Influencing Change

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Introduction

- Test / Dev Lead and Senior SDET at Vertafore
- Background in: mobile, web, Windows OS, game testing
- Passion around making things better for people and teams
Why Influence Change?

▶ “Isn’t that something managers do?”
▶ For Your Career
▶ For Your Company
▶ For the Test Discipline
▶ For You
How To Influence Change

- Know Your Audience
- Have a “Vision”
- Communicate Well
- Trust
Know Your Audience

- How to fail (Mantis experience)
- Who is the idea for?
- How should the idea be “contextualized”?
  - Identify customer characteristics
  - Identify stakeholders / power brokers
  - Document!
Having “Vision”

- “Our company's vision is to create synergistic opportunities by maximizing the vertical and horizontal integrations across the [InsertIndustryHere] industry”
Having “Vision”

- Understand what change looks like
- Understand the direction of the change
- Understand why it is critical
- Provides a focus and something to check the project against
Communicate Well

- Start with answering “Why?”
- Handling Questions Well
- Keep Vision at Center
Trust

- Cannot influence without this
- Build it every day
Identify Contributors

- Who has the most to gain through this change?
- Who asked productive questions when the vision was presented?
- Who would you like to drive this vision forward?
Success!

- Drive, Drive Drive!
- Change happens slower than it seems it should
- It will not follow the “plan”
  - “They say no plan survives first contact with implementation.” - Andy Weir, The Martian
Failure!

- Ask, did this fail because the idea / vision needs to change?
- Who / what is blocking you from moving forward?
  - Are there ways to solve these problems? If so, try again!
  - If they cannot be solved today, when can they be solved?
- Is the idea too large to accomplish all at once? Can this idea be iterated in part instead of as a whole?
“Design [, testing] and programming are human activities; forget that and all is lost.” -- Bjarne Stroustrup

[http://www.softwarequotes.com/ShowQuotes.aspx?ID=539&Name=Stroustrup,_Bjarne&Type=Q]
Questions?