Usability Notes Checklist

Fun: Make the experience fun and rewarding for the tester, facilitator, and the audience watching screen from another room. Use humor, snacks, drinks, etc.

Prominent UI People: Steve Krug, Don Norman, Laura Klein, Ginny Radix.

Books: Rocket Surgery Made Easy, Don’t Make Me Think, Design of Everyday Things, UX for Lean Startups, Letting Go of the Words.

Usability: Design that a person of average or below average skill can use without it being more trouble than it is worth.

Usability Testing: Watching people try to use what you created while they talk about it out loud.

Usability Problems: Bad wording, ambiguity, multiple definitions, technical language, alignment, proximity, scale, etc.

Conflicts of Interest: In any organization you have multiple interests working on a single product (example: developers, marketers, user experience, sales people, finance people, hr, etc.). Each interest has their separate goals such as technical ease, aesthetics, actionable design, onboarding, ease of use, ets. Many times people will disguise their personal opinions as facts in order to push their agenda and in turn will sacrifice the quality of the overall product.

Avoiding Conflicts of Interest Best Practices - Proper Usability Testing: Once a month test with three people in the morning (Ex: First Friday or Third Thursday). Follow Steve Krug Script Usability Testing Script. Have all departments watch and listen to the testing screen in a separate room. Bribe them to show up with good food and make it a fun event. Afterward have each department write down the three issues that were most serious and most frequently occurring. Combine all the departments issues and prioritize the most commonly marked issues.

Qualifying criteria for usability testers: Make sure you qualify the testers. Early on they don’t have to be part of your target market, although it is best to test your target customer. Example of criteria, English speaking, has used a web browser, has used a spreadsheet, has used LinkedIn, FB.

Usability Testing Other Solutions: You should usability test other people’s solutions and competitors to get ideas on user experience. If you don’t have mockups you can usability test competitors to start thinking ahead about your own user design.

Scheduling Usability Tests: Don’t schedule more than three to five people. No labs or mirrors. Better to test in person but you can test remotely. Schedule once a month consistently. Don’t schedule around release dates because those can constantly shift and be moved back.

Prototyping: Test prototypes even before anything is developed. The early you can identify issues, the cheaper they are to fix. Some prototyping software includes: Balsamic, Axure, Invision.

Tweak Don’t Redesign: Following agile principles, don’t create large reports from usability testing and keep the changes you make from testing as small tweaks and not large redesigns.

Websites for Usability Testing: Usertesting.com