

① Screen 1
choose password now

Normal passwords

Changing password for: Orville Redenbacher

Action: Set a normal password

Password: Show password

Verify:

Strength: Weak

Hint:

This hint may be displayed at the login screen. It will be visible to all users of this system.

- ① submit button => Accept
- ② policy kit to enter dialog
- ③ strength indicator shorter word next to instead of inside

The Password and Verify entries don't show clear text unless Show password is checked. The Verify field needs to be identical to the Password field. The Strength field shows the 'quality' of the password using some yet-to-be-defined algorithm. There is a system-defined minimum quality that a password needs to be acceptable. The Hint field allows to enter a hint that can be shown when the user can't remember the password. The Change button is disabled unless the password has sufficient strength (according to some system-defined minimum). The mockup is missing a Help button, but one point we noted is that Vista has a very good help page explaining how to choose a good password.

- ④ password strength change widget?
- ⑤ strong
- ⑥ ok
- ⑦ weak
- pie chart + label
- or make progress bar narrow?

Architecture

The basic architecture will consist of a dbus service on the system bus that offers an interface for user management. The service will use PolicyKit to ensure that callers have the necessary privileges for requested operations.

From the UI presentation above, it is clear that we need some more information about users than passwd offers. Additional fields include face, full name, account type (might be covered by groups), email, language, password hint. It would also be nice to get some more transient information, such as 'is the user enrolled in the fingerprint database?', 'can the user log in without network?'.

The service will certainly have the expected Create, Delete, Modify functions dealing with individual users. It is well-known that it is a bad idea to have a enumerate-all-users function, since the cost may be prohibitive and user interfaces that rely on such a function will simply not work in large deployments (cf fast-user-switch-applet vs NIS). By the same token, exposing every user as a dbus object will not work very well in such situations. One idea (inspired by LDAP again) is to have a Query function that allows querying for users by certain criteria.

- ⑧ Add help button - more context sensitive? closer to action?
- ⑨ create password key button? (not 1st, toolbar) - "strong"

readability

Google
"-too short
- weak
- fair
- strong"

② Screen 2 Generate password

Changing password for:
Orville Redenbacher

Action:

Length:

Password:

Hint:

This hint may be displayed at the login screen. It will be visible to all users of this system.

→ can edit generated password?

Cancel Change

menu pick from 5

task
→ generate new

When a password is generated, the Password entry shows the generated password in clear text. The Length field allows to control the length of generated passwords (within system-defined limits).

The Hint field allows to enter a hint that can be shown when the user can't remember the password. We've discussed ways to generate useful hints to go along with generated passwords, including somewhat crazy ideas like computer-generated poetry (cf gnoetry).

① no edit
②

No password

For actions that don't set a password, the dialog will just show an explanatory text.

Changing password for:
Orville Redenbacher

Action:

You will be prompted to choose a password the next time you login.

Cancel Change