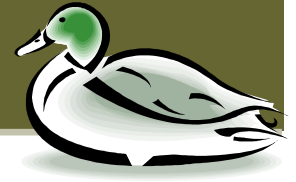


QAAC NEWSLETTER



Newsletter of the Quality Assurance Association of Connecticut, Inc.
www.qaac.org

Message from the President

As re-elected President of QAAC for 2009, I want to welcome you in the new year.

The new year begins with the economy as a concern for all, especially with the announcement of many job cuts and increased demands on the positions of those of us fortunate enough to be still employed.

The Quality Assurance Association of Connecticut (QAAC) continues to stress the importance of keeping your skills current by offering monthly development meetings for software quality practitioners. There is time before and after each meeting to network with your fellow attendees and typically the speaker. QAAC attempts to gear the meeting presentations toward the trends in the industry as obtained from member suggestions. New topics and speaker suggestions are always welcome.

QUEST 2009 is coming up in April. Chapter member discounts are offered, see the QAAC web site for details.

In closing I wish to thank all of you who continue to be members and to offer an invitation to those of you that are not members to join us at meetings for education and networking, see www.qaac.org

Bill Schreyer
President
2009 QAAC Board of Directors

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2009 Board of Directors

- President: Bill Schreyer
- Vice-president: Deepak Sharma
- Secretary: Kimberly Mahoney
- Treasurer: Nita Bhatt
- Membership: Steve Ryan
- Communications: Jaimini Bhatt
- Logistics: Maria Peplau
- Education: Randy Cole
- Charter: Dale Kasai
- Member At Large: Open

Each board member's name and e-mail is listed on the QAAC website, and is set up as a link so you can simply click and e-mail.

Many thanks go out to those who served on the board in 2008. Additional thanks go out to those serving in non-board roles:

- Website: Joyce Hardy
- Newsletter: Cheryl Klein

If you are interested in volunteering to assist with the website, newsletter or in any other way please contact us at info@qaac.org.

Defect Severity Standards

by David L. Brown, Ph.D., CSQA, CSQE

The first thing to get straight is the difference between severity and priority. Think of severity as how bad a defect is and think about priority as how soon you want to fix it. Most of the time, the two concepts are highly positively correlated because you usually want to fix the worst defects first, but you sometimes want to start work on a hard severity 2 defect before you work on an easy severity 1 defect. The main point is not to mix the two concepts or your severity categories will not be clear and will lead to disagreements.

A good standard for severity levels has been described by Capers Jones in many of his publications and presentations including [Software Quality: Analysis and Guidelines for Success](#).

There are four levels in the standard, which came out of his work for IBM many years back. Here are the four severities with a helpful explanation of each:

- Severity 1 is **Critical** (The application crashes or you wish it would because it is doing harm).
- Severity 2 is **Major** (Some major function will not work and you can't live without it).
- Severity 3 is **Minor** (Some minor function will not work. You can still use the software. You can do without that function at least for a while; and/or a workaround may exist).
- Severity 4 is **Cosmetic** (a very minor thing is wrong, such as a typo).

The biggest potential confusion is between severities 2 and 3. In case of any doubt about which severity a particular defect is, let the customers decide. They know best how badly a defect will impact them.

One other concept to be sure not to mix up with defect severities is the notion of enhancements. A suggestion about something else a system should do is not an instance of a defect of any severity level. Do not call such suggestions severity level 5 defects. Call them enhancements and deal with them through your regular requirements management process. An enhancement request is not a defect report.

On the other hand, if you discover that a requirement was missing or incorrect and that it absolutely needs to be included for this release, that's different from an enhancement. In this case, you should say that there is a requirements type defect for this release and not just a suggested improvement for a future release. Again, in case of any dispute, let the customers decide. If the customer must have it (requirement) for this release but the system is not providing it, then there is a defect. Once you have a defect related to an unmet requirement, then you can decide its severity level and decide what priority to give to fixing it.

Newsletter Submissions

I know, I know.... You are thinking I don't have time to write anything for the newsletter. However, I bet you are already doing it and just never thought to submit the information for the QAAC Newsletter.

Anyone working on maintaining their certification usually has to provide documentation: a synopsis of the book they have read, class attended or webinar you listened to. Why not take that write up you have for your certification and send it in for the newsletter? And how better to support your claimed hours as a QAAC member than by showing you contribute to the local chapter's newsletter?

To submit a book review, job posting, class summary or any other article for the newsletter please send your submission to Cheryl Klein @ Ch_K_Klein@comcast.net. The next newsletter will be May. All submissions should be sent in by April 30th.

Call For Speakers

Speaking at a QAAC meeting is a good way to earn CPU's toward your recertification. We have several openings this year for speakers to present topics relevant to the Common Bodies of Knowledge (CBOK) determined by the QAI Global Institute.

If you have, or need, an idea for a topic, please review the CBOK that interests you. To review the skill categories go to www.softwarecertifications.org/. The next step is easy. Contact Randy Cole (rcole1025@sbcglobal.net) Director of Education, and schedule a time to speak.

Even if you are not interested in speaking, but have recently seen a speaker who may be willing to present to QAAC, contact Randy with the speaker's name and contact information.

All topics should be educational, and cannot be given for the purpose of promoting or selling a product

Standardized Defect Statuses **By David L. Brown, PhD., CSQA, CSQE**

PAPER ABSTRACT

Many companies struggle with defect statuses, the stages that a defect goes through on its path to final resolution. Ambiguous and overlapping categories cause arguments, inefficiency, inaccuracy, and failures to handle defects properly. Based on measurement principles and best practices observed while consulting, the author has derived a solution to this problem. This paper provides a complete set of easy to understand, non-overlapping statuses and a full explanation of the reasoning behind them. It covers the valid reasons for withdrawing a defect and provides a state transition diagram of normal status changes. Don't keep reinventing this wheel. Adopt these standardized defect statuses and spend your time more productively fixing defects and finding more of them.

Want more information on this topic? See the full paper @ <http://www.qaac.org>. Under the Newsletter links you can read the whole paper.

QAAC is a tax-exempt, non-profit educational organization, independent but affiliated with the QAI Global Institute as a local chapter of its Federation of Associations.

QAAC is exempt from federal (and state) income taxes (and state corporate taxes) under section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code as an organization described in section 501(c)(3). We handle money only to pay our expenses. We do not pay our officers or board members. We have no employees. We collect dues from our members to cover our operating expenses. We are permitted to accept donations to further our goals, and they are tax deductible.