

Dear Software Colleague,

As the Middleware Development Manager within Wells Fargo, I run a team of five engineers coding up to a dozen concurrent initiatives for each of several annual releases, built in heavily-matrixed business and technical organizations. Within this challenging development environment, Mick Knutson has become a cornerstone of my team's ability to make quality, high-value releases under trying circumstances.

As a lead engineer, Mick has demonstrated an unflinching ability to approach broadly-sketched goals, resolve them into concrete deliverables, and dive into delivery regardless of obstacles or hindrances. I've seen "high-maintenance" engineers freeze in their tracks if the road ahead was not clearly lit and paved. Mick in contrast can be unstoppable, taking ownership and initiative to seek out answers and dismantle roadblocks as they arise. He affords me the luxury of being able to safely ignore projects entrusted to his care, a gift valued by any development manager.

Mick's technical and coding strength are first-rate, his commitment and work ethic unquestionable. My team completed a monumental system migration to a J2EE/Struts environment, with Mick spearheading the effort not just as a technical expert, but also as a dedicated team member inspiring other engineers through arduous circumstances. Another significant contribution has been his focus on quality. Not content to set a new standard for early attention to unit testing, Mick has actively helped other engineers get over the bar he himself raised. The payoff has been more than fewer bugs, leaner code and shorter QA cycles; Mick has also fueled the professional growth of his peers, yet another gift appreciated by his manager.

Mick's professional contribution extends beyond engineering. In our matrixed environment he's become a valued and approachable source of authoritative technical knowledge for requirements analysts, QA testers and project managers. His openness and consideration give him a broad vision that I've come to value, capable of flagging issues and considerations that might otherwise go overlooked.

Clearly Mick is more than a reliable technical asset. I run a team working under pressure in challenging circumstances. Positive dynamics are a large part of any team's overall effectiveness, and Mick is unquestionably a large part of our team's positive dynamics. His singular contribution extends beyond his high-caliber software. Mick is himself a high-caliber professional and individual, and it is my pleasure to recommend him to you.



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