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P R E S E N T A T I O N

T15

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Choosing and Managing the IDEAL TEST TEAM

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Choosing and Managing the Ideal Test Team

Prepared and presented

by

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Introduction

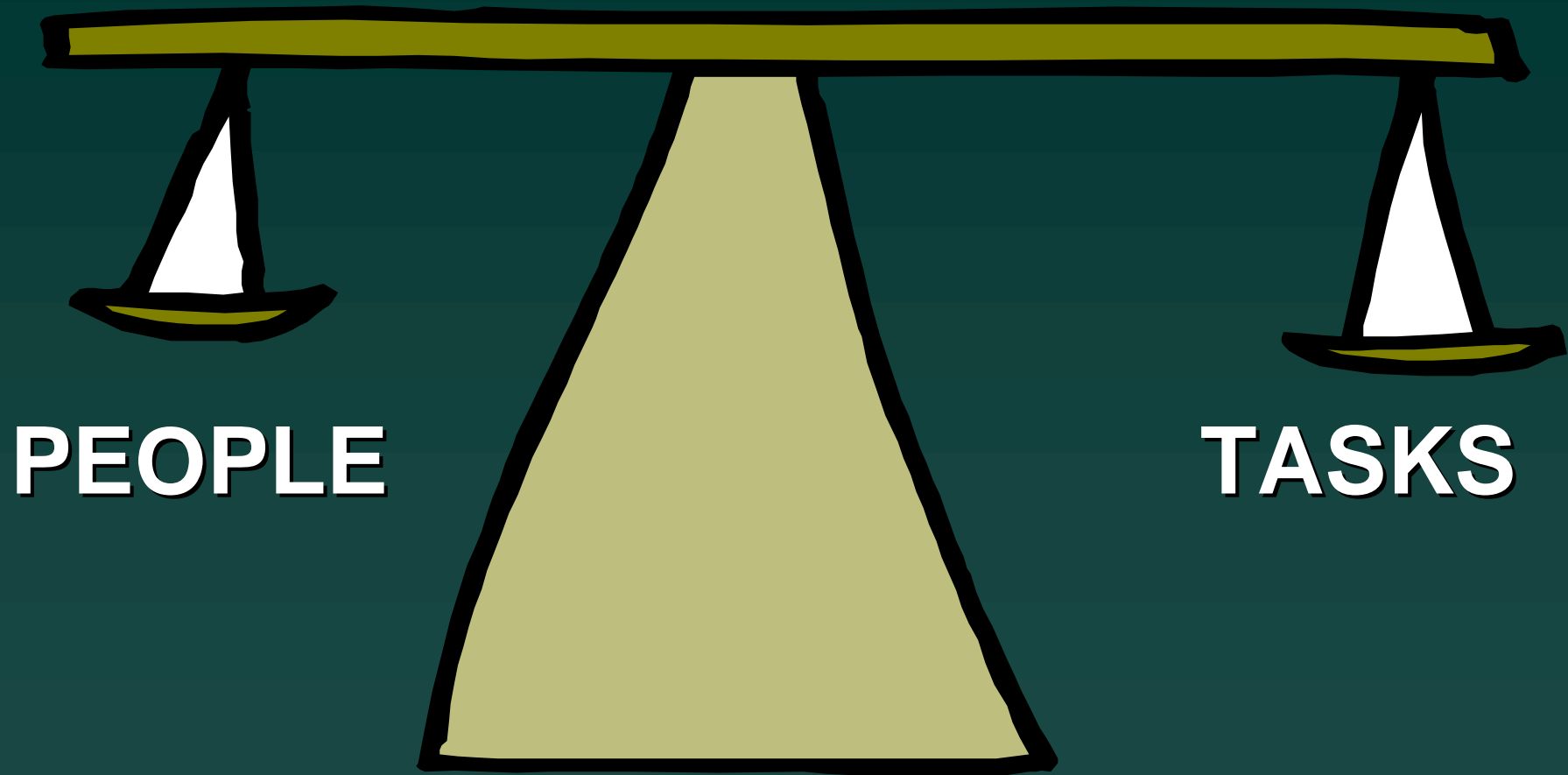
Profile

- ITG/PA/ITU Manager
- 18 years in DP/IT
- 11 years in Testing/Management

The Companies

- Royal Life (3 years); Life Assurance
- Peterborough Software (8 years); HR systems
- Grove Consultants (April 1999)

The 'right' balance



Choosing & Managing the Ideal Test Team



Overview

What constitutes the '*Ideal Test Team*'?

- Model Questionnaire
- Four types of tester - pro's & con's
- Recruiting the right team

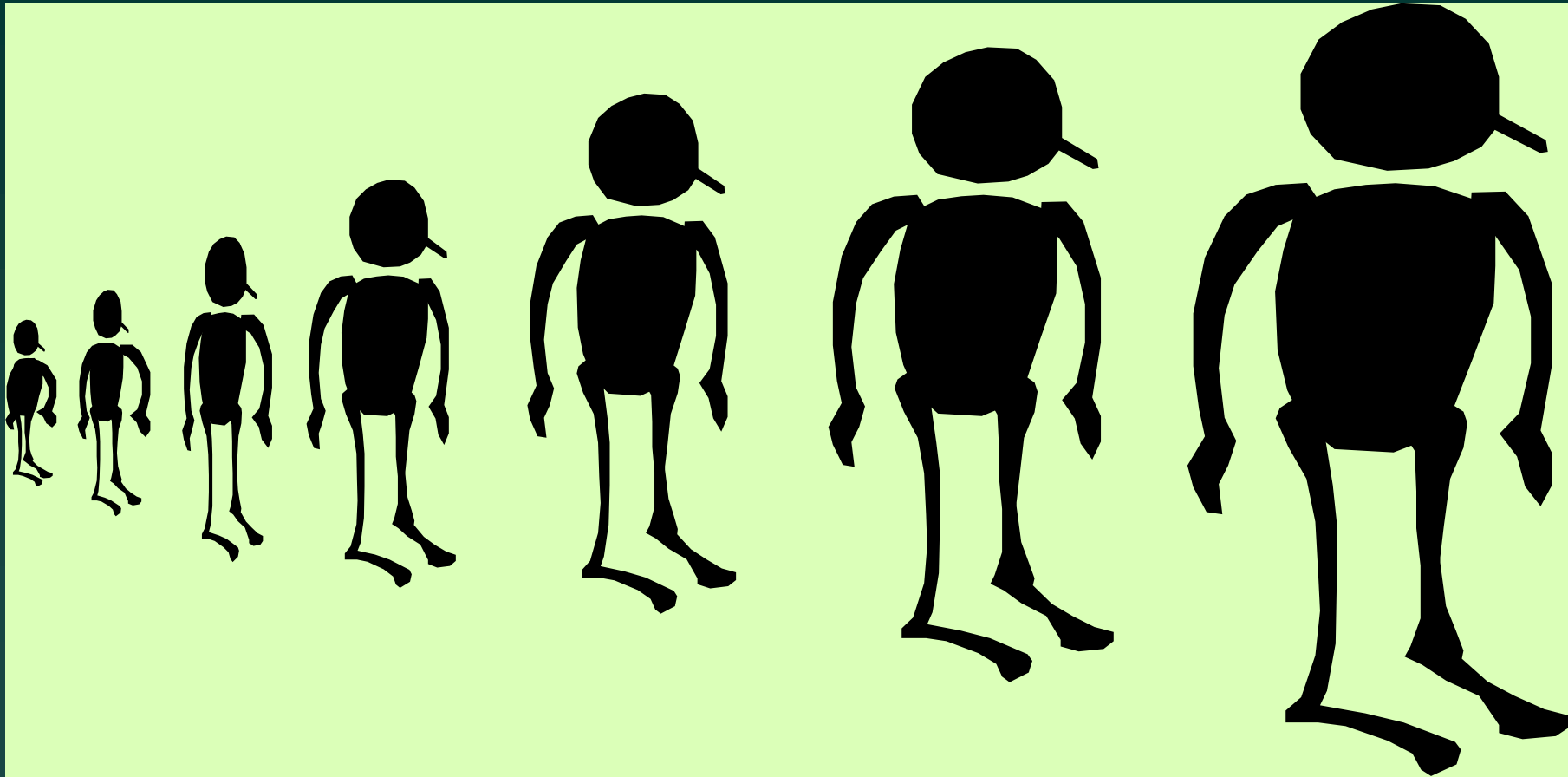
How to manage the '*Ideal Test Team*'

- Short and long term goals
- Good scheduling
- Right balance between 'hands on' and 'hands off'

How to encourage the '*Ideal Test Team*'

- Career and salary acknowledged
- Tools to help and not hinder
- Play to their strengths

What constitutes the 'Ideal Test Team'?



The questionnaire

Things to note

- **No right or wrong answer**
- **Try not to think too much**
- **Helps us assess our strengths**
- **Can be used with other management questionnaires (Belbin, 16PF, Briggs etc)**
- **Plot values on the graph**

The Model

**The
Pragmatist**

**The
Pioneer**

**The
Analyst**

**The
Facilitator**

Key words for the *'Pragmatic'* Style Tester

Likes

- **Strategic/Goals**
- **Positive**
- **Results/Brief**
- **Practicality**
- **Efficiency**
- **Tasks**

Dislikes

- **Indecision**
- **Vagueness**
- **Time-Wasting**
- **Unproductive**

The '*Pragmatic*' style tester will...

- Be good for setting and monitoring short/long term goals for the team
- Be good at documenting factual 'Test Reports'
- Remain positive through pressure
- Be keen to adopt 'Most Important Tests' first principle
- Be a strong driving force - ensure a task is done
- Want to implement efficiency into the team
- Be self-motivated and task oriented

Key words for the *'Pioneer'* Style Tester

Likes

- **New/Ideas**
- **Change**
- **Openness**
- **Results/efficiency**
- **Involving others**
- **Risks**

Dislikes

- **Standards**
- **Detail**
- **'Norm'**
- **Paper-Work**

The '*Pioneer*' style tester will...

- Be good at 'Ad-Hoc' testing/ bug hunting/error-guessing
- Be good at challenging and improving things to make more efficient and effective
- Enjoy "GUI" type testing/lateral tester
- Have good ideas
- Be good at brainstorming Test Conditions
- Identify and take necessary risks when required
- Have creative test ideas - how to find more faults

Key words for the *'Analysing'* Style Tester

Likes

- Accuracy
- Attention to detail
- Proof
- Standards
- Reliable
- All alternatives

Dislikes

- New/Change
- Untested/Risks
- Brief
- Speed

The '*Analysing*' style tester will...

- Be good at defining and documenting test cases
- Be good at producing Test Standards and Procedures
- Analyse problems and finding root cause
- Produce work which is accurate and complete
- Enjoy logical tests scenarios (e.g. Pensions systems)
- Provide proof when faults are found
- Document thorough test reports

Key words for the *'Facilitating'* Style Tester

Likes

- **Networking**
- **Positive**
- **Team Oriented**
- **Consensus/Sharing**
- **Building bridges**
- **Status Quo**

Dislikes

- **Pressure/Deadlines**
- **Confrontation**
- **Isolation**
- **Dictated**

The '*Facilitating*' style tester will...

- Will be good in a RAD environment or a 'buddy' test team
- Often ask opinion before raising issues
- Be good at documentation
- Often see the 'other side'
- Be good at defusing 'us' v 'them' syndrome
- Be popular
- Make things happen - eventually!

Tester style - patterns

- Usually operate within a certain boundary
- What if you are on the line/centre
 - flexible between styles
 - can be difficult to manage
- Opposites repel
 - may be the reason for team tension!
- Analysts & Pragmatists tend towards 'Tasks'
- Facilitators & Pioneers tend towards 'People'

The Ideal Test Team...



A MIXTURE IS THE BEST

BUT IT DEPENDS...

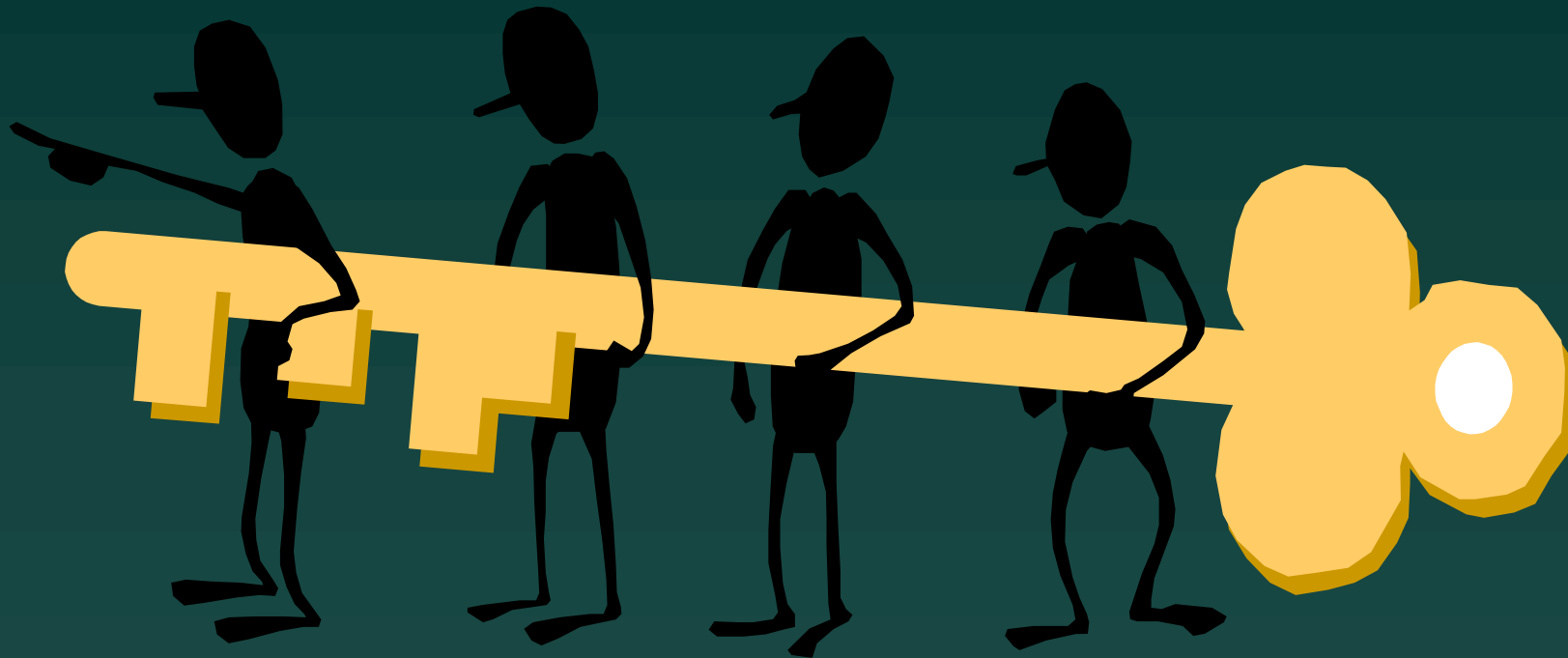
How can we recruit the right testers?



Recruiting the right people

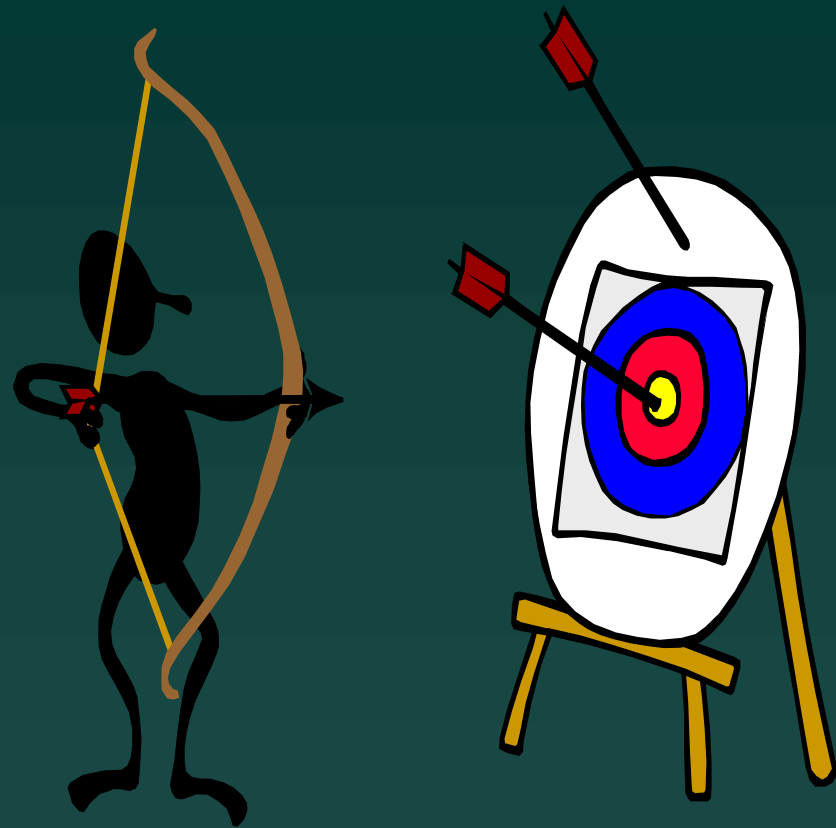
- Past Experience
- ISEB Foundation Certificate
- Skills relevant to the job
- References - telephone & written
- Relevant work to review(test specs, plans, reports, projects etc)
- Talk to the rest of the team (their impression is important)
- Belbin/Briggs/Styles test
- Aptitude test/Questionnaire

How to manage the 'Ideal Test Team'



Setting long and short term goals

- Aim at nothing...
- Involve the team = ownership
- 1 year and 5 year plan
- Measure and monitor goals
- Brought into the 'appraisal system'



Establish good scheduling techniques

- Don't impose - involve!
- Estimates are just that
- Raise concerns early in the lifecycle
- Effective monitoring and control
- Commitment to the estimate is needed
- Assess risks
- Beware of optimism

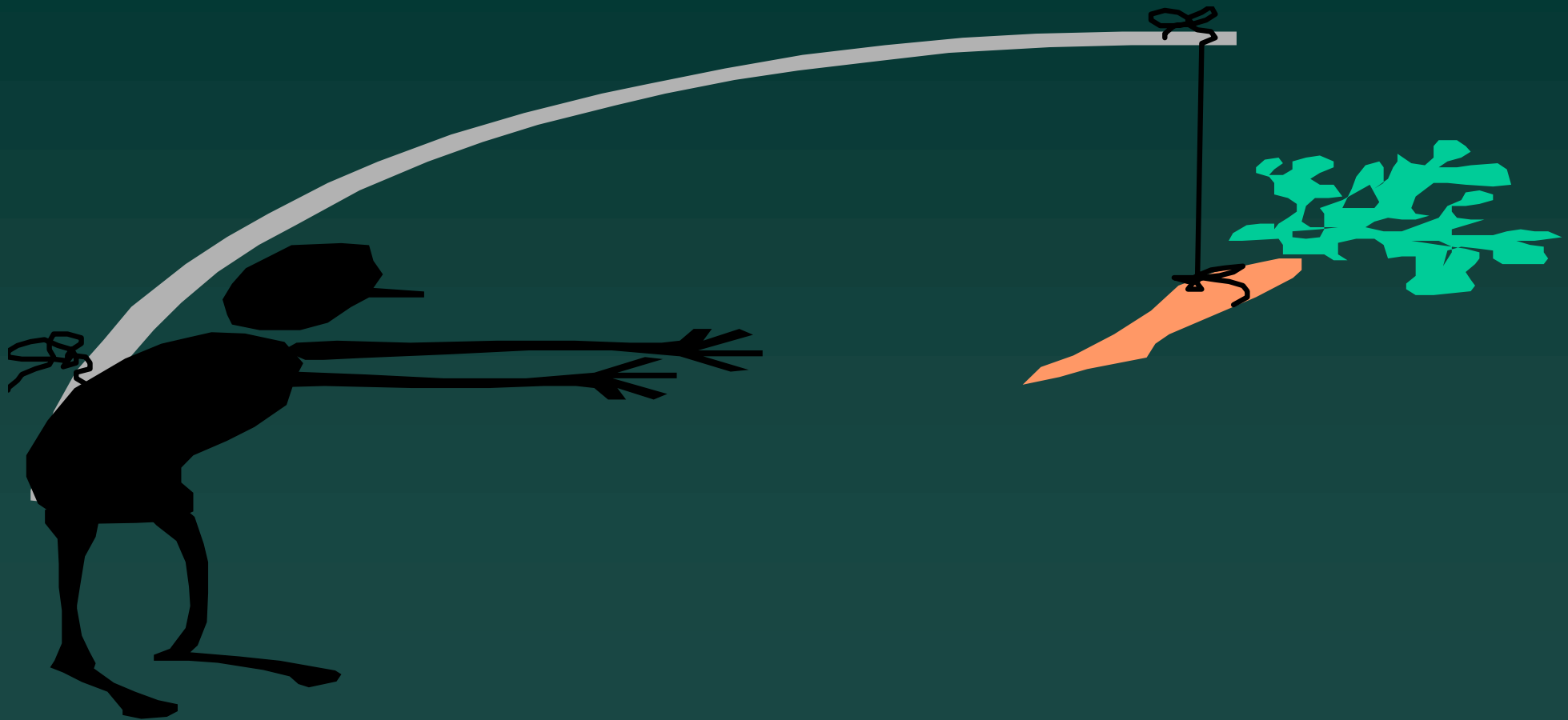


Maintain right balance between hands on and hands off

- Part of the team
- Work with them - identify key issues
- Recognise their strengths and your weaknesses
- Trust their judgement
- Enthusiasm with the work



How to encourage the 'Ideal Test Team'



Career and Salary Acknowledged

- **Recognition that not everyone can test!**
- **Definite Career in Software Testing**
 - Qualification
 - Career progression
- **Salaries must represent their skill!!**

Tools to help not hinder

- Recognition that humans are 'creative' beings
- Assessment and implementation of appropriate test tools at appropriate times
- Tools should be available to assist tester in the work they are good at.



Remember that tools
do not make good testers

Play to their strengths

- Assign work to compliment their testing 'style'
- Recognition that there is no 'right' or 'wrong' just different.
- Variety of work
- Words of encouragement are needed!!
 - “pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones” Proverb 16:24

Summary: Key Points

Get the right balance between Task and People issues

Testers are different - 4 types

Recruit the right people

Motivate the team with effective management and encouragement

Lloyd Roden

Lloyd has been involved in the software industry since 1980, studying Computer Science at Leicester University. He joined Peal Assurance as a trainee programmer in 1983 and worked there for five years, before becoming a senior independent test analyst for Royal Life. Three years later he joined Peterborough Software where he became project manager for the product assurance department. He also set up and managed the independent test unit for over 2 years. He joined Grove Consultants in April 1999.

Lloyd was chairman of the QARun User Group for three years, and is a lively and enthusiastic speaker at conferences and seminars. At Grove Consultants, he provides consultancy and training in all aspects of testing, specialising in test management, people issues and test automation.