Maintainer Influence

Review. Poor Requirements.[1]

Details   A programmer, Lynn Wilford[2], received a maintenance update request document and, while their hunch was that it seemed a bit thin, proceeded to write code for it. Once completed they used the user generated test plan that came with the requirements document to perform unit testing. The code while technically correct, immediately failed. The output did not match the expected test results.

It seemed to Wilford that the requirements document had not been reviewed.

Wilford went to, Sara H. Cinderey[3], the junior analyst new to the branch who wrote and gave Wilford the requirements. Being inexperienced, Cinderey thought they had to show they did not make mistakes and accused Wilford of not doing a good enough job.

Of course Wilford did not bite[4] but simply said "Show me where, precisely, the coding is not good enough." Trapped, Cinderey blustered for a few minutes, muttered the latest process management jargon, and stormed off.

Amused, Wilford pondered what to do. Clearly Cinderey was out of their depth[5] and behaving badly. The question was how to deal with this face-saving but unprofessional behaviour without creating a life-long enemy.

Wilford wandered into the team leader Rosalind Young's office and accurately retold the event; being gentle on Cinderey in the process. With Wilford listening, Young called Cinderey's boss, Damon Hursthouse, and said —

"Got a minute, we need to have a chat."

"The usual at Charrieriana's in five minutes. See you there."

Cast	Role
Sara H. Cinderey	Junior analyst
Damon Hursthouse	Cinderey's boss
Lynn Wilford	Programmer
Rosalind Young	Team Leader

Table 1: M_2 Cast

[2] Wilford was widely regarded as the best, most experienced, programmer in the branch: worth any two other programmers in the branch.

[3] They loved being called Sarah H. but we will stick with our habit of using family names only.

[4] They had been around too long and seen off many a beginner analyst to be much bothered.

[5] Wilford thought that Cinderey showed some potential as an analyst but needed nurturing.