

From: Dominic Kennedy <dominic@excellence.com.au>
Sent: Friday, October 20, 2017 2:03 PM
To: Caroline Hanna
Subject: Re:Lauren

Hi Caroline,

I am very pleased to share my thoughts about Lauren's value to your software team at Taylor.

For many years now I have had the good fortune to work (mostly) on the sureTREAT software projects for Taylor. During this time I have collaborated and worked with quite a few software teams and individuals. Of everyone that has been involved in specifications, testing, reporting and documentation, Lauren has been the obvious standout.

This is due to her highly co-operative and enthusiastic attitude, her strong desire and willingness to learn, impressive organizational skills, excellent attention to detail, and an ever improving extensive body of communication of complex testing results and/or specifications for software features.

From my perspective, Lauren is both an integral and very important team member for the ongoing success of software development at Taylor. She is loyal, cares very much about the integrity of any software that Taylor develops, is very quick to learn and is highly trainable. Lauren is a clear and concise communicator and is able to willingly action sensible suggestions that help a team to work more efficiently.

For example, back in June 2015, I asked quite a number of team members at Taylor to help with the very time consuming task of item tracking. The idea was to enable a more efficient organization of details and a much clearer form of communication.

Here is a thank you message that was emailed to Lauren at that time. This message was also copied to Tom Wise and Alex.

#224 Maintain item tracking files for all features and defects for all products

Conversations:

24-Jun-2015 Dominic

Hi Lauren,

I would like to extend a very grateful "Thank You !" to you.

Thank you for taking the time to:

1. Prefix your subject with the project name and item number "sureTREAT#224:"
2. Create subject text that is concise and that accurately reflects the content of the email. This subject will also be very helpful when searching (down the track) the many emails related to the item.
3. Including the item description at the top of the message as verification that the 224 in the subject was correct.
4. Formatting the content of the email in a way that helps me to copy and paste it to the item tracking system.
5. Concisely wording the email.
6. Naming the spreadsheet in a way that sorts correctly when in a folder with many other similar item tracking files !
7. Taking the initiative to identify all items that you had updated in the spreadsheet. This additional text information is immensely helpful (in addition to the purple/pink coloring) for knowing which items to update in the item tracking system.
8. Advising which completed items are still outstanding and why.

You can probably imagine how mind numbing the process of item tracking can be, and any assistance at speeding up the process is very much appreciated.

Thank you again.

Best,

Dominic

The actions taken in this email are typical of Lauren's response over the years to requests for improvement in techniques, reporting, communication, testing and so on.

Her level of skill has grown a great deal over the past few years as is also evidenced by her very important and effective participation in the development of Flywheel - inclusive of specification, testing, reporting and communication.

Lauren is a delight to work with, highly trainable, very professional, an excellent tester of complex software, a crystal clear communicator, a great organizer, and from my perspective continues to improve in every area of her work as part of the software development team at Taylor.

Thank you for the opportunity to share these thoughts about Lauren.

Best, Dominic

From: Ann Lynnworth <ann@href.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 19, 2017 5:17 PM
To: Caroline Hanna
Subject: Re:Lauren

Hi Caroline,

What stands out for me with Lauren is that she is not scared away by details AND she can hold on to the big picture. She is extremely trainable, she listens well, she remembers, and she can follow through.

In terms of specific skills that I have "taught" her, I will list: VirtualBox, screen capture and video recording, and CodeSite-LiveViewer and appropriate use thereof. All of those were required so that she could "reproduce" problem situations in a way that made it easy, or at least possible, for other people on the team to fix issues. Most people lose patience and do not have the diligence to provide sufficient detail for a software team to make efficient progress on bugs. Lauren is the opposite. Not only can she find software issues, she can provide the exact type of detail that developers need. This is definitely something she learned during the time I have worked with her.

Overall, Lauren has a great attitude. I always enjoy interacting with her. She has the trait I value most highly in a contractor or employee: she is "solution oriented."

I would say that her lack of formal training is part of why she has so far kept her "beginner's mind" approach to everything. She keeps learning, regardless of whether she is trying to pass an exam or impress someone.

I do think she is capable of more UX design and probably even general software specification work than she has done so far. It probably would help for her to take some courses.

There is one that I would recommend very highly, called Paper Prototyping. I have paid for some of my contractors to watch that one. It seems very simple, but, if followed it lets you put all your effort in to early design and much less into software maintenance. Basically it shows how to use simple techniques to present UX ideas to a test subject, without using a computer system, and how to evaluate the feedback to quickly improve a system. <https://www.nngroup.com/articles/paper-prototyping/>

I hope this information is relevant. If there are any follow-up questions, just let me know.

Ann