

Assignment 1 - Needfinding

Irene Hsu, Ke Xu, Jessica Zhang
Focus: Distractions & Longterm Productivity

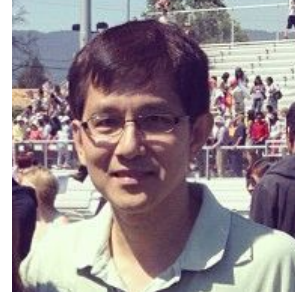
Our Participants:



Brian Zhao
Cognitive Neuroscience
Senior at Emory



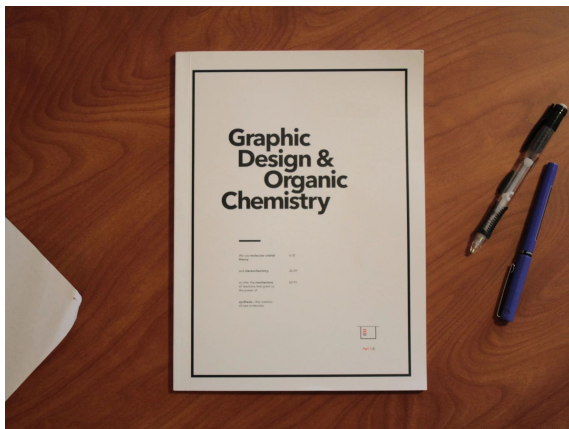
Amelia Hardy
Computer Science
Sophomore at Stanford



Liang Koh
Risk Analyst at Bank of
the West

Why they were chosen

-Brian completed & kickstarted a graphic design & organic chemistry on his own time during the school year



-Liang was formerly in academia teaching and doing research, then switched to industry work

-Amelia is a former varsity athlete for the Stanford sailing team

Where they were interviewed



What We Asked

- long term vs short term goals
- maintaining focus
- routines to develop focus
- managing/eliminating distractions



Interview Results:

A word cloud of interview results. The words are arranged in a roughly circular pattern, with 'work', 'focus', and 'time' being the largest and most prominent. Other significant words include 'research', 'social', 'term', 'always', 'day', 'working', 'actually', 'external', 'thing', 'about', 'go', and 'come'. The colors range from light orange to dark red.

things something only like tasks
research more focus really
work task think people make
all way before goals lose change
social end doing want release done life plan
term still over know going take short
even good kind time weeks need
always facebook many hard just
day working actually external go come
thing about

Quotes:

“It just gets done”

“You always come back [from breaks] better”

“Anything can be resolved with proper planning”

“The only thing that motivates me to commit to something is deadlines”

“If I lose focus, something goes wrong. So I have to maintain complete focus”

“I only do short term tasks if they contribute to my long term goals. If they don't, then I just don't do them.”

Surprises

-no routines or rituals

-internal motivation

-very confident and positive

-believed that focus was something you had and was hard to develop

-believed that those who plan don't have problems with focus

Empathy Map

Say

- “it just gets done”
- “just do it. do it”
- “you always come back better”
- “everything can be resolved with proper planning”

Do

- avoiding eye contact
- saying “um”
- using the general “you”
- multitasking
- asking for questions to be repeated

Think

- need people to see their work
- focus is hard to develop
- reminded to focus by thinking of things important to them

Feel

- stressed
- weary
- confident
- ambitious

Insights

- confident of their own focus
- planning solves everything
- short term tasks are steps to long term goals
- motivated by putting their work out there for people to see
- setting deadlines or mandatory events helps improve productivity
- acknowledging/accepting distractions makes people more productive



Needs

- plan and create visible deadlines or events
- develop self-confidence for long-term goals
- know when multitasking is appropriate
- know when they are unfocused

Questions moving forward

- How can people tell when they're focused versus and when they're not?
- How do people find the urgency to be focused?
- What kinds of external pressures can we apply on ourselves to find our focus?
- How do people find the energy/focus to work on personal projects?

Summary

- everyone positive/confident about their ability to focus
- rely on both internal and external motivation
- identifying and eliminating distractions
- answers centered primarily around productivity