

Participant 19

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SPEAKERS

Researcher, Participant 19

Researcher 00:06

Hello, hi, Participant 19, how are you?

Participant 19 00:10

Very well, good. Just to start my video I really use the zoom.

Researcher 00:24

So it's okay. It's working. Thank you. Yeah. Okay, great. Okay. Hello again, I'd like to start by thanking you for the interview, I really appreciate. It should take us between 40 to an hour. We should be in our way for the week and let's the interview is very fluid. There is no right and wrong questions, it just we try to understand your experience in working in Agile teams. And feel free to add anything if you like. So don't feel like restrained by the questions. The question is just a way to get us started. So perhaps we could start with an introduction. If you can introduce yourself briefly, mainly your education and your professional experience.

Participant 19 01:26

Well, about my education, I finished the at [deleted to preserve the participant anonymity] it was the master degree of postal traffic and telecommunications was the department. And after that, I get the opportunity to work in one bigger company. For let's say the programming the sugar electric early the company, we had the r&d Center here in my town. And I started working there as a QA. And I, when I get hired, I start working in the in the agile team, following the scrum, the scrum method. And there was my more than three years of experience I got there in the company using the Agile methodology. And after that, I changed the few companies why it was one year more than like, start the company where we, when it's companies smaller, you don't get the need, let's say for the first some agile, to have some agile environment, let's say most things are doing in the waterfall Waterfall development and after that, I joined the let's say a beer company when when we had all over again, the dailies meetings, all that scrum ceremonies, let's say again, so I mean, the thing from the perspective of the agile, because this is the point of this meeting, so So that was it. But my now more than five years of experience, or have for four years are in the agile and agile teams, let's say

Researcher 03:34

okay, I'm just curious because your education is not computer science. How did you become a QA?

Participant 19 03:43

Well, yeah. In hiring fifteens maybe in Sweeden, it's not that too much. rare case because, yeah, I mean, the faculty is is a technical but yeah, it's not it's not computer science and then on the first place, I'd say but here in our country is a very, very big need for their for the IT people I mean employees. So let's say the standards are a little bit lower when it comes to I mean, sometimes it's enough to have some technical experience that you've finished the technical faculty but also on my, on my department on my on my faculty, there was also several courses how to say about programming and and computer science in general. So it was more in the view of implementing them. A science, that knowledge in the area of whatever you study, but in general, we we had some programming and so on. So with, with some extra efforts or for that area, you can switch to IT sector.

Researcher 05:30

Yeah, it's common in Europe now it's not only not only in our country but yeah.

Researcher 05:37

I see a lot of non-computer science doing computer science things now.

Participant 19 05:44

Not also Yeah, not also the technical people. I, I am engineering in my degree, let's say, but you also have the psychology people, law people who was coming to the economy and so on.

Researcher 06:01

Yeah. Thanks, Participant 19. Thanks for the presentation. We will move now to a question regarding your team before we get to the core questions of the interview. So your current team is using Scrum. That's what you said, right? Yes, yes. Okay. Can you briefly describe to me how to use Scrum in your team?

Participant 19 06:27

Well, we use, let's say, I can I can describe my one working day, or once one sprint? Let's say, yeah. Well, first of all, we use JIRA, for the for the tracking tool, and we have the Kanban. Tracking, work tracking, let's say. So, also, at the end, at the beginning of the day, we have a daily meeting, standup which lasts, it should last 15 minutes, but usually it lasts more than more than that. And after, after, after that. Yeah, I mean, we have later late during during the sprint every week or some I mean, in our in our team sprint last two weeks. And in the meantime, let's say once, in the somewhere in the half of the of the sprint, we have some sink like let's say thinking about where we are now what maybe if there is a need to change something to change the priority and so on. But I don't know maybe maybe it's important to say I don't know about about the deal is that there are three main questions what you would have done yesterday, what you will have what you will do today, and eventually if you have some problem, if you are blocked off by something, you should tell that on the on the on the daily and later you can organize a meeting where if you have a problem you cannot relate to the meeting and with your colleagues trying to solve it. And but sometimes users that that problems have started to be

resolving on the on the daily bases and that last half hour or 45 minutes even. And yeah after that when after when when sprint is finished, we have sprint reviews, where we present what is done in the in the next sprint that they're usually on that meeting are beside our team stakeholders, product owners from from the hour in some other themes. And eventually they are I mean, when we present that they usually have some questions for us. How it will work in the in the future or what are the next plans for the future what are we developed and so on. And at the end we have sprint retrospective where we let's say have two to this, let's say columns where we anonymously write the what what what what went well is it intent what went less well or gone wrong? And after that, we are discussing about it. So, to see how what can be improved about the things what, which are not so good in that sprint, and to say give a blouse about the things which are, which was good. So, some kind of, let's say a reward about about it. And yeah, that's, that's some basic scrum ceremonies which we have during during the sprint.

Researcher 10:48

Yeah, that's, that's, that's a standard scrum implementation. Yeah, yeah. So does it work for you? Do you like it as your team? Is your team satisfied with with Scrum? Do you like it?

Participant 19 11:01

In general? Yes, yes. But from flip from Sprint to sprint, maybe. But I'm not sure how much that is. Scrum fault or something? Yes. But sometimes we had a lot of meetings. I mean, yeah, we have a lot of meetings because this also because it's Corporation now I'm working for the for the [deleted to preserve the participant anonymity]. And if you're that [deleted to preserve the participant anonymity] is Yeah, yeah. And I'm working for the Swedish client. And that's the big corporation, a lot of paper were involved. And whenever you have some problem, that must be escalated with more people, I mean, with a lot of people. So you need, usually you need a few meetings, to be organized, to solve some some problem to make some decision, which will, which will impact the team or more teams. So that can be a problem. Sometimes I spend half of my day on the meeting. Yeah, that's very exhausting. And besides this, I need to work my regular work.

Researcher 12:17

Yeah. Yeah, I understand. Well, thanks. for that. Let's move to mine. Interview questions, we will be talking a lot about software quality. It is a difficult term to define. I'm using a definition in this research. I will read it for you. And we will discuss it briefly and we will move to other questions. Okay. So the definition I use is ISO definition, which state software quality is the degree to which the system satisfies the stated and implied needs of its various stakeholders. And that's provide value. The model also proposes some non functional requirements or characteristics, mainly performance, compatibility, usability, reliability, security. maintainability, portability. Do you agree with this definition? What do you think of this definition for software quality?

Participant 19 13:21

Well, yeah, I mean, I can say it's true, but it's very, very general. I mean, it's definition. But yeah, yeah, that's a key point. If you ask, if you ask me, What's the definition, I will say only one in one sentence, that at the end of all the meeting sprint, there is and so on. The most important is that at the end of the day, you delivered the good quality. And when I say the good quality, from my perspective, that's with no, with no critical bugs with no no blocker bugs with no obvious bugs with. So it's, it's fine when you

miss some edge case, let's say. I mean, I'm not the only one who does that. We have testers in our team after that we have testing independent team in India, who clicks very, very often and much. So if bugs somehow slips through all of us, I mean, that's probably some some mid case some some I mean, but just to go back in the above the definition. So I will say that for me. From the perspective of my team, it's important to deliver a good quality without any obvious bugs? Let's see.

Researcher 15:04

Yeah, I think that's the main important things. It's yeah.

Participant 19 15:10

Oh, how we will deal with manual testing, automation testing, performance testing and so on. That's it that's different. How to say, this is a different question. But this is the main, this is the main goal.

Researcher 15:29

Okay. That's for that we will move to the main questions of the of the of the interview, and which are related to the one I've sent you in an email. Thanks for answering those. So when I looked at your answer, my assessment is that your team is highly safe work environment. I'll explain what do you mean? What do we mean by safe work environment? So based on your answer, it's a highly safe work environment. A safe is not in the sense of security. But we mean that the work environment in your team provide a sense of security from repercussions. So people in your team they feel it's okay to admit mistakes, they feel that it's okay to propose initiative, they feel it's okay to discuss problem, this sense of confidence that the teams will not embarrass, reject or punish someone for speaking up. So this confidence team's from a mutual respect and trust among each other. So do you agree with me that with this definition of safe your team is highly safe work environment?

Participant 19 16:50

Yes, I think it really is. Because I don't know I joined the [deleted to preserve the participant's anonymity] in July, so I'm here for five months. And I think in general, the [deleted to preserve the participant's anonymity] gives a lot of attention about about, about that about humans in not just from the from the work perspective, but also how you're feeling in the company and not sure how to what will be the right word about that. But I mean, probably it's within the bigger of the human, how you I will send it on English. They are giving a lot more of let's say, I don't know, attention to the to the people's relationships. I don't know how to say so. Yeah. Yeah. Maybe Maybe I in some I had in southern it. There were more of our people. And we had some, but it's not so related to the scramble. So it's the problems in general. I mean, how people are if I mean, if you have a bigger team of 10 people, there are a bigger chance that some of some of my colleagues won't be so cooperative then then the others. I mean, if you have the bigger team, that the bigger the changes that some someone will not be so so team worker, worker, let's say. So I had a similar experience in my first company we had we had one colleague that let's say it's not so much for the for the teamwork, it's more for independent work, but I know that is more of a problem maybe if the Human Resources at some at some hiring process left that person to come to the team or to in general to be hired. So but he currently is in this company. I didn't feel that any points so far that I had been in any case I don't felt any any bad, let's say. bad feeling about something that I did or did not about about my work because every one of us had the time when we

Participant 19 20:00

I slipped something some bugs some or some some things so because and it's also because that's that's the process which depends on all of us not not just the QA if the if the for example the developer didn't done any development testing or just just the develop something and add the post to the to the created the PR for that missing I push the repository repertory and I found some of us back that's, that's his fault. I mean, he has to do one part of the job I have my portion of it their support team at the end he has his own and if something goes wrong at the end it's a chain reaction let's say it's not it's not I am not the only one who is responsible for the quality I mean, so you can you can do the root cause analysis to see what where where that problem came from, from from where but it's not it's not good practice to point the finger of someone and sometimes it's like I said it's a chain reaction it's not as possible just one person it's hard to define who is who is the most responsible for some problem which happens

Researcher 21:38

yeah, that's a good environment I agree with you. Let's go through the items I sent you on the email and discuss one by one and if you possible can use as many example if if possible, so the first item I asked you is if you make mistakes on your team, it is often held against you and your answer is NO I would explain how it happens we all human and make mistakes

Participant 19 22:11

Yeah, I'm just trying to trying to find out okay. Just on my screen also Yeah, well that's partially what I suppose bespoke right now, I mean, in this please maybe I will, I will make some some error in the in the in the next screen. My other colleague, my other QA colleague will will not see something that the problem and at the end of the of the on the retrospective or some other meeting, we will try to find a way what, how we can prevent it in the future. So maybe to involve some other procedures, some new procedure to open some Confluence page, where we will start to write things down to define better some steps how to test something or sound. So it's really not, I mean, you will not get the smaller punishment for that, or the better view or something. Okay, really, it's really not not not a problem.

Researcher 23:21

Okay? Do you have a specific example where you or a colleague of yours made a mistake, and he or she will not blame? And if you can tell me what happened when the mistake was admitted. And the mistake happened, that mistake was admitted. And it's related to software quality. If you have an example to illustrate what's what happens.

Participant 19 23:51

To my mind, maybe we have two stages of testing, let's say it's let's say QA, environment and production or staging or whatever. And we are, we need to test first on the when the while we not merged that new chain to the master branch. We firstly need to test on that branch because the PR column in the Kanban we have on Jira, we have PR in the QA and after that it's done. So sometimes when we are in a hurry, maybe it's not tested at all or only only some small testing are done in the in the weather changes in the branch on the on the on the PR and when you when you later merge to the master, it's already there, let's say already on it's not on the production. I mean, it's not on the release,

but when you merge it you will break for everyone, let's say if you motomaster. So maybe we, I mean, we had some cases of that when when we didn't, for example, I don't know, my colleague wasn't tested that on the on the PR and budgeting event and the app won't even start. It was break, but the app started at the first point. So, that was a problem. And after that, I mean, we did a root cause because we didn't take it on the on the on the PR and then we have the meeting, if I remember right now, was that on the retrospective or some other meeting, but where we come to decision that we need to that will be mandatory to do smoke testing on the athletes the smoke testing on the on the PR before we measure something too much?

Researcher 26:01

So, do you think you learned from this experience as a team you learned something and you rectified you implemented measures to avoid this mistake in the future?

Participant 19 26:13

You Yes, because I think that was the good good decision, I mean, to have defined the that preceded that needs, that everything needs to be tested on the PR no matter how big changes.

Researcher 26:28

Thank you, Participant 19. We will use we will move to the next item which is a member of your team can bring problems and tough issues. You said yes, it is usually done in daily meeting and later we can arrange special meetings for that particular issue. Do you have also an example where somebody brought a serious problem to the attention of the team and what happened like you did the same example you something similar to the example you said before

Participant 19 27:09

well, that can be a for example, for if I know me or my colleagues can cannot reach some other people in from I mean, some other teams and we are depending on them. For example, we need some testing user that only testing thing can provide us create for us or something. And for some reason, we cannot reach them or they don't understand why do we need that particular user with the permissions and so on. So, we can bring that problem on the daily or even to give the direct chat with our team leader or in our team we have merged in one person, Team Leader and Scrum Master. So, I think we call him scrum leader. So, yeah, and we can we I mean, he is the first person for us when we have some problem in that, that, that men that we when we are dependent, because here he will arrange the meeting, he will call the other team leader of that team, to see what the problem and so on. So that will be an example of that. I can say on the dailies, for example, I tried to reach out that mean yesterday and there before it and I didn't get any response. Can you meet him later? See, what's the problem? I need that for this sense on.

Researcher 28:56

Okay, great, thank you. The next one is about being different or having different perspective than than your teammates. So, people of your team sometimes reject other for being different, what we mean here for having different ideas. You said yes. But only if we all agree, it is not a good solution to the problem. So what do you mean here? There is always a a frank or an honest discussion about the

solution. And you will reject the best solution and you move forward with the best solution. That's what you mean here.

Participant 19 29:49

Yes, but it's I will not say that necessarily to be the best solution. I always had the feeling that we have better and the best solution or the How to say? It's not the worst solution. It's not the solution that will. I don't know. My my team is, is we have only media to senior people, let's say. And when I when I listen some some. I mean, I speak now in general about developers and the QA is not not as good as the QA. And I really think that a few solutions, which are presented during some some meeting or something, or all the find solutions, but other ones will be of course, rejected if we agree that from one person is that the best thing in that case? So yeah, I think that we have good let's call it brainstorming during during that, that meetings but at the end, yeah, the product owner who decides what, what, what our main goal is and what we need to deliver at the end of the sprint or some quarter. That's why I wrote that. He will give the final word of it.

Researcher 31:29

That's really excellent. We will move to the next one, which is very close to the to rejecting people from being different. In here, we wanted to understand about people taking initiative, taking the risk and proposing initiatives on the teams. And we ask it is safe to take risks and initiative in your team? And you said yes, initiatives, member are usually leading developers or key AI who can always have because we know that how they can help. So what we mean here, do people for example, propose new ideas and the team? Do they feel confident to propose new ideas to the team?

Participant 19 32:23

Well, I just said, yes. Because I I have the feeling that we I never participated in some meeting that if you propose something, something new something. Actually, I think we had the one interesting disk interesting discussion in, but it's not in our team, it's about company. For some reason, our company is not so for the test management tools. I mean, like, for the manual test cases, testing, that will scale or someone that they are top management of the QA thinks that manual test cases are deprecated, that we don't need this, we are all highly experienced people who don't need to have every time written all test cases down what we need to test and so on. That was the main end. But at the end, we we had the, our reasons why, why do we think that we need this? Because we cannot automate everything and so on. That was the I mean, the initiative is from our side that we need this management tool. But from my perspective, I'm not sure that they had enough understanding why do we need this? But that's not that's like I said at the beginning, there's not initiatives from my team. In our team in team itself. It was the question of the, let's say, the whole company. QA involved, I mean, in the QA process, so and about my team. Yeah, I really think that initiative initiatives are very welcome there and even the wrong one I didn't so at any point that that caused some problem or something similar. So we will just they will just speak about that and decide do we need that or not or what will be the best and yeah, that is my also Feeling that? I know I mean, my team is a little bigger one. We have now 10 people, including product owner, I think, yeah. And in three QA is including me. So I can point up a few or three people who I think that's the that's the leading people in the development and and who is the most initiative? Team members?

Researcher 35:31

Okay, do you have an example of somebody brought an initiative and how the team react to it and what happened after the initiative was proposed by someone, specially if you have an initiative related to software quality?

Participant 19 35:47

Yeah, well, for example, recently, right now, we start the new project of the same product who needs to be developed for the US market. And we didn't have any automation tests about that. We only tested it manually. So but also, we had some shared repository with the support team. And we use their repository, and now we decided to, don't work with them anymore on the same repository, because we are independent team and we are skilled enough to have our own repository, our own automation tests. That can be the faster for us that we don't need approval of our PRs from them. So we proposed our plan, we aim for the plan as the for all three of us as a QA is that we wanted to do this on this way. I mean, to have our dependent wrap up about that. And, yeah, we came out, and you're listening to us or our team leader, also, developers are not so much, let's say interesting, interested in how we will test that, but they can provide us everything, and are willing to provide us everything what we need about testing, let's say that to put some ideas in the in the code, so we can manipulate with the application later. And at the end, that happened. I mean, we had a few meetings with the support team with our protagonist with their pro donors, test architect, and at the end he gave, it was given to us to have our repository and to develop only only only our test cases, test out this automation cases. Yeah.

Researcher 37:45

Excellent. That's a good example.

Participant 19 37:47

Yeah. But just like you said, before, we needed to have meetings and meetings and meetings about that, before that happened. See, what will be the quality of this? What will what will be delivered after this? So what we needed to explain and explain.

Researcher 38:06

Actually, Scrum is anti meetings, its proposals, only 3, three ceremonies, and you are not supposed to go outside the ceremonies. But that's another discussion for another day.

Participant 19 38:20

Yeah. And I think it's more the corporate problem than the scrum problem.

Researcher 38:24

Yes. Yes. It's a culture from like you said it's a corporate culture is the way they like to work. Yeah. Okay, the last item is about helping each other. And you seems to say it is a very collaborative teams, you collaborate, you help each others. Can you elaborate a little bit? What do you think makes this environments so collaborative? Is it Scrum? Or because of the feeling of safety? What does make you wanting to help each other?

Participant 19 39:01

Well, if I speak first about the three of us as a QA in the in the in the one team, I mean, it's obvious that we have the same goal. I mean, for example, we now right, that automation test is for the for the new product, and the giving our contribution to that repository. At the same time, and our main goal that that repository be the best as it can be, and I mean, from that, it comes the How to say comes the necessary to collaborate to have the good communication and collaboration. I mean, how you will achieve that if you don't have an issue that you had the good I mean, communication and if you don't have understanding Maybe I have the luck that I have the glue that is understandable, let's say. But I see it on that way. So I mean, also with the developers, they need us, we need them. Because at the end, if we as a team failed to deliver something, stakeholders will not ask who is the responsible for the it will look as as a team, that team, my team is TEAM for the iOS application, only. They will, they will say the iOS team didn't manage to fix that or to deliver that or something. It's not it will not be one person, it will be the whole team.

Researcher 40:50

Okay. Great. Thank you. Do you think that this collaborative environment helping each other make you make the quality of your software better?

Participant 19 41:05

Well, definitely, yes. I mean, if I can speak with, if I, if I'm not sure that something, for example, is a bug, or it's supposed to work or something, something. If I, if I'm free to call my other colleague, QA or developer, and share my screen and show him the case, what I retried found. How I can I mean, how I can be sure that God or not simply as that I mean, so that nowadays, when we are when we collaborate with the with the team members from from the other states, or only working from home, and you don't know people in person, that can be a little let's say negative thing from from the from the developer collaboration, it's much easier. I had the first three years of my experience was only in the in the office. And it was so much easier to to collaborate because colleague, which you need is next to you or in the same office or something. So it was much easier to reach him to ask him directly. What do you think about it? Is it this backwards or not? Is it supposed to work in this way? Or, and now when when you work from home, some colleagues, especially if you're not in the same time zone? I mean, sometimes you need hours to reach him to ask him something. So that they can be also but it's not related to this crap. Let's say it's now more general. How it works.

Researcher 42:54

Yeah. So thanks, Participant 19. That's that was the last question. Is there any things you'd like to elaborate more further, or you want to add to what we have been discussing? If you have any things you'd like to add? So maybe it's it's a good time to do that?

Participant 19 43:20

Well, it'll be more helpful if you asked me.

Researcher 43:25

No, that's fine. You don't have to it's Yeah,

Participant 19 43:27

I don't do anything now. In my mind right now.

Researcher 43:35

Okay. Sure. No problem. Do you have any questions for me?

Participant 19 43:41

Well, I can only ask for the curiosity. Why do you do you have some say they work some examination of the of the scrum Agile processes. So yeah, So I suppose that you work something, some how some paper.

Researcher 44:16

It's a research paper. Yes. It's a research paper on the topic of safety in other software teams. So what I'm looking at, I'm talking to people like yourself, I have talked to so far, 19 people. And I asked them the same questions. What happened when you admit mistakes? What happened when you bring initiative to the team, etc. And I'm seeing whether as well and this safety, this feeling of safety helps people to work better together. Does it help them to achieve better quality together? So it is important that when you work in a team Like you said yourself, you feel comfortable to collaborate, you feel comfortable to ask question. That's what makes us better at working together. So I'm doing our research to see whether when people admit mistakes when people bring initiatives, when people speak about problems, they managed to achieve better software quality, or at least it helps them to achieve better software quality. So I'm doing interviews, I'm interviewing, as I said, a lot of people and yes, and hopefully there will be a research paper at the end of this.

Participant 19 45:39

Yeah. Nice. And I agree with you that that is the case. Just I will also say that it's not isn't only the Federal Environment responsible for that? Yeah, it's it's very, very big, big. Impact has also the social aspect of the of the paper. For me, the most important is that some colleague, has the team experience, team spirit, let's say that, some understand that he is not. That can be that cannot be one man show, let's say if you're a team, in a team, I had some previous experience with that of my one colleague, female colleague, that she worked with to download her own everything and she didn't even want it. Sometimes if she's not in the mood, let's say to explain something, why? Or why she did it or not. So for me, it's not a problem with my colleague she has the better or over, let's say, experience or if you understand the difference, yeah, the most important is that you can collaborate with other people. And everything will be it easily achieved later, if you tell him something that needs to do and why it needs to be done in that way that he understand. And the steps that

Participant 19 47:36

I mean, it's not perfect person, let's say or something. And yeah, I agree that I need to give us the chance to, for us to see that kind of thing that we can have problems that we have

Participant 19 47:58

that we stuck or something or or similar. But for me, from my experience, a social aspect is really, really important. And that's that that's the good question for the for the human resources, when they hire people and choosing, they need to see that person, team team worker or not. I mean,

Researcher 48:26

yeah, that's why I do research in this topic, because I believe we are human. If we don't work with each other as a human. And we are not socially, in good terms with each other's nothing's would be good. No outcome would be good without having a good social environment that supports us.

Participant 19 48:46

Yeah, definitely. I mean, if some someone works to work alone, I mean, go and be a freelancer, I mean,

Researcher 48:53

A freelancer or some researchers somewhere and in the wild and Amazon or something.

Participant 19 49:00

Yeah. But if you want to, if you want to have your own project to, to work on your own and to deliver it on your own, I mean, in that case, you will be the Freelancer take the project done it. Yes.

Researcher 49:11

And do what's in your own and see what happens. Yeah, yeah. Yeah. I'd like to thank you again, Participant 19 was very interesting. I'd like to thank you for the examples that were very good examples. And thanks for having this interview on the weekend. I know it's a little bit difficult. And please stay in touch.

Participant 19 49:35

Okay, okay. I'm glad that I had in your in your research. And the examples were were good. Okay. Thank you. Bye. Bye.