

Ethnographic research & field methods for UX syllabus

In this one-day workshop, attendees learn how to observe, engage with, and analyze users in their natural environments to uncover meaningful insights. This hands-on UX course introduces core ethnographic methods—such as field studies, contextual inquiries, and affinity mapping—and demonstrates how to transform real-world observations into product-shaping decisions. It is ideal for UX professionals seeking a deeper understanding of users through field research.

Course Topics:

Overview of ethnographic research

- Importance and applications in UX
- Key concepts and methodologies
- Discussion on the importance of ethnographic research in UX

Planning field studies

- Setting goals for field studies
- Obtaining permissions and addressing ethical considerations
- Preparing for fieldwork
- Case study analysis and group brainstorming on planning field studies

Conducting observations and contextual inquiries

- Techniques for effective observation
- Conducting contextual inquiries
- Engaging with participants
- Role-playing exercise to practice conducting contextual inquiries

Taking field notes & video/audio recording

- Best practices for taking field notes
- Using video and audio recordings
- Organizing and managing data
- Hands-on practice with taking field notes and recording observations

Synthesizing ethnographic data

- Affinity mapping
- Creating journey maps
- Analyzing and interpreting data

Group activity to create affinity maps and journey maps based on sample data

Presenting findings for product decisions

- Structuring and presenting findings
- Communicating insights to stakeholders
- Using findings to inform product decisions
- Activity: Mock presentation of findings to a panel of stakeholders

Tools & templates

- Overview of tools and templates for ethnographic research
- Practical examples and case studies