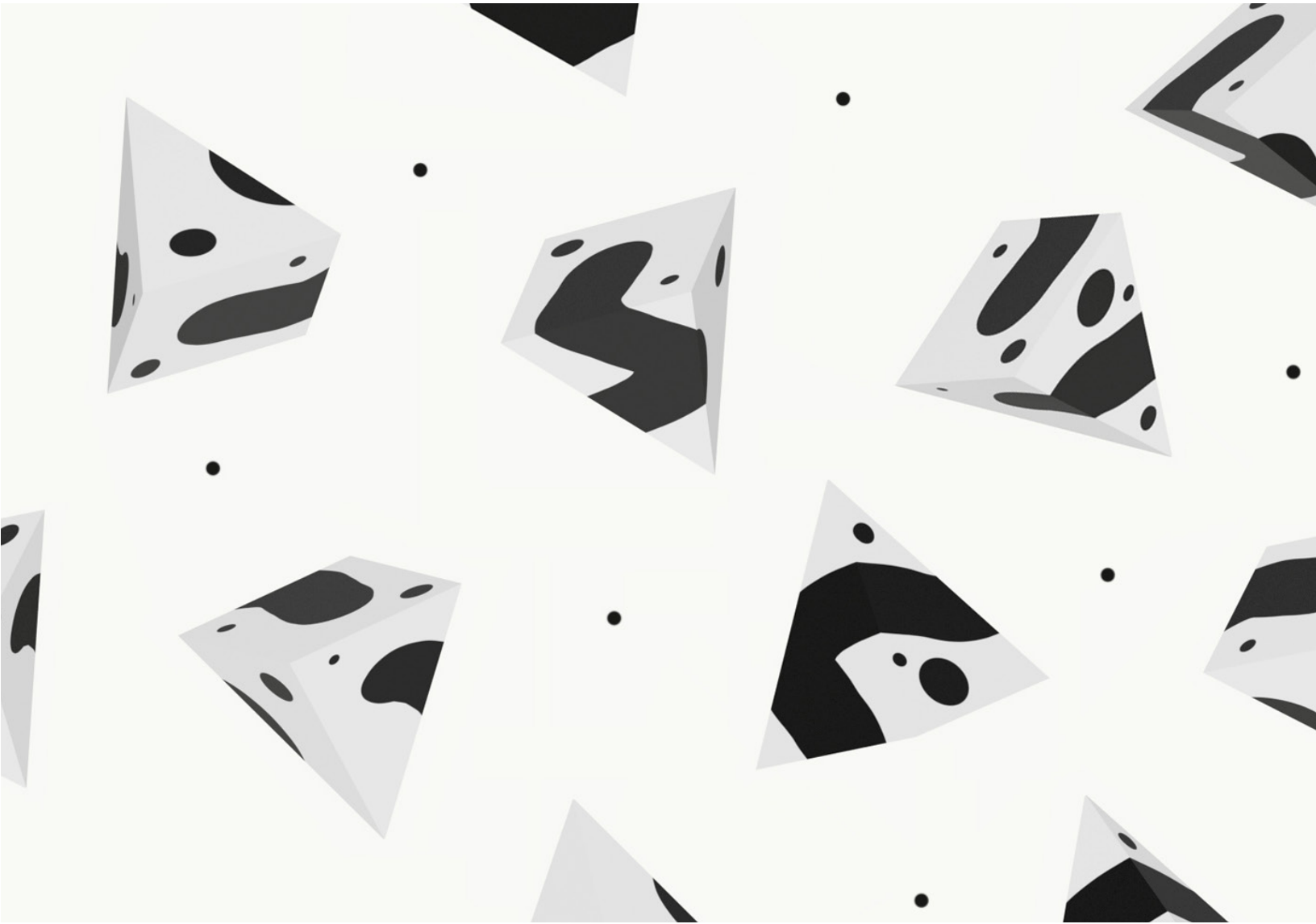# Department of Labor
State of Usability Report
June 11, 2019

Goals of research

The goal of this study is to analyze users and current user needs on the New York State (NYS) Daprtment of Labor (DOL) website. The study will be analyzed by task completion, user feedback and recomendation metrics in order to identify usability issues within the DOL user experience as it it exits un June 2019. The proposed tests will include:

- Remote task completion testing

- Video recordings

- Remote user survey

Methodology

The test will be run as a set of three (3) studies of five (5) users apiece to explore a variety of user journeys for 3 different user personas. This basis of five (5) users per study will identify major issues within that user journey and Testing will be sourced from the platform trymyui.com and users will need to meet the following criteria:

- Must be 18+

- Must have a high school education or higher

- Must have held a job in the United States

Methodology: Personas

Each study will be comprised of a set of tests for a different type of user that might be using the DOL website. These users have unique situations designed to test different needs of the DOL website and fall into these categories:

- Single task users:
  UI claimant looking to collect disability after unemployment has run out
  UI claimant trying to file a complaint after being fired for cause
  Parent of a child performer looking for the forms permitting work
  Seasonal hospitality worker trying to find minimum wage laws
  Recently trained trade worker looking for more career training

- Regular users:

  Researcher looking for the most recent DOL statistics on employment

  Director of human resources trying to strategize large-scale staffing

  Small business owner needing information on the shared work program for to help with seasonal lay offs

  Teen-aged job-seeking looking for information on occupational training

  Unemployed worker looking for a job

- Frequent users:

  Disabled, retired veteran looking for work in upstate New York

  A lawyer is looking for information a labor law that was recently passed

  A researcher is looking for information on credentials and statistics for green jobs

  Internal users: in-person testing

  A career counselor is looking for licensing requirements for architects, pharmacists and welders

  A DEWS staff member is trying to find updates on recent projects

Methodology: Survey

Each study will also consist of a series of follow-up questions which will remain consistent across all three (3) studies. These survey questions will be appended to each task test to attain qualitative information about the user experience for each user persona category. The following questions will be asked:

- How would you rate your ability to complete the tasks on the website?

- How did you feel using the website to complete these tasks?

- How comfortable would you feel recommending this website a resource to a friend or coworker?

- What suggestions do you have for improvement on this site?

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- What suggestions do you have for improvement on this site?

Analysis: Primary Methodology

The variance of ability to complete the tasks leads us to conclude that there are too many inconsistencies with the user experience for users to be universally successful.

In this study, we identify several navigation strategies among users. These methods preferences can help us identify where the inconsistencies lie in the DOL user experience as the content will need to serve all kinds of users. There are three main strategies users employ to complete tasks are:

- Primarily use search

- Primarily use navigation (DOL and NYS navigation)

- Primarily use content on the page

Analysis: Primary Methodology

Users who consistently used the DOL navigation were more successful than those who used the NYS navigation, thought this may partially be because the personas were based on DOL use cases. Users who used search exclusively were largely successful, with two patterns emerging where: users would often start on the DOL content, bounce to the NYS search and go back to DOL content, or users would often think they were successful when not on the DOL content.

Users that utilized the search feature were most successful when they found their way back to DOL content, and very unsuccessful and confused when they did not.

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Analysis: Task Completion

No user was able to complete all the tasks presented to them: the highest task completion ranking score was a 90/100, which was completed in the Regular User Study. The lowest completion ranking was 10/100, which was completed in the Frequent User Study.

The most universally successful study was the Regular User Study, followed by the Single User Study, and lastly the Frequent User Study. We believe this is from two factors: user primary methods of navigation, and the content structure on the page. See appendix for task completion rates.

Analysis: Survey Responses

While some users found the site easy to use, many expressed their confusion and with the amount of information presented to them and the effort to navigate it. Average recommendation scores as as follows:

- Single-task user study: 6

- Regular user study: 6

- Frequent user study: 5

Recomendations

In order to improve the DOL site experience for all users, regardless of their experience level or navigation instincts, we recommend the following high-level usability guidelines:

- Standardize search, filter and location input methods
  Input queries and filters should work the same across all tools

- Clarify state-wide versus department wide content
  Search often works well, but bounces through departments in accurately

- More consistent visual hierarchy and less content
  Organize content in a striking and consistent way that is less text-heavy

Larger Recomendations

In order to improve the DOL site experience for all users, regardless of their experience level or navigation instincts, we recommend the following high-level usability guidelines:

- All new sites being built under NYS need an information architecture guideline

- All additional tools and files should be broken out into a filter option in the NYS navigation

- The NYS search and department-specific content need to work well together visually and in the universal search

Appendices

Including test tasks, completion charts and select quotes

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Appendix: Test Tasks

Single- task user tests

Yvonne's daughter is performing in an off-Broadway show and will need to file paperwork for the production agency and school. Find the forms Yvonne will need to fill out for her daughter to legally work.

Sam is an unemployment insurance claimant who was fired for cause and is appealing his unemployment insurance claim because he says he was fired after reporting sexual harassment to HR. Find information on how to appeal a unemployment insurance claim.

Jackie recently saw subway ads explaining New York has a new $15 minimum wage. She works for a small restaurant with over 11 employees who told her because she works for tips, she will not see an increase. But even with tips, she falls short of $15/hour. Find information on who will make $15 an hour and what actions are available to wage workers.

Appendix: Test Tasks

Darshon is looking for career training in to see if there were any free career training programs available to him. Find free career training programs near his address of 10-55 47th Ave Long Island City, NY 11101 in Queens, New York.

Alex is an unemployment insurance claimant who lost her job as a home health aide when she became physically disabled and no longer able to satisfy the rigors of her job. She is looking for information on how to collect disability now that her unemployment is running out. Find information on how to collect disability.

Appendix: Test Tasks

Regular user tests

Jose is writing a piece for a regular column on labor organizing in Staten Island. Find the most recent statistic on unemployment rates in New York.

Shonda is staffing a large facility in Brooklyn and needs help to identify workforce needs, strategize hiring events and assist with the marketing and outreach of job openings through social media, career centers, workforce partners and community based organizations. Find support services available to her from the Department of Labor.

Jordan owns an event production company with several full-time and part-time workers. He unfortunately will need to lay off several employees and needs to find the correct forms and would like more information on the Share Work program to help them find other employment until work picks up. Find out how to sign up for the Shared Work program.

Appendix: Test Tasks

Maria needs a job during the summer of her Junior and Senior year of high school. She'd like to start building a skill in a trade rather, and she'd also like to get paid to learn on the job. Find her find a computer science internship in the Nassau County area.

Brad has recently graduated with a bachelor's degree in Accounting and is looking for a job. Find him a career center near his Rochester home of 123 Main Street, Rochester NY, 14602.

Appendix: Test Tasks

Frequent user tests

Derek is a disabled, retired veteran looking for help for finding work. Help him locate career services for veterans in the Albany area.

Danika is a legal associate looking for the state's monthly jobs press release and the most recent WARN notices. Find the most recent monthly job press release data for her and the most recent WARN notices.

Devin is an engineering student conducting research on green jobs for a university's engineering department. Find information on credentials for green jobs and common green occupations. Paul is a high school career counselor is gathering information for a high school job fair to encourage students to go into the trades. Find information on for licensing requirements for architects, pharmacists and welders.

Appendix: Test Tasks

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The Division of Employment & Workforce Solutions (DEWS) team distributed a newsletter about job positions open to government employees and Erica would like to learn more about the services the team provides. Find information on what the DEWS team does for the state.

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Appendix: Test Tasks Completion

Single-task user tests

User	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Task 4	Task 5	Success rating / 100	Primary Methods
491466	> 5 min	> 5 min	1:01 - 4:59 min	1:01 - 4:59 min	unsuccessful	30	DOL navigation, Content on page
491458	unsuccessful	1:01 - 4:59 min	1:01 - 4:59 min	unsuccessful	< 1 min	40	DOL navigation, NYS navigation
491449	1:01 - 4:59 min	1:01 - 4:59 min	1:01 - 4:59 min	unsuccessful	< 1 min	50	DOL navigation, Content on page
491447	1:01 - 4:59 min	1:01 - 4:59 min	1:01 - 4:59 min	< 1 min	< 1 min	70	DOL navigation
491446	1:01 - 4:59 min	1:01 - 4:59 min	1:01 - 4:59 min	1:01 - 4:59 min	1:01 - 4:59 min	50	DOL navigation
						note: determined by the folliong pointscale	
						<1 min = 20 points *<1 min = 10 points* *>5 min = 5 points* *unsuccessful = 0 points*	

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Appendix: Test Tasks Completion

Regular user tests

User	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Task 4	Task 5	Success rating / 100	Primary navigation methods
491928	< 1 min	> 5 min	< 1 min	1:01 - 4:59 min	1:01 - 4:59 min	65	Search, DOL navigation, NYS navigation
491929	< 1 min	< 1 min	< 1 min	1:01 - 4:59 min	< 1 min	90	DOL navigation, content on the page
491930	1:01 - 4:59 min	1:01 - 4:59 min	< 1 min	> 5 min	1:01 - 4:59 min	55	Content on page, NYS navigation
491931	< 1 min	1:01 - 4:59 min	1:01 - 4:59 min	> 5 min	1:01 - 4:59 min	55	Content on page
491932	< 1 min	< 1 min	< 1 min	1:01 - 4:59 min	unsuccessful	70	DOL navigation, NYS navigation
						note: determined by the folloing pointscale	
						<1 min = 20 points *<1 min = 10 points* *>5 min = 5 points* *unsucessful = 0 points*	

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Appendix: Test Tasks Completion

Frequent user tests

User	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Task 4	Task 5	Success rating / 100	Primary Methods
491920	1:01 - 4:59 min	1:01 - 4:59 min	1:01 - 4:59 min	< 1 min	< 1 min	70	DOL navigation, Content on page
491921	1:01 - 4:59 min	unsuccessful	1:01 - 4:59 min	< 1 min	< 1 min	60	Search
491922	1:01 - 4:59 min	1:01 - 4:59 min	1:01 - 4:59 min	< 1 min	1:01 - 4:59 min	60	Search
491923	1:01 - 4:59 min	unsuccessful	unsuccessful	unsuccessful	unsuccessful	10	NYS Navigation, Search
491924	> 5 min	unsuccessful	unsuccessful	1:01 - 4:59 min	unsuccessful	15	NYS Navigation, Search
						note: determined by the folloing pointscale	
						<1 min = 20 points *<1 min = 10 points* *>5 min = 5 points* *unsucessful = 0 points*	

Appendex: Select quotes

Single-task user study

"I didn't think it was particularly intuitive as I had to use the search bar to find everything I was looking for. If I was really looking for these services, I'm glad "search" worked but I'd like to see them more present in quickly viewable menus."

"I felt like some of the wording could have been better, like when I was looking to file an appeal, I saw information about hearings but I wasn't certain if that would be from an appeal process or for something else"

Appendex: Select quotes

Regular user study

"I was able to complete most tasks but it took too much trial and error clicking around until I found the section that was needed. This information could be organized in a more streamlined way. Screen reader support enabled. I was able to complete most tasks but it took too much trial and error clicking around until I found the section that was needed. This information could be organized in a more streamlined way."

"I felt like this website was designed to house an incredible amount of information and not to serve the person going to the site with a specific problem or question."

Appendex: Select quotes

Frequent user study

"I feel that the website has almost all the information I need. But it takes a while to find those files or data I need exactly."

"The website is not very well organized. Some information is hard to find and locate. Need to go to several other possible places before I land on the right place."

Appendex: Survey Responses

Single-task user test responses

	Mcgee Acebedo (491466)	Teresa Cardinale (491458)	Rick Lupert (491449)	Ishitkumar Patel (491447)	Gregory Burrage (491446)
How would you rate your ability to complete the tasks on the website?	I wasn't able to complete the last two task because the answers were quite difficult to find and I ran out of time.	I was able to complete the tasks with some difficulty (however there was one task I could not complete which is the free training program)	I had to rely on the search bar to find what I was looking for a lot as the items I was asked to find were not in any many or drop down menus I could easily see. The search menu worked pretty well so "with some difficulty"	I was able to complete the tasks with some difficulty	I was able to complete 4 out of the 5 tasks fairly easily but I was not able to find any free career training
How did you feel using the website to complete these tasks?	I felt good on the first three tasks but had issues finding the answers for the last two. I was finding it hard to find the answer for the fourth task and for the last one, I just ran out of time.	I found the website confusing, everytime I tapped on an option a new page would open so I got lost with my search, however I feel that after some practice I would feel more comfortable	I didn't think it was particularly intuitive as I had to use the search bar to find everything I was looking for. If I was really looking for these services, I'm glad "search" worked but I'd like to see them more present in quickly viewable menus.	It was a great experience. User-friendly website. Able to perform all the activities on this website	I felt like some of the wording could have been better, like when I was looking to file an appeal, I saw information about hearings but I wasn't certain if that would be from an appeal process or for something else
How comfortable would you feel recommending this website a resource to a friend or coworker? 1 being not comfortable at all and 10 and being very comfortable	I would give it a 6 basing it on my inability to complete all the task.	5. I liked the design, colors, the wording is clear, the pictures	5	8	6. I liked the different sections and there were a lot of different areas to find information but the information was kind of confusing. Like I was able to get to the section where it should the amount the waitress is supposed to make but it still
What suggestions do you have for improvement on this site?	It would be good if a Chatbot is created to assist people in navigating or finding answers in this site. With a site that has a lot of information, someone could easily get lost but with a Chatbot or a live chat maybe, it would help address that issue.	I feel that options like forms, training programs, employment should be made more visible. The option "Services" is too vague for me so should be replaced by the word menu and then have all the categories. Also would be great to have a video explain	Make it obvious what services or programs are available through the different services, perhaps with pop-ups etc when you hover over the many squares showing services. Thanks for the opportunity. I hope the feedback I gave was useful.	1) If it opens a new link and takes on some other .gov site then it should tell the user that you are leaving this site and going to another site. 2) Please perform ADA (American Disability Act) for this website.	Maybe adding suggestions. Like giving an example of how much the waitress should make compared to a regular worker, because the math looked to add up to about the same amount. Also, more clarity on stuff like what a hearing would be for and different examples
Avg. Recommendation Score		6			

Appendex: Survey Responses

Regular user test responses

	Chary Williams (491932)	Michele Hardy (491931)	Jonas Courey (491930)	Burhan Ul Haq (491929)	Sheena (491928)
How would you rate your ability to complete the tasks on the website?	I was able to complete the task easily on the website, but not in the time alloted	I was able to complete the first two tasks easily but had difficulty when trying to search for jobs.	I was able to complete most tasks but it took too much trial and error clicking around until I found the section that was needed. This information could be organized in a more streamlined way.	I was able to complete the tasks with some difficulty	I couldn't tell if I was able to complete every task
How did you feel using the website to complete these tasks?	The navigation aspect was easy and straightforward. I thought with all of the information the website must hold, it would be hard to navigate. That wasn't the case.	The first website was fine and easy to understand. When I went to the jobs website, it was more confusing.	I felt like this website was designed to house an incredible amount of information and not to serve the person going to the site with a specific problem or question.	The website was pretty confusing to use. It was a little hard to find out information which I needed to find out.	It was not easy to find some of the appropriate resources on this website
How comfortable would you feel recommending this website a resource to a friend or coworker? 1 being not comfortable at all and 10 and being very comfortable	I would feel very comfortable recommending this to a friend. I would give it a solid 8. I would just say that they need more time to dedicate to the search for finding their answers.	I think the first website is great and easy to find things. I didn't have any problems until I tried to search for a job.	I would not recommend this site to someone unless they had hours to comb through the information.	Maybe a 5 because it wasn't easy to navigate it around. Also, the CSS on the page varied for different pages, which made it even harder to navigate around.	7
What suggestions do you have for improvement on this site?	Make the search box a little easier to navigate. When I search, I'm not used to having to click the phrase again below the search for it to actually search. I just press enter and it goes. Virtually all websites do this. I'm not sure why this	If the jobs page is part of the NY Labor Department, it could definitely use some revamping, especially when trying to do a search for jobs. Otherwise, I really liked the first page and it was very easy to find the things I was looking for.	Better welcome screen that asks questions about what you're looking for and then narrows the information accordingly.	Have less text, as there was too much text which made it hard to figure out what I need to do.	simplify the website a bit, make it more intuitive and straightforward.
Avg. Recommendation Score		6			

Appendex: Survey Responses

Frequent user test responses

	Leo Kuai (491928)	Rebecca Eliav (491924)	Cindy Schmalz (491923)	Paul Pfau (491922)	Xiaoyu Guo (491920)
How would you rate your ability to complete the tasks on the website?	I feel that the website has almost all the information I need. But it takes a while to find those files or data I need exactly.	I felt that there was so much information on the website that it was overwhelming. All of the different buttons make the website hard to navigate.	I was able to complete the tasks with some difficulty. There was a huge about of information to dig through.	It wasn't impossible but it wasn't easy. I had a difficult time navigating the site so I just settled for search the key terms in the tasks I was given.	Some of the content is hard to find. I was able to complet the tasks with some difficulty.
How did you feel using the website to complete these tasks?	I feel that the website has almost all the information I need. But it takes a while to find those files or data I need exactly.	I felt that there was so much information on the website that it was overwhelming. All of the different buttons make the website hard to navigate.	I felt overwhelmed. But I did find some relief in using the search feature.	I felt like the site could have been better organized. Simpler to use. Again, I just ended up searching the keywords because it was too difficult to navigate otherwise.	The website is not very well organized. Some information is hard to find and locate. Need to go to several other possible places before i land on the right place.
How comfortable would you feel recommending this website a resource to a friend or coworker? 1 being not comfortable at all and 10 and being very comfortable	7. I would say the website has plenty of data and information that can help my friends or coworker. But it needs some time to get familiar with this website in order to use it efficiently.	3 - I'm not very comfortable recommending this website. Some of its features are self explanatory but most are not.	I would say a 7 depending on how savvy the friend or coworker was with the web.	3	5, there are good information on this website, but some info are hard to find.
What suggestions do you have for improvement on this site?	After searching for keywords, there could be more filters except "Relevance" and "Date". For example, if I just want to find the data, it would be great if i can filter the search results and get all the related data files I want.	Please think about who your different audiences might be and make the site accessible to them. It felt like the site would only be properly understood and navigated by someone working in government.	I think the search feature needs more filters and sorting options. This would certainly help narrow the information down a bit.	Improve the flow of the site. Make it easier to find what you are looking for.	Improve the categories and make it more clear for people. eg. browse by occupation or by for individual/group.
Avg. Recommendation Score	5				