10 Usability Lessons from Steve Krug’s Don’t Make Me Think

Many people in the usability community regard Steve Krug’s book *Don’t Make Me Think: A Common Sense Approach to Web Usability, 2nd Edition* as the laypersons usability bible. This book explains briefly and concisely everything one needs to know about getting started with web usability. For more advanced users, it’s a great refresher course.

UX Booth has been open for more than half a year now, and when we started I was always regarded as the layperson of the group. After getting all serious about usability, I’ve re-read Steve Krug’s Don’t Make Me Think and pulled out what I consider to be the most insightful and best thoughts in this book.

I highly recommend picking up a copy if you get a chance, but here are some things to think about in the meantime. Some are simple and straightforward but worth remembering, some are just phrased beautifully, and some will make you think.

The Lessons

1. **Usability Means...**
   Usability means making sure something works well, and that a person of average ability or experience can use it for its intended purpose without getting hopelessly frustrated.

2. **Web applications should explain themselves.**
   As far as humanly possible, when I look at a web page it should be self-evident. Obvious. Self-explanatory.

3. **Don’t Make Me Think**
   As a rule, people don’t like to puzzle over how to do things. If people who build a site don’t care enough to make things obvious it can erode confidence in the site and its publishers.

4. **Don’t waste my time**
   Much of our web use is motivated by the desire to save time. As a result, web users tend to act like sharks. They have to keep moving or they’ll die.

5. **Users still cling to their back buttons**
   There’s not much of a penalty for guessing wrong. Unlike firefighting, the penalty for guessing wrong on a website is just a click or two of the back button. The back button is the most-used feature of web browsers.

6. **We’re creatures of habit**
   If we find something that works, we stick to it. Once we find something
What are your words of wisdom?

So what words of wisdom on Usability do you have? What are the best books about Usability that you have read?