

ETA Week 7 – Summary Review

We kicked off the first session of the second half (that's right, over half way through) with a quick chat about correlation and causation. This is something worth understanding as a tester. It helps your critical thinking and can also help you locking in on a theory rather than thinking more widely. After this introduction, we reviewed your homework task – writing up bug reports using the parking calculator as the target software. A couple of you made some great efforts and found some interesting bugs. A reminder to each of you, having a go at the homework, and, talking to Lee and Paul about problems you might have had is REALLY IMPORTANT to help you learn and understand.

We moved from the homework review to revisiting discussion on Exploratory Testing (ET). We then went through a comparison of ideas that related to waterfall and agile. Paul mind mapped the ideas you provided. We found that while there were some key differences there were some ideas that applied to both. Something we didn't capture in the mind map was CONTEXT. Always, always, regardless of the type of development methodology you are working in, always understand and test to the context.

We spent some time applying some ET principles to a calculator. While the calculator seemed very simple we also found that it had a number of potential issues, inconsistencies and uncertainties. All this just by using the software and thinking about ways in which we gather information that would be useful to our stakeholders. We did all this without a specification document. That's pretty amazing really, and a really useful skill.

We then spoke about focus and defocus. When you focus you are really concentrating on getting to the bottom of something, finding specific information. In this state you might miss things, fail to see connections or other things you might want to test. When you defocus you take a higher level view of things. At this time you are able to process information differently. You can see how things are connected, think creatively. We used the dice game to practice focus and defocus. You did really well finding the pattern Lee had set. Some very nice work forming hypothesis, testing them, forming new hypothesis, testing again until you settled on a hypothesis that your testing seemed to support. While the dice game might not seem like testing, it is. It has you doing many things you need to do as a tester when working on software.

Thanks for another great session. Please remember, if you have question you can mail Lee and Paul. We are happy to answer your questions. We really want you to learn about software testing.

A note on the homework task. I have placed a small example of what we would like you to do in Github. There is an Xmind file and a PDF copy of the xmind file. I created the xmind file in windows, I have found that sometimes they don't open very well on Mac OS. Also if you are using the iPad cloud version you'll need to use the PDF document example. YOU can set out the information anyway you like. Be creative but also be mindful that other people might also want to understand what you have done. Have fun!!!!