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PD near the end of a project: What is it for, and how to prepare?

Practice Example: Burn off the liquid calories

Completely fictitious but highly motivated Group X is interested in encouraging people to choose active transport (in this case, walking) and increase the amount they do. They have an idea to motivate walking by linking it with drink consumption¹. They want to translate drinks into calories, and then calories into the amount of walking required to burn them off.¹ They want people to see the calorific intake from drinking, and how they could work those calories off (e.g. walking a longer route home instead of getting the bus). They think their main potential users are adults who live in or near Edinburgh, without mobility issues that would prevent their walking, who regularly use one or more forms of “passive transport” (bus, train, private car, taxi...). Another group of stakeholders are people working in public health who want to encourage health lifestyles. There may also be interest from venues that sell drinks.



Right now, Group X plans to build an app/website. They think it would work like this: A user could put in number and type of drink and find out how much walking would be needed to use those calories. They know they should have some kind of graphics to illustrate this information or turn a hypothetical number in to something that the user can act on, but haven't decided what. Group X has 3 weeks until their “stop date” (no new data collection, but can analyse afterwards). They already have most of the factual information they need (about drinks, calories, distances, etc.). They also need to do a PD activity to help develop their idea. What now?

[Activities – in different group to your usual teams](#)

TASK 1A (individual)

IN GENERAL, at this stage in a project, how might researchers/designers use input/involvement from their stakeholders to help them work toward demonstrating proof-of-concept for their idea? In other words, what might be the purpose or possible contribution of doing PD at this stage in a project, when there is already a specific idea, that may be close to “done” in some respects? This is not the same as the focus group or initial surveys/interviews.

TASK 1B (with your group)

What specific information or type of involvement might example Group X want to get from their stakeholders and users? Why is that? Many possible ideas here--*prepare to briefly explain 1 idea to the class.*

¹ This example is based on a team project from the Design for Informatics (D4I) course, 2015.

TASK 1C (with your group) For your idea from 1B (or another group's idea that you like better): What kind of activity or session might Group X do with their stakeholders, to try to get that type of information or involvement? Try to focus on face-to-face options (i.e. not online). In other words, if Group X invited stakeholders to participate...what exactly would they be inviting them to do?

ANY SUMMARY NOTES ON TASK 1

TASK 2A (group)

Given Group X's project idea, their planning from Task 1 and their remaining time (max 3 weeks to work on idea and do the PD session(s)), what do you think they should prepare for their PD activity? Focus on preparation related to their idea, NOT practical session preparation (e.g. scheduling). Hint: Should they have something they will show people? Have discussion questions ready? Both? Something else?

TASK 2B (group)

Do you think your idea in 2A is closer to an ideal level of preparation, or closer to the minimum required to make it the session work at all? Try to simplify your preparation plan from 2A. Be creative! You can fake it! Remember the goal is NOT to have a perfect, finished, working thing. The goal of the preparation is to support the type of activity planned for the session: what would they need at the absolute minimum for it to work?