



# How to Test Your Sketches with Your Users

## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO TEST WITH YOUR USERS?

Now you have hand-sketched prototypes, you want to make sure they will actually work for your users. This one step can save you a lot of valuable resources; you will be able to catch issues that make it difficult for your users to achieve their goals.

## 1 BEFORE YOU START

### *What do you want to find out?*

First, you need to develop your goals for the test. Use your storyboard to determine what your user needs to be able to accomplish within your design. For example, in our timesheet designs, we wanted to make sure that users are able to edit, confirm and vocally enter timesheet entries on their mobile phone. We also had alternatives for some screens and we wanted to understand which resonated most with users.

### *How will you test?*

Now you can create tasks to address each of your goals. Each task should be concise, focus on only one goal, and should be written in a way that reflects how a real user might interact with your design – participants should be able to put themselves “in the shoes” of someone who would be using the app.

### *Who should you test?*

Ideally, your participants will be very similar to the end user of your product. It may help to refer to your personas to see what type of people you need.

If your end users are people working for your company, you can find users within your own organization. For a broader audience, you can ask your friends and family. In person validations are best, but if this is not possible you can conduct it remotely using our Research Tool.

We recommend that you find around 5 users for each test and schedule test sessions in advance. Little gifts are always useful in ensuring that users are happy to give their time and will show up if scheduled.

### *Final prep*

Gather your test materials and conduct a practice run to make sure that everything runs smoothly. Finally, grab a buddy to take notes while you conduct the session... and test!

## 2 DURING THE TEST

### *Beginning the test*

- Be upfront and clear with your participants about what the meeting is about, what they will be doing, and how long it will take
- Build a rapport with them; ask about their day to help them feel comfortable
- Ask them about their backgrounds – this information will help you later in analysis to better understand where your users are coming from
- Keep your discussion light and casual, make participants feel like they can confide in you if there is anything that needs to be improved in your designs

### *Conducting the test*

- Remind users to “think aloud” as they are doing each task, several times if necessary
- Prompt users to share more about their thoughts by asking additional questions
- Learn about your users’ expectations by asking things like “How would you expect to accomplish this task?” or “What is missing on this screen?”
- Listen to your participants and capture as much as possible (this is where your note taker comes in handy), but only record with their permission
- Take note of points of confusion, and the things they love about the design

### *Wrapping up the test*

- When the tasks are complete, ask a few general wrap-up questions:
  - *What did you like most about the design?*
  - *What did you like the least?*
  - *Any other thoughts or comments?*
- Make sure the session only takes as long as you promised it would
- Thank your users, give them their gift, and let them enjoy the rest of their day!

## 3 AFTER THE TEST

### *Analyze your results*

When all of your sessions are complete (and not before!), you are ready to analyze and share your results. Go through your notes from each test, capture findings on sticky notes, and find commonalities in the feedback:

- *What are the top 3 most liked features? Top 3 least liked?*
- *Did multiple users have an issue with the same feature? Such finding can present a great opportunity to improve your designs.*

### *Share your results*

Sharing what you found with your team can be an art in itself, particularly if your team is new to design testing. Make sure to include the good results as well as the bad. You can support your recommendations:

- *With numbers wherever possible (e.g. “I recommend we rework the entry screen, because 4/5 users were confused about how this might help them.”)*
- *Or with quotes from the users (e.g. “One user mentioned that editing screen was not intuitive at all.”)*

Tailor your report to the people who have the power to decide if and how it will be acted upon and provide your own recommendations around what should be changed. Improve your designs based on the results!