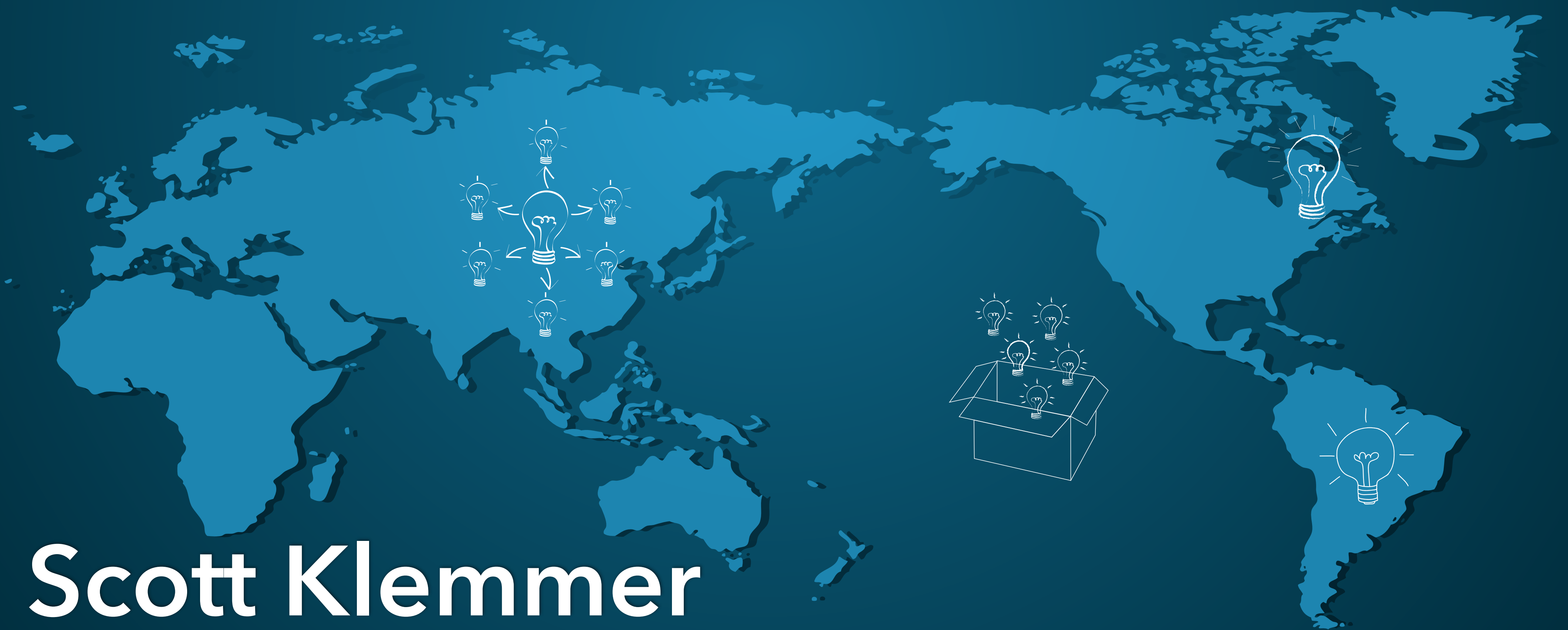# Interviewing

Scott Klemmer

Cognitive Science + Computer Science & Engineering

UC San Diego

Choosing Participants

- Representative of target users
- May be current users of a similar system
- Might also be the *non-users*

Say you were designing...

- A lecture support system
- Who would you interview?

Recruiting Participants

- Get a diverse set of stakeholders
- Use incentives and motivation
- Approximate better than nothing

Approximate if Necessary
(may not be ideal, but better than nothing)

The Importance of Being Curious

Malcolm Gladwell on Journalism

from the introduction to What the Dog Saw

What Are Good Questions?

"Is the daily update an important feature to you?"

"Would you like stores with less clutter?"

What would you like in a tool?

Other Types of Questions to Avoid

- What they would do / like / want in hypothetical scenarios
- How often they do things
- How much they like things on an absolute scale
- Avoid binary Questions

"Tell me a story about yourself"

Good Questions

Conducting An Interview

- Introduce yourself, explain your purpose
- The interview is about them, not you!
- Begin with open, unbiased questions
- Ask the question and let them answer

(a little bit of)
Silence is Golden

Further Reading

- Steve Portigal, *Interviewing Users*
- Mike Kuniavsky, *Observing the User Experience*
- Beyer and Holtzblatt, *Contextual Design*
- Blomberg & Burrell, *An Ethnographic Approach to Design*
- Diana Forsythe, *It's just a matter of common sense*