

The GenderMag Method

To Find and Fix Gender-Inclusiveness “Bugs” in Software

Updates May 2018 from: Margaret Burnett, Anita Sarma, Claudia Hilderbrand,
Zoe Steine-Hanson, Chris Mendez, Christopher Perdriau



Tim

Individual differences in ways people use software features often cluster by gender – especially when problem solving, such as understanding visualizations, figuring out budgets, or debugging. However, many software features are inadvertently designed to support only problem-solving styles favored mainly by men.

The GenderMag method helps software developers & usability professionals find and fix software features with such gender-inclusiveness “bugs”.

How the GenderMag Method Works



Pat(rick)



Abi

- At the GenderMag method’s core are five problem-solving facets that matter to software’s gender-inclusiveness:
 - a user’s motivations for using the software,
 - their information processing style,
 - their computer self-efficacy,
 - their attitude towards risk, &
 - their ways of learning new technology.
- The GenderMag method brings these facets to life with 4 personas (Tim, Abi, and 2 Pat’s), and sets the personas and facets into a simple, systematic process (the GenderMag Cognitive Walkthrough).
- Software developers and usability professionals can download the GenderMag “kit” to follow the process. They can then fix the issues they find to remove barriers that may disproportionately affect one gender.

In a study of 17 software teams using GenderMag, the teams found gender biases in 12%-100% of their own software (average 32%).



Pat(ricia)

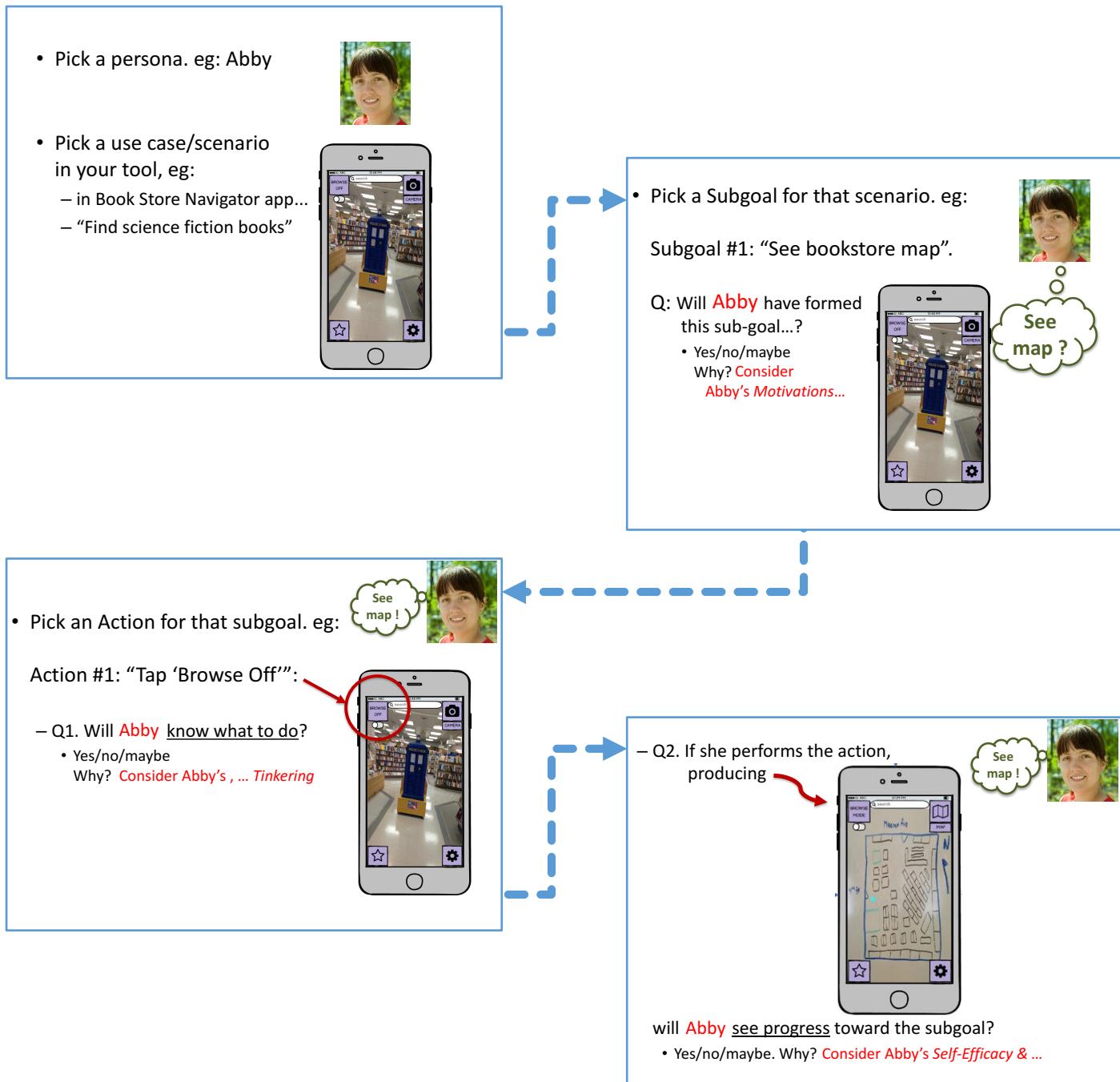
We are now collecting **Best Practices on how to Fix** gender-inclusivity issues in software. Please contact us if you want to know more about GenderMag or about Best Practices to make software gender-inclusive.

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A GenderMag Evaluation Looks Like This:



- Pick a use case/scenario in your tool, eg:
 - in Book Store Navigator app...
 - “Find science fiction books”



- Pick a Subgoal for that scenario. eg:

Subgoal #1: “See bookstore map”.



- Pick an Action for that subgoal. eg:



- Q1. Will **Abby** know what to do?
 - Yes/no/maybe
Why? Consider **Abby's**, ... *Tinkering*



will **Abby** see progress toward the subgoal?

- Yes/no/maybe. Why? Consider **Abby's Self-Efficacy** & ...

