CS352 E-campus

Learning about your users (cont.).:
The field interview

PRICPE and where we are

Predispositions:
  Initiated at project idea/inception.
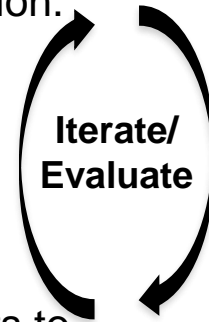 Gives us things to Research.
Research:
  Empirical, other kinds of research
  possible too.
  Gives us Insights.
Insights:
  Lead to requirements and Concepts to
  pursue.
Concepts:
  Lead to Prototypes

Iterate/ Evaluate

Field Interviews

- A.k.a. "Contextual interview".
- Interview in context of field observation.
- Has main elements of observation (next lecture)
  - PLUS interview elements (prev. lecture)...
  - ...ADJUSTED to be more effective for gathering in-the-field information.
- How:
  - Use your interview "how to"s
    - while avoiding the Top Mistakes of field interviewing.

Review: interview "how to"s

- Aim: get us from "P" to "I" using "R".
- The general guidelines:
  - Goals set "P", avoid complex, avoid jargon, avoid leading questions, precise recording.
  - These are hard! (saw in the interview activity.)
- The 4 key issues.
  - Goals, relationship, triangulate, pilot.
- The sequence.
  - Intro, warm-up, main (easy-to-hard), cool-down, closing.

4

Top mistakes in field interviewing

1. Thinking you're in the field when you're not.

    What is NOT "the field":

    - Usability lab.
    - Conference room.
    - A place in "the field" where the work is NOT actually being done.

    Solution:

    - Be prepared to move the interview to wherever the work really gets done.

5

2. Accepting a "representative" user.

- You DON'T want to interview:
  - Someone who used to do the job.
  - Someone who tells others how to do the job but doesn't actually participate in it.
  - Solutions:
    - You can interview other stakeholders, but don't confuse them with users.
    - But ultimately, you want the users who really do the work.

6

Using "I can't see the work live" as an excuse not to field-interview.

- Sometimes the work you need to see:
  - is infrequent.
  - takes place over long periods of time.
  - is confidential.
  - so you assume you can't see it.
- Solution: Retrospective interviews.
  - Re-create the work done (RECENTLY).
  - Include the real artifacts.
  - Be careful not to let user skip anything.

4. Not getting low-level details.

- Omitting details, one-word answers, filtering out everything except what you expected.
  - Did you experience these in your practice activity?
- Accepting vague generalities.
  - "We <u>usually</u> buy fresh produce."
  - "<u>You</u> can tell it's fresh from the date."
- Solution: Make them describe a real example!
  - Use past tense. "Last time you shopped, what exactly did you buy?"

5. Not being honest about user's reactions.

- Users follow social conversational norms to be polite.
- So remember that hesitantly appearing to agree/disagree sometimes means the opposite.
  - Do you think this dress makes me look fat?
  - Did you think the test was too hard to be fair?

9

6. Establishing the wrong relationship

- Examples:
  - I'm busy. Give me what I need fast.
  - I'm smart. So cater to my vantage point.
  - I'm important. So give all the data I seek.
  - I'm unimportant: talk about whatever you want.
- Solution:
  - Apprenticeship model. Your job is to learn how to do that task.
    - Listen, learn, be humble, don't judge.
    - People usually do things for a reason.

10

Field interview summary

- Interviews in a real-world setting.
- Combines interview with the observation of the "context".
- More on observations next lecture.
- In your project, you'll be doing field interview(s) and/or observations.

11