



Lebsontech LLC

Lessons learned from two years of in-person UX research in Covid times

Cory Lebson



Lebsontech LLC | @corylebson

Our methods always evolve and change...

UX Research Since 1994

...now, it's a push towards 100% remote

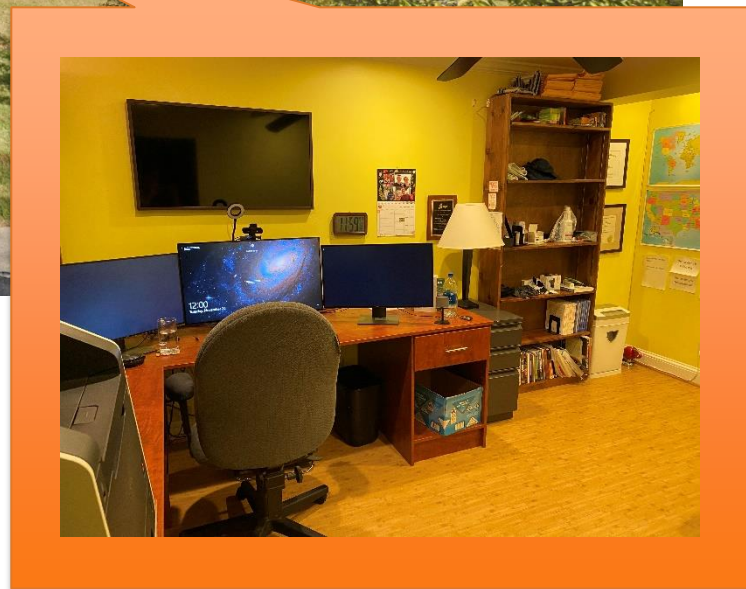
2



Yes, I did lots of remote research in Covid years...



And it generally worked out pretty well!



...But I did a bunch of in-person studies too.



Evolving Best Practices For Doing In-Person UX Research During Covid-19

Jul 26, 2020

Last week, I talked about why I made the decision to accept in-person UX research again even during the Covid-19 pandemic. Now in part two, after two weeks of in-person research, I'll go through my first pass at best practices for conducting individual research sessions in the hope that this can be useful for others who may have already [...]



Yes, I've again starting doing in-person UX research in the age of Covid-19

Jul 23, 2020

I've read several people's posts over the past few months saying that no user researcher should do in-person user research until such time as the Covid-19 pandemic has ended. That remote research fully covers all needs until then. That researchers should make a choice not to take on in-person research and just



When will it be time to resume in-person UX research?

May 4, 2020

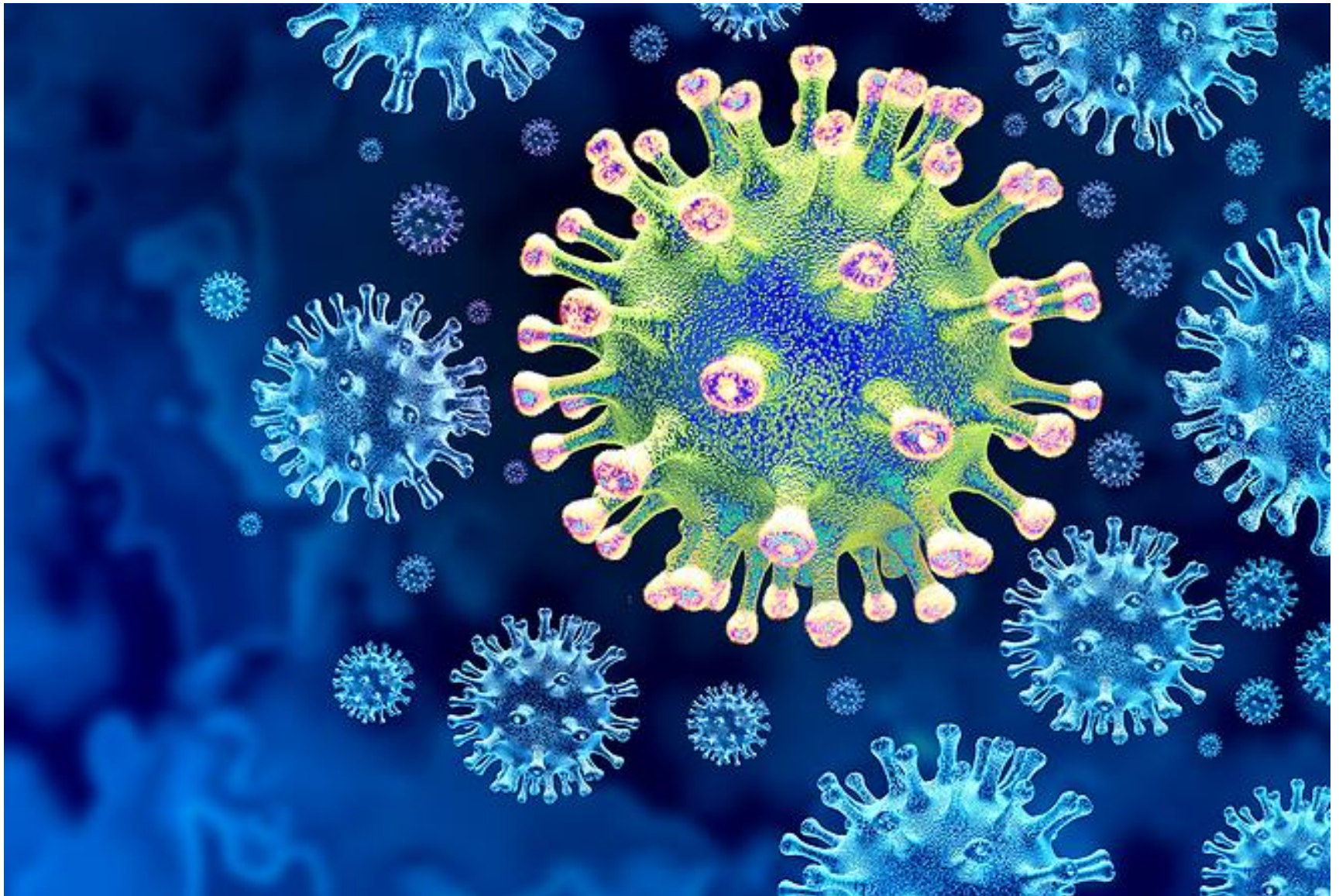
As with probably most of my UX peers around the world, I've been working remotely and social distancing because of Covid-19 for about seven weeks now. In that time, I've felt very lucky, having managed to go entirely remote without more than perhaps a 10% loss of projected income. It's not looking quite as perfect [...]



Also sometimes remote is just not feasible...



Covid evolves but so does our research



Lesson 1:

Remove vs. In-person is ultimately up to you and your comfort level



There may be reasons that working in person isn't ok for you



You have a right to push for what you're comfortable with.

And if you want to exclusively do remote UX research it's easier than ever!

The world is comfortable!



zoom

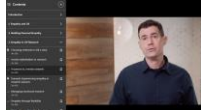
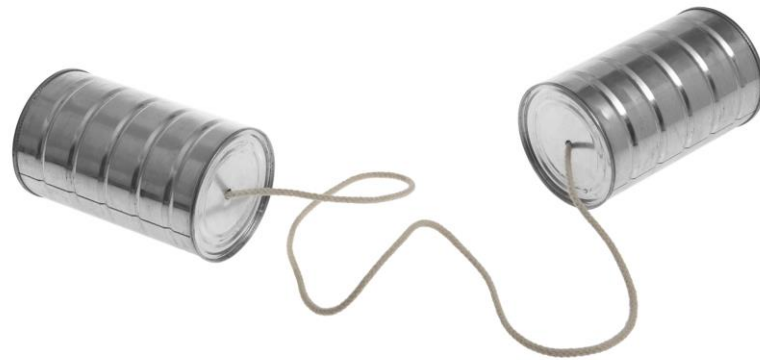
My oldest participant ever!



I found my balance, stayed safe, and kept busy.



And I enjoyed it



Empathy in UX Design (12/20/19): “There's a richness of interaction and that transmission of feeling, of communication, that comes with the sync of not only words but body language. And simply put, the humanity of being with others.”

“The acoustics are not quite the same when a song is compressed into digital bits of data, and human interaction is no different. Some of the richness of that interaction and some of the opportunity for empathy is simply lost along the way.”



Lesson 2:

We need to accept and work with the
comfort level of others



Never push someone such that they feel unsafe.



Find your comfort, but don't dictate.

Stakeholders want remote

- It's remote!

Stakeholders want in-person or remote is not feasible.

- You
- Someone else



And acceptance goes in both directions...

Any UX researcher who does in-person research is being immoral.

-As someone posted to LinkedIn in 2020

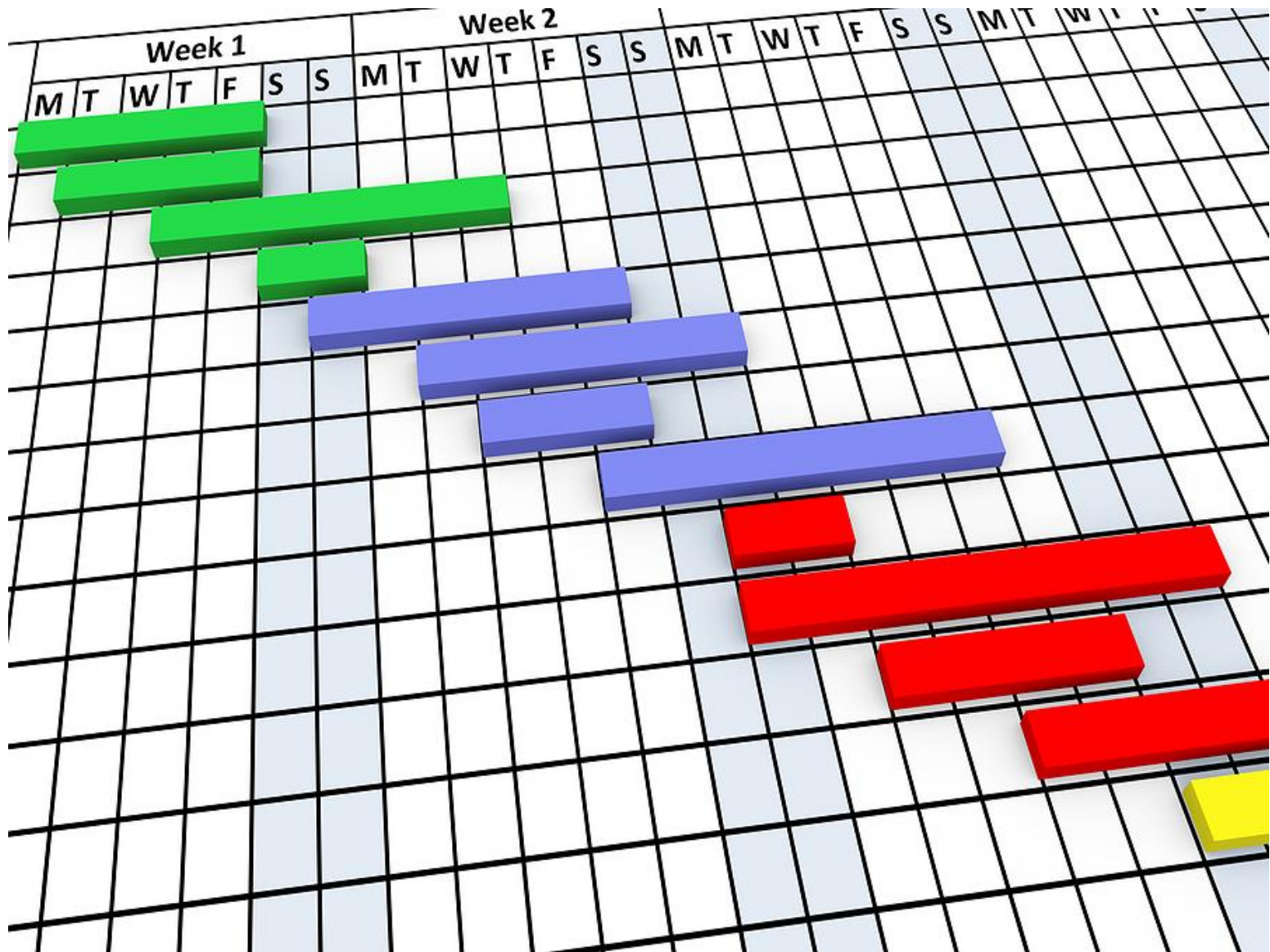


Lesson 3:

Flexibility is a key to successful research



Timelines slip and delays are inevitable



Build in buffer time!



Consider the flexibility of your travel plans

Flights Multi City & Round the World *hotel and car prices are based on 2 adults and updated every 24 to 48 hours

From Washington DC, Washington (All A
Outbound 12 October
Return Flight 19 October

To London, Heathrow (LHR), United K

Passengers 1 Adult
Travel class Economy, F

What is your travel class?

- Economy
- Premium economy
- Business
- First
- Flexible ticket?
Change your flight with no penalty fee

Confirm

Optional ext

Book now, cha

Book that perfect trip to London for travel before Aug
change your destination, dates or

Flights to London
from **USD 626**
round trip
from Washington DC, Oct
2020



If possible, plan in-person for remote flexibility

Comfort level assessment

D6. We are planning on conducting in-person sessions where our study participants would be in a conference room with two other people who are sitting at least six feet away and everyone is wearing a mask. However, given current Covid-19 stats, we understand that this may not be comfortable with everyone so we would alternatively be able to do the session remotely. Would you be willing to wear a mask and do the session in person or would you prefer to do the session remotely, by communicating with the study moderator using your computer microphone and webcam and also sharing the screen of your computer so they can see you use the website that we're testing?

- In-person with a mask
- Remotely with microphone, webcam and shared screen
- Neither **TERMINATE**

Ask all participants D9 - D12 but for those that are scheduled to participate in-person add: "If, for whatever reason, Covid-19 regulations keep us from having in-person sessions we would switch this to an entirely remote study and if this is the case, we would like to know if you would have the technology necessary to participate."

D9. Do you own a desktop or laptop computer that has a microphone and webcam?

- Yes
- No **TERMINATE**

D10. Does your home have high-speed internet and Wifi?

- Yes
- No **TERMINATE**

D11. Are you willing to share your computer screen (view-only) during the course of this session?

- Yes
- No **TERMINATE**



Negotiate extra travel flexibility

Given new travel uncertainty, we are including a Covid-19 allowance for travel expenses in this contract for up to \$3,000. This allowance would only be used for additional documented travel expenses that are directly or indirectly related to Covid-19. (For example, a planned flight stops operating and we need to stay longer, or a Lebsontech staff member gets quarantined and is required to stay for additional days.)



Lesson 4:

Stakeholder communication is another critical key to successful research.



Be gentle, open and honest with stakeholders



Maintain real-time communication during research



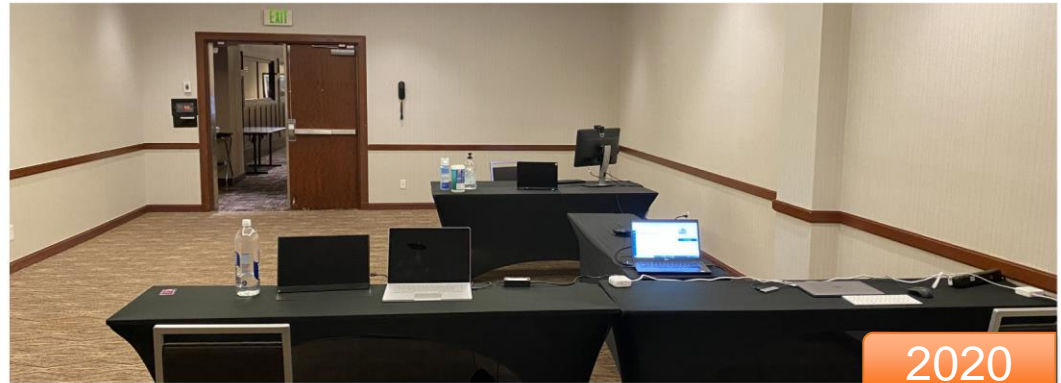
Lesson 5:

An in-person UX research setup should always keep an eye towards safety and adjust to changing conditions.

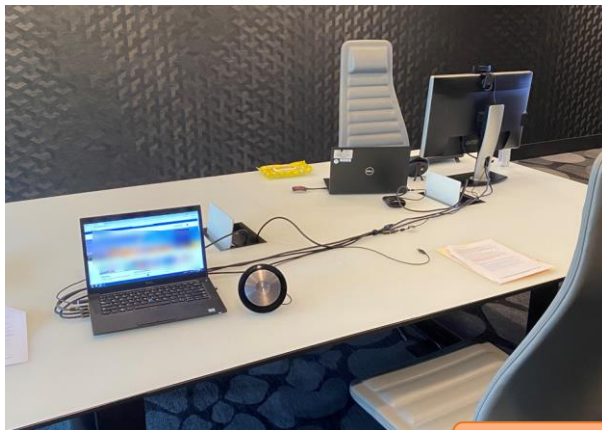


Modulate your setup

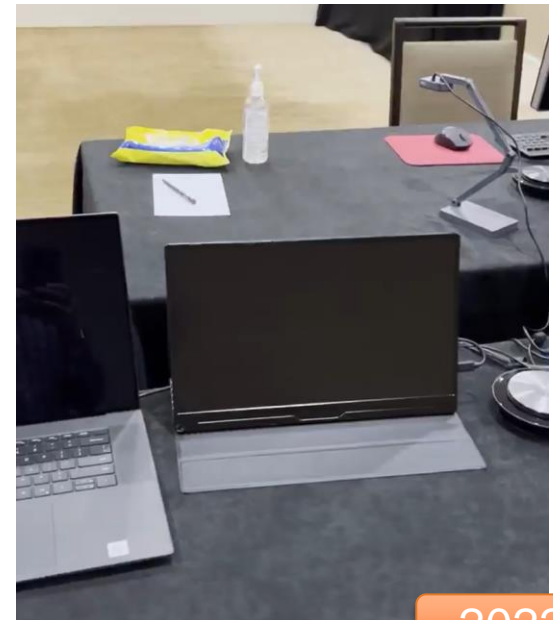
My setup!
2020 - 2022



2020



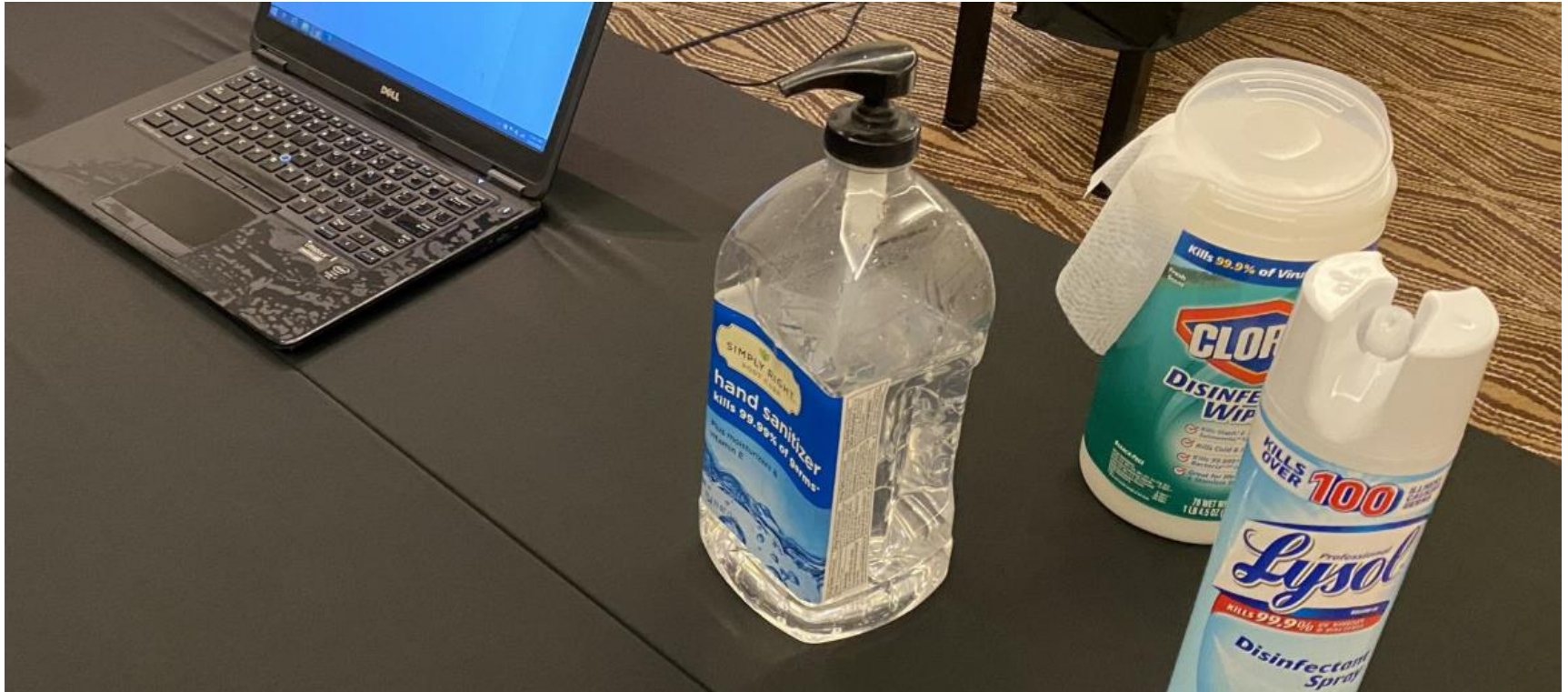
2021



2022

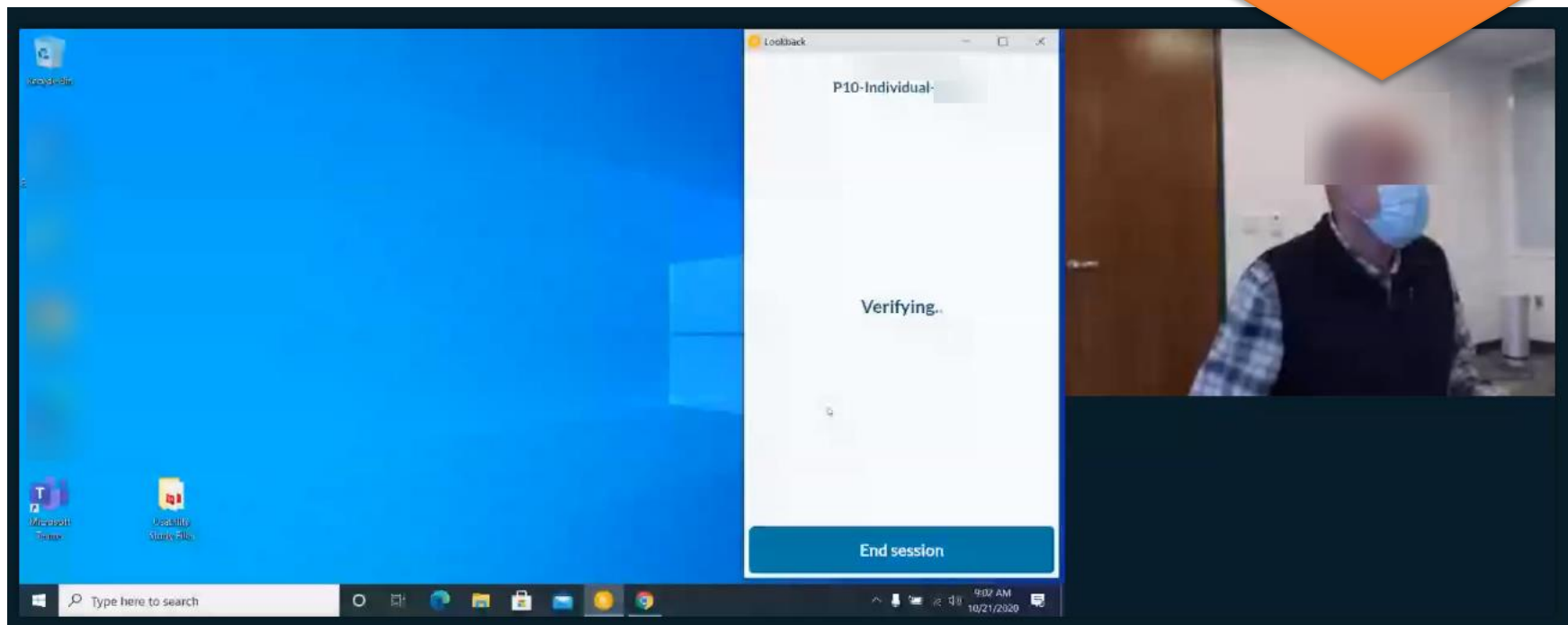


Covid or not, sanitization is a good idea!



Easily add remote observation to in-person research

And always
make it
known that
masks are
permitted!



Are we ready for a future with endemic Covid
and other pandemics?



We *really* will learn to live with Covid.



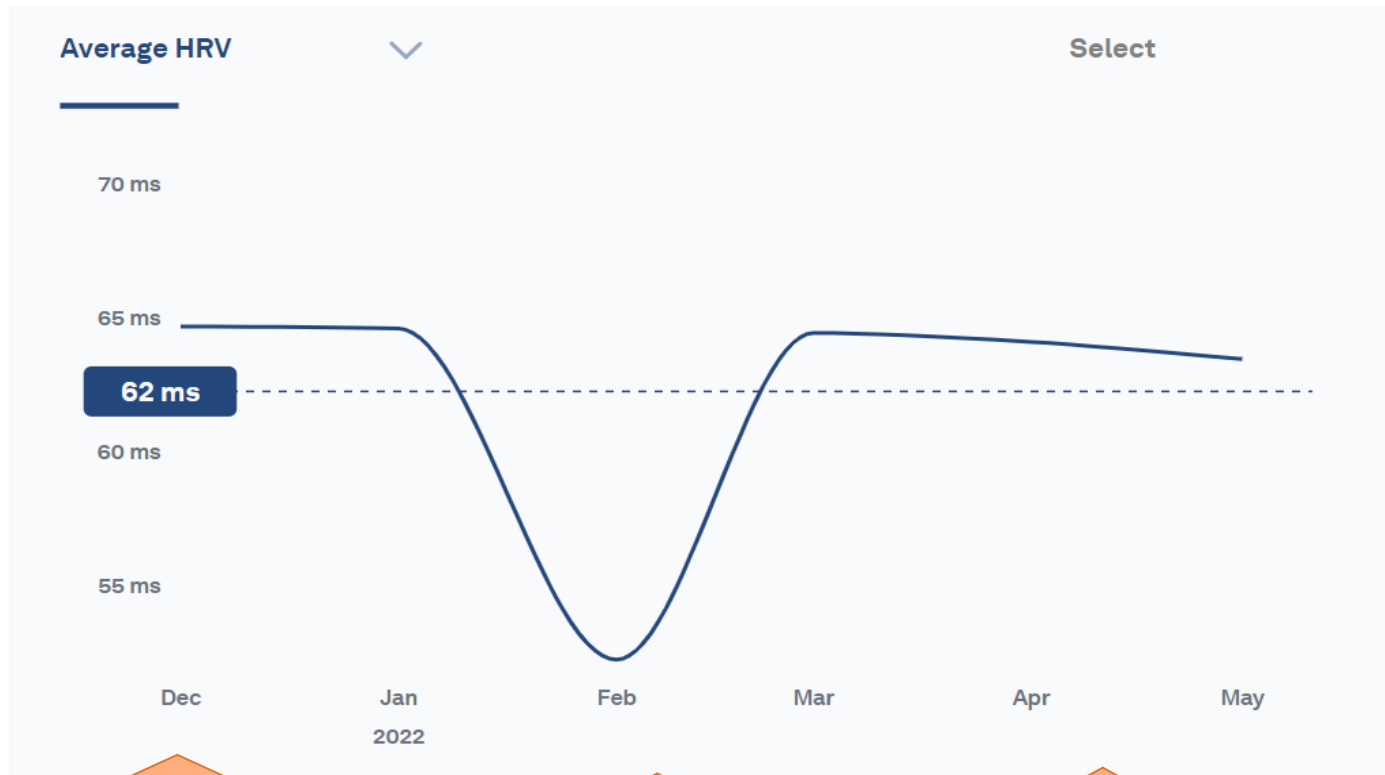
Hybrid everything will become the new norm



Soon the metaverse will take hybrid one step further.



And with new-found self-awareness, work shouldn't hurt us



Had Covid
(but light
work)

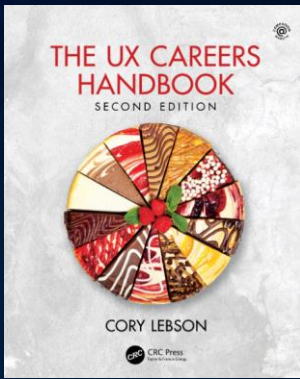
Stressful
month of
work

Busy but
not too
intense





Relish every opportunity for in-person research. Because we never know what tomorrow will bring.



Take a peek at the book

Contents

<i>First Edition Acknowledgments</i>	ix
<i>Second Edition Acknowledgments</i>	xi
<i>About the Author</i>	xiii
<i>Foreword</i>	xv
<i>How to Use This Book</i>	xvii
Part 1 Establishing Your Foundation	1
Chapter 1 What Is User Experience (UX)?	3
Chapter 2 Your Career Is Grounded in Your Education	13
Chapter 3 Never Stop Learning	25
Chapter 4 Personal Branding and Networking for Career Success	37
Chapter 5 Critical Soft Skills	61
Part 2 Getting a Job	69
Chapter 6 Resumes and Portfolios to Illustrate Your Value	71
Chapter 7 Work In-House or Be an External Consultant	87
Chapter 8 Independent Contracting or Starting a Small UX Business	99
Chapter 9 Landing a Job (or New Contract Work)	115

CONTENTS

Part 3 Recruiters & Employers	139
Chapter 10 Working with a Recruiter; Being a Recruiter	141
Chapter 11 Employer's Guide (and What Job Seekers Should Look For)	155
Part 4 Career Glimpses: What, Specifically, Can You Do?	169
Chapter 12 UX Career Pathways	171
Chapter 13 Design-Related Pathways	181
Interaction Design	181
<i>UX for Developers</i>	188
Information Architecture	192
<i>UX for SEO Professionals</i>	197
Visual Design	199
Service Design	203
<i>UX for Industrial Designers</i>	207
Chapter 14 Research-Related Pathways	211
User Research and Evaluation	211
<i>UX for Market Researchers</i>	217
Human Factors	220
Accessibility	225
Chapter 15 Content-Related Pathways	229
Content Strategy	229
Content Writing/Information Design	233
UX Writing	239
Technical Communication	244

CONTENTS

vii

Chapter 16 Strategy-Related Pathways	251
UX Strategy	251
Customer Experience	256
Part 5 UX Leadership	261
Chapter 17 Corporate UX Leadership	263
Chapter 18 Alternative Pathways to UX Leadership	273
CONCLUSION	279
Chapter 19 UX in the Future; Your Career Today	281
Index	291

Find a PDF book preview on
uxcareershandbook.com

20% Discount Available - enter the code **FLA22** at checkout*

Check out LinkedIn Learning



Cory Lebson

Leading Educator and Author in UX

[View profile on LinkedIn](#)

Two decades of UX consulting have made Cory Lebson one of the leading educators and authors in UX.

Cory Lebson ([@corylebson](#)) has been a UX consultant for over two decades. He is the principal and owner of Lebsontech LLC, a successful user experience consulting firm focused on user research and evaluation, user experience strategy, UX training, and mentoring.

Cory speaks frequently on topics related to UX career development, user experience, user research, information architecture, and

[Show more](#) ▾



COURSE

Planning a Career in User Experience

By: Cory Lebson · Updated Sep 2021



COURSE

Empathy in UX Design

By: Cory Lebson · Dec 2019



COURSE

Freelancing and Consulting in User Experience

By: Cory Lebson · Jun 2017



COURSE

Hiring and Managing UX Professionals

By: Cory Lebson · Sep 2019



COURSE

UX Research: Being Flexible

By: Cory Lebson · 2 months ago



COURSE

UX Research: International Projects

By: Cory Lebson · 3 months ago



Lebsontech LLC

| [@corylebson](#)



Let's connect!  

