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Optional - Learn more about how research informs ideation



Thinking of ideas for your product design isn't a random or mysterious process! The designs you create will be supported by research, feedback from user interviews, and learnings from observations. All designers have assumptions about users and what they *think* is important or challenging for those users. Often, these assumptions are based on the designer's own needs and experiences. But, to come up with ideas for designs that meet users' specific needs, your designs must be based on insights from actual user research, not assumptions.

After you **empathize** with users and **define** the problems they're facing, you're ready for the third stage in the design process: **ideate**. Your goal is to generate as many ideas as possible for potential solutions to the user problems you've identified. To do this, you should try multiple ideation techniques, and be prepared to have multiple ideation sessions. All of your ideas don't have to be great; you won't end up using them all in the end! Instead, ideation requires you to push your creative boundaries and try to think of new perspectives to your design approach. So, no limits!

Earlier in the course, you used four tools - empathy maps, personas, user stories, and user journey maps - to help gain a deeper understanding of users' needs. All of these tools informed the creation of a problem statement and will guide your ideation process moving forward. As a quick refresher:

- **Empathy maps** explore users' four main motivations: what the user says, thinks, does, and feels. The insights gathered from empathy maps help you come up with ideas for solutions that address the user's real problems.
- **Personas** place the users who you're designing for front-and-center. By creating detailed user profiles, you can clearly envision potential users that you'd design for.
- **User stories** determine which user needs are the most critical to address with your designs. This direction will help focus your ideation.
- **User journeys** help you come up with ideas for designs that truly support the users' needs and solve their problems.
- A **problem statement** is a clear description of the user's need that should be addressed. The problem statement you created in the last course will guide the focus of your ideation.

User research provides insights into how users behave, how users experience or think about a product, and more. Whether you conduct the user research yourself or with the help of a designated UX researcher, your research findings will help you understand how to design your product based on what your users really need. As UX designers, we always keep users top-of-mind, so using findings from research can go a long way in informing the ideation process.

Want to learn more about the link between research and ideation? Check out this article about <u>ideation for everyday design challenges</u> ☐ from Nielsen Norman Group.

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