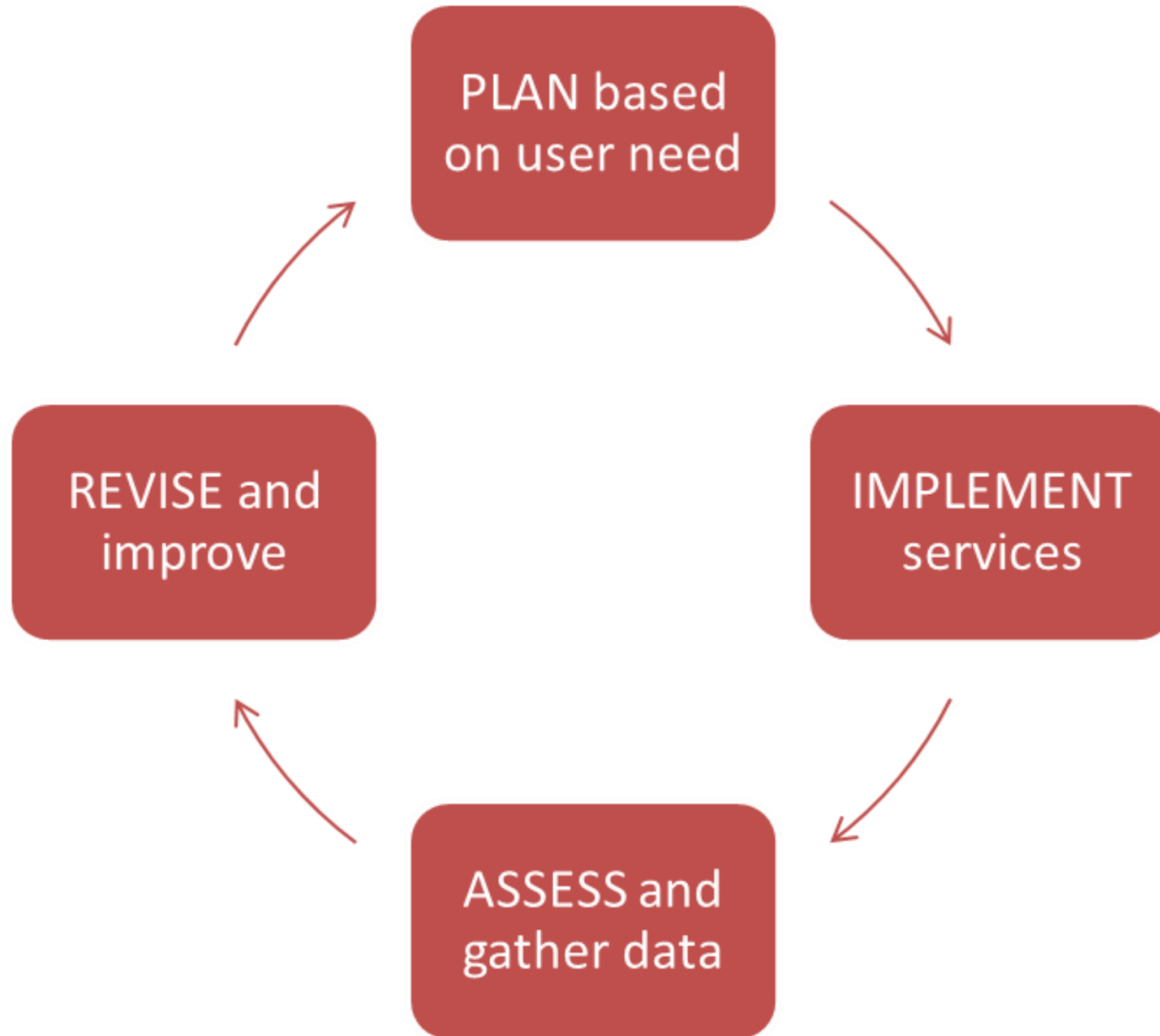


User Studies in the Library



Assessment Process



Effective Assessment

- Focuses on the user
- Is aligned with library and university goals
- Assesses what is important
- Is outcomes oriented
- Develops criteria for success
- Uses multiple assessment methods
- Integrates quantitative and qualitative information
- Provides results that can be used

Sustainable Assessment

- Organizational leadership
- Sufficient resources
- Supportive organizational culture
- Identifiable organizational responsibility
- Connection to strategic planning and priorities
- Iterative process of data collection, analysis, and use
- Involvement of users, staff and stakeholders

Practical Assessment

- Keep it simple and focused – “less is more”
- Know when enough is enough
- Use assessment that adds value for users
- Present results that are understandable
- Organize to act on results

Asking the right questions

- What do you need to know and why?
- How will you use the information?
- Does the information already exist?
- Where will you get the information?
- What are the appropriate methods?
- Is collecting the information cost effective?
- How will you analyze the information?
- Who will act upon the findings?

Standard Assessment Methods

- Surveys
- Usage counts
- Observations
- Interviews
- Focus groups
- Usability testing
- Comments and requests
- Card sorting
- Logged activities
- Personas

Have you ever had this conversation?

"Who are the primary users of your library?"

"Everyone!"

"What do they need from us?"

"Everything!"

Personas

"As used in the design field, the Persona is an artifact that consists of a narrative relating to a desired user or customer's daily behavior patterns, using specific details, not generalities."

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Personas>

Personas: Information to Collect

- Demographics
- Education
- Computer skills
- Tasks
- Users' understanding of the product
- Technology available
- Attitudes and values
- Learning styles

Personas: Sources of Information

- Public service personnel
- Surveys
- Focus groups
- Usability testing
- Admission data
- ITS
- External data
 - PEW Internet and American Life Project
 - OCLC

Persona Tips

Make them come alive

- Identity
- Goals
- Skill set
- Relationships
- Expectations
- Quotes
- Photograph



Sample Personas



Focus Groups



When To Use Focus Groups

- Idea generation
- Gather/confirm user requirements
- Learn about a new population
- Drill down data collected via other methods (e.g. shed some light on conflicting survey data)

Focus Group Considerations

- Beware of predictions; saying and doing are different things
- Avoid sensitive or personal topics
- Make sure your moderator is skilled
- Focus groups are not appropriate for comparative, competitive or benchmarking studies

Focus Group How To

- 6-12 participants
- 60 to 90 minutes
- 1 facilitator; 1 scribe
- Keep it structured: write at least one question for the group to brainstorm/discuss
- Plan session/activities to manage conversations
- Participants should be similar; run more than 1 group

Formulating the Question

Information oriented

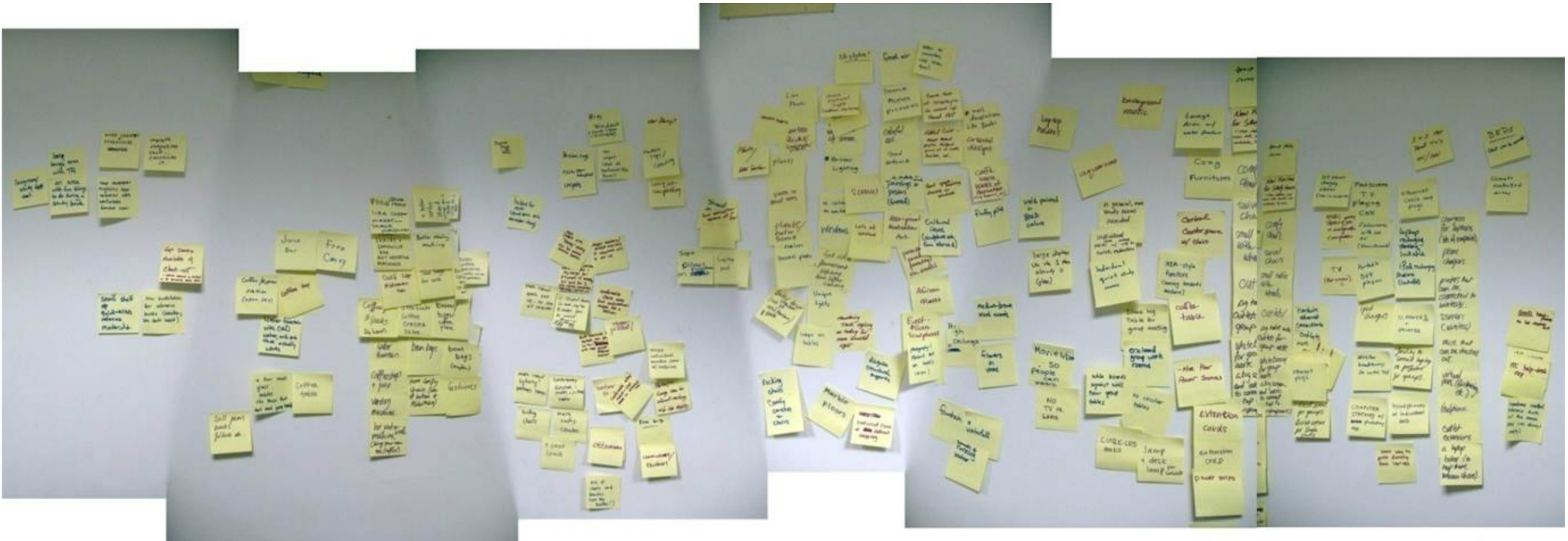
"What kind of information do you need from an ideal library catalog?"

Task oriented

"What tasks would you like to perform with an ideal library catalog?"

Characteristic oriented

"What are the characteristics of an ideal library catalog?"



TV mute
w/ caption on
three radio
station

TV
News
Channel
ONLY

ESPN or
Sports
(Comcast?)

Excellent
Idea
↓

beds
for 1st
floor
Ld

No MTV

NO T.V.s -
they waste
of accounts
& energy &
aren't really
watched

1 or 2 Flat
Panel TV's

Beds
might
be an
issue

BEDS
(that can be a

no bed...
people will
turn around.

Phone
tag
on
airports

Flat screen
T.V.
Pl...

TVs =
waste of
energy +
distracting
ethernet
cable and
plugs

Rough
it. →

↑
Seed these
for all-nighters

It's called a
dorm

UBIC primary
rarity on
designated
computer

more like
Travel
Channel /
Discovery
Channel
(News Channel)

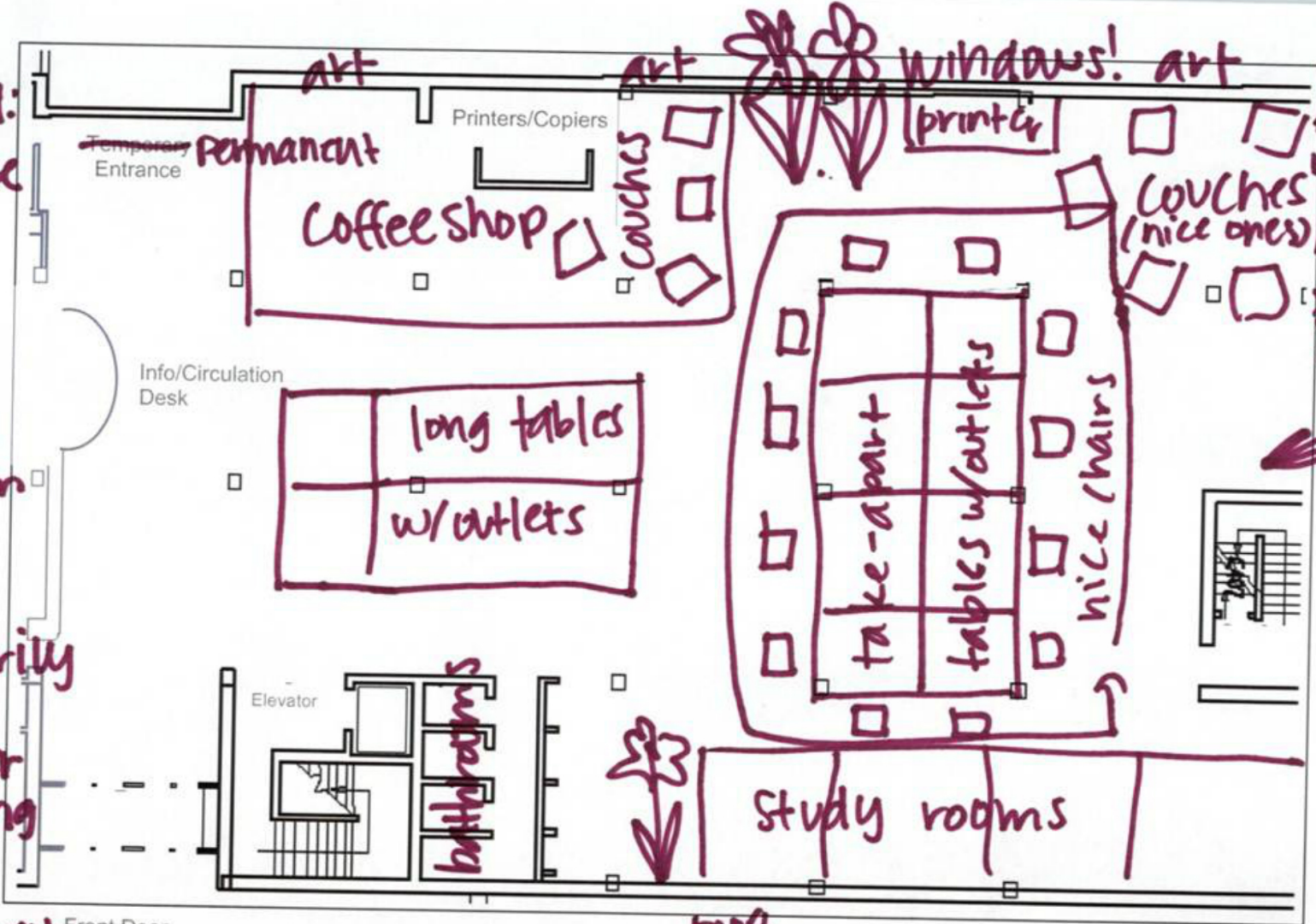
laptop
recharging
stations,
lookable

chargers
for laptops
(lots of companies)
Phone

Climate
controlled
areas

What I need:

- 1. open space
- 2. good lighting
- 3. ~~mult.~~ printing directly from laptop
- 4. quiet (not necessarily silence)
- 5. food other than vending



Free speech wall!
to be creative! break

Permanent Front Door

~~Windows~~ Windows

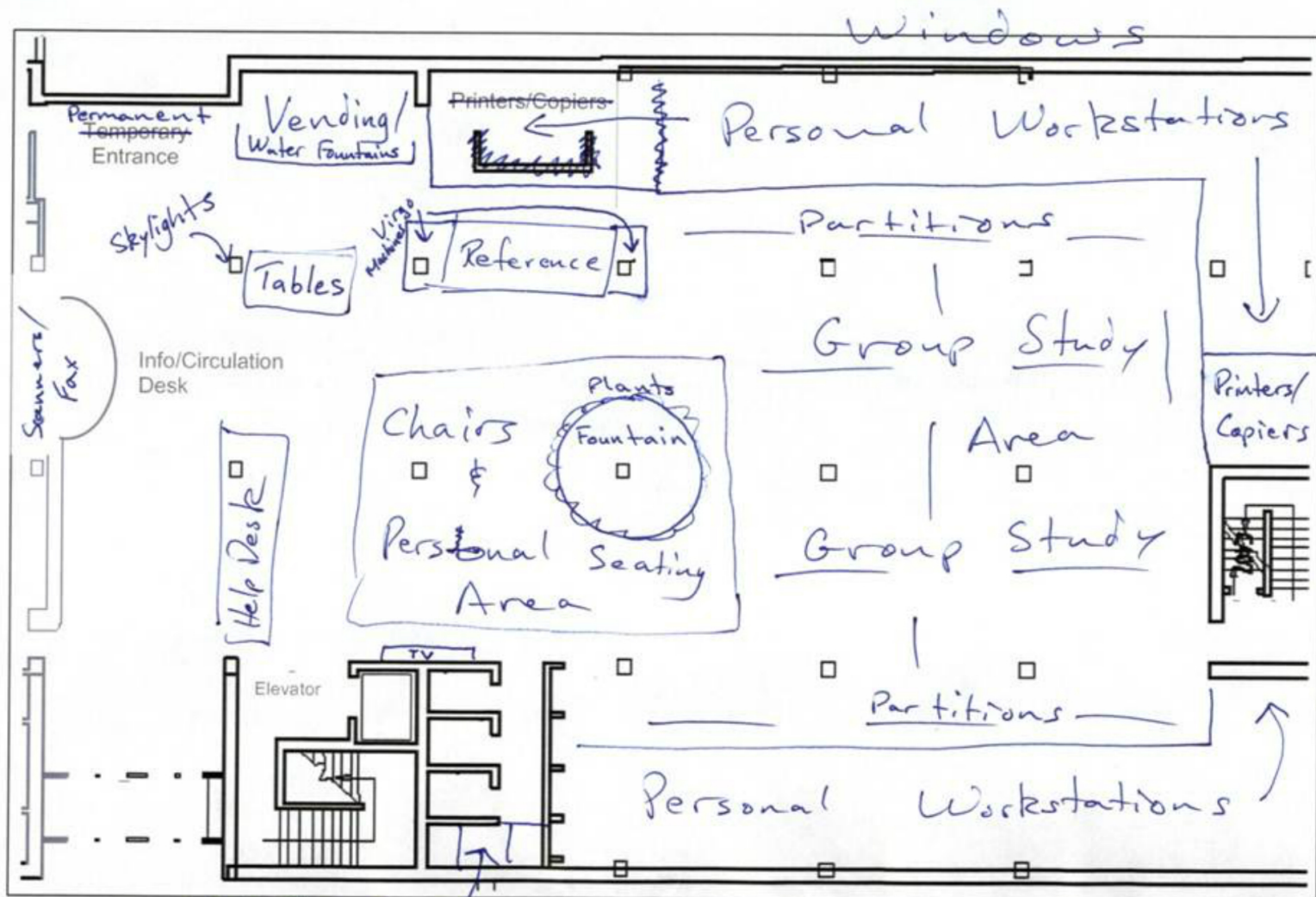
Clemons Library Fourth Floor

What I don't like: cubicles, crowdedness, no outlets

↓ means plants

Do

- 1) Laptops Available for Checkout
- 2) Personal Workstations Near Windows
- 3) Outlets Available
- 4) Move Vending/Better Water Fountain
- 5) Group Area Partitions



Front Door Cell Phone Isolation Chambers

Chambers Clemons Library Fourth Floor

Windows

Windows

Don't

- 1) Proliferate large, unpartitioned wooden tables & chairs
- 2) Eliminate Desktop Scanner Virgo Access
- 3) Add more sofa-style seating in place of dedicated workstations
- 4) Close second entrance
- 5) Leave booth-style restaurant seating along prime window real-estate

Note: Group Study Areas Provide Eyes & Ears to Deter Theft in Personal Workstations

Usability Testing



“Usability is a **quality attribute** that assesses how easy user interfaces are to use. The word “usability” also refers to methods for improving ease-of-use during the design process.”

–[Jakob Nielsen](#)'s Alertbox, August 25, 2003

Think-Aloud Method

- Participants think aloud as they perform tasks
- Users say what they are doing, looking at, feeling, thinking or reading
- Allows facilitator and observer to watch the process of task completion





Facility

Usability Roles

- Project owner
- Facilitator
- Observers
- Participant



What Can We Test For?

- *Learnability*: How easy is it for users to accomplish basic tasks the first time they encounter the design?
- *Efficiency*: Once users have learned the design, how quickly can they perform tasks?
- *Memorability*: When users return to the design after a period of not using it, how easily can they reestablish proficiency?
- *Errors*: How many errors do users make, how severe are these errors, and how easily can they recover from the errors?
- *Satisfaction*: How pleasant is it to use the design?

–<http://www.useit.com/alertbox/20030825.html>

Types Of Tasks

- First impression questions
 - Good for homepages
- Exploratory task
 - Open ended / research oriented
- Directed tasks
 - Specific / answer oriented

Task-Writing Guidelines

- Make it realistic
- Don't be funny
- Give minimal context
- Keep it neutral
- Use natural language
- Leave out clues or hints
- Involve team in writing and/or reviewing tasks

Metrics To Collect

- Success rate
- Task time
- Error rate
- Satisfaction ratings
- Goal setting



While Facilitating

- Monitor tasks, time, comfort, and system
- Observe actions, behaviors, and trends
- Analyze WHY something is not working
- Take notes
- Consider when to interrupt

Prioritize Severity

- HIGH: users could not complete the task or experiences severe frustration; common tasks
- MEDIUM: users had difficulty completing the task; tasks are done somewhat frequently
- LOW: users had little difficulty completing the task; task is low priority
- ENHANCEMENT: an idea for a new feature arose
- NO CHANGE: this design was simple for all or most users

Communicating/Interpreting the Results

- Describe what happened
- Distinguish between facts and interpretation
- Include positive and negative findings
- Avoid troubleshooting!



Questions?



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