Empathizing with Users

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Your Personas

- How do I know, if I'm not the users?

- Even so, I may still be biased

Name

|	
ARCHETYPE	A title to describe the person based on their actions, for example "The Hobbyist", "The Adventurer", "The Specialist"
BACKGROUND	Frame your user a bit with some more information. Identify their age, gender, location, habits, or profession.
MOTIVATIONS	What motivates the person to use this product?
GOALS & NEEDS	What does the user want to accomplish?
FRUSTRATIONS	What is standing in her way?
CHANNEL	Through which channel can we reach the user? Which websites, apps, stores, social media?
SCENARIO	Write out a description of the scenario or activity involving your user.

Outline: Your First UX research

- Empathize with users
- Overcoming your biases
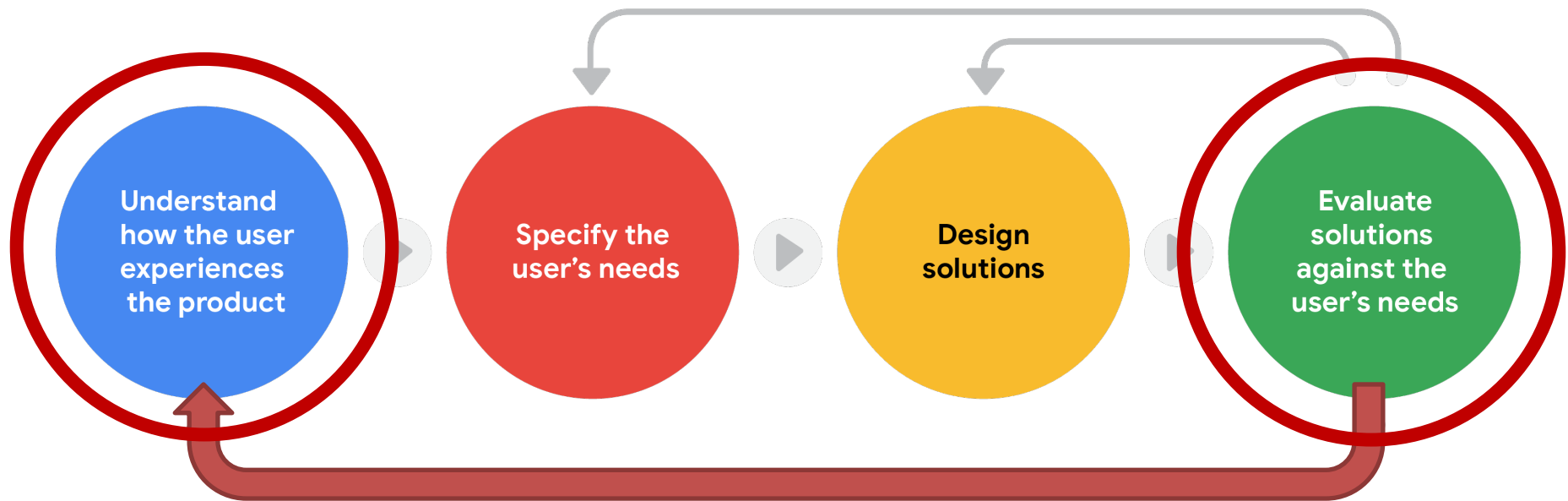
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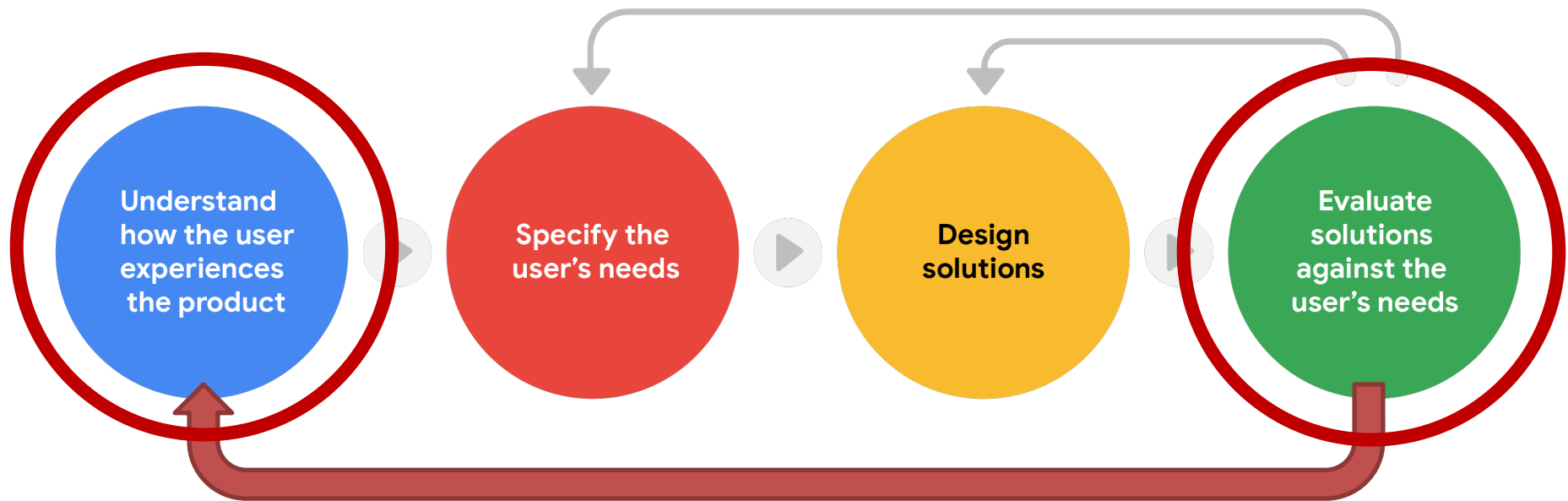
Empathy

- Able to understand someone else's feelings or thoughts in a situation

Pity

Sympathy

Empathy

Assignment: User Interview

1. Recruiting subjects
2. Preparing for the interviews
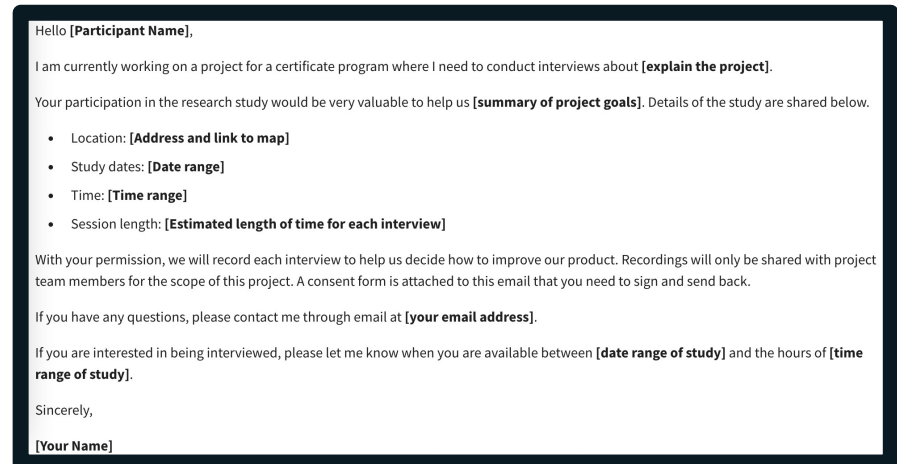3. Conducting interviews
4. Visualizing and learning

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Recruiting Interview Subjects

1. Determine interview goals
2. Screener survey (age, gender, location, job…)
3. Invite subjects and schedule time

- Channels
  - *Classmates*
  - Friends & family
  - Online
  - Hallway
  - Recruiting agencies
  - Existing user base

Hello **[Participant Name]**,

I am currently working on a project for a certificate program where I need to conduct interviews about **[explain the project]**.

Your participation in the research study would be very valuable to help us **[summary of project goals]**. Details of the study are shared below.

- Location: **[Address and link to map]**
- Study dates: **[Date range]**
- Time: **[Time range]**
- Session length: **[Estimated length of time for each interview]**

With your permission, we will record each interview to help us decide how to improve our product. Recordings will only be shared with project team members for the scope of this project. A consent form is attached to this email that you need to sign and send back.

If you have any questions, please contact me through email at **[your email address]**.

If you are interested in being interviewed, please let me know when you are available between **[date range of study]** and the hours of **[time range of study]**.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

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1. Recruiting subjects
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Preparing for User Interviews

1. Script interview questions
   - [Example for food delivery app](#) (by Google)
   - [Example for apps scheduling dog walkers](#) (by Google)
2. Collect supplies (e.g., phone and apps)
3. Research subjects
4. Practice

Assignment: User Interview

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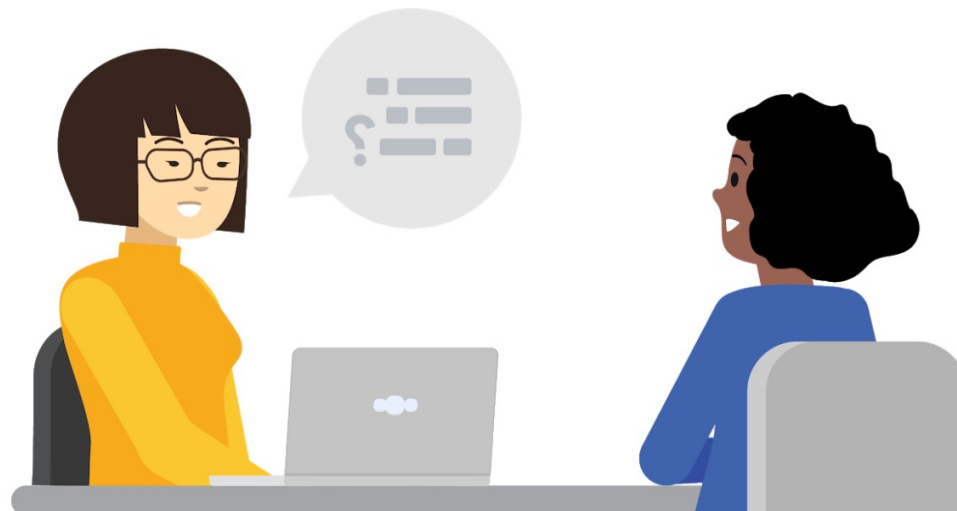
Conducting User Interviews

1. Make subjects relaxed and at ease
   - Build a good rapport
   - Thank the subject for coming
   - Get legal consent (e.g., of your recording)
   - Gather basic details
   - Let subject know there's no "right" or "wrong" answers

Conducting User Interviews

2. Conduct the interview
   - Speak clearly and concisely
   - Keep calm no matter how the subject answers the question
   - Ask open-end questions
     ❌ "Yes" or "No"   ✅ "Why" or "What"
   - Ask follow-up questions

Conducting User Interviews

3. Take notes
   – Highlight compelling quotes
     • To be used in empathy maps and user testimonies
   – Document observations about the subject
     • What's done? (mood, expressions, body language, behavior, etc.)
     • What's said? (audio recording suggested)

Conducting User Interviews

4. Wrap up the interview
   - Give the subject a chance to share any final thoughts
   - Thanks the subjects again for their time
   - Optional: offer the prepared incentives

Assignment: User Interview

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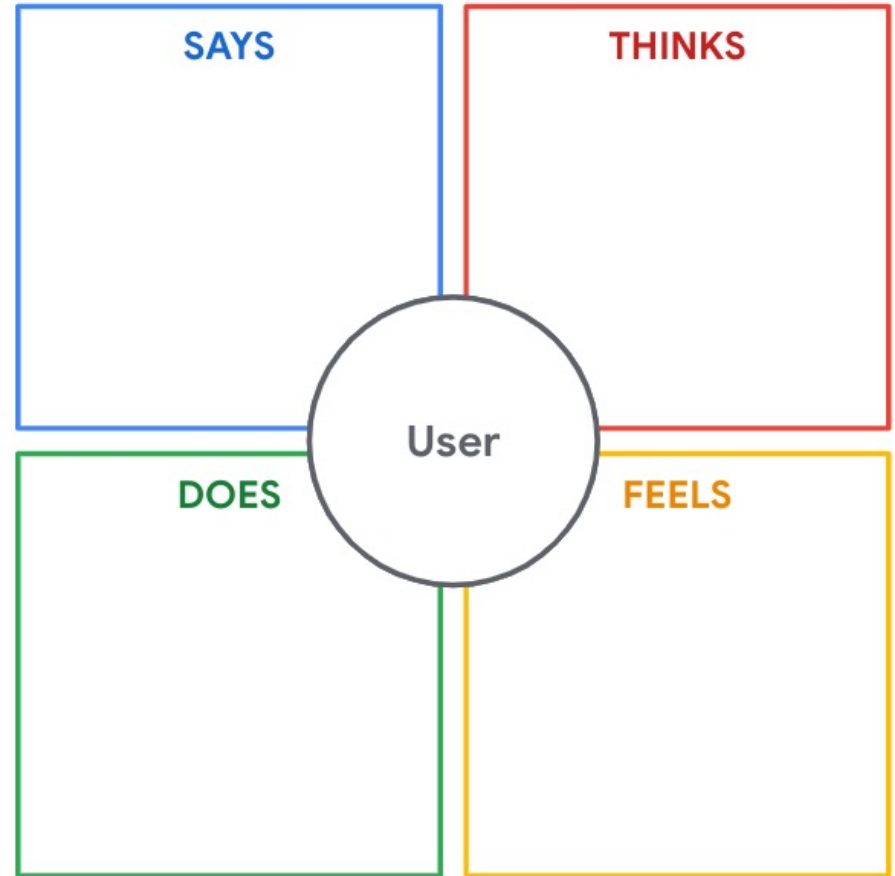4. **Visualizing and learning**

Visualizing and Learning

1. Draw the empathy maps
2. Identify user pain points
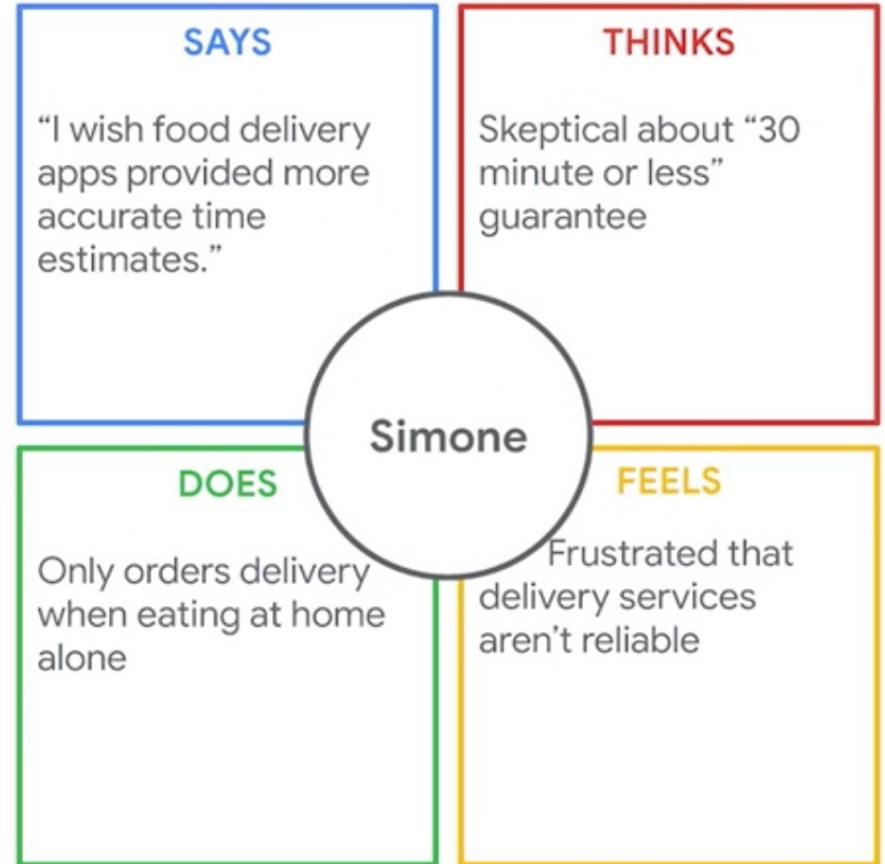3. Refine or create new personas

Empathy Maps

- A chart that explains everything designers have learned about a type of user

- How to draw?
  1. Maps for individual users
 2. Maps for different user segments

One-User Empathy Maps

SAYS
"I wish food delivery apps provided more accurate time estimates."

THINKS
Skeptical about "30 minute or less" guarantee

Simone

DOES
Only orders delivery when eating at home alone

FEELS
Frustrated that delivery services aren't reliable

- Imagine you're reviewing an app that promises food delivery in 30 minutes

- Use quotes whenever possible

Aggregated Empathy Maps

SAYS	THINKS
"I wish food delivery apps provided more accurate time estimates." "I wish I could live track my delivery"	Skeptical about "30 minute or less" guarantee Wants delivery option for favorite restaurants
DOES	FEELS
Only orders delivery when eating at home alone Orders delivery on weekends more than weeknights	Frustrated that delivery services aren't reliable Frustrated by lack of direction in apps

Aggregate

- Merge the maps of similar users

- One aggregated map for each user segment
  - "Happy" vs. "Confused" vs. "Churned" users
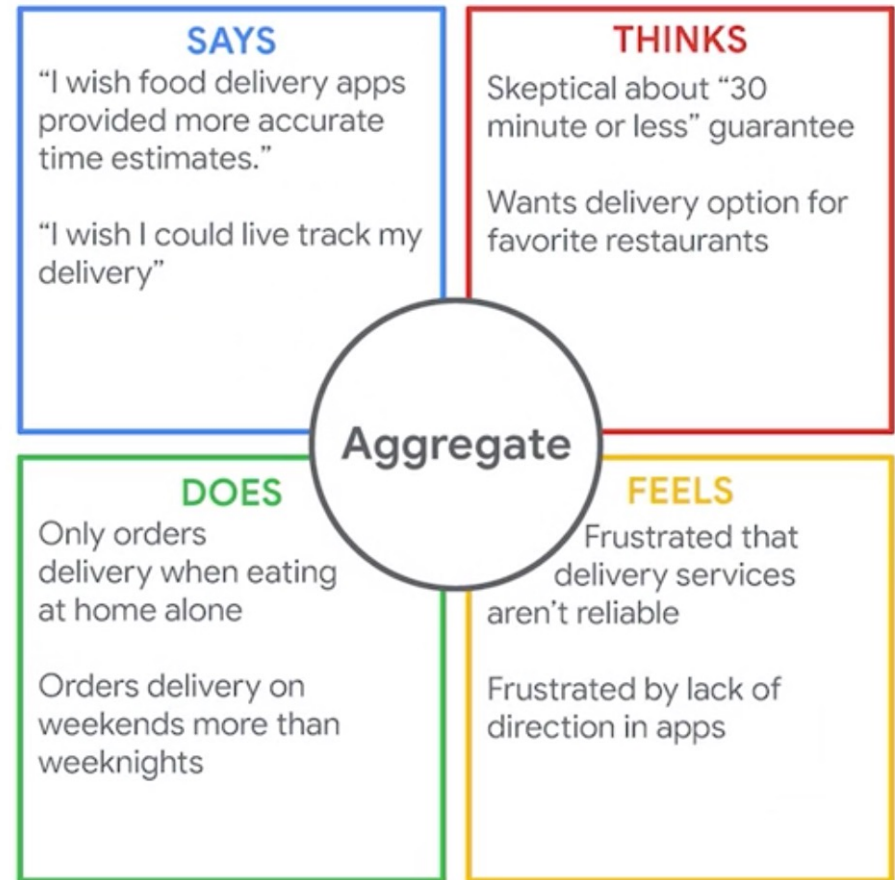
Identifying User Pain Points

- Pain points are any UX issues that frustrate the user and block the user from getting what they need

- Common types:
  - Financial: "It's too expensive!"
  - Product: e.g., the Norman door
  - Process: "What did I bought" during check out
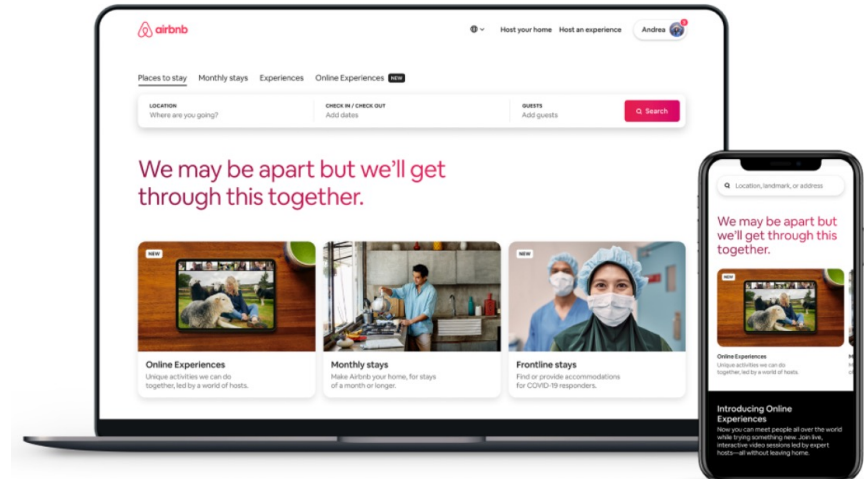 - Support: "I am confused… but no one helps"

Case Studies

- [How a new color system helped simplify Google Maps and make it more accessible](#)

- [How Airbnb revamped their product design in response to the COVID-19 pandemic](#)

Refining/Creating Your Personas

- Based on your research now
  - User segment and their behavior patterns
    - Through aggregated empathy maps
  - Pain points of each user segment

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Benefits of Having *a Set of* Personas?

- Build empathy
  - Make app for "1,532 older runners" vs.

  - Make app for "Livia, a competitive runner who only picked up the sport two years ago after turning 60 years old"

- Tell stories (coming next)
  - What features does Livia need?
  - Expanding accessibilities?

- Stress-test designs (coming later)
  - What works for Livia might not work for Diane, a working mother

Interview Subject Matching

- Each team post
  - Topics and apps under review
  - A screen survey
- Each person
  - Take the screen surveys of interesting topics/apps
  - Become an interview subject of **at least 5** teams
    - A team can reject unqualified volunteers
    - You have to use the apps specified by the team

Demo 1

- On 3/15
- Each team has 5 mins
- Share your
  - Apps surveyed & initial personas   (20%)
  - Interview goals & questions   (20%)
  - Results & empathy maps   (20%)
  - Insights & final personas (at least 3)   (20%)
- ***Grading by subjects***   ***(20%)***
  - Whether the interview is well-prepared

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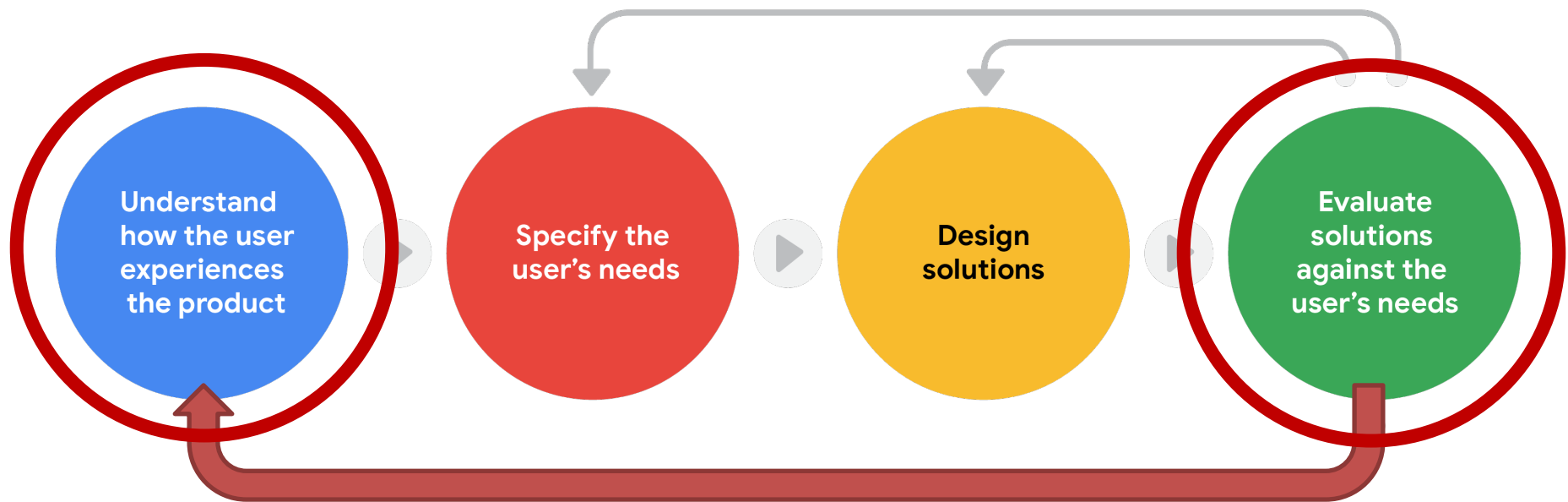
Bias

- Favoring or having prejudice against something based on limited information

Kinds of Biases

- Confirmation bias

- False consensus bias

- Primacy bias

- Recency bias

- Implicit bias

- The sunk cost fallacy

Confirmation Bias

- Occurs when you start looking for evidence to prove a hypothesis you have
  - E.g., "Left-handed people are more creative than right-handed people"
- How to overcome it?
  - Ask open-ended questions
  - Actively listen (without your own opinions)
  - Include a large sample of users

False Consensus Bias

- The assumption that others will think the same way as you do
  - E.g., "Anyone who doesn't … must be crazy"
- How to avoid it?
  - Identify and articulate your assumptions
  - Survey large groups of people
- Ask open-ended questions

Recency Bias

- It's easiest to remember the last thing you heard in an interview or conversation because it's the most recent

- How to overcome it?
  - Take notes or recordings

Primacy Bias

- You remember the first participant most strongly

- How to overcome it?
  - Take notes or recordings
  - Interview each participant in the same way
    - Also helps you remember the unusual moments

Implicit/Unconscious Bias

- A collection of attitudes and stereotypes we associate to people without our conscious knowledge
  - E.g., when we only interview n a limited set of people
  - E.g., Not interviewing people whose life experiences are different from your own
- How to overcome it?
  - Team up with people with diverse background

The Sunk Cost Fallacy

- The deeper we get into a project we've invested in, the harder it is to change course without feeling like we've failed or wasted time
  - E.g., "I need to finish this because I've been working on it for 2 months"
- How to avoid it?
  - Break down your project into smaller phases
  - Outline designated points where you can decide whether to continue or stop

Preventing Bias in Data Collection

- Choose your words carefully
  - "Do you like or dislike the ***improved*** layout of these buttons?"
- Avoid the bandwagon effect
  - "Let's ***take turns*** to share your opinions…"
- Avoid specific language
  - "Which of ***the following ways*** did you use our product? (1) … (2) …"
- Limit the guidance you give users
  - "Oh! You should ***click here first***…"
- Consider users' tone and body language
  - Subject: "***Uh***, ***well***, … it's … good… ***I think***…"
- Be careful of your own body language and reactions
  - "It's smart! ***Isn't it***?"
- Plan your research effectively
  - "Let's invite your Mom ***because we are out of testers***"
- Space out the scheduling of interviews and take notes

Happy interviewing!