How Does Anthropology Relate To User Experience Research?

Users are people!
People use software designed by other people!

Chris Ferrell

Research Intake

What is the *business* problem?
(*Needs Assessment*)

- What is the business problem? (*really*)
- Who are all of the stakeholders?
- What are the business constraints or flexibilities?
- Will I have access to your users?
- What is the risk profile?
- What do we already know?

Organizational Prioritization

How does a product team request align with the goals of the larger organization?

- Does new request fit org goals?
- Are there competing demands that are better aligned?
- Prioritization and justification are essential for small teams under high demand

Stakeholder Management

How receptive are the stakeholders to research or design thinking approaches?

- The intake process expedites this understanding
- Reframe your explanations according to your audience

Interviews

Understanding User Goals

Create P.O.V. statements.

- Who are our users?
- What are they trying to do?
- How do they want to feel?

Critical Empathy

- Empathy for users *and* people in your org
- Understanding issues related to meaning as opposed to emotion
- Identifying ambiguity, ambivalence, and indifference
- Explore subjective or unfamiliar terms (TEDW)

Research Plan

What is the *research* problem?
(*Related but differs from business problem*)

- Define
- Plan
- Gather
- Analyze
- Apply

Managing Up, Across, & Out

Your specialization and position may not afford you a mentor.

- Create & host research workshops
- Team competence may be variable
- Teaching is learning
- Multivariate problems are challenging to identify and explain
- Communicate clearly, adapting your message according to its direction and specific recipient

Structure, Transparency, Connection, & Confidence

Adaptability is key, but there needs to be a comparative ideal as compromises are made.

- Demonstrate a structured, but adaptive approach
- Invite participation in the process
- Frequent touch points increase receptivity
- Confidence from cross-functional teams grows slowly; be patient