**Page ID**:**2.3 Understand**

**Primary Content**

**Title**

Enter the **page title** here (REQUIRED).

**Understand**

**Page Content**

Enter the **content** here (REQUIRED).

**The Understand phase determines the users and the context of use before investing in a design solution.**

Products are generally developed with a particular user (or groups of users) in mind, and they are generally intended to fulfill a need in a particular setting. Building a full description of the problem space is key to the design of a solution.

The Understand phase has the following objectives:

* **Understand the user.** There are many ways that users of the product might be characterized. What is the user’s role and/or professional background? What skills and training would be expected of a typical user? Are there a variety of user types or do they all belong in the same group?
* **Understand the task.** Products generally support completion of a task.What is the goal that the user is aiming to accomplish in the task? What are the steps? What are the cognitive and perceptual demands that the task imposes on a user? Are there physical requirements, such as lifting or fine motor control?
* **Understand the workflow.** What is the overall process that the task rests within? How does task completion depend on interactions with other users and other systems?
* **Understand the use environment.** What is the setting for task completion? For example, is it in a clinic, in an office, or in a home? Are there time pressures? What are potential distractions?
* **Understand the technology.** What hardware, software, and/or devices are included in the task, workflow, or environment? What level of training or experience is required for end users to make effective use of the technology?

Common methods and activities employed in support of these objectives are: User Interview, Observation, and Clinical Workflow Modeling.

When an existing and/or competing design solution(s) are available, the Understand phase may include a supplemental objective:

* **Evaluate existing and/or competing solutions.** What usability issues are present in the existing systems? To what degree are existing systems able to meet user needs? Are there performance metrics that can collected to benchmark anticipated design solutions?

Common methods and activities employed in support of these objectives are: Heuristic Evaluation and Usability Walkthrough.

To browse a complete listing of methods, please see our Methods page.

**Excerpt**

Summary text for WordPress

The Understand phase determines the users and the context of use before investing in a design solution.