

Assignment 2: POVs and Experience Prototypes

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Problem Domain

Our problem domain is **education for career and social mobility**. We wanted to study how people transition from job to job, industry to industry. Through our first round of interviews, we realized that occupational training programs are usually inaccessible and/or unaffordable for those in need, and as a result, we also want to observe what people do in place of training programs, hoping to recognize what kind of information is needed but yet to be provided/made accessible. Our initial needfinding pointed to interpersonal connection and learning from industry experience as crucial sources of information.

Initial POV

We met Jerry, a 21-year-old Stanford student formerly doing CS but has been exploring a new career path in fashion since the past gap year. We were amazed that he started a new career largely through personal interactions and learning from others' experiences. It would be game-changing to help him establish effective and meaningful connections with industry professionals.

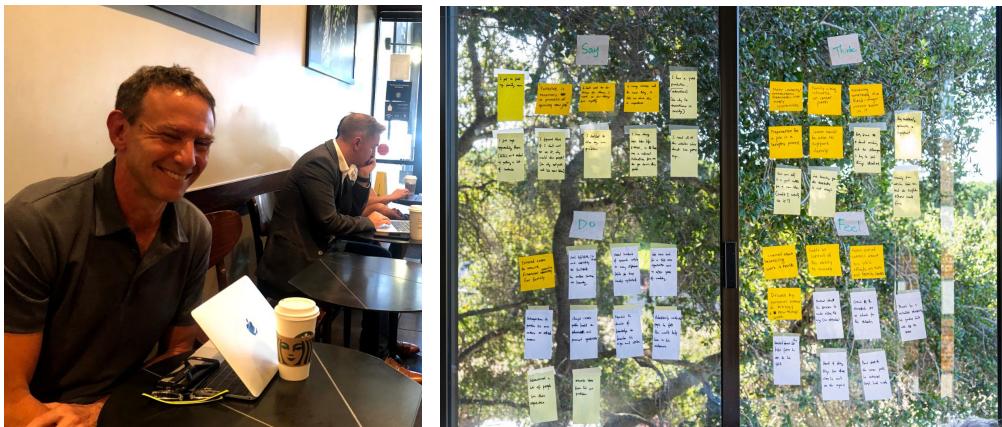
Additional Needfinding Results

1. Stacey Dao



We met Stacey, a software engineer in her 30s who studied informatics for undergraduate. She then worked in a few established tech companies followed by several startups in Australia before returning to the Bay Area for new job searches in big names. She walked us through the difficulties and challenges she had to overcome as a female in a very competitive and male-dominated industry.

2. Rob Wotring



We met Rob, a 56-year-old CEO of two life science startups in the Bay Area. He has two master degrees in Life Sciences. Because of his digestive problems, he researched and found an effective method that grew into his own startup idea. Thus, he returned to Bay Area and have been since working on his two startups related to digestive system and medical testing.

3. Kay Cadena



We met Kay, a 29-year-old Evening and Student Supervisor at Bowes Library at Stanford. She is confident about her occupational choices but also rely heavily on her work experience as a credential. She finds working full time while finishing a master's degree both physically and financially exhausting, but in the meantime, she believes that keeping an open mind and learning from workspace/co-workers provide the most insight and best guidance.

Revised POVs, HMW statements and Prototypes



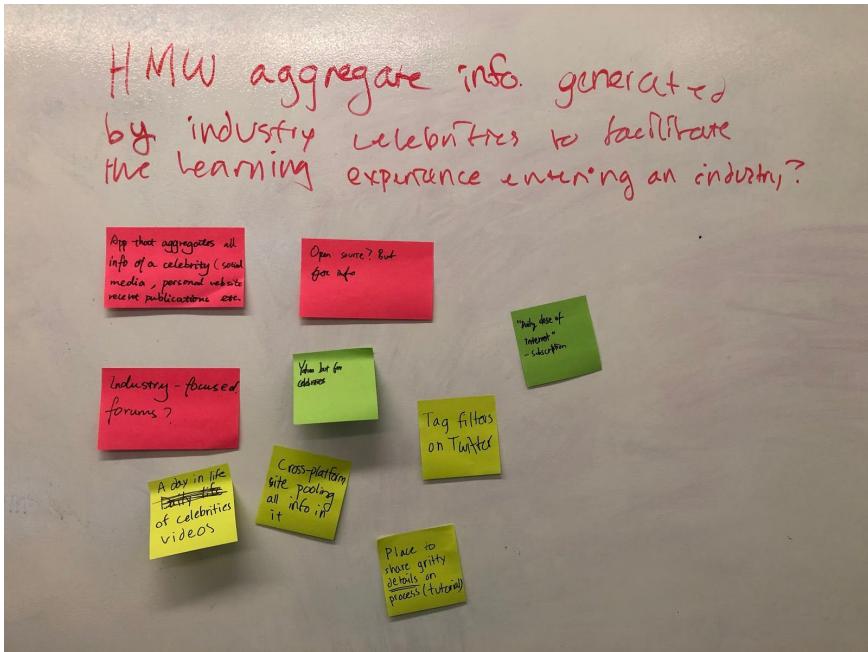
POV1:

We met Stacey, a software engineer in her 30s who just returned to Bay Area and is actively looking for jobs. We were amazed to realize that she educates herself by following the industry celebrities on media such as Twitter. It would be game-changing if she could feel more in sync and relevant to the rapidly evolving tech industry.

Selected HMWs:

- **aggregate information generated by industry celebrities to facilitate the learning experience entering an industry?**
- help individuals better grasp the defining features/values of companies/products?
- encourage industry celebrities to produce more content?
- broaden her sources of information while protecting her privacy?
- transition her to a more steady industry/role?
- facilitate her information-gathering process on the latest startup news?
- make the shared content by industry celebrities more entertaining?
- maintain her connection to her family during her job hunt travels?

- ensure her interests are being reflected in the jobs she manages to get interviewed?
- slow down the evolution of the industry?

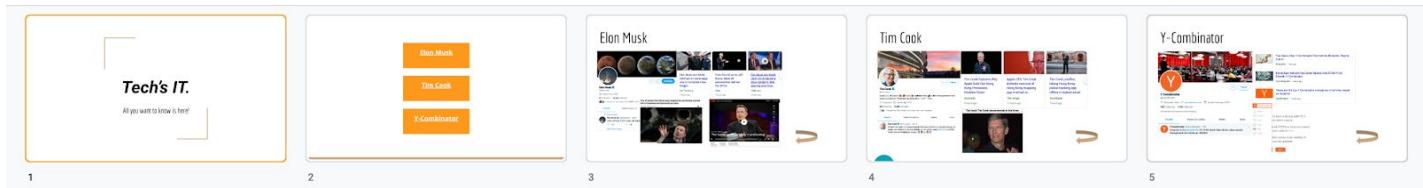


Experience Prototype #1: Tech's IT

Cross platform that pools news and information

a. Assumption

Using a platform to access to aggregated information on news and trends would make individuals feel more connected and in sync with the tech industry.



b. Slide prototype

c. Script

We used Google Slide to simulate a news interface where the interviewee, in this case the user of the interface, would search for news based on preselected tabs of industry celebrities/major influencers. The environment will be one of learning and seeking knowledge like and catching up with the latest tech news for personal enrichment while waiting for coffee before work.

d. Interview



We found Yulou, a senior at Stanford studying Linguistics and Computer Science. As he works in the tech industry, we hoped that, much like Stacey, the ability to conveniently receive updates on industry celebrities he admires can be attractive.

e. Worked

- He instantly understood the target audience
- He instantly understood how to navigate through the app prototype
- He does feel more kept up with the industry celebrities by consuming the aggregated pages of different figures and companies

f. Didn't work

- His search for information is usually not a people-centric process, thus not likely to discover this app on his own

g. Learned

- He associated the model with a similar Chinese app that allows fangirls stay closely in loop
- Potential users of this app are those who self-select into this kind of information sourcing

h. Assumptions evals

- Our assumption is valid that this app does make our users feel more connected and relevant by getting comprehensive information about something of their interests

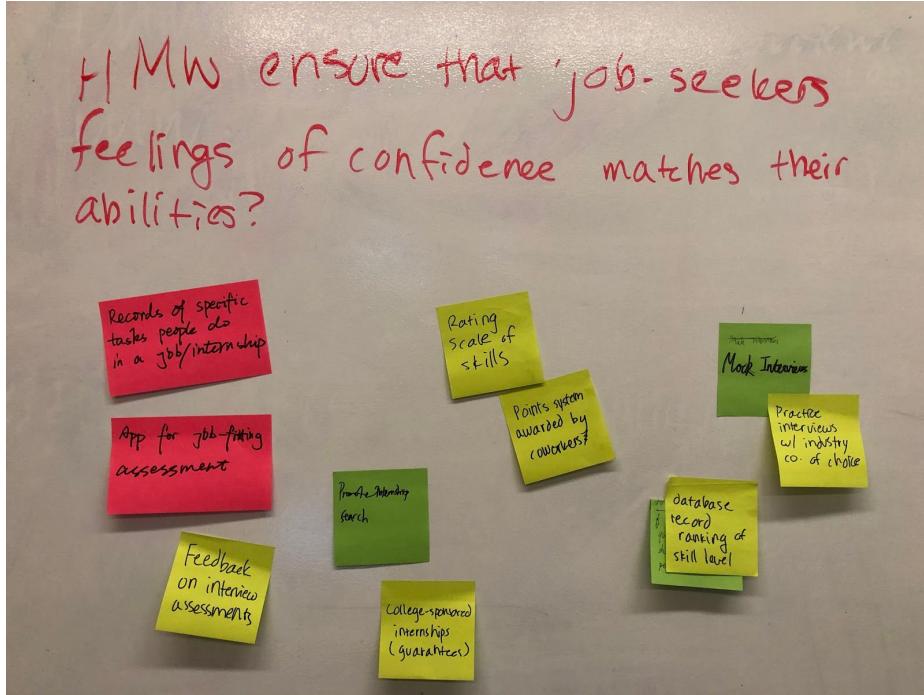
POV2:

We met Kay, a 29-year-old Evening and Student Supervisor at Bowes Art and Architecture Library at Stanford. We were amazed that although she feels ready and confident about transitioning from a gallery job to library, she is enrolled in part-time training program on library studies. It would be game-changing if the required qualifications can be achieved more accessible and affordably.

Selected HMWs:

- **Ensure that her feelings of confidence reflects her abilities?**
- Localize the needed resources?
- Identify the best current options for fulfilling the requirements?
- Make job transitions more continuous than discrete?

- Increase the value of her work experience in applying for jobs?
- Make training programs not necessary to enter a new career field?
- Change her perception that she is unqualified for her career of interest?
- Lower the attendance cost of training programs?
- Find the right balance between hard qualifications and experience?
- Convince the government to offer free training programs?



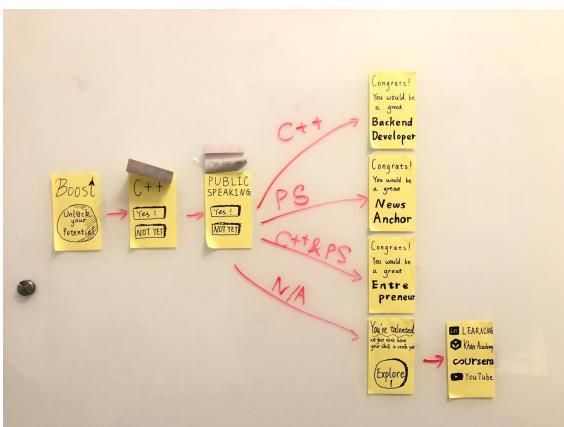
Experience Prototype #1: Boost

An app that stores your skill set (which is self quizzed or evaluated some other way periodically), matches your unique composite of skill sets to suitable jobs and for the skills you lack in, directs you to sample learning resources, all with prompts that boost user confidence. eg: "Congrats! You would be a great backend software engineer!"

a. Assumption

Through recognizing the set of skills one has, he or she would feel more confident about finding jobs that suit the particular skill set.

b. Paper prototype



c. Script

We use a series of sticky notes to simulate an interface that prompts a self-monitored quiz that leads to an occupational outcomes. We will act as the system facilitating smooth transition from frame to frame, and the environment will be one of the work leisure like morning coffee run.

d. Interview



We met Ally, a staff associated with Stanford Storytelling Project, former copywriter at IDEO.

e. Worked

- She picked up the task effortlessly
- Intuitive interface

f. Didn't work

- She didn't feel like there was a boost of confidence

g. Learned

- She thought low-level, concrete skills are not sufficient for matching people to jobs and self-checking for those skills do not necessarily spark confidence
- She suggested more high-level, abstract questions such as: "Have you picked an outfit for others?"

h. Assumptions evals

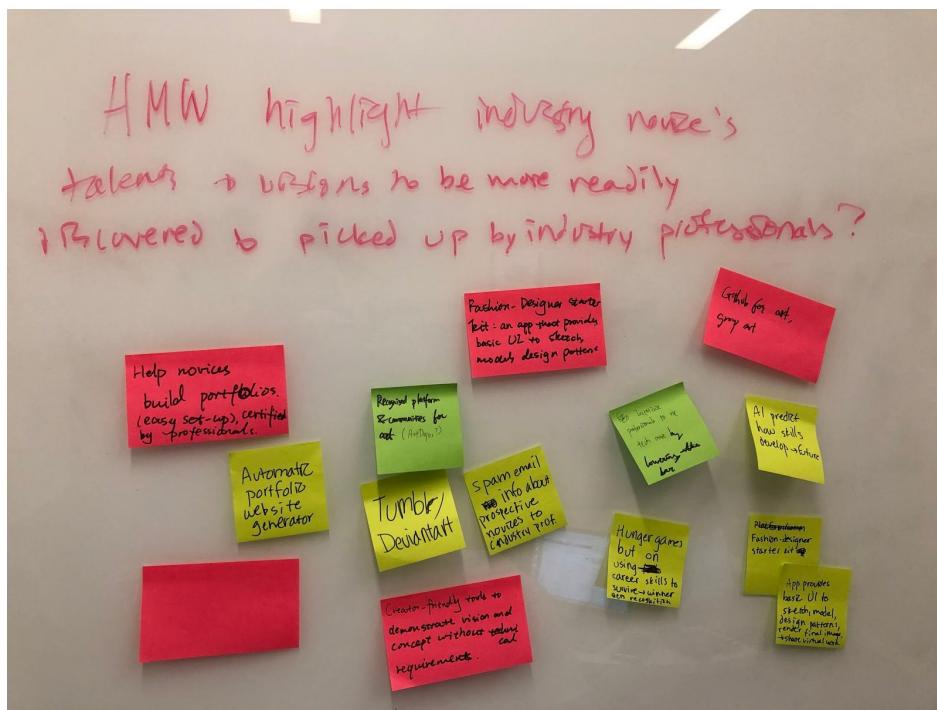
- She was pleasant and reacted positively to seeing the final page of job match. While she didn't experience the boost of confidence we had hoped, we were informed that higher-level questions like "do your friends ask you for outfit recommendations" can do so
- New assumption: a boost of confidence can be alternatively achieved by validating high level attributes

POV3:

We met Jerry, a 21-year-old Stanford student formerly doing CS but has been exploring a new career path in fashion since the past gap year. We were amazed that he started a new career largely through personal interactions and learning from others' experiences. It would be game-changing to help him establish effective and meaningful connections with industry professionals.

Selected HMWs:

- **Highlight industry novice's talents and visions to be more readily discovered and picked up by industry professionals?**
- Better support cold starts in fashion industry?
- Get industry professionals to share about their how-tos and experiences?
- Connect him to professionals willing to offer their time to train him?
- Ease the process of connecting to the right people?
- Encourage bold decisions?
- Include art diversity in a high level education system like universities?
- Discover industry professionals with matching taste in fashion and design?
- Make fashion industry more accepting to novices?
- Make the job hunt an enjoyable process?



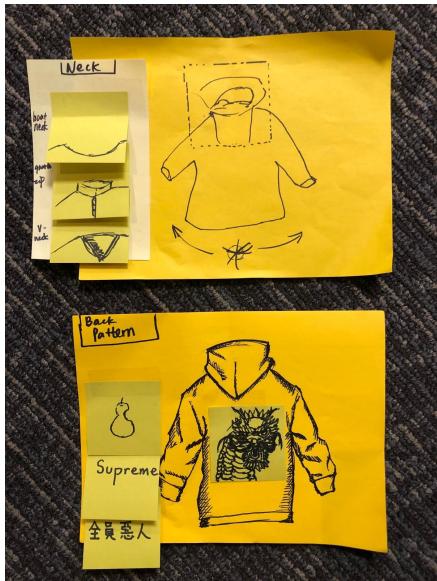
Experience Prototype #3: FitUp

Creator-friendly tools to demonstrate vision and concept without technical requirements in the fashion industry

a. Assumption

Taking out the hard requirements on technicality would elicit more creative expressions from individuals in the fashion industry and help them better demonstrate ideas and vision

b. Paper prototype



c. Script

We use sticky notes of various sizes to simulate a web interface. Imagine the background as the shirt the interviewee (who plays the role of a fashion designer during his/her creative composition) just designed, and the smaller sticky notes as decorators/overlays interviewee have designed so far. The interviewee can see how each decorator would fit with the shirt design. We interviewers will not interfere with your experimentation.

d. Interview



We met McArdle, a 28-year-old visual storyteller based in San Francisco. He has a general interest in art, fashion and design and tested our prototype with him at Green Coupa.

e. Worked

- The interface was somewhat instantaneously intuitive
- Right away recognized the area defined by dotted line as where the decorator/overlay would go on the garment
- He incorporated his aesthetic tastes into his experimentation of the prototype by moving the stickers around

f. Didn't work

- He was confused by the spin-around icon and thought it would switch him to a different garment/design
- Felt a bit underwhelmed by the limited features our prototype offered and found it difficult to envision what it would feel like to use an imagined, expanded version of it in real life

g. Learned

- “It’s hard to feel super creative in a short time”
- It is often better to entrust the participant with the freedom to mess around with our prototype

h. Assumptions evals

- Assumption not immediately valid. We seemed to give too little room for him to experiment with the design, due to the material constraints. Nevertheless, he seemed pleased and entertained to play around with the drag-n-drop features of the interface. In addition, he seemed to really put thought into deciding what design decisions to make and seemed to like the final result

- New assumption: Taking out the hard requirements on technicality and *allowing individuals to create their own assets and styles* would elicit more creative expressions from professionals in the fashion industry

Moving On

Overall, we learned a lot from testing our prototypes on people we thought would fit in our range of target audience. First, we noticed that even though our interviewees roughly fall into our imagined profile of target audience, individuals tend to have different communication patterns, ways to feel validated/motivated and means to fetch information. We noted that prototype **Boost** and **Tech's It** do not account very well for the personal variation, causing our interviewees feelings of misalignment with the obvious purpose of the prototype. In addition, we acknowledged that some paper prototype(i.e. **FitUp**), because of its extremely low fidelity, does not realize or indicate the extent of freedom we intend to give users in our imagined final product. Therefore, we need to also reflect on how to grant more freedom and incorporate it most effectively into our low-fi prototype.

In the end, we decided to move on with prototype #3, FitUp, as it seemed to be the most intuitive and generated the result most aligned to our initial assumption. Compared to the other two prototypes, it is also broad enough for us to move on accommodating greater individual differences, because as people tend to, let's say, follow news and trends differently, the process of creation is largely similar and self-explanatory. In the upcoming weeks, we intend to explore more about how people create and how they can feel comfortable/free/undaunted with fashion design using our interface.