



# 10 DESIGN THINKING METHODS TO GET UNSTUCK AND REGAIN YOUR FLOW

A structured approach to exploring complex problems, challenging your frame, and finding clarity.

# INTRO TO THE METHOD

## THIS PAGE TIP TKTKT

	<b>What it is, and who is it for?</b> Assumptions Mapping is a quick but powerful technique for anyone—from solo entrepreneurs to larger teams—seeking clarity in complex situations. It's typically used at the start of a project or when you sense unresolved confusion about what you believe to be true, versus what's actually proven.	
<b>Why you'd do it?</b>	By identifying and categorising assumptions across the three lenses of feasibility, desirability, viability, you create a snapshot of where your biggest risks lie. This helps you pinpoint the *critical and uncertain* beliefs that could make or break your endeavour.  Testing those assumptions early prevents you from investing time and resources in false premises, <b>ensuring you're tackling the right problem from the start.</b>	<b>How It Works:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. List assumptions on sticky notes</li><li>2. Plot assumptions on a 2x2 grid: certainty vs. importance</li><li>3. Identify your “critical and uncertain” assumptions</li></ol>

**NUMBER ONE:**

# ASSUMPTIONS MAPPING

## What it is, and who is it for?

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## Why would you do it?

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## How It Works:

**First:** List assumptions on sticky notes

**Then:** Plot assumptions on a 2x2 grid: certainty vs. importance

**So that:** You can identify your “critical and uncertain” assumptions

**NUMBER TWO:**

# CHALLENGE MAPPING

## **What it is, and who is it for?**

Challenge Mapping is an approach used by facilitators, innovation teams, and individuals looking to break down an overly broad question—like “How do we transform our business?”—into manageable sub-challenges.

It’s especially helpful when you’re overwhelmed by the scale or ambiguity of the problem.

## **Why would you do it?**

The purpose is to clarify a sprawling or confusing problem space by continuously asking “What’s stopping us?” or “What else contributes to this issue?” That process reveals underlying barriers, hidden angles, or surprising connections. Ultimately, Challenge Mapping ensures you focus on the most critical or actionable parts of the problem, rather than tackling everything at once.



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# FRAME SHIFTING (AKA REFRAMING)

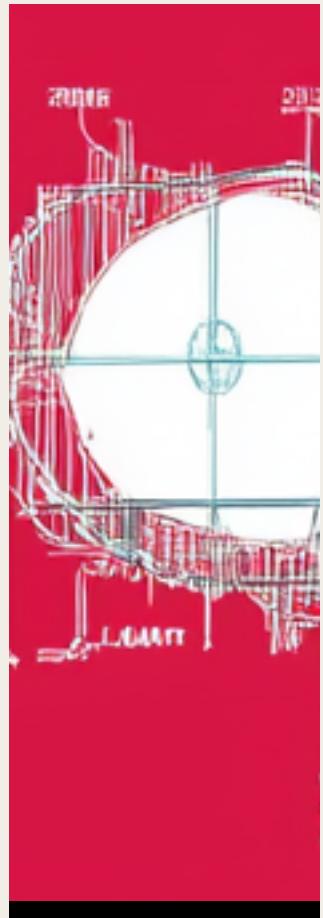
## **What it is, and who is it for?**

Reframing, sometimes called Frame Shifting, is about consciously looking at a problem from different vantage points (e.g., user-centred, financial, technological).

It's popular among product teams, service designers, and entrepreneurs who suspect they might be solving the "wrong" version of a challenge.

## **Why would you do it?**

By flipping perspectives and questioning your initial assumptions about what the "real" problem is, you often uncover unexpected insights. In many cases, the biggest breakthroughs happen not through fancy solutions but by realising you were framing the problem too narrowly. Reframing expands your options and helps you find an angle that actually addresses root causes or unmet needs.



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**NUMBER FOUR:**

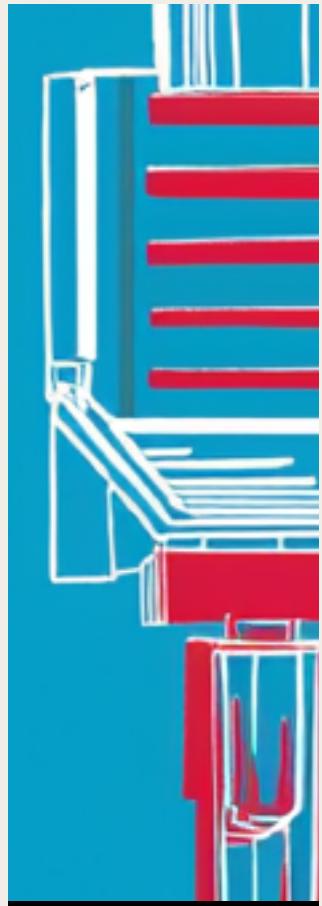
# FIVE WHYS

## **What it is, and who is it for?**

Five whys is an extremely accessible method for virtually anyone—whether you’re a solo innovator, a team leader, or a student. It requires no special materials beyond curiosity and a willingness to keep digging.

## **Why would you do it?**

The goal is to push past surface-level symptoms and get to the root cause of an issue. By repeatedly asking “Why?” up to five times, you often expose underlying patterns or system-level problems that aren’t immediately visible. This clarity lets you design solutions that tackle the real driver of a problem, rather than just patching symptoms.



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**NUMBER FIVE:**

# “HOW MIGHT WE?” STORMING

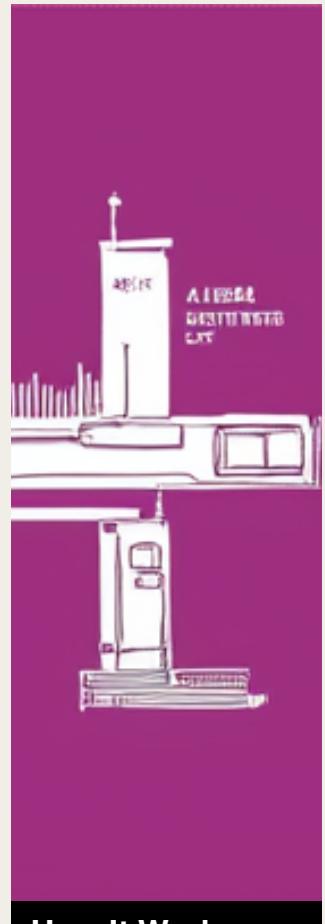
## **What it is, and who is it for?**

‘How Might We’ (HMW) questions are a favourite tool of design thinking and innovation facilitators, but they can be just as effective for individuals seeking a new perspective on a personal or professional challenge.

## **Why would you do it?**

The reason “How Might We” is so powerful is that it transforms a problem statement into a possibility.

Instead of feeling stuck or constrained, you ask how you might create, improve, or overcome a situation. This shift from “Why is this broken?” to “How might we fix this?” opens up a more generative and optimistic mindset, encouraging creative brainstorming and solution exploration.



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**NUMBER SIX:**

# LIGHT-TOUCH STAKEHOLDER MAPPING

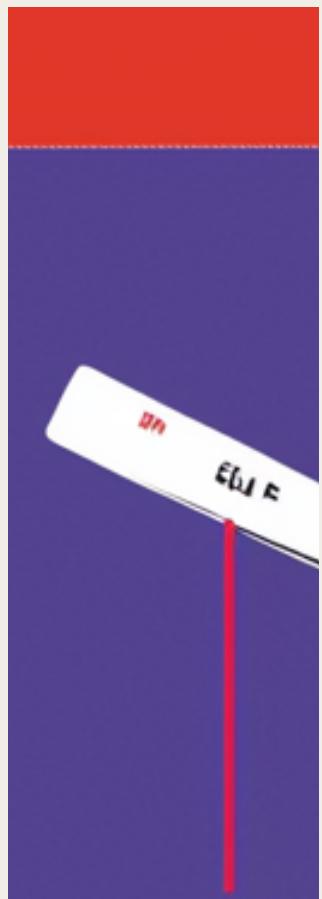
## **What it is, and who is it for?**

Light-Touch Stakeholder Mapping is used by people or teams who need a quick overview of who's involved—directly or indirectly—in a particular problem or project. It's helpful for entrepreneurs, service designers, community organisers, or anyone who suspects there are multiple players with differing needs or interests.

## **Why would you do it?**

The purpose is to capture the “ecosystem” around an issue without deep-diving into formal stakeholder analysis.

With a simple sketch, you can identify which relationships or power dynamics might be complicating the problem—and which allies or resources could help you reach your goals more effectively. It's a simple yet revealing way to ensure you don't overlook important perspectives.



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**NUMBER SEVEN:**

# HYPOTHESIS PERSONAS

## **What it is, and who is it for?**

Hypothesis Personas are short, best-guess character sketches of the types of people affected by your problem. Startups, service designers, and career coaches often use them before they have resources for full-blown user research.

## **Why would you do it?**

They allow you to quickly outline your target audiences' goals, pain points, and motivations—even if you haven't validated every detail yet.

The idea is to avoid the “one-size-fits-all” trap by acknowledging that different segments may approach or experience your problem in distinct ways. Later, you can refine these personas with real data, but having a hypothetical version upfront helps guide early decision-making and solution concepts.



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**NUMBER EIGHT:**

# EMPATHY MAPPING (SHORT VERSION)

## **What it is, and who is it for?**

Empathy Mapping is traditionally used by UX or service design teams, but it's equally beneficial for individuals wanting to see the world through someone else's eyes. You sketch or document what someone says, thinks, feels, and does in relation to a challenge.

## **Why would you do it?**

The goal is to uncover hidden needs or contradictions.

A user might say they want simplicity, but in reality they feel anxious, causing them to overcomplicate solutions. Spotting these gaps helps you craft more empathetic and truly user-centred approaches, whether you're designing a new product or addressing a personal challenge in a relationship or career.



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**NUMBER NINE:**

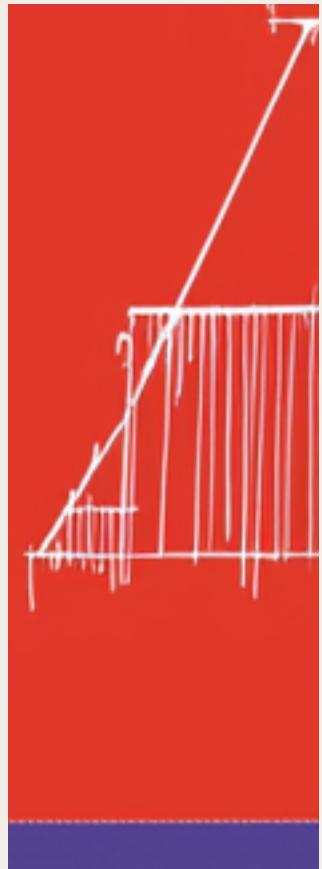
# SERVICE SAFARI (OR 5-MINUTE RESEARCH)

## **What it is, and who is it for?**

Service Safari—sometimes called a quick observational research session—is for anyone who needs a fast, on-the-ground glimpse of how users currently deal with a challenge. It's ideal for busy professionals or small teams who can't invest in large-scale ethnography.

## **Why would you do it?**

Spending a short amount of time experiencing existing services or solutions helps you see friction points or missed opportunities firsthand. By doing this, you gather immediate insights to refine your problem statement—often discovering that the original challenge is bigger, smaller, or totally different than you expected.



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**NUMBER TEN:**

# JOBS-TO-BE-DONE INTERVIEWS (LITE VERSION)

## **What it is, and who is it for?**

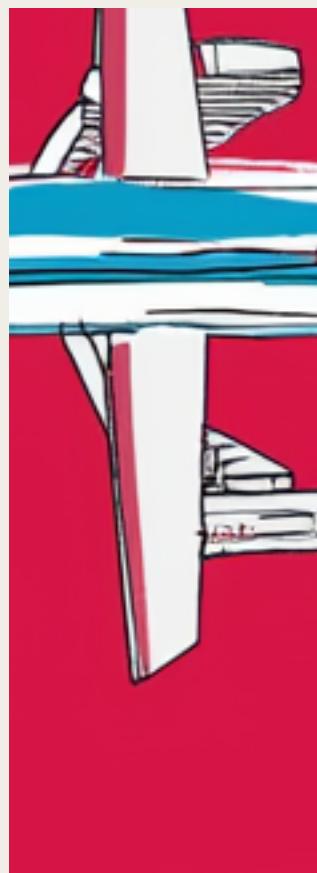
Jobs-to-be-done (JTBD) interviews are commonly used in product and service innovation circles, but the “lite” version is simple enough for anyone to conduct.

You speak with people who’ve tried solving the same problem and ask them about their motivations and decision-making process.

## **Why would you do it?**

This method’s purpose is to unearth what “job” users are really hiring a product, service, or approach to do.

Maybe they’re not just trying to “buy a drill”—they’re seeking “a way to hang family photos quickly.” Understanding that deeper motivation helps you frame the problem in terms of the benefit people truly care about, guiding you to more resonant solutions.



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# PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER...

**These ten methods are excellent for defining the right problem, shifting perspectives, and lightly discovering what's really going on—both at an individual and organisational level.**

Each technique digs a little deeper beneath surface assumptions, ensuring that you're tackling the true challenge rather than a guess.

By combining or sequencing these methods, you can transform even the most confusing or daunting situation into one that's much clearer, more energised, and ripe for innovative action.

The Clarity Lab Method leverages these techniques and many more. If you want some help navigating the process, book a free discovery call and we'll be happy to answer any questions.



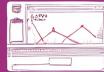
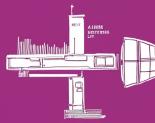
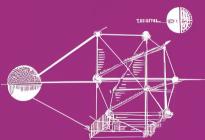
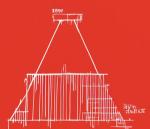
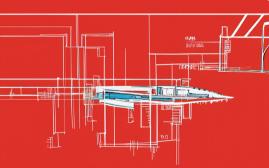
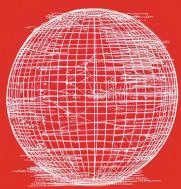
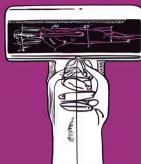
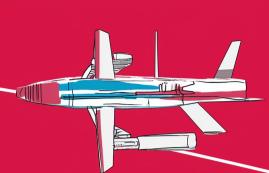
## What next?

**Book a discovery call:**





CLARITY LAB



# BACK COVER TKTKTKTKTKTK