



BEST PRACTICE

Solutions Workshop Notes for

"Managing Software Quality and Test Solutions"

Date: 4/30/08

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1. What can I do as a Quality Manager to best deal with a team which is 'old school' and resistant to change?

Constraints

- Not having our manager buy-in
- What tenure means to the company
- Fear of change
- Difficulty proving there are better ways

Assumptions

- Tenure = knowledge, people simply don't want to change
- Team I want to change is not my own team
- Attitude is 'If it is not broken, don't fix it'
- A person's pay or position might be affected

Success criteria

- Recognition that maybe the old way is not the best way anymore
- People start using the new process
- Employee morale is boosted
- Less fear in change and making improvements
- Employees feel valued
- Stabilized environment

Solution Approaches

- Deliberate/share results from other teams that have been successful
- Gradually get individuals to buy in – focus first on those who you think might be easier to influence, and have them help to influence others to join in.
- Get measurements behind your statement to support your approach
- Have a well thought-out plan
- Follow-up with staged execution
- Report results



2. How can I best determine the test cost/savings on individual projects?

Constraints

- No baseline
- Time is limited
- Limited or no scope control
- Lack of Information and resources
- Hard to quantify cost savings for quality

Assumptions

- We have start and end dates for projects
- There is currently no tool to track
- There is currently no process to measure costs

Success Factors

- Will have quantifiable dollar figures
- Reusable process – easy to use
- Results can be used to optimize the process

Solution Approaches

- Create baseline for current test process
- Collect historical data from other projects if available
- Establish measures and cost formulas
 - Staff hours/effort costs
 - Agree on a standard hourly rate – internal
 - Identify a reflective external rate
 - Tools
 - Time/Cost savings associated with it's use
 - Other benefits of use of tool - efficiency
 - Cost expenditure for purchase
 - Ongoing maintenance costs
- Keep Measurements “Apples to apples” when collecting and reporting
- Analyze results – propose recommendations
- Communicate those to management

3. How can I effectively manage our QA team and processes if I'm given the responsibility without any authority?

Constraints

- Inexperience
- Delegating to Peers



- Resource Leaks
- Turnover
- New team
- No Defined QA structure

Assumptions

- It is possible to gain the authority for resources, performance reviews, prioritization
- Person with responsibility does not have authority
- Organization believes in technical ability
- Someone has authority who will not exercise it

Success Factors

- Non-reporting team partners start coming to me for advice/consultation.
- Improved decision making ability from me even without my having the authority. (If you act as though you have the authority, people start listening.)
- I am included in early project planning
- I'm being kept informed without asking
- I am given formal authority by the manager

Solutions

- Get a coach/mentor
- Ask current manager to step up and take authoritative steps
- Define a plan for issue resolution with the manager who has authority
- Assign roles to provide better structure around decision-making authority
- Design and implement QA structure to leverage more process/oversight, which can lead to a higher level of authority.

4. As a QM Manager, how can I best move test activities from developers and Business to test organization?

Constraints

- We have always done it this way
- We know it best
- Capacity
- Does not need testing
- Time

Assumptions

- Development doing own testing
- Management wants testing to be done



- Undefined testing roles
- Not part of developments deployment process
- Testing Organization exists

Success Factors

- Testing part of development process
- Check off to deployment not a bottleneck
- Developer realizes value of QA and comes to testing group
- QA planned and scheduled

Solutions:

- Quality and testing education (internal & external)
- Marketing and advertising of quality process and roles
- QA part of development process early in SDLC
- Measure time/effort/quality to compare before/after
- Staff a solid and committed QA team
- Build stronger relationships with business partners to align efforts and apply roles/ownership to the right place.

5. As a QA Manager, how can I best initiate and partner with others to adopt a more mature software development practice within the IT organization?

Constraints

- Resistance to Change
- Communication breakdown
- Lack of time
- Lack of Understanding
- Lack of Authority

Assumptions

- Time is limited
- Relationship is not ideal
- Haven't achieved 'buy-in'

Success Factors

- Improved Relationship with other teams
- Better productivity
- Improved Quality



Solutions

- Use industry metrics to show benefits of quality due to process maturity
- Train and educate others in the maturity model and apply to organization
- Help teams with prioritization of projects and scope control
- Provide a system that rewards better Quality and process alignment from others

References

Conference – Quality Engineered Software And Testing Conferences - Chicago
April, 30, 2008 (QUEST)
<http://www.qaiquest.org/chicago/>