



Usability Professionals' Association

UPA Code of Professional Conduct for Usability Practitioners Adopted September 2005

Introduction

This code of conduct is intended to cover situations commonly encountered by usability practitioners. Membership includes acceptance of this code. The Code is stated in two parts. Part One is a list of statements of UPA Ethical Principles. Part Two contains examples of the practice of the Principles.

Adherence to This Code of Conduct

Usability practitioners shall ensure that their work meets the Ethical Principles laid out in this code of conduct. Usability practitioners shall report any violations of this code of ethics to the Vice President of the Usability Professionals' Association. A review of the allegations will be conducted by the UPA Ethics Advisory Committee. Violations of this code may lead to expulsion from the Usability Professionals' Association.

Part One: UPA Ethical Principles

- Act in the Best Interest of Everyone
- Be Honest with Everyone
- Do No Harm and If Possible Provide Benefits
- Act with Integrity
- Avoid Conflicts of Interest
- Respect Privacy, Confidentiality, and Anonymity
- Provide All Resultant Data

promoting usability concepts and techniques worldwide



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Part Two: Examples of the Practice of the Principles

1 Act in the Best Interest of Everyone

- 1.1. Usability practitioners shall be aware of relevant standards, principles, and generally accepted usability methods
- 1.2. Usability practitioners shall undertake professional assignments only when qualified by education or experience.
- 1.3. Usability practitioners shall provide products and services that match the operational and financial needs of clients and employers.
- 1.4. Usability practitioners shall undertake ongoing efforts to develop and maintain their competence.
- 1.5. Usability practitioners shall seek and use peer review as well as provide critical review of the work of others whenever appropriate. Usability practitioners shall make reasonable efforts to avoid offering excessive or inappropriate financial or other inducements for participation in usability activities when such inducements are likely to coerce participation.

2 Be Honest with Everyone

- 2.1. Usability practitioners shall not knowingly mislead a client or potential client about the suitability of a product or service.
- 2.2. Usability practitioners shall give recommendations that are objective, consistent with accepted principles, and/or based on the judgment of qualified professionals.
- 2.3. Usability practitioners shall never deliberately misinform or mislead individuals for whom they are providing services.
- 2.4. Usability practitioners shall credit the intellectual property right of work, methods, and tools done or created by others in such a way that all parties involved are always clear as to the origin of such and the rights of the usability practitioner to use or cite such work, methods or tools.

3 Do No Harm and If Possible Provide Benefits

- 3.1. Usability practitioners shall not expose participants to any unreasonable physical, mental or emotional stress.
- 3.2. Usability practitioners shall take reasonable steps to avoid harming their clients or employers, study participants, and others with whom they work, and to minimize harm where it is foreseeable and avoidable.
- 3.3. Usability practitioners shall review for special needs when working with the elderly, the disabled, and children. Precautions taken to avoid risks associated with such groups shall be clearly identified and reviewed by the client or employer.

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4 Act with Integrity

- 4.1. Usability practitioners shall work in a spirit of respectful collaboration and cooperation with those with whom they interact without compromising their personal or professional integrity.
- 4.2. Usability practitioners shall not discriminate against their clients, colleagues, or participants on the basis of age, gender, gender identity, race, ethnicity, culture, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, socioeconomic status, or any basis proscribed by law.
- 4.3. Usability practitioners shall not make public derogatory comments about their clients, colleagues, or participants.
- 4.4. Usability practitioners shall never knowingly use material that is illegal, immoral, or which may hurt or damage a person or group of people. If exposed to illegal material, the usability practitioner shall advise their client or employer of the illegal nature of the material and take reasonable steps to inform the relevant authorities of the existence of the material.

5 Avoid Conflicts of Interest

- 5.1. Usability practitioners shall avoid all known conflicts of interest with their employers or clients and shall promptly inform their employers or clients of any business association, interests, or circumstances that could influence their judgments or the quality of their services.
- 5.2. Usability practitioners shall not accept any assignments that would knowingly create a possible conflict of interest between themselves and their clients, employers, or participants.
- 5.3. Usability practitioners shall advise clients and employers when a proposed project is not in the client's best interest and provide a rationale for this advice.

6 Respect Privacy, Confidentiality, and Anonymity

- 6.1. Usability practitioners shall not reveal information that identifies colleagues or participants without their permission and shall take reasonable precautions to avoid such information from being disclosed unintentionally.
- 6.2. Usability practitioners shall ensure that participants in any study provide informed consent for use of all data collected.
- 6.3. Usability practitioners shall never disclose in their writings, reports, teaching materials or other public media or otherwise make public any information they have acquired about persons, employers or clients in the course of their professional work unless disclosure is both legal and that they have either taken reasonable steps to disguise the identity of the person, employer or client, or they have the express permission to disclose.

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7 Provide All Resultant Data

- 7.1. Usability practitioners shall choose participants and tasks so as to ensure the validity of the results.
- 7.2. Usability practitioners shall consider the limitations of every usability project they plan or carry out and if requested or if in their view the limitations render the results questionable, shall communicate the results of this analysis to their client or employer.
- 7.3 Usability practitioners shall accurately report both the positive and negative feedback from usability activities.