

To promote testing in your organization

By **Rob van Steenbergen**

Although we testers all feel testing is a real profession, the knowledge of testing in other disciplines is often very limited to “pushing some buttons or so”.

What is testing? When do you start? How you work through a test process? What is a tester doing exactly? This is something you want to know if you require a test team for your project to start testing. It's time to go out to everyone and explain about testing and get some understanding.

So here are my 29 tips to promote testing in an organization where testing is still at a very initial stage or people in the organization do not understand what testing is.

1. If someone asks you to give a presentation on testing: always do!
2. Place posters about testing to a wall.
3. Place articles about testing from IT magazines to a wall (the test wall?)
4. Understand the developer and other test disciplines well and know how to deal with them.
5. Did no one test yet at a department at your organization? Just start testing and communicate your defects and test results.
6. Don't have a bug's database yet? Create it yourself; start with an Excel sheet if necessary. A central list of product issues convinces many people of the usefulness of such a tool.
7. Stay positive about testing in your conversation and communication. Radiate passion for the testing profession.
8. Tell people about the benefits of starting early with testing in a project and finding those defects as early as possible.
9. Talk through the exit criteria of a test with all stakeholders.
10. Discuss Test planning step-by-step with project managers and team leaders.
11. Do regular product risk analysis sessions.
12. Publish in the organization's magazine about the testing organization.
13. Have a KISS (Keep it Simple Stupid) talk ready about testing that you can always use when talking about testing. (Elevator pitch)
14. Create a recognizable logo for your test team and use it on all your documents
15. Put a developer in the test team
16. Put a tester on the development team
17. Not an independent test team but dependent teams. “Needing each other” works great to create a good product.

18. For managers: put the focus on the process not the product, we need someone to watch the process, including the testing process.



Rob van Steenbergen from the Netherlands is an independent software test consultant and has 14 years of experience as a software tester in miscellaneous areas.

In the last 4 years he has been involved in infrastructure projects and is working now on a desktop virtualization project where he is testing and coordinating the tests.

In his leisure time he reads, listens to lots of music and watches even more movies. His twitter account, weblog and other links can be found at his website

www.chickenwings.nl

19. For managers: Each step of the process should have a test, not only at the end of a project.

20. Ensure management commitment. This is needed to make testing visible in the organization.

21. If you communicate about testing, do not constantly repeat the same words. Each repetition makes you less credible, after a while people will not listen anymore (oh no, not again the same story).

22. Tap into the feelings of others in conveying the message, what emotionally touches your stakeholder (mostly money and losing time for managers I guess).

23. Spread articles about testing, magazines, make copies, create a test library for interested people.

24. Go to test events, bring your colleagues along.

25. As software goes wrong in production, analyze and discuss with management how those mistakes could be found early in the development phase, before going in to production.

26. Ensure that managers at various levels have understanding of the risks of not testing, the testing process and the specific problems that arise daily in the workplace.

27. In this process: Patience, patience, patience

28. Tell what you did; do marketing for your own work. What and how many

defects have you found on time?

29. Create a roadmap how to get test consciousness into your organization (communication planning).

Add your own tips to make this list longer and better.