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Human Factors: UX | Journey Map

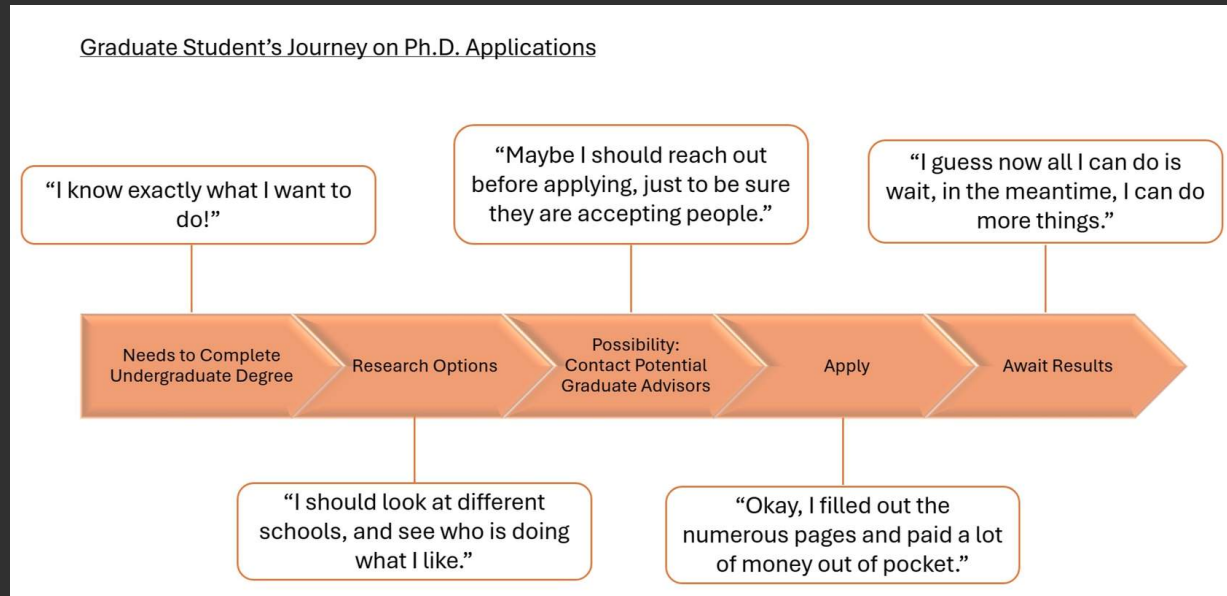
Journey Maps are tools for UX/UI designers and researchers to use to gauge potential interactions and experiences from target audiences

The Utility of the Journey Map: Predicting User Experiences

Journey maps are visualization tools, they help us in human factors psychology to begin to have an easier time in predicting the series of events that might happen when you, the user, tries to complete a goal.

The goal could be anything; losing weight, gaining muscle, gaining weight, changing our hair, needing to download a particular app, needing to find a particular book, applying to a job, school, or more. Regardless of the goal, the journey map helps to act as a reflection tool, because it helps you to see potential pitfalls and difficult-to-predict events in the experience of completing a goal.

The upcoming image shows a low-grade wireframe of a hopeful student applying to Ph.D. programs and their potential journey map.



Example Journey Map: A Student Applies to Ph.D. Programs

Isn't the Journey Map just Random Predictions about an Experience?

Not quite, that's why this is considered a practice, and not just a social science.

Even though it might seem like you can just throw whatever you want into a journey map and call it a journey map, you actually have to put yourself in the place of your users, think about the things that they might have to go through, think about things from their perspective, and you must think about the entire process involved in producing the experience; it involves a lot of thinking, primarily based on real-world items and not our opinions about real-world things.

It requires a lot of intrapersonal speech communication, a soft skill that is highly underutilized.

1

First Step

Identify your user(s). Who is your target audience? Who is going to be using your product/service? Who is the one going out? Who is trying to accomplish a task or goal?

Identify your actor. This actor is your **persona**, your makeshift user based on the collection of qualities of real-world users. They are a vector for you to use to imagine what might happen next in their journey, based on qualities and characteristics of real people.

2

Second Step

Define your scenario and your expectations.

Give a short background, to help explain what's going on, and this can help to begin your outline for your map.

As an example, a user could be trying to switch phones to break away from their norm, and the expectation could be just to have a new experience that isn't reminiscent of the negative aspects of the previous experience.

3

Third Step

Develop your journey phases.

Identify potentially different parts to your user's journey. What kinds of things will they have to do? In the case of the picture above with the student-user example, there could be the possibility of delving deeper into their first phase; perhaps they completed more activities than just their undergraduate degree to attain a goal? The possibilities should be considered and factored into the journey map that populates your mind.

The phases should show each individual unique step in the experience.

Fourth Step

Actions, mindsets, and emotions. What did the user do? What kind of perspective did the user have and did it change? How did the journey make the user feel?

Actions are the actual behaviors taken by the users.

Mindsets correspond to the users' thoughts, motivations, questions, and information needs. Often within UX research, these are the user's feedback verbatim.

Emotions are plotted as a single, continuous line across the journey map, quite literally representing the "ups" and "downs" of the journey and the experience.

Fifth Step

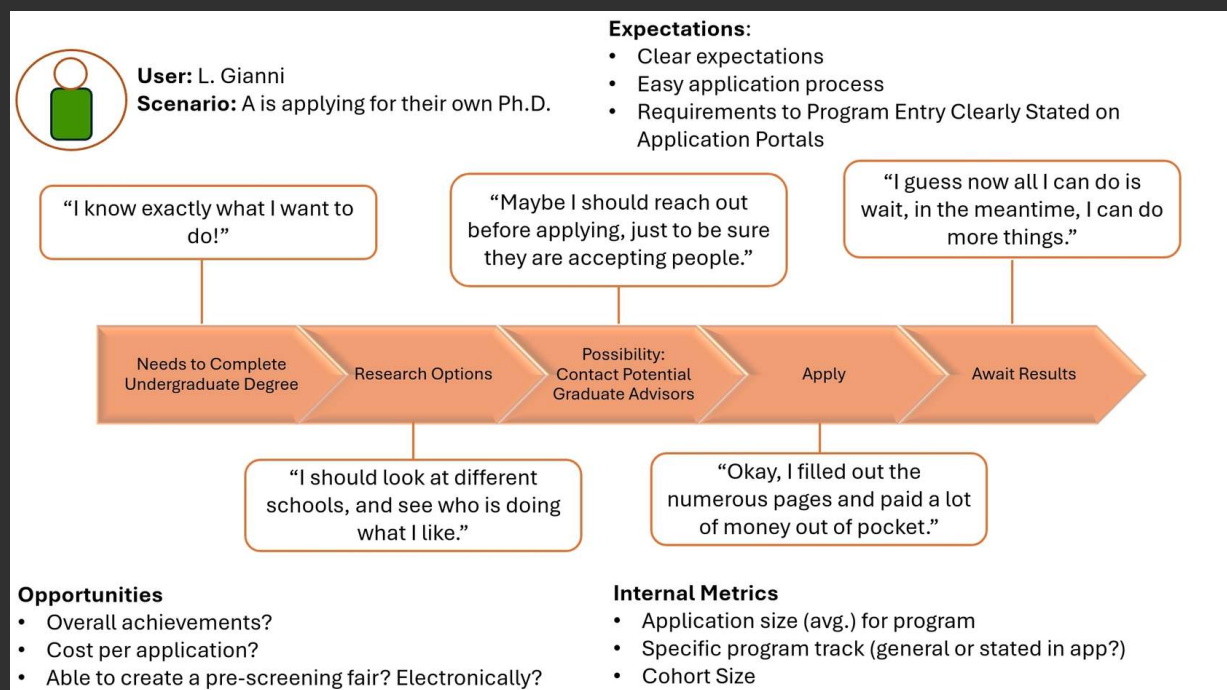
Opportunities.

With this tool in hand and completed, what information popped up in hindsight? What information was reconsidered during the development of the journey map? How many angles did you view the user's experience? What are support features that

could be added to the journey to enhance UX? What features exist inside the journey that are hindering UX? What features exist inside the journey that have no effect and no placement in the journey?

This is a chance to reflect on everything that has happened up to a point.

Take a look at the sample of the student applicant again, down below, and see what changes have been made after reviewing these steps. Do you see anything that could be changed?



A full-draft of a wireframed journey map.

Have Questions?

Contact Miguel Fermaint for further reflection on Human Factors, UX/UI, and Instructional Design.

CONTACT