METHOD

Assume a Beginner's Mindset

WHY assume a beginner's mindset

Designers (as humans in general) tend to carry some baggage in regards to some situations, challenges, problems, and opportunities – think of these things as shortcuts in a sense-maker's toolkit. These prior experiences, perceptions, assumptions, misconceptions, and stereotypes can restrict the amount of empathy a designer is able to build for his or her users. Assume a beginner's mindset in order to put aside these biases, so that you can approach a design challenge afresh.

HOW to assume a beginner's mindset

Don't judge. Just observe and engage users without the influence of value judgments upon their actions, circumstances, decisions, or "issues."
Question everything. Even (and especially) the things you think you already understand. Ask questions to learn about how the user perceives the world. Think about a 5-year-old who asks "Why?" a hundred times.
Be truly curious. Strive to assume a posture of wonder and curiosity, especially in circumstances that seem either familiar or frightening.
Find patterns. Look for interesting threads and themes that emerge across interactions with users.
Listen. Really. Lose your agenda and let the scene soak into your psyche. Absorb what users say to you, and how they say it, without thinking about the next thing you're going to say.

METHOD

Interview Preparation

WHY prepare for an interview

Time with users is precious, we need to make the most of it! While we always must allow room for the spontaneous, blissful serendipity of a user-guided conversation, we should never abdicate our responsibility to prepare for interviews, particularly with users with whom we have been working with a period of time. Especially in following up with users (after testing, etc), it is imperative to plan your interviews. You may not get to every question you prepare, but you come in with a plan for engagement.

HOW to prepare for an interview

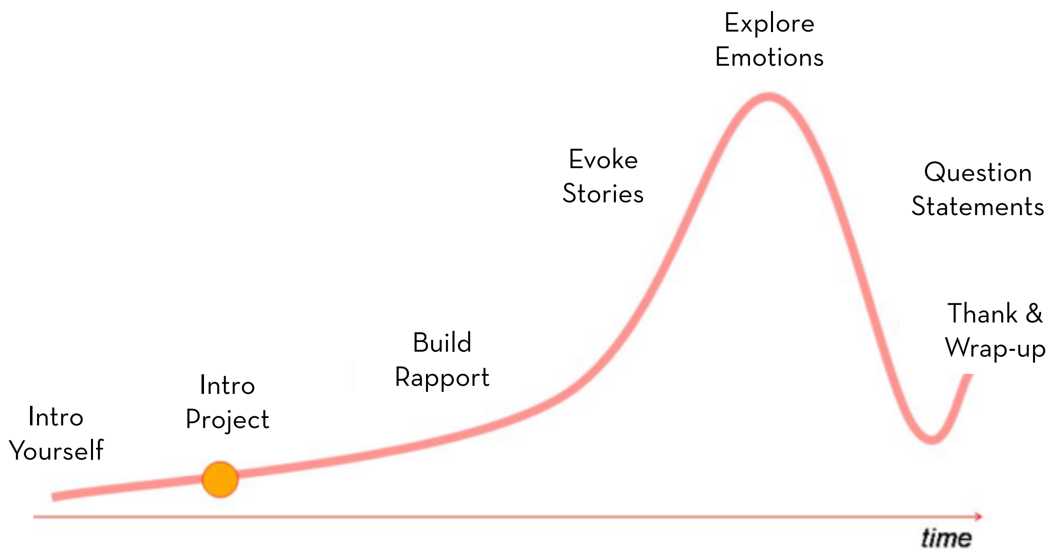
Brainstorm questions
Get all of the potential questions your team can generate down in written format. Try to build on one another's ideas in order to flesh out meaningful subject areas.

Identify and order themes
Similar to "grouping" in synthesis, have your team identify themes or subject areas into which most questions fall; once you've identified the themes of your question-pool, determine the order that would allow the conversation to flow most naturally. This will enable you to structure the flow of your interview, decreasing the potential for hosting a seemingly-scattershot interaction with your user.

Refine questions
Once you have all the questions grouped by theme and order, you may find that there are some redundant areas of conversation, or questions that seem strangely out of place. Take a few moments to make sure that you leave room in your planning to ask plenty of "why?" questions, plenty of "tell me about the last time you ___?" questions, and plenty of questions that are directed at how the user FEELS.

METHOD

Interview for Empathy



WHY interview?

We want to understand a person's thoughts, emotions, and motivations, so that we can determine how to innovate for him or her. By understanding the choices that person makes and the behaviors that person engages in, we can identify their needs and design for those needs.

HOW to interview

Never say "usually" when asking a question. Instead, ask about a specific instance or occurrence, such as "tell me about the last time you ___"
Ask why. Even when you think you know the answer, ask people why they do or say things. The answers will sometimes surprise you. A conversation started from one question should go on as long as it needs to.
Encourage stories. Whether or not the stories people tell are true, they reveal how they think about the world. Ask questions that get people telling stories.
Look for inconsistencies. Sometimes what people say and what they do are different. These inconsistencies often hide interesting insights.
Listen to nonverbal cues. Be aware of body language and emotions.
Don't be afraid of silence. Interviewers often feel the need to ask another question when there is a pause. If you allow for silence, a person can reflect on what they've just said and may reveal something deeper.
Don't suggest answers to your questions. Even if they pause before answering, don't help them by suggesting an answer. This can unintentionally get people to say things that agree with your expectations.
Ask questions neutrally. "What do you think about this idea?" is a better question than "Don't you think this idea is great?" because the first question doesn't imply that there is a right answer.
Don't ask binary questions. Binary questions can be answered in a word; you want to host a conversation built upon stories.
Only ten words to a question. Your user will get lost inside long questions.
Only ask one question at a time, one person at a time. Resist the urge to ambush your user.
Make sure you're prepared to capture. Always interview in pairs. If this is possible, you should use a voice recorder—it is impossible to engage a user and take detailed notes at the same time.

Visual adapted from Michael Barry, Point Forward

METHOD

Extreme Users

WHY engage with extreme users

Designers engage with users (people) to understand their needs and gain insights about their lives. We also draw inspiration from their work-arounds and frameworks. When you speak with and observe extreme users the needs are amplified and their work-arounds are often more notable. This helps you pull out meaningful needs that may not pop when engaging with the middle of the bell curve. However, the needs that are uncovered through extreme users are often needs of a wider population.

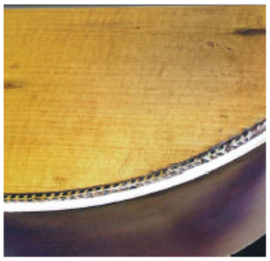
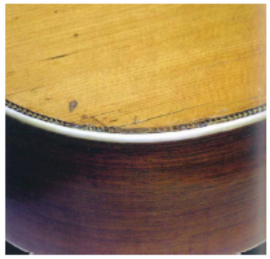
HOW to engage extreme users

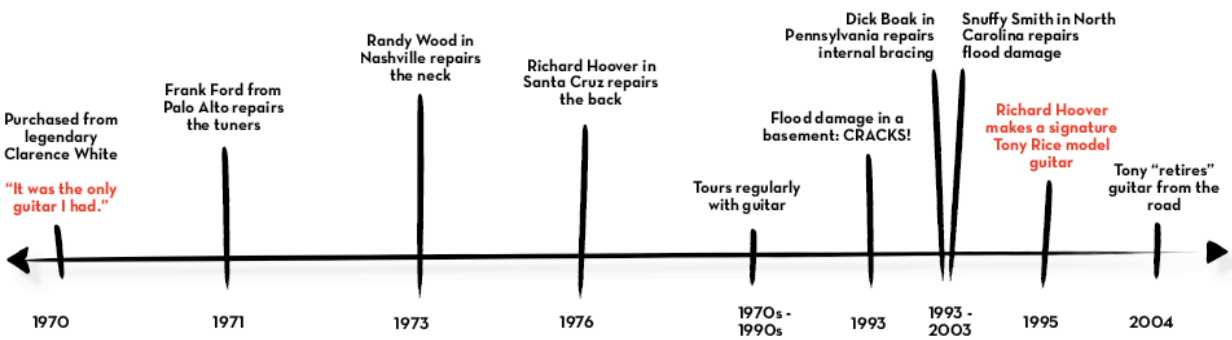
Determine who's extreme
Determining who is an extreme user starts with considering what aspect of your design challenge you want explore to an extreme. List a number of facets to explore within your design space. Then think of people who may be extreme in those facets. For example, if you are redesigning the grocery store shopping experience you might consider the following aspects: how groceries are gathered, how payment is made, how purchase choices are made, how people get their groceries home, etc. Then to consider the aspect of gathering groceries, for example, you might talk to professional shoppers, someone who uses a shopping cart to gather recyclables (and thus overloads the cart), product pullers for online buyers, people who bring their kids shopping with them, or someone who doesn't go to grocery stores (and ask why).

Engage
Observe and interview your extreme user as you would other folks. Look for work-arounds (or other extreme behaviors) that can serve as inspiration and uncover insights.

Look at the extreme in all of us
Look to extreme users for inspiration and to spur wild ideas. Then work to understand what resonates with the primary users you are designing for.

Journey Map



WHY use a journey map

To gain empathy for a person or understand of one's process through an experience, consider the details of that process to illuminate areas of potential insights. Creating a journey map is an excellent way to systematically think about the steps or milestones of a process. A journey map can be used for your own empathy work, or to communicate your findings to others.

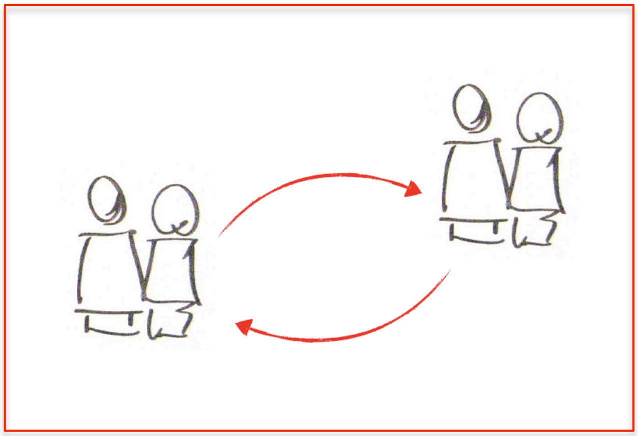
HOW to use a journey map

Create diagrams that capture multiple observations, e.g. a map of a user's day, a map of a user's experience, or a map of how a product moves through space and time (from manufacturing to store shelf to user's hands). Consider a process or journey that is relevant, or even tangential to, your problem space. For example, you could consider your user's morning breakfast routine. You could capture every event of one person's exercise in a month – and consider who she was with, where she came from, where she exercised, and where she went afterwards. Or perhaps you are developing a dating service website; you could document every communication between two people before the first date. One important concern is to be comprehensive within the variables you choose to capture. (Don't overlook the opening of the window shades in the morning breakfast routine.) What seems meaningless, could actually be the nugget that develops into a stunning insight.

Organize the data in a way that makes sense: a timeline of events, a number of parallel timelines that allows for easy comparison, a series of pictures, or a stack of cards. Then look for patterns and anomalies and question why those themes or events occurred. Push yourself to connect individual events to a larger context or framework. It is often the pairing of an observation with the designer's knowledge and perspective that yields a meaningful insight.

METHOD

Team Share-and-Capture



WHY team share-and-capture

A team share serves at least three purposes. First, it allows team members to come up to speed about what different people saw and heard in the field. Even if all the team members were present for the fieldwork, comparing how each experienced it is valuable. Second, in listening and probing for more information, team members can draw out more nuance and meaning from the experience than you may have initially realized. This starts the synthesis process. Third, in capturing each interesting detail of the fieldwork, you begin the space saturation process.

HOW to team share-and-capture

Unpack observations and air all the stories that stick out to you about what you saw and heard during your empathy fieldwork. Each member in the group should tell user stories and share notes while other members headline quotes, surprises, and other interesting bits – one headline per post-it. These post-its become part of the team's space saturation, and can also be physically grouped to illuminate theme and patterns that emerge (See "Saturate and Group" method card). The end goal is to understand what is really going on with each user. Discover who that person is and what that person needs in regards to your problem space.

Saturate and Group

WHY saturate and group

You space saturate to help you unpack thoughts and experiences into tangible and visual pieces of information that you surround yourself with to inform and inspire the design team. You group these findings to explore what themes and patterns emerge, and strive to move toward identifying meaningful needs of people and insights that will inform your design solutions.

HOW to saturate and group

Saturate your wall space (or work boards) with items such as pictures of relevant products, environments, and users you met, and post-its headlining interesting findings (see "Team Share-and-Capture").

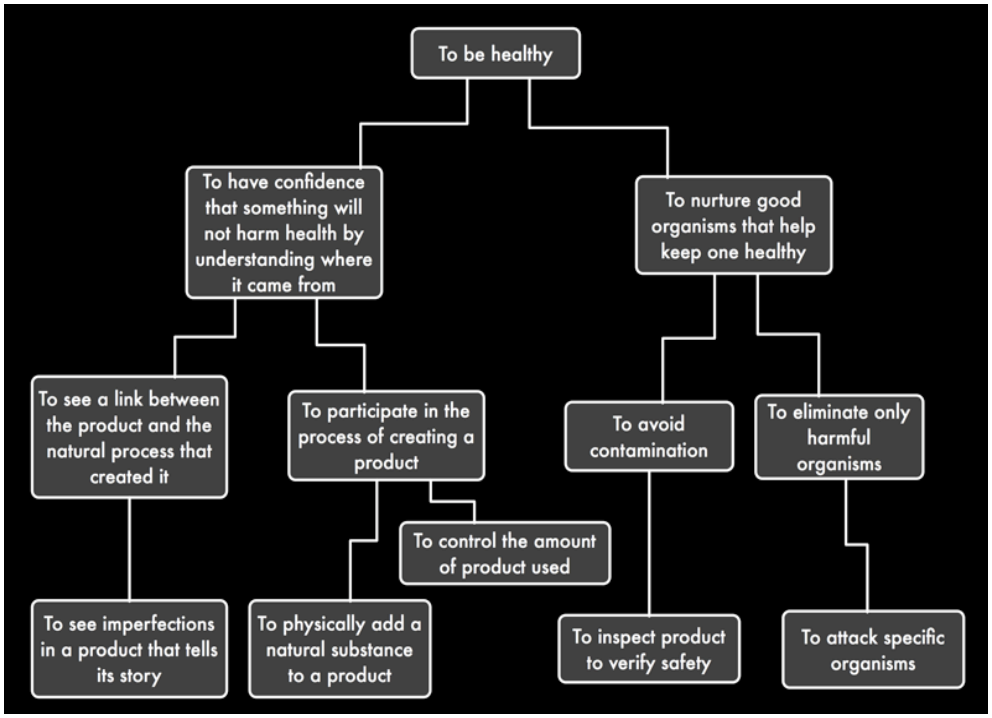
In order to begin to synthesize the information, group the post-its and pictures into the themes or patterns you are noticing. You likely have some ideas of the patterns within the data from the unpacking you did producing the notes. For example, you may have see and heard many things related to feeling safe, and many things regarding desire for efficiency. Within the group of 'safety', go beyond the theme and try to see if there is a deeper connection that may lead to an insight such as "Feeling safe is more about who I am with than where I am". Maybe there is a relation between groups that you realize as you place items in groups – that safety is often at odds with users' desire for efficiency. Try one set of grouping, discuss (and write down) the findings, and then create a new set of groups.

The end goal is to synthesize data into interesting findings and create insights which will be useful to you in creating design solutions.

It is common to do the grouping with post-its headlining interesting stories from fieldwork. But grouping is also useful to think about similarities among a group of products, objects, or users.

METHOD

Why-How Laddering



WHY why-how ladder

As a general rule, asking 'why' yields more abstract statements and asking 'how' yields specific statements. Often times abstract statements are more meaningful but not as directly actionable, and the opposite is true of more specific statements. That is why you ask 'why?' often during interviews – in order to get toward more meaningful feelings from users rather than specific likes and dislikes, and surface layer answers. Outside an interview, when you think about the needs of someone, you can use why-how laddering to flesh out a number of needs, and find a middle stratum of needs that are both meaningful and actionable.

HOW to why-how ladder

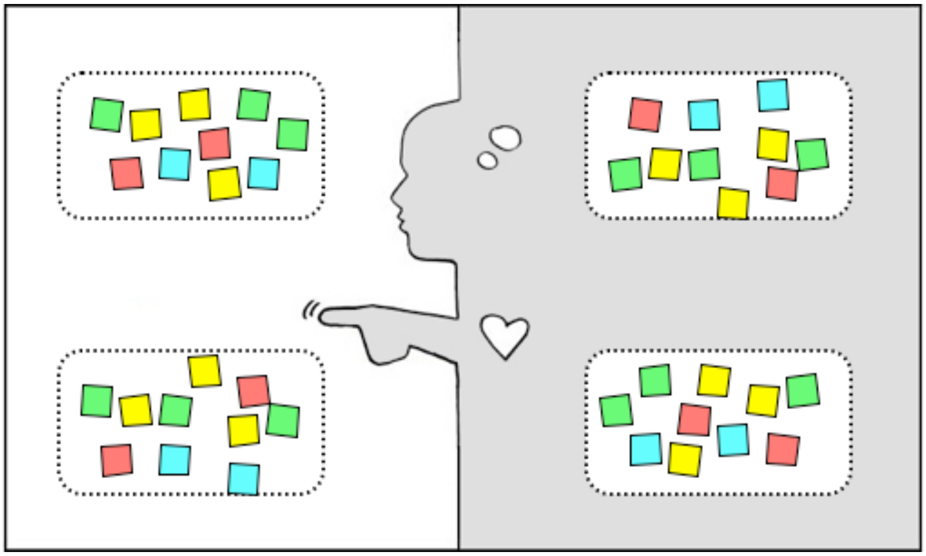
When considering the needs of your user, start with a meaningful one. Write that need on the board and then ladder up from there by asking 'why'. Ask why your user would have that need, and phrase the answer as a need. For example, "Why would she 'need to see a link between a product and the natural process that created it'? Because she 'needs to have confidence that something will not harm her health by understanding where it came from'." Combine your observations and interviews with your intuition to identify that need. Then take that more abstract need and ask why again, to create another need. Write each on the board above the former. At a certain point you will reach a very abstract need, common to just about everyone, such as the 'need to be healthy'. This is the top of that need hierarchy branch.

You can also ask 'how' to develop more specific needs. Climb up ('why?') and down (how?) in branches to flesh out a set of needs for your user. You might come up to one need and then come back down. In the previous example, you climbed up to the 'need to understand where a product came from'. Then ask 'how' to identify the 'need to participate in the process of creating a product'. There will also be multiple answers to your 'whys' and 'hows' – branch out and write those down.

The result (after some editing and refining) is needs hierarchy that paints a full picture of your user or composite user. Alternatively, you can use this tool to hone in on one or two particularly salient needs.

METHOD

Empathy Map



WHY use an empathy map

Good design is grounded in a deep understanding of the person for whom you are designing. Designers have many techniques for developing this sort of empathy. An Empathy Map is one tool to help us synthesize our observations and draw out unexpected insights.

HOW to use an empathy map

UNPACK: Create a four quadrant layout on paper or a whiteboard. Populate the map by taking note of the following four traits of your user as you review your notes, audio, and video from your fieldwork:

SAY: What are some quotes and defining words your user said?
DO: What actions and behaviors did you notice?
THINK: What might your user be thinking? What does this tell you about his or her beliefs?
FEEL: What emotions might your subject be feeling?

Note that thoughts/beliefs and feelings/emotions cannot be observed directly. They must be inferred by paying careful attention to various clues. Pay attention to body language, tone, and choice of words.

IDENTIFY NEEDS: “Needs” are human emotional or physical necessities. Needs help define your design challenge. Remember: Needs are *verbs* (activities and desires with which your user could use help), not *nouns* (solutions). Identify needs directly out of the user traits you noted, or from contradictions between two traits – such as a disconnect between what she says and what she does. Write down needs on the side of your Empathy Map.

IDENTIFY INSIGHTS: An “Insight” is a remarkable realization that you could leverage to better respond to a design challenge. Insights often grow from contradictions between two user attributes (either within a quadrant or from two different quadrants) or from asking yourself “Why?” when you notice strange behavior. Write down potential insights on the side of your Empathy Map.

METHOD

Composite Character Profile

Franklin

- 38 years old
- Divorced
- 2 kids
- Diabetic
- Free-clinic care-giver
- Has extreme tendencies in consumption and preparation of food.
- Balances his health and that of others, favoring the health of others.

WHY use a composite character profile

The composite character profile can be used to bucket interesting observations into one specific, recognizable character. Teams sometimes get hung up on outlying (or non-essential) characteristics of any of a number of particular potential users, and the composite character profile is a way for them to focus the team's attention on the salient and relevant characteristics of the user whom they wish to address. Forming a composite character can be a great way to create a "guinea pig" to keep the team moving forward.

HOW to use a composite character profile

The composite character profile is a synthesis method whereby the team creates a (semi)-fictional character who embodies the human observations the team has made in the field. These might include "typical" characteristics, trends, and other patterns that the team has identified in their user group over the course of their field work.

In order to create a composite character profile, a team needs to have unpacked its field observations and saturated its team space. After this is done, a team should survey across the individual users it encountered in the field to identify relevant dimensions of commonality and/or complementarity – these dimensions could be demographic information, strange proclivities and habits, or sources of motivation, to name only a few. After several dimensions of commonality have been identified, list these features of the user; if there are any dimensions of complementarity (those which may not be shared by all users, but are interesting to the team and not necessarily mutually exclusive), the team should add these as well. Last, give your character a name, and make sure every member of the team buys into the identity and corresponding characteristics that the team has created.

METHOD

Fill-In-The-Blank Character Profile

Attribute	The Character
Name	
Age and Life-Stage	
Occupation	
Family Situation	
Hobbies and Interests	
Attitudes Towards Health	
Key Values	
Media Interests	
Strengths/Weaknesses	
A Regular Ritual	
Loyalty to a Brand	
A Source of Pleasure	
A Habit He Desires	
A Habit He Wants to Kick	
Something Under Control	
Something Out of Control	

Adaptation of "Whose Life?," Steve Bishop, IDEO

WHY use a Fill-In-The-Blank Character Profile?

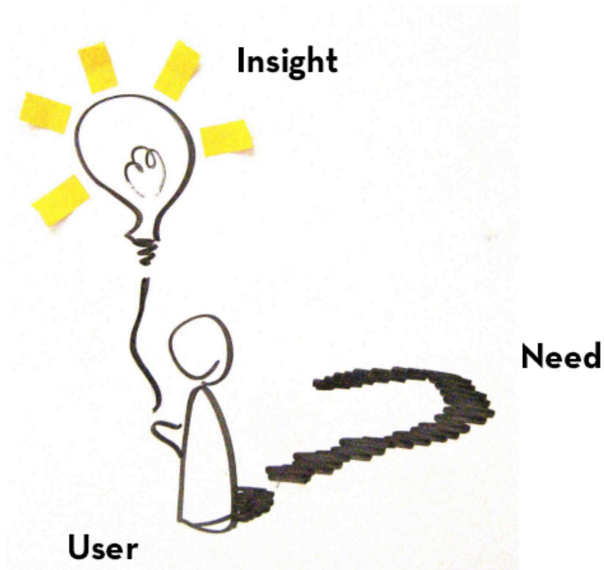
The FITBCP is a great tool to get you thinking about some dimensions of your user that will help you better understand him or her. It could be used for a real person or as a tool to construct your composite character. The method helps you catalogue some typically interesting characteristics of an individual, either during synthesis, or during an interview itself. Using the Character Profile list can reveal gaps in your understanding and can lead you to further areas of exploration. Note of caution: the character profile should only be leveraged to the extent that it is informative; it is not a silver bullet to empathy work, and will likely need to be adapted to fit the needs of the design challenge and context of a team's project.

HOW to use a Fill-In-The-Blank Character Profile

Make it your own. First confirm that the characteristics in the profile are relevant to your empathy work; if you're not sure, leave it – these recommendations have been culled from many successful field researchers.
Fill it out.
Refine it for next time.

METHOD

Point-of-View Madlib



WHY use a POV madlib

A point-of-view (POV) is your reframing of a design challenge into an actionable problem statement that will launch you into generative ideation. A POV Madlib provides a scaffolding to develop your POV. A good POV will allow you to ideate in a directed manner, by creating How-Might-We (HMW) questions based on your POV (see "Facilitating Brainstorms").

HOW to use a POV madlib

Use the following the madlib to capture and harmonize three elements of a POV: user, need, and insight.

[USER] needs to [USER'S NEED] because [SURPRISING INSIGHT]

Use a whiteboard or scratch paper to try out a number of options, playing with each variable and the combinations of them. The need and insight should flow from your unpacking and synthesis work. Remember, 'needs' should be verbs, and the insight typically should not simply be a reason for the need, but rather a synthesized statement that you can leverage in designing a solution.

For example, instead of "A teenage girl needs more nutritious food because vitamins are vital to good health" try "A teenage girl with a bleak outlook needs to feel more socially accepted when eating healthy food, because in her hood a social risks is more dangerous than a health risk." Note how the latter is an actionable, and potentially generative, problem statement, while the former is little more than a statement of fact, which spurs little excitement or direction to develop solutions.

METHOD

Point-of-View Analogy

WHY use a POV analogy

A point-of-view (POV) is your reframing of a design challenge into an actionable problem statement that will launch you into generative ideation. A POV Analogy can be a concise and compelling way to capture how you define the design challenge (your POV!). A good analogy will yield a strong directive of how you go about designing the final solution.

HOW to use a POV analogy

Use concise analogies to distill ideas. Metaphors and similes can encapsulate your insights in a rich picture. Discover metaphors from the work you do in synthesizing information, and looking at analogies between your user's situation and other areas.

For example, one metaphor from industry is:
"Personal music player as jewelry,"
which provides the directive for creating the iPod. Looking at the headset as jewelry, rather than simply speakers, allows the designer to create a product that users will enjoy as a projection of themselves, rather than merely a utilitarian device.
This could have been seeded by an insight about how a user views her music collection – that "her identity is linked to the bands she listens to, and her relationships are bolstered by shared music taste."

A metaphor can also be embedded into a more comprehensive POV.
For example you may create the following POV:
"A works-hard-plays-hard young professional needs to be motivated at work with a job that is more like a first-person-shooter than Tetris."

Stoke

WHY stoke

Stoke activities help teams loosen up and become mentally and physically active. Use stoke activities when energy is wavering, to wake up in the morning, to launch a meeting, or before a brainstorm.

HOW to stoke

Do an activity that gets your creativity going and increases your team members' engagement with each other. A good stoke activity not only increases energy but also requires each person to actively engage, listen, think and do. For example, when playing pictionary you must watch a teammate drawing, listen to other teammates guessing the answer (allowing you to build on those ideas), think of what the answer might be, and call it out guesses yourself. Keep it brief (5-10 minutes) and active so you can jump into your design work after. Many improv games are good stoke activities. Try one of these:

Category, category, die! Line folks up. Name a category (breakfast cereals, vegetables, animals, car manufacturers). Point at each person in rapid succession, skipping around the group. The player has to name something in the category. If she does not, everyone yells "die!!" and that player is out for the round.

Sound ball Stand in a circle and throw an imaginary ball to each other. Make eye contact with the person you are throwing to, and make a noise as you throw it. The catcher should repeat the noise while catching, and then make a new noise as he throws to next person. Try to increase the speed the ball travels around the circle. Add a second ball to the circle to increase each person's awareness.

Yes, And Everyone walk around the room randomly, and then one person can make an offer: "We're all at a cocktail party," "We're baby birds," or "We don't understand gravity." Then everyone should shout in unison the response, "Yes" and proceed to take the directive by acting it out. At anytime someone else can yell out the next offer. The answer is always "Yes."

photo: flickr/James Willamor

METHOD

"How Might We" Statements

WHY create how might we statements

"How might we" (HMW) statements are short questions that launch brainstorms. HMWs fall out of your point-of-view statement as seeds for your ideation. Create a seed that is broad enough that there are a wide range of solutions but narrow enough that the team has some bounds to bounce off of. For example, between the too narrow "HMW create a cone to eat ice cream without dripping" and the too broad "HMW redesign dessert" might be the properly scoped "HMW redesign ice cream to be more portable". It should be noted, the the proper scope of the seed will vary with the project and how much progress you have made in your project work.

HOW to generate how might we statements

Begin with your Point of View (POV) or problem statement. Break that larger challenge up into smaller actionable pieces. Look for aspects of the statement to complete the sentence, "How might we..." It is often helpful to brainstorm the HMW questions before the solutions brainstorm. For example, consider the following POV and resulting HMW statements.

USER	+	NEED	+	INSIGHT
An overworked husband	(needs)	to feel good about recycling		When things pile up he feels behind. And ultimately the big pile on the curb feels more like generating waste than doing good

1. How to reduce the size of the recycling pile?
2. How to make the husband feel good about a big pile?
3. How to reduce the amount of work involved in gathering all the house piles?
4. How to eliminate overflowing recycling bins?
5. How to make the husband feel ahead of the game?
6. How to make the husband feel less overworked?
7. How to make recycling feel less like waste?

METHOD

Brainstorming

One Conversation at a Time

Go for Quantity

Headline!

Build on the Ideas of Others

Encourage wild ideas

Be Visual

Stay on Topic

Defer Judgement - NO Blocking

WHY brainstorm

Brainstorming is a great way to come up with a lot of ideas, that you would not be able to create by just sitting down with a pen and paper. The intention of brainstorming is to leverage the collective thinking of the group, by engaging with each other, listening, and building on other ideas. Conducting a brainstorm also creates a distinct segment of time when you intentionally turn up the generative part of your brain and turn down the evaluative part. Brainstorming can be used throughout a design process; of course to come up with design solutions, but also any time you are trying to come up with ideas, such as planning where to do empathy work, or thinking about product and services related to your project.

HOW to brainstorm

Be intentional about setting aside a period of time when your team will be in “brainstorm mode” – when the sole goal is to come up with as many ideas as possible, and when judgment of those ideas will not come into the discussion. Invest energy into a short period of time, like 15 or 30 minutes of high engagement. Get in front of a whiteboard or around a table, but take an active posture of standing or sitting upright. Get close together.
Write down clearly what you are brainstorming. Using a How-Might-We (HMW) statement is often a great way to frame a brainstorm (e.g. HMW redesign the way we way we shop online). (See more on the “How Might We” Statements method card.)

There are at least two ways to capture the ideas of a brainstorming.

1. Scribe: the scribe will capture each idea that team members call out on the whiteboard or paper. It is very important to capture every idea, regardless of your own feelings about each idea.
2. All-in: Each person will write down each of his or her ideas as they come, and verbally share it with the group. It is great to do this with post-it notes, so you can write your idea and then stick it on the board.

Follow and (nicely) enforce the brainstorming rules – they are intended to increase your creative output.

Facilitate a Brainstorm

WHY facilitate a brainstorm

Good facilitation is key to a generative brainstorm. You brainstorm to come up with many, wide-ranging ideas; a good facilitator sets the stage for the team to be successful doing this.

HOW to facilitate brainstorm

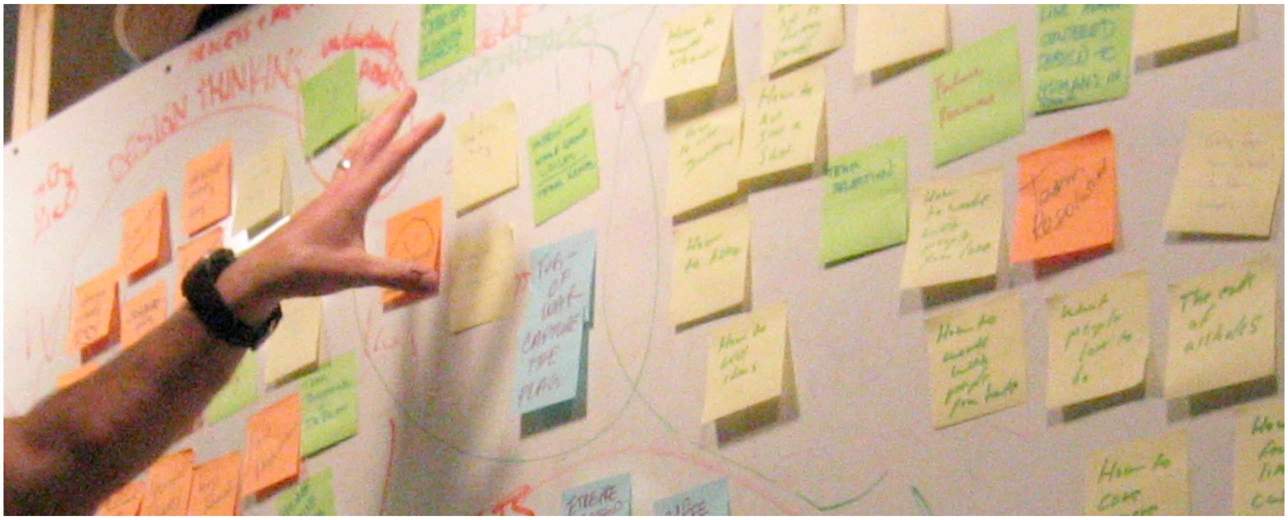
ENERGY – As the facilitator it is your task to keep the ideas flowing. Perhaps the most important aspect of a successful brainstorm is the seed question that you are brainstorming about (see the "How Might We" method card for more information). During the brainstorm keep a pulse on the energy of the group. If the group is slowing down or getting stuck make an adjustment. Create a variation to the "How-might-we?" (HMW) statement to get the group thinking in another direction (prepare some HMW options ahead of time). Or have a few provocative ideas in your back pocket that you can lob in to reenergize the team.

SPACE – Be mindful about the space in which you conduct a brainstorm. Make sure that there is plenty of vertical writing area. This allows the group to generate a large number of potential solutions. Strike a balance between having a footprint that is big enough for everyone, but also is not so large that some people start to feel removed. A good rule of thumb is that all members of the group should be able to reach the board in two steps. Also, make sure each person has access to sticky notes and a marker so they can capture their own thoughts and add them to the board if the scribe cannot keep up with the pace.

CONTRAINTS – Add constraints that may spark new ideas. "What if it had to be round?," "How would superman do it?," "How would your spouse design it?," "How would you design it with the technology of 100 years ago?" Additionally you can create process constraints. Try putting a time limit on each how-might-we statement; shoot for a fifty ideas in twenty minutes.

METHOD

Selection



WHY brainstorm selection is important

Your brainstorm should generate many, wide-ranging ideas. Now harvest that brainstorm, so those ideas don't just sit there on the board. Harvesting is straight forward for some brainstorms (pick a couple), but when ideating design solutions give some thought to how you select ideas. Carry forward a range of those ideas, so you preserve the breadth of solutions and don't settle only for the safe choice.

HOW to select

In the selection process, don't narrow too fast. Don't immediately worry about feasibility. Hang on to the ideas about which the group is excited, amused, or intrigued. An idea that is not plausible may still have an aspect within it that is very useful and meaningful.
Different selection techniques can be used, including these two:

1. Post-it voting – each team member gets three votes and marks three ideas that he or she is attracted to. Independent voting allows all team members to have a voice.
2. The four categories method – the method encourages you to hang onto those crazy but meaningful ideas. Elect one or two ideas for each of these four categories: the rational choice, the most likely to delight, the darling, and the long shot.
3. Bingo selection method – like the four categories method, this is designed to help preserve innovation potential. Choose ideas that inspire you to make; a physical prototype, a digital prototype, and an experience prototype.

Carry forward multiple ideas into prototyping. If an idea is so far out there that it seems pointless to test, ask yourselves what about that solution was attractive, and then test that aspect or integrate it into a new solution.

METHOD

Prototype for Empathy

WHY prototype for empathy

It is common practice to test prototypes with users to evaluate solutions, but you can also gain empathy through prototyping, exposing different information than simple interviewing and observation might. Of course, whenever you test with a user you should consider both what you can learn about your solution and what you can learn about the person – you can always use more empathetic understanding.

But you can also develop prototypes or create situations specifically designed to gain empathy, without testing a solution at all (or even having a solution in mind). This is sometimes called “active empathy” because you are not an outside observer, you are creating conditions to bring out new information. In the same way a solution prototype helps you gain understanding about your concept, an empathy prototype helps you gain understanding about the design space and people's mindsets about certain issues.

HOW to prototype for empathy

These empathy prototypes are often best used when you have done some work to understand the design space, and want to dig deeper into a certain area or probe an insight you are developing. Think about what aspect of the challenge you want to learn more about. Then discuss or brainstorm ways you might investigate that subject. You can create prototypes for empathy to test with users or with your design team.

Some ideas:
-Have your user draw something (for example, draw how you think about spending money, or draw how you get to work) and then talk about it afterward.
- Create a game that probes issues you want to explore (for example, you could make a simple card game which forces users to make choices related to your design challenge).
-Simulate an aspect of what users are going through to better understand it yourself (for example, if your users plant seeds while carrying a baby, get a sling and carry ten pounds while planting seeds).

METHOD

Storytelling

WHY storytelling over other forms of communication?

It seems stories are hard wired into our psyche. People have been passing information along via storytelling for as long as humans have had a rich language to draw from. Stories are great at connecting with ideas at a human level. A well-told story focused on sharing pertinent details that express surprising meaning and underlying emotions effects the emotions and the intellect simultaneously.

HOW to design a story.

What's the point? Know what you intend to convey both narratively and emotionally. You should be able to describe the essence of the transformation of your character in one sentence & the tone of the story in a couple of words. Be able to articulate the emotional tone in a couple of words.

Be Authentic: Stories are more powerful when they include a little bit of you. Honest expression is stronger and more resonant than cliché .

Character-Driven: Characters are a great vehicle through which to express deep human needs and generate empathy & interest from your audience. Focus on character.

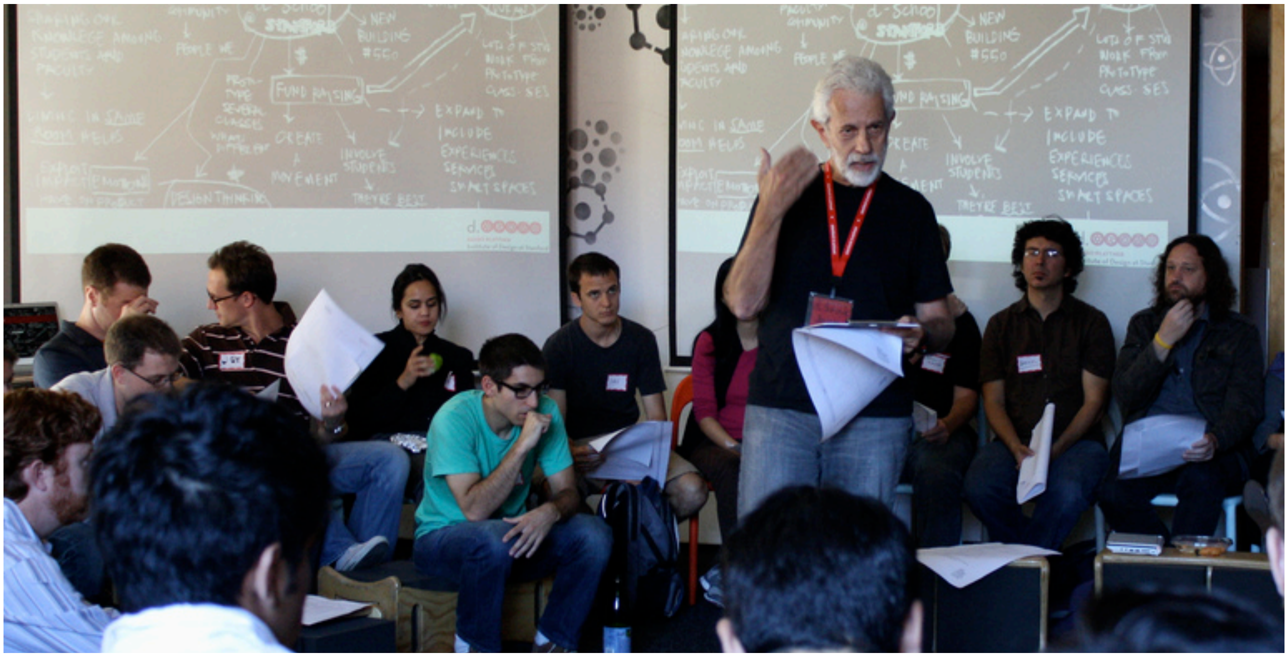
Dramatic Action: Your story should have 3 components.: Action : Conflict : Transformation.
Action: What is the character trying to do? What actions are they taking to achieve it?
Conflict: What is in her way? What questions linger beneath the surface?
Transformation: What is the big insight? How do the action & conflict resolve.

Details: "Behind all behavior lies emotion." What details can you share about your character and their situation that will suggest the emotions that lie beneath?

Design Process is a Built in Story: Use what you've learned during the design process: Empathy maps well to Character. Needs to conflict, & insights + solutions to Transformation.

METHOD

I Like, I Wish, How To



WHY use I Like, I Wish, How to

Designers rely on personal communication and, particularly, feedback, during design work. You request feedback from users your solution concepts , and you seek feedback from colleagues about design frameworks you are developing. Outside the project itself fellow designers need to communicate how they are working together as a team. Feedback is best given with I-statements. For example, "I sometimes think you don't listen to me" instead of "You don't listen to a word I say."
Specifically, "*I like, I wish, How to*" (IL/IW/H2) is a simple tool to encourage open feedback.

HOW to use I Like, I Wish, How To

The IL/IW/H2 method is almost too simple to write down, but too useful not to mention. The format can be used for groups as small as a pair and as large as 100. You meet as a group and any person can express a "Like," a "Wish," or a "How to" succinctly as a headline.
For example you might say one of the following:
"I like how we broke our team into pairs to work."
"I wish we would have met to discuss our plan before the user testing."
"How to get new team members up to speed effectively?"

The third option "How to . . ." has variants of "I wonder . . ." and "What if . . ."
Use what works for your team.

As a group, share dozens of thoughts in a session. It is useful to have one person capture the feedback (type each headline). Listen to the feedback; you don't need to respond at that moment. Use your judgment as team to decide if you want to discuss certain topics that arise.