

# Lab 1 : Observations

- In Critique 1 (January 6), we will focus on contextual inquiry (CI).
- From <http://www.usabilitybok.org/contextual-inquiry>:
- Contextual inquiry is a semi-structured interview method to obtain information about the context of use, where users are first asked a set of standard questions and then observed and questioned while they work in their own environments.

The four principles of contextual inquiry are:

- 1. Focus - Plan for the inquiry, based on a clear understanding of your purpose
- 2. Context - Go to the user's environment and watch them do their own work
- 3. Partnership - Talk to users about their context and engage them in uncovering unarticulated aspects of work
- 4. Interpretation - Develop a shared understanding with the customer about the aspects of work that matter

# Practicing observations

- Goal: To understand how undergraduates use digital devices to surf the Internet using a browser.

- 5 minutes: We will quickly plan an inquiry on what we will look for in this observational activity. We will discuss what constitutes an observation in context.

# Activity and observation

- For 5 minutes, one partner will use a device (e.g., smartphone, tablet, laptop) to surf the Internet.

One partner will write down observations of the surfing.

# Now switch

- For 5 minutes, the other partner will use a device (e.g., smartphone, tablet, laptop) to surf the Internet.

The other partner will write down observations of the surfing.

# DISCUSS

- 10 minutes: The observation partner will share with your note-taking partner the observations made.
- The observation partner will inquire with the note-taking partner to understand how the notes were taken.
- The note-taking and the observation partner will try to come to an agreement how note taking happens.



# Overall thoughts

- What's it like to make observations?
- What's it like being observed?
- Did the observer make an interpretation the notetaker agreed with?

# Canvas

- Go to Lab #1 in assignments
- Briefly write down one thing you learned about observing people.