1 Introduction

So far in 6.S194, you have been a worker bee for a large open-source project. Your contributions have been guided by your mentors. Your value to the team comes from how well you were able to take the directions from your mentor and execute them to his/her satisfaction. As a smart, capable engineer, you will not be at the bottom of the totem pole for long.

Sooner rather than later you will be propelled to a leadership position. It may be informal, as you gain respect from your team members and they look up to you for guidance, or your bosses may recognize your merits and promote you to a formal leadership position. This does not necessarily mean a managerial role, but more generally a position that will let you help guide the technical vision of the project.

In this exercise, we ask you to imagine yourself as a technical leader of your open-source project. We want you to come up with an original idea that can have an impact on the project. Some possible topics include

- a new feature for the product,
- a new direction for the project, or
- a new development process for the team.

You have been working with your project for more than 10 weeks, and you should have a good understanding of the internals (the product, the code, the development practices and processes, etc.) This should have given you an opportunity to ask many “what if” questions and think about what could be done better. Choose the best idea from that list and expand on it.

2 Requirements

You will need to give a presentation describing your idea, with your target audience as your project’s developers. However, the real audience for your presentation, the staff and your fellow students, won’t know your project. Thus, you will have to go easy on us and explain aspects of the project that you might otherwise assume the developer community knows. Your task is to define the opportunity/need, describe your idea, and convince your fellow developers that it is a good idea and that they should adopt it.

This is an individual project; please don’t share your ideas with the rest of your teammates/class or your mentor prior to the presentation. You will have 10 minutes to present your idea. (PDF or Google slides that can be shared with the staff are preferred.) Practice giving your presentation multiple times so that you will be able to deliver your ideas properly and within the time limit. We will also have a 5 minute Q&A session after your presentation. You will be be judged for
the originality and elegance of the idea,
• the possible impact and practicality of the idea,
• your ability to clearly explain the idea, and
• your ability to convince us to adopt it.

Furthermore, you will provide feedback on the ideas of all your fellow classmates. We will provide you with an individual Google form to get your feedback. We will collect the feedback, anonymize them, and give them back to the presenters. This also implies that you should attend class during all presentation days (if you have a legitimate excuse, contact the staff).

We plan to assign roughly 15% of your grade to this project — 10% for your presentation and 5% for the quality of the feedback you provide. Presentations will be held in class on

• Tuesday, April 26th
• Thursday, April 28th
• Tuesday, May 3rd

Sign up for a presentation slot at https://goo.gl/tRKdeH. If you can’t make any of the available slots, let us know soon so that we can rearrange accordingly.