An Introduction to Design Thinking

"Wallet" Edition

Facilitator's Guide:

Script, talking points, takeaways, and setup considerations inside.

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The Wallet Project

A little background on the project

The project you're holding in your hands is an iteration on the d.school's iconic "Wallet Project." The original wallet project was created as an introduction to design thinking for the d.school's inaugural Boot Camp class in the Winter of 2006. It has since been contributed to, modified, stretched, and evolved by many d.school collaborators.

The Wallet Project is an immersive activity meant to give participants a full cycle through the design thinking process in as short a time as possible. The project itself gives facilitators the opportunity to touch on the fundamental values of the d.school—human-centered design, a bias towards action, and a culture of iteration and rapid prototyping—without attempting to communicate all of the methods and activities that the term "design thinking" encompasses.

Why did we choose a wallet as the starting point for the introductory design challenge?
   * everyone has experience with a wallet, or another way to carry cash, cards, and ID
   * the wallet and its contents have the potential to evoke a range of meaning and the larger context of a person's life
   * wallet as a starting point enables a wide range of potential innovation outcomes (we've seen objects, experiences, services, systems, and spaces!)
   * having a physical artifact in-hand allows for immediate recall of experiences (participants can gain empathy for one another in the room)

It is certainly possible to facilitate a similar project with a different topic—and you may choose to in order to amp up a particular aspect you think is important for your group of participants. For example, we have done the "oral-hygiene project" to make it more personal and had partipants observe their partners in their homes previous to the beginning of the workshop. We also do a "redesign the gift-giving experience" version, with the aim to encourage participants to create services, experiences, and systems. If you decide to change the topic [you can simply change the instructions for the first two steps], be mindful of the considerations we listed above and scope it in a way that is both wide-open to possibilities but also managable for participants.

Why project-based, team-facilitated learning?

Having created learning experiences for students of all cultures, ages, disciplines, and industries, we have found that engaging in projects provides a much richer learning experience than listening to a "talking head" does. As such, our bias is to provide limited scaffolding to allow participants to **do**, and then to facilitate a reflection that invites the participants themselves to extract the meaningful learning opportunities from the experience. We teach in teams at the d.school because we have found that this approach tends to create a conversation in the classroom, as opposed to the one-way communication that often transpires in more lecture-driven formats. We relish the diversity of perspectives that emerge when faculty from diverse backgrounds instruct, and even disagree in front of, a class. One great way to run the Wallet Project with two people, is for one to take *lead* (concentrating on communicating the instructions, logistics, and timing), and the other person to provide *color* (communicating the nuances, offering encouragement, and providing helpful tips).

Your NEW mission: **Design something useful and meaningful for your partner. Start by gaining empathy.**

1 Interview
8min (2 sessions x 4 minutes each)
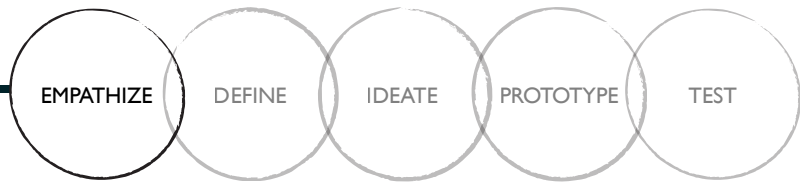
Notes from your first interview

2 Dig Deeper
6min (2 sessions x 3 minutes each)

Notes from your second interview

Switch roles & repeat Interview

Switch roles & repeat Interview

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Start by gaining empathy.

How to facilitate these steps

EMPATHIZE DEFINE IDEATE PROTOTYPE TEST

1—Interview your Partner

Have participants partner up in pairs.
It helps to refer to "Partner A" and "Partner B" to simplify your language in these interactive steps.

"Your challenge is to design something useful and meaningful to your partner."

"The most important part of designing for someone is to gain empathy for that person."
"One way to do this is to have a good conversation."
Be clear about the logistics of the interviews:
"Partner A will have four minutes to interview Partner B, and then we will tell you when to switch."

"As a starting point, ask your partner to walk you through the contents of their wallet."
"When do they carry their wallet? Why do they have a particular card in there? What do the things in their wallet tell you about their life?"
Tell them to take note of things they find interesting or surprising.

"Let's begin!" (Don't forget to start playing the upbeat music now.)

2—Dig deeper

After the first set of interviews, tell them to follow up on things that intrigued them during the first interview.

"Try to dig for stories, feelings, and emotion."

"Ask 'WHY?' often"

"Forget about the wallet, find out what's important to your partner."
"Why does he still carry a picture of his ex-girlfriend? When was a time he carried a lot of cash? What does she remember most about her first paying job?"
Remind them you will let them know when time is up.
. . ."Time to switch! Again, make note of any unexpected discoveries along the way, capture quotes!"

Reframe the problem.

3 Capture findings 3min

Goals and Wishes:

What is your partner trying to achieve?

*use verbs

Insights: New learnings about your partner's feelings and motivations. What's something you see about your partner's experience that maybe s/he doesn't see?*

*make inferences from what you heard

4 Take a stand with a point-of-view 3min
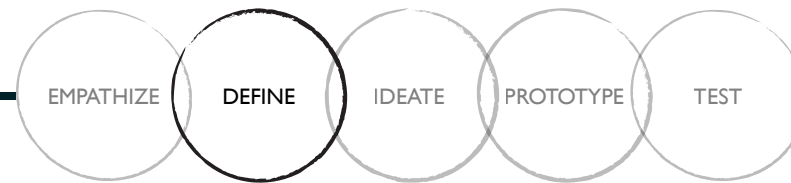
_____

partner's name/description

needs a way to _____

user's need

because (or "but . . ." or "Surprisingly . . .")

[circle one]

_____

_____

insight

d.

Reframe the problem.

How to facilitate these steps

EMPATHIZE   DEFINE   IDEATE   PROTOTYPE   TEST

3—Capture findings

Tell them to *individually* take three minutes to collect their thoughts and
reflect on what they've learned about their partner.

"Synthesize your learning into two groups:
your partner's goals and wishes, and insights you discovered."

"Use verbs to express the goals and wishes."

"These are his needs related to his wallet and life. Think about both physical and emotional needs."

"For example maybe your partner *needs* to minimize the number of things he carries . . . or needs to feel like she is supporting the local community and economy."

"'Insights' are discoveries that you might be able to leverage when creating solutions."

"For example, you might have discovered the insight that buying with cash makes your partner value the purchase more and take more care with decisions."

"Or, that she sees a wallet as a reminder and organizing system, not a carrying device."

4—Take a stand with a point-of-view

Now tell them to select the most compelling need and most interesting insight to articulate a point-of-view.

"This is your point of view."

"Take a stand by specifically stating the meaningful challenge you are going to take on."

'This is the statement that you're going to address with your design,
so make sure it's juicy and actionable!"

"It should feel like a problem worth tackling!"

"Your point-of-view might be:

'Janice need a way to feel she has access to all her stuff and is ready to act. Surprisingly, carrying her purse makes her feel less ready to act, not more.'

Or 'Arthur needs a way to socialize with his friends while eating healthy, but he feels like he isn't participating if he isn't holding a drink.'"

Ideate: generate alternatives to test.

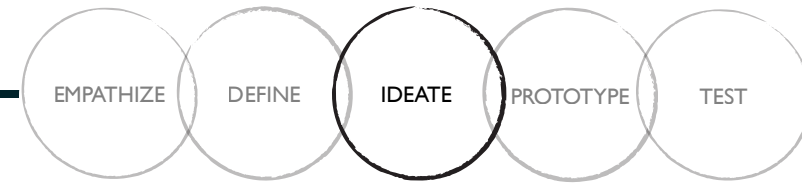## 5 Sketch at least 5 *radical* ways to meet your user's needs. 5min

write your problem statement above

6 Share your solutions & capture feedback. 10min (2 sessions x 5 minutes each)

Notes

Switch roles & repeat sharing.

Ideate: generate alternatives to test.

How to facilitate these steps

EMPATHIZE DEFINE **IDEATE** PROTOTYPE TEST

5—Sketch to Ideate

Have them rewrite their problem statement at the top of the page.

Remind them they are now creating solutions to the new challenge they've identified.

They them to sketch a lot of ideas, and to try to create a number of different ideas.

"GO FOR VOLUME!"

"This is time for idea generation, not evaluation—you can evaluate your ideas later."

You can even suggest a friendly competition to come up with the most ideas --
"See if you can come up with at least 7 ideas!"

Remind them they are not necessarily designing a wallet; instead they should create solutions to problem statement they just created.

"Remember to be VISUAL—use words just when necessary to call out details."

... "One minute left! Try to sketch at least 2 more wildly different ways to address your problem statement!"

6—Share solutions and capture feedback

"Now it's time to share your sketches with your partner!"
"Partner A, share your sketches with Partner B first, and then we will tell you to switch after four minutes."
Tell them to note likes/dislikes and builds on the idea, but also listen for new insights.

EMPATHIZE DEFINE IDEATE PROTOTYPE **TEST**

"Spend the time listening to your partners reactions and questions."

"This is not just about validating your ideas."

"Fight the urge to explain and defend your ideas."

"This is another opportunity to learn more about your partner's feelings and motivations."

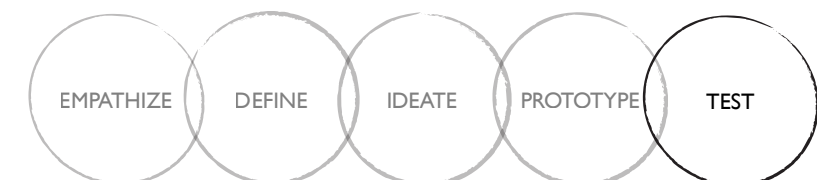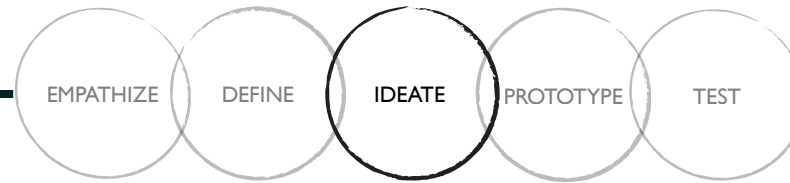Tell them to switch after time is up for the first session.

Iterate based on feedback.

7 Reflect & generate a new solution. 3min

Sketch your big idea, note details if necessary!

Iterate based on feedback.

How to facilitate this step

EMPATHIZE · DEFINE · **IDEATE** · PROTOTYPE · TEST

7—Reflect & generate a new solution

They've had a chance to share their sketches with their partners and collect feedback.

"Now, take a moment to consider what you have learned both about your partner, **and** about the solutions you generated."

"From this new understanding of your partner and his or her needs, sketch a new idea."

Tell them this solution may be a variation on an idea from before or something completely new.
They are still addressing a problem statement that *they* articulated, but you might point out that their previous problem statement may need to change to incorporate the new insights and needs they discovered.

"Try to provide as much detail and color around your idea as possible."

"How might this solution fit into the context of your partner's life?"

"When and how might they handle or encounter your solution?"
While participants are working, grab the prototyping materials if you have not already.

Build and test.

8 Build your solution.

Make something your partner can interact with!
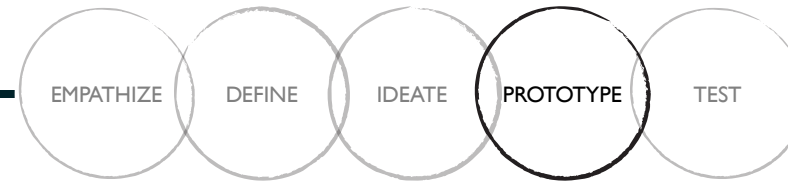
[not here]

7min

9 Share your solution and get feedback.

+ What worked…

− What could be improved…

? Questions…

! Ideas…

8min (2 sessions x 4 minutes each)

d.

Build and test.

How to facilitate these steps

EMPATHIZE · DEFINE · IDEATE · **PROTOTYPE** · TEST

8—Build!

Tell participants to use the idea they just sketched as a blueprint for a tangible manifestation of their solution.

"Create a physical prototype of your solution."
Explain that they should not simply make a scale model of their idea to explain the idea.
They should create an experience that their partner can react to.
They could decide to test just one aspect of the overall solution.

**"MAKE something that your partner can engage and interact with."**

"If your solution is a service or a system,

create a scenario that allows your partner to experience this innovation."
"Use whatever materials are available to you—including space!"
Provide some urgency and excitement in your voice—you want to get them building immediately.
"Be scrappy and quick—you only have a few minutes!!"

EMPATHIZE · DEFINE · IDEATE · PROTOTYPE · **TEST**
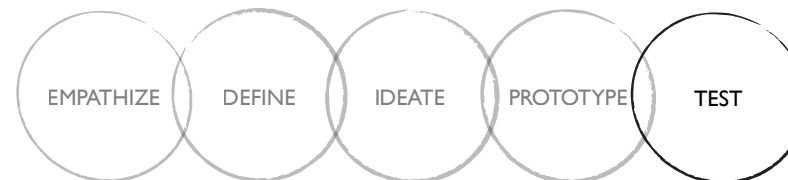
9—Share your solution and get feedback

Explain that one partner will have time to share and collect feedback, and then they will switch so the other partner can share.

"Now you're going to have the opportunity to share your prototype with your partner."
Validation of the prototype is not the point—it should be an artifact that facilitates a new, targeted conversation.

"When you test, LET GO of your prototype, physically and emotionally."

"Your prototype is NOT PRECIOUS, but the feedback and new insights it draws out are!"

"Don't defend your prototype; instead, watch how your partner uses and misuses it."
Tell them to jot down things their partner liked and didn't like about the idea, as well as questions that emerged and new ideas that came up.

Build and test.

8 Build your solution.

Make something your partner can interact with!

[not here]

7min

9 Share your solution and get feedback.

+ What worked...	− What could be improved...
? Questions...	! Ideas...

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