

## Best Practices for Usability-Test Logging

### QUESTION EXPANSION

Descriptions of logging are frequently too general to be useful. Logging software applications reflect a range of models for this crucial activity. Apparently, logging is an art that gets passed down from master to apprentice (or facilitator to newbie). Do usability professionals have a consensus on best practices for logging?

### THOUGHT-STARTER QUESTIONS

- What are the hallmarks of a truly effective Utest log?
- What approaches to logging have the widest acceptance in the industry?
- What are the key issues that practitioners argue about when it comes to logging?
- What are the most common mistakes that newbie loggers make?
- What are the most important guidelines that newbie loggers should learn?

### HOW THE OUTCOMES OF THE DISCUSSION WILL BE USED

The activator recently lost his Utesting virginity by serving as logger for a test of a software product involving 12 participants in two different user groups. In preparing for this role, I discovered that textbooks, HCI course sites, and miscellaneous Utesting information on the Web did not help me to form a clear, focused, and confident mental model of what constitutes effective logging.

- In addition to the required UPA summary, the activator hopes to publish information generated by this session [format and venue TBD], and that it will go some little way toward correcting that gap in readily available information on usability testing procedures.
- The activator also will complement the data gathered in this Idea Market session by conducting a survey of UPA members on this topic.

### ADDITIONAL ACTIVATOR(S)

No additional activators will be needed for this Idea Market session.