DESIGN MANAGEMENT AND STRATEGY

MODULE 10: FOCUS GROUP REPORT

C2O USER EXPERIENCE

Shanthini Kumar
21 March 2021

Meeting Agenda

Time		Item
0900 - 0915	❖	Personal Introductions
0915 - 0935	❖	Company Introduction, Product Overview & Focus Group Purpose
0935 - 0945	❖	Ground Rules
0945 - 1000	❖	Break
1000 - 1130	❖	Project Presentation & User Experience Discussion
1000 - 1015	❖	Initial Thoughts
1015 - 1100	❖	Focus Questions
1100 - 1115	❖	Open Discussion & Final Thoughts
1115 - 1130	❖	Feedback

Goals

Cₐ0 Mobile App | Track and measure Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps (AFROTC) cadet performance. Create a resource for cadets to help manage their ROTC commitments and exceed ROTC standards.

Key Concerns | User experience & productivity output

Focus Group Goal | Determine ease of navigation and user experience regarding design functions & features, increase in productivity & efficiency, and multi-platform compatibility.

Participants | Five lower and five upper division ROTC cadets from three different universities within the same state. Participant ages range from 18 to 22. Participants have utilized mobile application for eight weeks, and provided bi-monthly reviews of their experiences at Novice's (*imaginary company*) request.

Desired Takeaways | Determine effectiveness in increasing cadet and wing performance, minimizing stress, and providing a resource for planning, organizing, and executing ROTC events and activities.

PARTICIPANTS OVERVIEW

UPPER DIVISION CADETS | AGE 20 - 21

Caroline Smith	Daniel Guerrero	Warren Patterson	Selena Rodriguez	Obediah Jameson
University of Texas	University of Texas	Texas State University	Texas State University	University of North Texas
High functioning, highly competent, very effective leader & very involved student	Moderately competent, highly intelligent, moderately engaged leader & student	Highly competent but lazy and unconcerned leader & student	Clueless and uninformed leader but highly competent student	Unconcerned, disrespectful, and unreliable leader & average student

LOWER DIVISION CADETS | AGE 18 - 20

Amber Chambers	John Worthington	Alexia Patel	Victoria Shiang	Leroy Wilkinson
University of Texas	University of Texas	Texas State University	University of North Texas	University of North Texas
Hard-working and committed cadet; above average student; waitress	Overconfident cadet putting minimal effort into ROTC activities; average student w/ active social life	Lazy and only partially committed cadet; Outstanding students involved in multiple	Hard-working cadet with high goals for the Air Force; average student	Highly competent and committed trainee & high-performing student

Focus Questions

- What is your first impression of this mobile app?

- Is it easy to navigate? If not, how can it be improved?

- How do the features and functions meet your needs as a cadet?

- Which features do you like the most?

- Which features do you like the least or find to be useless?

- Are there any functions you wish it had?

- How do you feel about the design? What do you think about the color schemes and content?

- Are there any other organization apps that you particularly like or use? If so, what do you like about the app?

- How would you say this app has affected your performance as a cadet trainee or cadet leader?

- Do you believe your ROTC wing has benefitted from using this app?

- If so, how? If not, why do you think that is?

Discussion Points

User experience and preference

❖   Navigation, design, functions and features

Productivity and effectiveness

❖ To what extent does the app actually help cadets perform better?

User association and acceptance

❖   What do cadets associate the app design and features with? How can we improve this?

❖   Has this app increased effective communication between cadet trainees, cadet leaders, and the cadet leadership teams?

OBSERVATIONS

OVERALL GROUP DYNAMIC

Participants were engaged and cooperative throughout the meeting. While there were some who voiced their opinions more or louder than others, all were respectful to each other's perspectives for the most part. Of note, three participants displayed negative attitudes towards the mobile app. Their comments were primarily negative, and they did not offer feedback for improvement. The other seven participants appreciated the app but also offered valuable feedback on how to improve it to better fit their needs and suit their lifestyles. Although there were differences in opinion, there were no personal offenses.

INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIORS & BODY LANGUAGE

This particular focus group was very relaxed, comfortable, and confident. Most individuals sat with their legs crossed on the couches, some slouching, and two with their feet up and tucked under them. Most made eye contact with one another and our representatives when speaking or listening to others. The overall tone was very conversational, and there were several instances when each participant brought up personal examples of their challenges as a cadet and college student. This led our team to believe that the participants were fairly relaxed and comfortable around each other, even joking about university team sports.

OBSERVATIONS

DIFFERENCE IN PERSPECTIVE

We found that the lower division cadets, or cadet trainees, appeared to benefit the most from the app. It helped them keep their schedules and events organized. All of them specifically noted the "reminder alerts" and "calendar" as the most useful functions for them. They also appreciated the integration with Google Drive, since that is what their teams primarily use to keep their activities and group assignments organized and up to date.

Alternatively, the upper division cadets, or cadet leaders, had much more to say on how to improve the app navigation and features. Specifically, they did not find much use in the "reminder alerts" or "calendar" functions, since they already use other apps to keep track of events and activities. However, they did acknowledge that these features would much improve their trainees' attendance for events. They also found the navigation sequences to be too complicated, indicating the app would be more effective if the different features could be better integrated. For example, instead of opening two separate push buttons that connect an activity (i.e. a button for the Calendar *and* a button for the event details on the Events page), they recommended connecting the two (i.e. being able to click on the event in the Calendar to automatically lead to the Events page).

Additionally, the cadet leaders suggested improving the function for communication between them and their trainees. Currently, cadet leaders can send out or post cadet trainee performance reports and letters for the trainees to view at their convenience. However, cadet leaders pointed out **mentoring** as a key component of any successful cadet wing. Therefore, including a function in which cadet trainees can request mentoring sessions, or perhaps comment on the performance reports to ask specific ways in which they can improve, would be very valuable to the cadet leaders. This particular comment was also met with approval by the cadet trainee participants in the group, who also offered their suggestions in this area.

KEY DATA POINTS

COMMON USER LIKES & DISLIKES

❖ Common "Likes": Google drive integration capability; Events and Calendar-related features to create unofficial training and team "bonding" activities; fast response time and very quick to use = able to access and create events/notifications quickly and easily when walking from class to class or sitting on the bus; 4-digit quick login versus an email/password combo; consolidated weekly "to-do"s for each cadet flight group

❖ Common "Dislikes" : Too many "push" buttons and time-consuming to navigate; *limited options for cadet trainees to communicate with their cadet trainer or leader (no email or chat integration feature); Process for setting up a profile is too long and extensive

PRIMARY USER & NAVIGATION CONCERNS

❖ Overall consensus: App could be much improved with better integration sequences between features and functions

FUNCTIONS & FEATURES FEEDBACK

❖ 7/10 participants were satisfied with a majority of the app functions and features, specifically commenting on the speed and ease of using the features

❖ 6/10 participants offered specific feedback on new features to include or improve on. These included the "Warrior Knowledge" information section; "zoom in" capability for the Calendar and other organization features (events and activities); including an "Organization Chart" for cadet wing, including an "Air Force Manuals" sections for Air Force Instructions regarding areas such as uniform wear, formal procedures, rules and regulations; including an Email or Chat function for easy communication; including a Calendar for University events such as football games

KEY DATA POINTS

DESIGN FEEDBACK AND RECOMMENDATIONS

❖ 5/10 participants liked or were satisfied with the design

❖ 5/10 participants offered feedback for improvement: Lighter color scheme with less colors; larger font and easier to read; less words for app features (*suggested a simple icon would do the trick*); less image content (*commented that it was not necessary and took up valuable space on the page*)

❖ 8/10 participants appreciated the "sleek and modern take"

OVERALL FEEDBACK

❖ 6/10 participants would 100% recommend the app be utilized at their detachments

❖ 7/10 participants agreed the app improved their ability to perform well in the cadet wing

   ❖ 3/5 cadet <u>leaders</u> agreed the app moderately improved their ability to communicate and keep events/activities organized amongst leadership

      ❖ 1/5 cadet leaders did not see the benefits of using the app

      ❖ 2/5 cadet leaders recognized the potential for the app, but offered significant feedback on how to improve the features to better accommodate leadership's needs

   ❖ 4/5 cadet <u>trainees</u> agreed the app greatly improved their organization skills, performance, and opportunities to bond with other cadets in ROTC

❖ 3/10 participants did not recognize the need for the app, citing Google Drive, Email, and Excel suffice perfectly well to run cadet operations at their wings

Key Takeaways

- Minimal Design Modifications: Less content and text, more icons

- Significant Improvement in Navigation: Better and easier integration among app features

- Moderate Improvement in Functions and Features: Better back and forth communication tools

Project Recommendations

* Email/Chat integration feature

    * How do we include this without crossing the "this should not be/become a social app" guideline provided by the client?

* "Mentoring" section or component

    * What sort of mentoring do cadet wings do?

    * How can we incorporate this component to enrich their mentoring programs?

* Re-evaluate Navigation sequence approach

    * What other options are better suited to meet participant recommendations?

FACTORS OF CONSIDERATION

❖ This is one of five focus group meetings

❖ All participants were specifically chosen from cadet wings located within the same state. Other focus groups will have participants from other states

❖ All participants utilized the app for 8 weeks at their respective detachments

❖ All participants were recommended/selected by detachment commanders to participate in the 8 week trial and focus group

❖ All participants are part of cadet wings of the same size and scope (~75 cadets)