



## Use Cases Exposed

This week's interview:  
Confessions of an Alternate Path

**HeadFirst:** Hello, Alternate Path. We've been hearing that you're really unhappy these days. Tell us what's going on.

**Alternate Path:** I just don't feel very included sometimes. I mean, you can hardly put together a decent use case without me, but I still seem to get ignored all the time.

**HeadFirst:** Ignored? But you just said you're part of almost every use case. It sounds like you're quite important, really.

**Alternate Path:** Sure, it may *sound* that way. But even when I'm part of a use case, I can get skipped over for some other set of steps. It really sucks... it's like I'm not even there!

**HeadFirst:** Can you give us an example?

**Alternate Path:** Just the other day, I was part of a use case for buying a CD at this great new online store, Musicology. I was so excited... but it turned out that I handled the situation when the customer's credit card was rejected.

**HeadFirst:** Well, that sounds like a really important job! So what's the problem?

**Alternate Path:** Well, yeah, I guess it's important, but I always get passed over. It seems like everyone was ordering CDs, but their credit cards were all getting accepted. *Even though I was part of the use case, I wasn't part of the most common scenarios.*

**HeadFirst:** Oh, I see. So unless someone's credit card was rejected, you were never involved.

**Alternate Path:** Exactly! And the finance and security guys loved me, they just went on and on about how much I'm worth to the company, but who wants to sit there unused all the time?

**HeadFirst:** I'm starting to get the picture. But you're still helping the use case, right? Even if you're not used all the time, you're bound to get called on once in a while.

**Alternate Path:** That's true; we all do have the same goal. I just didn't realize that I could be important to the use case and still hardly ever get noticed.

**HeadFirst:** Well, just think... the use case wouldn't be complete without you.

**Alternate Path:** Yeah, that's what 3.1 and 4.1 keep telling me. Of course, they're part of the alternate path for when customers already have an account on the system, so they get used constantly. Easy for them to say!

**HeadFirst:** Hang in there, Alternate Path. We know you're an important part of the use case!