OfficeMentor

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I. Problem statement

<u>The Aspiration to Solve</u>

The goal is to keep employees within organizations connected when operating remotely especially during a time when the pandemic is keeping people separated. OfficeMentor would serve as a platform where people in the workplace would have a means to stay connected when mentoring in an organization, sharing ideas, and overall bridging the gap between junior and senior workers when learning from each other's competencies. The platform can be used to train new workers or junior staff in a particular position within the company. Such a design idea is important to address to keep people sane through such a restrictive time, making it easier for people to communicate remotely and at the very least providing a platform that is designed intuitively enough for all people to use. Overall, OfficeMentor can make it so that workflow through certain organizations is conducted efficiently by encouraging people to mentor and collaborate among each other remotely.

II. Formative evaluation

<u>Understanding OfficeMentor</u>

Based on formative evaluations, OfficeMentor came across as a software that assists senior employees by providing a platform that promotes mentorship and collaboration with new oncoming junior employees in the workplace. Participants felt comfortable behind the idea of using a platform that helps bridge the gap between professional expertise regarding senior and oncoming junior employees during such restrictive times. Participants seemed to have liked the idea behind having a platform that integrated multiple recognizable features such as: screen-sharing, voice and video call, calendar scheduling, synchronous document-style editing, file-sharing, instant-messaging and various other popular communication driven features.

The evaluations brought up concerns regarding how people would be able to navigate and use the features on the platform with questions like "would it be intuitive to operate?" and "would it be easy to implement in organizations with already existing managerial platforms?". Such feedback helped us understand that OfficeMentor would serve as a good software for organizations that have habits of using communication-based platforms to teach, train, and brainstorm on projects while simultaneously trading competent skill sets among the employees. Some parts of the evaluation process also gave us perspective on the kinds of professions that would not benefit from OfficeMentor.

When it comes to professions that require highly specific work processes as well as primarily verbal communication, OfficeMentor was deemed least effective in such cases. Aside from the video calling or screen-share functions, the rest of the features were seen as not useful. Therefore, it was clear that OfficeMentor is probably more suitable for larger organizations, particularly ones that involve more collaboration and higher quantities of knowledge sharing and management.

III. Persona, scenario, & storyboard

<u>Visualizing the Design process</u>

Upon taking OfficeMentor through the more visual/real world characterization process, the primary and secondary personas were determined. The primary personas revolved around focusing on employees that were of the senior and junior positions, typically older if in a senior role and younger if in a junior role. Secondary personas may include any associates or co-workers that help primary personas in their day-to-day operations. Upon establishing the personas for OfficeMentor, a scenario was concocted to help visualize the people that may use OfficeMentor.

The scenario starts with an elderly man or woman who is working in a senior position during the pandemic for a large organization that had just been informed that their company is adapting to a new platform to help alleviate workflow throughout the organization remotely. The senior employees are then tasked to use OfficeMentor to help the new junior oncoming employees by mentoring and collaborating among one another. There is also the added benefit of them trading competent skill sets and bridging the gap in communication between one another. OfficeMentor includes tasks that allow users to navigate a user interface easily even for someone who may lack computer literacy skills.
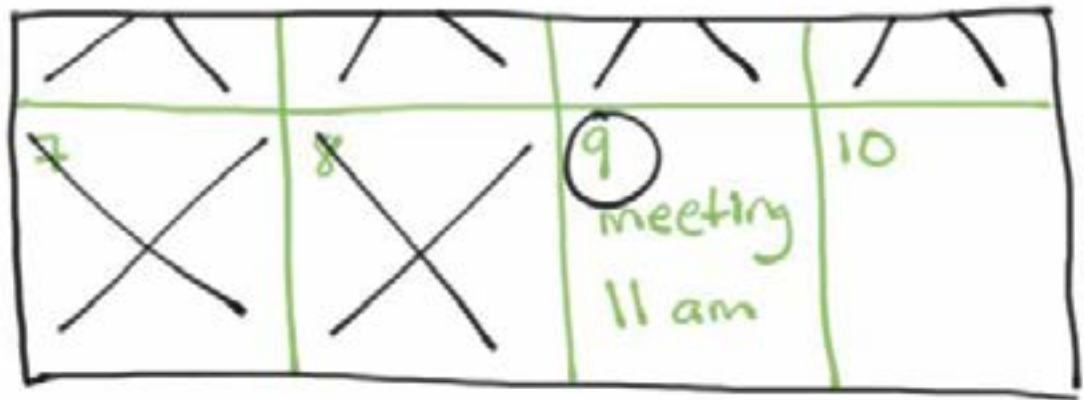
Visual representation of employees utilizing OfficeMentor.

IV. Prototype overview

Overview of OfficeMentor

OfficeMentor is a platform designed to help workers mentor and communicate remotely while still maintaining the feel of collaborating in-person. OfficeMentor will feature a sleek and simple user experience by allowing users to easily navigate the interface. OfficeMentor includes features like video, screen, and document sharing, being able to access such resources reliably, the ability to schedule events, the integration of different training aspects, document filing and the ability to retain knowledge across the organization.
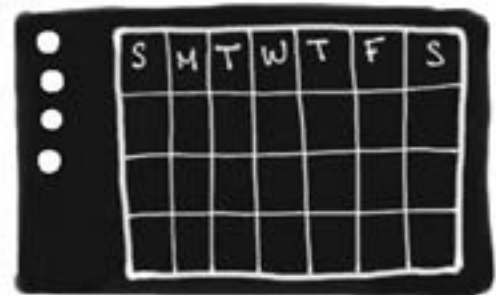
Watch prototype here.

Sketches and examples of the features and user-experience for OfficeMentor.
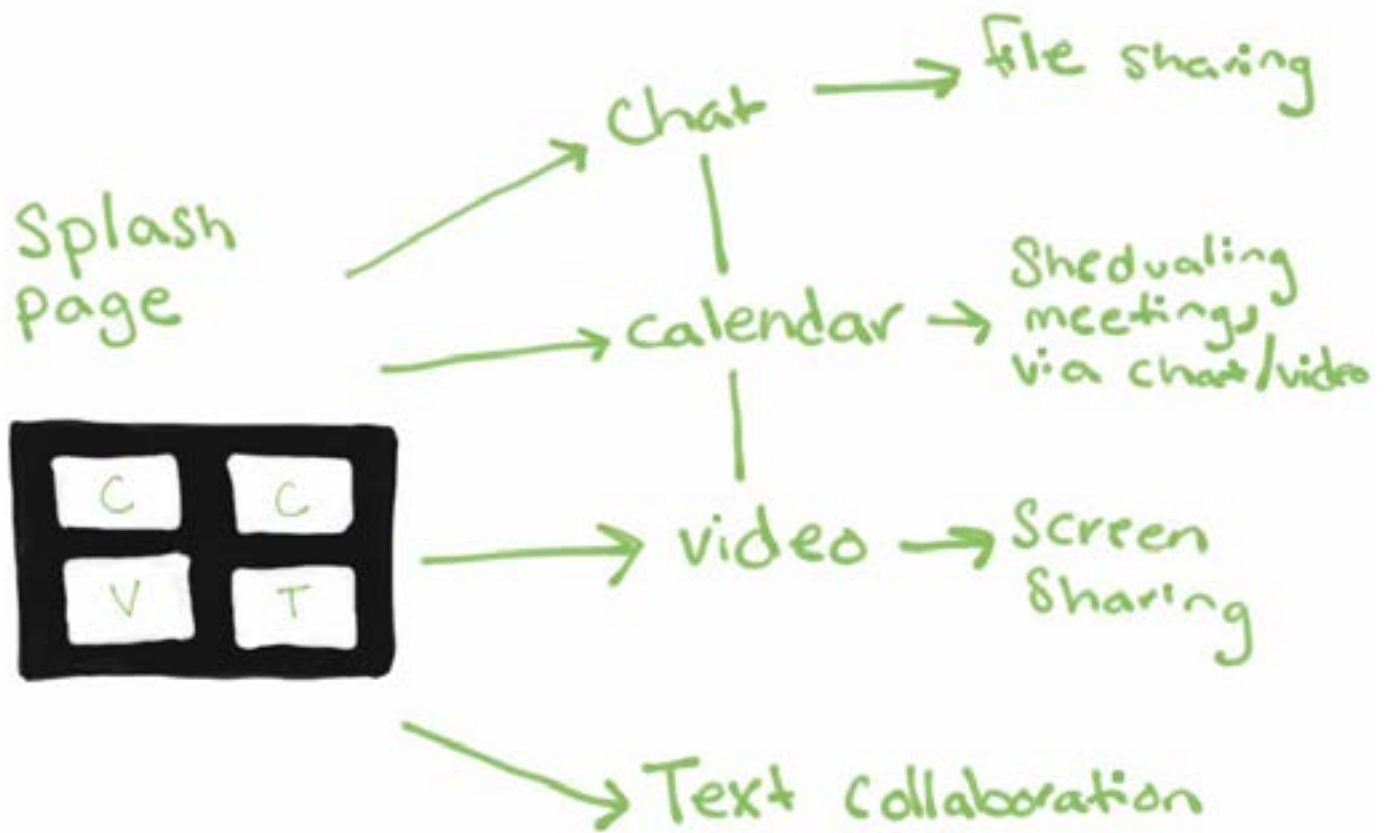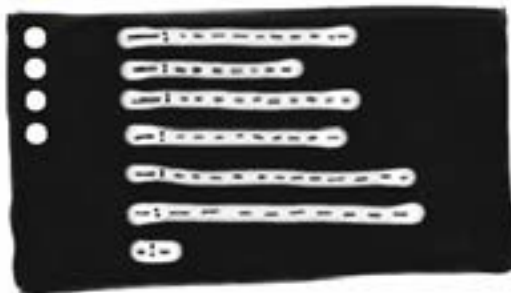
What to Consider

Notable critiques of how the platform may impact day-to-day operations are considered. There are concerns regarding ease of access when using the platform. Officementor is looking to find ways to help transfer any kind of data from other existing document style managerial programs so that knowledge transfer is an option. Features like administrative roles, payment model and the kind of information security embedded within the program are all aspects of OfficeMentor that were brought up as questions and concerns, followed by acknowledging such features that are being addressed when designing the platform.

The implementation of the plethora of features that will help when employees mentor and communicate among one another are what stood out the most when it came to what people had to say about OfficeMentor. While the inclusion of multiple features was well received, some feedback mentioned that it could also pose potential problems, overloading the user with too many features and possibly making it hard to identify what specifically makes OfficeMentor stand out when comparing it to its competition.

Optimizing OfficeMentor

A repository of information was gathered to determine how to further optimize OfficeMentor. Designing an intuitive process of how the user would download and set up the program from a large organizational perspective is something that was gathered from feedback and taken into consideration for the design process. Other considerations regarding how data would be stored, payment model and the implementation of customer service are all features that will be accounted for when designing OfficeMentor.

There is also consideration of implementing administrative roles in the final design to help replicate the organization's chain of command. Focusing on keeping the interface design simple and clean with an easy to pick up intuitive navigable user experience is also a key component towards the redesign process. Featuring multi-platform integration would help with accessibility.

Other comments regarding a possible name-change by making the platform sound more descriptive and straightforward like "Remote Office Assistant" or "Tech Remote Assist Platform" possibly making it so that users better identify what the platform is specifically for. Lastly, instead of overloading OfficeMentor with multiple features, focusing on a select few may help improve the quality of the final design and could make OfficeMentor stand out on the market.

VII. Conclusion & future work

<u>Moving forward</u>

Taking all prior steps into consideration, users seem to like OfficeMentor as long as it still feels intuitive and simple to use. When taking future work into account, it is important to keep in mind that simplicity is key when designing OfficeMentor. Tackling the concerns of the participants such as: the possibility of having too many features, concerns regarding information security, adding administrative roles, adding multi-platform support, adding customer support and the myriad of other concerns can help shape the final design for OfficeMentor. Future work on OfficeMentor would also entail the development of the platform's aesthetics such as choosing the color palette of the platform's logo, user interface and overall look.

Other tasks would be to specifically organize how users would interact with the features in the user interface. Another key component is to keep in mind how OfficeMentor would stand out from its competition. Focusing on the sole purpose of designing such a platform with the intent for users to communicate remotely for mentoring and collaboration purposes, would help shape OfficeMentor in a way that may give it an edge on the market instead of just designing an all-encompassing generic feature-full platform. Such considerations can help the final design stages of OfficeMentor, ultimately leading to producing a platform that will help organizations work remotely and efficiently across the world, especially during such a restrictive time because of a pandemic.