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GCSE Bitesize Computer Science

Facebook's Jackson Gabbard on decomposing computing problems - transcript

I'm Jackson Gabbard. I'm an engineer at the Facebook London office. I've been at Facebook about 4 years and across those 4 years I've worked on a lot of different teams, which includes, like, Facebook Timeline for mobile devices. I also worked on the App Center, and then I also spent a little bit of time working on Facebook Groups.

As an engineer, decomposing problems – breaking big problems down into their sub parts – is such a core part of what you do that it really becomes instinctual. You find yourself decomposing problems just naturally. Because a big fuzzy problem like 'make page loads on Facebook more efficient' or 'make the iOS app take up less space' – that's a big fuzzy problem. And as an engineer, you're sort of trained to think, okay, well, I know how apps are composed, I know what the parts of them are - there's static resources like images, there's the executable code that makes the application experience work, there's the overhead of how complex the code base is - and you start expecting that one of these, or many of these, are bigger than they need to be. Then you start thinking, okay, where can I go? Where can I poke and prod to find the places where we're doing stuff that we don't need to do?