Human Centric User Acceptance Testing

Rebecca Long
@amaya30
#PNSQC2020
Hello!

• Rebecca Long
• @amaya30
• Spokane, Washington
• QA Manager at Engie Impact
• President & Founder of non-profit Future Ada
• Co-Founder of SpoQuality User Group
Outline

User Acceptance Testing

The Human-Element

Best Practices
User Acceptance Testing
What is UAT?

- Special testing phase between QA sign-off & Production use
- UA Testers are representatives of your end-user base
- Tests from the end-user perspective
The Human-Element
Surprise!

Humans are involved in UAT

• Humans come with a lot of human specific things...
  • Emotions, lives, families, baggage, hopes & dreams
  • Different communication styles, backgrounds, educations, & experiences
• Remembering this and accounting for the human-element will help improve your UAT process
• Trust has a direct correlation to our ability to effectively communicate

• Low-trust environments → defensiveness

• High-trust environments → higher collaboration

*Levels of Communication*
7 Habits of Highly Effective People
Stephen Covey
Trust Accounts

• Need to invest in “Trust Accounts”
  • Deposits come from trust building behaviors
  • Withdrawals come from trust breaking behaviors
• Deposits & withdrawals look different to different people
• Withdrawals are generally larger than deposits
Trust Building Behaviors

- Open and honest with the reality of our software and processes
- Recognize gaps and actively work to improve them
- Own up to mistakes
- Stick to commitments
- Be transparent if things need to shift
- Extend trust to others
Inclusive Environment

- UAT spaces & communication should be positive & inclusive
- Everyone should feel welcome, included & that their feedback is valued
- Use inclusive language
- Avoid inappropriate language & humor
- Define terms that may not be known by everyone
- Blame & judgement free zone
Empathy

- Empathy is about being able to step into someone else’s shoes to see & feel what they are experiencing
Empathetic Leadership

- Engineering Team should take an empathetic leadership role in UAT
- Have empathy on the UA tester experience
  - Withhold judgement for “mistakes” or “user errors”
  - Checking your biases about users (and testers and anyone else) at the door
  - Do not get frustrated when problems are reported
- Take the experience seriously
- Ensure they can provide the experience back to the Engineering Team
Clear Expectations

- Define process, goals, roles, and responsibilities upfront
- Communicate these expectations to UAT group
- Not setting clear expectations leaves people to their implicit expectations
- When implicit expectations are not met...
  - Trust is broken
  - Communication breakdowns happen
  - Stress and frustrations are increased
Feedback Loops

• Human-centric feedback loops aid in fast flow of communication between UAT group members

• Designate a UAT Coordinator to facilitate & manage structured & clear communication channels
  • Kickoff / Wrap-Up Meetings
  • Daily touchpoints
  • Open group chat channels

• All feedback loops should be inclusive & safe for everyone to participate in

• Be open to adjusting your feedback loops as you go to accommodate the communication needs of your group
  • Continuously improving your feedback loops & communication processes builds trust
Documentation

• Save time & frustration with good upfront documentation
  • Purpose, goals, roles, responsibilities, scope, assumptions, constraints, environment details, risks, etc.

• Checklists help track vital setup & teardown procedures

• Provide test scripts to UA testers

• Provide templates for bug reports

• Don’t make it overly complicated or tedious
## Success Template

### Prep
- Understand Test Needs
- Leadership Commitment
- Environment Setup
- Documentation

### UAT
- Kickoff
- Testing Session
- Daily Touchpoints
- Close Out
Wrap-Up

• The human-element is complicated to account for & manage

• Well managed it can result in...
  • Less frustration & stress
  • More effective communication & collaboration

• Be adaptable since every team & individual are different
Like in Agile Development...

Working with humans is an **iterative** process where you want to **fail fast**, acknowledge & **learn** from your mistakes, & **continuously improve**
Thank you!

- Rebecca Long
- @amaya30
- rebecca.long1@engie.com
- rebecca@futureada.org