Designing Effective Conversational Experiences Training

Duration: **1 Day**

IT Academy

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Overview

This course provides professionals with practical skills for **designing, testing, and evaluating human-centred conversational experiences** for chatbots, voice assistants, and AI-powered systems.

Rather than relying on vague requirements or flowcharts alone, participants learn how to create clear and resilient conversations based on genuine user goals. No coding knowledge is required.

Using real-world examples, collaborative design activities, and live role-play testing, learners examine how human conversations work, why conversational systems often break down, and how dialogue can be designed to accommodate ambiguity, errors, misunderstandings, and real user behaviour.

By the end of the course, participants will have:

- Created and tested a conversational design for a real-world use case
- Learned a repeatable approach for designing and evaluating conversational experiences
- Developed practical techniques for testing conversations before development begins

Prerequisites

Participants should have:

- Basic familiarity with digital products, AI, or live services
- An interest in user experience, AI, or conversational systems

No previous conversation design or technical experience is required.

Who Should Attend

This course is suitable for:

- Product managers and product owners working with conversational or AI-enabled products
- UX, service, and content designers responsible for shaping user interactions
- Developers and AI practitioners collaborating on conversational systems
- Customer experience, innovation, and digital transformation teams
- Stakeholders responsible for AI quality, usability, and trust

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What You Will Learn

By the end of the course, participants will be able to:

- Identify why conversational experiences fail and diagnose where design problems occur
- Frame conversations around clear user goals and system responsibilities
- Design conversations as collaborative and goal-driven interactions
- Create realistic sample dialogues rather than depending too heavily on flowcharts
- Design effectively for ambiguity, misunderstanding, and graceful recovery
- Test conversational experiences through role-play and Wizard-of-Oz techniques
- Collaborate more effectively across product, design, and engineering teams

Outline

Introduction

The course begins by establishing the objectives and structure of the day while exploring what makes a conversational experience effective.

- Welcome and course objectives
- Structure of the day
- Participant goals and expectations
- Characteristics of effective conversational experiences

Module 1 – Why Conversational Systems Fail

This module explores common problems found in chatbots and conversational assistants.

- Common conversational failure patterns
- Misaligned user and system goals
- Missing context
- Incorrect assumptions
- Conversation design versus copywriting
- Differences between conversation design, flows, and prompt writing

Exercise – Conversation Autopsy:
Participants analyse a broken conversational experience and identify the underlying design failures.

Module 2 – How Conversations Work

This module examines conversation as a collaborative interaction built around shared goals.

- Goal-oriented collaboration
- Turn-taking
- Managing initiative
- Shared context
- Deciding when a system should ask a question
- Deciding when the system should take action
- Clarification and handoff decisions

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Exercise – Turn-by-Turn Breakdown:
Participants review a short dialogue step by step and improve it using core conversation design principles.

Module 3 – Designing Conversations with Real Language

This section focuses on writing realistic dialogue rather than relying exclusively on flowcharts.

- Creating sample dialogues
- Designing for ambiguity
- Handling errors and misunderstandings
- Using tone to shape behaviour and expectations

Exercise – Sample Dialogue Design:
Participants create and refine a dialogue for a focused conversational use case.

Module 4 – Testing Conversations Before You Build

This module explores how conversational experiences can be evaluated before development begins.

- The importance of conversation testing
- Role-play testing
- Wizard-of-Oz testing
- Observing conversational breakdowns
- Identifying areas of user confusion

Exercise – Live Role-Play Testing:
Participants test their conversations in real time and document the failure points they observe.

Module 5 – Iteration Under Real-World Constraints

Participants use insights gathered during testing to improve their conversational designs.

- Designing around incomplete data
- Handling off-path user behaviour
- Escalation
- Handoffs
- Graceful failure
- Balancing user needs with system limitations
- Considering business goals during conversation design

Exercise – Redesign Sprint:
Participants redesign and improve their conversation using findings from the testing process.

Module 6 – Applying Conversation Design in Your Organisation

This module explores how conversation design can become part of existing product and delivery processes.

- Conversation design within the product lifecycle
- Conversation design within delivery processes
- Collaborating with developers and AI teams

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- Working effectively with stakeholders
- Common organisational anti-patterns
- Approaches for avoiding recurring design problems

Exercise – Application Mapping:
Participants identify where and how the conversation design approach can be applied within their own organisational context.

Module 7 – Wrap-Up and Reflection

- Review of key learning points
- Important mindset shifts
- Changes participants can apply to current or future projects
- Resources
- Next steps