

# Assignment: The Mission of Testing

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Your instructor will assign you to a group. Your group will receive a dedicated discussion board and a dedicated wiki in which to complete your task. Your group will collaboratively develop a report using a wiki. (Are you unfamiliar with wikis? Take a look at [this tutorial](http://www.commoncraft.com/video-wikis-plain-english) – here’s the URL if the link doesn’t work <http://www.commoncraft.com/video-wikis-plain-english>) Your instructor is a member of all groups to monitor efforts and contributions of all parties. Unless necessary, the instructor will not participate in the functioning of the group.

## Project Description

You are testing a program that includes spreadsheet features. Your work involves testing those features. Your report should consider the following questions, and any others that you think should be added.

1. What is your mission? (Please pay attention to your specific context.)
2. How should you organize your testing to help you achieve the mission? Please don’t write a test plan. Write a short summary of your thinking about your strategy and then focus on these three questions:
  - a. How aggressively should you hunt for bugs? Why?
  - b. Which bugs are less important than others? Why?
  - c. Suppose the program has a numeric input field. The spec says it must accept single digits, but not how it should respond to letters. Should you test with letters? Why or why not? What if you're time pressed?
3. How extensively will you document your work? Why?

After your group has completed its task, please look over the work of the other groups. How is their approach different from yours? What are the differences? What differences between their context and yours might make their answer more suitable for their situation and yours for yours?

Please post a comment in another group’s forum, comparing and contrasting your contexts and theirs, your answers and theirs and the appropriateness of their (and your) answers to the contexts. (Each member of your group should post their own comment.)

We understand that some groups will finish their task at the last minute, making it impossible to post comments before the deadline. If a delay is necessary, please post your comments within a day or two after the deadline.

## The Groups

Group 1: Early Development

You have joined the development team very early in the project. The project manager has asked you to test along with the programmers as they write code. She wants to mitigate the implementation-related risks in the project. She hopes you can help her and her staff understand and control the implementation-related risks.

#### Group 2: Late Development

You have joined the development team close to its release date. The project manager expects you to test the product in ways that tell her whether it is ready for release.

#### Group 3: Custom Software

You have joined the development team in a company that is doing custom software development, writing this program to a specification that was negotiated and incorporated into the development contract. Your objective is to test the program in a way that lets you determine whether it will be acceptable to the customer (as indicated by conformity with the specification).

#### Group 4: Medical Software

You have joined the development team for a spreadsheet component of a product that will be used in medical services, to track treatment history, prescriptions, etc. Doctors and nurses will rely on the information stored here when medicating or otherwise treating their patients. Your objective is to test in whatever way will most help the company get approval of the US Food & Drug Administration.

#### Group 5: Computer Game

You have joined the development team for a role-playing computer game. The spreadsheet features will keep track of character attributes, for example the character's experience points, health, age, and equipment or spells it is carrying.

### **Project Logistics**

Each group will "meet" in their dedicated discussion forum to develop a plan for working on this project. You may organize yourselves in any way that you think will enable your group to work effectively.

We expect you will do all of the work in the discussion board and the wiki. We expect the final project to be presented in the wiki. To facilitate communication about entries, all contributions to the wiki will be signed by the contributor. Note that wiki technology allows the instructor to monitor revisions and contributors.

All members of the class are expected to participate in their respective groups and to communicate with them regularly.