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CSD380 Module 8.1 Discussion

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Outline the steps in a pull request. Are there any disadvantages to using a pull request?

Hello,

For the Module 8 discussion I will be covering the main topic of a Pull Request and outlining its steps while posing possible disadvantages of performing it. “A pull request flow is a lightweight, 6 steps, branch-based workflow” (H.urna). Seems pretty simple right? Well, a pull request is something I feel we’ll all have to do on a regular basis once we work with others in a project and find myself at a loss for its steps. These are the steps that H.urna indicates that are involved in the workflow of a Pull Request:

1. “Pull” the changes to your local machine (get the most recent base)
   1. Master (main) branch is “default” branch in a repository.
   2. Anything in the master branch is always deployable.
2. Create a “branch” (version)
   1. A branch is not available to others unless you push branch back.
3. Commit the changes to your branch.
   1. Commits keep track of progress and the history allows others to follow along on what you’ve done and why.
   2. Be descriptive in your commits as they will help others understand each commit’s purpose.
4. Step Three
   1. Push your changes.
      1. A branch isn’t available to others unless you push branch to repository.
   2. OR Open a “pull request” (propose changes).
      1. A pull request will start discussion of your commits and others are able to see what changes will be merged if request is accepted.
      2. Useful for contributing to open-source projects and for managing changes to shared repositories.
5. Discuss and review your code.
   1. A person or team reviewing your changes may have questions or comments.
6. Rebase and tests.
   1. Take all changes committed on master and replay them on the current branch.
   2. If branch causes issues, address before merging.
7. “Merge” your branch to the master branch
   1. Create tags for software releases, this makes it easy to track versions and rollback if needed.  
      (H.urna)

Some possible disadvantages could be that a pull request requires two distinct branches or two distinct repositories and WILL NOT work with a centralized workflow (Atlassian). Other disadvantages can include how the more long lived a branch is, the more merge conflicts you’ll have. Or how reviewability will decrease with the size of a change and reviews may be superficial. Merging can be blocked by non-issue comments or opinions. And lastly, it could be quicker for someone to just do a fix rather than explain it to the branch owner (WRÓBEL). There are more listed in the article, but they get more abstract and are more dependent on peers rather than process. Hope you enjoyed and got some information that can assist us when we’re handling our own Pull Requests.

Thank you for your time,

Jeremiah K.

Reference(s):

Atlassian. (n.d.-b). Pull Requests | Atlassian Git Tutorial. <https://www.atlassian.com/git/tutorials/making-a-pull-request>

H.urna, H. (2020, May 19). Pull Request Workflow with Git — 6 steps guide - Hybesis - H.urna - Medium. Medium. <https://medium.com/@urna.hybesis/pull-request-workflow-with-git-6-steps-guide-3858e30b5fa4>

WRÓBEL, T. (2021, April 12). Disadvantages of Pull Requests. Arkency Blog. <https://blog.arkency.com/disadvantages-of-pull-requests/>