Let's stop talking about testing,
let's start thinking about value

YOU TALK TOO

MUCH

classic

Hello!

We are Alex Schladebeck

& Huib Schoots

@alex_schl

@huibschoots

Let's start

With a couple of rants…

#TestNet @alex_schl @huibschoots

Testing is under appreciated

Unable to explain what we do...

#TestNet @huibschoots @alex_schl

Our goal:

Start a revolution!

Learn to talk about quality and value!

Value?

✗ **What is value in the first place?**

- Value is in the eye of the beholder

- Something the customer is willing to pay for (Taiichi Ohno)

- The importance or worth of something for someone (Cambridge dictionary)

✗ **What is the value of testing?**

✗ **Why do we need testers?**

It's a trap!

✗ I need to talk about testing! it is good for my soul to explain what I did and why...

✗ But I don't know how to talk about my testing in a way that others understand...

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What is the role of testers?

We are not here to give confidence...

We are here to demolish unwarranted confidence!

Testers are like oncologists

We have to establish our role: we deliver bad news most of the time... but that's part of the deal!

What is the role of testers?

Contribute to value by helping the team to:

X   *Creating awareness about the state of the product*

X   *Stay skeptical when everybody else is sure*

X   *Being the adapter between each & every technological system and the people it interacts with*

X   *Representing the human factors*

You know you are a tester when you see the world as a test environment!

The information from testing enables other people to do better work!

What are the traps?

Stories	decay into	Numbers
A performance	decay into	Deliverables
Test strategy	decay into	Test execution
Tool supported testing	decay into	Automation
Many kinds of coverage	decay into	One kind of coverage
Learning activity	decay into	Formalized static tasks
Balance risk and uncertainty	decay into	Certainty
Business Impact	decay into	Bugs
Product story	decay into	Testing jargon

http://www.satisfice.com/blog/archives/1728

Testing is not being taken seriously

✗ Lowered expectations for testing expertise by stuff like ISO standards and ISTQB

✗ Avoiding controversy

✗ We devaluate our own work by becoming tool jockeys

✗ We do not stand up for our craft

✗ We do not learn or practice enough

Are we okay with that?

Are we ripe for a revolution?

✗ People ... are discontented

✗ People feel ... held down by unacceptable restrictions

✗ People ... think of themselves as belonging to a class, and there is ... bitterness between classes

✗ The classes closest to one another are the most hostile

https://insiderevolution.weebly.com/why-do-revolutions-happen.html

A real revolution?

Maybe not... (no period of terror)

But the future is coming - and we need to be prepared.

What does the future look like?

- ✗ Programming is one of the new literacies
- ✗ Skills in communication and leadership define success
- ✗ Complex, interconnected webs of human experience and technological integration
- ✗ Data is gold if it can be turned into useful information and even knowledge
- ✗ New uses and value as emergent properties

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A bright future for testers?

Hmmm . . .

So if we can't talk about testing. What should we be talking about??

The Product Risk Knowledge Gap

What we need to know

What we know

The purpose of testing is to close the risk gap.

Our knowledge of the product:
How much do we already know?

Are there problems that threaten the on-time, successful completion of the product?

Dirty little secret

You can talk about testing…

… if you get better at it!

What can we do?

✗ **Get better at describing and explaining your testing!**

✗ **In a way others understand**

✗ **About stuff that matters**

Modern Testing Principles

Mission: Accelerate the Achievement of Shippable Quality

1. Our priority is improving the business
2. We accelerate the team and help mitigate bottlenecks
3. We are a force for continuous improvement, no safety net to catch failures
4. We care about the quality culture and we coach, lead, and nurture the team
5. The customer is the only one capable to evaluate the quality of our product
6. We use data extensively to deeply understand customer usage
7. We expand testing abilities and knowhow across the team;
   this may reduce/eliminate dedicated testing specialists

http://www.moderntesting.org/

Our testing principles

X Deliver insight into status of the product

X Practice (and enact) critical thinking

X Enable testing: lead, coach, teach, support

X Discuss testability

X Explore & experiment

X Promote waste removal / avoidance

X Help to accelerate the team

X Advocate continuous improvement

X Foster quality culture

You should talk about

Product story

Risks & value

That might involve stuff like:
- ✗ Problems
- ✗ Users & needs
- ✗ Feelings
- ✗ Open questions & doubts
- ✗ Improvements
- ✗ Relations & connections

Questions we must answer

✗ What does the client need to know right now?

✗ What might hinder the successful completion of the product?

✗ What role do I need to take on in this situation to ensure we achieve our aims?

✗ Does this matter? To whom?

… can you think of any more concrete questions you can ask to ensure that you are contributing to value?

Establish credibility!

✗ Focus on stuff that matters

✗ Responsible ways of telling there is a problem (and articulating why there is a problem)

✗ By using credible oracles

How to avoid talking about testing (how not to be bugged)

✗ Find enough problems so they don't have time to ask you questions

✗ Tell a credible story so they do not care how you got the information

✗ Tell people what they need to hear despite of what they want hear

✗ Prepare to be able to tell a damned good story about your testing

So now what?

✗ The future is coming, ready or not!

✗ And it's different enough that we need to change

✗ We need to revolutionise how we contribute and communicate

Testers' true value

Analysing pieces	and	Seeing how they fit
Gathering data	and	Deliver insight
Logic	and	Empathy & ethics
Critical distance	and	Close social distance
Trusting assumptions	and	Challenging assumptions
Observation of tech systems	and	Observation of people

Be the magic the team is afraid to miss

A story about Thomas

Summary

X   *Talk about what you found out and why it matters. And only talk about what you have done, if you have to*

X   *Be able to talk what people need to hear to hear about*

X   *In an increasingly technology-driven space, focus on the relations between humans and systems*

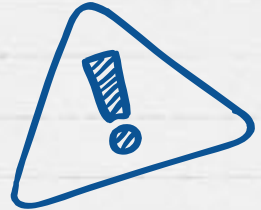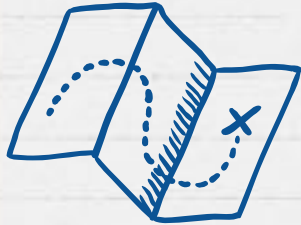X   *Explore, coach, remove waste, question, foster testability and become a service to the team*
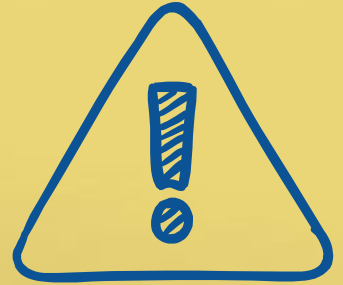
Any questions?

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Thanks!

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Credits & thanks

Credits:

- Presentation template: http://www.slidescarnival.com/
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- Nederlandschreeuwtomcultuur.nl
- Jargon Free Fridays
- Pink Floyd

Thanks:

- Michael Bolton