

## FUNDAMENTALS OF Motivational Design

A methodology for  
social network design

Motivational Design (Mo.De.) is an interaction design methodology for the analysis and development of social networks from a motivational and psychological point of view.

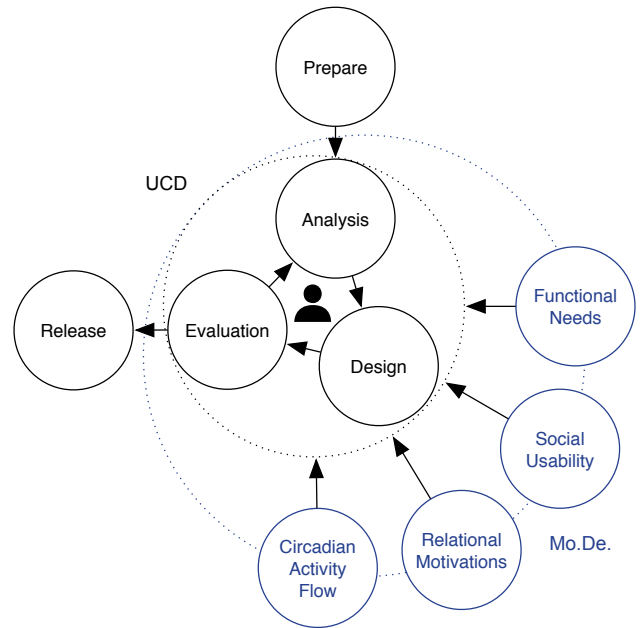
This methodology applies to user centered design, shifting from the actions to the inner motivations, departing from a technologic and platform-based approach that characterizes most of the current praxis.

Our research rises from the need to identify those factors **augmenting the probability that users will be motivated to express and repeat certain behaviors in socially-enabled contexts**, like social networks. We believe that those factors are the components adding value to analysis, design and investments in social networks and it isn't enough to design a good communication channel to enable participation or collaboration.

We consider social networks as a **network of people**, without any consideration for the media it uses. We consider the **network** as a complex system and the **people** as entities with psychological and social dynamics.

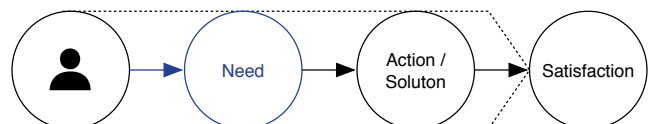
Mo.De. founds itself upon four basic concepts: Functional Needs, Social Usability, Relational Motivations and Circadian Activity Flow.

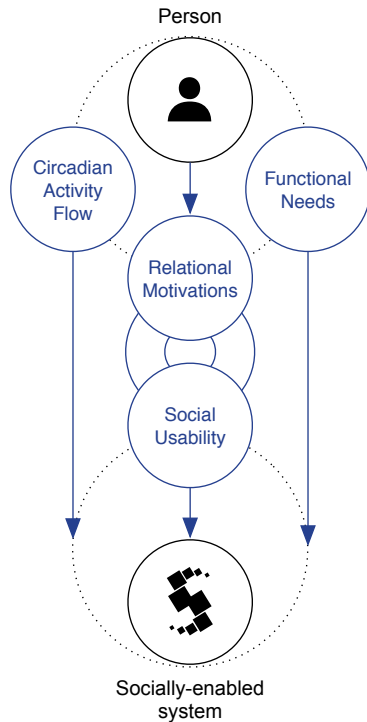
Mo.De., using those concepts, builds a methodology to design socially-enabled projects.



### Functional Needs

They are needs and requirements of the person and/or group that are **satisfied explicitly by the system**. We make a step toward one's needs, going over ready-made solutions for those same needs: eating a pizza is a good solution, but the need it answers is hunger.





## Relational Motivations

Motivation is a dynamic factor of animal and human behavior that activates and directs toward an objective. Relational Motivations are a dynamic factor of human behavior that activate and direct towards objectives that feed social networks.

The motivations able to push a person are different and mixed. The Relational Motivations that we identified are more effective catalysts to enable and influence participation and/or collaboration in social networks.

With this narrowed scope we are able to concentrate our efforts inside socially-enabled context like social network. The four Relational Motivations are:

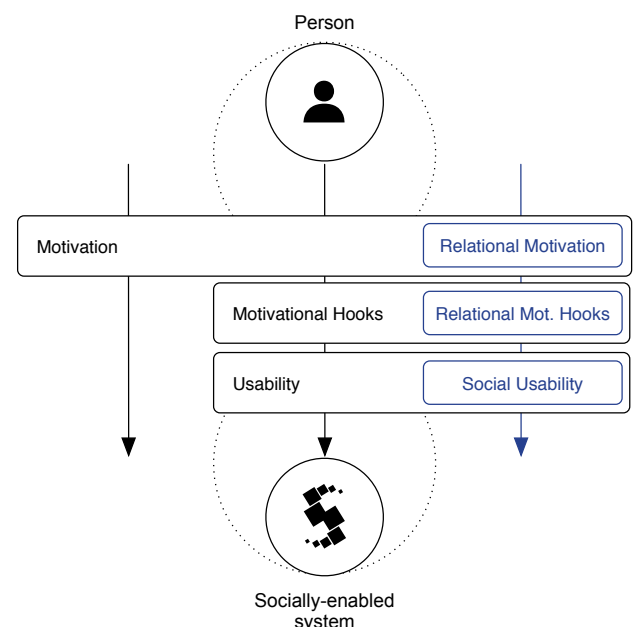
1. **Competition** (Anger - Aggressivity System): the need to impose oneself and/or his/hers beliefs, the search for a confrontation, the accumulation of aggressiveness.
2. **Excellence** (Narcissism - Self): the need to confirm one's skills and quality self-worth, the need for approval and increase one's self-esteem.
3. **Curiosity** (Research - Play system): the need for knowledge, the need to satisfy one's exploratory instinct.
4. **Appartenance** (Affection - Care system): the need to share and be a part of a community of relationship that supports individual actions and thoughts, that also functions as a shelter to protect oneself.

## Social Usability

Social Usability is a quality attribute that assesses how easy social interactions are to make. The term "social usability" also refers to the methods for improving the ease of human-human interaction during the design process.

Social Usability is defined by four properties (RICE):

- **Interpersonal Relations**: How easy is it to find other people and connect to them? How easy is it to keep those connections active? How relevant are those connections?
- **Identity**: How rich is one's personal identity expression? How much are interests and passions expressed? How much are personal distinctive traits shown? How much is privacy management detailed?
- **Communication**: How fast can a message reach the other person? How many messages can one handle efficiently? How easy is it to handle conversations (1-to-1, 1-to-some, 1-to-many)?
- **Group Emergence**: How easy is it to create groups, aggregate and talk around a common interest? How active are groups once established? How long do they last? How important is to be a part of the group? How long do they last? How much is it important to be part of a group?



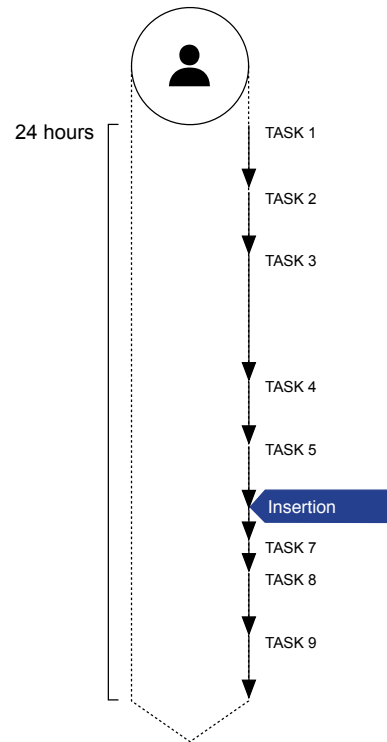
## Circadian Activity Flow

It's the sequence of small and big actions made during the span of a day, prioritized through competing individual value hierarchies: importance, interest, obligations, effort, moral, etc.

Like Functional Needs, also big errors or misinterpretations in the Circadian Activity Flow design translates to Social Usability and Relational Motivations issues, up to being completely ineffective.

The four most relevant factors determining the Circadian Activity Flow are:

- **Priority:** activity X is the most important, so it's done.
- **Easiness:** activity X is so easy to be completed that a little interest is enough to steal a few moments to near tasks to do it.
- **Proximity:** activity X is very easy to be done just after activity A because it's near (spatially or mentally).
- **Efficacy:** activity X is the best one to reach a defined objective.



Mo.De. is a model based upon years of field experience, research, meetings and it's been integrated with feedback received from extensive interfacing with the community and experts.

Mo.De. is a model in continuous beta, continuously revised and updated incorporating transdisciplinary points of view and research.

Mo.De. fits in our long-term plan to grow and evolve a human-computer-human (HCH) psychology able to support interaction design (IxD) and user experience design (UXD).

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