Supplement A

Needs Assessment for the Design of Information Synthesis Visual Analytics Tools

Interview Script

Opener:

Thanks for agreeing to participate in this interview, I'd like to ask you several questions today about kinds of information analysis you do and about how you store, organize, and evaluate your analytical results.

To start, I'd like to get some general background about your work.

1. Please provide a brief description of your job.
   a. What general topic area(s) does your analysis work cover?
   b. What general types of input data are common in your work (e.g., numerical data, text documents, maps, etc.)?
   c. What methods do you use to analyze that data (e.g., statistical, office tools such as excel and word, document analysis tools, etc.)?
   d. What form does a typical analytical result take in your work (e.g. maps, graphs, tables, etc.)?

2. How do your currently store your analytical results – those things you find during your work that are important evidence to support your findings?

3. What are some strategies you use to organize your results?

   a. Do these strategies change depending on the type of project you are working on and/or type of results you generate?

4. What methods or tools do you use to get the "bigger picture" about your collections of results?

5. Are the tools you use to store, organize, and evaluate your results adequate?

   a. If not, how could they be improved?

6. In those cases where you work on one or a set of related problems over a period of time (from days to months), how do you approach the problem of recalling your prior work to add to your existing knowledge?

7. When you collaborate with co-workers, what tools (software or otherwise) do you use to share your results?

   a. Are these tools sufficient? Why or why not?

8. When you collaborate with co-workers, what methods (meetings, web repositories, etc…) do you use to share your results?
   a. Are these methods generally successful? Why or why not?

9. Are there analytical methods you use that develop a particular type of result more often than others? For example, a particular disease modeling approach might always yield a threat matrix as the final output. A geographic analysis approach might yield maps and other graphics that take many forms.

10. Describe the connections that exist between the results you generate and the tools they come from.

    a. Are these connections adequate, or could they be improved?

11. Tell me about a time when you had a particularly hard time explaining an analytical result (or set of results), and how you eventually succeeded?

    a. How did you present this result or set of results to your colleagues?

12. Tell me about a time when one particular result or set of results was especially useful for explaining your results.

    a. How did you present this result or set of results to your colleagues?

13. In situations where you generate several interesting results, how would you describe the process of going from individual results to a final report?