

Example learning journal entries on group work

Entry 1



As a group we decided to meet up and catch up on the work we had done on our slides and get an idea of what we were going to talk about in are sections of the presentation. We agreed that I would put the initial set of group slides together so we only had one document that was passed around and changed rather than 4. We found this worked a lot better as it made it easy to manage any changes made. We planned to meet again on <date>, unfortunately I did not make it to the final meeting but I made sure that I had called the group I good time and allocated someone else to take over on any changes needed on the slides. That evening I got in contact with the group to catch up on what was said and done during the meeting.

Entry 2



One of the things I've discovered about myself through doing group work in this course, and at university generally, is that I'm highly intolerant of people who I perceive as not putting enough effort in... I find it incredibly difficult to come to terms with the idea of my own grades being brought down because other group members aren't as motivated. If people aren't actively contributing I get annoyed without ever making an attempt to find out why. I very quickly lose faith that they will have something valuable to contribute and rather than encouraging them I simply take on their share of the work myself... I should give people the chance to offer their opinions without being afraid of being shot down when I insist on the methods I'm used to. This was particularly apparent in the affective computing presentation where one student who I'd thought wasn't doing any work because there was no contribution on the GoogleDoc had actually done a significant amount of research. If I'd helped provide an environment where this student was comfortable to communicate his ideas, our presentation could have benefitted.

Example learning journal entries on readings

Entry 3

I read the article Rethinking 'Multi-user': an In-the-wild study of how groups approach a walk-up-and-use table top interface by Paul Marshall, Richad Morris, Yvone Rodgers Stefan Kreitmayer and Matt Davies. This article was based on multi-touch table top technology that is now moving into 'the wild' and away from labs. This particular table top was placed in a tourist information centre to help describe how groups of people would approach the table top device and interact with it as well as e different social interactions that also transpired when different groups of people used the device. I learned a great deal of where multi touch technology came from and the meaning of multi-touch table top which assumes fairly large groups of people can use it at the same time, and how it has now evolved to be understandable and usable by any human with any sort of background or profession. They found that groups did to come to the table at the same time but at least one person would walk up and use it then they would wave group members over to take a look or use the touch screen. But unfortunately they also discovered that the multi-user interaction had a few problems where different groups would have to wait, while other groups were still planning there day.

Entry 4

In her paper entitled Moving on from Weiser's Vision of Calm Computing: Engaging UbiComp Experiences, Rogers (2006) argues the need 'for researchers to take a critical stance' and adopt a more realistic outlook, in particular regarding ethics. Rogers argues that we haven't realised Weiser's vision because of ethics, and questions whether we would actually want to live in the world he envisions – letting computers control every aspect of our lives could be dangerous in terms of over-reliance, technical problems and even cyber terrorism. Instead Rogers proposes a shift from 'proactive computing to proactive people', by this she means a world where computers actively engage in helping users achieve what they set out to do, rather than doing it for them. By making slight changes to the environment, computers can enable humans to achieve goals they thought unattainable or never even considered. Personally I prefer Rogers' vision over Weiser's, despite being a generation Y, technology lover, I still prefer to be in control but assisted by technology, rather than technology reliant.... I also agree with the three key areas Rogers' highlights as the most promising avenues for ubicomp:

- Playful and learning practices
- Scientific practices
- Persuasive practices

Working in the creative industry, technology is an integral part of my job, however I know I could not rely on it be creative or innovative and I wouldn't want to. Many issues regarding ubicomp go far beyond computer science, into realms of psychology, ethics and morals – issues which are fundamental to adoption and therefore must not be overlooked.

Example learning journal entries on lecture content

Entry 5



Good/Bad Design: The Computer Already Knows!

This week I have noticed two separate designs which not only appear to be poor in a usability sense, but are strange in that the system appears to already know about the flaw. The first is a supermarket self-checkout system at which the user can either pay by card or cash. To pay by card, the user must insert their card into the card reader. To pay by cash, the user simply drops coins into a coin collector and/or feeds notes into a slot. However, before doing either of these things, the user must select from the touchscreen which method of payment they intend to use. It is easy for the user to forget to do this as once the shopping has all been scanned the user's attention naturally turns to the payment area of the checkout. If, having forgotten to select a payment method, the user then inserts their credit card into the card reader, the machine issues a warning that the payment method has not been selected and requests that the user removes their card and selects a method. **This is inefficient and unnecessary, given that the machine already knows what the payment method is, by virtue of the fact that a card has been inserted.**

In a similar vein, the Nat West online banking system allows payments to be sent to another account, providing that the payee's account is set up using a card reader and code number system. The card reader issues two numbers, separated by spaces, which must then be entered into a input box in a form on the bank website. Instructions next to the input box request that the user enter the numbers without the spaces in-between. This is confusing, and if the instruction is not noticed, the number is entered incorrectly and the process has to be started all over again. That the instruction is there at all implies that the designers know that some people will attempt to enter the number including the spaces, **so why not just accept the number with or without spaces?**

Entry 6



In lecture this week we discussed human cognition and action and the user centered design process again. I found Gestalt's and Fitt's Law to be very interesting. I think its so cool how these things actually have names and are analyzed. These things seem to just be engrained in our minds and we don't think twice about their meaning and how important they really are to design. The interaction online for Fitt's Law was a cool way of helping us to understand what Fitt's Law is and demonstrates what the model formula given in the lecture tells us. You can really tell a difference in the speed of the person clicking the green rectangle when the distance the mouse needs to move and thickness of the reactance changes. When the rectangle is thick, there is more room for error, so it is easier for the user to click it quicker. Same goes for when the rectangle is close to where the user last clicked. When this is the case, the curser doesn't need to move very far, so the user will be able to click the rectangle faster. I can really see how this goes into deciding the layouts of the webpages and applications that are used all the time!