

# Hiring SQA People for an Agile Team

## Hiring SQA People for an Agile Team

Johanna Rothman  
New: Hiring Geeks That Fit  
[@johannarothman](mailto:@johannarothman)  
[www.jrothman.com](http://www.jrothman.com)  
[jr@jrothman.com](mailto:jr@jrothman.com)  
781-641-4046



What do You Normally Do When You Hire?

## Hiring SQA People for an Agile Team

### You Review a Resume

- \* You do a phone screen
- \* You ask behavior-description questions
- \* How do you detect “agile” behavior?
- \* It’s not always easy...



3

© 2013 Johanna Rothman

### Who Here Has an Agile Team?

- \* Each agile team is unique and has some similarities:
  - \* Collaboration
  - \* Helpful
  - \* Cross-functional
  - \* High initiative
  - \* High respect
  - \* Roles tend to blur

4

© 2013 Johanna Rothman

# Hiring SQA People for an Agile Team

## Typical Testers

- \* Skeptical
- \* Enjoy discovering problems
- \* Curious
- \* Observant
- \* Take disparate events and connect them to create better tests
- \* Write great defect reports
- \* Select which defects to champion and then champion them

5

© 2013 Johanna Rothman

## Technical Skills

- Functional knowledge:
  - Testing and development techniques
- Product domain expertise:
  - Problem-space expertise
  - Solution space expertise
- Technology:
  - How well the candidate uses the tools
- Industry expertise:
  - What the customers expect, how well the candidate understands the problems solved by the system

6

© 2013 Johanna Rothman

# *Hiring SQA People for an Agile Team*

## *Behaviors, Not Practices*

7

© 2013 Johanna Rothman

## *Six “Agile” Behaviors*

- \* People who can collaborate
- \* People who can ask for help
- \* People who are willing to take small steps and get feedback
- \* People who are will to do something that is good enough for now
- \* Adaptable people
- \* People willing to work outside their expertise

8

© 2013 Johanna Rothman

## Hiring SQA People for an Agile Team

### *It's All About Cultural Fit*

- \* Culture is composed of:
  - \* What people can discuss
  - \* How people treat each other
  - \* What the organization rewards



9

© 2013 Johanna Rothman

### *Types of Questions*

- \* Closed questions establish the facts
- \* Behavior-description questions: "Tell me about a time when..."
- \* Auditions
- \* Hypothetical questions: "What would you do if..."
- \* Meta-questions: "What else should I ask you?"

10

© 2013 Johanna Rothman

## *Hiring SQA People for an Agile Team*

### *Questions That Don't Discover Anything*

---

- \* Irrelevant questions
  - \* Puzzles, riddles
  - \* Questions not about work
  - \* "Why do you want to work here?"
  - \* Strengths, weaknesses
- \* See my article in the April pragprog magazine

11

© 2013 Johanna Rothman

### *Collaboration*

---

- \* "Think back to a recent project. Give me an example of a time you had to work with other people to make sure that you could finish something. What happened?"

12

© 2013 Johanna Rothman

## *Hiring SQA People for an Agile Team*

### *Ask for Help*

---

- \* "Think back to your most recent project. Tell me about a time you did not understand something. What did you do?"
- \* "Tell me about a recent time you did not think you could finish when you needed to. What were the circumstances? What did you do?"

13

© 2013 Johanna Rothman

### *Small Steps and Ask for Feedback*

---

- \* "Tell me how you like to work. Think back to the last feature you worked on. When did you ask for feedback?" ... "Why?"
- \* For people new to/inexperienced with agile:
  - \* "When you work on your projects outside of work, how do you work? Give me an example."

14

© 2013 Johanna Rothman

## *Hiring SQA People for an Agile Team*

### *Do Something Good Enough For Now*

---

- \* "Tell me about a recent time you did not know everything at the beginning of the project. What did you do?"

15

© 2013 Johanna Rothman

### *Adaptable*

---

- \* "Tell me about a time when you did not have the conditions you would've liked for your project. What did you do?"

16

© 2013 Johanna Rothman



## *Hiring SQA People for an Agile Team*

### *Willing to Work Outside Their Expertise*

---

- \* "Tell me about a time you took on work to help the team. What was that like?"
- \* "We work on things we may not be comfortable with in order to finish a feature for an iteration. Have you ever been in that position?"
- \* "Tell me about a time you did something you thought was not in your job description. What did you do?"

17

© 2013 Johanna Rothman

### *What Questions Do You Have?*

18

© 2013 Johanna Rothman

# Hiring SQA People for an Agile Team

## Let's Stay in Touch...

- \* *Hiring Geeks That Fit* on [leanpub.com](http://leanpub.com), [Pragprog.com](http://Pragprog.com), Amazon
- \* Much more on [www.jrothman.com/blog/http](http://www.jrothman.com/blog/http)
- \* Pragmatic Manager:
  - \* [www.jrothman.com/pragmaticmanager](http://www.jrothman.com/pragmaticmanager)
  - \* Please link with me on LinkedIn
- \* *Manage Your Job Search* on [leanpub](http://leanpub.com)

