

Principles of User Experience Research

Understanding and Communicating User Needs

DESCRIPTION

This 15-hour activity-based course introduces product teams to key User Experience (UX) research methods for systematically integrating the voice of the customer into product development. Through small group exercises students learn the range of UX/user research options for gathering insights from end users to improve product usability and relevance.

UX Research techniques covered include in-depth interviews, product walk throughs, heuristic and task analysis and card sorting. They learn how to set objectives, select the most appropriate research method to meet the information need, how to plan and design research activities to meet the team's information need at various points in the product development lifecycle.

Students learn how to identify and define personas and use these parameters to recruit a diverse set of participants who match the product's target audience. They also learn about ethical recruiting and how to protect participant privacy. The course covers steps for planning user research, effective moderating techniques, data collection, analysis, and reporting. We cover how to work with stakeholders to ensure organizational priorities are met.

The topics covered can be emphasized and expanded upon to suit student interest and information needs. This training can be delivered in-person, remotely or via on-the-job mentoring. With mentoring your team will learn User Experience (UX) Research skills as they carry out an actual project for your organization.

AUDIENCE

Designers, administrators, program/project/product managers, team leaders, engineers and others who are involved in the conceptualization and creation of interactive applications, services, and physical products.

PREREQUISITES

There are no prerequisites for this class except a deep interest in learning about your end user's world and a willingness to listen closely and challenge assumptions.



TOPICS

General User Experience research skills

- Identifying study objectives that align with business needs and organizational context
- UX Research techniques and selecting the best method for your needs
- Recruiting diverse and outstanding participants, ensuring informed consent
- Tools and methods for remote user research

Moderating user interviews

- Moderating skills to keep an interview conversational and productive
- Using creative interviewing techniques to get below “top of mind” thinking
- Crafting effective questions that match objectives

Observing the customer journey – how to run field studies in-person and remotely

- Special considerations when meeting users in their physical context (e.g., for in-home studies and workplace studies)
- Simulating the purchasing experience via “out of the box” methods
- Observational research techniques to understand the user’s context

Techniques for uncovering the end-user’s mental model of your product

- How to design, set up and run in-person and online card sorts
- Carrying out a task analysis and workflow analysis
- Interviewing techniques that shed light on the user’s understanding of your product

Developing efficient research operations to deliver the best participants

- Using personas to identify critical participant characteristics
- Recruiting considerations for in person vs. live/remote (over the Internet) research
- Creating effective recruiting screeners
- NDAs, Informed Consent, and other key documents participant should sign
- DIY recruiting vs. working with a professional recruiter
- Developing a budget, scheduling, and managing research operations

Transforming user research into actionable results

- Working with stakeholders to arrive at insights that address business needs
- Sharing results with your team through collaborative workshops
- Communicating through storytelling and visualizations



ABOUT YOUR INSTRUCTOR

Kay Corry Aubrey is a usability consultant and trainer who shows her customers how to make their products more easily understandable for users. She specializes in collaborating with product and marketing teams to carry out user research and user interface design for a range of interactive products. Much of her work focuses on improving the usability of products and services directed towards older people. Since founding her company in 2002, her clients have included the Broad Institute, Sivantos, Oracle, Pillo Health, Massachusetts Medical Society, iRobot, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid, and Raytheon.

Kay has educated and trained hundreds of professionals in UX skills across many industries. She teaches UX research and design through the Healthcare Informatics program at Northeastern University and is a RIVA-certified Master Moderator and trainer. Kay is a feature editor for the QRCA VIEWS magazine, a qualitative research journal.

TESTIMONIALS FROM PAST STUDENTS

- *I learned about something almost completely new in a very engaging and comprehensive way...instructor is obviously an expert and is able to convey her expertise very effectively.*
- *For the time allotted, I believe I gained a large set of baseline tools to use in my future usability test. Ms. Aubrey answered all the questions I had regarding unique circumstances that I will encounter in the future.*
- *Very well thought out/taught and extremely easy to understand and comprehensive. The instructor was very knowledgeable and friendly.*
- *Good content, engaging trainer, hands on practice*
- *The whole class had value for me. From the Q&A portion to the demonstration, I have gained valuable experience to use my career*
- *This was a great course; very glad I could attend and I learned a lot that will be very helpful for my work.*

PREVIOUS ORGANIZATIONS WHO HAVE BENEFITED FROM OUR TRAINING

- Abt Associates
- Columbia University Libraries
- Commonwealth of Massachusetts
- The Concord Consortium
- Georgia Pacific Innovation Institute
- Intuitive Surgical
- RIVA Training Institute
- United States Air Force

TRAINING PLAN EXAMPLE Principles of User Experience Research (remote or in-person)

Session 1 5 hours	Session 2 5 hours	Session 3 5 hours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Introductions and course overview ◆ What is User Experience (UX) Research and how does it relate to Design Thinking? ◆ Leveraging the Design Thinking process to learn from your end users ◆ The Jobs to be Done, Six Minds, and User Experience Umbrella, and Elements of User Experience frameworks for understanding and analyzing the user's experience ◆ Developing personas, using the "DIL0" method to understand their key tasks and overall journey (small group exercise) ◆ Nielsen-Mollich usability heuristics for evaluating a user interface ◆ Key UX concepts: Design Patterns and Gestalt Principles ◆ The role of attention, mental model, and affordances in observing,, designing and evaluating the user experience <p><u>Homework 1.</u> What is the information architecture of your spice cabinet?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Recap of session 1 ◆ Students share experiences and learnings from homework #1. Did you use an organizational scheme such as alphabetically, by when you use the spice, by whether the spice is savory or sweet, by country of origin., by a combination of dimensions? Etc.) ◆ Collaborative techniques for developing objectives for your user research ◆ Selecting the best UX research method for formative and summative usability ◆ Tips for developing a discussion guide for user interviews ◆ Introduction to usability testing, planning steps ◆ Recruiting users who will deliver the richest insights ◆ Tools and online platforms for user research (Mural and UserTesting.com) <p><u>Homework 2</u> Students run their own remote or in-person usability study with at least 3 participants. They can run these studies as individuals or paired up with people from their team.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Recap of session 2 ◆ Teams share experiences and learnings from homework #2 ◆ Moderating an interview ◆ Moderating a usability study ◆ Data collection methods ◆ Managing observers during a user interview and usability study ◆ Involving stakeholders in the UX process ◆ Collaborative techniques for analyzing & synthesizing research data ◆ Techniques for reporting, tracking and resolving feedback from user interviews and usability testing ◆ Respecting client & participant privacy and confidentiality <p>Group debrief, final teaching points, closing comments, and resources for expanding your knowledge of UX. Students complete evaluation form.</p>