



James Ling Software Developer at Teatree Software	<p>“I do exactly what the specs say. If that's not what you want, it's not my fault- it's the spec's.”</p> <p>“You ever play Overwatch? I'm thinking I might go pro in the next few years.”</p>
(Photo by Matthew Dix on Unsplash)	

Character Cues	Personal Information
Pet Peeve:	Age: 27
Coworkers say: “Dependable guy. Wish he'd think outside the box a little more, though.”	Sex: M
	Education: Bachelor's in Computer Science
Hardware/Software	Car: Subaru BRZ
Visual Studio: Can't live with it, can't live without it.	Music taste: Classic rock and punk
Stack Overflow: Looks for answers to questions and sometimes checks Code Golf for fun.	Exercise: Plays soccer once a week with the guys
Github: Thinks CLI workflows are old school cool. Works on open source projects on weekends.	Hobbies: Video games and playing the guitar

In my spare time, I play as many video games as I can get my hands on. Occasionally I go to the parties my friends throw, but when I get back to my place it's gaming time. I tend to lose track of time when I'm gaming, which can lead to me losing out on a few hours of sleep, but whatever. I'll sleep when I'm dead, or so they say. My roommate mostly isn't bothered by my gaming habits since he plays a lot of games too, but if I'm being too loud when he's trying to sleep he yells at me.

Everybody I know who isn't a software developer thinks my job is impossibly complicated, but really it's not so bad. I clock in at 9, people tell me what I need to code, and I code it. Simple as that. Sometimes I have to check Stack Overflow to see what solutions other people have used for my problems, or figure out how to loop through a list efficiently, but that's really the worst of it. Besides, it feels really great when I compile and my code works perfectly the first time. Although... lately it feels like all the other teams have been getting on my back about this or that. Either it's “This test case failed” from QE, or “This isn't aligned properly” from Design.. Seriously, do people really care about this stuff? It works most of the time, which is what I care about. I still fix the issues as they come up, but... c'mon.

When it comes to software design, I don't really care what it looks like. Don't really get it, either. But

my bosses say I have to care, so I do it. I guess it's good to have someone around to tell me exactly how things should look, though, or I have to spend extra mental energy to try and figure out how the layout should be myself... but most of the time it's kind of a hassle to get that info out of them. The design team takes way too long to make their mockups! By the time they come up with something, I already have the whole thing coded based on what the Project Manager said and my own intuition. But then the designer comes in and tells me I have to do it all over again, but differently. Do they really want the project to be finished on time? It's not really any skin off my back if we deliver late, but it's annoying to have to redo everything.

They say that all these overhauls are for "usability", or some crock like that. But what's usability worth, anyway? Our users are smart. They've figured out most everything we've thrown their way before, otherwise they wouldn't have bought the software in the first place. So why can't we just trust them to figure out what we're doing?

It's not really a big deal, but if you asked me for ways our team could improve I'd say it would be nice if we could shorten the lead time between when the designer starts their work and when I get it in my hands. Our Project Managers can only come up with half-baked ideas before we're set to start coding, and the designers don't really get much time to design things properly before we developers set our noses to the grindstone. Whenever I tell our designers how I feel, they nod and smile at me as though they're saying "of course". It would be great if I could just look at some of their example work or download icons and things without having to bother them, but I guess our design team is overwhelmed enough that they can't even start to think about time-saving measures.