How To Make (Almost) Anything Usable

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Fab Academy Recitation • May 3, 2021
Usability

The art & science of designing stuff that works great for people

- More useful & convincing final project
- For your future startup
- Fab Fame™
Today

1. Golden rules

2. Process tips
1. Simplicity

User • Task • Context
2. Visibility and Feedback
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1. Current state?
2. Available features?
3. How to access?
2. Visibility and Feedback
2. Visibility and Feedback

Read: Bret Victor’s rant on future of interaction design
3. Gestalt Laws

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4. Natural Mappings
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5. User’s Language
6. Avoid Modes
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7. Principle of Least Surprise

Your battery is now fully charged!
Timeouts are evil!

7. Principle of Least Surprise

Timeouts are evil!
8. Dialog, not Monolog
9. Tolerate Errors

Operation Could not be completed.
client-error-not-possible

OK
10. Visual Design
Today

1. Golden rules

2. Process tips
The DIA Cycle
Design is Iterative & Agile

Design

Analyse

Implement
Observe and Ask First, Then Start Solving

- Are you looking for a problem for your solution?
- **What** problem to solve, not how to solve it
- **Users**: Who is it for? Other stakeholders?
- **Task**: What is their *actual* problem?
- **Context**: When & where does it occur?
Design:
Search the Solution Space
Implement: Prototype

- Create quick prototypes to get feedback on from others, to improve and fill in your idea(s!). For each idea:
  - Write one-paragraph success story, test it
  - Then draw 3-panel success comic, test it
  - Fake features with Wizard of Oz
Bob is somewhere...

Bob never remembers faces...

If he had recognition glasses...

Glasses register Tim's name

Bob remembers Tim Brown's startup, "Brown.com"
Evaluate: Observe & Ask Constructive Interaction

Now, why did it do that?

Oh, I think you clicked on the wrong icon

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Analyse: Retrospective Testing

I didn't see it. Why don't you make it look like a button?

Do you know why you never tried that option?
Iterate to Expand and Focus Solution

Iterative:
- General overall concepts
- Iteration 1 exploratory
- Iteration 2 clarification
- Iteration 3 resolution

Granularity:
- General overall concepts
  - Coarse significant alternatives
  - Medium intermediate development
  - Fine detailed refinement

Concept generation:
- Initial number of concepts
- New ones added
- Further reduction
- Further addition
- Further reduction

Concept selected
Design Thinking

1. How did engaging with a real person, testing with a real person, change the direction your prototype took?

5. What principle, what tool, would you infuse into the work tomorrow?

After the video questions, try these exercises:
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For Persistent Storage

Paying attention to your user experience pays off

Universal Golden Rules

Simplicity
Visibility & Feedback
Gestalt Laws
Natural Mappings
User’s Language
Avoiding Modes
Princ. of Least Surprise
Dialogs
Error Tolerance
Visual Design

Process Tips: Iterative DIA Cycle (Design Thinking)

Design: Explore problem space first
Implement: Storyboard before building
Analyse: Observe and ask others

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