



Use Cases Exposed

This week's interview:
Getting to Know the Happy Path

HeadFirst: Hello there, Main Path.

Happy Path: Actually, I prefer to be called "Happy Path." I know a lot of books refer to me as "Main Path," but I find lots more people remember who I am when I go by "Happy Path."

HeadFirst: Oh, I apologize. Well, in any case, it's great to have you with us today, Happy Path, and you're right on time, too.

Happy Path: Thanks... I'm always on time, that's really important to me.

HeadFirst: Is that right? You're *never* late?

Happy Path: Nope, not a single time. I never miss an appointment, either. I never make a mistake, nothing ever goes unexpectedly... you can really count on me to come through just like you want, every time.

HeadFirst: That's quite a statement to make.

Happy Path: Well, it's just part of who I am.

HeadFirst: And that's how you got your name? You make people happy by always being on time and never making a mistake?

Happy Path: No, but that's close. They call me "Happy Path" because when you're hanging out with me, everything goes just as you'd hope. Nothing ever goes wrong when the "Happy Path" is at the wheel.

HeadFirst: I have to admit, I'm still a bit amazed that nothing ever goes wrong around you. Are you sure you're living in the real world?

Happy Path: Well, don't get me wrong... things definitely go wrong in the real world. But when that happens, I just hand things off to my buddy, Alternate Path.

HeadFirst: Oh, I think I see now... so things can go wrong, but that's Alternate Path's job to handle.

Happy Path: Yeah, pretty much. But I don't worry too much about that. My job is to take care of things when the sun is shining and things are going just like people expect.

HeadFirst: Wow, that must be really satisfying.

Happy Path: Well, most of the time it is. But things do tend to go wrong a lot. It seems like hardly anyone sticks with me from start to finish. Alternate Path usually gets involved at some point, but we get along well, so it's no big deal.

HeadFirst: Do you ever feel like Alternate Path is butting in? I could imagine some tension there...

Happy Path: No, not at all. I mean, we're all after the same thing: getting the customer to their goal, and making sure they're satisfied. And once we're defined well, actually coding an application is a lot simpler.

HeadFirst: Well, you heard it here folks. Next week, we'll try and catch up with Alternate Path, and get her side of the story. Until then, try and stay on the Happy Path, but remember to plan for problems!