

UX Design - Ideation Techniques

- Adding Creativity to the User-Centered Design (UCD) Process
- Ideation Techniques

The ideation phase is a time when team members **brainstorm on a range of creative ideas** that address the project goals. During this phase, it's critical not only to generate ideas but also to confirm that the most important design assumptions are valid.

Product teams have a lot of techniques for ideation — from **sketching**, which is very helpful for visualizing what some aspects of the design will look like, to **storyboarding**, which is used to visualize the overall interactions with a product.

Ideate



“Ideation is the mode of the design process in which you concentrate on idea generation. Mentally it represents a process of ‘going wide’ in terms of concepts and outcomes. Ideation provides both the fuel and also the source material for building prototypes and getting innovative solutions into the hands of your users.”

– d.school, An Introduction to Design Thinking PROCESS GUIDE

Benefits of Ideation:

- ✓ Everyone on team can propose new ideas.
- ✓ It helps bring together perspectives and strengths of your team members.
- ✓ People understand why certain ideas may or may not work.
- ✓ Create volume and variety in your innovation options
- ✓ Get obvious solutions out of your heads, drive your team beyond them.
- ✓ Get a visual perspective of the user journey mapping and therefore increase the innovation potential of your solution.

“It’s not about coming up with the ‘right’ idea,

it’s about generating the broadest range of possibilities.”

– d.school, An Introduction to Design Thinking PROCESS GUIDE

In the ideation process, **POV (Point of View)** should be your guiding statement that focusses on your **insights** about your **users** and their **needs**.

- Define the type of person you are designing for – your **user**. For instance, you can develop one or more personas which help you understand and crystallize your research results – observations, interviews, etc.
- You extract and synthesize your users' most essential **needs**, which are the most important to fulfill. Remember that needs should be verbs.
- You work to express **insights** you developed through the synthesis of information that you gathered during your initial Empathize mode.

Post your findings in a template similar to the right one.

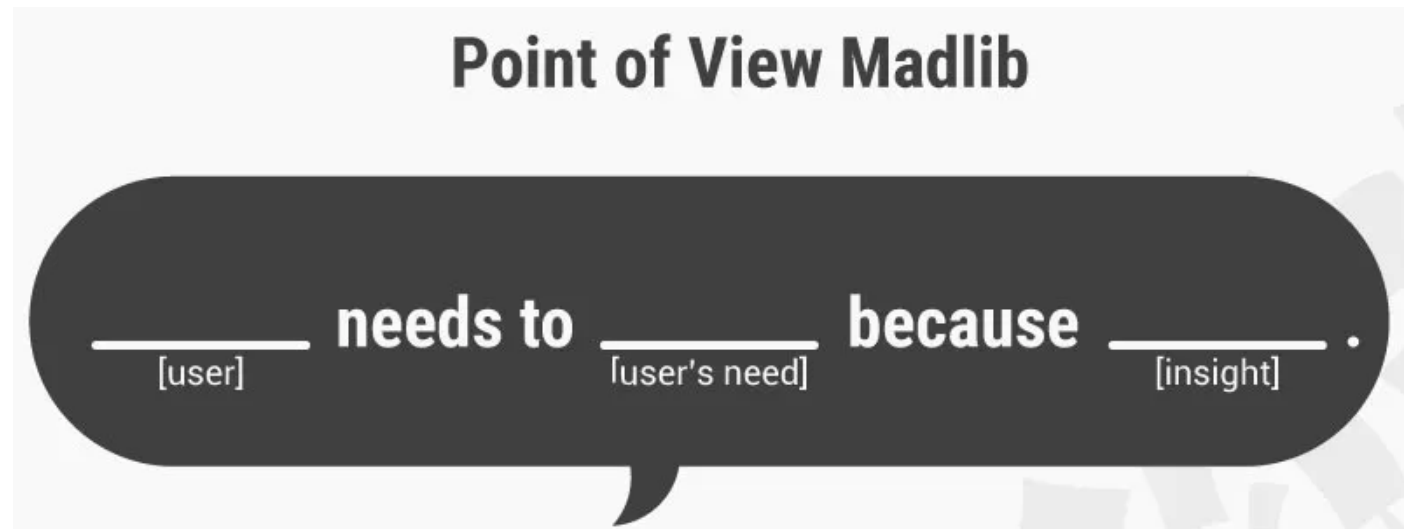
Point of View Template		
User	Need	Insight

POV Mad lib

You can articulate a POV by combining these three elements – **user, need, and insight** – as an actionable problem statement that will drive the rest of your design work.

Example: An adult person wishes to commute from one city to another by road but does not wish to self drive or book a rental (due to heavy charge). He is willing to pool/share a car with more people as it would be cheaper and more eco-friendly.

[**User** ... (descriptive)] needs [**Need** ... (verb)] because [**Insight** ... (compelling)]



Begin with your Point Of View or problem statement. Break that larger challenge up into smaller actionable pieces. It's time to start using the Ideation method that involves asking, “**How Might We...?**”

For example: How might we... design a driverless car, which is environmental friendly, cheap and easy for more people to share?

Then break the POV into smaller and actionable pieces as follows:

- a) Come up with **too narrow** questions, such as: “HMW create a taxi which does not need a chauffeur”.
- b) Or your questions might become **too broad**: “HMW redesign transportation”.
- c) You should strive to ask an **inspiring and specific question** which can be the **main question** which you use as your guide in your ideation sessions: “HMW design a driverless car, which is environmental friendly, cheap and easy to share for more people.”
- d) After you've asked the foundational question you start breaking the POV into **several smaller and actionable sub-questions** which you can center your different ideation sessions around: “HMW design an electric car?” and “HMW design a car which has a digital code as a key which is safe to share among a lot of varying users.”

Best Practice Guide to Asking “*How Might We?*”

- 1) Begin with your Point of View (POV) or problem statement.
- 2) Break that larger POV challenge up into smaller actionable and meaningful questions. Five to ten HMW questions for one POV is a good starting point.
- 3) If your How Might We questions are too broad, narrow them down. You should aim for a narrow enough frame to let you know where to start your Brainstorm, but at the same time you should also aim for enough breadth to give you *room* to explore wild ideas.

“We use the How Might We format because it suggests that a solution is possible and because they offer you the chance to answer them in a variety of ways.

A properly framed How Might We doesn't suggest a particular solution, but gives you the perfect frame for innovative thinking.”

– Ideo.org

Next...

UX Design – Creating Scenarios & Storyboards Techniques