

# Contextual Inquiry & Task Analysis (Team)

**Due: Thursday, April 30, 2015, 11:59 PM**

## Overview

In this assignment you will use the **contextual inquiry** methodology to learn more about the work/play/use practices of your target customers. The interview data will form the basis for a **task analysis** of your idea.

## Requirements

1. Interview at least **two target customers** (no classmates) using contextual inquiry. Remember to use the Master-Apprentice model and not just interview people. **Take pictures!**
2. Answer the standard **task analysis** questions (attached) using your contextual inquiry results as a start.
3. Analyze new and existing tasks that your customers need. **Describe three to five tasks in moderate detail** that users currently or will need to perform. There should be at least one each of simple, moderate, and complex tasks. **Compare and contrast** your tasks with any existing tasks that your customers are performing already. *Note: tasks do not say how to carry out the activity, but instead say **what** the user is trying to achieve.* Focus on user behavior, not features. Label each task along two dimensions: frequency (high, medium, low) of use by the customer and importance (high, medium, low) to the customer or application.

## Deliverables

### Essay

You will submit **an essay** of no more than **3-5 pages of text (12 pt. Helvetica font or equivalent, single-spaced)**. Have one team member submit on your Google drive directory (**images are encouraged and free**—not counting in the page limit). Your essay should follow the outline below and will be graded using the writing guidelines on the last page.

1. Title of project (come up with something short and catchy)
2. Each team member's name
3. Problem Overview (short, 1 paragraph)
4. Contextual Inquiry Customers (3/4 page)
  - a. Who? How recruited? Background? Skills? (1 short paragraph for each)
5. Contextual Inquiry Results (1 and 1/4 pages text)
  - a. What did you learn?
  - b. include images taken of the interview locations & tasks taking place**
6. Task Analysis Questions & Answers (2.5-3.5 pages)- [subsection for each question]
  - a. Answer the **11** questions with a subsection for each
  - b. For tasks, carefully analyze old and new tasks:
    - i. Describe 3-5 tasks you will support (at least one each of simple, moderate, complex)
    - ii. Give the rationale on why each task was chosen

## Examples

For the Contextual Inquiry portion see the To:Do team's assignment from winter 2013:

[http://courses.cs.washington.edu/courses/cse440/13wi/projects/2do/files/2Do\\_ContextualInquiry.pdf](http://courses.cs.washington.edu/courses/cse440/13wi/projects/2do/files/2Do_ContextualInquiry.pdf)

For the Task Analysis portion of the write-up see the StyleEye team's version of this assignment from winter 2012:

[http://courses.cs.washington.edu/courses/cse440/12wi/projects/styleeye/reports/StyleEye\\_TaskAnalysis.pdf](http://courses.cs.washington.edu/courses/cse440/12wi/projects/styleeye/reports/StyleEye_TaskAnalysis.pdf)

## Writing Guidelines / Grading Criteria

### Overall writing quality (15 pts)

Make sure that your writing is easy to read. First and foremost this means making sure your writing is clear and concise. This also means using bolded section headings, liberally adding whitespace, and including images in the body of the write-up with appropriate figure numbers and captions. Refer to the figures (e.g., “(see Figure 2)”) in the body of your text. Check your essay for grammar errors.

### Title & Team Member Names (5 pts)

We will grade you on the creativity and marketability of the title you come up with.

### Problem overview (10 pts)

This overview should be a concise statement of the problem you are tackling.

### Contextual inquiry customers (20 pts)

Describe the rationale behind your choice of target CI customers. How appropriate are they for the problem domain? For each of the three (or more) customers, give some details of their background, the environment where you observed their work (**including images**), and your role as the “apprentice”. Describe how you used the Master-Apprentice model rather than simply interviewing your target customers. When appropriate, the customers should be diverse (e.g., age, background, etc.). Students who live on a college campus are not a representative sample unless that is your target customer (if it is your target, Stanford students are not the only ones in town).

### Contextual inquiry results (30 pts)

Identify high level activities, tasks, and themes that the customers shared in common in their practices. Then, note anything unique about each interview and comment on the rationale behind these events. **Include images (if of the participants, make sure to blur out their identity or not show the face).**

### Task analysis questions & answers (20 pts)

Answer the standard task analysis questions. **Use examples from your contextual inquiry interviews.** Make sure to consider both existing ways of doing things (old tasks) and your proposed new way (new tasks) in answering these questions. You need to describe and analyze the new and existing tasks in detail. These should be real world tasks that have details (e.g., programming your DVR to record the Daily Show). These tasks should not have any specific relation to the exact interface sketches that you brainstorm next. Do not work backwards from a design idea that you already have in mind.

## Standard Task Analysis Questions

1. Who is going to use the system?
2. What tasks do they now perform?
3. What tasks are desired?
4. How are the tasks learned?
5. Where are the tasks performed?
6. What's the relationship between customer & data?
7. What other tools does the customer have?
8. How do users communicate with each other?
9. How often are the tasks performed?
10. What are the time constraints on the tasks?
11. What happens when things go wrong?