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Article Review 9

Managing Testing Conflict

This article goes over the conflict between developers and software testers in the software development process. Since each group could have different goals or methods regarding how they will go about the process, it is inevitable that they will butt heads on certain ideas. To minimize these conflicts, it is essential that these groups go through these projects with mutual respect and use their communication skills to stay on the same page as much as possible. In these situations, the managers must be the link that holds these two groups together to minimize conflicts. The main ideas mentioned in this article that I will focus on are processes, people, and organization, their sources of conflict, and how to manage that conflict.

There are two sources of conflict that will be highlighted regarding the process section of software development. Firstly, a deficiency of time could cause all sorts of chaos and the way to manage that would be to manage your time effectively. Planning for schedule overruns, managing the effects of a schedule change, and ultimately learning from the project experience is how you could deal with a time issue correctly. The next conflict that may occur regarding processes could be user vs. technical requirements. It is important to handle this using common goals. That means to make sure everyone is on the same page with process metrics, and valuing team goals before individual success.

The next idea of how conflicts arise involve the ‘people’ aspect. Each person has different strokes and ways they like to do things, which predictably cause conflict. To deal with this, team building is very important. For team building, you could train your team in conflict resolution, sponsor group activities, and support informal social contact. These things could improve morale within your organization. Another conflict could be personalization of code, where one person may like to code differently than another. By understanding each other’s point of view, it would help overall understanding within the project. To support this idea, the manager could design jobs to support mutual understanding and involve testers in requirements planning to ensure that both teams are on the same page.

Lastly, conflicts may arise from the organization itself. Power and politics could become an issue within the company if one person feels like their ideas should have more importance than someone else’s. To manage this, the company must structure itself for success. This means co-locate teams, integrate development or testing functions, and instill ownership into sections of the project. Another conflict could arise from how the managers are functioning. Managers should be one of the most, if not the most important position for the project. To handle issues that may arise from managers, it’s important to create and involved leadership in the projects. Creating a collaborative atmosphere and an effective model of conflict management can make the managers jobs easier.

Looking at a few of the conflicts that go on in real-life projects was very interesting to me. I could even look back at this article one day and compare it to how my company functions.