

How to promote Testing in Your Organization



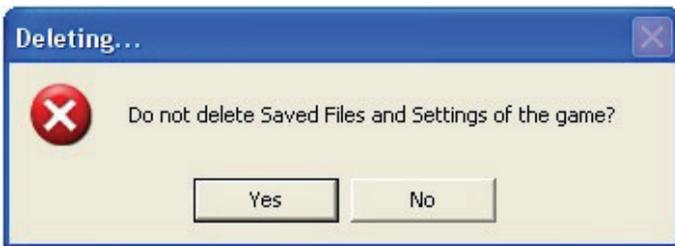
Testing Circus Regular Feature

- Rob van Steenbergen

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Test promotion: Do regular product risk analysis - Part 4

I started with my product risk session tips to guide you a bit when you are doing a risk analysis session in your company and told you how to prepare and what you would do in a session (with use of sticky notes). Furthermore I mentioned some attention points and pitfalls. Now for the last part of this product risk analysis series.



Examples of aspects of failure

- Frequency of use
- Complicated or unknown product
- New tooling
- Development of product is taken over from others
- Time pressure
- Functions in subsystems are complex
- Functions that have been changed a lot

Examples of damage

- Loss of image of company or organization
- Costs of correction actions, also extra documentation
- Employees cannot do their work
- Clients can't be supported
- The business processes are less efficient (or not efficient)

- There is arising a negative image of the ICT organization

You can find more on the internet or by deep thought of course!

Classification of risks

There are a lot of ways to classify risks. One way I use is to let the stakeholders choose between Low, Medium and High (1, 2, and 5)

- Low Failure Probability / Damage: 1
- Medium FP / D: 5
- High FP / D: 10

So per risk everyone will place a number for FP and for D. Multiply and you get a classification. A risk with a FP of 5 and a D of 10 = 50

So the session phases are in this order:

- Discuss scope
- Defining the risks
- Classification of risks (F X D)

Conclusion

- Risk analysis is a communication process
- Good starting point for testing strategy (risk based testing)
- Stakeholders talks to each other
- It is experienced as a fun process

Outcome is a risk table but you will have made testing more visible for the stakeholders too.

Good practices and remarks

- When doing a session, ask someone to help who has some experience on this
- Ask to write down risks

- Goal of the session is to get as many risks as possible
- Product risks versus project risks: When in doubt: Product risk
- Supply quick feedback: as soon as the risk list is completed, send this to all stakeholders

Feedback

The main important thing now is to place the list in an MS-excel sheet (or other format) and mail this to the people that were in the session as soon as possible, with a request for review.

This Excel sheet should be clear for the readers and simple. Here's an example of such a sheet:

	Criteria/Risk	Submitter	Functionality / area of the product	Quality attribute	Chance of failure High = 10 Middle = 5 Low = 1	Damage (when failing)	Risk class
1	There could be known issues in the application API that we don't know off that will cause problems in our system	Jacko	API	Reliability	1	10	10
2	Support installs the software in production in the wrong order. It looks like installation is complete but at the end it is not.	Peter	Installation	Installability	5	10	50
3	Customer does not get feedback when the shop website is handling 1500+ customers at the same time	Team	General	Performance	1	5	5
4	Error messages that come via the API will give information about the product that could be a security risk	Team	API	Security	1	1	1
5	A customer can reach and edit other customer's shopping cart	Team	General	Security	5	10	50
6	The new page is not translated into chickenwings.	Team	Translation	Localizability	1	5	5
7	Emptying a basket is not possible because the customer already did go to the last page of the order process	Jacko	Product database	Capability	10	10	100

Testing and results

Now for testing you have an idea that has been created by the technical people and the business. They all provided inputs and need to be updated about the results.

In this way testing becomes more visible to everyone that has a relation with the project. If this is done in a professional manner, it will automatically promote the testing you are doing. So think about it, discuss it with fellow testers and do it.

Agile?

As a last remark you can do this also within agile projects. For example, on each iteration you are doing, you can do an informal risk session with your team. Sitting around the table and just discussing possible risks of the functionalities or user stories you are implementing in the iteration. The product owner will be there to get input from the business.

After a few iterations you then could do a more formal brainstorming session with more people from the organization to get a bigger picture. This is a bit like zooming in (focusing) and zooming out (de-focusing) on your test project.

Thank you for reading. Bit of special article this time, big subject, but from a testing promotion perspective a very important part.



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In the last 5 years he has been involved in infrastructure projects and is now working at Leaseweb. He is working in agile projects, infrastructural and software products, coaching new testers and helping with setting up and improving the testprocesses for this company.

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Few days to go, and New Year 2012 will be here. With the advent of new year, a new era begins and with it comes new hopes and new possibilities. Every year teaches us some of life's most important lessons, and with that learning we put our step forward into the new year. Testing Circus Team wishes you a very happy and a bug free New Year.