How I Became An Automation Engineer

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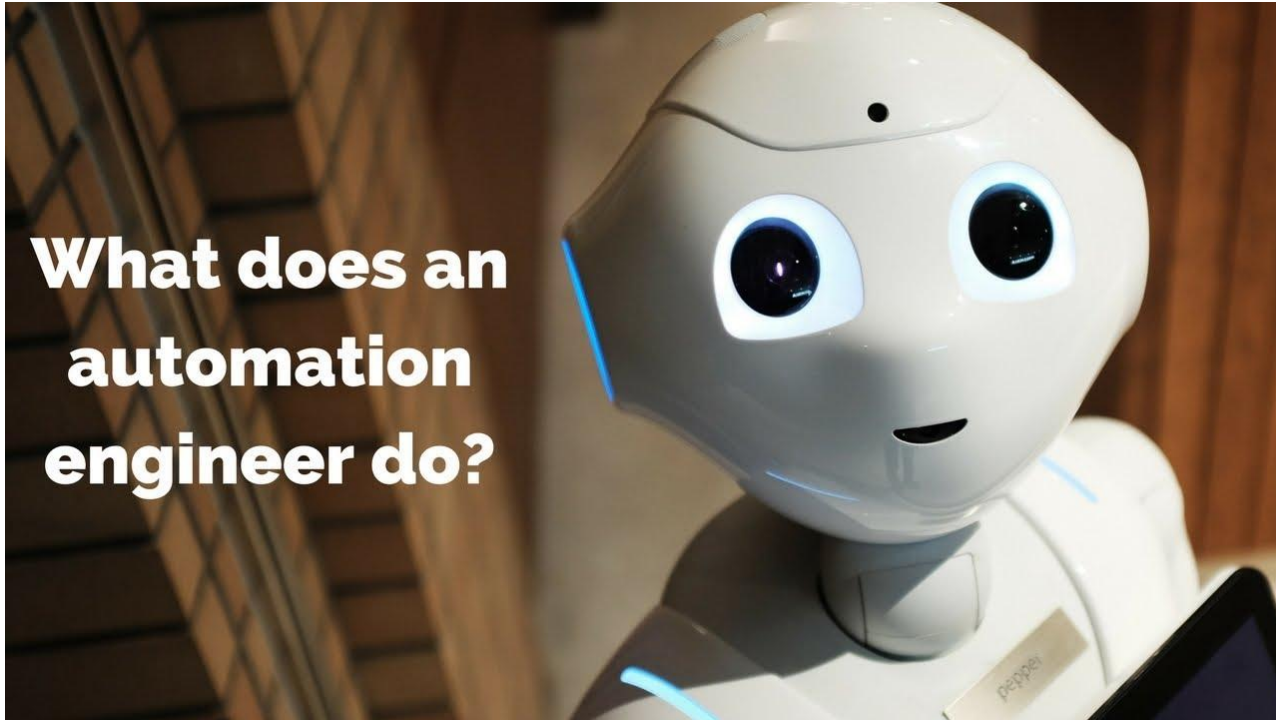@ckenst

Access the Materials
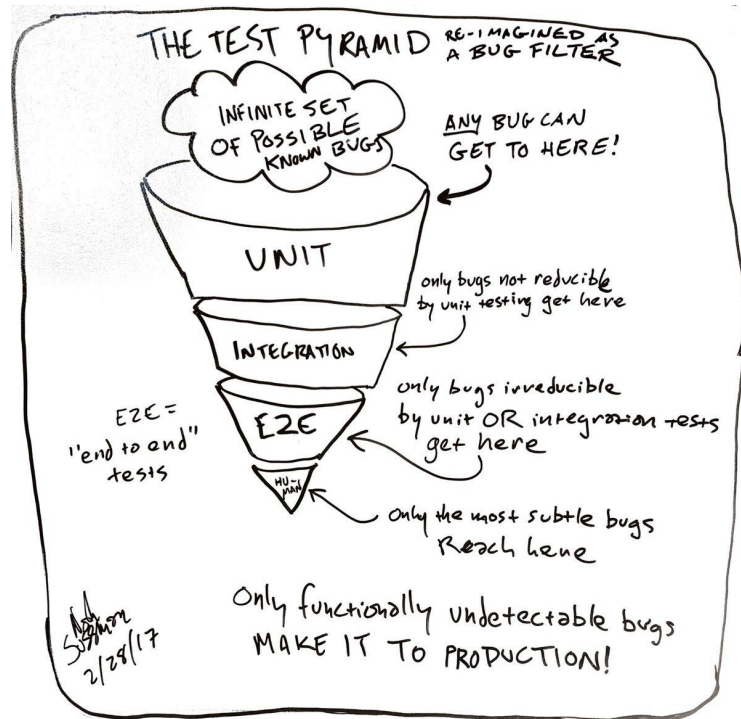

https://github.com/ckenst/how-automation-engineer-talk

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A Test Automation Engineer???

What does an automation engineer do?

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Lots to learn about Test Automation

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Here's my confession...

- I learned to code to write UI automation
- It's a well-worn path with lots of resources even if it isn't the best way
- I like the idea of learning a language (coding) and using the tools examples at the same time

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Practice

- Each time I've built a UI framework I've gotten better / improved either in code or process
- Regular code reviews from other developers

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Interviews

- Partially a Coding role
  - FizzBuzz or similar entry level coding challenge in CoderPad
- Partially a Testing role
  - How would you test an email system?
  - How would you test a facebook like button?
- Lots of web technology questions

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Automation Engineering @BloomNation

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In the last year I also worked on...

- Automated tests for SEO
- API tests using Dredd based on Swagger specification
- Wrote a few unit tests in PHP
- Code Reviews, Configuration changes to our CI pipeline, process improvements
- Production Support & Monitoring
- Deployment help
- Lots of Exploratory Testing, etc
- Etc… etc...

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60/40 split

- Given all my responsibilities I anecdotally spend about 60% of my testing time around automation (new code, maintenance, doing some specific test automation task) and around 40% exploring
- These aren't hard numbers and change with regard to time / feature
    - I work on individual features sometimes and other times not

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Automation requires Exploration

- It's well understood you have to explore, test & understand your application before you can automate any of the processes around it

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Next Up

- Switching to a new greenfield application to work on UI automation & ET
  - Work with my developers for tighter integration of UI testing to CI system.
  - Hand off maintenance said automation & to learn more JavaScript myself

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Challenges

- Make decisions based on customer data / analytics
- I need to continue to increase my JavaScript programming experience (breadth and depth). Become a better software developer
- Company is starting to play around with some basic ML to identify and categorize products. I could be testing this in the future.

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So many things to do

- Short terms vs long term?
- I see myself having more value as I am able to teach / coach. This is something I haven't grabbed a hold of yet
- I know some of the work I've done is isolated and doesn't necessarily help the team accelerate as well as I could

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I'm not sure this role has a future

- I do work that a developer could do if they had the time or desire
- I'm reminded of what the book Accelerate says about Test Automation:
  - "It's interesting to note that having automated tests primarily created and maintained either by QA or an outsourced party is not correlated with IT performance.
  - The theory behind this is that when developers are involved in creating and maintaining acceptance tests, there are two important effects.
  - First, the code becomes more testable when developers write tests. This is one of the main reasons why test-driven development (TDD) is an important practice—it forces developers to create more testable designs.
  - Second, when developers are responsible for the automated tests, they care more about them and will invest more effort into maintaining and fixing them. "

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Questions?

Get in touch:

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Thank You!

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