

How to write like Raymond: Intentional typographical errors, part 2

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One of my passive-aggressive ways of “helping” people who are acting helpless is by giving them slightly incorrect information. Enough to unstick them, but they’ll have to figure out that last step by themselves. This is a variation of the intentional typographical error to demonstrate impatience.

For example, somebody wanted to know who to contact about a bug, and for some reason asked me because my name was in the email thread pasted into the bug. (I root-caused the bug but was not involved with the fix.)

I suggested that they could talk to the person who fixed the bug, or the owner of the component the bug is in.

They wanted to know who the component owner was. I happened to know from memory, so I said, “It’s Mimi St Louis.” They wrote back, “I can’t find Mimi St Louis.”

I sent screen shots showing how to get from the bug to the component name, then from the component name to the component owner.

“Oh, It’s Mimi St. Louis. You forgot the period.”

Oh, it’s like my fault now.

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