

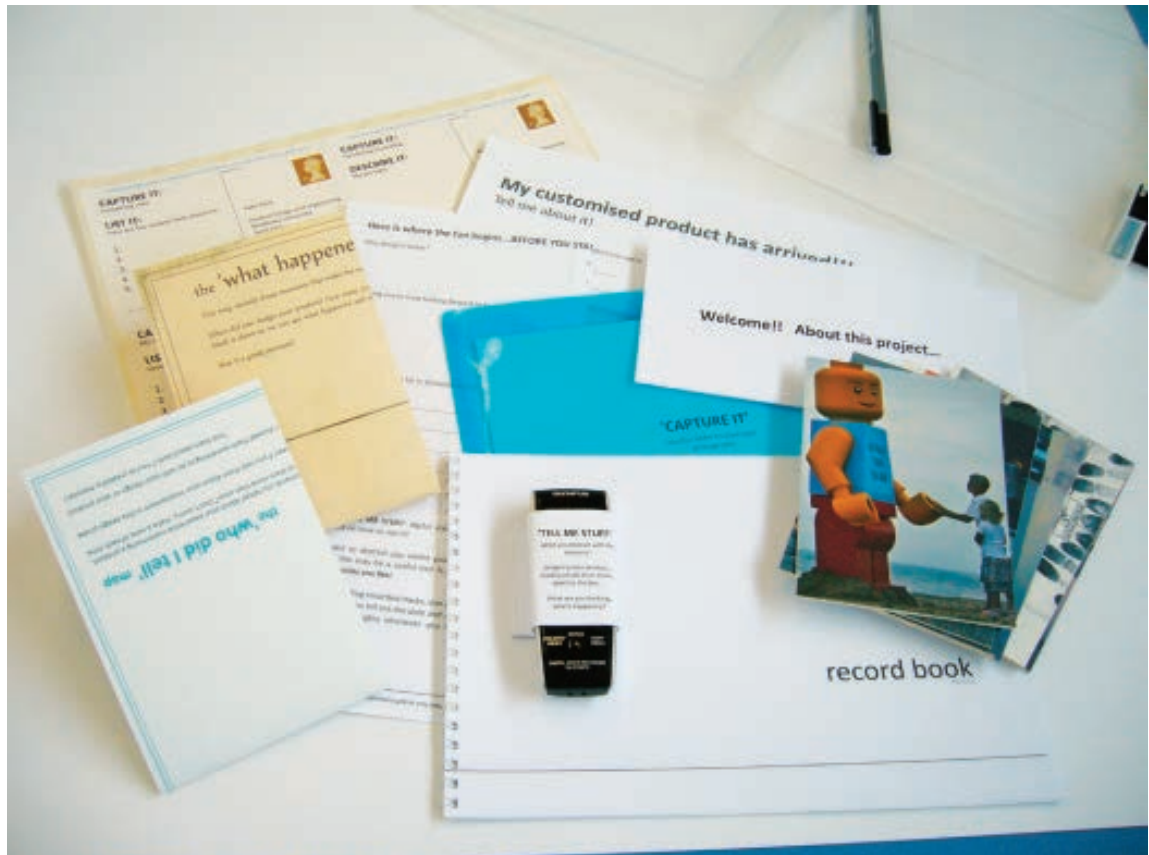
024 Cultural Probes

Provocative instruments to inspire new forms of self-understanding and communication

- Use materials such as postcards, journals, cameras, text, and imagery to gather personal insights from participants.
- Provocations are designed to inspire people to thoughtfully consider personal context and circumstance and respond in unique, creative ways.
- Materials should be varied and imaginative to elicit responses that are relevant to the design inquiry.
- Probes are flexible, open-ended, and intentionally subjective, collecting inspirational data to stimulate design imagination.
- Design probes support empathic understanding through information gathering over a prolonged period, where the researcher cannot be present.
- Probe kits are combined with other research methods such as observations, site visits, and interviews.
- Probes should be thoughtful in aesthetic craft, message, and delivery and be created to inspire delight and respect, response, and return.

See also Diary Studies • Experience Sampling Method • Photo Studies

Courtesy of Kate Herd



A study on mass-customization of products collected personal stories of participants using a cultural probe kit of digital voice recorders, cameras, postcards, diaries, and stickers.