# LEARNING FROM YOUR PATRONS:

# AN INTRODUCTION TO USER RESEARCH

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# SOME KINDS OF USER RESEARCH

- Surveys

- Card sorting

- Focus groups

- Interviews

- Personas

- Suggestion boxes

- Web analytics

- Task analysis

- Usability testing

- Heuristic evaluations

# FOCUS FOR TODAY:

- Usability testing

# USABILITY TESTING: THE BASICS

- Recruit representative users

- Watch them do key tasks

- Ask them to "think out loud"

- See where they run into problems

- Fix those problems

"There's no trick to it. It's just a simple trick!"

# A QUICK DEMONSTRATION

# ANOTHER DEMONSTRATION

Steve Krug Usability Demo:
https://youtu.be/QckIzHC99Xc

# USABILITY TESTING: THE PROCESS

1. Planning the evaluation

2. Recruiting participants

3. Running the evaluation

4. Evaluating the results

# *What should you test?*

[ chat: what kinds of things would you like to test at your library?]

# *What should you test?*

- Critical systems

- Known or suspected problems

- Things you can probably fix (unless they are critical)

# *Specific tasks & good scenarios*

- What patrons might really do

- Plausible scenarios

- Specific tasks but generic language

# Question:

*How easy is it for patrons to use the e-resources list?*

# Task:

*Find a database on a particular subject.*

Q: *How easy is it to use the e-resources list?*

T: *Find a database on a particular subject.*

# Scenario:

You would like to find a database on a particular subject. Access the e-resources list, and choose a database for newspapers.

Q: *How easy is it to use the e-resources list?*

T: *Find a database on a particular subject.*

# Scenario:

You are looking for recent news stories about Colorado. Starting from the library homepage, find a database for recent newspaper articles.

Q: *How easy is it to use the e-resources list?*

T: *Find a database on a particular subject.*

# Scenario:

You are looking for recent newspaper articles about Colorado. Starting from the library homepage, find a resource relevant to your search.

# *More Advice on Tasks*

Amy Schade, "Write Better Qualitative Usability Tasks:
Top 10 Mistakes to Avoid,"
Nielsen Norman Group, 9 April 2017
https://www.nngroup.com/articles/better-usability-tasks/

# *Technology & Setting*

- Match real-world setting

- But private and quiet if possible

- Record the session if possible

- Observers, or just you?

# *Pilot Test the Session*

- Run the full test with someone

- Make sure your tasks make sense

- Test the equipment and recording

# *Who should you recruit?*

- Try to get people who represent your users

- If you can't get them, get anyone you can

# *Who should you recruit?*

[ please chat about who you'd recruit and how ]

# *How to recruit participants*

- Flyers, posters, friends

- Offer a reasonable incentive

- Consider remote testing if needed

# *Be a good facilitator*

- Explain what will happen in the session

- Emphasize that you're testing the website, not the participant

# *Be a good facilitator*

- Be friendly, but not too helpful

- Keep them talking

Savage Chickens, by Doug Savage
http://www.savagechickens.com/2005/11/chicken-therapy.html

# *Be a good facilitator*

- Try to keep the session on track

- Try to leave time for follow-up questions

- End the session on time

# *Review and record*

- Review your notes and the recordings

- Look for patterns, things more than one participant did or said

# *Metrics*

[ chat about possible metrics ]

# *Metrics*

- Basic metric is success or failure at completing the tasks

- Usually results are qualitative, so really more your judgement

## *How to fix problems*
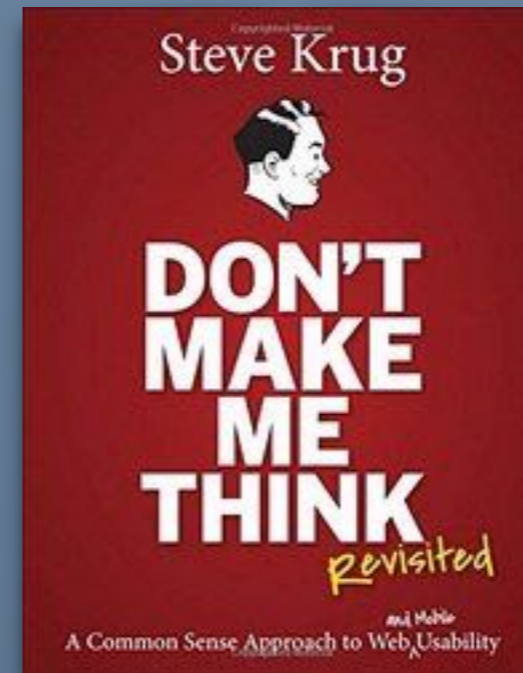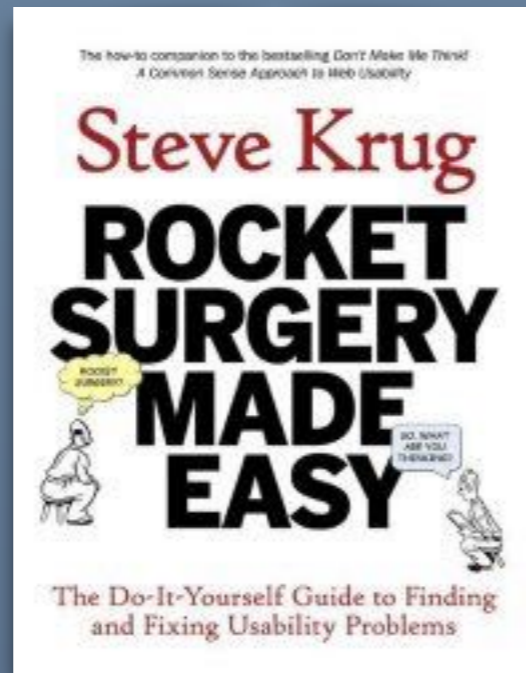
- Prioritize; fix critical problems first

- "Tweak, don't redesign"

- Patch problems you can't fix

- Test the fixes with another study

# SOURCES FOR MORE INFO

Steve Krug's books



His company's website: http://sensible.com/

His amazon.com page: http://www.amazon.com/Steve-Krug/e/B001KHCFUU/

# SOURCES FOR MORE INFO

Free info online

- Usability.gov
  (http://www.usability.gov/)

- Nielsen-Norman Group
  (https://www.nngroup.com/articles/usability-101-introduction-to-usability/

- Usability Body of Knowledge
  (http://www.usabilitybok.org/usability-testing)

# SOURCES FOR MORE INFO

Free help from the State Library

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# SO.... WHAT NEXT?

- What kinds of usability tests do want to try?

- Anything you'd like to know more about?

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