Danda, Srujana
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The UX Book: Chapter 5

This chapter spoke about a gap existing between analysis and design, taking place in two spans. These include needs and requirements, as well as design informing models, the former of which will be covered in this chapter.

Analysis, or contextual inquiry as the book refers to it, is about understanding existing work practice and context. It is only after this is performed that we are able to design a new way of getting something done. However, a process exists in between that involved extracting requirements from the contextual data. These requirements in the UX domain are those which support user work activity needs, ensure the usefulness component of the user experience and fulfill the need for emotional impact.

Bridging the gap between analysis and design is done by using a deductive thinking process to come up with several requirement statements. The book suggests that a team of consisting of both software engineers and UX people be put together to go over the Work Activity Affinity Diagram, with all the requirement statements, with a team leader to keep them on track and a recorder to write down the requirements they come up with. Basically they will consolidate the ideas that are on the WAAD. Interaction design requirements now imply functionality and you can use this to include SE people in the process. Additionally, you can standardize the terminology so that everyone is on the same page. It is also important to prioritize your requirements, and a good way to do this is to ask your customer and users to mark the requirements that are of a higher concern, that way you know which to address first. Lastly, take all of the requirements you have extracted back to the customer for validation, and avoid technical jargon. Allow them to provide feedback and check if your interpretation of the requirements from the work activity notes is accurate. There are some abridged methods for requirement extraction, such as using the WAAD itself as implicit requirements without extracting them as this saves time and cost. In addition, building the WAAD is better suited for organizing large amounts of data to identify themes and relationships. If there aren't that many work activity notes in the first place, you don't need one! You can identify relationships among the work activity notes themselves, and deduce requirements mentally.

My critique is that this seems like a very efficient method to get through the process of finding requirements. However, it is a bit vague. The pros are that the lack of rigidity allows a team to cater the process to their project, but they must be good at mentally extracting requirements from the notes provided. The example I chose depicts a work study room booking system with various layers. The pink are categories while the green seem to be work activity notes and the yellow are the requirments that have been extracted.