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# From Solution-First to Problem-Led

At the start of the design thinking process, I was heavily solution focused. My focus was not on figuring out what problems the user had and instead identifying what solution I could create to solve the problem I assumed the user had. Through the design thinking process I found that the several steps prior to working on a solution helped prevent wasted time working on a solution that no one wanted.

The worksheet “Trends & Knowledge Map” stood out to me as one of the key templates that helped clarify the process. It acted as a clear methodology from which to analyze the problem/challenge from the user’s point of view and the complex set of aspects that may influence a user. This worksheet gave me and my group a shared method to identify a user’s needs and kept discussions from ballooning into everything—and therefore nothing. This was the case when we were discussing how researchers use software where first hand experience of this aspect varied considerably between different group members.

Moving forward with my group’s project I think my group will be relying heavily on the different sections of the double diamond design thinking methodology. Group projects can often suffer from ambiguity about what the current goals are and I think that the schematic provides a straightforward way to clearly express to help the group agree on which aspects to focus on. For example, are we identifying new ideas or are we in the process of narrowing the ideas we already have?

A key challenge for my group will be to avoid skipping ahead. It can be tempting to see problems and associated solutions to those problems and try to “skip ahead.” However, based on my initial experiences in the first test run of the design thinking method this is a premature risk. I think this is particularly the case today where every problem requires a new app to be created with very little to distinguish why this app is so crucial to its user base. By slowing down and working through each stage of the method, a team can grasp the full breadth of problems and solutions and pick the best fit.