



[Wk6] Start Here: Contextual Inquiry

[Erin Ashley Sheets](#)

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Contextual Inquiry

Of all the UX research methods out there for understanding users and their needs, contextual inquiry is by far the most commonly used in industry (in my experience) and most effective for truly understanding the people you're designing for and what they really need from the products you create for them.

There's so much research in psychology, anthropology, and computer science that clearly shows us that it is not possible to fully understand how people learn or work if the unit of study is the unaided individual with no access to other people or to artifacts for accomplishing the task at hand. **We have to know people's context in order to design effectively for them.** Context includes the relations among individuals, artifacts, and social groups (there's so much more to this, but we are just starting with a shallow dive). This week we'll explore one methodology for studying the context in which users work so that we can better create meaningful products.

Read

1. [Contextual Inquiry.pdf](#)

No discussion this week, quiz due Wednesday

Lab

You'll be putting the lessons from this week's reading into practice and designing your own contextual inquiry

Unread



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