# EuroSTAR

*Created:*         *22 July 2016, 14:44*

*Modified:*       *1 November 2016, 07:16*

*Status:*          *No Status*

*Label:*           *No Label*

—> this is a workshop about emotions.

**Emotional state follows the body**

*Created:*         *1 July 2016, 11:56*

*Modified:*       *31 October 2016, 23:52*

*Status:*         *Exercise tried*

*Label:*          *No Label*

*Keywords:*      *physical, individual, Triggers emotions, game, whole room, NVM*

**Idea:** influence your emotions with physical actions

**Activity:**

Talk group through these, collectively. Ask people to gauge their emotional reaction. Ask people to look at each other.

"Allow your emotion to follow your motion – no need to resist."

"It's "fake" as in not spontaneous, but your hormonal response is real."

Physical activities to include:

\*      stand – to activate body

\*      actively use muscles – stretch and move arms, shift weight over legs, become aware of core

\*      breathe – expand the sides? focus on outbreath? visualise?

\*      alexander – consider above, behind

\*      arms apart, elbows bent, palms offered, wrists up – feel how it changes as you open your chin from your chest. Now look someone in the eyes.

\*      look surprised – widen the eyes, Ooo mouth, flare nostrils

\*      hand on chin, eyes top left – feel yourself step away from the now, into memory and analysis

\*      cross arms, lower head

\*      smile – full instructions, focus on eyes, top lip,

\*      power pose? Refs Rob Lambert, Tory govt, superheroes

?      Mask – bared teeth, narrowed eyes, try a civilised conversation

?      finger / hand over mouth

Explore this for a moment with your group. Move your body, listen to your

emotions… think about doing something, and observe your body's reactions.

- what can you do with your body to prepare you for testing?

- what does your body do when you think about testing something?

- what does your physical environment push you towards when you test?

**Testing relevance:** Emphasise role of emotions in alertness

**Duration:**

**Traps:**

**Variations:**

Possibly: Build your own "get happy" exercise – share with group. Share group's highlights with crowds.


**Source and references:**

**Notes:**

actions one can take to change one's emotions

- particularly positive emotions

- increased energy

- openness to ideas

Does Thiagi have a jolt?

**Tried:** New Voice Media 27/10/2016

**Differences in working style between engaged and bored**

*Created:*      *23 October 2016, 16:58*

*Modified:*     *28 October 2016, 01:52*

*Status:*       *No Status*

*Label:*        *No Label*

*Keywords:*     *small groups, reflection and memory, NVM*

**Idea:** real stories from engaged work and bored work

**Activity:**

2 mins Remember testing something that you found interesting.

Recall why you found it interesting – was it something you already found interesting? was it new? was it important? was the need urgent? was the tech something you'd always wanted to work with?

How did your testing reflect your engagement?

What are you still proud of? What mistakes did you make – and how idd you recognise and (perhaps) fix them?

2 mins Remember testing something that you found dull.

Recall why you found it dull – had you done it before? was it a dead-end? was testing pointless, or the environment creaky? was it repetitive?

How did your testing reflect your engagement?

What are you still proud of? What mistakes did you make – and how idd you recognise and (perhaps) fix them?

5 mins In small groups, talk about styles of testing that are characteristic of engaged testing work and bored testing work.

5 mins Exchange: verbally if small-enough groups. Large groups might write these up on a flipchart during, hang on the wall, then walk around, looking at other group's lists.

Notes:

People find novelty / complexity / engagement / sorting out a problem

Need to build interest in product / build empathy with users

Tried:

## How To Have Fun

| | |
|---|---|
| *Created:* | *27 September 2016, 15:55* |
| *Modified:* | *24 October 2016, 00:11* |
| *Status:* | *Exercise tried* |
| *Label:* | *No Label* |
| *Keywords:* | *big group, how do I stay interested, groupwork* |

**Idea:** Aggregate and stimulate other ideas, memories

**Activity:**

10-30 people stand in a circle (as open space)

"I think that we can find testing boring, but that interested testers are more engaged. How have you made testing fun? How might you?"

**Testing relevance:** Direct

**Duration:** 20 mins

**Keywords:**

**Traps:**

**Variations:**

If group is large, split and make flipchart of ideas to share at end. Shorten time to allow flipcharts to be examined by other group

**Tried at:**

Tried successfully at FiSTB

list included

- do something different
    - area
    - data
    - team
- be silly with the software
- stimulate brain w/ puzzles
- pair
- learn 1 new thing every week
- teach

- prioritise yourself
- do immediate stuff
- find ways to break it
- non-software (was this "go to work with other people on their software"?)
- Go see other people
    - funny people
    - play together
- Identify what's boring and what's fun, and mix them up. reward with fun.
- make short tasks
- time-boxing and reward
- testing can be lumpy – really busy, then nothing to do; waiting. Different kind of bored from doing same thing over and over again.
- Using personas? Dress up as your persona!
- Sauna helps
- Beer and bugs
- Change location of work
- Move repeatedly dull meetings to a new space
- Scare / create anticipation
- Bring snacks
- Share knowledge within peers – skype to other groups
- What's not fun? Do the opposite!
- Tell the meeting that it's borong
- Visualise the mood
- Powerpoint karaoke
- Do something more complex
- Do something simpler
- Same questions, different person
- Dig deep – get uninterrupted time to get somethhing really done.
- Avoid code switching
- Get more feedback
- Imaginary feedback – imaginary applause
- Soundtrack music
- Share discoveries – celebrate!

**Source and references:**

**Notes:**

**FInding a new angle**

| | |
|---|---|
| *Created:* | *3 February 2016, 14:25* |
| *Modified:* | *27 October 2016, 01:31* |
| *Status:* | *Exercise not ready* |
| *Label:* | *No Label* |
| *Keywords:* | *large groups, inventive, what can I change?* |

**Idea:** Build a broad set of things one can change

**Activity:**

Make circles of ~12-15 people.

Each circle to spend 7 minutes thinking of things they could change, ways they could change. At the end of the 7 minutes, the group should take two pieces of paper and write one thing on each from their list.

All the bits of paper go onto the floor to attract interest

Groups form around them, spend 7 minutes thinking about how the change might be made.

Papers go up on a wall, everyone looks.


**Notes**

What can you change about your task?

Today I shall focus on

X is more important than Y

Area of focus – we're looking at X today

Emphasis – we value X today

    We value collaboration today

    We value learning today

    We value surprises today

    We build something to day that we can use tomorrow / next year / when stuff explodes

    We value efficiency today – we want to speed stuff up

> We value effectiveness today – we want to do more with less
>
> We invent something today
>
> We smooth our path today

Time – we're spending (much less | much more) on X today

Change level – automate, aggregate, dig in, go to database or transactions or accessibility or strategy

Switch to diagnosis

Fix bugs

write code

write deliverable code

become a specialist

bring in a new tool or technology

change the team structure

rotate to a different team / exchange members / ambassadors

Oblique strategies -esque (test upside down / backwards / add something / remove something / find and change constraints) (SCAMper and SMART) (creativity techniques)

(problems of hawthorn effect)


**What shall we learn today**

Putting Learning First. Not "what should I do?", but "what do we need to learn?"

How might this change your own work?

Imagine, discuss, plan

Simon Tomes

## My Music

| | |
|---|---|
| *Created:* | *20 May 2016, 14:11* |
| *Modified:* | *28 October 2016, 01:52* |
| *Status:* | *Exercise ready* |
| *Label:* | *No Label* |
| *Keywords:* | *physical, small groups, Triggers emotions, NVM* |

**Idea:** Music affects us – pick the music for desired effect.

**Activty:**

Have you got an iPod?

What music do you use to get yourself enthusiastic? To continue concentrating? To cool down? To write to? To keep distractions at bay?

Share.

Make a playlist – spotify?

Consider when you might use it in testing, and when you might re-use it, and how it might change for context.

Play each other the actual tracks.

**Pitfalls:** Crossing sounds, everything too loud.

**Testing:** as above

**Dealing with the short-term dull**

| | |
|---|---|
| *Created:* | *5 February 2016, 13:35* |
| *Modified:* | *1 November 2016, 00:14* |
| *Status:* | *Exercise ready* |
| *Label:* | *No Label* |
| *Keywords:* | *small groups* |

##Idea##: One person gets a clinic in something they find dull

##Activity##:

In groups – pick one person to query, rest to act as enquirers / consultants

what's dull?

why is it dull?

does it need to be there?

what can we do about it?

At end, short presentation from central person "What I'm going to do about it"

## Portal / Lords of misuse

| | |
|---|---|
| *Created:* | *5 February 2016, 13:42* |
| *Modified:* | *24 October 2016, 00:11* |
| *Status:* | *Exercise tried* |
| *Label:* | *No Label* |
| *Keywords:* | *physical, inventive, before break, game* |

**Idea:** Labelling "functional fixedness" lets us recognise it, skip the bias (a little) and access innovation and resourcefulness

The nature of a thing is not necessarily related to its purpose (or its value when used for that purpose).

### Activity:

"Here's a portal to a desert island. Shortly, you'll be thrown through it. Find something, anything, that you can use."

Get everyone to find something. Bring it back. Tell each other. Tell the group.

Celebrate particularly surprising re-uses. Allow new ideas, new uses for "someone else's" object.

Go round again.

Debrief together –

– What do we feel about functional fixedness? And testing?

– What do we know about resourcefulness?

Optional: Extend into tools and tricks used in testing.

### Teaching and tricks:

Everyone to pick individually, but to come back and to show their group (with actions, to ping the imagination a little more)

There will be lots of repeats, so don't ask everyone. Ask groups for one or two.

Reward people who combine their misused object with another to extend or make new new capabilities.

Interesting how deadline increases focus and need for re-invention and resourcefulness.

**Pitfalls:**

In a conference venue, there may not be much stuff. Allow imaginary, plausible objects.

Lots of random stuff, cross venue. Run it before a break, announce that the portal is now… to the coffeebreak, and get people to take stuff back.

**Testing:**

Many testing tools are small elements of tools used for other things.

To find the true nature of what we're testing, we (may) need to get away from our expected purpose of the subject.

**Variant:**

Get the people actually thrown through a portal with their thing, and show us.


**Tried** at Nordic Testing Days, Improvisation for Testers

**Sources:**

I want to remember this as a KJ game, but we didn't play it.

Wikipedia – "Functional fixedness is a cognitive bias that limits a person to using an object only in the way it is traditionally used."

## 17 Seconds

| | |
|---|---|
| *Created:* | *27 June 2016, 12:12* |
| *Modified:* | *27 October 2016, 01:26* |
| *Status:* | *Exercise ready* |
| *Label:* | *No Label* |
| *Keywords:* | *physical, Triggers emotions, game* |

**Idea**: A "jolt" to emphasise that in some games, everyone wins

**Activity**: Follow Thiagi closely!

Pair. No obstacles. 6in apart.

I'm going to say "go"

If you can get your oppo to move their feet in 17s, you win.


- some use force

- some use persuasion

- some use money

- some use their feet first, then say "please move yours, so we can both win"


A win-win

A non-zero-sum-game]


From Thiagi

[Check it Out: Creative Problem Solving Institute Conference — The Thiagi Group](#)

(roughly 9 minutes in)

**Autonomy, Mastery, Purpose**

| | |
|---|---|
| *Created:* | *3 February 2016, 14:06* |
| *Modified:* | *24 October 2016, 01:49* |
| *Status:* | *Exercise close* |
| *Label:* | *No Label* |
| *Keywords:* | *individual, encouraging, introspective, incentives* |

**Idea:** We're motivated by work – it is fulfilling in itself.

**Activity:**

Present ideas around autonomy, mastery, purpose.

"There's something, right now, that you'd like to be yours in work. It maybe small, but you're currently having to collaborate, or ask permission, or notify, or have your work checked in order to do it. What is that thing? Can you take ownership of it?"

"reverse – what autonomy can you give the people round you?"

"What small thing would you like to get rather good at? Would you like to be able to do so well that you're being asked how, not asking how"

"How do you go about setting a purpose for the next few mintes of a task?"

"For the next five years?"

"What makes you valuable"

**Teaching:** Pink suggests that the reason to use money as a motivator is to make it go away – "Pay people enough so that they're not thinking about money and they're thinking about the work."

**Source:**

better than these

[Autonomy, Mastery, Purpose: The Science of What Motivates Us, Animated – Brain Pickings](#)

Pink – time / task / team / technique

### Analyse survey

*Created:*   *17 October 2016, 17:04*
*Modified:*  *31 October 2016, 17:27*
*Status:*   *No Status*
*Label:*   *No Label*
*Keywords:*  *analysis, small groups, how do I stay interested*

**Idea:** what do other people think?

**Activity:**

pre-workshop – survey. Had two sets of questions; people see either the up ones or the down ones.

reveal that survey offered two sets of questions – did emotional at end of survey reflect questions?

Provide all answers to whole group – ask them to analyse, group, add or choose.

Ask them to recall whether they were asked "up" or "down" questions

Tell them that one side of the room will look at "up", the other "down"

Ask them to move, regroup.

A few smaller sub-groups ? to look at individual questions. What are their own reactions to the question? What are they collectively told by the aggregate?

Ask each group to be our experts in the responses to that question. Prepare two things that they found useful or powerful from reading responses.

Get the two from each group.

**Encouraging your "subordinates"**

| | |
|---|---|
| *Created:* | *22 October 2016, 15:19* |
| *Modified:* | *24 October 2016, 01:49* |
| *Status:* | *Exercise ready* |
| *Label:* | *No Label* |
| *Keywords:* | *whole room, encouraging, team-focussed, incentives* |

**Idea:** How to make your team feel encouraged

**Activity:**

Think of someone who has managed you (in the sense of directly above you in whatever hierarchy of status). One who you've got a good relationship with. Assume that his/her words are sincere and that those words can and will be backed up with action.

What did they say that encouraged you?


What can you say that encourages the people who "work for you"?

What might *your* manager say that would genuinely encourage *you*?

What might your manager say to someone else that would encourage you?

Two things, 35 game

But judge on "I would be encouraged by this"

Facilitator to play, partly to introduce a pair of cards –

- how can I help you?

- what do you think?

- I appreciate your work.

## Interest groups

*Created:*       *23 October 2016, 15:09*

*Modified:*     *1 November 2016, 00:17*

*Status:*        *Exercise close*

*Label:*         *No Label*

*Keywords:*    *large group*

**Idea:** Test-focussed groups to discuss elements promised in abstract, but not delivered (or of interest) to the whole group.

**Activity:** Form interest groups around the questions

- those from the abstract that aren't yet covered.

- any others from the workshop

- any that anyone wants to add

No need for groups to report back – but put conclusions on a flip chart / wall for others to observe…

Questions / activites to include:

- use stories to spice up regression testing

- tools to crunch down bulk testing

- examine feedback in learning

- discovery and exploration in testing

- way that empowerment and responsibility can be the foundation of engagement

- observation and test design are enhanced by empathy and role-play

- chilling effects of zealotry and the dulling qualities of micro-management

- introduce competition and game-playing into testing

**empathy, role-play and their effects on test design and observation**

| | |
|---|---|
| *Created:* | *23 October 2016, 15:12* |
| *Modified:* | *31 October 2016, 21:18* |
| *Status:* | *No Status* |
| *Label:* | *No Label* |

##Idea##

exchange thoughts on how test design, and observation of system, is affected by empathy – and how role-play can help develop empathy

##Activity##

Consider dressing up as persona – perhaps start with the shoes, list and visualise. Describe yourself to those around you. Do your movements change?

Can you imagine interacting with the system, not as a person but as a system, an interface, as data?

**tools to crunch down bulk testing**

*Created:*      *23 October 2016, 15:12*

*Modified:*      *24 October 2016, 02:03*

*Status:*      *Exercise ready*

*Label:*      *No Label*

**Activity:** form a group to talk about the tools that individuals have sued to make dull jobs go better

**stories to spice up regression testing**

| | |
|---|---|
| *Created:* | *23 October 2016, 15:12* |
| *Modified:* | *24 October 2016, 02:03* |
| *Status:* | *Exercise ready* |
| *Label:* | *No Label* |

**Activity:** form a group to talk about personas, scenarios, variants, soap operas and other ways to make regression testing less dull

**chilling effects of zealotry and the dulling qualities of micro-management**

*Created:*        *23 October 2016, 15:13*

*Modified:*     *23 October 2016, 15:13*

*Status:*         *No Status*

*Label:*          *No Label*

**Sloganeering**

| | |
|---|---|
| *Created:* | *20 May 2016, 14:09* |
| *Modified:* | *28 October 2016, 01:53* |
| *Status:* | *Exercise ready* |
| *Label:* | *No Label* |
| *Keywords:* | *game, small groups, NVM* |

**Idea:** To get to a pithy and memorable expression of an idea

**Activity:**

Ask: What's an important truth, to you, about your work / job / situation

- doesn't have to be, maybe shouldn't be, a fundamental truth or axiom. But important to you.

Express it in a couple of sentences.

Remove adjecitves and adverbs where possible.

Use a thesaurus to find alterntive vocabulary

Use a rhyming dictionary to find possible rhymes

Arrive at a rhyming slogan

Share slogans

**Status for testers**

| | |
|---|---|
| *Created:* | *1 July 2016, 11:48* |
| *Modified:* | *28 October 2016, 02:14* |
| *Status:* | *Exercise close* |
| *Label:* | *No Label* |
| *Keywords:* | *physical, challenging, Triggers emotions, game* |

"Testers don't get no respect"

Status is something we do. It's not to do with social position.

It's something we activate, not something we learn or particularly control. Subconsciously expert. Animal – social animal

-       use KJ's physical set of status cues

Say something nice (a lie) to the person next to you. Say something nasty (a lie). See how it feels (both of you).

Mill about. Say hello. Now, say hello with long eye contact, or breaking

steady gaze. hands away from head. Pause + breathe. Keep head still. Long er or pause. Smooth. Show teeth. Toes out.

blink. touch mouth. lower head. don't hold eye contact. Waggle head. Short, frequeent er. Jerky. Hide teeth. Toes in.

High and low are both defences "Go away, I bite" "Go away, I'm not worth biting".

**could:** pairs – Mirror status. Endow with humour.

**could:** small group up front – demonstrate with balloon game + master/servant

Aside: status engagement is *activated*, not learned.

## All fired up?

| | |
|---|---|
| *Created:* | *22 October 2016, 00:54* |
| *Modified:* | *24 October 2016, 00:13* |
| *Status:* | *Exercise ready* |
| *Label:* | *No Label* |
| *Keywords:* | *whole room, enthusiasm, physical, Triggers emotions, after break, game* |

**Idea:** That enthusiasm can be consciously achieved, and is contagious.

## Activity:

Prep the group with what they've done so far, with the fun they're going to have, the friends they're going to make, the skills they're going to learn…. then ask the group.

"So, are you fired up?"

- wait for response

"Are you ready to go?"

- wait for response

And repeat.

Ask people to gauge their emotions, and the emotions of those around them (Trick: which involves looking each other in the eyes, which gives support and shared purpose)

Two more…

"So, how do you feel?"

Do people feel a little more enthusiastic, a little more focussed on the immediate future? Project for people, as part of the exercise. More awake, more alive, more willing to try new things?

Group is led to enthusiasm. Peer activity, synchronised activity, takes us there – and can take us beyond our initial

**Testing Relevance:**

Not a lot – but plenty to the business of coming into work feeling flat.

**Teaching**: After a break?

**Pitfalls**:

- too little emotion transferred at outset will make this an exercise in flatness. Be larger than life to stave off embarrassment.

- too much unwanted projection of resulting emotions – some may get more than uncomfortable. Ramp up, stay a little wry to let people know that it's, in part, a performance that you want them to join in with.

- asking people to feel their emotions – some just don't want to, especially with strangers in a workshop.

**Duration:** 5-8 minutes

**Sources** – Edith Childs / Barak Obama

Obama: "it goes to show you how one voice can change a room.  (Applause.) And if it changes a room it can change a city.  And if it can change a city it can change a state.  And if it can change a state it can change a nation.  If it changes the nation it can change the world."

[Fired Up? Ready to Go? | whitehouse.gov](#)

[The Story of "Fired up! Ready to go!"Obama for America - Boundless Media](#)

**Takeaways – closing summary**

*Created:*        *23 October 2016, 14:09*

*Modified:*       *23 October 2016, 14:31*

*Status:*         *No Status*

*Label:*          *No Label*

**Idea:** time to pack your bag

**Activity:**

Take three pieces of paper. You're going to pack these.

Write down your plan to re-engage when you notice you're bored. Make it small enough to fit on a postcard. Write it, make it look nice. Stick it somewhere you can see it (in a clear envelope in my drawer), or somewhere that you go to when you lose engagement (inside the jam cupboard, for me). Put it there (or imagine it there).

Write down the exercises you're going to take back to work – think of how you'll run them, where and when and with whom. Write that down.

Write down your own plan to stay interested in your job over the next year, over the next 5 years.

### The Professor – closing exercise (or go early)

| | |
|---|---|
| *Created:* | *23 October 2016, 14:14* |
| *Modified:* | *23 October 2016, 14:31* |
| *Status:* | *No Status* |
| *Label:* | *No Label* |
| *Keywords:* | *before break* |

I want to try something. It's an exercise taught to me by the master of improvisation, Keith Johnstone. I've done it before; sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't. I've never taught it before.

If it works, it's astonishing, and has a lesson for us all as testers and team members.

If it doesn't… well, that's a risk. And you've got to take a risk from time to time.

Run The Professor

"Can you speak with one voice"

Make two groups…

"Speaking with one voice is, primarily, a listening exercise. Don't worry about the right words. Just make a noise – if you can hear your noise, you're too loud. Don't try to lead, to innovate – try hard to listen."

2 Questions each that are yes / no, then…

"what's your name?" x2 (for surprise and collective identity)

"do you come from round here?"

"have you come far?

"You're lost, you're live to give directions."

After

bring 6 (louder) people out – "you're the audience", and this (larger remainder) is the professor. The professor is the professor of everything. You may ask the professor anything. Audience – don't be too clever.

Wen can do amazing things, in a group, even if we don't know how or why.

And it teaches us, as testers, that working without expectations is not impossible, just different.