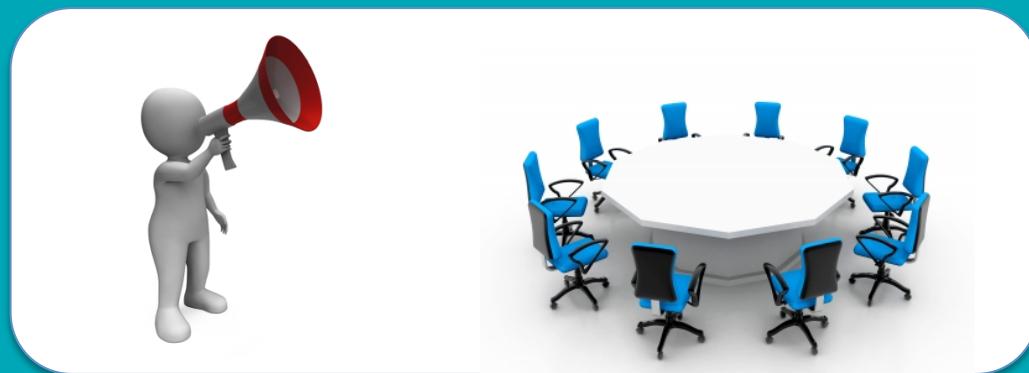


# Communication Skills for Testers

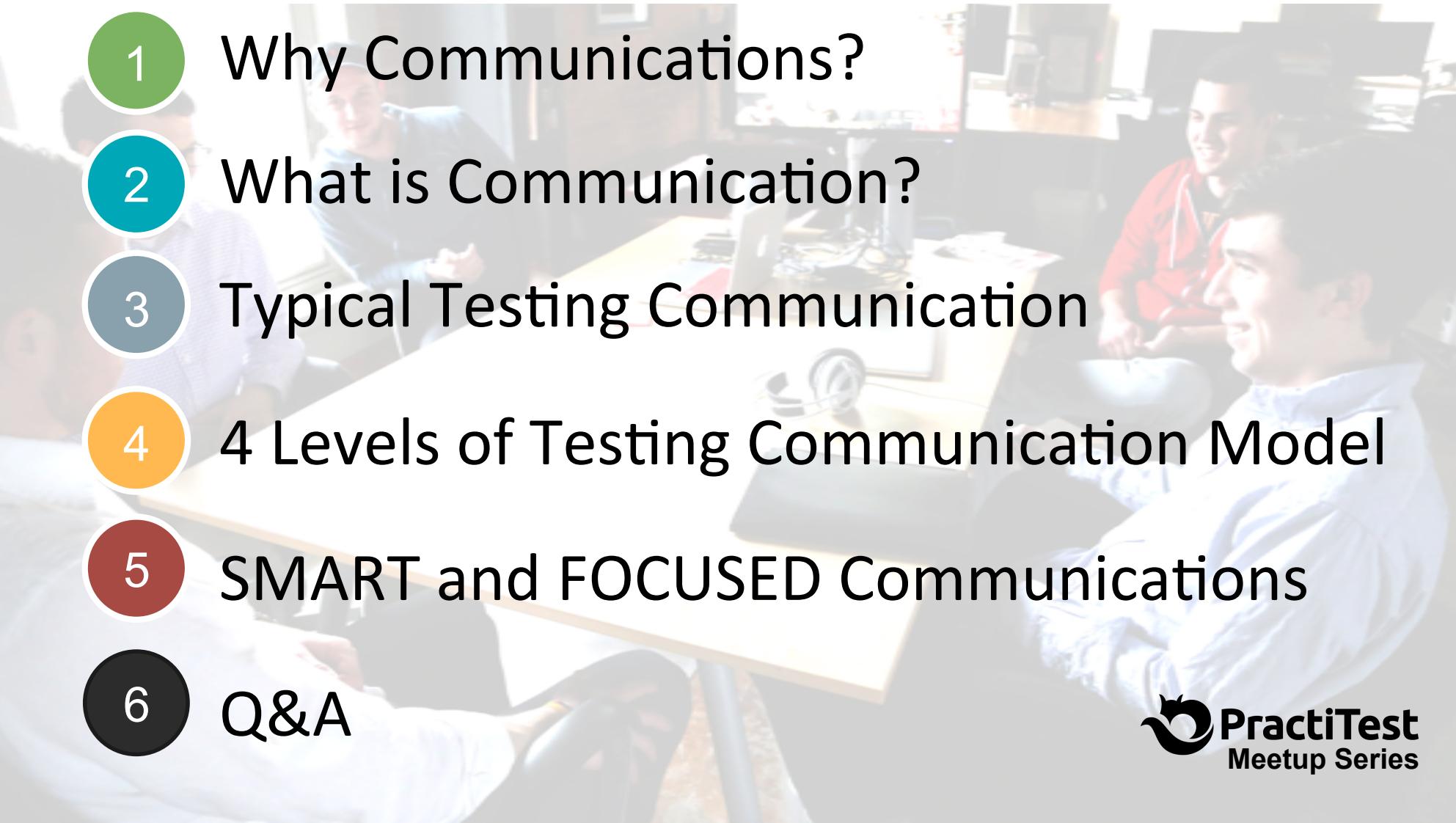
and

## Why you have been doing it wrong all this time...



Joel Montvelisky  
Chief Solution Architect  
 PractiTest

# What we want to cover today?

- 
- 1 Why Communications?
  - 2 What is Communication?
  - 3 Typical Testing Communication
  - 4 4 Levels of Testing Communication Model
  - 5 SMART and FOCUSED Communications
  - 6 Q&A

# Who am I?

## Professions :

(last 20 years)

- Accidental Tester
- QA Manager
- Blogger
- Speaker
- Solution Architect



## PractiTest:

- Chief Solution Architect
- QA Manager

## Other Projects:

- OnlineTestConf
- State of Testing

# SPRING ONLINE TEST CONF

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June 13-14, 2017

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# STATE of TESTING



2016

State of Testing Report



State of Testing 2015



STATE of TESTING  
2013



PractiTest  
Meetup Series

# About PractiTest

- ✓ SaaS ALM Solution
- ✓ Simple & Intuitive – yet – Professional & Flexible
- ✓ Integrates with Jira, Selenium, Jenkins, Pivotal Tracker, QTP, Bugzilla, Ranorex, SoapUI, etc...
- ✓ Best Darn Support in the Business 😊



1

# Why Communication?

# Why do we Test?



# Why do we Test?

To provide *information*  
about the *project* and *product*  
so that the *stakeholders*  
can make the correct *decisions*.

# Why do we Test?

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# Why talk about communication?

# Why do we Test?

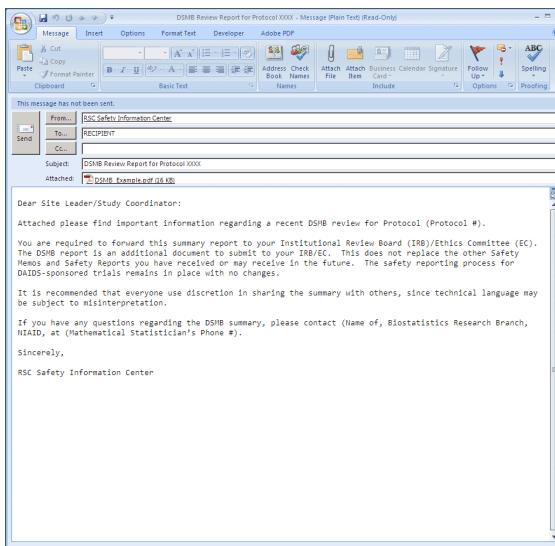
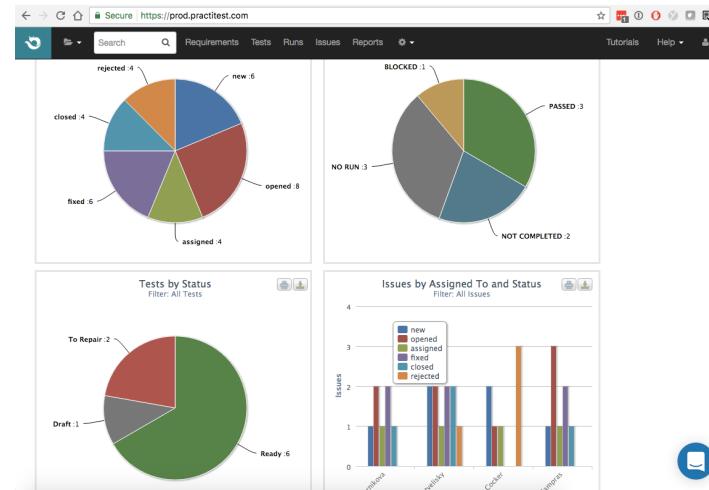
To provide *information*  
about the *project* and *product*  
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2

# What is Communication?

# What is communication?



# What is communication?

Every communication event is defined by four components:

1 The Goal

2 The Players

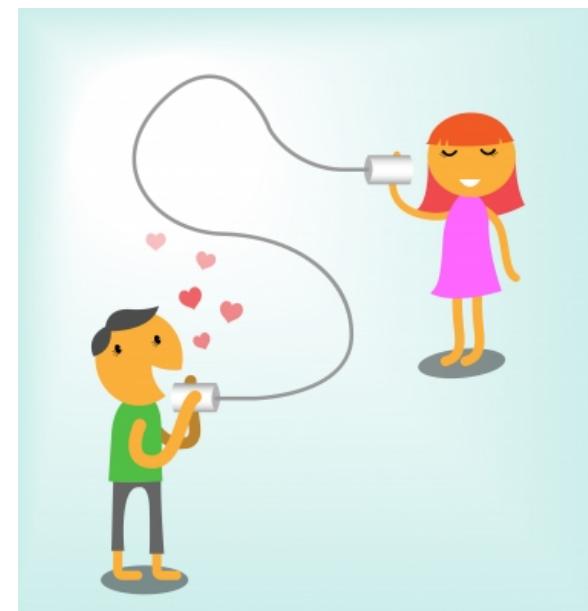
- Sender
- Receiver/s

3 The Channel

(encoding - medium - decoding)

4 The Message

In Theory,  
we think of Communication like this...





In Practice,  
Communication is more like this...

# What is Communication Alignment?

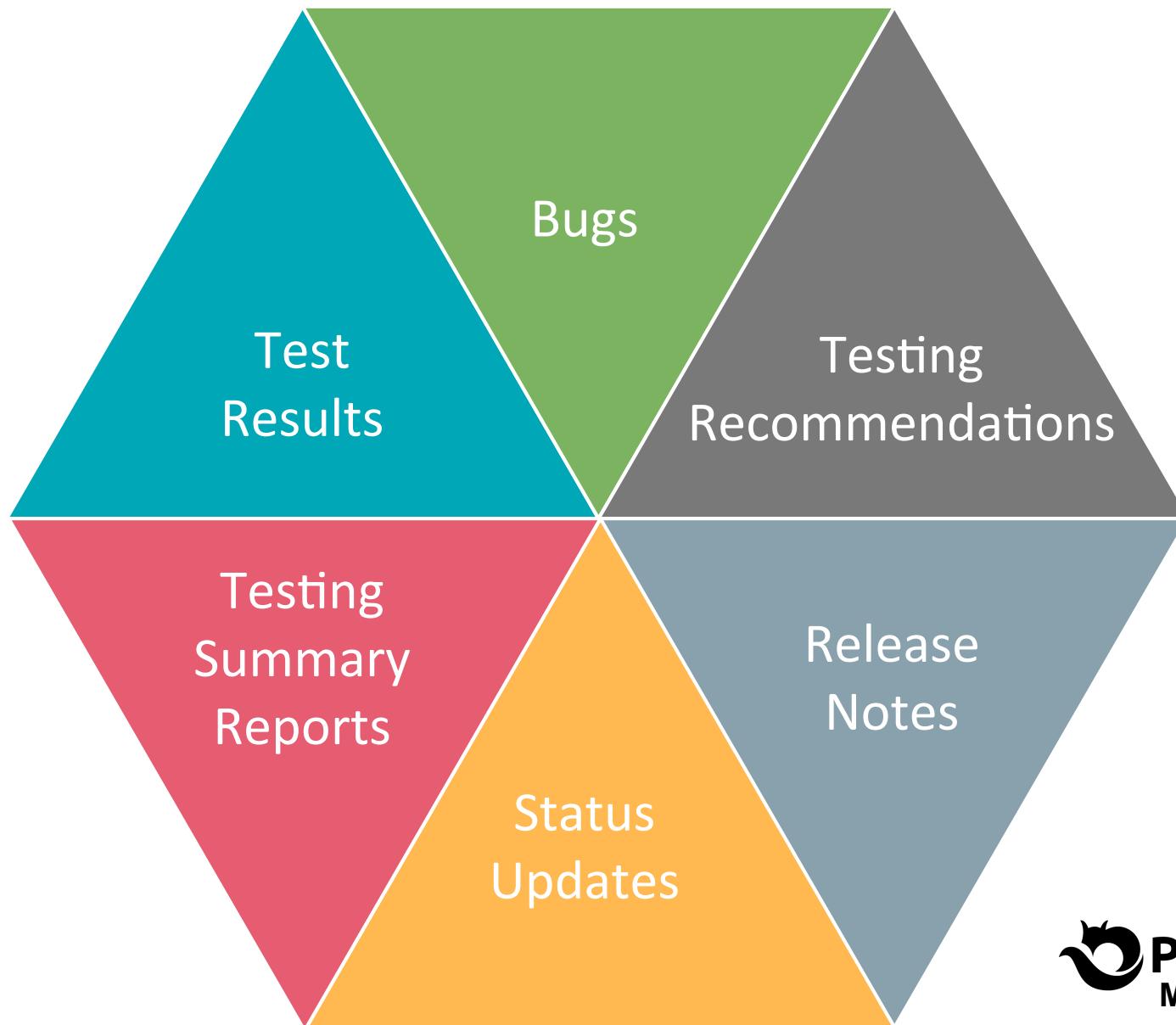
Focusing on the GOAL, we need to ask ourselves  
3 important questions:

- What do we want to achieve?
- Who is sending and receiving the message?
- What channel should we use?

3

# “Typical” Testing Communication

# Typical Testing Communication



# Why do we Test?

To provide *information*  
about the *project* and *product*  
so that the *stakeholders*  
can make the correct *decisions*.

# Typical Testing Communication

The main problem:

As testers, we don't stop to think about the GOALS we want to achieve with our Testing Communication.



*We limit Testing Communication to updating “everyone” on the status of our testing, when we could be achieving a lot more...*

Correct communication is  
the Most Important Tool  
of the Tester!



4

# Four Levels of Testing Communication Model

# 4 Levels of Testing Communication

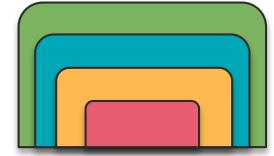
Constructive Communication

Research Communication

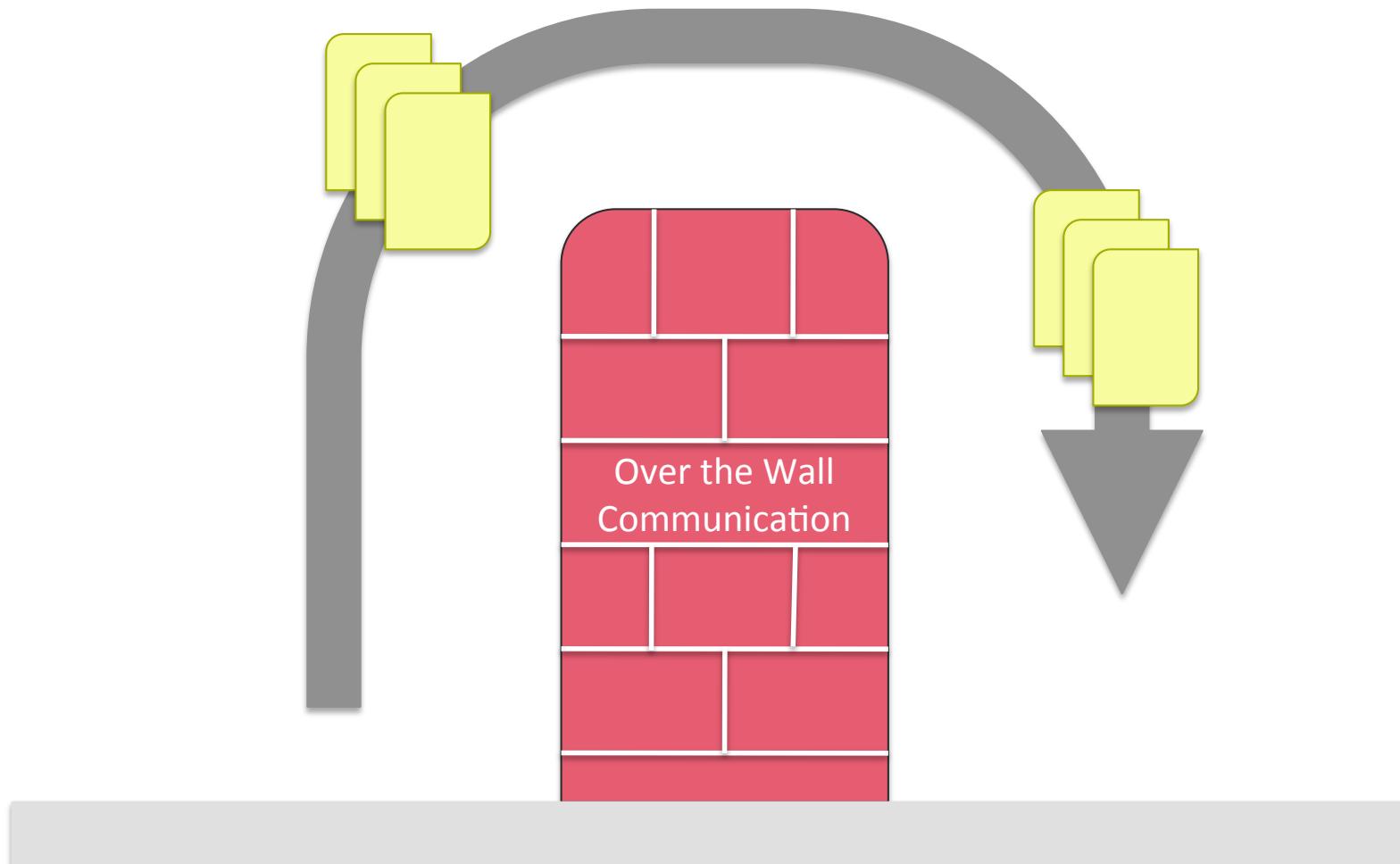
Learning Communication

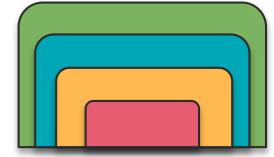
Over the Wall  
Communication

# 4 Levels of Testing Communication



## Level 1: Over the Wall Communication





# 4 Levels of Testing Communication

## Level 1: Over the Wall Communication

### Examples

- Bug Reports / Lists
- Testing Results / Reports
- Update Presentations / Emails

### Objective

Help stakeholders with their tactical decisions.

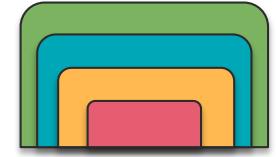
### Characteristics

- One way communication:  
“Fire & Forget”
- Dry and fact based
- “One Size Fits All” templates

### Biggest problem

- Most of times we don't provide any new information or real help.
- It enrages more than it helps.

Over the Wall  
Communication

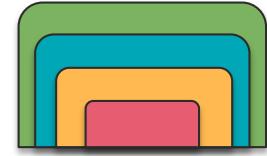


# 4 Levels of Testing Communication

## Level 2: Learning Communication



# 4 Levels of Testing Communication



## Level 2: Learning Communication

### Examples

- ◎ Reqs & Design Review Meetings
- ◎ 1-on-1 meetings with Dev or Product
- ◎ Sessions with other testing teams

### Objective

- ◎ Better understanding of the AUT
- ◎ Create awareness of testing in Dev & Product teams

### Characteristics

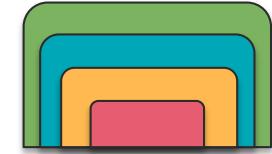
- ◎ Mainly inbound communication
- ◎ Around concrete and simple information of product and risks
- ◎ Introduces some stakeholders to the testing process

### The Good and Bad

- ◎ Great first step to get information from additional stakeholders.
- ◎ Most times it misses the chance to get these stakeholders more involved in the testing process.

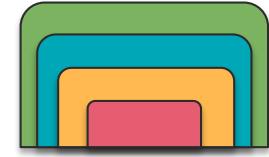
Learning  
Communication

# 4 Levels of Testing Communication



## Level 3: Research Communication





# 4 Levels of Testing Communication

## Level 3: Research Communication

### Examples

- Meetings with Support to analyze tickets
- Meetings with Pre-Sales or Tech-Sales
- User Profiles (Personas)
- Competitor Profiles
- Sessions with higher management

### Objective

- Get more complex information on the AUT.
- Understand what information is needed by stakeholders that can be provided by testing.

### Characteristics

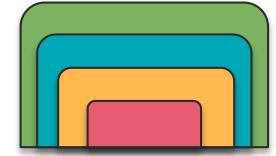
- 2 way communication channel – Expect more questions than information.
- Provides additional testing ideas, not necessarily related to functionality.
- Usually surprises people when you come and ask for a meeting – Surprises are good!

### The good and the bad

- Provides valuable information on non-functional stuff from Real Life Users.
- Awakes interest from additional stakeholders in the testing process.
- Generates noise from the outside – some Development Managers will not see this nicely!

Investigative  
Communication

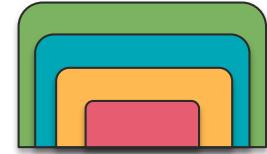
# 4 Levels of Testing Communication



## Level 4: Constructive Communication



# 4 Levels of Testing Communication



## Level 4: Constructive Communication

### Examples

- Pair testing sessions with Dev & Support engineers
- Test Planning workshops with representative from different teams
- Visits or sessions with Strategic Customers or CABs to understand their usage

### Objectives

- Get and share information and involvement with internal stakeholders
- Generate recognition on the value of testing.
- Get first hand information from users and the field.

### Characteristics

- 2 way communication
- Internal and external players.
- Requires advanced skills of communication and group management.
- Generates more involvement into the testing process.

### The good and the bad

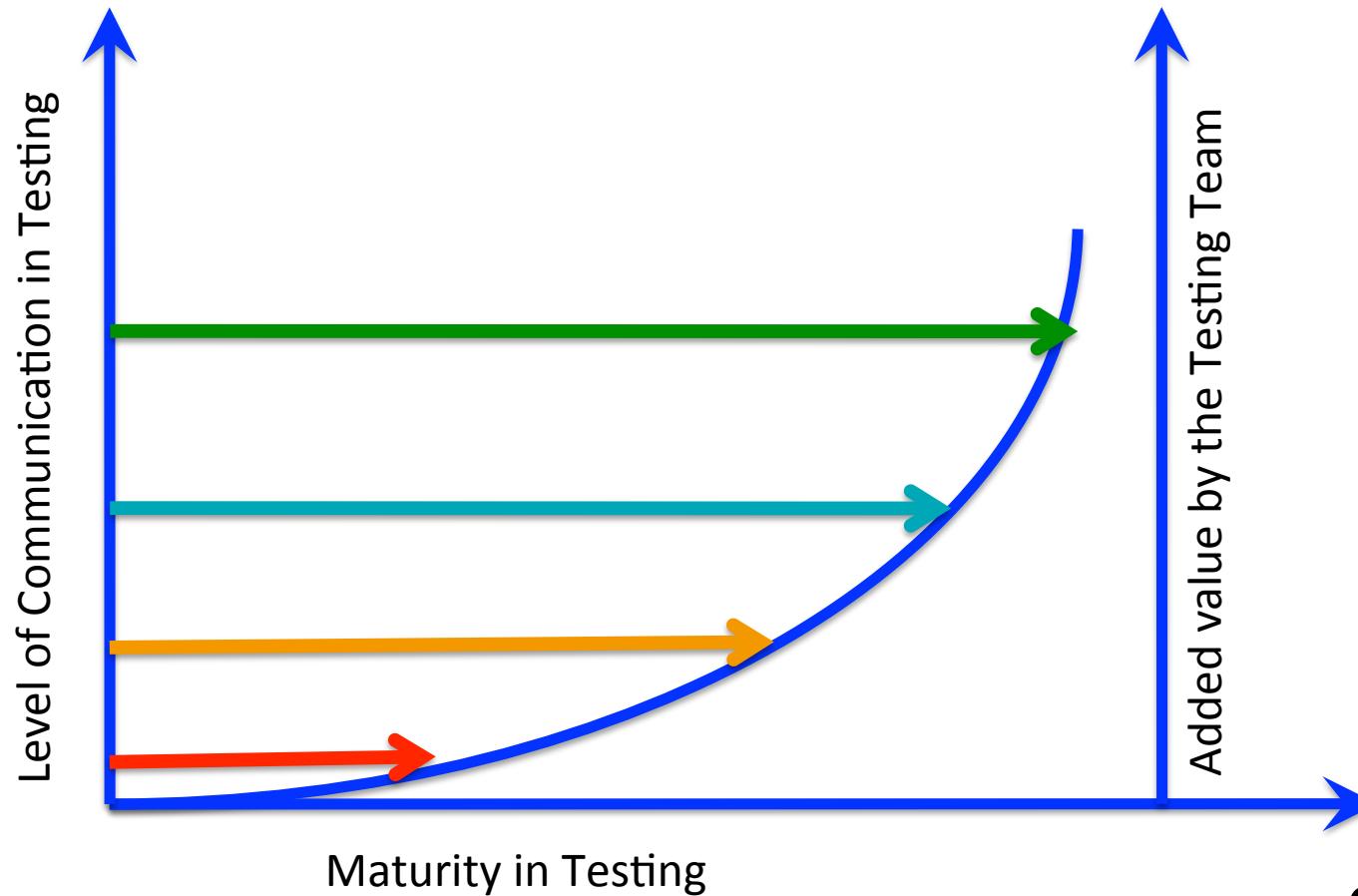
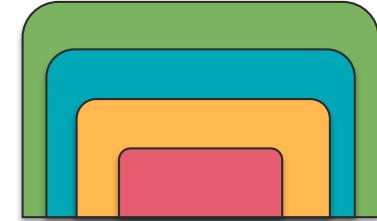
- Generates recognition on the value of testing
- Requires tons of preparation and execution
- This is a long range gain and a short range investment.

Constructive  
Communication



# Communication and Career Path

# Communication and Career Path



5

# SMART & FOCUSed Communication

# S.M.A.R.T. Communication

◎ Simple -

Graphs over Words / One-liners over Paragraphs

◎ Measurable -

Numbers & Stats over feelings and descriptions

◎ Actionable -

Suggest solutions, don't stop at pointing at issues

◎ Repeatable -

Show information over versions and products

◎ Timely -

Inform while still relevant

# F.O.C.U.S. Approach

◎ Fast -

Be quick to answer questions

◎ Objective -

Share good and bad news equally

◎ Condensed -

To the point and quickly

◎ User centered -

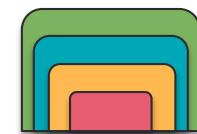
Think on the needs of each (not all!) of your users

◎ Service -

The customer is always right!

# To summarize

- 1 Communication is a complex mechanism
- 2 There are many goals testers don't even try to achieve via correct communication use
- 3 There are a number of levels of communication you can use (smartly!) to advance your goals
- 4 Communication should be SMART & FOCUSed



# Q&A



# Thank You!

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<http://qablog.practitest.com/>