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## Testing & People



The long way to become a tester.

My experience.

*By Tamás Stöckert*

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I have now worked as a tester for more than five years. My becoming a tester, however, was quite an unusual story: Having worked in Germany and Austria for several years, I decided to move back to Hungary, and so I sent my CV to a headhunter in Budapest.

Within a few days I got a call informing me that people with good communication skills are required by „Lufthansa”.

My first thought was: ”Hmmm....maybe something to do with passengers?” During the interview it turned out that it was Lufthansa Systems, the IT subsidiary of Lufthansa, that was offering the job.

My first assignment was project coordination in the field of customer management.

After the project was successfully completed, I was offered a position in the newly founded test team of Lufthansa Systems Hungária on the basis of my background, ...and that is how it all began. Structured, professional testing was something I had already learnt. Nevertheless, I found the area new and exciting, especially since Lufthansa Systems Hungaria was a forerunner in this field. In addition to this, I had the feeling that testing as a whole was gaining significance by the day... Initially, there were only three of us in the core team: Our leader with already significant software testing experience gained in various multinational companies, and the two of us as junior testers with IT know-how, good communication skills and a customer relationship background. A few days later I was already sitting by a

customer: my first test assignment had started.

I have to admit that as a junior it was not easy. Questions came to my mind that made me uncertain: Even though my role and my tasks were clear, what is my added value to the project?

The idea of destroying the tiresome work of others, to be ”picky” in a good sense, was not really appealing to me at all.

After several months spent in various small projects, I slowly but surely started to realise the high-level objectives of my activity: Find the bugs before the customer finds them, try to find them as early as possible, develop a kind of passion towards quality by applying a structured approach, and last but not least, have fun!

I will never forget the pride I felt when detecting the first critical error at an early stage of a functional testing phase....Yessss! That is what is called success! From that point on, I wanted to learn as much as possible about this area and spread the culture of early failure detection within the company.

Our testing-specific training was pre-planned and professional. Many, many training courses and books (testing, development methodologies, UML etc.) followed coupled with new, bigger and ever more interesting multinational projects.

Only a year after my career start, I got my first international certification (ISEB

Foundation Level) and with it came the recognition in the company as well...

Slowly I found myself in the position of being a consultant in different development projects, explaining to development leads and project managers the general testing approach and characteristics that should be considered.

In the meantime, our team has grown and the necessity of coordinating the different testing activities turned out to be inevitable. Courses in project management, change management as well as soft skills gave me directions to manage my first assignments in this area.

As a result of a reorganisation in my business unit in 2006, a new test team was formed and I was appointed as the leader of this team. The expectations were clear: Testing competence must be built up by applying a unified training scheme, the team of then 11 colleagues must grow, the culture of testing must be spread within the company.

At this stage, I would like to take the opportunity and briefly present my company: Lufthansa Systems is one of the leading full-service IT providers in the aviation business. Our core business competence is aviation yet LSY has customers from a large variety of other businesses as well. Steady growths and fierce competition on the airline market forces airlines to optimise their business processes and continuously reduce their costs. One means of cost reduction is using fast and reliable IT solutions. Needless to emphasise the vital role of quality.

With the company's headquarters and the majority of the approx. 3500 employees being in Germany and the test team based in Budapest, the vision of an independent test service is not far fetched but rather reality.

A year and a half after my appointment, the results of our hard work became more and more obvious: New, dedicated and highly motivated IT specialists were employed and trained specifically (ISEB Practitioner / ISTQB Advanced Level training courses), success in various projects, the majority of the team members speak a common testing language. In fact, all team members are ISTQB certified. Right now the team consists of 22 testing professionals

As for me, I passed both the ISEB Practitioner and the ISTQB Advanced Level exams, and as a result of this my testing horizon has widened.

Parallel to the above-mentioned developments in my company, the Hungarian testing community as such has also started to discover itself. Initiatives for establishing the Hungarian Testing Board, as a member organisation of ISTQB, started early last year and by October 2007 all the preconditions of forming the board were fulfilled.

The HTB was founded on 6th October 2007 and on 13th October 2007 its application for ISTQB membership was accepted!



### Biography

Tamás Stöckert has been working in different software testing positions for more than five years now. As one of the pioneers in testing by Lufthansa Systems Hungaria he had the possibility to build up significant testing specific know how both from the professional and from the management point of view.

Tamas holds a BSc in economics and an ISTQB foundation as well as ISEB Practitioner / ISTQB full advanced level certificates.

While working for Lufthansa he accomplished a year long management development program organised by the Lufthansa School of Business.

He is fluent in German and English (University of Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English) and speaks French as well.

From September 2006 on Tamás leads an ever growing dedicated test team by Lufthansa Systems Hungaria currently counting 22 young yet already experienced and motivated specialists. With his team he is providing complete test service as well as trainings and consultancy mainly for multi-national software development projects.

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