

# Heuristic Evaluation of [BDGD]

## 1. Problem/Prototype

Bad Day Good Day (BDGD) is a prototype for a mobile application that provides users with a platform on which to candidly share positive and negative anecdotal experiences from their jobs to help people in selecting careers.

## 2. Violations Found

### 1. H2-4 Consistency & Standards / Severity 3 / Found by: A, C, D

The interface used the string “Save” on the first screen for saving the user’s profile, but used the string “Update” on the second screen. Users may be confused by this different terminology for the same function.

Fix: Use the same string on each screen.

### 1. H8 Aesthetic and minimalist design / Severity: 1 / Found by: A, C, D

Using a single color is a little bit monotonous, and it is hard for a single color to emphasize different functionalities for certain pages. For example, it does not reflect the “mood”, bad or good, of a certain page. It is also useful to incorporate a few more colors which could help add some more meaning or guide the users’ eyes (i.e. indicate if they have seen a story already).

Fix: add one or two colors without breaking harmony, or vary the saturation and brightness of the theme color.

### 2. H6 Recognition rather than recall / Severity: 1 / Found by: A

The user cannot see which tab he or she is on, and if he or she wants to come back later, he or she has to either remember which tab this functionality belongs to or to try all four to find out the answer.

Fix: change the icon’s color of the active tab to make it stand out.

### 3. H6 Recognition rather than recall / Severity: 2 / Found by: A, C

In the browse page, the user cannot know which the current order is for the stories.

Fix: add a checkmark next to the active selection.

### 4. H8 Aesthetic and minimalist design / Severity: 1 / Found by: A

In the story page, the user’s profile image and title do not seem to align with the main text on the same page. In particular, I assume the components related to the story itself (title, author, main text) are aligned, as shown in alignment between the title and the main text, while the floating buttons (save, like, share, etc) are with a different margin.

Fix: move the user’s profile left a little bit to align with the main text.

### 5. H8 Aesthetic and minimalist design / Severity: 1 / Found by: A, B

The text “Search” appears twice on the search page. This information is duplicated.  
Fix: remove the text in the search text field and leave it blank, or change it to some suggested keywords such as “agent”.

**6. H4 Consistency and standards / Severity: 1 / Found by: A, C, D**

The text on the search button is “Search”, but once the user enters a keyword it changes to “Send”.

Fix: Make the text consistent, for example, both using “Search”.

**7. H7 Flexibility and efficiency of use / Severity: 2 / Found by: A, B, C**

When the user is interested in particular one professional and wants to read some stories every day, he or she has to manually type the keywords each time.

Fix: add previously-searched keywords as searching options under the search text field.

**8. H8 Aesthetic and minimalist design / Severity: 1 / Found by: A, D**

A large amount of space on the search page is missing. In particular, the only elements are at the top and the page seems to be unbalanced.

Fix: center the search field, or add search results below the search field (see below).

**9. H7 Flexibility and efficiency of use / Severity: 2 / Found by: A**

The user has to type keywords in one page and sees the result on another page, which is not efficient since the user needs to jump back and forth if he or she needs to enter multiple entries.

Fix: add search results directly below the search field.

**10. H3 User control and freedom / Severity: 2 / Found by: A**

The user is unable to modify the current search keyword. For example, if the user types a long word like “anthropologist” but with a typo, he or she needs to go back and re-type.

Fix: add a back button in the search result page or an edit button next to the keyword, and auto-fill current keyword in the text field appeared.

**11. H10 Help and documentation / Severity: 1 / Found by: A**

It is unclear what “Add Audio” is for. In particular, the functionality of auto transcribing is not shown on the screen and it is unknown to the user until he or she actually records audio.

Fix: add an “info” icon with tooltip like “record audio and we will transcribe it for you” can be added next to the “Add Audio” button.

**12. H3 User Control & Freedom / Severity: 2 / Found by: A, D**

When the user is in the “Submit Your Story” page, the user cannot undo the last audio recorded. Assume the user re-records an audio and confirms, then realize that the original audio A is better than audio B, he or she cannot return to the previous stage.

Fix: add an “undo” button.

**13. H3 User Control & Freedom / Severity: 4 / Found by: A, B, C, D**

When the user enters a story and wants to edit and publish later, he or she cannot save the current progress.

Fix: add a “save” button to allow users to save drafts, and make drafts accessible.

**14. H8 Aesthetic and minimalist design / Severity: 1 / Found by: A**

The text “Bad” and “Good” in the switch for submission is not completely centered. Also, there is almost no padding left for the word “Good”, which makes the switch look busy.

Fix: center the text, and make the font size smaller.

**15. H8 Aesthetic and minimalist design / Severity: 1 / Found by: A**

The “Submit Your Story” page seems to be quite busy with all fields filled with text.

Fix: increase margins between UI elements, such as between the “Profession” text field and the “Story” label. Also, increase the left and right margin of the page might help as well.

**16. H7 Flexibility & Efficiency of Use / Severity: 0 / Found by: A**

The user has to go through two pages to submit the story: the page to choose whether to include the audio and the confirmation page. This may benefit a novice user but when a user has used this app for a long time, it may be less efficient.

Fix: merge two modals into one, with a checkbox saying “include your audio with your story”.

**17. H4 Consistency and standards / Severity: 1 / Found by: A, B, C**

I assume that the theme color (green) indicates the clickable area, as shown in multiple screens. For example, only when the user enters a username and password, the “Create Account” button turns green. In the profile page for another user where the user is allowed to enter the conversation page, the “message” icon is grey.

Fix: *add a green circle around the icon.*

**18. H2 Match between system and the real world / Severity: 0 / Found by: A**

The subtitle under another single user’s profile page is “Their Stories”. It does not match the real world where we say “His Stories” or “Her Stories”.

Fix: change to “His Stories” or “Her Stories” based on gender, or just “Stories”.

**19. H2 Match between system and the real world / Severity: 1 / Found by: A**

When the user clicks “Edit Interests” from the profile, the screen is pushed left indicating that a layer, in this case, the interest selection page, is added on the top. When he or she finishes selection and clicks “Explore”, the screen is pushed left as well, indicating the browse page is added on the top. It seems that the user “never goes back” to the original screen.

Fix: change the animation to push right when the user finishes editing his or her interests.

Actually, I assume the issue is due to the reuse of the interest selection page after sign up page and on the edit page, and so the animation is the same in this medium-fidelity prototype.

**20. H4 Consistency and Standards / Severity: 3 / Found by: B, C, D**

There is no visual indicator across screens that the user has interacted with a given story. The most prominent example of this is that each story, when it is listed, displays the number of likes the story has next to the title of the story. However, there is no indication that the user has liked a story if they have. This would potentially accelerate user interaction with an author's page because they would be able to see that they already like a lot of this author's content, potentially pushing them to delve deeper into this author's page.

Fix: simply color in the heart icon next to the title of a given story if the user has liked this story in the past.

**21. H3 User control and freedom / Severity: 2 / Found by: B, C**

When the user enters their profile and chooses to "Edit Interests," they are taken to a page where they must select their interests before they can "Explore." There is no way for the user to exit this page without selecting new interests, which may be problematic if they had no intention of editing their interests in the first place.

Fix: include a back icon of some kind, potentially just a back arrow, to return to the profile settings page.

**22. H1 Visibility of system status / Severity: 2 / Found by: B, D**

Once the user elects to record a story for their posting and they click the record button to record this story, there is no clear indication of the status of their recording and how they should go about saving it or attempting it again.

Fix: Add a pop-up menu, much like the one you will find on iOS Voice Memos that asks the user whether they would like to save their recording or not upon completing the recording.

**23. H2 Match between system and real world / Severity: 1 / Found by: B, C**

The options in the "Sort By" menu on the landing page do not make sense grammatically when taken in context with the label of the dropdown menu. In other words, "Sort by...top stories" and "Sort by...most recent," don't make grammatical English sense even if they look fine aesthetically.

Fix: Change menu items to Sort by...popularity and Sort by...date or change the menu title to "Filter," the option that I think makes more sense.

**24. H1 Visibility of system status / Severity: 3 / Found by: B, C, D**

Once the like button or save button is clicked there is a pop-up message that indicates that this action has been taken. However, the buttons themselves remain unchanged and suggest that the action may not have been recorded.

Fix: Fill in the flag or heart with the border color to remind the user that this action was taken so they can be sure of the system status and not worry about repeating this action or being uncertain about whether it has been recorded.

**25. H7 Flexibility and efficiency of use / Severity: 0 / Found by: B**

One of the core tasks of this product is for the user to be able to share stories that they find helpful. However, the share menu only includes options to direct message, text, email, or copy a link to a given story. In order to increase efficiency of use and accelerate the ability of a power user to share a story, there should be a way to share a story on the platform quickly, rather than just on an individual basis.

Fix: Add primary button to share a given story on the BDGD platform below that story, thereby making it quick and efficient to do so.

**26. H4 Consistency and standards / Severity: 2 / Found by: B, D**

The outline of the message icon on the viewing a story page is different than that of the other icons on this page ie. the flag, like, and share icons. It is unclear whether this is intended to differentiate the button from the others or not. This is confusing because the comment icon is the same as the message icon.

Fix: Change this icon to make it different from the message icon.

**27. H4 Consistency and standards / Severity: 1 / Found by: B**

On the user profile page, the Your Stories title is capitalized whereas the “no stories” indicator within the Your Stories is not capitalized. This inconsistency is aesthetically displeasing and even suggests that the no stories indicator isn’t intended to be viewed, because it seems out of place. This may be confusing to the user and cause them to question whether the information is accurate.

Fix: simply capitalize the letters n and s to make “no stories” become “No Stories”

**28. H5 Error prevention / Severity: 2 / Found by: B**

The template for user submission does not do a great job of mitigating the potential for bad input. It is unclear whether “Title:” refers to a title for the story or the title of the person writing the story in their place of work. The story also appears to have no word limit or implied format. Stories may be written as bullet points, narratives, or incoherent streams of consciousness. Although I recognize that these stories are ultimately vetted by the team, there is definitely room to prevent errors with a more descriptive template or instant feedback and error messages.

Fix: Split the story submission page up into three separate pages each with a more descriptive instruction made possible with the new whitespace gained on a fresh page, ie. “What would you call your story?” instead of “Title:”

**29. H7 Flexibility and efficiency of use / Severity: 2 / Found by: B, C**

The home page feels fairly inefficient because at present there exists no infrastructure on the platform to suggest or tailor stories to the user. Having relevant stories placed on the landing page would likely increase user engagement and ensure that users are receiving content they care about, which is particularly relevant and could be made seamless for power users.

Fix: allow users to follow, subscribe to, or like authors so that content produced by those author's can be shown as preferential to the user.

**30. H6 Recognition rather than recall / Severity: 3 / Found by: B**

The placement of the message icon is unintuitive and sporadic across the screens of the prototype which may make it difficult for the user to recall where the icon brings them.

On the share page it presumably brings the user to a new direct message, on the profile page it brings the user to their DM history, and on a given author page it opens a DM with that author. Rather than the user recognizing a familiar icon and going where they intend to go, they will remain confused about what the next step in the workflow may be.

Fix: Create a messages tab to be able to access messages for a consistent purpose from any screen.

**31. H6 Recognition rather than recall / Severity: 2 / Found by: C, D**

When a user likes, comments, or saves a story, there is no emergency button to remove a like, comment, or save.

Fix: make it so if the user clicks that icon again it reverses the actions (also changing the icon color or filling it in, like instagram, would be helpful visual).

**32. H10 Help and documentation / Severity: 2 / Found by: C**

Add a help page. This may seem a bit unnecessary but having a guide to the general tasks you are expecting users to perform can make their experience much more enjoyable as well as less work for you.

Fix: Walk through the tasks and provide expected feedback from the application as well as any common errors. Also should include a frequently asked question (FAQ) page and contact/support information.

**33. H8 Aesthetic and minimalist design / Severity: 1 / Found by: C**

Having the "Browse" in the search page seems a little irrelevant and unnecessary. It should be fairly clear to the user what they are doing on the home page.

Fix: Remove the "Browse" label on the home page.

**34. H1 Visibility of system status / Severity: 1 / Found by: C**

When editing a user's profile, there is no verification or confirmation that a change has been made. Also, we have no understanding if the changes have been made already.

Fix: Having an alert pop-up acknowledging their changes and that it has been currently updated.

**35. H5 Error Prevention / Severity: 2 / Found by: A, D**

When creating a story, it is difficult to tell whether “BAD” or “GOOD” has been selected from the sliding button.

Fix: use different colors to distinguish the two or let the user confirm the category before submitting a story

**36. H6: Recognition not Recall / Severity: 2 / Found by: D**

On the profile screen, you can edit your interests, but you cannot see your previous selected interests. Users should be able to view their selected interests in the profile.

Fix: Add their current interests to the profile screen

**37. H8: Aesthetic & Minimalist Design / Severity: 1 / Found by: D**

Currently all your posted stories will be listed on the profile screen. If a user has posted many stories, the profile page can get very long.

Fix: Add a “Stories” button on the profile screen which is linked to a new screen for stories

**3. Summary of Violations**

Category	# Viol. (sev 0)	# Viol. (sev 1)	# Viol. (sev 2)	# Viol. (sev 3)	# Viol. (sev 4)	# Viol. (total)
H1: Visibility of Status	0	1	1	1	0	3
H2: Match Sys & World	1	2	0	0	0	3
H3: User Control	0	0	3	0	1	4
H4: Consistency	0	3	1	1	0	5
H5: Error Prevention	0	0	2	0	0	2
H6: Recognition not Recall	0	1	3	1	0	5
H7: Efficiency of Use	2	0	3	0	0	5
H8: Minimalist Design	0	8	0	0	0	8
H9: Help Users with Errors	0	0	0	0	0	0
H10: Documentation	0	1	1	0	0	2
<b>Total Violations by Severity</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>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)</b>						

**4. Evaluation Statistics**

Severity / Evaluator	Evaluator A	Evaluator B	Evaluator C	Evaluator D	Evaluator E
sev. 0	67%	33%	0%	0%	

sev. 1	69%	25%	31%	25%	
sev. 2	43%	43%	43%	43%	
sev. 3	0%	100%	66%	66%	
sev. 4	100%	100%	100%	100%	
<b>total (sev. 3 &amp; 4)</b>	25%	100%	75%	75%	
<b>total (all severity levels)</b>	54%	41%	38%	35%	

**\*Note that the bottom rows are *not* calculated by adding the numbers above it.**

## 5. Summary Recommendations

The general flow is good in the sense that the user can go through the tasks in a linear way without issues. However, when the user needs to go back, make edits, or recall information from prior points this can be challenging. We recommend focus on implementing emergency exits, editing and drafting options, and icon use indicators especially for the like and save icons.

We have found some issues with messaging. The icon used is the same as the icon for “comments”, which has different functionality. Also, some people might not know the abbreviation like “DM”. We recommend using a more intuitive icon for messaging, and change the wording.

Making it more apparent when someone has taken an action (i.e. liking, commenting, or saving a story) by changing the color or fill in the icon, and having different color to differentiate between good and bad stories. Also, along the same lines this implementation should include be able to reverse an action, either with another button or by clicking the same button and having it change appropriately.

We suggest integrating the search and landing pages would make the task flows much simpler. Additionally, the landing/search page should be more user-specific and include recommendations of some kind rather than just random new stories.

### **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***

### **H1: Visibility of System Status**

- Keep users informed about what is going on

### **H2: Match Between System & Real World**

- Speak the users' language
- Follow real world conventions

### **H3: User Control & Freedom**

- "Exits" for mistaken choices, undo, redo
- Don't force down fixed paths

### **H4: Consistency & Standards**

### **H5: Error Prevention**

### **H6: Recognition Rather Than Recall**

- Make objects, actions, options, & directions visible or easily retrievable

### **H7: Flexibility & Efficiency of Use**

- Accelerators for experts (e.g., gestures, kb shortcuts)
- Allow users to tailor frequent actions (e.g., macros)

### **H8: Aesthetic & Minimalist Design**

- No irrelevant information in dialogues

### **H9: Help Users Recognize, Diagnose, & Recover from Errors**

- Error messages in plain language
- Precisely indicate the problem
- Constructively suggest a solution

### **H10: Help & Documentation**

- Easy to search
- Focused on the user's task
- List concrete steps to carry out
- Not too large