SREpath

Strategic questions prior to creating the SRE function [SREpath.com]

Is there a burning platform for moving towards SRE?

Burning platform refers to the dire consequences of not changing

Business issues

- □ Is there a financial cost associated with downtime or poor performance?
- □ Is there a regulatory requirement to demonstrate high service reliability?
- □ Do operating partners require you to demonstrate high reliability of service?

Technical issues

- □ Are your operations people hitting infrastructure roadblocks due to low or no coding skills?
- □ Is your infrastructure struggling to keep up with demand?
- □ Are your developers pumping out code with high technical debt?
- □ Is the architecture of the system an afterthought to feature delivery?
- □ Are your developers doing DIY with risky push-to-production practices?
- □ Do critical services and systems seem to be getting increasingly fragile?

> 💡 **Advice**
>
> Keep exploring Site Reliability Engineering seriously for your organization if you ticked at least one box in the *Business issues* section plus 1 or more *Technical issues* questions.

🔎 For the next question, please review these capabilities:

Core SRE capabilities

- observability
- incident response
- retrospectives (”postmortems”)
- test & release procedures

Ancillary SRE capabilities

- capacity planning
- tooling & platform development
- architecture reviews
- DevOps education
- chaos engineering*
- performance engineering*

** Note that most orgs with Chaos and APM capabilities have dedicated Chaos and Performance Engineers outside of SRE teams*

What is your current state of SRE?

1. We have lined up several engineers for SRE work who can execute on:
   - □ 0-2 SRE capabilities
   - □ 2-4 capabilities
   - □ 4+ capabilities
2. We don’t have an SRE team but have a Site Reliability Engineer
   - □ hired recently
   - □ working for 0-6 months
   - □ working for 6+ months

3. We don’t have any SREs

    □ but other engineers do partial SRE-like work e.g. observability

    □ there is no SRE-type work in place right now

> 💡 **Advice**
>
> If you ticked any checkboxes under #1, you’re off to a reasonably good start.
>
> If you ticked the “working for 6+ months” checkbox under #2, that’s also a good start.
>
> If you ticked other checkboxes, you will need to build a structure to get benefits from SRE.

Do you have buy-in from senior leadership e.g. CTO, CEO?

□ Full support from senior leadership

□ Partial buy-in, but they still need to see results

□ Negative buy-in, we need to better sell the idea

□ We haven’t approached senior leadership yet

> 💡 **Advice**
>
> The higher you tick, the better chances you have of a successful SRE function. If you have ticked lower down the list, consider spending more time gaining buy-in. SRE requires a reasonably sized budget and engineer roster to pay dividends.

What is your timeline for developing an initial SRE function?

□ Within the next 3 months

□ 3-6 months from now

□ 6+ months from now

□ Not sure yet

💡 **Advice**

The sooner your timeline, the more meticulous capability planning you will need to ensure you don’t waste any budget on trial-and-error initiatives.