
Grove
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software testing
Creating balance as a tester in modern times
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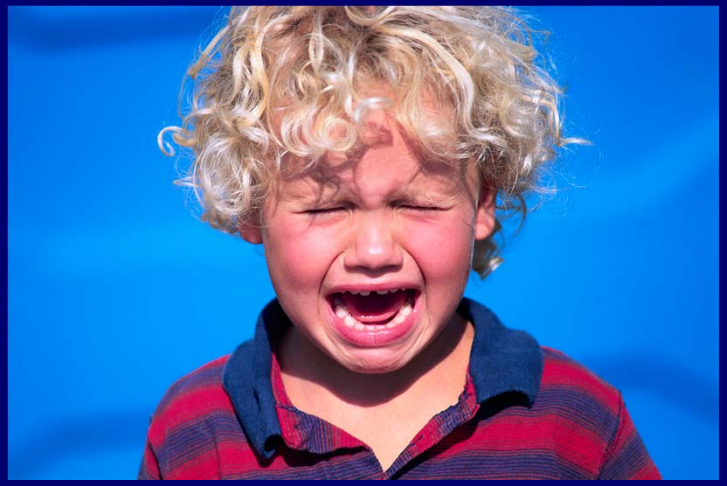
Shift

Causes of stress or in-balance

"Between 2008/09 and 2010/11 16,000 people suffered from work related stress in the United Kingdom within the ICT industry"

Source: UK Health and Safety Executive

- Some causes of stress at work…?
  - pace and complexity of technology
  - rising workloads
  - time to market
  - work/life balance
  - office politics
  - commuting



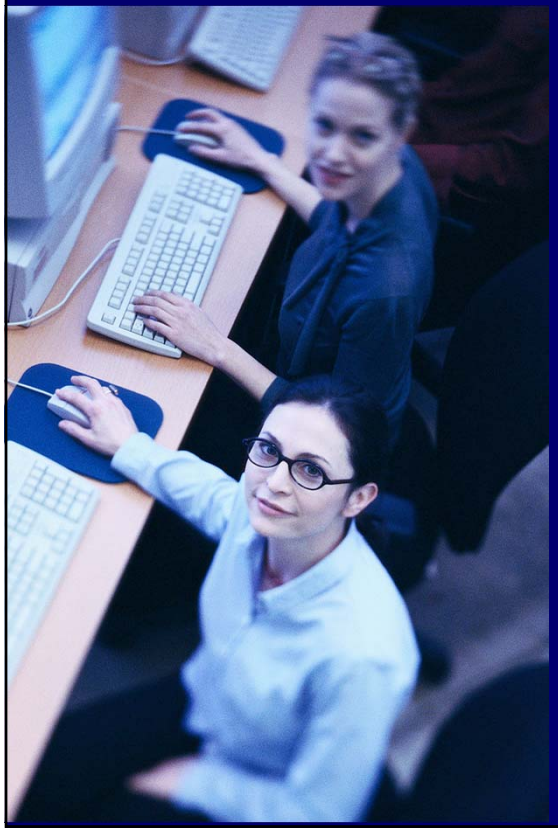
Survey questions: In your job…

1. what do **you need to do** to operate at your best?
2. what do **you need** in order to operate at your best?

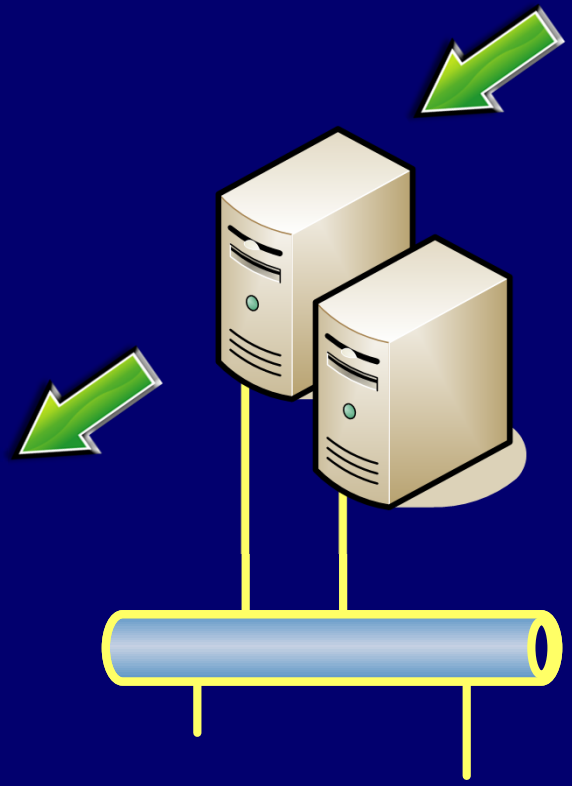
The tester's wheel©



The test strategy in context









Test Strategy

Feedback on test strategy

Test Strategy

- The test strategy must endorse the business needs – which must be realistic!
- The business/project must endorse and support the test strategy and the people implementing it
  - Time
  - Budget
  - Test tools
  - Any other genuine and supportive actions



- There must be clear roles and responsibilities for testing staff

Feedback on test strategy

Test Strategy

- Ensure that the test strategy is reflected in implementation
  - ‘Child’ test assets, e.g. plans, schedules and test cases
  - The correct tools and infrastructure
  - A clear and workable process
- Everyone in the test team is working the test strategy at some level
  - Appreciate how you are implementing the strategy



Sizing up the whole person

Emotional Intelligence

IQ: a measure of intelligence



Personality

EQ: a measure of emotional intelligence

- –Personal Competence
- –Social Competence

Feedback on Personal Competence

Emotional Intelligence

- Understand yourself and your abilities
  - Appreciate your talents and your limitations
  - Seek support and training where necessary
- Use self discipline to structure your tasks and time
  - Fully appreciate and manage your tasks
- maintain a sense of humour
  - Which reminds you it's just a job



Feedback on Social Competence

Emotional Intelligence

- Build a rapport with others
  - Across the project team & with customers
  - Understand others moods, their motivations and improve your relationships
- When managing others: delegate, trust in the individual, manage and lead where necessary
  - Hold frequent 1:1's with team members



- Be personable and empathetic towards individuals

A simple overview of motivation

Motivation

Intrinsic motivator!



Extrinsic motivator!

De-motivators

Feedback on intrinsic motivators

- A need to show commitment to task
  - To make a difference on a new project or task
  - To complete a task well when realistic and sensible
- Maintain good working relationships
  - With team members and stakeholders alike

Feedback on extrinsic motivators

- To receive realistic tasks and goals
  - Good task planning and goal setting by management
  - Given a realistic time to complete them
- To have a good working environment
  - Closer working relationships, more face to face
  - Correct test tools and facilities
- A need to be valued
  - A sense of reward, e.g. a simple “thank you!”
  - Training supplied…rather than just get on with it!

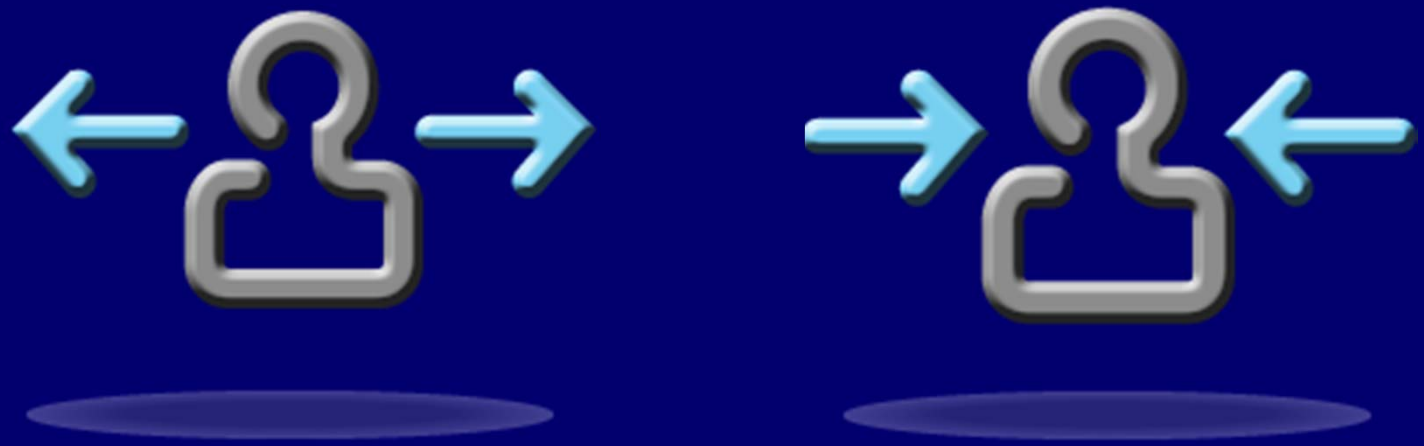


Education – in context

Education

- Education:

  noun: the act or process of imparting or acquiring particular knowledge or skills, as for a profession.



Feedback on education

Education

- Good communication is key
  - With management, team members, peers and stakeholders



- A need for good product / domain knowledge
  - Company / project working practices & processes
  - The product under test
  - Project key players and points of contact

- Grow both testing and non-testing skills
  - Testing skills necessary for the job at hand
  - Soft-skills: management, leadership, communication

Solutions to imbalance @ work

- Imbalance or stress are very real aspects of industry today and we are not exempt within testing

- The 4 elements of the tester's wheel are:
  - Test Strategy (our approach)
  - Emotional intelligence
  - Motivation (removing de-motivators)
  - Education

"What will **you** do in order to promote a better balance in **your** job tomorrow…?"



Suggested reading…

- Peopleware (2nd edition)
  - Demarco & Lister
- Emotional Intelligence 2.0
  - Bradberry & Greaves
- Drive
  - Daniel H. Pink