

5 Guidelines for Test Planning

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Give Users Options

Develop multiple prototypes, each with a different variable change, to help your users compare and choose from the options. When prototypes can be compared, users are often better able to explain what they like and dislike about them.

Show, don't tell

Instead of getting into too much detail about how your prototype works, or how it is supposed to solve your user's problems, avoid it altogether. Observe and listen to how the users use the prototype, and allow their use experience to speak for itself.

Engage Users in the Experience

When your prototype is being used, ask your users what they are thinking. People may need to become accustomed to using this feature before fully benefiting from it, so it may be a good idea to distract them with an unrelated discussion and then, in a one-on-one conversation, ask questions such as, "What are you thinking right now as you are using this?"

Observe

If you observe your users using your prototype and their use of it "correctly" or "incorrectly," try to resist the urge to correct them when they get it wrong. A valuable opportunity for users is to recognize and remedy their mistakes. It is crucial to bear in mind that you are conducting a test of the prototype, not the user.

Ask follow up questions

In every communication, follow up with questions even if you think you already know what the user is trying to communicate. Whenever you are talking about something that you understand but the user struggles to explain, asking questions like "What do you mean when you say ___?", "How did that make you feel?", and most importantly, "Why?"