

Intro to UCD

ACTIVITY 1: INTERVIEW, OBSERVE, EMPATHIZE

DATA USER-CENTERED DESIGN (UCD) OVERVIEW

User-Centered Design promotes the concept of involving users with specific needs in the design process. The activities in this series will engage high school students (both sighted and BVI) in the process of redesigning the Afterglow interface to better meet their needs.

Activity One models User-Centered Design Methods through hands-on engagement with a design problem. You will work with a user to identify his/her needs, develop design concepts to address those needs, and then bring the concepts back to the user for feedback and future iterations.

PROCESS

STEP 1. Gather in groups of 3. Two participants should be designated as interviewers and 1 should be an interviewee.

STEP 2. First interview your subject. Interviewers should ask their interviewee to go through his/her typical morning routine aloud. (Note: the interviewee can switch to their evening routine if going to bed is more problematic.)

The goal of this interview is to improve the interviewees' morning routine in some way. Listen for any moments of frustration or inefficiency. Maybe they have trouble getting out of bed initially, maybe they have trouble fitting in a healthy breakfast, maybe they just feel crabby. Maybe their kid brother runs into their room and annoys them while they try to prepare for school.

Be sure to take notes. When the interviewee is finished going through his/her morning routine, ask follow-up questions to clarify details. For example, if he/she wakes up feeling generally crabby, try to determine any factors influencing this mood: Diet? Sleep patterns? School stress? Smartphone overuse? Back problems?

Do not try to solve the interviewee's problems during the interview. Instead, focus on better understanding his/her morning routine.

STEP 3. Ideation: Interviewers separate from the interviewee and begin to develop ideas together for an app that could alleviate one morning pain point. Crazy ideas are perfectly acceptable as long as they address user need. Be sure to focus on one source of frustration in each concept. Your app only needs to solve one very specific morning issue for the identified user (your interviewee). Come up with as many ideas as you can.

Interviewees can sit in on ideation sessions with interviewees other than their own. Or they can hang out with one another and take a short break.

STEP 4. Dissemination: Select your top idea and fill out an elevator pitch template to clearly communicate the idea. Do not yet share your idea with the interviewee.

FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION

Hannington, Bruce and Bella Martin, *Universal Methods of Design: 100 Ways to Research Complex Problems, Develop Innovative Ideas, And Design Effective Solutions*, Rockport Publishers, 2012.

Newell, Alan F. and Peter Gregor. "User Sensitive Inclusive Design - In Search of a New Paradigm," In ACM Conference on Universal Usability, 2000.

Norman, Don. *The Design of Everyday Things: Revised and Expanded Edition*, Basic Books, 2013. (Original Edition Pub. 1988)

Sanders, Liz and Pieter Jan Stappers, *Convivial Toolbox: Generative Research For the Front End of Design*, BIS Publishers, 2013.