

## Step 3: Contextual Task Analysis

### Purpose of this step:

The purpose of this step is to identify and scope out the current functions and features of an existing application, in order to help identify how to improve the application.

### Overview:

- This step is applicable when you already have an application.
- The purposes of this step are:
  - To understand how users currently do their work in their actual work environment.
  - To figure out how to reengineer work processes to support business goals.
  - To analyze how to maximize existing task knowledge.

### Practical application of these principles to your site:

- 1) Gather background information about the work being automated:** The purpose of this task is to obtain a user-centered model of the work as it is currently performed.
- 2) Collect and analyze data from observations of and interviews with users as they do real work in their actual work environment:** Making direct observations about users in their work environment may uncover work flow and details about the work environment that questioning does not uncover.
- 3) Construct and validate a model of the users' current task organization:** To truly understand the work of a set of users, go to their workplace, learn the user jargon, and observe and talk with a representative set of users of all key types.

Examples: See examples of this step in the “Examples” folder.