

Chapter 6: Constructing design informing models

This chapter was all about envisioning scenarios of how users might use your product, or how your product functions, considering a wide variety of situations from success to failure of those interactions, letting these scenarios influence your design. We are at the stage of analyzing or understanding user work and needs.

Some keywords for this are, Persona, barrier, scenario, story board, social model, user class, flow model, work roles, work environment model, and hierarchical task inventory. These are all things that should be considered when you are forming your models.

A work role is like your job title. So who is your user? What is the task that they are out to do? Who are they as a human being? For example if I am a web person, and my job title is Content Manager, my task is to update the information on the home page, and my user class is that I am a trained employee who knows about our personal Content Management System and I can easily navigate there. But what is not included is something like, if someones' computer breaks, I don't fix that. That's not my job so I know nothing about that.

Models can also concern social situations. For example, consider a situation in which there's a presenter, local audience, and remote audience, and they are all standing in the same area that has an ambience, work domain constraints. We observe the concerns which are the blue cloud things, and how they are creating influences. Each person has their thoughts, the main speaker is saying "I want to communicate" which influences an event (black arrow) that says "tell me what to talk about". And then the people in the audience are thinking "I want to learn something", which influences them asking "tell us what you are doing, explain your diagrams". That's just a quick example on how creating diagrams can make you think a little deeper about how an audience might react.

Hierarchical task inventories also come into play. Here we can list out all of the options that a system could provide. From this we would take our work roles, and we can make another chart that looks like the last social chart, and think, "how are these people with these qualities going to interact with this system", what kinds of problems or barriers might they run into? Think and consider these human elements and how they would interact with your product. What do you need to change to cater to those needs?

IDEO does something very similar which they teach in their book The Field Guide to Human Centered Design. And here they are doing the same thing except taking into consideration resource flows. By observing these flows they are looking to create efficiency.

Link to IDEO

1. <http://www.designkit.org/resources/1>
2. <http://www.designkit.org/methods/61>