The Admin Zen
 Keep it up and running

Know your tools
- Evaluate tools before using them.
- Read the documentation.
- Know how to get the best out of your daily tools.
- Use version control. Everywhere.
- If it’s repetitive, it needs automation.
- Prefer Open Source.
- Don't use tools you can't handle.
- Don't use a tool just because everyone does so.
- Constantly invest in your know-how.
- Have a testbed.
- Use the right tool for the right job.

Anticipate
- Foresight instead of reaction.
- Fix it before it gets broken.
- But don't fix what won't break.
- Monitor your infrastructure.
- Monitor your business.
- Use metrics.
- Have formulated disaster scenarios.
- Know what you don’t anticipate.

Expect problems
- Don’t ignore flukes.
- Murphy is out there to get you.
- Software breaks. Hardware breaks.
- Know what facts you can trust.
- People leave.
- Errors happen once. Everything else is failure.
- Know how to deal with problems.
- A symptom is not a cause.
- Fix causes, not symptoms.
- Be a debugging artist.
- Bugs don't exist unless there is a test for them.

Design it
- Focus on simplicity, clarity, and frugality.
- Security, maintainability and extensibility is the foundation, not a feature.
- Take benchmarks with a grain of salt.
- Avoid bloat.
- Explicit is better than implicit.
- Simple is better than complex.
- Complex is better than complicated.
- Now is better than never.
- Although never is often better than "right" now.
- Buying cheap might cost you in the long run.
- Don't deploy what you can't maintain.
- Testing happens in staging, not in production.

Scale
- Setup is cheap. Maintenance is expensive.
- Know what is going to hit you.
- Virtualise when sensible.
- Don't virtualise just because you can.
- Scale horizontally and vertically.
- Have a testbed.
- Use configuration management.
- Use change management.
- Use patch management.

Backup
- Nobody wants backup, everybody wants restore.
- To restore, you need a backup.
- Have a backup.
- RAID is not a backup.
- There’s more to save than just the files.
- Devices need backup too.
- Even expensive hardware can fail catastrophically.
- Do not hit the enter key before thinking about it.
- Consistent against corruption.
- Secure from disasters.
- Protected from prying eyes.

Communicate
- Talk with your clients.
- Hear what they want, understand what they need.
- Learn the art of presentation.
- Know how to convince.
- Know what is important for someone.
- Use the appropriate communication media.
- Have experts for everything that’s relevant to your business.
- Visit events related to your business.
- Maintain your social network.
- Try to get on a first-name-basis, when appropriate.
- Have meetings on a regular basis.
- Mistakes shouldn’t be used for blame but educate.
- Learn to love communicating.

Document
- Write documentation.
- Make writing comfortable.
- Keep documentation up to date.
- Collect documentation.
- Publish your documents.
- Use a todo list.
- Use a ticket system if a todo list doesn’t scale.

adminzen.org