
Crucial Test Conversations

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Outline

1. General Conversations
2. Other Venues: Dashboards, Assessments & Defects
3. Conversations – Setting the Stage
4. Conversations – Interviewing
5. Conversations – Coaching & Feedback
6. Conversations – Perceptions & Attitude

Introduction

- Background on the talk, 2 software testing classes –
 - Effective Communication Workshop
 - 7 Habits of Effective Leadership Workshop
- Goals
 - Stress the importance of Conversation (Communication)
 - Examine tools & techniques
 - Provide interaction and a bit of practice
- It's OUR class – please participate and share your lessons learned, challenges, approaches, ideas, etc.

The “One Thing”

When it comes to risky, controversial, and emotional conversations, skilled people find a way to get all relevant information out into the open.

That’s it. At the core of every successful conversation lies the free flow of relevant information. People openly and honestly express their opinions, share their feelings, and articulate their theories.

They willingly and capably share their views, even when their ideas are controversial or unpopular.

-- Crucial Conversations, Patterson, Grenny, McMillan, Switzler

Conversations – A Situation

You're in the middle of a testing cycle for a business critical project. You're testing a single component of a large system - *roughly* 10 testers are on your team. The Vice President of Software development walks up to you in the lab and asks you – “How's it going?”

- ❑ What do you say?

He challenges you on several defects that you've entered – disagreeing on priority and severity

- ❑ How do you respond?

This is a great opportunity. You're either ready for it and respond well or you don't...which do you choose?

Another Situation

Same situation, although time has passed and the project has missed several of its planned Beta dates and things are “dicey”. You’re in the middle of the “last” testing cycle prior to going to Beta test. You’ve found some regressions that you “suspect” will impact the product’s ability to go to Beta. The Vice President of Marketing walks up to you in the lab and asks you – “How’s it going?”

- ❑ What do you say?
- ❑ How do you say it?

Another, even more critical opportunity to make an impression...

The Point

- We're in communicating situations all of the time
- As Test, QA and Process engineers -
 - We're representing the product, it's correctness, completeness and overall quality
 - We're representing our test team and ourselves
 - We're the living embodiment of "how is it going?" And "is it ready yet?"
- I refer to these ongoing and ever present **conversations** as a communications & PR effort
- It's all of our jobs and we do it anyway – so why not learn techniques for doing it often and well?

Conversations - Introductions

- Break into groups of 2
- Take a minute or two and introduce yourselves. Share on:
 - Background information (Overall experience, where you work, etc.)
 - Biggest challenge you face at work
 - Ideas for facing that challenge
- I'll time each exchange

- Let's debrief...how did you do?

30 Second “Commercial”

- In job search circles, they refer to your developing and delivering a “30 second commercial” for networking. It’s a -
 - Quick introduction
 - Concise overview of your background
 - Includes your professional history
 - Delivered to fit the situation, allowed time and specific audience
- You take the time to develop your “commercials” from your resume, you should have at least a few – to many of them. They’re targeted towards different audiences and situations.

30 Second Testing “Commercials”

■ ***Current work status:***

- ❑ What are you working on, what are your recent successes and your challenges. Very importantly - what's next?
- ❑ Do you need any help? (escalations, ideas, alternatives, workarounds, etc.)
- ❑ If you have one message to send for status – what would it be? Make sure you communicate it!

■ ***Current product status:***

- ❑ Overall view to your area of testing responsibility
- ❑ What is the overall product stability, feature set maturity and performance?
- ❑ High level defect trends, schedule status and work projections

Always practice your commercials - Preparation is the key!

Characteristics

- Keys to Effective Communication
 - Concise communications – remember the “Top 1/3” rule
 - If you could only say 2-3 things, what would they be?
 - All forms matter – written, verbal, non-verbal, defects

- Target your communications
 - Their functional role and level within the organization
 - Their point of view (adopt their POV - empathize)
 - What they want to hear and what they need to hear
 - What will they do with the information you give them
 - Can they “handle” the truth and how much of the truth

Communication Components

- 1967 study by *Mehrabian and Wiener* deduced that the communication “channel” is composed of:
 - ❑ 55% visible content – body language, environment, gestures
 - ❑ 38% inflexion – tone, emphasis, accent
 - ❑ 7% language
 - ❑ *While these results are currently under debate, it's clear that language is not a single dimensional medium*

- Barriers to Communication
 - ❑ Culture, background, bias
 - ❑ Noise, environment, medium
 - ❑ Ourselves, perception, message, stress

Personality Type

- What about personality types? Is it important to consider the “type” of your “receiver”? You bet!
 - Data gatherers vs. Gut feelers
 - Show me the money types
 - Quick decision-makers
 - Quiet, thoughtful assessors

- There are several instruments that try to categorize your personality profile
 - Myers-Briggs (MBTI)
 - DiSC, True Colors, Enneagram

Exploring MBTI - Basics

Myers Briggs Type Indicator

4 Primary attributes or major preferences, 16 combinations of personality type

- **Sociability, *Where do you get your energy?***

- E: Extroverted (sociable)
- I: Introverted (private)

- ❖ Probably the clearest of the preferences. Extroverts get their energy in groups and social setting, while introverts are much more comfortable in quiet and private activity.

Exploring MBTI – Basics

- **Obtaining Data, *How do you prefer to take in information?***
 - ❑ S: Sensing (factual)
 - ❑ N: Intuition (imaginative)
- ❖ Sensation dominant people prefer precise, specific data in making what they would consider to be realistic and practical decisions.
- ❖ Intuitive people seek holistic information describing possibilities and tend to make innovative decisions based on relatively general data trends.

Exploring MBTI – Basics

- **Decision-Making, *How do you make decisions?***

- F: Feeling (empathetic)
- T: Thinking (analytical)
- ❖ Thinkers stress logic and formal modes of reasoning; they generalize and abstract and seem to base their choices on impersonal factors.
- ❖ Feeling dominant people form personalistic value judgments; they explain things in human terms and emphasize affective and personal processes in decision-making.

Exploring MBTI – Basics

- **Taking Action, *How do you deal with the outer world?***
 - J: Judging (scheduled, outcome oriented)
 - P: Perceiving (spontaneous, process oriented)
- ❖ Judging dominate people approach their life with a sense of urgency. Making decisions, planning ahead and reaching closure are all viewed as extremely important.
- ❖ Perceiving dominant people tend to prefer process to outcome. Reaching closure is not as important as keeping options open. Adapting is more desirable than planning.

The Situation...Revisited

You're in the middle of a testing cycle for a business critical project. You're testing a single component of a large system - *roughly* 10 testers are on your team. The Vice President of Software development walks up to you in the lab and asks you – “How's it going?”

BTW: She is a data centered decision-maker (INTJ)

- What do you say?

She challenges you on several defects that you've entered – disagreeing on priority and severity

- How do you respond?

Other Conversation Venues

Dashboards

Project Name: Snoopy		<u>DASHBOARD</u>		Reported on: 12-4-2006	
Test Mgr: Lucy					
Key milestones		Team		Overall Status	
10/1 – UI prototype		UI functionality,		GREEN, ready for UI prototype	
11/1 – B/E complete, phase 1		UI usability		RED, waiting for approval for usability consultant	
12/1 – UI v2 available		MWare, business logic		YELLOW, test case development behind by 2 days	
2/1 – Alpha ready		Lab & infrastructure		GREEN, fully prepared for prototype testing	
		Tools		GREEN, CM and defect systems ready for release	
		Automation		N/A, at this stage, automation not engaged	
		PM		TESTING STATUS - GREEN	
Release Dates		Major Issues and Risks			
Alpha: 2/1		1) Resources, need 1 usability tester and 1 MWare test resource			
Beta: 3/1		2) Resource, still running too lean and vacation season approaching			
Production: 4/1		3) We had planned for parallel automation development, resource constraints prevent that. Long term effect to efficiency on regression testing			

Quality Assessment

- What is it? At any point in time you may be asked to assess the current quality of the product under test ---
 - Formal, written assessment
 - With a current, data driven view to status
 - With your observations, opinions and insights
 - Focused towards making a “next step” decision based on “next step” criteria (Phase, Beta, Release or others)
- It is the template for the above and one of the *primary vehicles* for testing PR
- Make sure you’re always ready and prepared for an assessment
- Be true to yourself and your functional responsibility, if it’s not a “Go”, be prepared to recommend a “Stop”

Quality Assessment

Overview of Product Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Current release version■ # of test passes completed so far, # planned■ Test dynamics: # of testers, test cases
Testing Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Overall # of tests – passed, failed, deferred and blocked. Current coverage.■ Issues, challenges and risks
Defect Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Current totals, # open, # high priority/severity■ Trends supporting the software release plan
Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Trends & observations supporting test and project plans■ Connection to business requirements, schedule & release criteria

Quality Assessment

■ **What the assessment *is* –**

- ❑ It is a forum for test to communicate accurate, honest product status from the POV of testing and recommend next steps based on current release goals
- ❑ It is intended to present information for the *whole team* to use in making “next step” decisions
- ❑ It is crisp, clear, simple and targeted towards the “receiving” audience

■ **What the assessment *is not* –**

- ❑ It is not 5+ pages of information
- ❑ It is not a defect by defect analysis nor exhaustive graphs and charts
- ❑ It is not intended as a win-lose situation (test “win” or test “lose”)

Defects – Windows into your Work

- Communication starts at the individual defect level
- Every defect is a window into your work. What will your team read and how will they *perceive* it?
- Beyond the “raw” data, consider –
 - Your audience – who will be reading the defects, what do they need to see
 - Insure that you explain things simply, thoroughly and clearly
 - Don’t speculate too much, keep it data driven and factual
 - Don’t let your feelings creep in
 - It should “connect” the problem to requirements - customer - business impact
- Every one matters!

Defects – Windows into your Work

- 5 heuristics for crafting a solid defect “message” -
 1. Target the “core level” of your audience (high technology startup, vs. a telecommunications giant vs. OS provider)
 2. Clear, concise and meaningful description - headline
 3. Include steps, time and level of difficulty to reproduce
 4. Clearly identify Business & Customer impact
 5. Short, with most of the important information in “front”

- Sometimes it’s useful to review historically “good” defects to establish an expectation baseline

Defects – General Guidelines

- According to Kaner, Falk & Nguyen –

A good report is written, numbered, simple, understandable, reproducible, legible and non-judgmental

- **Simple:** single defect, focused problem
- **Understandable:** context to the product, domain and development staff (terms, technology, experience), connected to the audience
- **Reproducible:** details, directions, ease setup, include supporting documentation
- **Legible:** clear and precise prose, time taken to do it right
- **Non-judgmental:** just the facts, no “attacks”

Bug Advocacy

Chapter 4 of Lessons Learned in Software Testing – Kaner, Bach & Pettichord

It's about more than simply entering bugs, it's about presenting your test results so they get results. Be an advocate for your bugs!

- Lesson 55 – You are what you write
- Lesson 57 – Make your bug report an effective sales tool
- Lesson 58 – Your bug report is your representative
- Lesson 64 – Draw the affected stakeholder's attention to controversial bugs
- Lesson 78 – Be conscious of the processing cost of your bug reports
- Lesson 83 – The summary line is the most important line in the bug report
- Lesson 84 – Never exaggerate your bugs

Bug Advocacy

- Lesson 85 – Report the problem clearly, but don't try to solve it
- Lesson 86 – Be careful of your tone. Every person your criticize will see the report
- Lesson 89 – Use market or support data when appropriate
- Lesson 90 – Review each other's bug reports
- Lesson 91 – Meet the programmers who will read your reports
- Lesson 92 – The best approach may be to demonstrate your bugs to the programmers
- Lesson 93 – Verify bug fixes promptly
- Lesson 97 – Don't insist that every bug be fixed. Pick your battles.
- Lesson 98 – Don't let deferred bugs disappear
- Lesson 100 – Appeal bug deferrals immediately
- Lesson 101 – When you decide to fight, decide to win!

Metrics are great, but...

- I've worked in organizations that are proud of their historical data
 - They have precise trends for the last 4-6 major releases
 - They can discuss component failure rates, overall failure rates, stability and settling trends and other details gathered from the data
 - Oh, and they've got charts and graphs sprinkled on the walls and websites.
- One problem though, they really didn't do much with the data or even fully understand it
- In fact, the amount of data really confused their cross functional teams and leadership. Why?

Metrics are great, but...

- Because metrics don't always stand alone or speak for themselves. Here are some helpful heuristics –
 - Insure that everyone truly understands the trending
 - Run some brief, ad-hoc training course on what the metrics are, what they imply, how they're collected and why they're useful
 - In presentations or discussion, condense the metrics into a few short bullets that define what's going on (avoid complexity and information overload)
 - Don't "hide" behind the metrics and expect everyone to understand them. Explain, teach and leverage just a few, concrete points in your assessments and communication



Conversations – Big Picture

You're sitting down in the cafeteria having lunch when your new VP of SQA sits down with you. She seems personable and competent, but you don't really know her very well nor fully trust her. She asks you for your opinion on what's "broken" in the team and where she needs to focus?

- ❑ What do you say?
- ❑ What wouldn't you say?

After listening to your thoughts intently, she asks you for corrective action advice to the "challenges" you've discussed. What would you specifically recommend she do?

- ❑ How do you respond?

Setting the Stage

Vision

- ❑ **Vision is a statement about what your organization wants to become**
- ❑ It should resonate with all members of the organization and help them feel proud, excited, and part of something much bigger than themselves
- ❑ A vision should stretch the organization's capabilities and image of itself.
- ❑ It gives shape and direction to the organization's future

Mission

- ❑ **Mission or Purpose is a precise description of what an organization does**
- ❑ It should describe the business the organization is in
- ❑ It is a definition of “why” the organization currently exists
- ❑ Each member of an organization should be able to verbally express this mission

Setting the Stage

- Vision is a critical characteristic for a good leader.

The eternal dilemma is keeping your eye on the ball of today (Mission), while playing on the field of tomorrow (Vision).

- You need to constantly be thinking globally within your team
 - Have a personal vision and mission for yourself and your team
 - Thinking globally – towards key improvement actions across the organization
 - Always be ready to make recommendations for key challenges OR have amplification advice to strengthen the team
 - Be bold and get some skin in the game

Test Team Differentiation

ST&P November 2005 Future Testing column -
Moving Beyond Commodity Testing

1. Deep Product Knowledge
 - *Breadth of product experience, real-world usage, priority*
2. Broad-View Commentary
 - *Technology vs. Business vs. Quality vs. Customer trade-offs*
3. Cycle Time Reduction
 - *Speed: automation, risk-based testing, just in time & just enough*
4. Outsource Thinking
 - *Balanced recommendations & assistance on best ways to outsource for quality / speed advantage*

The Need For A Balanced View

- Business needs & dynamics
 - Understanding of the customer & your business model
 - Always mapping SQA to Visible Business Value

- Project Dynamics
 - Be a part of your PMO and active partner in Project Chartering
 - Engage in all capabilities assessments

- Team
 - Establishing clear goals, processes and approaches
 - Continuously learning; Open to change
 - Team building

Becoming a “Partner”

- A big part of the Agile Methods involves collaboration...
 - With Development – focusing on product quality
 - With Customers – focusing on directed requirements & acceptance testing
- Creating a partnership focused towards shared project goals & quality responsibilities
- Testers need to communicate quality and process information as part of this; not from the position of gatekeeper, but one of an informed, proactive Voice of the Customer



Conversations – Interviewing

Break into groups of 2

- Lets simulate a quick 2 question phone screen. This time you will have 3 minutes each.
 - Using your favorite “testing” question AND your favorite “team fit” question phone screen your partner
 - Decide whether you have sufficient match to bring them in for an onsite interview
- I’ll time each exchanges
- Let’s debrief...

Good to Great – The People

The Good-to-Great leaders began the transformation by first getting the right people on the bus (and the wrong people off the bus). And then figuring out where to drive the bus.

Who should always come before what (vision, strategy, organization structure, and tactics)

-- Good to Great, Jim Collins

Setting up an effective hiring process

- It starts with a commitment to building your team
 - Assess your gaps & needs from a current / future perspective
 - Define clear goals for your needs
 - Write a solid job description; review it with your team
 - *Composing* a team takes creative, now vs. future thinking
- Don't be afraid to be disruptive, to hire someone "different"
- Phone screens are not an interview. Instead they
 - Determine domain match, technical match, and team fit at a HIGH level
 - The phone screener decides whether to bring someone in

Setting up an effective hiring process

- Craft a unique interview for each position
 - Always phone screen (notion of an “on-site” screen)
 - Plan the interview (agenda, focus points, teaming)
 - Define clear roles and responsibilities

- After the interview:
 - Discuss direct & indirect (observed) responses
 - Debrief as a team, try to achieve consensus, or at least no firm opposition (no thumbs down)
 - Always go with your “gut”
 - Should be excited about the “possibilities”!

Group interviewing techniques

- Multiple group interviews
 - Group has a specific focus – technology, skill area, team fit
 - Have a question asking protocol
 - Observers (answer + body language)
 - Caution: prepare the interviewee for it, no more than 2-3 interviewers
- Auditioning
 - Prepare a “piece of work” – code, architecture & design, test
 - Present it in front of a group – 30 minute presentation, Q&A
 - Looking at the work AND the presentation abilities
- Guerrilla Guide to Interviewing – *Joel on Software*
 - <http://www.joelonsoftware.com/articles/GuerrillaInterviewing3.html>

Group interviewing techniques

- Information sharing
 - Demo products that they'll be testing
 - Share company and domain information
 - Lab tours, office tours
- Not so great practices
 - Too many interviewers, lunch interviews
 - Over use of testing
 - Poor group combinations, little planning, interrogation, it's all about you
- Don't forget the lost art of the thoughtful, targeted open-ended question
 - Active listening and the effectiveness of silence



Conversation – Coaching

You've noticed that one of the junior testers on your team is struggling in their interactions with the development team. They also seem to only have a superficial understanding of the product, which may be large part of the problem.

It also doesn't help things in that they seem to be a bit full of themselves and not very self-aware...

- ❑ If you're a peer - should you get involved? If so, how?
- ❑ What if things don't improve? Or in fact, get worse?
- ❑ What changes if this person "reports" to you?

Conversation – Coaching, again...

You're in a project review meeting that the project manager has called to try and release your project. It's got way too many bugs in it to release and everyone is getting pressure to figure out what minimally needs repair in order to ship it.

You're representing the QA department and have invited a few senior testers to help you adequately represent the quality of the product. Unfortunately, as the pressure increases their defensiveness does as well – and they are taking the discussion way too personally. Now they're beginning to ask that ALL bugs be repaired prior to them signing-off on the release.

- ❑ What do you do in the meeting to diffuse the situation?
- ❑ How about afterwards?
- ❑ How does your role come into play?

Coaching for Performance

- What do I mean by Coaching?
 - Performance management, timely and honest feedback
 - Finding and receiving feedback
 - Managing group performance
 - Motivating your team

- Why so hard?
 - Because it deals with PEOPLE
 - People aren't neat, tidy, one sized, or computer programs
 - So easily avoided or handled too lightly or heavily
 - Focused forward – towards improvement
 - You get little short-term recognition for your efforts

Feedback

- Face the Challenges

- Don't look for divine intervention
- 100% of the time, it doesn't improve on its own
- More people recognize it than you realize
- It takes time for a direction to form, so don't wait

- Learn to give feedback

- At the point of attack and continuously
- To all members of your team
- Be honest and constructive, say what's on your mind, and ensure it's clear
- Be congruent across your team

Feedback – The 95% “Gap”

- As a “Team Repair” consultant I notice that:
 - Leaders often share strong opinions related to team & individual performance issues
 - But when I look for direct, clearly communicated evidence in performance appraisals I find...
 - 5% or less of what I was told or “heard”

- As a Leadership Skills instructor, I notice that:
 - When asked, about 95% of the IT Leaders adamantly feel that providing detailed, precise, real-time, clear feedback is clearly a strength of theirs

- So why the gap?

Categories of Feedback

- Carl Roger's – 5 Categories of Feedback
 1. **Evaluative** – Making a judgment about the worth, goodness or appropriateness of the other person's statements
 2. **Interpretive** – Paraphrasing, attempting to explain what the other persons statement means
 3. **Supportive** – Attempting to assist or bolster the other communicator
 4. **Probing** – Attempting to gain additional information, continue the discussion or clarify a point
 5. **Understanding** – Attempting to discover completely what the other communicator means by her statements

They're listed in the order of daily frequency. Notice that we try to judge well before we try to understand...

Aspects of Active Listening

People speak at 100 – 175 WPM, but listen at 600-800 WPM.

This can create mind drift.

- Spend more time listening than talking
- Do not finish sentences of others
- Do not answer questions with questions
- Are aware of their biases
- Never daydream or drift
- Let the other speaker talk, don't dominate the conversation
- Do not plan responses while other person is speaking
- Provide feedback, but don't interrupt
- Summarize for understanding
- Ask open ended questions
- Take brief notes

Receiving as Well as Giving

- Listen to your team...truly listen
 - Group 360 degree communications

- Learn to receive feedback
 - It's a gift from others, truly welcome and cherish feedback
 - It isn't good or bad, it simply is
 - My strategy is to gather it first, then digest it, then look for the "truth" in it, then work to adjust
 - If you don't receive it well, you won't receive it often. Be receptive!
 - It isn't just what's been said, it's what hasn't been said. Consider body language and other clues

Managing Group Performance

- Consistent principles, but tailor to individuals
- Communicate your “soft side” performance expectations
 - Energy, enthusiasm, learning, effort, stretch – over hours
 - Results – over hours
 - Attitude and effort – over hours
- Deciding who gets your time?
 - Top down, not bottom up
 - Start with your top 20% and high potential employees, then focus on the remainder – *First Break All The Rules, Buckingham & Coffman*
 - Pareto Principal applies here as well

Motivating Your Team

Stephen M. R. Covey's
book – *The Speed of
Trust*

13 Behaviors that Foster &
Increase Trust

1. **Talk Straight**
2. Demonstrate Respect
3. **Create Transparency**
4. Right Wrongs
5. Show Loyalty
6. Deliver Results
7. Get Better
8. **Confront Reality**
9. **Clarify Expectations**
10. Practice Accountability
11. **Listen First**
12. Keep Commitments
13. Extend Trust



Conversation – Perceptions & Attitudes

Your boss stops into your office and closes the door. He begins to vent frustration on how your team is perceived as negative, low energy whiners. How their attitudes drag the entire team down.

While you've seen some of this behavior yourself, you don't believe its as widespread or as strong as he claims.

You also think that there is some finger pointing going on here. Schedules have been lost of late and the QA team has born the brunt of the direct and indirect blame.

- ❑ How do you initially respond to his claims?
- ❑ Would you follow-up with your team in any way? Specifically how?
- ❑ And follow-up with your boss?

Perceptions of Testing & Testers

- A key challenge for test resources is illustrating value. Marketing **envisions** the products, developers **create** the products, but we **only test** them. Heck, why do we need test anyway?
- What value we bring is an often unasked but considered question
- We need to construct, articulate and sell our value proposition
- Insure that our customers and colleagues understand what we “bring to the table”. Not only the understanding, but **we continuously demonstrate how we excel at it!**
- How? Conversations, training and by example...

Perceptions of Testing & Testers

What do we bring to the table?

- An understanding of the product & risks
 - **Big picture & product breadth**
 - **Customer usage**
 - **Competition**
 - **Trade-offs**
 - **Functionality**

- An understanding of the discipline of Testing & QA
 - **Test coverage, thoroughness and completeness**
 - **Reporting, insight, data and understanding**
 - **Compass towards success**

Perceptions of Testing & Testers

More to the table?

- An understanding of the customer
 - Usability & Needs
 - Completeness
 - Minimal impact - work around possibilities
 - Defect impacts

- An understanding of the requirements
 - Completeness
 - Traceability
 - Trade-offs

Attitude & Presentation

- Your attitude is reflected in many ways:
 - Your level of engagement and enthusiasm
 - Your level of open mindedness
 - Your verbal and non verbal communication
 - Your contribution dynamics within the project (and under pressure)
- Any of you ever work with a colleague who:
 - Overreacts often or is domineering in exchanges?
 - Is disinterested, draws or plays with their laptop in meetings?
 - Is extremely quiet and finds it hard to communicate in meetings?
- Of course you have! While it's hard to define and quantify, attitude really matters in our conversations!

Attitude & Presentation

- Attitude and presentation considerations –
 - *Always be positive and balanced in your exchanges. Don't take things too personally*
 - *Be honest and use data in your exchanges. If something isn't proven quite yet, defer actions or opinions until you get more information*
 - *Present scenarios from the perspective of the business or customer impact*
 - *Present the assessment from the perspective of a team member presenting status (not as a "quality ultimatum")*
 - *Watch your body language, stay alert in meetings & exchanges and get engaged*
 - *Always know what is going on in Testing, understand it and be able to effectively present status*

Combating “They don’t understand me”

- In a word, its communications:
 - Many organizations really don’t understand the challenges associated with testing, so it’s your job to help them understand
 - It’s also your job to “connect” beyond a simplistic view of quality – connect to the business, scope, TTM and customer dimensions
 - Don’t expect to “win” every time! In fact, it’s about Win-Win

- It takes:
 - Hard work, patience and perseverance
 - An understanding of your “customers”, their POV and what they need
 - Time to progress and gain their trust & understanding

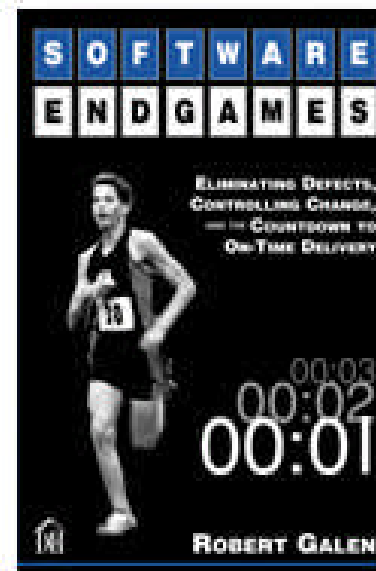
Thank you for taking the time!

Any questions?

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*Software Endgames: Eliminating Defects,
Controlling Change, and the Countdown to
On-Time Delivery* published by Dorset House
in Spring 2005. www.rgalen.com for order
info, misc. related presentations, and papers.



Assessment Exercise

Quality Assessment Exercise

Project high level view:

- HR management applications
 - Personnel management (recruiting, basic information)
 - Benefit management
 - Payroll
 - Training and development
- Web based system (3 tiers)
- Multiple browsers supported
- Internet and intranet based access
- Secure system, 15,000 users
- Distributed across 4 primary sites

Quality Assessment Exercise

Project development view:

- 500 individual screens, using XP stories for requirements
- Primary languages: html, java, and ruby
- Using several 3'rd party java components
- Oracle primary, SQL server secondary database
- Using ADP for payroll processing, several API interfaces used to dialogue with ADP databases and exchange data
- Relatively small, 7 engineers, and inexperienced development team
- They continue to experiment with different development methods, XP being the latest
- There seems to be very little “customer” input or involvement in the effort

Quality Assessment Exercise

Project testing status:

- We've been testing the application for 3 months, with 2 testers
- Through about 6 testing cycles
- The code set froze right before the last testing cycle. Prior to that, it was about 50% complete
- We have had an increasing view to open / new defects. We found 156 new defects in the last release
- Priority 0-1 defects have been relatively stable for each release, running at about 20-30 defects in each
- There was a critical set of defects in the payroll interface subsystem in the last release and we couldn't test that functionality
- In fact, we have never closed the loop on payroll testing

Quality Assessment Exercise

Project testing status (cont.):

- The java reporting applet has several severe problems and the vendor has been non responsive in making repairs
- Performance testing will only seriously commence next week. To-date, we've only tested with about 200 clients attached to the application

Late Breaking News:

- Management has indicated that the project is taking too long. They've decided to add 4 more developers to the team and 1 more tester.
- You are two days into your most recent release, of a 2 week test cycle.
- They want to schedule a Beta for next week and are looking for a quality assessment as a check for readiness
- All “eyes” look to the test team... 😊

Quality Assessment

Overview of Product Status	
Testing Status	
Defect Status	
Recommendations	

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