Heuristic Evaluation of [Slaptitude]

1. Problem

I am evaluating Slaptitude, a mobile app that allows you to set a timer and monitor leaderboards to help achieve and improve focus.

2. Violations Found

1. [H2-5 Error Prevention] [Severity 2] [Found by: A]
The interface has a time setting screen for it's focus timer function which does not account for unrealistic bounds on the amount of time being set which may lead users to input and extra zero and magnify their time set.
Fix: Create a boundary time threshold and have an extra confirm screen for very high times.

2. [H2-7 Flexibility and Efficiency of Use] [Severity 2] [Found by: A, B]
The interface does not have a more flexible methodology for frequent users to set their recurring time for focus as well as a default location quickly.
Fix: Create a one tap default button to allow frequent users quick set up of their default or preferred session settings.

3. [H2-5 Error Prevention] [Severity 1] [Found by: A]
The interface has a location setting screen where users can accidentally manually input inaccurate locations which may have similar names due to input errors.
Fix: Check the location GPS to automatically set the exact location to avoid error inputs or keep a cached index of locations nearby to reference against for incorrect inputs.

4. [H2-3 User Control and Freedom] [Severity 3] [Found by: A]
In the interface on the running timer screen, the user is unable to quickly go back and change the parameters of their session without completing quitting out of the running timer and reentering the timer setup flow.
Fix: A back button can be added to allow users to quickly go back to the last settings screen viewed.

5. [H2-3 User Control and Freedom] [Severity 1] [Found by: A]
In the interface on the progress viewing initial screen there are options to move between length intervals of time views (day, week, month) but no way to individually move in time within a certain time interval view. Fix: Create arrows or swipe functionality to allow users to move through time in the day, week, and month time views.

6. [H2-3 User Control and Freedom] [Severity 2] [Found by: A]
In the interface on the leaderboard screen, there is no way for the user to choose which friends or other app users they want to view and be compared against.
Fix: Create a settings screen to manipulate the peers in one's leaderboard

7. [H2-8 Aesthetic and Minimalist Design] [Severity 0] [Found by: A]
In the interface, on the leaderboard screen both the player rankings and their best focus session times are listed. As their best times determine the ranking there is a redundancy of information in the leaderboard view.
Fix: Eliminate the ranking values and just list the players according to their best focus session times in descending order to create a more minimalist effect.

8. [H2-10 Help and Documentation] [Severity 3] [Found by: A, B, C, D]

I wish I knew what some of the settings actually do. The location switch on and switch off, the "play for stakes" as well as the alarm sound do not give me information as to what they actually do. There should be some sort of documentation for this.
Fix: Make language more clear, or small descriptions about what each setting does

9. [H2-1 Visibility of System Status] [Severity 0] [Found by: A]
In the interface on the location screen of the progress screens group, the locations are listed in an unclear ordering and the user does not know whether they are in order of highest raw focus session score of by their average focus session length at each of those locations.
Fix: Provide a clear message detailing how the locations are ordered.

10. [H2-6 Visibility of System Status] [Severity 2] [Found by: A]
In the interface on the location setting screen within the setting up focus session screens, there is no option to toggle location phone settings and instead the user must go into the app settings to change the toggle which is a form of recall for the user to recall where the location setting options are in the app.
Fix: Create a location toggle option also on the location setting screen of the screens to set up focus sessions.

11. [H2-3 User Control and Freedom] [Severity 3] [Found by: A]
In the interface there is no option for the user to be able to extend their focus session in the event that they want to continue their session for a longer interval.
Fix: Add an extra minute button on the timer screen to help provide more control to the user.

12. [H2-4 Consistency and Standards] [Severity 1] [Found by: A]
In the interface on the progress report screen there are screens for viewing "Location" and "You at Your Best" which are descriptions of the types of progress but the first report screen only displays labels for "day", "week", and "month" which doesn't follow the progress categorization methods used.
Fix: Add a "Time Period" label above the "day", "week", and "month" labels to follow a standard labeling methodology for the progress screens.

13. [H2-2 Match Between System and the Real World] [Severity 1] [Found by: A]
In the interface locations on the focus session setup screen don't appear to be organized in a specific logical order for the user to select.
Fix: Choose to order suggested locations by most recent usage or by association with the best focus session times.

14. [H2-2 Match Between System and the Real World] [Severity 3] [Found by: B,C,D]
The bottom screen is always a button, but in Taskflow1, there's a screen where the text displayed inside the button simply says "ouch".
Fix: This probably is a button, but maybe it would be better to keep it as a button that says "continue" or something similar that indicates that this is a button to move on.

15. [H2-5 Error Prevention] [Severity 2] [Found by: C]
In Taskflow1, the start and reset button are placed too close to each other.
Fix: It may be a good idea to change the location of the reset button to right below the time and leave the start button where it is as the main button.

16. [H2-4 Consistency and Standards] [Severity 2] [Found by: C]
In Taskflow3, the leaderboard has no buttons at the bottom of the screen.
Fix: All throughout Slaptitude's interface, there are buttons at the bottom of the screen. It may be a good idea to add a button at the bottom of the screen and add another functionality there.

17. [H2-2 Match Between System and the Real World] [Severity 3] [Found by: C]
In Taskflow2, when viewing their progress by location, the screen just displays a table/list of locations.
Fix: Most users are familiar with items/events grouped together by location. It may be a good idea to display the current location and group the items by location (pins on a certain location).

18. [H2-2 Match Between System and the Real World] [Severity 2] [Found by: C]
In Taskflow2, when viewing the progress by day view, the icon/button suggests that the progress will display the results of the previous week or month.
Fix: Changing the icon to a single day, like the icon that Apple uses for their calendar app, would allow users to expect their daily progress results.

19. [H2-2 Match Between System and the Real World] [Severity 2] [Found by: C]
The progress bar/pie chart used in Taskflow1's "You got this!" screen, doesn't make it clear what its purpose is.
Fix: Maybe adding a percentage in the middle of the pie chart would make it easier for users to guess its intended purpose.

20. [H2-4 Consistency and Standards][Severity 4][Found by B,C]
When I am prompted to keep the alarm going or not, I am not sure what that means. Do I continue where I'm from? Do I restart? The language needs to clearer.
Fix: Either make the language much clearer here or eliminate altogether. I'm not sure people would want to keep the alarm on if they're going to do something else.

21. [H2-3 User Control and Freedom] [Severity 2] [Found by D]
Too many steps to quit out from a session.
Fix. Remove 2 pages after quitting.

22. [H2-6 Recognition rather than recall] [Severity 2] [Found by D]
Graph should distinct between successful and unsuccessful sessions.
Fix. Color code sessions.

3. Summary of Violations

Category	# Viol. (sev 0)	# Viol. (sev 1)	# Viol. (sev 2)	# Viol. (sev 3)	# Viol. (sev 4)	# Viol. (total)
[H2-1: Visibility of Status]	1	0	0	0	0	**1**
[H2-2: Match Sys & World]	0	1	2	2	0	**5**
[H2-3: User Control]	0	1	2	2	0	**5**
[H2-4: Consistency]	0	1	1	0	1	**3**
[H2-5: Error Prevention]	0	1	2	0	0	**3**
[H2-6: Recognition not Recall]	0	0	2	0	0	**2**
[H2-7: Efficiency of Use]	0	0	1	0	0	**1**
[H2-8: Minimalist Design]	1	0	0	0	0	**1**

[H2-9: Help Users with Errors]	0	0	0	0	0	**0**
[H2-10: Documentation]	0	0	0	1	0	**1**
Total Violations by Severity	**2**	**4**	**9**	**5**	**1**	**22**
Note: check your answer for the green box by making sure the sum of the last column is equal to the sum of the last row (not including the green box)						

4. Evaluation Statistics

Severity / Evaluator	Evaluator A	Evaluator B	Evaluator C	Evaluator D	Evaluator E
sev. 0	100%	0%	0%	0%	
sev. 1	100%	0%	0%	0%	
sev. 2	44%	11%	44%	22%	
sev. 3	60%	40%	60%	40%	
sev. 4	0%	100%	0%	0%	
total (sev. 3 & 4)	50%	50%	50%	31%	
total (all severity levels)	59%	22%	32%	19%	

5. Summary Recommendations

After getting to use the prototype, we found it to be a very well put together intuitive interface design that definitely accomplishes its main goals. Regarding specific recommendations, a larger violation we found was around the process of quitting an active session. The whole process of quitting an active session was much longer and involved more screens than necessary. Furthermore, the icons used in the app may be confusing to users as the functionality of the buttons/icons are different from what the users may be expecting. For instance, the map icon used to check the progress based on location suggests that the information would be presented as pins on a map, but the app just displays a list of events/progress. Through our heuristic evaluations we found a theme of violations surrounding the lack of User Control and Freedom mainly in small fine tuning abilities that were left out for the user in a number of situations. We recommend thinking through these smaller adjustments the user may make in order to include a suitable amount of user control. Also, we found a number of violations in Matching System and World which can be addressed through thinking through the wording throughout the application to ensure there is clear context and understanding for the user.

Severity Ratings

> 0 - don't agree that this is a usability problem
> 1 - cosmetic problem
> 2 - minor usability problem
> 3 - major usability problem; important to fix
> 4 - usability catastrophe; imperative to fix

Heuristics

[H2-1: Visibility of System Status]
- keep users informed about what is going on

[H2-2: Match Between System & Real World]
- speak the users' language
- follow real world conventions

[H2-3: User Control & Freedom]
- "exits" for mistaken choices, undo, redo
- don't force down fixed paths

[H2-4: Consistency & Standards]

[H2-5: Error Prevention]

[H2-6: Recognition Rather Than Recall]
- make objects, actions, options, & directions visible or easily retrievable

[H2-7: Flexibility & Efficiency of Use]
- accelerators for experts (e.g., gestures, kb shortcuts)
- allow users to tailor frequent actions (e.g., macros)

[H2-8: Aesthetic & Minimalist Design]
- no irrelevant information in dialogues

[H2-9: Help Users Recognize, Diagnose, & Recover from Errors]
- error messages in plain language
- precisely indicate the problem
- constructively suggest a solution

[H2-10: Help & Documentation]
- easy to search
- focused on the user's task
- list concrete steps to carry out
- not too large