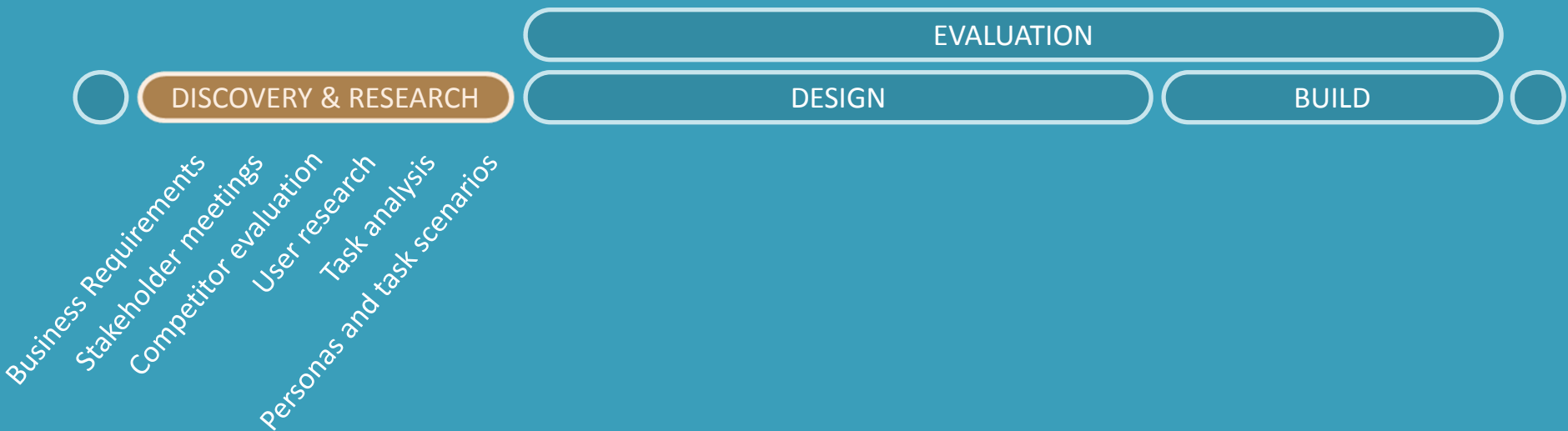


3.1.3 Client and competitor research

PROJECT TIMELINE





***...I don't need to do
this, I've already got
a design brief from
the client!***

Discuss: What design briefs won't tell you...

What client briefs rarely tell you...

- Hidden agendas
- Internal politics
- Unstated/undiscovered user needs & behaviours
- Where you can innovate

Before you start, you need to understand:

- Business needs & objectives
- Stakeholders, their involvement and agenda
- The market
- Your users, their goals, needs, and context of work

Understanding business objectives

- UCD is **all about discovering business opportunities** through user research and improving the way users can interact with products or services.
- Often **there may some resistance** against adopting UCD
- So it's vital to understand the **business goals, success factors and politics** of the organisation you are working for.
- It's all about **bringing organisational objectives/business goals and user needs together!**

Understanding business objectives

- **Scope & definitions:** WHAT is the product/service supposed to do?
- **Primary purpose/goal of project:** WHY are you doing it? (what are the business benefits?)
- **What's the Business model?**
 - Revenue generating (for example Commerce, Advertising, Subscription)?
 - Non-revenue generating (for example promotional or cost saving)?
- **What is considered a successful outcome and how will you assess it?**

Planning the UCD process

- Formulate SMART **objectives** for the website
- Formulate **strategies**
- What **resources** are available? (people, equipment etc...)
- What **methods/processes** will you adopt?
- What is your **schedule**?
- What is your **budget**?

...UCD gives you a rich [toolkit of methods](#), from informal low cost “guerilla” methods to thorough research.

Understanding the organisation

- **What are the politics of project?** (Don't underestimate the importance of politics!)
- **What decision structures are there?** (WHERE does the power lie?)
- **Who are the stakeholders?** (WHO has a vested interest in this project?)
- **A good Project Initiation Process** helps to clarify some of those things.

Understanding stakeholders & their objectives

- **Get to know people.**
- Have **one-to-one** meetings.
- **Listen to them.** Don't spend the time telling them about all your great ideas!
- When you need to, communicate your ideas clearly and effectively.
- Establish **common frames of reference between** stakeholders.
- **Identify conflicts.**
- **Get buy-in.**

Some things to ask stakeholders...

- What's your **involvement**?
- **Why do you want to do this** project?
- How do you think this could **benefit the business/organisation**?
- What would be the **best possible outcome**?
- What do you fear **could go wrong**?
- How would you like to be **involved/informed**?
- What are your **key objectives**?
- What is your (departments) **strategy** for the next year/five years?
- What **motivates** you to do this?
- Etc...

[More on stakeholder workshops](#)

Types of Stakeholders

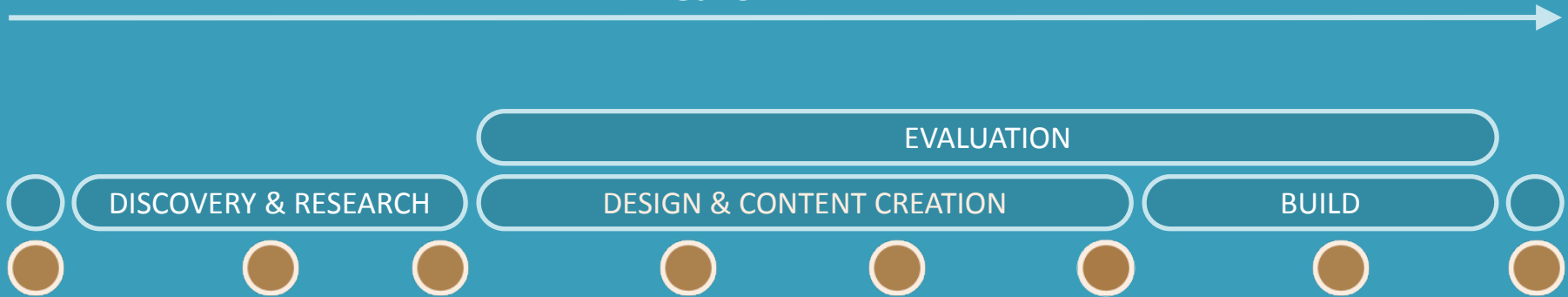
- Decision makers
- Gatekeepers
- Beneficiaries
- Workers

Think how, why and when to involve them in the design process:

- Direct involvement at defined points/throughout?
- Highlights and snapshots only?
- Reports and recommendations?
- Setting priorities?

This has to be part of your **communication plan...**

PROJECT TIMELINE



*Regular touch points with relevant stakeholders
prevent unwanted surprises further down the road.*

Task: Client survey

- Open this [client survey](#) and **apply it to your project**
- If you have a client, then you can use this and the workshop link to be the basis of client interviews
- If you don't have a client, then the survey will help you identify what your goals for the website are



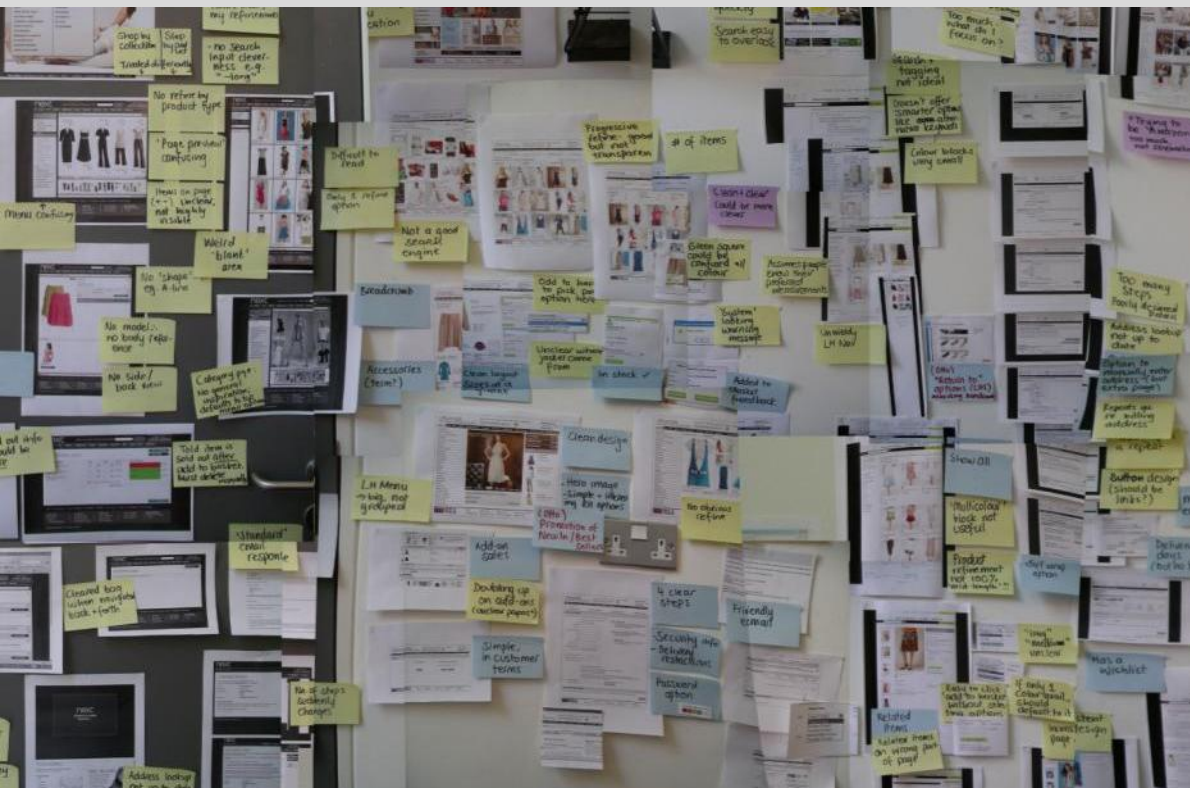
<http://www.web-redesign.com>

Competitor evaluation

- Looking at other companies products is a great source of inspiration...
- Get lots of **photos/screenshots**
- **Compare** features and functionality
- Pick out the **stuff that works well**

- There is **no point in re-inventing the wheel**
- Design is **evolutionary** process; no one designs everything from scratch
- Competitor evaluation lets you **identify what state-of-the-market is**
- **Your business goals will tell you whether you can match them or whether you need to set a new standard**

Competitor evaluation



If you can, print out screenshots and put them on the wall. Identify trends and common themes, unusual ideas and things that do or don't work well.

Task: Conduct competitor evaluation

- Identify some competitors for your website, or failing that for [Ocado.com](https://www.ocado.com)
- Use the 6 layer model of user experience as headings for a competitor review
 - Proposition
 - Concept
 - Structure
 - Information
 - Interaction
 - Appearance



1hr. Lunch