

Lund, 26<sup>th</sup> October 2012

Dear research colleague,

We are currently evaluating the suitability of our retrospective method<sup>1</sup> as an RE research approach. Would you be interested and willing to participate in a desktop evaluation of the method? This would entail an hour-long interview where we describe the method and ask for your views on its suitability, weak points and limitations for as an RE research method.

The retrospective method has been developed together with a partner company with the aim of supporting assessment and research of the impact of RE decision making and communication on the software development activities and the resulting product. The main idea is to support project team reflection and learning at a meeting after project completion by visualizing the project history in timelines. These timelines are prepared by researchers before this meeting and contain evidence of project events, e.g. decisions on scope changes, requirements meetings with customers, and product events, e.g. number of filed issue reports, changes to product hardware. We call the timelines 'evidence-based timelines' in contrast to timelines generated at retrospective meetings based on participants memory of events (as proposed by Norman Kerth<sup>2</sup>). At the meeting, the timelines are printed and displayed on the wall and, together with a set of focus questions, act as a focal point for the discussions with the project members who also have the opportunity to correct &/ add information to the timelines.

For credibility purposes, we would prefer if you would be willing to be named in the resulting publication. Your participation will also be mentioned in the acknowledgement. In addition, we would welcome suggestions on a suitable reference to your work that is relevant to our retrospective method. We are targeting a special issue of JSS for which the deadline is 30<sup>th</sup> November. Ideally, the interview will be performed before the middle of November.

Yours sincerely,

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<sup>1</sup> E. Bjarnason, R. Berntsson Svensson, B. Regnell, "Evidence-Based Timelines for Project Retrospectives — A Method for Assessing Requirements Engineering in Context". In: Proc of 2<sup>nd</sup> Int Workshop of Empirical Requirements Engineering, Chicago, Sept 2012



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<sup>2</sup> N. Kerth, "Project Retrospectives. A handbook for team reviews", Dorset House, 2001.