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★★★★☆ **SQA Starter Kit**, February 16, 2002

Reviewer: [B. Scott Andersen](#) (Acton, MA USA) - [See all my reviews](#)

REAL NAME

Bill Gates is famous for his yearly retreats where he takes a pile of books and reads them. Maybe that's the one thing today's managers should emulate. If you do, bring this book along on your first sabbatical.

This all new edition of the book (first published in 1997) was even renamed to include its new, extended charter. "Clearly management must take a leadership role in helping the organization behave in a more predictable way. It is for this reason that the title of the book has been changed to include managers. [the book] includes specific actions that managers can take to help organizations behave in a more predictable manner."

Software development is a difficult discipline to master. Even so, technical acumen is no guarantee of quality. "As observed by Dr. Edwards Deming, 'The quality of a product is directly related to the quality of the process used to create it.'" Verification ("are we building the product right?") and validation ("are we building the right product?") are the first questions one must ask to begin the path of process improvement. This book addresses those questions and more.

The book is divided into four large sections. The first three sections are brought forward from the previous edition with some noticeable improvements. The new edition is not just a rehash of the old stuff, however. Over 30 new pages of appendices and an entire new section of the book aimed at management with over 70 new pages have been added.

Other improvements are also evident including better formatting. For example, the font selection and layout are much easier on the eyes than in the previous edition.

If you own the first edition, this is a "must have" update. If you don't own the first edition, consider this work an SQA department "starter kit." It is well organized, well annotated, and filled with practical artifacts such as checklists for inspections, suggested document outlines, and the like. This is stuff you can use.

Chapter 12 is specifically for the CEO and should be required reading by anyone running a company with a software development function. "Managers and executives need to understand that having a predictable software development process is vitally important to the long-term success of their business." Rakitin shows how, then shows what can be done. The prose is crisp and to-the-point. Well done.