

CS 321 HCI

Observation/Note Taking Assignment

Purpose: To observe and describe a work setting, an individual working within that setting, and the actions of the individual. To practice developing field notes and interpreting observation data

Activity:

1. Select a person performing an activity in a public space such as a restaurant, health club, the student union, or a shopping center and observe them for a minimum of 10 minutes.
2. The person you observe must be a stranger to you. If you feel it is appropriate, you may want to introduce yourself and ask if you can observe them, explaining that it is part of a class assignment and assure them of confidentiality.
3. Make detailed notes while you observe. You must include descriptions of the physical setting (make a sketch of the layout), the person, the actions of the person, and any thoughts that occur to you about the work the individual is doing while you are observing.
4. Create field notes from the data you collected.
5. Use either the two-column format or the wide left margin format.
6. Must be word processed (all work in this class should be word processed and printed).
7. Field notes will be graded on detail, clarity, and implications/conclusions drawn.

NOTE: You must choose someone active who is doing something interesting.