

PEER REVIEWS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The concept behind peer reviews is that the author/developer of a product (i.e., specification, design, unit of code, test procedures) gets help from a colleague who is familiar with the product. Together, they discuss in detail a specific portion of the overall product. The author presents the product element to the colleague, item by item, who in turn raises questions and suggestions. Application of the concept is simple and inexpensive. One-on-one reviews are ad hoc. They are accomplished with only enough planning necessary to solicit participation from the colleague and prepare the product element to a state where it can be reviewed. Such reviews should always be limited to two hours. One-on-one reviews usually examine a portion of a product rather than the entire document, plan, specification, or design under review. Because one-on-one reviews impose only small blocks of time, this technique is used frequently (typically many times in a given week) among the set of people working that project. Notes are kept by the author of the product element. No "list of issues" or action items result from one-on-one reviews. Management personnel and Software Quality Assurance track these reviews and ensure they are occurring through project status reviews.

2.0 RULES OF CONDUCT

In any review/walkthrough, the general rules of conduct to be followed are:

- Respect each person
- Share responsibility
- Criticize items, not people
- Keep an open mind
- Question and participate
- Arrive on time
- Keep interruptions to a minimum

In addition, the following guidelines apply to a peer review meeting:

- Come to the meeting prepared
- Focus on the product under review
- Be concise in identifying defects
- Concentrate on the more significant issues