Trying to Teach Testing Skills and Judgment

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Rikard Edgren
Context

• Higher vocational studies, 1 – 2 years full time
• Based on market needs, including supervised internship
• We (Rikard and Henrik) have taught test-savvy parts at several schools

• Teaching Philosophy
  – Motivation is key
  – Not for the money
  – It’s not about us
  – Encourage new ideas
  – Don’t be afraid
Tacit Skills and Judgment

- Asking good questions
- Critical thinking
- Understanding what is important
- Rapid learning
- Seeing many perspective and test ideas
- Selecting effective test strategies
- Capturing serendipity
- Realizing when testing is good enough

[Courses are not centered around these, but they are embedded within “classic” testing areas.]

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Think Like a Tester - excerpt

• You will now experience a fake lecture, using real examples from ”Think Like a Tester”.

• We usually start with a story...
Think Like a Tester - definition

• Testers think differently than other professions; we want to see problems.

• A good tester needs critical thinking, questioning assumptions that really aren’t givens.
• You get many perspectives with creativity, often by combining old things in new ways.
• You also need logical thinking, to understand how things are connected.
• And we need to learn rapidly, since there are loads to know in order to test well.
• On top of this a healthy dose of pragmatic thinking, to adjust to reality so you can test your best within time limits.

• This needs to be balanced with a very good understanding about what is important in the unique situation.
Critical Thinking

• Question everything, especially this statement

• What If...

• You can’t avoid bias, but you can manage it (Lessons Learned #39)
Critical Thinking - Examples

• Evaluating concepts

• Questioning the product

• Testers can make mistakes

• *The critical thinking is embedded in who we are as testers.*
Think Like a Tester - Exercise

• Guess the Number v1.0 by Rikard Edgren and Henrik Emilsson

• This is an exercise for software testers.
• It promotes logical thinking and pattern recognition.
• Understand the behavior so you can solve the puzzle within 7 guesses.
• I am thinking about an integer between 1 and 100 (decimals are ignored)

• What is your guess:

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Think Like a Tester – Exercise Debrief

- Critical thinking
- Many experiments
- Logical thinking
- Observation
Finale

• A challenging opportunity to learn (for students and teachers!)

• “If a student wants a crystal clear education with easy assignments, you will probably not like it” (Magnus)

• I can’t really teach these tacit skills and judgment, but I know how to help students acquire it.

• You can do it too, a good start is reading the paper with details.

rikard.edgren@learningwell.se

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