

Dashboards Prompt Questions

How do you provoke the right questions?

*Offer a compact summary
that directs attention to risk.*

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Reporting Considerations

- **Reporter safety:** What will they think if I made no progress?
- **Client:** Who am I reporting to and how do I relate to them?
- **Rules:** What rules and traditions are there for reporting here?
- **Significance of report:** How will my report influence events?
- **Subject of report:** On what am I reporting?
- **Other agents reporting:** How do other reports affect mine?
- **Medium:** How will my report be seen, heard, and touched?
- **Precision and confidence levels:** What distinctions make a difference?

Take responsibility for the communication.

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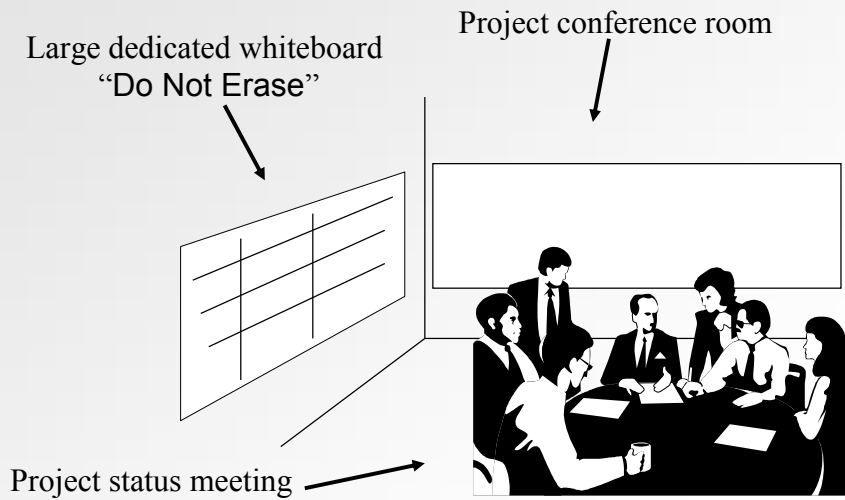
What Could We Report?

- **Tasks:** Things we are doing. Example: “We are trying to reinstall the server so we can do the smoke tests. We have 28 fix verifications to get through.”
- **Product Coverage:** What we have examined. Example: “We have tested printing, performance, and compatibility.”
- **Product Risk:** Problems or potential for problems in the product. Example: “We have found 53 bugs.”
- **Agreement:** What we specifically contracted to do. Example: “We have implemented 90% of the tests on our test plan. As we agreed, we have started testing for printer compatibility.”

What Could We Report?

- **Project:** Schedule, documents, resources, people, or anything else that makes it possible for us to test. Example: “Testing is on schedule. But Jaeline goes on vacation next week.”
- **Mission:** The ultimate goal, which may be to ship a product that meets quality criteria, satisfy customers, or some other goal that can be a guiding principle for the testing. Example: “We don’t yet know enough about feature X of the product.”
- **Client Satisfaction:** What our clients think of our work. Example: “The project manager is happy with our work.”

The Dashboard Concept



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The Low-Tech Testing Dashboard

Testing Dashboard				Updated 21/2 Build 38	
Area	Effort	C	Q	Comments	
File/edit	High	1	😊		
View	Low	1+	😐	1345, 1363, 1401	
Insert	Low	2	😊		
Format	Low	2+	😐	automation broken	
Tools	Blocked	1	😞	crashes bug 1407, 1423	
Slideshow	Low	2	😞	animation memory leak	
Online help	Blocked	0		new files not delivered	
Clip art	Pause	1	😐	need help to test	
Connectors	None	1	😐	need help to test	
Install	Start 20/3	0			
Compatibility	Start 13/3	0		compatibility lab time scheduled	
General GUI	Low	3	😊		

Product Area

Area
file/edit
view
insert
format
tools
slideshow
online help
clipart
converters
install
compatibility
general GUI

- 15-30 areas (keep it simple)
- Avoid sub-areas: they're confusing.
- Areas should have roughly equal value.
- Areas together should be inclusive of everything reasonably testable.
- "Product areas" can include tasks or risks- but put them at the end.
- Minimize overlap between areas.
- Areas must "make sense" to your clients, or they won't use the board.

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Test Effort




How much testing focus is each area getting right now?

None	Not testing; not planning to test.
Start	No testing yet, but expecting to start soon.
Low	Regression or spot testing only; maintaining coverage.
High	Focused testing effort; increasing coverage.
Pause	Temporarily ceased testing, though area is testable.
Blocked	Can't effectively test, due to blocking problem.
Ship	Going through final tests and wrap-up procedure.

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Test Coverage	
<i>How much information do we have about each area so far?</i>	
0	We don't have good information about this area.
1	Sanity Check: major functions & simple data.
1+	More than sanity, but many functions not tested.
2	Common & Critical: all functions touched; common & critical tests executed.
2+	Some data, state, or error coverage beyond level 2.
3	Complex Cases: strong data, state, error, or stress testing.

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Quality Assessment	
<i>Does management see threats to the ship date?</i>	
	“We know of no problems in this area that threaten to stop ship or interrupt testing, nor do we have any definite suspicions about any.”
	“We know of problems that are possible showstoppers, or we suspect that there could be important problems not yet discovered.”
	“We know of problems in this area that definitely stop ship or interrupt testing.”

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Comments

Use the comment field to explain anything colored red, or any non-green quality indicator.

- Problem ID numbers.
- Reasons for pausing, or delayed start.
- Nature of blocking problems.
- Why area is unstaffed.

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Using the Dashboard

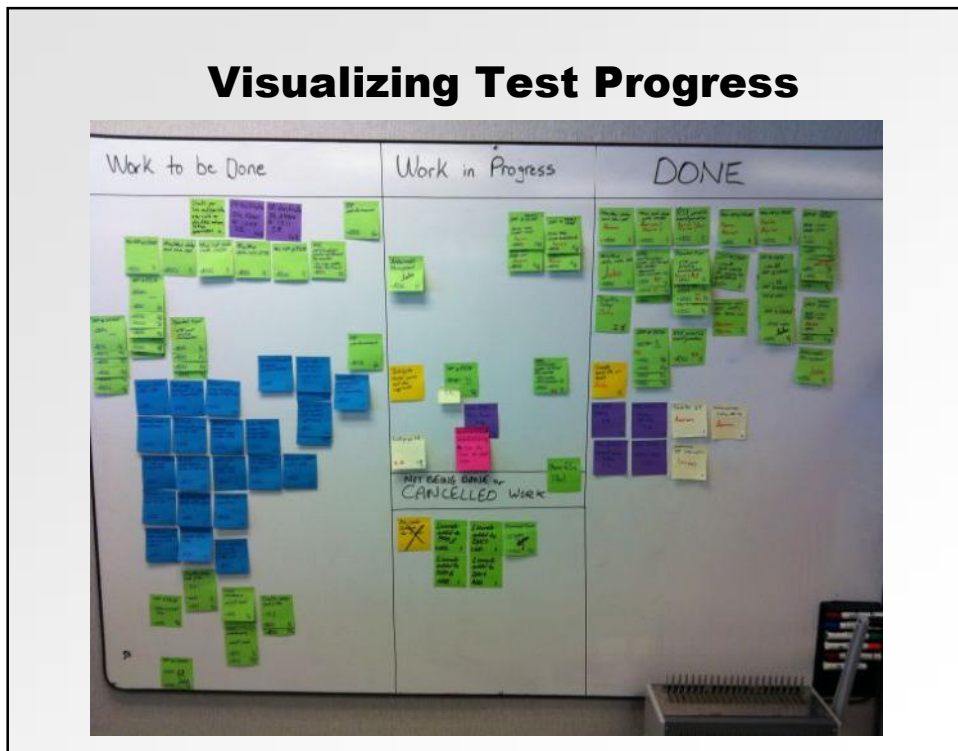
- **Updates:** 2-5/week, or at each build, or prior to each project meeting.
- **Progress:** Set expectation about the duration of the “Testing Clock” and how new builds reset it.
- **Justification:** Be ready to justify the contents of any cell in the dashboard. The authority of the board depends upon meaningful, actionable content.
- **Going High Tech:** Sure, you can put this on the web, but will anyone actually look at it? A big visible chart gets attention without being asked.

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Visualizing Test Progress



Visualizing Test Progress



Visualizing Test Progress

