



Cognitive Walkthrough

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Introduction

- Usability evaluation procedure for a user interface
- Test a prototypes features with an unexperienced user
- This method is based on a theory that users are able to learn about the applications environment through exploring it
- Specific test approach (not heuristic evaluation)

Design Phases



Instructions

Preparation



Participants should be selected based on following criteria:

Hasn't used the prototype/website before (has no prior knowledge)

Someone with an intermediate level of IT proficiency (should be more native users)

Develop a persona for the targeted user

Define tasks the user should perform within the application

e.g. Task Login: —> open browser and launch the website —> enter user credentials

Instructions

Step-by-Step



The following instructions are to be followed so as to ensure valuable results are gotten from the Cognitive walkthrough session.

- ▶ Participants are admonished to perform all the tasks in a chronological manner, no step should be skipped.
- ▶ The follow up questions must be answered based on your experience while interacting with the Interface of the software.
- ▶ While Interacting with the Interface, it is important to write down some of your observations with the Software this will be talked about in the discussion section.
- ▶ All ideas are welcomed during this workshop, please feel free to talk to any of the moderators about what you experience while using the software.

Instructions

After the Workshop



For each step in the task, the following questions should be answered with a YES or NO. In the case of a NO response, this answer will be substantiated by a credible failure story which indicates that a usability problem has been identified.

- ▶ Will the User understand how to start the task?
- ▶ Are the controls easy to locate and interact with?
- ▶ Will the User associate the correct action with the effect trying to be achieved?
- ▶ Was there feedback to indicate you completed (or did not complete) the task?

Strengths:

Great for anticipating usability problems before the design is developed. Requires few resources. Can identify multiple usability problems.

Weaknesses:

Not suited for identifying problems experienced by trained users. Focuses only on specific tasks (limited method). Can not assess efficiency and satisfaction of an interface.

Links

Rieman, J., Davies, S., Hair, D. C., Esemplare, M., Polson, P., & Lewis, C. (1991, March). An automated cognitive walkthrough. In Proceedings of the SIGCHI conference on human factors in computing systems (pp. 427-428).

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<https://ext.eurocontrol.int/ehp/?q=node/1622#:~:text=Disadvantages%3A,problems%20experienced%20by%20trained%20users>

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Contact

usability-siegen.de

fablab-siegen.de