Training: Introduction to User Research

18F

Agenda

1

Exercise:

Try usability testing

2

What did we just do?

Introduction to human-centered design

3

Exercise:

What can you use in your work?

An exercise

Credit: **Cyd Harrell**

1. Form teams of 3.
   one interviewee,
   one interviewer,
   one observer.

2.a. Interviewer: you are working to improve the instructions in the handout. Ask questions, but...

NO HELPING!

2.b. Observer: write down any reactions, points of confusion, and pain points you observe.

3. This is a race. There will be a prize.

You have 10 minutes, starting now.

Go!

10:00

Stop

How'd that go?

Now, let's switch roles and go again. Instead of fastest, prize goes to the loveliest.

10:00

Stop

Thoughts? Questions?

What went right?
What went wrong?

How would you improve the experience?

Come up with 3 hypotheses about how you could improve the process.

10:00

Stop

Thoughts? Questions?

What did we just do?

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Usability testing

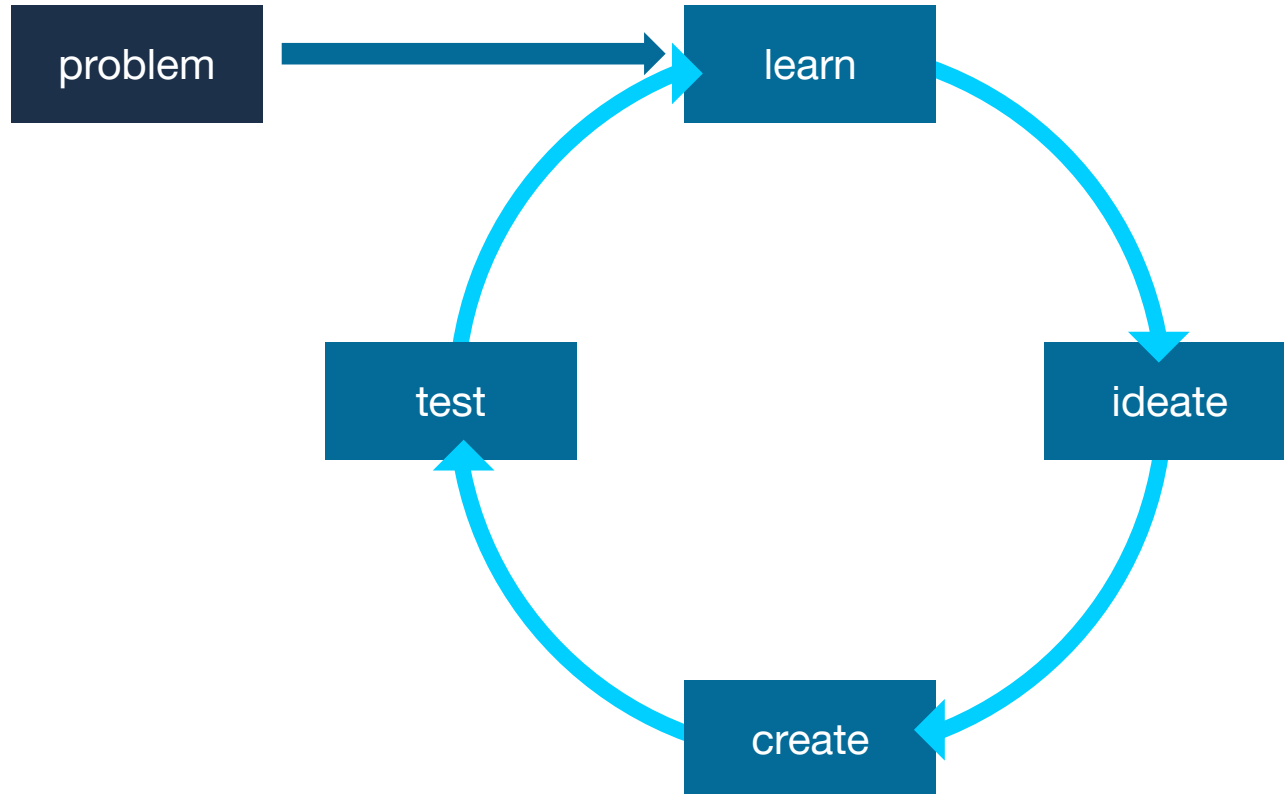...which is a **human-centered design method**

human-centered design

A **way of solving problems** that centers on the experiences and needs of humans throughout the design process.

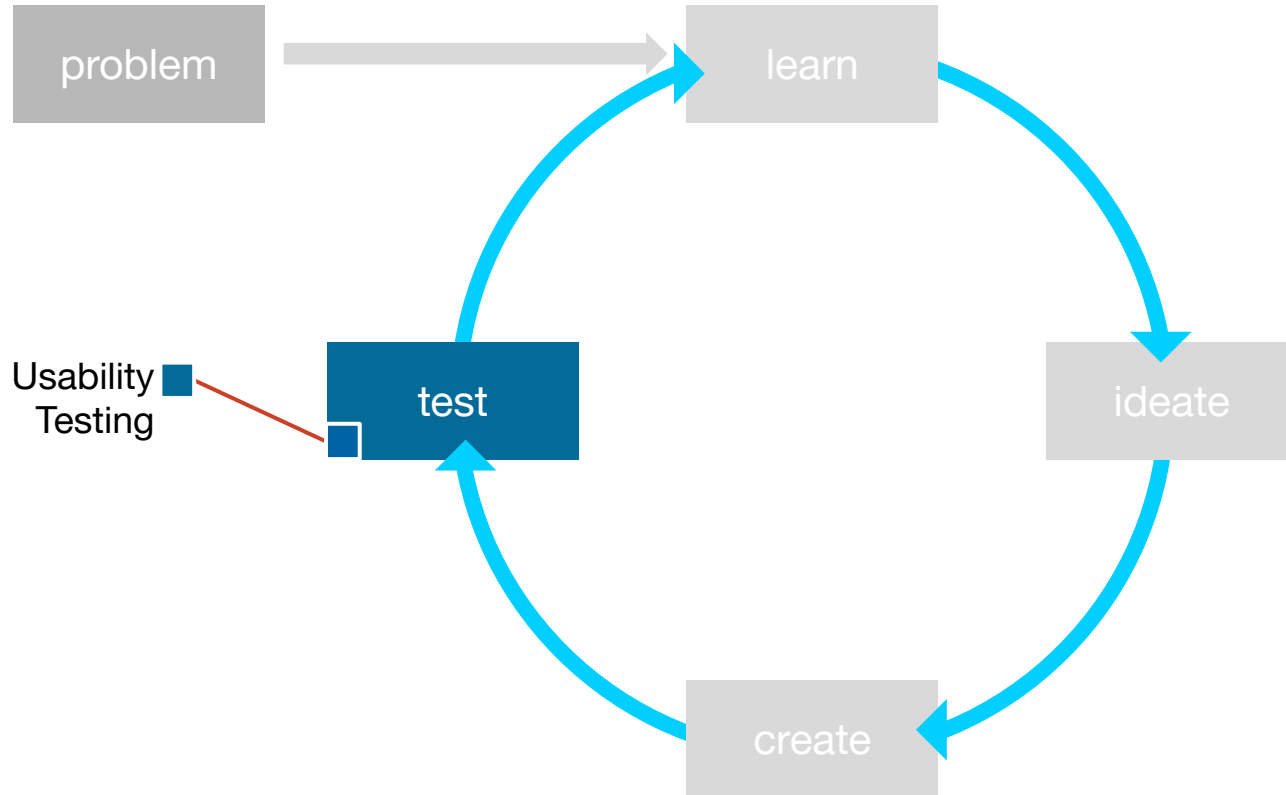**A way of solving problems that centers on the experiences and needs of humans throughout the design process.**
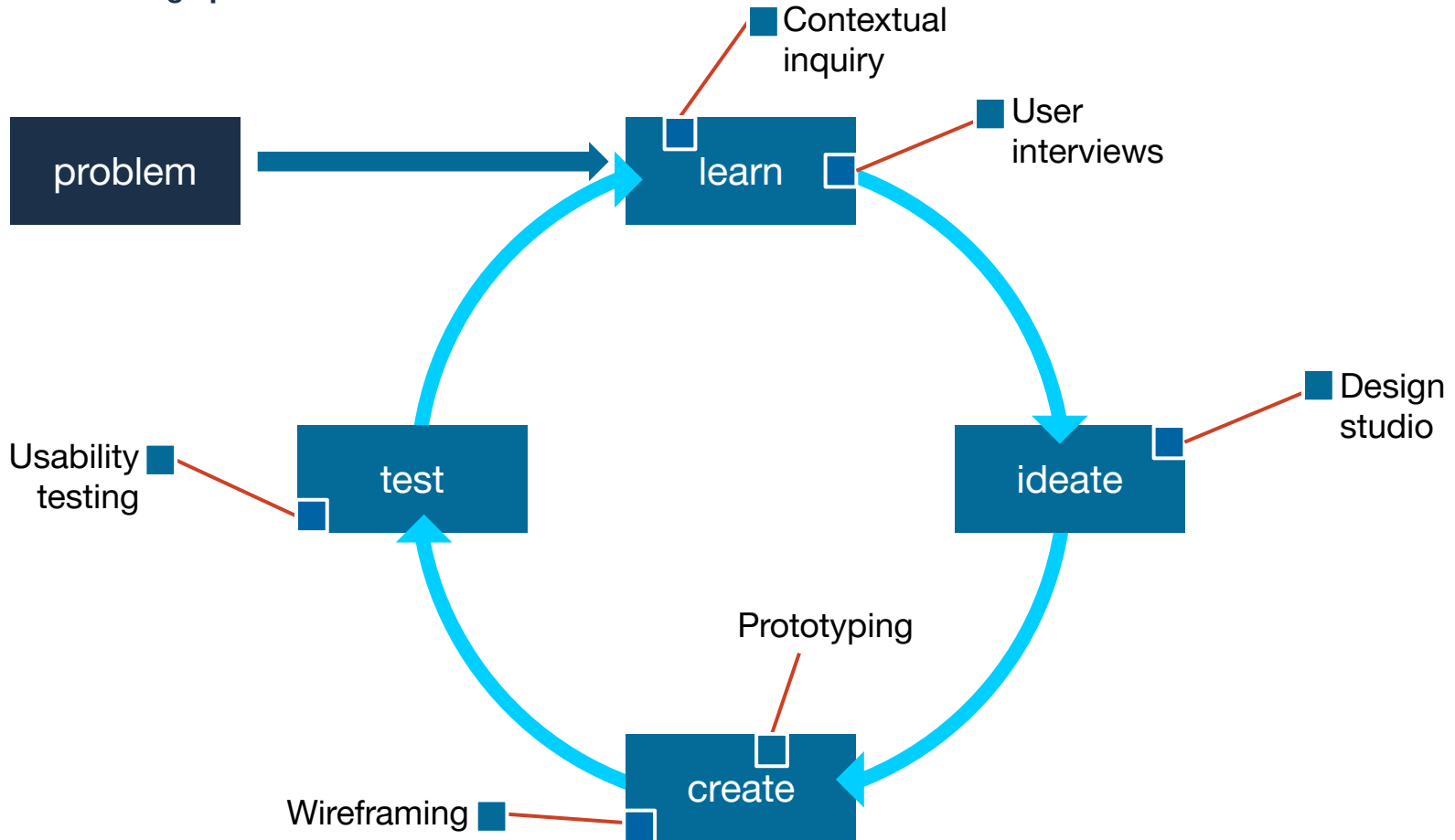
A very oversimplified design process

A very oversimplified design process

problem

learn

ideate

create

test

Usability
Testing

The design process

problem → learn
- Contextual inquiry
- User interviews

ideate
- Design studio

create
- Prototyping
- Wireframing

test
- Usability testing

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A collection of tools to bring human-centered design into your project.

Discover

Methods to build empathy for the project and people involved.

Bodystorming

What

An improvisational brainstorm based on interaction and movement with the body.

Why

To remind participants that interactions are human and physical, to teach stakeholders empathy for users, and to get away from our computers.

How to do it

1. Gather three to six members of the project team who are ready to think on their feet. If possible, identify a few users who can play along.

2. Bring the project team to the user's environment. If that's not practical, model the user's environment in a conference room.

3. Assign each member of the project team to a role, interface, or "touchpoint" that you have identified in a journey map. If users are present, ask them to pretend to accomplish their goals as usual. Otherwise, assign a persona to each member of the product team who isn't serving as a touchpoint. If you anticipate discomfort, assign roles in advance and start with a basic script.

4. Use props to role play how users accomplish their goals. "Speak the interface" to one another. For example, one of the touchpoints might say "Submit all of your required forms." and

A very oversimplified design process

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Usability
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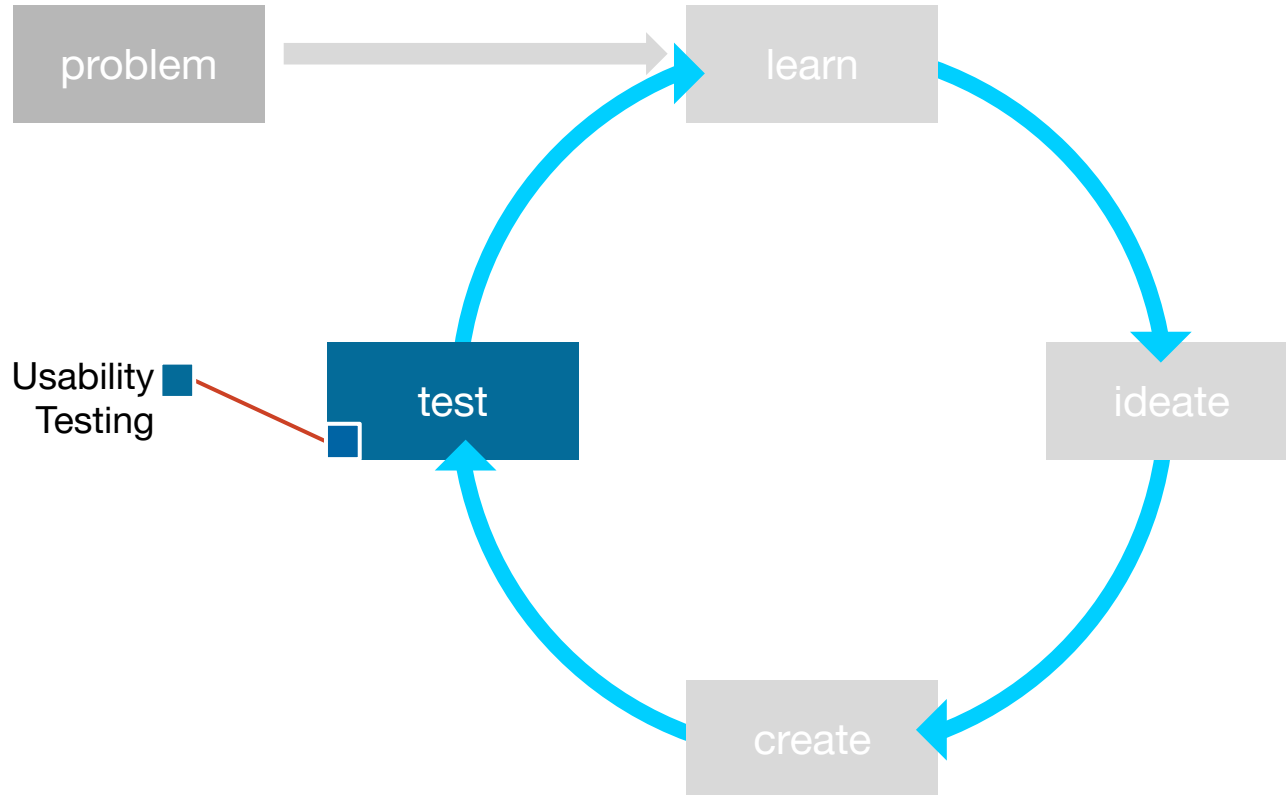
"The best tool for **resolving disputes** within a design team, for making design decisions based on data rather than opinion, is sitting next to someone who is a real person who wants to accomplish something as they use your design to do it."

—*Dana Chisnell (Usability expert, formerly U.S. Digital Service)*

A word on recruiting

More Reliable Results

- Team members.

- Friends, not on your team.

- People who fit your demographics.

- Target customers with recent experience in the problem space.

- Target customers with current needs.

- Target customers with a need <u>this hour</u>.

What can you use?

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What origami instructions do you encounter in your work?

What origami instructions do you write?

What do you make that other people* use to do their jobs?
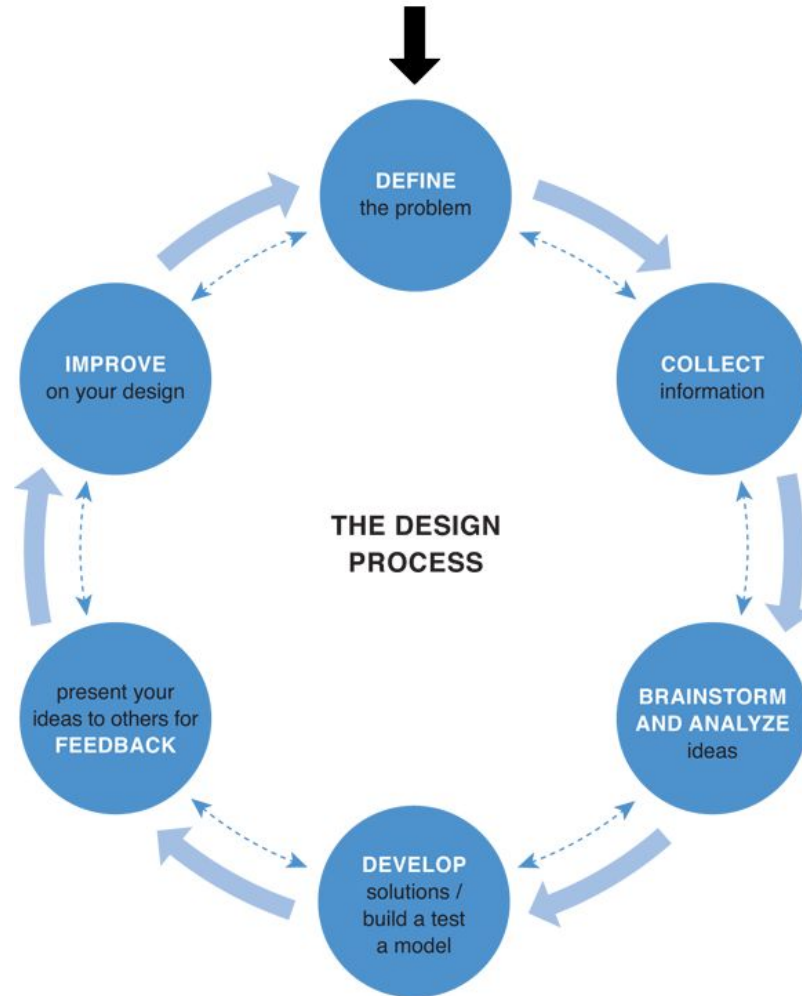
*inside or outside of ONRR

A few things designers don't do

- Ensure the product vision is fulfilled
- Confirm your preconceived notions, even when they're inaccurate
- Make the design "pop more"
- Make the design "pretty"
- Draw the ideas in your head
- Read minds
- Research every single decision, big or small
- Add UI elements because they were asked to

- Ignore end user needs
- Follow numbers blindly
- Work alone
- "Throw things over the wall" to developers
- Fix the database
- Architect software
- Make the words sparkle
- Prioritize work
- Fetch coffee

A few things designers do

- Discover what users **want** a system to do
- Discover what users **need** a system to do
- Help the team understand users' underlying goals and human motivations
- Create ideas for new products or services
- Sketch ideas for new products and services to help others understand them
- Design systems that are easy for users to understand and learn
- Create interactions that lead users to a desired action or thought process
- Prioritize users' needs

- Run usability tests to understand how well users can understand and use a system
- Use expert analysis to identify usability problems before testing
- Make it easy for users to notice, and fix, errors and bad data
- Create prototypes to test ideas before investing lots of development effort
- Shape how systems look and act to convey a specific personality, tone, or atmosphere
- Shape how language is used to convey a specific personality, tone, or atmosphere

THE DESIGN PROCESS

DEFINE the problem

COLLECT information

BRAINSTORM AND ANALYZE ideas

DEVELOP solutions / build a test a model

present your ideas to others for FEEDBACK

IMPROVE on your design

"Design is deciding how a thing should be."

— William Van Hecke

The end

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