

# Introduction To Usability

**Designing and developing usable systems.**

**The historical context of usability.**

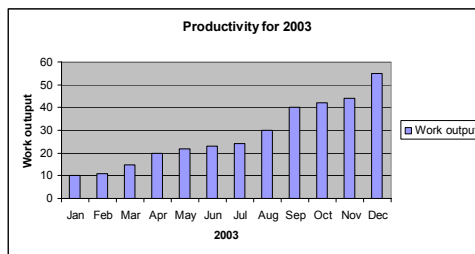
James Tam

## What Is Usability?

**User satisfaction**

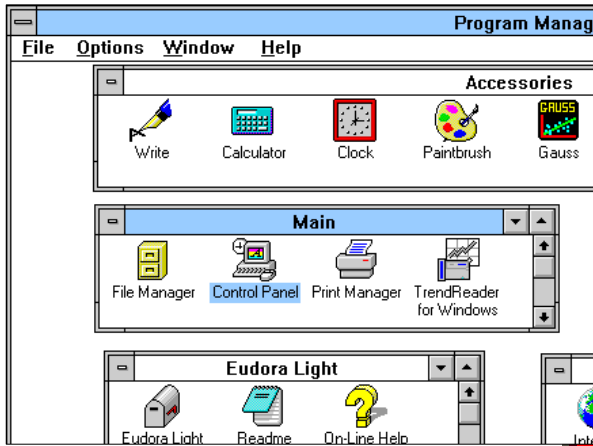


**Efficiency and effectiveness (user tasks)**



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## Importance Of Usability: The Interface IS The System To Most People



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## Importance Of Usability: Cost Of Using A Computer

### **Costs from a technical perspective**

- Hardware costs
- Software costs

### **Costs from the user's perspective (personware)**

- Training costs
- Daily usage

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## **Designing Unusable Systems: Blame It On The User!**

- **“What is wrong with me? Why can’t I figure this out?”**
- **“I must be tired, this should be so simple to do.”**
- **“You don’t know how to do [something as simple as] that???”**
- **“They’re all just a bunch of idiots!”**

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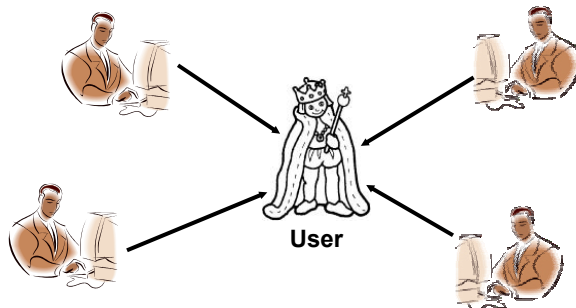
## **How To Design Usable Systems (Gould)**

- 1) Early - and continual focus on users**
- 2) Early - and continual user testing**
- 3) Engage in iterative design**
- 4) Make design an integrated process**

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## 1) Early And Continual Focus On Users

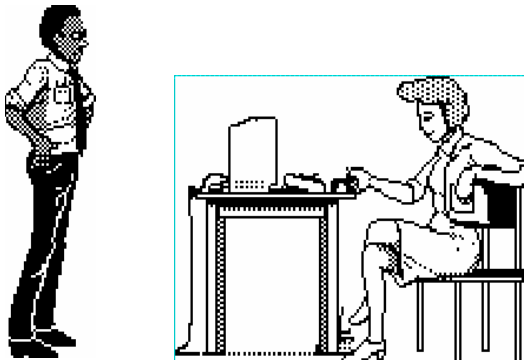
- **Decide who will be using the system and what they will be doing with it**
- **This forms the basis of your design**
- **Many techniques may be employed**



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## 2) Early And Continual User Testing

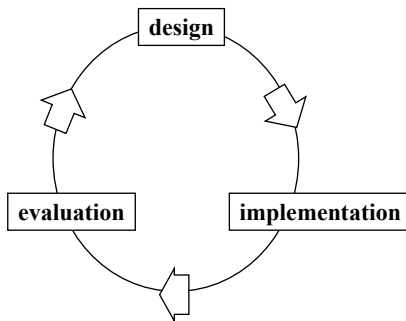
- **Not something to do just at the end!**
- **Instead: From the start of the development process and throughout have users do real work using different versions of your system.**



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### 3) Engage In Iterative Design

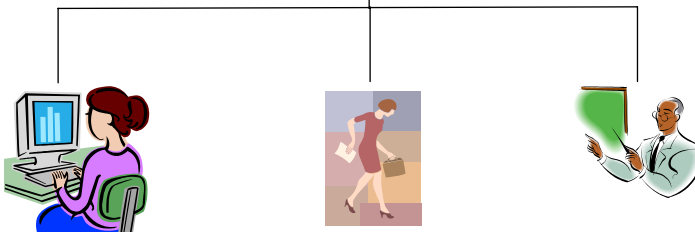
- Identifying required changes.
- Being able to make the required changes.
- Being willing to make the required changes.



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### 4) Integrated Design

All aspects of usability are controlled by one person



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**The Historical Context Of Usability:**  
**Apply It Like Peanut Butter.**



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**The Historical Context Of Usability:**  
**The Priest With A Parachute Paradigm.**



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**The Historical Context Of Usability:**  
**HCI People Are The UI Police.**

**Programmers hide your code!**



Terminator 2 © Artisan Entertainment

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**The Historical Context Of Usability:**  
**It's Important**

**But what do we need to do?**



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## **You Should Now Know**

- **What is usability**
- **Why is usability an important issue in terms of system design**
- **Some principles for designing usable systems**
- **How attitudes towards usability have changed over time**