Common System and Software Testing Pitfalls: How to Prevent and Mitigate Them: Descriptions, Symptoms, Consequences, Causes, and Recommendations (SEI Series in Software Engineering)

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"Don's book is a very good addition both to the testing literature and to the literature on quality assurance and software engineering... . [It] is likely to become a standard for test training as well as a good reference for professional testers and developers. I would also recommend this book as background material for negotiating outsourced software contracts. I often work as an expert witness in litigation for software with very poor quality, and this book might well reduce or eliminate these lawsuits...."
–Capers Jones, VP and CTO, Namcook Analytics LLC

Software and system testers repeatedly fall victim to the same pitfalls. Think of them as "anti-patterns": mistakes that make testing far less effective and efficient than it ought to be. In **Common System and Software Testing Pitfalls,** Donald G. Firesmith catalogs 92 of these pitfalls. Drawing on his 35 years of software and system engineering experience, Firesmith shows testers and technical managers and other stakeholders how to avoid falling into these pitfalls, recognize when they have already fallen in, and escape while minimizing their negative consequences.

Firesmith writes for testing professionals and other stakeholders involved in large or medium-sized projects. His anti-patterns and solutions address both "pure software" applications and "software-reliant systems," encompassing heterogeneous subsystems, hardware, software, data, facilities, material, and personnel. For each pitfall, he identifies its applicability, characteristic symptoms, potential negative consequences and causes, and offers specific actionable recommendations for avoiding it or limiting its consequences.

This guide will help you

- Pinpoint testing processes that need improvement–before, during, and after the project
- Improve shared understanding and collaboration among all project participants
- Develop, review, and optimize future project testing programs
- Make your test documentation far more useful
- Identify testing risks and appropriate risk-mitigation strategies
- Categorize testing problems for metrics collection, analysis, and reporting
- Train new testers, QA specialists, and other project stakeholders

With 92 common testing pitfalls organized into 14 categories, this taxonomy of testing pitfalls should be relatively complete. However, in spite of its comprehensiveness, it is also quite likely that additional pitfalls and even missing categories of pitfalls will be identified over time as testers read this book and compare it to their personal experiences. As an enhancement to the print edition, the author has provided the following location on the web where readers can find major additions and modifications to this taxonomy of pitfalls: http://donald.firesmith.net/home/common-testing-pitfalls

Please send any recommended changes and additions to dgf (at) sei (dot) cmu (dot) edu, and the author will consider them for publication both on the website and in future editions of this book.

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