How mad are your skillz? Each category earns up to three points. You earn the number of points that represent your highest level in each category.

- 0 if no skillz in that category
- +1 for beginner
- +2 for intermediate

Pop Quiz!

How mad are your skillz? Each category earns up to three points. You earn the number of points that represent your highest level in each category.

- 0 if no skillz in that category
- +1 for beginner
- +2 for intermediate
- +3 for advanced

Instructions

Instructions

Track your score. Textpad, paper and pen,
fingers and toes.

Instructions

Track your score. Textpad, paper and pen, fingers and toes.

Ready? Let's begin!

Good Person Skillz

Good Person Skillz

- up to + 10 if you are a good communicator

Good Person Skillz

- up to + 10 if you are a good communicator
- up to + 10 if you are a cooperative team member

Good Person Skillz

- up to + 10 if you are a good communicator
- up to + 10 if you are a cooperative team member
- up to +20 if you are a cool person

Good Person Skillz

- up to + 10 if you are a good communicator
- up to + 10 if you are a cooperative team member
- up to +20 if you are a cool person
- up to -20 if you are an @55h0l3

HTML

HTML

1. Aware of markup language and how it's used; able to view source; can understand tableless layout

HTML

1. Aware of markup language and how it's used; able to view source; can understand tableless layout
2. Write valid markup by hand, understand cross-browser testing and compatibility; use debugging tools

HTML

1. Aware of markup language and how it's used; able to view source; can understand tableless layout
2. Write valid markup by hand, understand cross-browser testing and compatibility; use debugging tools
3. Strong web standard awareness; know specific rendering differences; familiar with emerging technologies (HTML5, for example)

CSS

CSS

1. Know how CSS affects style of page(s) across site; understand "cascading"

CSS

1. Know how CSS affects style of page(s) across site; understand "cascading"
2. Write valid cross-browser-compatible .css files by hand; use debugging tools

CSS

1. Know how CSS affects style of page(s) across site; understand "cascading"
2. Write valid cross-browser-compatible .css files by hand; use debugging tools
3. Understand CSS3 and preprocessors; aware of emerging technologies; understand performance and caching

Javascript

Javascript

1. Know what it's purpose is and that it's not Java

Javascript

1. Know what it's purpose is and that it's not Java
2. Can traverse the DOM; use at least one library; can hook into events

Javascript

1. Know what it's purpose is and that it's not Java
2. Can traverse the DOM; use at least one library; can hook into events
3. Familiar with emerging technologies (Harmony, for example); active in the JS community; able to implement web sockets

PHP

PHP

1. Understand that it runs on a server and is a programming language; can describe dynamic vs static web pages

PHP

1. Understand that it runs on a server and is a programming language; can describe dynamic vs static web pages
2. Understand basic programming concepts (variables, arrays, functions, control structures); can read code and edit it; can perform single-line database queries (select, insert, no joins or subqueries); understand OO enough to use classes and objects

PHP

1. Understand that it runs on a server and is a programming language; can describe dynamic vs static web pages
2. Understand basic programming concepts (variables, arrays, functions, control structures); can read code and edit it; can perform single-line database queries (select, insert, no joins or subqueries); understand OO enough to use classes and objects
3. Write OOP, use libraries, apply big O (attempts to write code that runs quickly), code is elegant

Databases

Databases

1. Can create databases and users using GUI tools

Databases

1. Can create databases and users using GUI tools
2. Can execute queries; create tables; write semi-complex queries (one join)

Databases

1. Can create databases and users using GUI tools
2. Can execute queries; create tables; write semi-complex queries (one join)
3. Can tweak indexes; architect performance optimizations; write complex queries with multiple joins; implement transactions; can rewrite slow performing queries; experience beyond MySQL

Dev Ops

Dev Ops

1. Can use a version control system for basic tasks; separate dev environment from live

Dev Ops

1. Can use a version control system for basic tasks; separate dev environment from live
2. Use version control on a team project, set up dev->stage->live environments; follow QA process

Dev Ops

1. Can use a version control system for basic tasks; separate dev environment from live
2. Use version control on a team project, set up dev->stage->live environments; follow QA process
3. Use feature branching; automated deployment; automated testing

Sys Admin

Sys Admin

1. Understand major Linux package managers and can add/remove packages; configure repositories; perform common command line tasks; configure components of the LAMP stack

Sys Admin

1. Understand major Linux package managers and can add/remove packages; configure repositories; perform common command line tasks; configure components of the LAMP stack
2. Know the purpose of each folder in a standard Posix system; can inspect and configure network devices and firewalls; create backup strategies; basic security; can setup a new server

Sys Admin

1. Understand major Linux package managers and can add/remove packages; configure repositories; perform common command line tasks; configure components of the LAMP stack
2. Know the purpose of each folder in a standard Posix system; can inspect and configure network devices and firewalls; create backup strategies; basic security; can setup a new server
3. Automatic configuration/deployment tools such as bcfg2; advanced security knowledge; can use penetration testing tools, set up intrusion detection tools.



Performance & Scalability

Performance & Scalability

1. Understand how clusters of servers can be load balanced; understand the limitations of and can work with replicated databases;

Performance & Scalability

1. Understand how clusters of servers can be load balanced; understand the limitations of and can work with replicated databases;
2. Write code that employs "just enough" caching; profile a site to discover where performance bottlenecks are; know Varnish and memcache

Performance & Scalability

1. Understand how clusters of servers can be load balanced; understand the limitations of and can work with replicated databases;
2. Write code that employs "just enough" caching; profile a site to discover where performance bottlenecks are; know Varnish and memcache
3. Can use lower level OS and system profiling tools such as sar, oprofile; can design a scalable architecture and predict problems; knowledgeable about cutting edge technologies such as NoSQL databases (MongoDB, Cassandra)

Angela Byron (webchick)

Director of Community Development at [Acquia](#) and core co-maintainer for Drupal 7

1. Taking initiative: It takes minimal energy to complain about something you don't like, and a lot more to actually do something about it. This guy jthorson, for example. He got stuck in the Project Application Queue Hell like all new code contributors do, and the normal reaction is to whine about the situation on IRC. Instead, he started reviewing *other* peoples' applications to try and prevent others from being frustrated, and then went even further to start churning out patches for testbot so it can do automated coding standards checks to take burden off project application reviewers. People who do stuff like that get my *immediate* thumbs-up.

2. Civility and respect: It's natural in an open source community for many people to have many heated, passionate opinions about various things. It's also natural that we won't always agree. When I see people wade into these kinds of heated discussions and do things like summarize the arguments to date with objective, neutral language, and state their opinions in a way that values the opinions of others, it puts a huge "+1" in their corner from me. The inverse is also true; regardless of technical skill level, I can't ever justify recommending someone who walks into discussions with a chip on their shoulder and knowingly treats other people with disrespect.

3. Willingness to spread knowledge around: People who contribute to documentation, people who help out in support channels, people who help others one-on-one at a local user meetup, etc. ... those people are solid gold in my book. This directly helps foster the community of mentorship that is the heart and soul of what makes Drupal great.

Drupal Site Building

Drupal Site Building

1. Can create users, content types, fields; create roles and permissions; create blocks administratively

Drupal Site Building

1. Can create users, content types, fields; create roles and permissions; create blocks administratively
2. Can install Drupal, add modules and themes (in the right place), create views, and use panels

Drupal Site Building

1. Can create users, content types, fields; create roles and permissions; create blocks administratively
2. Can install Drupal, add modules and themes (in the right place), create views, and use panels
3. Use features, apply rules (actions and layouts), implement complicated module integration or views

Drupal Development

Drupal Development

1. Can apply a patch; understand "hooks"; can read module code

Drupal Development

1. Can apply a patch; understand "hooks"; can read module code
2. Can use the form API, hook menu, and database API

Drupal Development

1. Can apply a patch; understand "hooks"; can read module code
2. Can use the form API, hook menu, and database API
3. Can write custom modules using Drupal best practices; write custom drush commands or cron tasks; write performance-enhanced code

Drupal Theme Building

Drupal Theme Building

1. Install a drupal theme, customize settings via UI, modify templates, make cosmetic changes to Drupal's default output

Drupal Theme Building

1. Install a drupal theme, customize settings via UI, modify templates, make cosmetic changes to Drupal's default output
2. Use base theme / sub theme, create custom templates, apply advanced front-end concepts like accessibility, responsive layouts

Drupal Theme Building

1. Install a drupal theme, customize settings via UI, modify templates, make cosmetic changes to Drupal's default output
2. Use base theme / sub theme, create custom templates, apply advanced front-end concepts like accessibility, responsive layouts
3. Create a theme from scratch, use template.php to the fullest by using or creating theme hooks to modify Drupal output, can add theme functions to modules

Visual Design

Visual Design

1. Design-software use knowledge (Photoshop, Illustrator etc); know visual hierarchy of elements in design; designed static websites

Visual Design

1. Design-software use knowledge (Photoshop, Illustrator etc); know visual hierarchy of elements in design; designed static websites
2. Designed logos, brand elements and style guides; design documents are organized and clearly labeled; designed for dynamic websites (CMS)

Visual Design

1. Design-software use knowledge (Photoshop, Illustrator etc); know visual hierarchy of elements in design; designed static websites
2. Designed logos, brand elements and style guides; design documents are organized and clearly labeled; designed for dynamic websites (CMS)
3. Have a library of design tools and styles that are used to rapidly create elements; can transform own artwork into markup with platform specific conventions; design states of inter-active elements

IA

IA

1. Understand the importance of organizing all pages/content at the onset of the project because IA influences navigation, interface, interaction, and visual design (foundation)

IA

1. Understand the importance of organizing all pages/content at the onset of the project because IA influences navigation, interface, interaction, and visual design (foundation)
2. Use the personas and goals of the site to clearly illustrate the relationship of pages in order to provide workflow diagrams and logical site navigation (framework)

IA

1. Understand the importance of organizing all pages/content at the onset of the project because IA influences navigation, interface, interaction, and visual design (foundation)
2. Use the personas and goals of the site to clearly illustrate the relationship of pages in order to provide workflow diagrams and logical site navigation (framework)
3. Understand how aspects of IA/navigation can be translated to a specific technology (Drupal), experience implementing modules that aid in this process (whole house)

UX

UX

1. Know the difference between a site map and wireframes; can build basic wireframes

UX

1. Know the difference between a site map and wireframes; can build basic wireframes
2. Build user flow / process flow diagrams and detailed wireframes with illustrated interaction patterns; aware of recent trends and accessibility guidelines; consider major aspects of accessibility (visual/hearing impairment) when designing a site

UX

1. Know the difference between a site map and wireframes; can build basic wireframes
2. Build user flow / process flow diagrams and detailed wireframes with illustrated interaction patterns; aware of recent trends and accessibility guidelines; consider major aspects of accessibility (visual/hearing impairment) when designing a site
3. Perform user testing of all levels; expert knowledge of accessibility regulations / guidelines; consider many levels of accessibility (color blindness, etc) when designing a site

Open Source Involvement

Open Source Involvement

1. Attend local meetups; use issue queue; edit doc pages

Open Source Involvement

1. Attend local meetups; use issue queue; edit doc pages
2. Volunteer at events; help on IRC; contribute patches, small modules or themes; propose sessions

Open Source Involvement

1. Attend local meetups; use issue queue; edit doc pages
2. Volunteer at events; help on IRC; contribute patches, small modules or themes; propose sessions
3. Organize events; become a community leader; maintain major modules, forks, or distributions; contribute to core

How'd you do?

How'd you do?

- Beginner: -20 - 28

How'd you do?

- Beginner: -20 - 28
- Intermediate: 29 - 57

How'd you do?

- Beginner: -20 - 28
- Intermediate: 29 - 57
- Advanced: 58 - 85

How'd you do?

- Beginner: -20 - 28
- Intermediate: 29 - 57
- Advanced: 58 - 85
- This is just for fun!

How'd you do?

- Beginner: -20 - 28
- Intermediate: 29 - 57
- Advanced: 58 - 85
- This is just for fun!
- Like a Cosmo quiz

I look for great writing skills, communication skills and a self-effacing quick-witted character. If they have these things they'll be fun to work with, add to the company culture, and be teachable and teacher-able with our clients and team.

Then, I look for wicked ninja developer skills.

-- Matt Westgate

Lullabot co-founder and President

Further info

Further info

- Mad Skillz: Home Version on the Four Kitchens blog

Further info

- Mad Skillz: Home Version on the Four Kitchens blog
- <http://fourkitchens.com/blog/2011/08/24/mad-skillz-self-assessment-experience>

Further info

- Mad Skillz: Home Version on the Four Kitchens blog
- <http://fourkitchens.com/blog/2011/08/24/mad-skillz-self-assessment-experience>
- @dianadupuis

Thank You!



WHENEVER I LEARN A NEW SKILL I CONCOCT ELABORATE FANTASY SCENARIOS WHERE IT LETS ME SAVE THE DAY.

OH NO! THE KILLER MUST HAVE FOLLOWED HER ON VACATION!

BUT TO FIND THEM WE'D HAVE TO SEARCH THROUGH 200 MB OF EMAILS LOOKING FOR SOMETHING FORMATTED LIKE AN ADDRESS!

IT'S HOPELESS!

EVERYBODY STAND BACK.

I KNOW REGULAR EXPRESSIONS.