

Bug workflow is the way in which bugs are prioritized and steps are taken to fix, avoid, or ignore them individually based upon their priority.

When a bug is entered onto a bug list, it must be triaged, during which it must be prioritized. Priority levels should be based upon the consequences of the chosen action, including technical risks, side effects, and the relative cost of fixing the bug now or later. Setting the priority level of a bug is a business decision, and must be treated as such. Those who are responsible for assigning bug severity levels must be aware of the business context of the project.

While severity is a factor in determining priority, since it is not the only factor, it is possible for the severity and priority of a bug to be out of sync. There are four possible relationships between the priority and severity of a bug. Bugs with high priority and severity are important, highly costly bugs, and testers should be encouraged to find as many of them as they can. Bugs with high priority and low severity are bugs that would upset a client but are easy to fix. Bugs with low priority and high severity are bugs that won't be fixed right away, possibly due to time constraints, and may lead to dropping affected features. Bugs with low priority and low severity are not too worrisome on their own, but can become critical problems in high numbers.

An effective bug workflow must be signed off on by all stakeholders. These stakeholders must be identified and their feedback taken into account. As an organization evolves, the

bug workflow must evolve to embrace new shareholders and to recognize when old ones are no longer relevant to the project.