

# Staff-Level Testing Roles

[ A Path for High-level Testing Contributors ]



Includes exercises  
to guide your path

by Jesper Ottosen  
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Sample

## Staff-Level Testing Roles

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By Jesper Ottosen

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#SltrBook

Version: 2026.04.15 - sample.

Full book is for sale at <https://leanpub.com/sltrbook>.



# Leanpub

This book is a Leanpub book. Leanpub combines a powerful ebook and course writing platform and an online storefront where you can buy our authors' ebooks and courses.

To Lonnie. Thank you for all the “Writing Tuesdays”.

The front page picture is from Unsplash by Beil Morrol<sup>1</sup>.

The links<sup>2</sup> in the footnotes are valid as of the above date.

This is my personal work, handcrafted and curated with reflection.

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<sup>1</sup> Biel Morro, Minorca Beacon, 2017, via Unsplash,

<https://unsplash.com/photos/lighthouse-under-cumulus-clouds-and-blue-calm-sky-zSftGuAoDPM>

<sup>2</sup> All references are located here: <https://www.o2sn.dk/sltrbook/>

## About the Author:

Jesper primarily leads testing and quality activities in programs and projects that address the company's license to operate - industry regulations, government legislation, and other contractual requirements. At work, he is praised for the mindset that a challenge is just a doorway to an unknown opportunity.

He has 7+ years of experience as an individual contributor on an advisory level and prior 10 years as test manager. Jesper has authored two books and multiple leadership resources to help testing professionals advance their careers and develop testing strategies and leadership skills.

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/jespero2/>  
Personal blog: <https://o2sn.dk>

**Leading Testing Activities, 2024**  
A Guidebook for New Leaders of Testing<sup>3</sup>.

**Goal-Aligned Test Strategies, 2022**  
Using Wardley Maps to Visualize Test Strategies  
and align the test strategies with business goals<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Leading Testing Activities, LeanPub 2024, <https://www.o2sn.dk/ltabook/>

<sup>4</sup> Goal-Aligned Test Strategies, LeanPub 2022, <https://www.o2sn.dk/goatsbook/>

## From The Reviewers:

*Our industry is undergoing a compressed period of change as AI lays waste to the durable code model of software development. At times like these, first principles are more important than ever. The software development lifecycle may be dissolving but software quality still matters. Users still matter. And disciplines like operations and testing, grounded in reality over theory, have more to contribute than ever. Jesper's book could not be better timed, because the need has never been greater for staff+ contributors in these practical disciplines who can serve as force multipliers and systems thinkers and guides. There is a wealth of practical knowledge in this book, and I suggest you use it.*

**Charity Majors, cofounder/CTO**

*Whether you're a senior IC looking to learn more about the next step in your career, or somebody already working at the staff-level, this book is a great descriptor of the industry's expectations and the types of skills needed to excel, with comprehensive references so that you can upskill yourself.*

**Emily O'Connor, Principal Quality Engineer**

*The Staff+ role in testing isn't well understood or described in our industry; Jesper's book solves this by providing practical commentary backed up with his experiences and references. As someone working in this space, I see a lot of myself and what I do echoed throughout the book and would recommend anyone wanting to progress their own careers (or engineering leaders looking to understand the value of these roles) read it.*

**Callum Akehurst-Ryan, Staff Quality Engineer**

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*As time passes, we learn to navigate our roles.  
As we outgrow the roles, where do we go next?  
Is the management path the only way?  
Or is there an uncharted path  
As the Staff-Level Testing Professional.*

This book is written as a guide for aspiring and existing **staff-level testing professionals**, whether they have the formal title or not. This book is not about what might theoretically happen. There are real people out there doing this work and having these (testing) roles. These are the things that are actually happening<sup>5</sup>. Yet many testing professionals are not aware that the role even exists<sup>6</sup>.

The inspiration to bring “Staff-Level” roles into the testing scene is directly inspired by reading these two key books for Staff Engineers:

- **Staff Engineer: Leadership Beyond the Management Track** by Will Larson<sup>7</sup>
- **The Staff Engineer’s Path** by Tanya Reilly<sup>8</sup>

On the front page of this book is a lighthouse (an actual one<sup>9</sup>) and a path. I aim to help you increase your awareness and help you have some reflections along the way on your path. I intend to bring the staff role, the books, and many other resources<sup>10</sup> on the topic into a testing setting and flavour it with my experience (in **green**).

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<sup>5</sup> Ministry of Testing, This Week in Quality Episode 111, 2025,

<https://www.ministryoftesting.com/podcasts/this-week-in-testing?wchannelid=czgwdadw2c&wmediavid=w392labzq6>

<sup>6</sup> Trend by Ministry of Testing 2025,

<https://www.ministryoftesting.com/testing-trends/the-staff-quality-engineer-role>

<sup>7</sup> Will Larson, 2021, <https://staffeng.com/book>

<sup>8</sup> Tanya Reilly, 2022, The Staff Engineer’s Path, <https://www.noidea.dog/staff>

<sup>9</sup> Biel Morro, Minorca Beacon, 2017, via Unsplash,

<https://unsplash.com/photos/lighthouse-under-cumulus-clouds-and-blue-calm-sky-zSftGuAoDPM>

<sup>10</sup> See my resource collection at <https://www.ministryoftesting.com/collections/staff-level>