

*A must-read for Software Quality & Testing
practitioners*

THE BUSINESS OF SOFTWARE TESTING

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JOHAN STEYN

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About the author

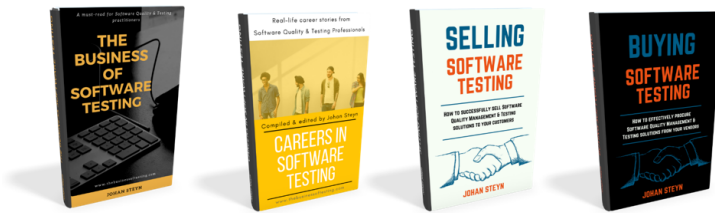


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My other books

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Dedication

I dedicate this book to all the young, enthusiastic and inspiring test professionals I worked with over the years. I trust that this book will help you in some way as you venture into the future.

I especially dedicate the book to my friend Gaven. We met when you were a young testing intern. I am proud of how far you have come.

1 A brave new world

The shifting sand under our feet

There is a momentous shift taking place in the world of digital technology. Industries and careers that offered sanctuary to many professionals for many decades are being disrupted in ways that we may never be able to grasp. Although the news media and industry forums have been shouting this news into our ears for a long time, many of us remain oblivious to the dramatic impact of and speed at which we are approaching the cliff of innovation.

We are entering a new technological world, a world where only the brave will survive. Who are those brave souls? They have the foresight to understand the massive impact of what is already happening to our world and have taken the needed steps to survive the coming tsunami.

“Tsunami” is the right word to use here. When a tsunami approaches, we cannot do much to stop the destruction about to hit our homes, but we can heed the warnings from scientists and prepare accordingly. A tsunami moves with great speed and is usually unexpected. As meteorological technology advances, we will have more time to organize when the warning bell sounds, but we will never have enough time. A tsunami wave moves faster than we can imagine.

The DevOps Tsunami

Tsunami is the word I have been using for a long time to describe the changes in our digital world and technical careers. Some months back, I published an article on LinkedIn

called The DevOps Tsunami which caused quite a stir among my peers. The article was also picked up by an influential British Software Testing publication. Resultantly, many software quality professionals from a global spectrum contacted me to express their views.

My sincere belief was that my description of the tsunami would echo what many others in our industry already knew and experienced. But I was surprised by the amount of resistance and criticism that filled my inbox. Many who made contact expressed a belief that DevOps and the resultant impact on Software Quality Management was just a fad – another buzz word like Agile or Scrum – and that it would soon disappear like the sound of a jet plane passing by. They expressed a “been there – done that” view: they have seen the many changes hitting our technological world but have experienced little change in their daily lives as testing practitioners. There are always new tools at our disposal, new buzz words, and new trends. But many are still conducting software testing in a manual way, and they seem to be quite happy with that.

The Status Quo

This comfort zone of the status quo was built on personality cults, and empires that were carefully manufactured in our corporate environments over the years. These cult leaders may have been good testing professionals in their hey-day. But over time, have they climbed the corporate ladder, nestled in a comfortable career where change and innovation were the enemy, and where like-minded minions filled the ranks of the teams managed by them.

They have achieved becoming the go-to software guys in their corporate divisions and are the holders of the keys

to quality. But to justify their existence, they keep their stakeholders – especially those with the funding on which their kingdoms depend – at ransom. Concepts like automotive innovation, cognitive technology, and even the expertise of vendor partners are avoided at all costs. Innovation, the reuse of assets, and the employment of disruptive thinkers are not welcomed. These things will make their houses built on sand to crumble.

The Testers of Tomorrow (Today)

The clarion call goes out to the software quality and testing community. What we desperately need TODAY is an army of *testers of tomorrow*. The call goes out to those testing professionals who embrace the coming tsunami, with all the change and uncertainty it brings. Nothing could have prepared you for this.

What does the *tester of tomorrow* look like? First of all, he or she is a testing professional with good technical skills. This is not someone who is bound to a specific tool, framework, or methodology. This adaptable tester allowed himself or herself to be exposed to a variety of tools of the trade. Exploration, a hunger for growth, and innovation are the name of the game.

Testers of tomorrow are real leaders. While many in this trade like to work in the shadows, they operate in the trenches with their teams. They drive their teams through their example of commitment and dedication, and they see the strengths in their teams not as threats but essential elements that will make the testers successful, too. They are always keen to promote others and give praise where it is due.

Testers of tomorrow are commercially savvy leaders. They understand that software quality management and testing are means to an end. He always and foremost takes into account

the business objectives of his customers and stakeholders. He spends time and effort with his team to ensure all are aligned with the business goals of their organization, and aligns their testing approach and planning to these. He is measured and measures his team on the successful realization of business goals through software quality management.

The tester of tomorrow is a shrewd political navigator. She knows that both she and her team's success rely on her political capital within her organization. She makes sure that she is connected to the relevant influencers and that she has their ear. She knows that gossip and second-hand information within the corridors of the workplace can scuttle her success.

She knows how to promote herself with skilled maneuvering, and she always ensures that the achievements of her team and the credit due to them is visible to her stakeholders. She recovers from failures gracefully, knowing how to dust herself off and tackle the failure with ownership to exceed expectations.

The tester of tomorrow is a reader and a learner. Learning never stops for this leader. He is on the cutting-edge with technological advances and innovation because he attends conferences, participates in webinars, and spends time reading.

He or she is not a lazy information gatherer. He is also well connected with his peers in the world of software quality. She is a voice worth listening to, a thought leader.

Testers of tomorrow live and breathe software quality management. They are not merely testers at the end of the cycle. They are not seen as the "stepchildren of the SDLC." Their voices and influence are heard from the very outset of a new project or planned feature. Their peers welcome their opin-

ions and shape their planning around the testers' guidance. They embody a "shift left" of innovation and test automation as they skilfully practice their craft throughout the software development and release process.

The Impossible Dream?

What I have just described may seem like a far cry from the reality that most quality professionals experience. The growth of a plant in a pot is restricted by its environment. Many organizations – whether end users of software services such as banks or even the supposed experts like global vendors – are not aware of or prepared for the tsunami.

Your career ambitions as a tester of tomorrow may not be realized where you currently work. Many organizations still see software testing as a necessary evil to be avoided at all costs, or at least as a grudge purchase like insurance.

Traditionally, our peers in the software world looked at testers as second-hand citizens. Testing was seen for those who did not "make the cut" to become developers. One would never be able to entice a hard-core developer into a career of software testing. The tsunami will force a change here. As we wake up to the tsunami-hit world around us, and as the actual role of software quality is recognized in a world moving at a fast pace that introduces massive risk, the *Tester of Tomorrow* will find her real place.

I see a world where those hardcore, weirdo pony-tail developers can be enticed to focus on a career in software quality management. In this world, their technical and development skills will make them the ideal candidates to test software.

Dear Reader, Welcome to a brave new world! Will we find you sinking or swimming as the tsunami hits?

Note: see [this link](#) for my Article about the DevOps Tsunami:

<https://www.thebusinessoftesting.com/single-post/2017/04/27/Testers-while-you-were-sleeping-the-DevOps-Tsunami>

2 Software testing is big business

As mentioned in the Introduction, this book is about the *business* of software testing. And let me tell you: software quality management and testing is big business! It is possibly bigger business than many realise.

The World Quality Report indicates that in mature organisations about a third of IT budgets are allocated to software quality management and testing. I say *mature organisations* as not all value software quality the way they should. Many think of testing as something that we do at the end of the Software Development Lifecycle (SDLC) as if we can live without it. They do not view software testing as important so they hire the least expensive consultants or providers to do this. And what do you get when you pay peanuts...?

These organisations may adhere to quality gates throughout their software release process, but for many software quality is just a tick in the box. Is there is a test plan? Tick. Are test consultants allocated to the project? Tick. But often questions around the reusability of test assets and the suitability of the test approach as it applies outside of the project at hand is skimmed over.

The World Quality Report also predicts that in a year or two organisations will allocate as much as 40% of IT spend on managing the quality of their software. Why is this? In a digital age where customers interact with their service providers mostly by the smartphones in their pockets, and

where brand loyalty is not a key driver, organisations can not afford to fail. They are required to release new products and features at a break-neck pace to keep up with competitors and market trends. And in a time when channel synergies are key to drive all the needed features to a customer's smartphone as a single interface, a failure of a software feature is no longer an isolated event. Customers have choices and it is easier than ever to switch to another provider.

3 Career navigation

The word navigation applies well to how we manage our careers. A ship's captain navigates his vessel around the vast oceans of the world. It is all about the intended destination. It is rarely a smooth cruise in a straight line: weather conditions, maritime traffic, and shipping lanes determine the route. The ship still reaches its destination, despite delays, despite navigational equipment failure, despite rerouting the journey.

As a test professional, your career is in your own hands. You are not at the mercy of others, and you are not at the mercy of market trends. You have to make a conscious decision of what you are aiming for, and you have to determine how you will get there. It is ok not to know right at this moment what your final port of entry should be. But you have to start thinking about this every day.

Many people do not progress in their careers because of one reason, and only this one: *laziness*. It takes work and planning to navigate your professional journey. Career navigation consist of the following bill of goods:

1. *Education*. Technological advances and changing market conditions will have a significant effect on your career. If you think you will be doing the same job, needing the same skillset, and utilizing the professional network you have in place today in a year from now, you are asleep at the helm. You have to read as much as you can. There are fantastic books, blogs, and webinars available for you to consume. But if you do not allocate

regular time for educating yourself amidst your busy work life, you will fall behind before you know it.

2. *Networking.* You are only as employable as the people you know. Even if you have the best resume and the best skills in the market, you will rarely find the job you want if you do not know the right people. You have to put yourself out there. Attend conferences, contribute to newsletters, use social media to find your peers and put in the effort to get to know the right people.
3. *Always plan for your next job.* Whatever you are doing right now is in preparation for the next thing you will be doing. What you are learning in your situation at this very moment can position you for the next step. Do not be stuck in your current job, thinking this is all there is for you. Always think about what you can do, what you should learn, and who you should meet with to position yourself for the next step in your career.
4. *Learn to deal with failure.* You and I make many mistakes, as we are just human and imperfect beings. No one wakes up in the morning saying “today I will make a mistake.” But we do make mistakes. Not for the lack of trying. We work hard and try our best, but you and I will fail at some things sometimes. What differentiates successful people from the rest is their ability to get up, dust themselves off, learn from the failure and to move on with courage. Some of the most valuable lessons you will learn in your career will come from your failures. Embrace these experiences.
5. *Survive the politics.* Wherever you work and whatever you do, you will do it with other people around you. And where there are people, there will be political maneuvering and backstabbing. It is the nature of

humankind. We can be the best of friends and the most valuable team members, but we all have a flaw when it comes to the opportunity to advance despite others. Your most trusted confidant at work will turn his back on you in an instant if he could move forward in his career. Don't be blind to this. But also do not be cynical and suspicious. Just accept that you will deal with corporate politics all your life. Grow a thick skin and keep your integrity in place. Learn what to ignore.

You will face many setbacks on your journey to success. You will have to be able to adapt and change your route and plans. But the corporate world is not for the weak. Be strong, believe in yourself, and be kind to yourself. It is possible to find that dream job, but you have to be smart, and you have to be patient.

4 The software shipyard - building our builders

(Allow me to be poetic)

Software engineering as a career is an exciting world to be part of. As the oceans cover most of the earth and adventurers of old risked their lives exploring and hunting for treasures, today software practitioners sail the seas of innovation and discovery into the glorious unknown.

However, as in the day when seafarers were the explorers of an earlier age, so the software engineering world we live in now is being forced to change, modernize, and we are called to go to the edge of the known world. We are more like the explorers who sail the endless void of outer space: It is an ever-expanding universe we inhabit, and for the rest of humanity's finite future, we will never be able to satisfy our thirst for discovery.

In centuries past, the maps used by sailors often had curious annotations that read, "Here be dragons." Superstitious and paranoid, people often believed that there was only so far you could go on your adventure before you would inevitably reach an untimely death. The dragons represented the unknown that you dare not disturb. Many believed that the earth was flat, and although you may cunningly escape the clutches of the dragons, you were bound to drop off the edge of the world

eventually.

The oceans of software engineering we are challenged to discover today are filled with treasure but also with storms, danger, and the risk of failing faster than ever before. More and more we are forced to rethink the quality of our ships and the skill of our sailors. Quality Management and Testing has often been the “stepchild” of the Software Development Lifecycle: our peers frowned upon us as testing is seen as a “thing you do at the end” (if there was time and budget left).

Those who sail the safe harbors of their local shores are not in need of better ships and more quality. The risk of disaster is small as the shores are near. However, those Buccaneers who are drawn to the smell of new oceans are forced to build better vessels to sail in. They are compelled to have a larger component of quality engineering sailors. They have to have a team who can work fast and smart and automate their manual tasks.

The conundrum we face is that we have so many new ships to build that we do not have enough shipyards to cater for the need. We also struggle to find ship builders and sailors who are skilled and experienced enough to join us on our journey.

So we are forced to build more good quality ships faster than ever before. We are also in need of growing our own teams of shipbuilders and nurturing our own crews.

But where to find good team members? With the rapid expansion of assembly lines in global software shipyards, the shipbuilders are all fighting for good engineers from the same limited talent pool, and the bugger that supply and demand are, means the labor costs are ever increasing.

Therefore, we are left with one option: Find and grow our

crews. But how to train them? We are under immense pressure to deliver ocean-ready vessels faster and faster, and the luxury of time to take newbies under our wings just does not exist.

The other question regards certification. Many shipyards send their new builders on training to gain levels of certification. But one may find that most of the current training on offer lacks relevance to the world of Ship-Ops. Oh yes, Ship-Ops, not sure if you heard about this? Rather than checking the quality of the ships on the assembly line at the end, there is a trend nowadays to regularly check quality right through every step on the assembly line. Shipyards also try to find ways to automate many of the manual tasks and, importantly, to automate from the beginning.

However, this new world of Ship-Ops (and its devious sister, Agile Ship Building) means that we need a whole new breed of crew members. We can certify our crews until the cows come home, but they may just not keep up. Our crew members long for certification to make their resumes look better: you have them certified, and then they are off to another shipyard. I am also concerned about the relevance of the shipyard training providers. Many of their teachers were excellent ship builders years ago, but they have been training others for so long that they inevitably lose their relevance of where the new breed of ships is heading.

Therefore, every shipyard needs to find its very own newbies. We need to train them not in theory, but with getting-your-hands-dirty on the job training. The planks of the new ships must make marks on their hands. They need to be seasoned builders. And to make things easier (not!), Ship-Ops is often forcing us to combine the roles of shipbuilders and ship

testers.

So the clarion call goes out to the ship building community: We have to find ways to grow our crews. Do not think this is someone else's problem – it is ours. Do not just ship off this responsibility to a vendor ship builder. Yes, they may be able to offer some help and point you in the right direction. We have to be the owners of this extraordinary journey, and it is an exciting adventure!

This chapter was an article originally published in Test Magazine www.testingmagazine.com

5 Testing interns - thrown to the wolves

Many software quality and testing providers offer internship programmes to the local market. These initiatives are critical given the high unemployment rate and skills shortage in South Africa. However, most of these programmes are doomed to fail, and many of these youngsters will be left discouraged.

It was a warm summer day when I met them in the foyer. Enthusiastic, bright-eyed, and a little nervous, these youngsters arrived for their first day “on the job.” They arrived for what would be the start of their careers as software testing professionals.

After a few months of preparation, they were keen to practice their craft in the real world. Most of them were graduates with a technical training background; they went through the necessary theoretical and practical preparation to become test analysts.

There are many good reasons for corporate customers to engage with service providers on an internship programme. Our country is filled with countless smart and ambitious youngsters who may never be given a chance to rise from their poverty-stricken backgrounds. Our market is inundated with foreign nationals who bring their expertise to local projects, but who also leave more often than not without having imparted skills to locals. Corporations in South Africa relinquish billions of rands to foreign service providers.

There are also some wrong reasons to embark on an internship programme. Many corporations are being left behind by the massive change happening under our noses right now. The world is already digitized, and this push will only increase in momentum. Some still think that software testing is a rather straightforward craft to practice and, therefore, leave it to the less experienced of the software community. Some mistakingly think that employing interns is the right solution for testing software when budgetary constraints limit the recruitment of suitably skilled and experienced professionals.

These enthusiastic youngsters are often thrown to the wolves. They enter a world that they are rarely prepared for. They may have technical skills, but little would have prepared them for the brutal realities of the corporate world.

This happened to the youngsters I met on that summer's day. They were allocated to projects to gain experience but were seen as an unnecessary nuisance. They ended up being sidelined, doing manual tasks, and some even became the defacto coffee cup-bearers for the project kings. It was little surprise that they left one by one over the next few weeks. I often think of them and wonder if some of them ever entered the careers they dreamed about after that crushing experience.

So, what are the factors that corporates and service providers need to take into account in order to complete a successful intern programme?

1. Do not go it alone. Many corporates embark on an internship journey, but their internal human resources and recruitment teams are so inundated with the backlog of filling other much-needed positions that they

rarely get the time to find suitable internship candidates. It is best to partner with a service vendor who can share the risks, and who is better suited for finding these individuals. It takes a considerable effort to filter through the various possible candidates and much time is spent visiting college campuses and meeting with prospective candidates.

2. Have a clear end state in mind. Both corporates and service providers can benefit from an efficient internship programme by training their future employees; however, both parties need to agree on the terms and duration of the engagement. Of consideration are aspects, such as the commercial agreement: what are the staggered pay scale increases over the given period, what will the corporation commit to in order to guarantee success on a practical level, what risks and guarantees will the vendor partner be held accountable for.
3. Be ready for their arrival. The corporation needs to ensure that these youngsters are received and made welcome on their first day. They need to be introduced to the project teams with whom they will work, and these teams need to be aware of the terms of the engagement. Internally, there must be checks and balances on a regular basis to ensure that the project teams and the interns are aligned.
4. Look after them. Do not just dump them on a project and forget about them. Check in with them, mentor them, and be patient with them.

The star performers who will take you on a road to success in the medium to long term may be part of your internship

intake. Treat them with respect and look after them. Invest in them.

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www.itweb.co.za*

6 Buying software testing

As a software quality professional, you will inevitably at some stage in your career work for a software quality services provider. Or you will at least deal with vendor providers as a client.

I have spent nearly a decade of my career selling software quality services to clients. Recently I have been working for a bank, and I am now a client of such service providers. My experience as a vendor has taught me a great deal about the way that customers typically interact with vendors, and I endeavor to use that proficiency today in my interaction with vendor providers.

Perhaps the most significant frustration I faced with clients was their lack of commercial maturity. They were often technology experts but had no clue how to engage with a vendor to get the best that the vendor can offer, in a win-win engagement. I usually had the experience where clients strip-mined my firm for intellectual property, stealing my best people and leaving me behind in the dust as they moved on to leach from another vendor.

It is possible to have a strategic and meaningful relationship with providers, where you get what you need in the form of value and expertise, and where the vendors hit their revenue targets and grow their market share. Both are possible.

But you also need to be aware that vendors can often be brutal

in how they deal with clients. Many of them will not care about solving your problems but will only focus on selling you things you may not need at prices no one else will pay. You have to be commercially streetwise.

When I review a vendor's proposal I ask myself the following fundamental questions: What is in it for my employer? What will we be left with when the vendor is done? Will the vendor share risk and commit to working with me to drive up my team's maturity and skill levels, while at the same time help us drive down our costs?

No matter how shiny their proposals, nor the brilliance of their delivery when presenting, neither the seemingly fantastic content of their response documents or client references will mean anything to me if the above-listed questions are not answered.

Buying software testing services can be a complicated process. When you buy a product - say a Dell or HP server - it is more straightforward. You can easily compare the spec and pricing with other products, but when you buy a service, it is all about the solutioning and the extent to which you can bring the vendor into your pain. You have to be able to lower your guard, be exposed where you are weak or lean in knowledge, and allow a trusted vendor to fix your problems with you.

7 Selling software testing

So you sell software testing services? Ever wondered what your customers are thinking? The answers may surprise you.

Over the last two decades, I have worked in roles where I sold technology products and services to corporate customers. The last ten years, my focus turned to software services and software testing and quality management in particular. I worked in senior roles for some of the large global vendors, and I competed for business with many of the best rated global software service providers.

Last year, something interesting happened: I had the unique opportunity to fall down the rabbit hole, and I discovered a new world. For the first time in my life, I worked for a customer of these large providers. I had the opportunity to look over the fence.

My experience over the last months made me rethink how I would deal with customers if I am ever again in a sales role. The question that continually popped up in my mind was, “Would I sell to me?” Or more to the point: “Would I buy from me?”

Many who read this article work for software quality and testing vendors. You deal with customers on a daily basis. But do you not sometimes wonder what your world looks like from the other side? How do your customers perceive you? What is it that your clients wish to get from you to see you as

a value-adding partner?

Allow me to share with you what I have discovered. What I am about to share applies to all who sell service offerings to customers irrespective of the industry, but it applies to software testing and quality management in particular.

Your product and service offerings are not as unique as you think

The downfall of many vendor representatives is that they are so involved in the world of their employers that they are blind to the competitive world out there. Many will refer to the latest industry reports (like the World Quality Report or Gartner's "Magic Quadrants") to prove that they are the best vendor.

Over the last months, I reviewed proposals and RFX responses from most of the leading software quality vendors in the world. My conclusion is the following: If you consider the recommended solution proposals from the top five global vendors, there is very little that differentiates them. On a basic level, they can all offer the same solutions, they have the same capabilities, they do the same "cutting-edge" R&D, and they all have the same abilities to scale (like offshore testing centers).

So what differentiates a vendor is not global reach, capability, client references, or shiny presentations. It all comes down to relationship. I need to know that you are genuinely interested in fixing my pain points. I want to see that you are willing to invest time with my team and me even when there is currently no clear opportunity for you on the table. Hold my hand in the long run, and your trust and guidance could be commercially rewarded.

Please employ professional sales people

Most vendor technology divisions are led by techies who “came through the ranks” over the years. These leaders are often technically the best in their fields, but they lack business and commercial understanding. Many providers will use their best techies as customer representatives. This is good when the client’s engagement is of a technical/solution scoping nature. However, the initial customer engagements will most often be with business people, so please deploy individuals who are commercially savvy and who are thinking about a problem to be solved.

A vendor’s proposed solution will always be a means to an end. A tool or technology or framework or approach must deliver a result. In the case of software quality management, the net effect is risk mitigation, reduced time to market, and cost savings. With that in mind, why should your customer worry primarily about your proposed framework or toolset?

I urge vendors to employ and invest in professional salespeople. Yes, they need to understand the offering, but more importantly, they need to deal with your customers in business terms. They need to understand sales pipeline management and the often drawn-out process of landing significant business with your clients. They need to be trusted advisors and not primarily technical specialists. And please, for the sake of all that is good and holy, they need to speak English well!

Your customer is not as stupid as you think

Vendors should never underestimate how much their customers know about testing. Some years back, you could get away with this, as software testing as a specialty was in its infancy. But nowadays, your clients are often testing professionals themselves who attend conferences, read books,

and are “in the know.” You customers receive advice from many other vendors, and if you propose a solution that is not suitable or if you reference facts that do not align, you will quickly lose credibility with your customer.

Your presentations are boring

We copy what we see, and in time, we think it is the norm. Let’s walk through a typical vendor presentation: The first few slides are all about how big you are, how many customers you serve, how many countries you have offices in, your humongous annual revenue, and so forth. All presentations start the same.

Most presentations are clearly a cut-and-paste job; they show little relevance to the customer and the challenges we face. It is not that we do not want to tell you about the problems we need to fix, it’s just that you do not earn my trust and spend time with me. I am keen for you to help me with my challenges.

Oh, and please can you send your people on a presentations skills course? Content is not king. It’s about delivery.

Cold calling leaves me ... cold

Most people hate calling on prospective customers, but skilled and experienced salespeople know how to approach a cold call to good effect. Often, when someone calls me for the first time requesting a meeting or wanting my e-mail address to send me their company profile, it sounds like they are reading their words from a script. Maybe they are. Or maybe they have done so many calls and are sticking with the phrases they are comfortable with.

I welcome cold calls. You never know when you discover a needle in a haystack - a potential vendor (big or small) who

can offer value. I also respect it when people call me as I know how daunting this can be.

I receive many intro requests via LinkedIn messages. I recently received a request from a representative of a large global provider. Her message read that they did extensive research into the bank I work for, and they believe they can help us. I then replied asking her for more info on the findings of the “research” when I realized this was simply a ploy. My name was one of many on her list, and she was merely flinging mud at the wall to see what sticks. A week later, I received the same message - word for word - from another person in the same company!

So, please invest time and do some homework before you call a prospective customer.

This chapter was an article originally published in Test Magazine www.testingmagazine.com

8 Starting your own testing business

A question I get often asked as I meet with test professions is whether they should start their own testing business. I think it is an admirable ambition to start your own business, but it can also lead to much financial, reputational and career progress loss if you do not think and plan it out.

1. *What is your motivation?* If you want to start your own gig because you are frustrated with your current employer, or if you need more money I would advise you to think very carefully before you venture out and start your own thing. Frustration and fear are the worst types of motivation influencers when you are thinking about a change. Often the things that frustrate us are there to teach us a lesson, and the experience will follow you wherever you go.
2. *It can not just be about the money.* Sometimes testing consultants have sight of the invoice and see the charge at which they are billed out to their client. They make a quick calculation and conclude that their employer is making a killing on their rate. Of course, your employer is there to make a profit - why else be in business - and there are investments and risks to cover and shareholders expecting a return. But you do not see the costs involved in running the enterprise, and you may just be surprised at the low margin achieved by your

services. When you start your own company, make sure you do your research about the costs involved. Think about issues like cash-flow, clients paying you late, legal disputes and expenses, dealing with labor unions, and investments in technology and hardware.

3. *Can you sell?* You may be a brilliantly skilled and experienced quality testing professional, and you may have all the know-how needed to fix your prospective clients' problems. But are you able to translate the value you can bring into business terms, into a language your customers will understand? You must be able to identify the key stakeholders and get into their diaries. You must know the competitors you are competing against, and you must be able to communicate that which differentiates your offering.
4. *You need an anchor client.* Many who venture out on their own do so by making a deal with their current employer. They aim to sell their time and services back to the company they are currently working for. But you have to ask yourself why your employer should pay more for your services if all you end up delivering is the same you are doing at the moment. But an anchor client can give you the launch you need. You may, however, end up working so hard at the outset that you do not have time and capacity to seek out new clients. And even if you find new clients you will always be at risk of losing your anchor client, and you will end up in financial ruin.
5. *Be ethical.* I was often surprised over the years to find test capability managers who work for a corporation, and who procure services from their own little "on the side" company. Despite all the regulations and policies

in place from a vendor management and fair dealings perspective, this deceitful conduct happens more often than you think. I am a firm believer that the “wheel turns, “ and you will be caught out at some stage. You will in the least lose your job but may also face criminal prosecution.

Conclusion

Dear reader, I trust that you enjoyed reading my book and that in some way I helped you think about things differently. Here I briefly touched on the topics I deem relevant to The Business of Software Testing. There is undoubtedly much more to be said.

Please, can you do me a favor and add a review on the LeanPub portal? And please tell your friends and colleagues about this book.

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