ISTE-260: Designing for the User Experience, Exercise 3: Data Collection Methods

In this assignment, you will work as a GROUP to identify a research question (focused on a particular device, system, or service) and plan a set of interview questions. **Your work on this assignment will inform your work on the team project.**

Steps

1. **Step 1:** Meet with your GROUP, and select a device, system, service, or setting to observe. You should have a project topic in mind of something your team wants to create, and these observations should be informative for you. So, you could observe a setting where people are currently accomplishing something that your app/website will help with, or you could observe people using an app/website that is a current competitor or related technology to your plans.
2. **Step 2:** INDIVIDUALLY or as a GROUP, you will conduct initial field observations of people using this type of device, system, or service. It is OK for all of the members of the group to observe together at one time, but each student should take their own field notes. Each student should summarize their own field notes so that they are ready to share them with their teammates. (Each team member will include a copy of their personal field notes summary, which will be submitted as part of this group assignment, as an appendix in Step 3.)
   - The physical and cultural environment should be described in rich detail and a rough sketch of the environment should be included in the document.
   - The summary should include the date, time, and location of the observation.
   - Students should take note of the people and any observable characteristics.
   - Students should document any artifacts they observe.
   - If possible and with permission, pictures should be taken.
3. **Step 3:** Meet with your GROUP to discuss your observations and decide which application, website, or technology your group would like to address for the remainder of the project. As a group, you should also identify a set of questions that you want to know the answer to, which would assist in your design process. At this point, the GROUP should prepare a set of interview questions that will target these questions. The GROUP will prepare a document summarizing their selection of project topic, research questions, and interview questions.
   - It is OK for the team's document to use exact text (copied directly) from individual team member's field notes. Your GROUP submission here in step 3 is what will be graded. The individual team member's notes from Step 2 are your source material for your work. So, it's OK for you to directly use this text in your single GROUP Step 3 document.
   - From the list of research questions compiled from each member of the group, which will you focus upon and why? What is the general purpose of collecting data? What do you want to know? What device, system, or service will you focus on?
   - List the questions you will ask the stakeholder. You should plan at least 10 questions.
4. **Step 4:** Then, each student will INDIVIDUALLY conduct an interview with a stakeholder (each member of the team will do an interview with a different person) and conduct a task walk-through with this participant. The person could have a direct or indirect connection to a research domain of your choice. The website, app, or technology used for the walk-through should be some competing product, loosely similar website, or current method of accomplishing the task. Basically, the task you observe during the interview should be informative for your design

process. Your goal is to obtain information about how the stakeholder identifies with problems, people, scenarios and their overall relationship with their environment(s).

- ***The Interview:*** Schedule an interview time with a stakeholder. Each team member should interview a different person. If possible, each team member should interview a different type of user (e.g. line-worker, manager, supervisor, customer, etc.) Conduct an interview at least 15-minutes in length. Take notes during the interview. As part of your written submission, you must include information about the time, date, location, and anonymous demographics of the person you interviewed. Also, you can note if you asked some unique follow-up questions during the interview that were not part of your original planned list of questions.
- ***Task Walk Through Section:*** *In addition to asking interview questions,* ask the stakeholder to describe how they use a particular device, system or service. Where? What artifacts (devices, technologies, objects) do they use? (Take photos) You could briefly explain the task that the person to performed here, but the detailed written summary of this part of your work will be the "List of Problems" below.) Take note of anyone else with whom the interviewee must interact in order to perform the task (e.g. co-workers, managers, customers, etc.) and the nature of that interaction.
- INDIVIDUALLY, each student will prepare some notes about their personal interview, summarizing the session, including key quotes, and identifying a list of problems that were identified. Each team member will include a copy of their interview notes summary, which will be submitted as part of this group assignment, as an appendix in Step 5.

5. **Step 5:** Meet with your GROUP, and combine together the observations, interview findings, and list of problems observed during this assignment. Your team will prepare a single written document that summarizes all of your observations, interviews, and results.
   - In addition to providing a summary of the interview notes from each team member, your team should also prepare a list all stakeholder problems that you identified through this experience. You should demonstrate some careful thought here in the document, and you should explain what **evidence** (e.g., interview comments or something you observed) **support** the list of problems that you have identified. Stronger submissions will show a clear connection between interview/observations and the problem list.
   - It is OK for the team's document to use exact text (copied directly) from individual team member's interview notes. Your GROUP submission here in step 5 is what will be graded. The individual member's notes from Step 4 are your source material; so, it's OK for you to directly use this text in your single GROUP Step 3 document.

WHAT TO SUBMIT

- **From Step 3:** The group will prepare a 2-3 page document that summarizes the observation notes of the individual team members, explains why you selected those settings to observe, explains what you noticed during the observation, explains what questions this suggested to you, explains what problems or challenges people might currently face (that you could help with), identifies a list of "research questions" of things you want the answer to, and includes a list of interview questions that your team members can use in Step 4. (The list of interview questions does not count toward the page-limit for this document.) This document will also include, as appendices, copies of each team members' field notes from the observation (with the team member's name on each).
- **From Step 5:** The group will prepare a 3-4 page document that summarizes the interview process, including what task you asked the interviewee to perform during the interview. You should explain who your asked to interview, and your group document should *summarize* the main themes of what you observed. So, you should not individually discuss each interview. Instead, you should group thematically the "commonalities" between what the interviewees said. You should include some quotes from the interviews. You should identify key challenges, current problems or frustrations, hopes/desires for how things could be better, level of interest in a new app/website/technology, and initial impressions of how they would like it to work.
- **Appendix for Step 3 and Step 5 Documents:** Each person will prepare personal field notes (in Step 2) and personal interview notes (in Step 4), which should be of sufficient quality that they would be useful for your team members to see them. You should retain copies of these individual notes, and you should include them all in separate appendices at the end of your two group documents (produced in Step 3 and Step 5).

FORMATTING INSTRUCTIONS

Your GROUP should upload two documents (Step 3 and Step 5) to the "group" submission folder on dropbox on myCourses.

- Each file should be a single, cohesive document, with consistent formatting throughout. Please submit the written assignment as a MS Word or PDF.
- Please name one file: Exercise3_Step3_*GroupName.pdf*
- Please name the other file: Exercise3_Step5_*GroupName.pdf*
- **Line Spacing** (3 points): 1.15 - 1.2
- **Font**: 10-11 point Arial, Calibri or Times (3 points)
- **Margins**: 1 inch
- **Page limit for Step 3:** 2-3 pages
- **Page limit for Step 5:** 3-4 pages
- Include photos, screenshots or any other supporting materials where required. Caption your images, and refer to your images in your main text of the document, e.g., "As shown in Figure 1…"
- If you need to cite an external reference or academic paper, then you should use the ACM citation format. Details about the ACM Citation format are available on the myCourses website for this course.
- Be concise and cogent! No extra points for long winded explanations.
- Your writing should be grammatical, clear, and persuasive, as would be expected of students in university level courses. Text that is difficult to understand will receive lower grades.
- Compress your pictures before you submit your document.

Note about Plagiarism:

It is appropriate to share your field notes and other work within your group.   It is considered a violation of the academic code of conduct for you to share your work with other groups.