

# Forms that work: understanding forms to improve their design

Forms are ubiquitous, essential and widely disliked, but they do not have to be a difficult experience for the user. This tutorial concentrates on the human side of forms: how we interact with, and think about forms and how to make them as easy for users as practicable.

You do not need any special knowledge or experience of forms or usability. You need to have some interest in forms and preferably to be working with forms in some way.

## What you will learn

You will learn:

1. The three-layer model of the form: relationship, conversation and appearance
2. A six-step process of creating forms that work for the users
  - Define the information requirement
  - Understand the relationship
  - Write questions, the building blocks of a conversation
  - Design a flow to create a conversation
  - Design an appropriate appearance
  - Testing
3. The importance of iteration throughout the process.

Take-aways include:

- a deep understanding of forms, encapsulated in a variety of guidelines that are easy to remember and apply
- thorough appreciation of the three-layer model of forms (relationship, conversation and appearance) and how to use it to improve forms
- a range of ways of testing forms and understanding of the value of testing.

## A forms tutorial that combines principles and practice

The style of the day is very interactive, with lots of discussion and exercises.

We will work through a real-life example of a form that needs some improvement. You're welcome to send the presenter any forms you'd like to discuss: we'll either use them in class, or find some time in breaks to chat about them.

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## **The presenter: Caroline Jarrett**

Caroline has been fascinated by forms since she started working on UK tax forms in 1992, and has been teaching forms tutorials internationally since the first Nielsen-Norman world tour in 2000/20001. Whether your particular form is complex or simple, for the general public or a specialist audience, high-volume or rarely used, chances are she'll have consulted on something similar. Come to share your ideas with her.