Leadership Quality Advisory®

Ilari Henrik Aegerter Founder & CEO, House of Test

"I help engineering organisations think clearly about software quality."

THE PROBLEM

Why engineering quality breaks down at scale

Engineering organisations rarely fail because of individual incompetence. They fail because of systemic misalignment — between how quality is understood across teams, where responsibility sits, and how development, testing, product, and UX actually collaborate in practice.

The cost is rarely visible on any single dashboard: it accumulates in rework, production incidents, late-stage defects, deferred releases, and engineers who lose motivation when their work repeatedly unravels downstream.

The levers for change are rarely technical. They are organisational, cultural, and structural. That is precisely where this advisory operates.

WHO THIS IS FOR

Engineering leaders who sense the problem is structural

This advisory is designed for CTOs, VP Engineering, Directors of Engineering, and Heads of Engineering in product organisations with roughly 20–200 engineers — particularly in SaaS, fintech, platform, and technology-driven companies scaling their engineering teams.

The right fit is a senior engineering leader who recognises that quality and throughput problems are not purely a tooling or process question, and who wants a rigorous, confidential thinking partner with experience in both the engineering and the organisational dimensions of the challenge.

THE APPROACH

A distinctive lens on engineering organisations

Most quality advisory focuses on process frameworks and testing toolchains. This advisory starts from a different premise: that software quality is primarily a social and organisational phenomenon. The frameworks that explain why engineering teams succeed or fail draw as much from organisational psychology, communication theory, and systems thinking as they do from software engineering practice.

Crucially, this advisory does not sell certification frameworks or methodology packages — it offers thinking partnership grounded in context, craft, and organisational reality.

Ilari Henrik Aegerter brings an unusually interdisciplinary background to this work — academic training spanning General Linguistics, Sociology, and Software Engineering, combined with senior leadership experience across two demanding environments: global e-commerce at eBay Europe, where quality engineering operated across distributed, high-throughput systems at scale; and regulated medical device development at Phonak AG (now Sonova AG), where quality carries both legal and patient-safety implications.

This combination produces a distinctive analytical lens: rigorous about engineering, and equally attentive to the human and systemic dimensions that purely technical frameworks cannot address.

Training in linguistics, for instance, surfaces directly in how engineering miscommunication is diagnosed: the concept of indexicality — the context-dependence of meaning — explains why requirements, bug reports, and handoffs across team boundaries so routinely generate ambiguity that tooling alone cannot fix.

“Leadership is not control. It is much more giving people the liberty to shine.”

TYPICAL QUESTIONS ADDRESSED

What senior engineering leaders bring to this advisory

- How should testing and quality engineering be positioned within the organisation — and how does that change as we scale?
- How can engineering teams grow in headcount and scope without losing release confidence?

- How should development, testing, and product management collaborate effectively — and what structures enable that?
- How do we hire and grow engineers with strong quality instincts, rather than just strong technical credentials?
- What organisational structures support sustainable engineering quality over time, rather than short-term heroics?
- Why do our quality initiatives keep stalling, and what is actually preventing change?

OUTCOMES

What organisations consistently address through this advisory

- **The silent capacity drain of poor quality**

  Defects, rework, and production incidents consume engineering bandwidth that should be building product. Identifying and removing this drain is typically the first and highest-leverage intervention.

- **Coordination friction between development, testing, product, and UX**

  Misaligned responsibilities and duplicated effort slow delivery and erode team morale. Clear collaboration structures release throughput that was always there.

- **Hiring and retaining engineers with strong quality instincts**

  Building lasting quality capability requires knowing what to look for — and creating the conditions that keep strong engineers motivated and effective.

- **Sustainable release confidence at scale**

  The ability to ship predictably without increasing headcount or sacrificing stability — achieved through organisational design, not just test coverage.

CORE AREAS OF ADVISORY

Where the work is focused

1. **Organisational design** — structuring effective collaboration between development, testing, product management, and UX
2. **Hiring and talent strategy** — evaluating and growing engineering and quality capability
3. **Engineering culture and leadership** — communication patterns, decision structures, and the conditions for high performance
4. **Leadership development** — supporting engineering managers and directors on organisational and people challenges
5. **Strategic positioning of quality** — defining the role of quality engineering within modern product organisations

ADVISORY FORMAT

How the engagement works

Standard Advisory	Premium Advisory
Price on request	**Price on request**
Monthly leadership strategy session (60–90 min)	Monthly leadership strategy session (90–120 min)
Asynchronous advisory access for strategic questions	Priority asynchronous advisory access (48-hour response)
Annual engineering organisation review	Quarterly engineering organisation review
—	Ad hoc soundboarding for time-sensitive leadership decisions

Engagements are limited to a small number of organisations at a time to ensure depth and focus.

Minimum commitment: six months. Organisational change operates on a longer cycle than monthly sprints. Six months is the minimum horizon at which meaningful shifts in collaboration patterns, engineering culture, and decision-making become visible — and it is also the point at which the advisory relationship has the context depth to be genuinely useful for complex, sensitive leadership questions.

ADVISOR BACKGROUND

Ilari Henrik Aegerter

Ilari Henrik Aegerter is the Founder and CEO of House of Test GmbH, a specialist consultancy focused on software quality and test engineering. Over more than two decades he has led engineering and quality organisations across medical technology, global e-commerce, and product consultancy — and has been a consistent voice for rigorous, professional software quality at the intersection of engineering excellence and organisational effectiveness.

CURRENT ROLES

- **Founder & CEO, House of Test GmbH** — specialist consultancy in software quality and test engineering, Switzerland (2015–present)
- **Member, Board of Advisors, Disqnect** — AI-native security hardware company (2026–present)
- **President, GreaTest Quality Convention** — community for software quality professionals in Zurich (2022–present)
- **Patron, Meetup of Test Zurich** — advancing the craft of software testing (2015–present)

PREVIOUS ROLES

- **Manager Quality Engineering Europe, eBay** — quality engineering leadership across distributed, high-throughput e-commerce systems at European scale
- **Manager Software Verification, Phonak AG** — quality and verification in regulated medical device development (hearing technology)
- **Vice President, Association for Software Testing** — a variety of elected leadership roles within the international professional association
- **President, International Society for Software Testing** — elected leadership of the international professional body

- **Instructor — CAS Software Testing, OST** — postgraduate programme, Eastern Switzerland University of Applied Sciences

ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

- **MAS Software Engineering** — OST — Eastern Switzerland University of Applied Sciences
- **General Linguistics** — University of Zurich
- **Sociology** — University of Zurich

NEXT STEP

Starting the conversation

If the challenges described here are recognisable, the most useful first step is a short, direct conversation — typically 30–45 minutes — to assess whether there is a genuine fit and to understand where the highest-leverage interventions are likely to be.

Contact: ilari.aegerter@houseoftest.ch | +41 78 804 03 25 | www.houseoftest.ch