

5 Human Factors *Observation*

Techniques

It was important to choose the most appropriate techniques for determining where the opportunities for re design lie. With this in mind, I chose :

Observational Analysis

This technique was used to determine what the user does when left to their own devices as opposed to me leading them through the process or hinting at the correct method. The tests took place in the home and entire process was carried out by the user while I observed and took pictures of the key incidents throughout the process. The user was then interviewed afterward to determine their thoughts on the process.



Name: Angela MacMillan

Age: 76

Status: Married

Observations

- Looks through and reads instructions before attempting set up - lots of trust placed in the hands of whoever wrote the instructions
- Intimidated by warnings on the product
- Very methodical in her process. Ticks off parts and instructions as they are completed.
- Getting frustrated very quickly
- Struggles with identifying how the clip opens and opening the clip itself
- Not comfortable around live electricity cables
- Finds kneeling to access cupboard uncomfortable due to slight arthritis in the legs
- Confused by set up process on the device - buttons are confusing
- Bills are filed and knows exactly where to find her tariff
- Now getting a reading - no idea what rate at
- Gets to a point and frustration is too much - puts down device

Comments

- “The instructions are like reading a novel”
- “Far too wordy, have to switch between quick guide and main instructions, can’t use one without the other”
- “Real lack of clarity over which parts are which and how to apply them”
- “Too many options on the device - difficult to decide which one is more or less useful”
- “I don’t want my yearly total ticking up right in front of me, that would scare me into switching things off”
- “It’s a ‘clever gadget’ but not something which is useful to me, I have no concept of whether its high or low”
- “The clip was stiff and all black, I couldn’t tell which way it was supposed to go”
- “Mismatch between product and its image - hard to identify which parts are which”
- “The unit is attractive enough, the process and instructions are a total nightmare”
- “Cables were very tight to the wall making it hard to get in behind”
- “I find the meter in the cupboard easier to read because it ticks faster when its high and slower when its low”

