Don’t Make Me Think

Joshua Beaulieu

Don’t Make Me Think by Steve Krug is a book that is all about the usability of your product. Krug defines usability as a person of average ability and experience being able to figure out how to use the product without it causing more problems than it solves. He believes that this book can help you become a better designer and build better products. The book is broken up into a few sections the first is about guiding principles.

The first five chapters are all about guiding the reader into becoming a better designer and setting them up to build better products. Krug believes that the most important rule to usability is that the product needs to be self-explanatory. A user should not be confused by your product and shouldn’t be expected to have to put in effort trying to figure out how to make it work. He goes into details on how self-explanatory your product should be. In his onion you should be able to give your product to someone that has some experience with your type of product without them getting confused. Krug believes that this is so important as it makes using the product feel effortless, instead of wasting the time and energy of the user. When you waste people’s time they will not come back to use your product again.

When making a webpage you need to realize that people don’t read the page they are going to scan it. So Krug believes that you need to design the page knowing that people will not read everything they will just scan for what they need. To do this you need to make sure that you do a good job breaking up the page into clearly defined areas. It also helps to make what is clickable more obvious so the user can find what they need faster and get less frustrated with your product. A website that makes users have to do a lot of reading to find what they need will just frustrate the user to the point of never using the site again. The next two chapters are about what you need to get right when designing a product.

Krug believes that one of the most important things that needs to be right on a web page is navigation. People won’t use your web site if they can’t find the information they are looking for, or they can’t perform the task that the page is supposed to do. With good navigation people will be able to tell what is on your webpage the first time they visit it. If navigation is done right people will also be able to use your website the first time with no trouble. This is why it’s so important to make sure that people can navigate your site.

Krug believes that testing is very important when it comes to making sure your website is user friendly. Testing lets you see what is unclear, what is missing, and what makes it confusing to the user. Krug thinks that you should be testing as early as possible and to make sure you keep testing during the development process. He breaks down all the proper points that need to be made when testing your product with people. After you do the testing with the user you need to decide what to fix from the feedback you get. Krug thinks it’s a good idea to create an ordered list of what’s most important and less important so you can focus more on the serious problems.

Overall I really enjoyed this book as it has taught me to look at the development process in a different way. It has given me some good ideas when it comes to devolving and what I need to do in order to make sure I make the best product possible. I would recommend this book to any student in computer science as it will help them get a better understanding on how to become a better developer.