SEEKING SYMBIOSIS:
Bringing User-Centered Design & Learner-Centered Practice
Into Harmony

Workshop Toolkit

**Learner-Centered Design**

*Key Points to Consider*

- Understanding is the goal
- Motivation is the basis
- Diversity of learners is the norm
- Growth of learners is the challenge
- Consider context of the guide, tasks users are asked to do, construction of knowledge and meaning for learners, and collaborative learning strategies (Soloway et. al., 1994)

**Design Approach**

- Effective learner-centered design is based on the integration of learning theory and usability principles. As designers we need to understand the process of learning-centered design and how in that process usability and user experience can be integrated with instructional design concepts, techniques, and practices
- Learner-centered design is based on **authentic learning contexts**, **problem-based** and **situated** learning. It requires us to pay attention to affect and motivation and should include metacognitive strategies.

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References and Further Reading


Accessibility

**Key Points to Consider**

- Use easy-to-read fonts (sans serif)
- Use real text when possible, not text within graphics
- Always provide an alt-text version if you want to include a graphics-based object, like an infographic
- Write in plain language
- Headings on tables
- Avoid [click here](#) and “mystery links”
- Caption and include transcripts for other media

(University of Illinois, n.d.)

Tips

- Be flexible and adaptable to different users’ needs or preferences
- Consider users first and design for them
- Aim for usability across multiple platforms and technology setups
- Be willing to make design or functionality adjustments to ensure usability
- Align with standards for accessible web design

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**Toolkit**

- Web Accessibility Initiative’s Design and Develop Overview
- Wave Web Accessibility Evaluation Tool
- Association of Research Libraries’ Web Accessibility Toolkit

**References and Further Reading**


**Usability**

*Key Points to Consider*

- Learnability
- Efficiency
- Memorability
- Errors
- Satisfaction
  
  (Nielsen, 2012)

**Usability Testing**

*Can be done before the product has been designed or implemented:*

- Focus groups or surveys
- Card sorting
  
  - Can be done using online tool (Proven by Users offers a free plan)

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• Wireframe
  • Can be done on paper or using a free online tool like Mockflow (opt for the Basic plan). Adobe XD is also an option, but the learning curve is steeper.

*Can be done once the product has been implemented:*
• Task-based usability testing
  • The UX @ Harvard Library wiki offers usability testing scripts and project plan templates. A number of university libraries also make their usability testing scripts and reports available online.
• First-click testing
  • Can be done using a free online tool (e.g. Optimal Workshop)
• Feedback forms or satisfaction surveys

**User Experience and Accessibility**

• A web for everyone: designing accessible user experiences (Horton & Queensberry, 2015) looks at creating a user experience with a diverse audience in mind.
• Universal Design Center, California State University
• Accessibility, Usability, and Inclusion (W3C)

**References and Further Reading**


Appendix – Discussion prompts

Consider your LibGuides

- Is the content accurate?
- Is the content relevant to your learners?
- Is the content sequenced logically and chunked meaningfully?
- Is the vocabulary and terminology easily understandable and appropriate for your learners?
- Are abstract concepts illustrated with concrete, specific examples?
- Do your guides offer tools (handouts/aids, glossaries, help menus, etc.) that support learning?
- Are your fonts (color, saturation, style, etc.) easy to read?
- Will learners always know where they are and how to get where they want to go in the guide?
- Are your guides accessible?
- Do your guides offer games, simulations, cases, activities, etc. that gain the attention or increase the motivation of your learners?
- Do your guides stimulate the desire for further inquiry?
- Do your guides provide formative or summative feedback for your learners?
- Are your guides engaging, enjoyable, and interesting?