

Unit 2: Instructions Project

This assignment is an exercise in team production of an instructional text. You will work in teams of 3-4 and adopt production roles based on interests and/or skill sets. You will collaboratively decide on a task, write instructions for that task, design a multimedia instructional website (wiki or website), conduct usability testing, and revise accordingly. This entire sequence will take approximately 5 weeks.

Your first step will be to propose the task. Your selected task must be a process that has a defined beginning, middle, end, and a clear desired outcome. It should be a process that can be completed in a reasonable length of time, and you are writing instructions, not suggestions or guidelines. Topics like “how to be a successful student” or “how to write a song” are not workable. Physical tasks work best. We will conduct usability testing (others will actually try to use your instructions) in class; thus, the selected task should be something that includes parts that can be brought to campus and accomplished within an hour. The completed instructions project will be a published website.

Don't panic!

We will review different platforms in class, e.g., Google Sites, WordPress, Wix, Wikispaces.

Document Requirements

1. **Instructions:** The actual instructions will be created and hosted on a digital platform. Your website should include the following components:
 - **Landing page:** This should introduce your product (perhaps including a photograph or drawing of the completed object) and instructions. Be as creative as you'd like.
 - **Team Bio Page:** This should include a listing of all group members and their functions, similar to your professional bios in unit one.
 - **Sidebar:** Your website should be simple and easy to navigate.
 - **Body Text:** This is where the actual instructions go.
2. **Letter of Transmission:** This will be an email to me that includes your team's link to the instructions site and an attached PDF of your usability report. You will introduce me—your manager—to your project. Discuss design objectives and the process involved in creating your design/instructions. Also summarize what you learned from your usability report and how certain decisions were negotiated within the group.
3. **Usability Report.** See below.

Usability Report

Usability reports are professional workplace documents. A successful report will demonstrate the multi-level document conventions we've discussed throughout the semester. Pay close attention to producing solid, clean document design. There is no page limit to your report, but it should cover the information clearly, concisely, and comprehensively. Typically, this work takes a bare minimum of 3-4 pages of solid text and will become longer as you add visuals and appendices.

All text should be 12-pt font, single-spaced paragraphs with double spaces between

paragraphs, i.e., block formatting. Pages should have one-inch margins. Each report should contain the following elements:

1. **Title Page**
2. **Table of Contents**
3. **Introduction**
4. **Research Objectives**
5. **Methods and Protocols** (Describe and justify your choices.)
6. **Results** (Summarize your usability testing and findings: environment/conditions, demographics, a summary of subject responses, and the conclusions you drew from those responses. Narrative information should be reinforced with charts or graphs.)
7. **Discussion** (Discuss what the results meant for you as a group and what patterns or anomalies you observed.)
8. **Revisions**
9. **Conclusions** (Include limitations of your study here.)
10. **Appendices** (Include raw data.)

Basic Project Guidelines

Writing:

- Instructions should have a complete parts list.
- Instructions must have at least ten steps, presented either modularly or sequentially.
- Follow the principles outlined in Chapter 28.
- Communicate about which parts of the assembly may need illustrations to prevent assembly errors.

Visuals:

- Images should be crisp, clear, cropped, and paired with corresponding text.
- The parts list should include images.
- Include a visual of the assembled product.
- Communicate with each other about parts that are difficult to depict, and suggest a different modular design to make sketches of the component parts more effective.

Usability:

- Devise one or two methods for testing your instructions, such as read-and-locate tests or timed tests on the assembly.
- A usability test result report will be part of the final project and is just as important as the instructions. You must anticipate what potential problems will be before the product is tested and list them in your report.
- The final project will include your anticipated problems and empirical data from a real usability test, which lists modifications made to the instructions to address these issues.
- Be sure to include data on the amount of time spent reading the instructions versus assembly time. Do users use your instructions? Do they have to refer to them constantly during the process, or do they simply read and then execute them?
- Make sure that the instructions allow for error. How can a user troubleshoot the results if their results do not match the instructions?

The Completed Instructions Project is 250 points. It is due Monday, March 26, 2014.

Instructions Project Rubric

Group Members:

Final Grade:

Section	Requirements	Points Poss.	Points Earned	Comments
1. Letter of Transmission				
	Introduce the project and explain the process involved with creating and testing the instructions; also, reflections on what you learned and had to negotiate in the process.	30		
2. Instructions				
Landing Page	Professional introductory page with an overview of the product addressed to an appropriate audience	20		
Team Bios	Professional bios and pictures	20		
Navigation	Appropriate section divisions, easy to navigate and move between sections	20		
Instructions	Straightforward language, easy to follow and understand directions, clear and effective images	50		
3. Usability Report				
Detailed Sections	Full, detailed explanations of objectives, predications, methods, results, and discussion	30		
Explanation of Revisions	The instructions were revised appropriately based on the usability study findings—and this is clearly explained in the report.	50		
Overall Design				
	Group presents seamless professional documents (website and report) with parallel layout/design for each relevant section	20		
	Error Free	10		
	Total Points	250		