LANETTE CREAMER
TEST LIKE A CAT
SOFTWARE TEST PILOT
THE OMNI GROUP
@lanettecream

DOGS ARE AWESOME

- Unrestrained enthusiasm is easy for humans to read
- Pack hierarchy strictly followed & enforced
- Trusting

CATS INSPIRED IDEAS IN FOUR AREAS

• Survival

• Hunting

• Communication

• Resting & Comfort

Reference 1

SURVIVE WITH DIGNITY

CATS HAVE A REPUTATION

- Arrogant
- Plotting to kill you
- Lazy
- Not as good as dogs
- Untrainable

TESTERS HAVE A REPUTATION

- Negative
- Unfriendly
- Break everything
- Don’t understand customers
- Not technical

CURIOSITY KILLED THE CAT

“The only thing a cat worries about is what's happening right now. As we tell the kittens, you can only wash one paw at a time.”

–LLOYD ALEXANDER, TIME CAT

THRIVING DESPITE DANGER

- Indoor cats have healthier, longer lives than feral cats on average
- Being an indoor cat has more comfort & safety
- Being a feral has more adventure & variety

TESTERS THRIVING IN THE WILD

- Testing always happens, it is just a matter of who does it
- If you believe testing done by your customers and a few unit tests is enough, that says more about your values than it does about the value of testers
- Work where your talent is celebrated rather than barely tolerated

ADVOCATES & COMMUNITY

MAKE SELF SUFFICIENCY EVEN BETTER

HANDLING CONFLICT

TESTING NIHILISM

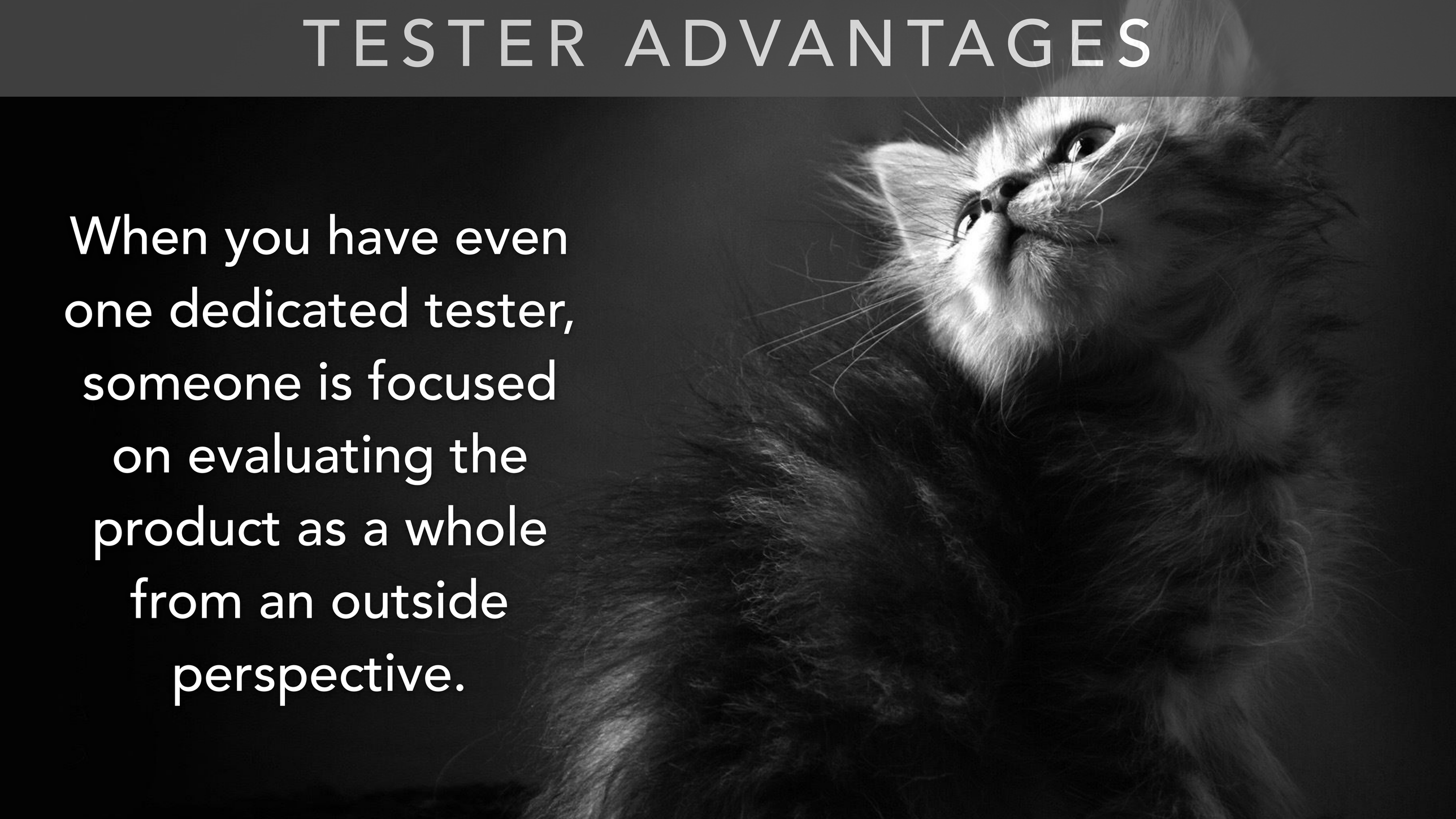
CAN YOU PROVE YOUR VALUE AS A CAT?

CAT ADVANTAGES

Cats aren’t overly concerned with pleasing us or upsetting us.

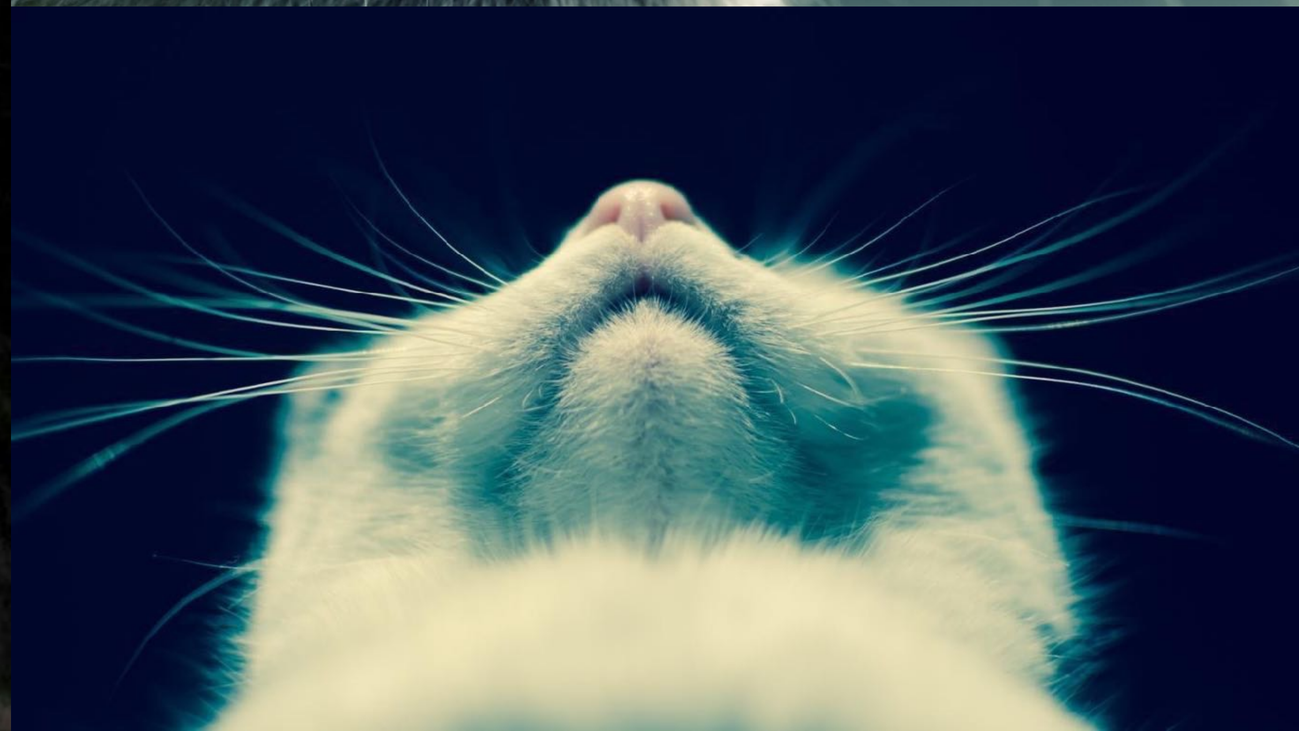
TESTER ADVANTAGES

When you have even one dedicated tester, someone is focused on evaluating the product as a whole from an outside perspective.



HUNT EFFECTIVELY

Look at my cat's whiskers



CLAWS

Scratch the surface or
dig deeply depending
on the relative
difficulty of the prey.

CATS SEE SIX TIMES BETTER THAN HUMANS IN THE DARK

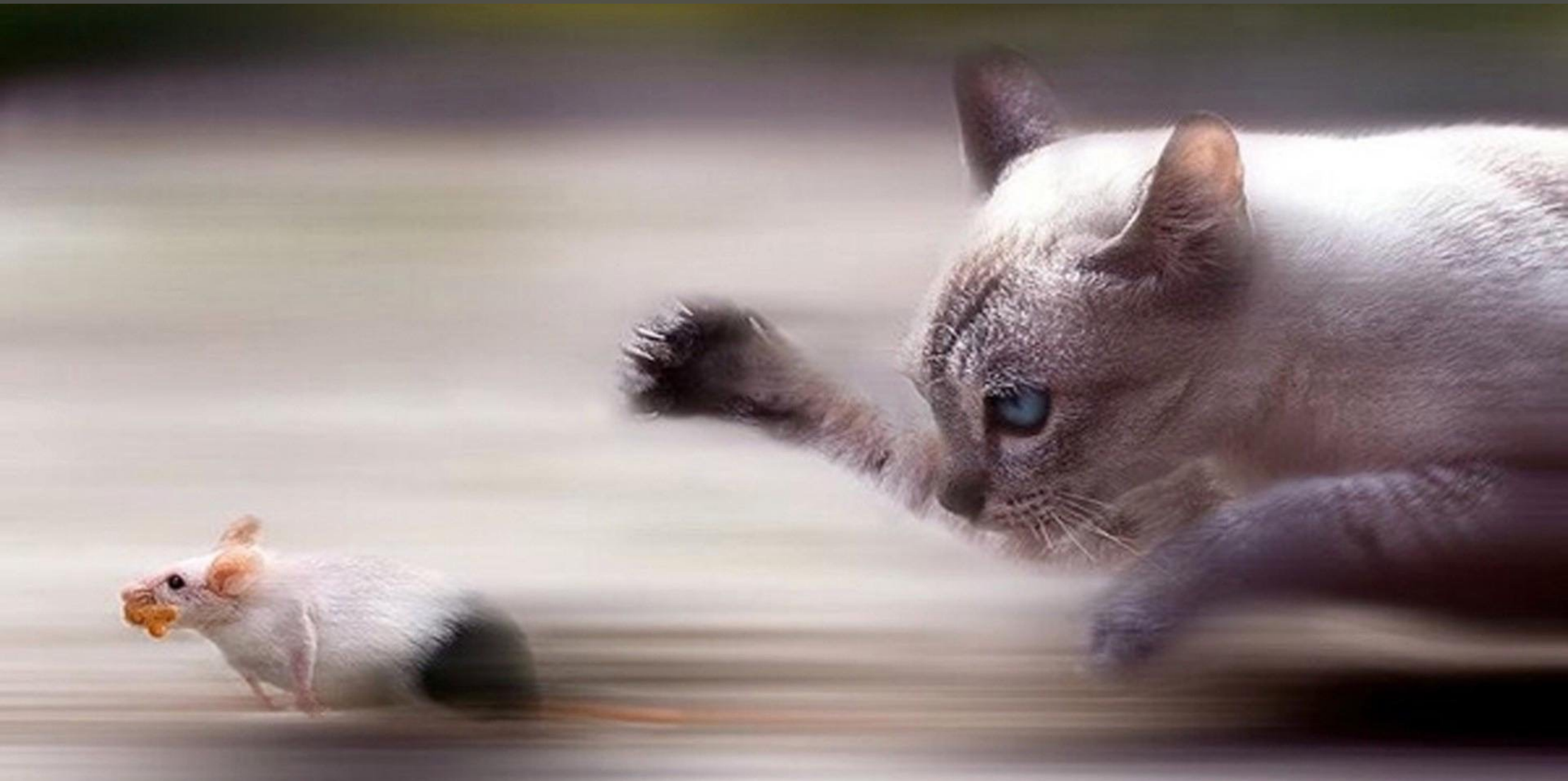
TESTERS USE CAT VISION

- Focus on technical motion over every detail to identify targets
- Commit messages, the code itself, logging, scripts, tools, monitoring, and even simple notes and mind maps may help you scan for changes
- You can see in the dark so start now

CREPUSCULAR NOT NOCTURNAL

THE DEADLIEST CAT ON EARTH

HUNTING TOO MUCH?



CATS IN THE WILD

- The average feral cat will kill & eat ~9 mice per day
- Leaving you their kill has meaning
- Cats are especially well equipped to survive to the detriment of local wildlife

Reference 2

HUNT LIKE A CAT

Switch between
scanning the territory
broadly for changes
and focusing on bugs.

COMMUNICATE FOR RESULTS

References 1, 2 & 3

M E O W !

- Purr, trills, hissing & the primary cat language
- Adapted based on what gets the desired reaction from a specific person
- New relationship on either side means starting over

Reference 3

THE RIGHT LANGUAGE FOR THE RIGHT AUDIENCE

COMPLAIN EFFECTIVELY

TALK LIKE A CAT

- Don’t meow at the other cats, they can’t fill your dish
- Learn what works & adapt if it stops working
- Body language & actions speak louder than you can

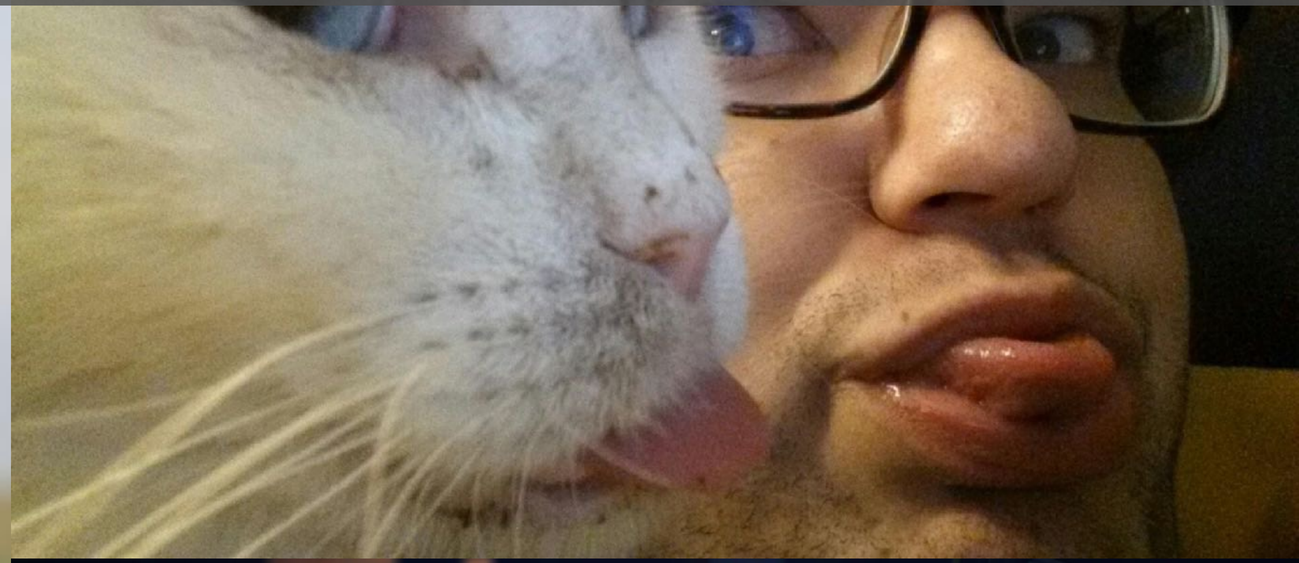
OPTIMIZE SURROUNDINGS

OPEN OFFICE PLANS

Reference 6

PUNISHMENT CAUSES SIDE-EFFECTS, NOT IMPROVEMENT

Reference 7



Differences in approach, skill, experience & interests make us stronger.

TREATS

RESTING IS IMPORTANT

CATS LOVE WITH LOYALTY

SHOW THAT YOU CARE

- Be responsive & adapt to the style that works for your team
- Teach others in areas you have talent
- Admit it & apologize when you make mistakes even though cats never would

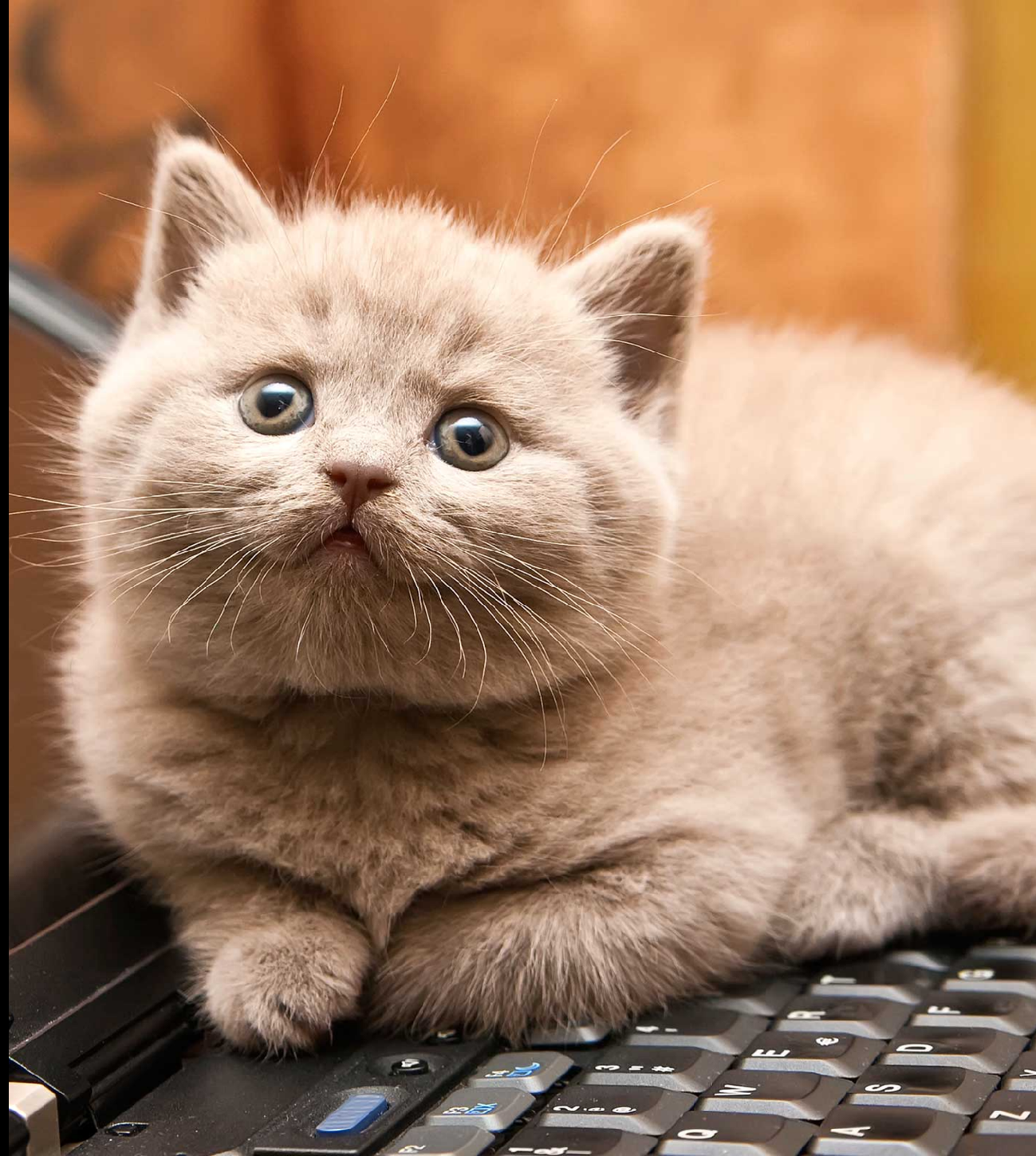
UNIQUE BENEFITS OF CATS

- Boosted immunity
- Less depression & less heart disease
- Better sleep
- Makes you stronger (faster healing & better ability to cope, fewer allergies)

Reference 5

UNIQUE BENEFITS OF TESTERS

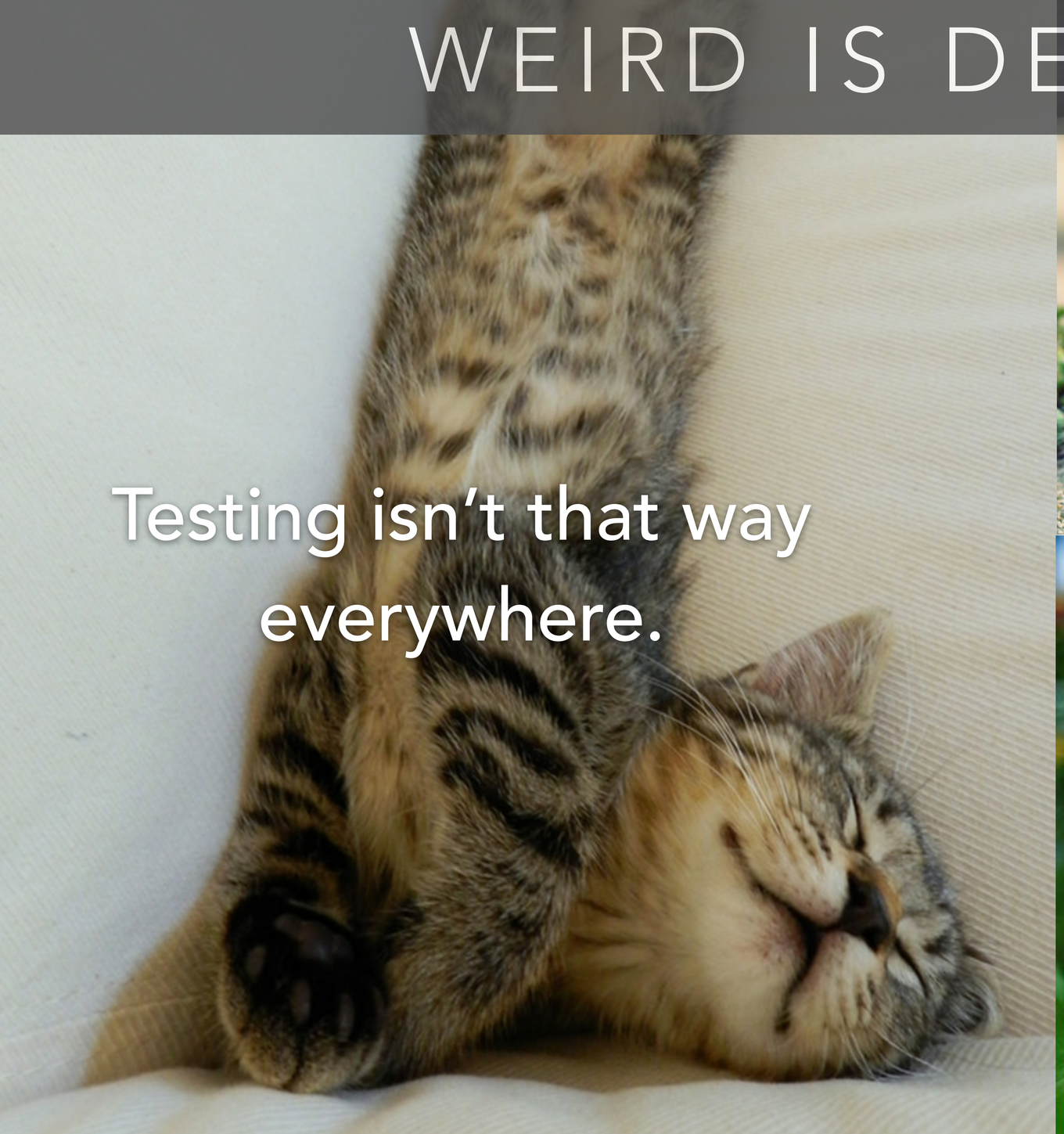
- More time to focus on development & unit tests
- Product expertise grows over time
- Quality minded developers often started in testing
- More diversity is often possible
- Boosted code immunity if both developers and testers work together



VARIETY IS A FEATURE

The range of people working in technology should be as limitless as the range of users whose lives it impacts.

WEIRD IS DELIGHTFUL



Testing isn‘t that way everywhere.

FAVORITE LESSONS FROM CATS

- Survive with Dignity
- Hunt Efficiently
- Communicate for Results
- Optimize Surroundings

1. How to Speak Cat: A Guide to Decoding Cat Language, Aline Alexander Newman & Gary Weitzman

2. Cambridge Study-Estimation of the dietary nutrient profile of free-roaming feral cats: possible implications for nutrition of domestic cats, Esther A. Plantinga, Guido Bosch & Wouter H. Hendriks, 2011

3. Cornell Study-Cat Language, Nicholas Nicastro, 2002

4. Pet ownership statistics with map, Washington Post Article, Roberto A. Ferdman & Christopher Ingraham, 2014

5. Health Benefits of Owning a Cat, Mental Floss Article, Kathy Benjamin & Austin Thompson, 2016

6. Workplace Stress Leads to Less Productive Employees, Forbes Article, Karen Higginbottom, 2014

7. Is Punishment an Effective Way to Change the Behavior of Dogs?, Psychology Today Article, Stanley Coren, PhD., DSc., FRSC, 2012

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