Explain in detail your document's development from planning to finish, describing your challenges, how you overcame them, and what you learned.

Planning

When planning my memo and creating my instruction guide, I spent a lot of time debating what I should do for it. I originally landed on "how to domesticate a feral cat" but that topic didn't really fit the scope of the assignment, so I changed to "how to adopt a cat in Charlotte". Once I settled on that topic, I researched how to adopt a cat in Charlotte and then I spent a lot (too much) of time worrying about the words and making sure all of the information that was needed would be on the document. I also spent time researching who works at the Humane Society that I may send this instruction guide to and figuring out the audience types for my document. I also spent time planning the usability test, what questions to ask on it, and then planning how to revise my instruction guide based on the usability test.

First Draft (for peer review)

For the first draft, my biggest issue was really redoing my instructions quickly when I realized that my original idea didn't work. Once I realized that, I immediately started redoing them with my new topic but, of course, had to start researching from scratch in order to type the document. I took some time debating where I should write the instructions to adopt a cat from, but I chose the Humane Society of Charlotte because I have volunteered there before and enjoyed it quite a bit. Once I chose them it became much easier to complete my first draft, since their website is fairly intuitive and easy to use and comes with some good information on adopting cats. I think the biggest challenge, once I got the information, was making it readable and attempting to make a document that looked professional and clean. I mainly overcame that by deleting extra information and trying to increase white space. I definitely learned to read and read again assignment instructions to make sure that the topic I choose is within the scope of the assignment in the future.

Second Draft (after peer review, for your packet)

The biggest challenge for the second draft was just going through and fixing the issues that I think were caused by me rushing when I redid them. Another large challenge was taking the information from the peer review of the instructions and the feedback from the usability test and making meaningful changes to improve the instructions guide. I knew that I needed to make the images easier to read and see, but I wasn't really sure what would be the best way. I ended up cutting out some text and making the images larger, which goes back to my issue mentioned in my status report DDE – I write too much and then have to cut it down a lot, it isn't per se an issue except that it takes a lot longer to finish a document. Once I did cut it down more and make it readable, I felt ready to turn it in.

Final Draft (for your portfolio)

For my final draft, my biggest challenge was still creating more white space and moving extra information out of the way. The comments on my second submission recommended a textbox to hold the extra information being added to the side; but, with the image and text layout, I couldn't find a good way of adding it as a side text box so I added it to the bottom. I am hoping that this will call attention to the extra information that I feel is necessary at the end, while also making it feel less cluttered. I also slightly increased the line spacing in an attempt to increase white space and make it feel less cluttered. Throughout this entire assignment I have learned that I'm not very good at leaving white space, and that I'm not as good at design as I'd like to be.