Usability Test Procedure

How many examiners are required?

The test procedure can technically be accomplished with just one examiner, but ideally there should be at least two. With two examiners, one can be designated to guide the user through the testing of the prototype, while the other is responsible for documenting the results of this testing process while also noting any questions or concerns that the user has regarding the prototype.

What equipment will the examiners need?

As far as equipment goes, the examiners simply need access to a computer with an internet connection. This will allow them to download and access our computer prototype as well as all the necessary test materials, the latter of which are available in the “Low Fidelity Prototyping and Test Procedure” section of our website. For the examiner who is taking notes, a data collection sheet is included in the test materials, but they may wish to also have a physical notebook if they prefer to take notes by hand.

How should the prototype be handled? (manual/documentation)

The provided user manual should include all the details necessary to install and then use the prototype.

How will you instruct your examiners to proceed?

The testing procedure should essentially just follow the test script which is included in the test material. The examiners should read the “Observer Briefing” document before they begin the testing, so that they have a clear understanding

of how to proceed. The next two questions are essentially answered in the "Observer Briefing" document, but we will reiterate the main points.

How should the examiners treat the test subjects, what should they tell them?

The examiners should make it clear to the testers that they are not the ones being tested, the prototype is. Furthermore, it is important for the examiners to be patient with the testers. This means that if, for instance, the tester is having an issue completing a certain task, the examiner should let them know that it's fine, and that this is most likely due to a shortcoming in the design of the prototype.

What should the examiners avoid doing/telling the test subjects??

Continuing on the point that the prototype is being tested and not the testers, the examiners should avoid telling the testers how to accomplish the desired tasks. We aren't trying to see if a tester is capable of following a series of commands to accomplish a task, but rather to see if the prototype is intuitive enough that it allows the tester to accomplish the tasks without guidance.

What/How/When should the examiners measure?

After each task is attempted, the examiner who is documenting the results should take note of whether or not the task was completed, how long it took to complete, as well as how intuitive the task was to complete. They may also add any questions, comments, or concerns that the tester has at any point.