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## Wim Demey

### The altered tester's anatomy

#### **Samenvatting:**

As human beings of flesh and blood the testers' anatomy has altered over the years. His or her physical test body is no longer the same as it was 5 years ago. Also the mental aspect, way of talking and thinking had to be adapted to the project context which has definitely changed.

Some years ago having an IT background as tester was in a number of cases considered as an asset. During the years however a technical background has become more and more important. New technologies, approaches like SOA require a different testing approach. As tester you have to evolve from pure black box GUI tester to at least a kind of grey-box tester. By consequence you get more insight in the system behind the screens. For some types of testing (e.g. performance testing) even a basic knowledge of the involved tiers is required. This evolution triggers a lot of discussions as it might impact the objectivity of the tester.

Another side effect is the evolution in the project scope. Projects become larger, more complex and more global. Of course testing is impacted by this phenomenon. Testers are no longer just an intermediary between users and developers. He or she is now a person who talks to different project parties (like project sponsors, managers, system administrators, directors, ...). An elaborated set of soft skills is needed in this context e.g. a tester has to adapt his vocabulary to each level he talks to in order to understand the needs, questions and provide the appropriate information regarding testing.

What about the way of doing your work? Does a pragmatic, common-sense approach works in every context? No it really depends in which area you are testing. For instance projects have more and more to deal with strict rules and procedures regarding testing (e.g. projects in regulated environments). You can no longer perform your test job in the same way as believed and as you was used to. Accuracy, sense for details, using the same kind of rigidity are no vague terms anymore for a tester.


#### **Biografie:**

Wim Demey is working as a certified ISEB & TMAP Professional test engineer employed by Sogeti Belgium. He has 9 years of test experience in several areas: telecom, social security, banking, and graphical industry and validation. In his projects he performed different roles of testing (e.g. test preparation, test execution, test management, test automation, test process improvement). Since 2003 he is leader of the competence center for testing tools.

## The altered tester's anatomy




TestNet Event – 20 september 2007  
Wim Demey – Sogeti BE




## Agenda

- Introduction
- The tester of 10 years ago
- The tester of today
- Reasons for altered anatomy
- How will the tester of 2020 look like?
- Questions





## Introduction

- Presentation must be seen in Belgian context
- Situation of Belgian testing market in 1997
  - > GiTek was first IT company with an own testing department
  - > Cooperation with IQUIP (-> Sogeti NL)
  - > TMap introduced by Gitek
  - > No guarantees on success



## The tester of 10 years ago

- What did testing means?
  - > Testing had exotic connotation
  - > Working at customers site
  - > Acting as "intermediary"
  - > Playing the role of end user
  - > Testing work of somebody else
  - > Following a methodology
  - > Pure black-box testing

## The tester of 10 years ago

- Which profile did you need?
  - > Background requirements were limited
    - Master degree was sufficient
    - Having no IT background was no problem
    - Being bilingual (Dutch – French)
  - > A few soft skills were required
    - Being able and willing to follow a training
    - Being social
    - Taking initiative
    - Being communicative (oral, written)


**?! Everybody could become a tester ?!**





## The tester of 10 years ago

- How did the outside world look to testing?
  - > Private – personal environment
    - Testing is very abstract to explain
    - Waste of study time and background
  - > Professional environment
    - Testers were often real evangelists
    - Testing is nice to have
    - Opportunistic approach by companies (Y2K, Euro)
    - Classic theme "Testers versus developers"

- Ignorance is important
- Skeptics
- Focus on what can go wrong
- What's observed
- Comfortable with conflict
- Report problems



- Expertise is important
- Believers
- Focus on how it can work
- How it's designed
- Avoid conflict
- Understand problems



## The tester of today

- **The testers anatomy has definitely altered**

Test awareness      Scope of testing services

Test community      Technologies      Project scope

SOGETI

## Reasons for altered anatomy

- **Increased test awareness**
  - > Testing contributes to quality of software
  - > Own test methodology, test teams
  - > Ready for test process optimization – test tooling
- **Due to external factors**
  - > Legislation (SOX, FDA,...)
  - > Consequences of failures (image, money,...)

Do we have to test?

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What do we have to test first?  
How could we improve our test processes?

SOGETI

## Reasons for altered anatomy

- **Scope of testing activities has extended**
  - > Manual testing
  - > Test coordination – test management
  - > Test tooling
  - > Test process improvement
  - > Training
  - > Coaching
  - > Pre-sales

=> Career path development needed  
=> Mixed profiles  
=> Importance of soft skills

SOGETI

## Reasons for altered anatomy

- **Evolution of technologies**
  - > **Development**
    - .NET, Java, SAP, Siebel, PeopleSoft, ...
    - Object oriented programming
    - SOA
  - > **Test tools**
    - Packages
    - Performance testing
    - Open source tools

=> Test approach must be adapted  
=> Technical skills needed

SOGETI

## Reasons for altered anatomy

- **Evolution of testing community**
  - > **Diverse channels**
    - Test organisations
    - Websites
    - Test conferences (Eurostar, SSQS, TestNet, ..)
  - > **Formalization of methodologies**
    - TMap Next, TestFrame, QualityPoint, STBox, ...
  - > **Trend of certification**
    - ISEB, TMap, Test tools
  - > **Competence centers within companies**
    - Validation
    - Test tools
    - Test methodology
    - ....

SOGETI

## Reasons for altered anatomy

- **Scope of projects has extended**
  - > Worldwide projects
  - > Testing is done on several (physical) locations
  - > More parties involved
- **New delivery models**
  - > Fixed price, near-shore, off-shore, managed sourcing

=> Flexibility & communication skills  
=> Pure testing knowledge is no longer sufficient

SOGETI

## How will the tester of 2050 look like?

- **Pure GUI testers are in danger**
- **Mixed profile/background is a must**
  - > Expertise in specific domain of testing
  - > Continuous investment in career development
  - > Enlarge scope
- **Tester is very flexible in many ways**
  - > Tasks & responsibilities
- **Importance of soft skills**
  - > Empathy
  - > Diplomacy
  - > Team spirit
  - > Languages
  - > Pragmatic
  - > Organisation & planning



## Questions

