Appendix B: The Abby Persona

Abby (Abigail) Jones

28 years old
Employed as an Accountant
Lives in Cardiff, Wales

Although Abby lives right on the bus route to work, she prefers to drive and avoid the hassle. After arriving into work, she always looks over all the emails that she has received before answering any one of them. After work, she rushes to a yoga or spinning class. A game of Sudoku or Candy Crush Saga is her main pastime before bed.

Motivations and Strategies

Abby is proficient with the technologies she uses. She learns new technologies when she needs to, but she doesn't spend her free time exploring technology or expanding obscure functionality of programs and devices that she uses. When Abby uses computers to problem-solve, she has the desire to learn new functions, or to search for information on them. She tries to use methods she is already familiar and comfortable with to achieve her goals.

Information Processing Style:
Abby leans towards a comprehensive information processing style when she needs to gather information to problem-solve. That is, before following any path that seems promising, she gathers information comprehensively to try to form a complete understanding of the problem before trying to solve it.

Attitude toward Risk:
Abby is risk averse when she uses computers to perform tasks. When confronted with new software features, Abby worries that she will spend time on them and not get any benefits from doing so. She tries to perform tasks "the safe" (i.e., familiar) way, even if the less familiar features might promise a more direct solution.

Willingness to Explore and Tinker:
Abby doesn't particularly like exploring the latest gadgets or learning how to use them. Even though she's an accountant and deals with numbers all day at work, she never taken any computer programming or IT systems classes. She doesn't particularly like tinkering with computers. She prefers following step-by-step tutorials and wizards over tinkering. (However, when she does bring herself to tinker, it has positive effects on her understanding of the software.)

Background knowledge and Skills
Abby works as an accountant in a consulting firm. Consequently, she spends a good deal of her time working with spreadsheets with clients' financial data. She describes herself as a "numbers person." She is not a professional programmer but she writes and edits spreadsheet formulas in her work.

Abby has a degree in accounting, so she knows plenty of Maths and knows how to think in terms of numbers. She's never taken any computer programming or IT systems classes. Even though she's an accountant and deals with numbers all day at work, she likes Sudoku and other puzzle games.

Computer Self-Efficacy: Abby has low computer self-efficacy, meaning that she has low self-confidence in performing computing tasks other than the ones she is familiar with. This has a variety of impacts on how she uses software. For example, she is not confident that she can learn new functions and, as a result, she often relies on familiar software rather than exploring new options. When confronted with new software features, Abby worries that she will spend time on them and not get any benefits from doing so. She tries to perform tasks "the safe" (i.e., familiar) way, even if the less familiar features might promise a more direct solution.

Attitude to Technology:
Abby is generally comfortable using familiar technology, but she does not get too excited about the latest gadgets or learning how to use them. This is due to her low computer self-efficacy, meaning that she is not confident in learning new functions or using new software features. When confronted with new software features, Abby worries that she will spend time on them and not get any benefits from doing so. She tries to perform tasks "the safe" (i.e., familiar) way, even if the less familiar features might promise a more direct solution.

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