

# Tips for Moderating Usability Tests

## How to Keep Tests Smooth

- Let users struggle, don't over moderate
- Use pauses and silence if you need to
- Do not leave too much silence during task – say okay often
- Say "Okay" and "uh-huh" to fill in gaps
- Use a monotone tonality with users
- Ask "reverse questions": Is this what you expect to find there?

## How to Avoid Emotion Traps

| Trap   | Solution  |
|--|---|
| Wants to know if they are doing a good job     | Say "OK" or "You're helping us identify what we are looking for". Repeat.                       |
| Wants to get answers right                     | Say "There are no right or wrong answers" or "You helped us identify what we were looking for". |
| Stubborn or quiet                              | Ask user to "Remember to Think Out Loud so I can follow along".                                 |
| Waiting for permission to move on to next task | Tell user to move at her own pace during test. Indicate before test in instructions.            |
| Mumbles or speaks unclearly                    | Ask user to speak louder. Repeat.   |
| Panicking for help                             | Let them struggle, within reason. Say nothing or just say "OK". Repeat.                         |

