

The Design Thinking Process

Start by Gaining Empathy

1. Interview – 8 min. (2 x 4 min.)

Background to Step	Action
<p>The first step of a human-centered design process is to gain empathy so you can better understand how people understand the problem and what is required to solve it.</p> <p>Empathy is the capacity to step into other people's shoes, to understand their lives, and start to solve problems from their perspectives. This process involves observing, engaging, and immersing with the people you are designing for to understand their experiences and motivations in order to gain a deeper personal understanding of the issues, needs and challenges they face.</p> <p>This step begins with in-depth interviews to help us get a better sense for the people we're designing for.</p>	<p>Interview your partner. Begin by understanding their everyday experiences. Find out how things make them feel, what they wish could be different, what they enjoy, what gets in their way. Your job is to listen and learn, so don't be afraid to ask "Why?"</p> <p>At the four-minute mark, start transitioning—if you were interviewed first, now take a hand at being the interviewer, and vice versa.</p> <p>Interview tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Write notes or keywordsAsk why questionsEncourage stories and examplesAsk your partner to visualize their design experience with a drawing or a diagramDo not be afraid of silencesDo not suggest or discuss answers to questions

2. Dig Deeper - 8 min. (2 x 4 min.)

Background to Step	Action
<p>This step digs deeper into your partner(s)' practices, beliefs, and philosophies. In this step you can follow up on things that intrigued you during the first interview.</p> <p>Try to dig for stories, feelings, and emotion.</p>	<p>Interview tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Refer to your notes and keywords from Step #1.Ask what and how questionsEncourage stories and examplesDo not be afraid of silencesDo not suggest or discuss your answers to the question when interviewing

Reframe the Problem

3. Capture Findings - 3 min.

Background to Step	Action
<p>The Define stage of the design thinking process consists of synthesizing the information gained from the Empathy stage. In this phase, you make meaning from what you learned in the Empathy phase and uncover the patterns and relationships within the data you have gathered, which lead to new insights and inspiration. The Define phase can help you reframe the problem to open up new and innovative solutions.</p> <p>In this step, you reflect on what you've learned about your partner and you can synthesize your learning into two groups: your partner's needs, and insights you discovered.</p>	<p>First, consider your partner's needs:</p> <p>What is your partner trying to achieve?</p> <p>Next, consider insights gained from your interview:</p> <p>What have you learned about your partner(s)' motivations, work, practice, or how they address design? Is there anything you note that possibly your partner(s) have not recognized or acknowledged about their practices that you would like to comment on?</p>

4. Define Problem Statement – 3 min.

Background to Step	Action
<p>Based on your findings, in this step you clearly state the problem that you're going to try and solve.</p> <p>As you frame or bound the problem, you are defining what you see as the problem that you will explore and discover a resolution.</p>	<p>Create a problem statement.</p> <p>You can use the following format to help craft your problem statement:</p> <p>[Partners name] needs a way to [partner's need] because [insight].</p>

Ideate: Generate Alternatives to Test

5. Sketch at least 5 radical ways to meet your user's needs – 5 min.

Background to Step	Action
The Ideate stage of the design thinking process consists of idea generation. Based on what you know about your users from the Empathy stage and about your problem/issue from the Define	Now's your chance to imagine some new solutions that might address your partner's needs. Sketch at least five radical new ways to address the problem frame you identified in Step
stage, you are now able to start imagining new ideas for how to solve your design challenge. This is the time to think big, and to be open to new and radical ideas for how things could be, and what they can become. This can sometimes be the most difficult part of the process, but it is also one of the most fun and creative.	You should focus on ideas for your partner and your partner should focus on ideas for you. Don't worry about being perfect, draw your ideas quickly to capture them. Sketching tips: Defer judgment Go for volume One way at a time Be visual Think in headlines Build on the ideas of others Stay on topic – refer to the overarching question and your stand Encourage yourself to think of at least one wild idea

6. Share your Solutions and Capture Feedback – 10 min. (2 x 5 min.)

Background to Step	Action
In this step you share your sketches with your partner and take turns providing feedback. Note likes/dislikes and builds on the idea, but also listen for new insights. This is another opportunity to learn more about your partner's feelings and worldview. Spend the time listening to your partners reactions and questions.	Receive feedback and feedforward responses from your partner(s). Suggestions: Honor the work the presenter has completed by letting them finish their presentations before you interrupt with feedback and feedforward responses. Honor the feedback and feedforward responses by finding possible space and place by either editing your problem statement or your sketches.

Iterate Based on Feedback

7. Reflect and Generate New Solution – 3 min.

Background to Step	Action
<p>In this step, you reflect on the feedback and feed Forward and generate a new solution.</p> <p>For our purposes, rather than work independently in this step, you are going to work together to generate a new collaborative solution that incorporates a few ideas that might work for both of you.</p>	<p>In this step, you will reflect on the entire process thus far and come up with a collaborative solution that you would like to build in Step 8.</p> <p>Questions to consider: What is your Problem Statement? How have you honored the feedback and feedforward responses? If you described your solution to trusted work colleagues, how might they respond?</p>

Build and Test

8. Build Your Solution

Background to Step	Action
<p>The Prototype phase involves bringing the ideas to life that you imagined during the Ideate phase. A prototype is a tangible representation of an idea that people can directly experience. Prototyping is about making ideas visible, learning while building, and sharing ideas with others. Often physically making something helps us think about it in a different way and helps us answer questions we did not even know to ask. Prototyping is an integral part of the design thinking process and it allows you to think by making things.</p>	<p>Create a physical prototype of your solution from Step 7. Make something visual or physical that will help you better imagine the possibilities and the pitfalls of your solution, as well as explain it more easily to others. Your prototype can be a model, a diagram, or a more detailed drawing.</p> <p>You can use any resources you like to make your idea visual.</p>

References

Morris, S. M. (2017). A Call for Critical Instructional Design. <https://www.seanmichaelmorris.com/a-call-for-critical-instructional-design>

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