

Scenarios, Storyboards, Wireframes, Critique

Scenarios

Creating a written story that explains how a person will use a product, service, or system to achieve a goal.

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A GOOD SCENARIO/

- 1. Acts as a bridge between an initial design idea or problem, and a solution
- 2. Advances the fidelity of an idea
- 3. Stands on its own, without explanation
- 4. Does not prescribe interface elements in any great detail
- 5. Includes a rich description of a person
- 6. Includes a rich description of a goal
- 7. Is credible

1. Identify the people involved.

What are their names?

Where do they work?

What level of technical experience do they have?

What level of technical competence can you assume with this system, specifically?

It's often helpful to write a three or four sentence introduction to each person, describing their background and helping to humanize them.



2. Identify the starting state/context

Where will the people using your system be, physically, when they encounter it?

What state is the actual product or service in when they first acknowledge it?



3. List the goals a user may have, as they pertain to your product or service.

A goal is about a fundamental want, need, or desire that is presently unattained. Goals rarely change, even as technology progresses.

For example, when using a printer, my goal is not "to print" – it is "to communicate my intent to other people when I'm not there through a lasting artifact."

List as many goals as you can think of.



4. Prioritize the goals, based on your understanding of your users.

Stack rank the goals, putting them in order from "most important to achieve using this system or service" to "least important to achieve using this system or service."



5. Craft stories.

Using the people, context, and goals as a starting point, craft a narrative that explains how a person will use your system to achieve their goals. Don't try to achieve all goals in a single epic story; instead, create multiple stories, one for each goal. Keep the conversation at a high, behavioral level, rather than a low, user interface level:

Good

Fred grabs his phone. He opens the beerfinding app, and locates a beer nearby. He chooses to have it delivered, enters his payment information, and completes his order.

Not so good

Fred grabs his phone. He tabs the beer-finding app. He taps the zipcode input box, and the onscreen keyboard appears. He taps the numbers for his zipcode, and then taps "find beer." An hourglass appears on his screen, and after several seconds, search results begin showing up....

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UI Storyboards

Sketching a comic-book style visualization of your written narrative, to illustrate scenes and screens.

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- 1. Emphasizes screens over scenes
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- 4. Dedicates one panel to one idea, and uses panels generously



s packing for n; he's going to Gras, where he's g on meeting iends.

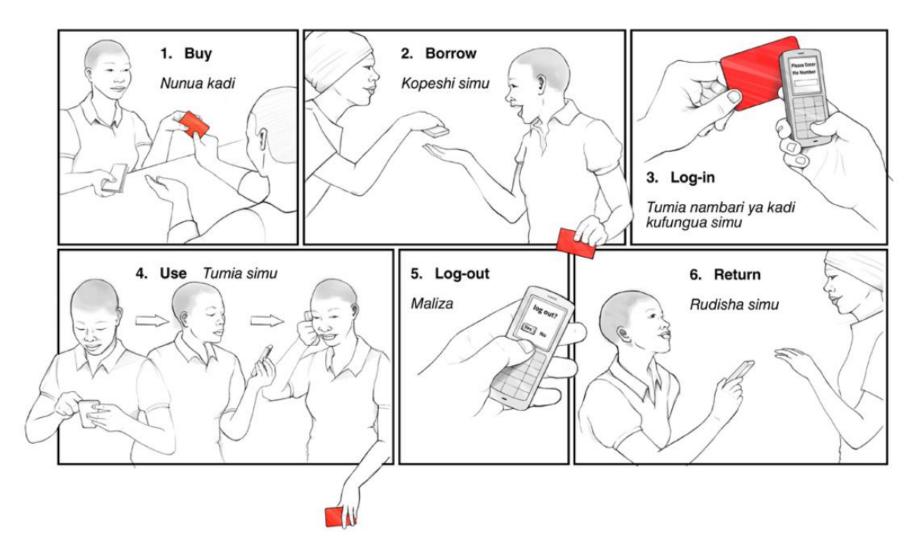
As they wander the streets, they keep bumping into new and interesting people – and because they have our software installed, they are able to both find new parties, and log the experiences they have easily and seamlessly.

When Melvin's having a particularly inte time at a party, he grabs his phone and it at the crowd. A number of the people event start to crowd around..



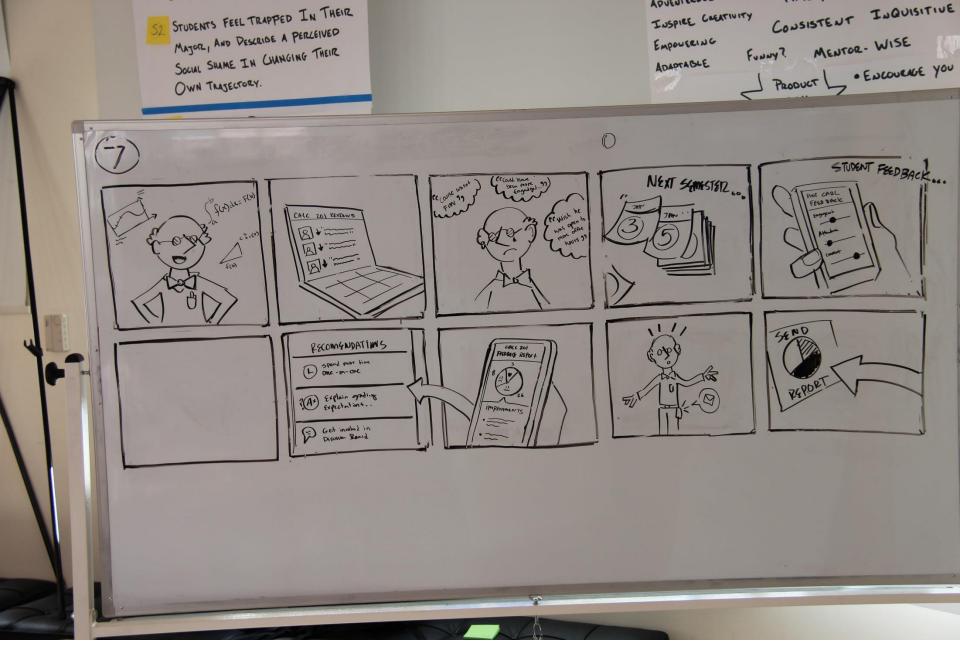
MXShare Testing Assets: Concept Storyboard

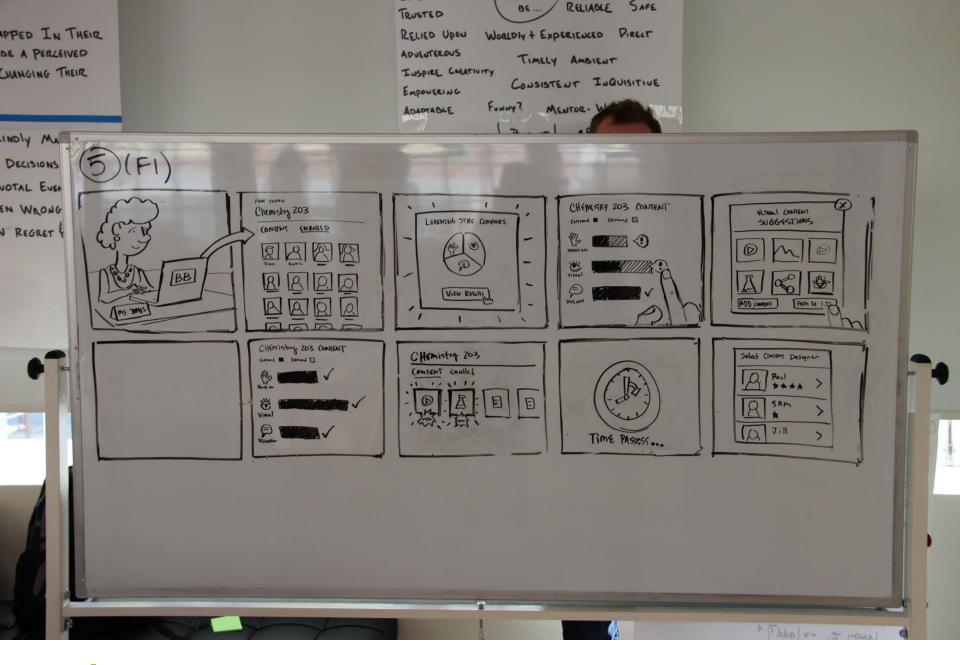
Used by the frog research team to explain the concept to users Ideally used by the Movirtu small business owner to explain the concept to customers.











1. Sketch the frame.

Each sentence in your scenario becomes a frame in the storyboard. Using your scenario as a starting point, draw empty boxes (approximately 4" x 4") for each sentence. Number the boxes.



2. Transfer the scenario.

Directly below each box, write the sentence from your scenario.



3. Sketch.

Inside of each box, sketch what happens in the scenario.

When you sketch people, emphasize their hands and eyes.

When you sketch human touchpoints, show both humans in the frame at once.

When you sketch digital products, first introduce the product in context (in someone's hand), and then sketch what the user actually sees on the screen.



4. Enhance with selective use of color.

Use color only to make a point – to emphasize a particular element in each frame (such as a device or handoff of information), or to differentiate characters from one another.



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Wireframes

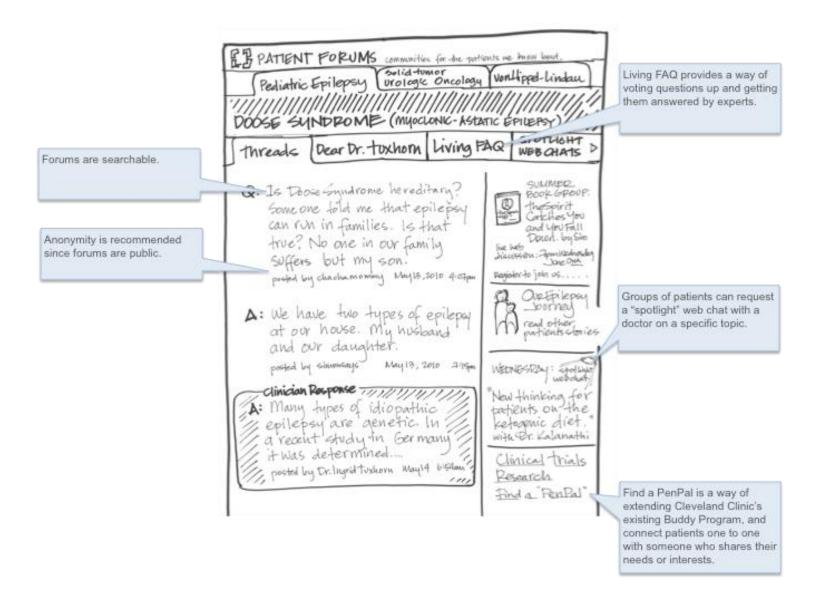
Creating a visual representation of a user-interface, abstracted to show behavior and controls instead of color or emotion.

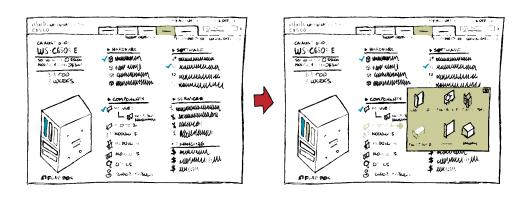
Wireframes

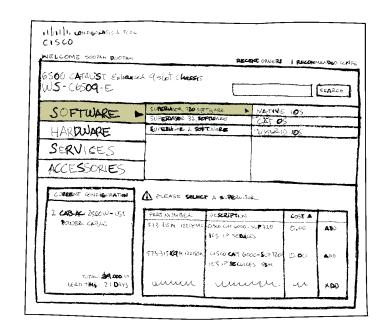
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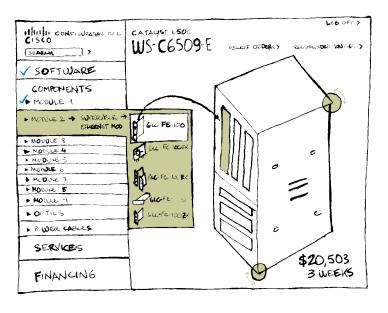
A GOOD SET OF WIREFRAMES/

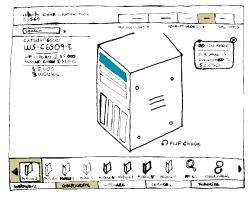
- 1. Advances the fidelity of an idea
- 2. Stands on its own, without explanation
- 3. Describes every control
- 4. Uses actual content, not "filler" or "placeholder" content
- 5. Uses space in a realistic manner

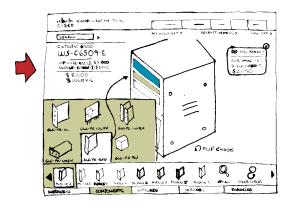








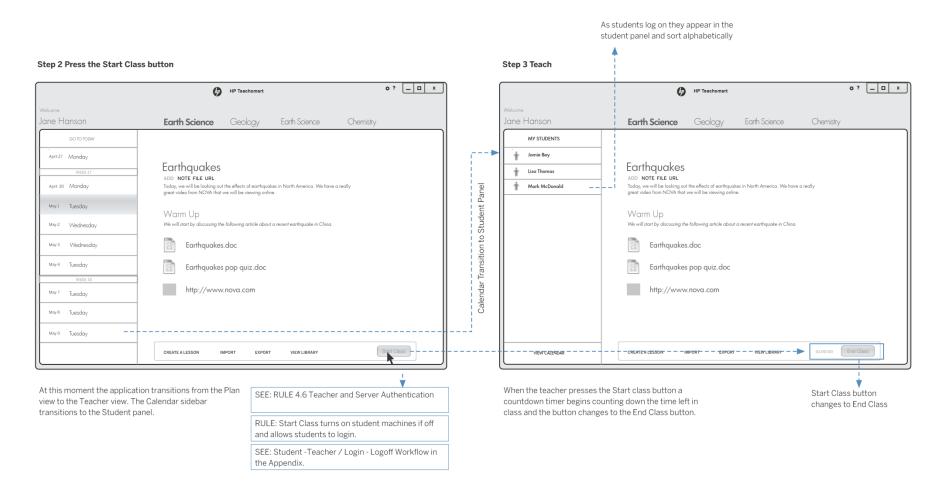




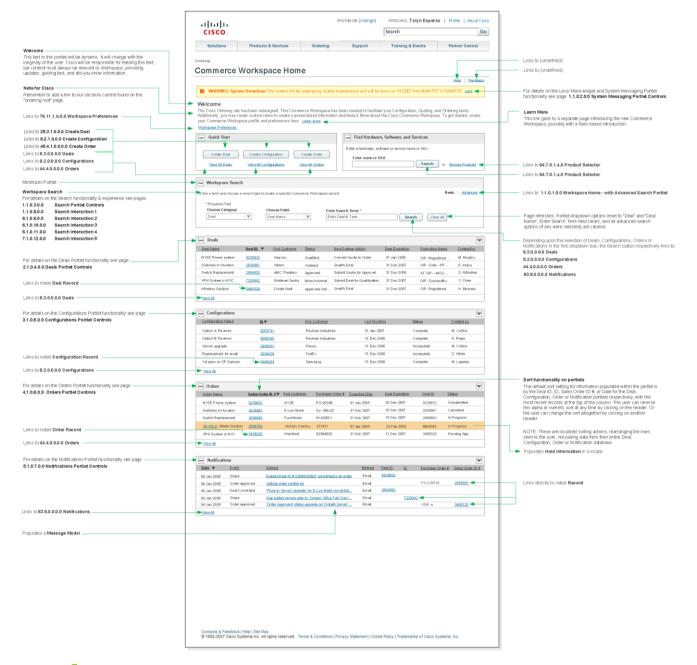


Core Application User Flows

Flow: 4.7 Start a Class - continued



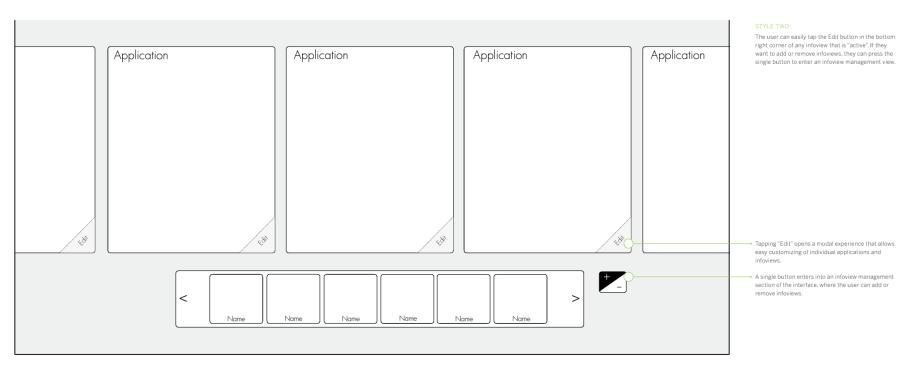




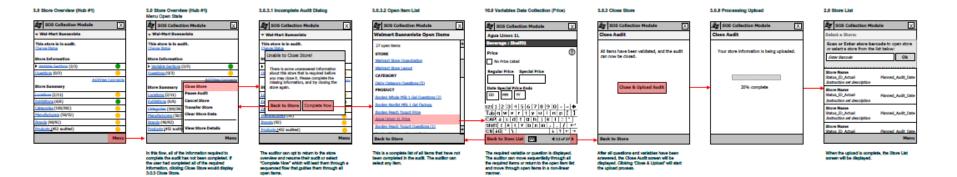


Workstream Two: Personalize, Entry Point

Style Two: Minimal, and Individual Entry







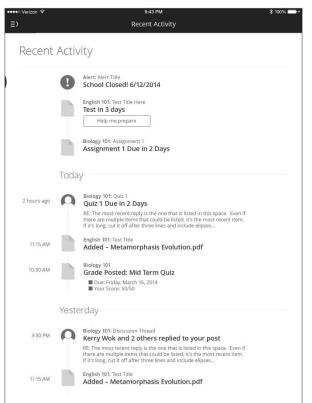


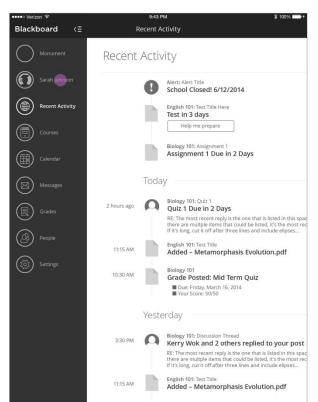
Blackboard
with the state of th



Base 4.1.1 V2

Student profile for a school that has disabled social





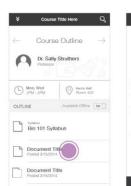


Blackboard

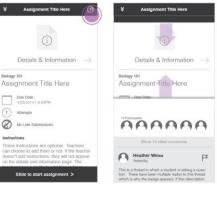
Tablet Learn: Student

Assign/Tests 6.0.4_v.1.3

Participate in conversation before starting and submitting an assignment

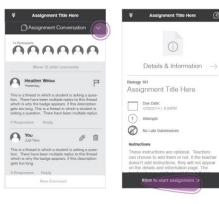


Document Title











Blackboard

Mobile Learn: Student

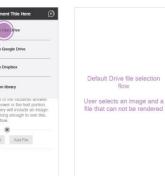








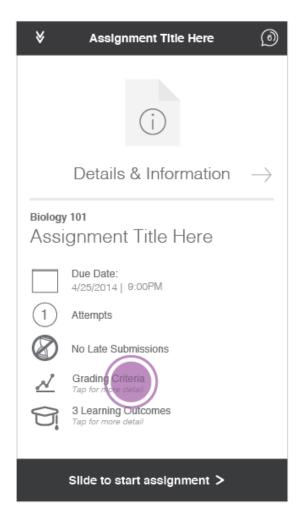


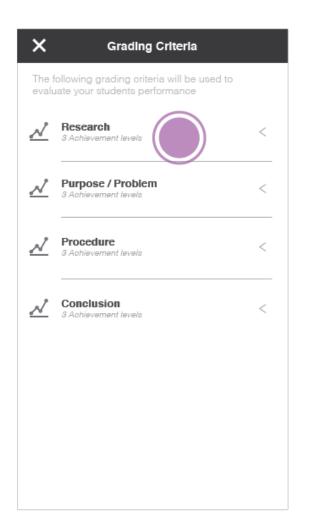


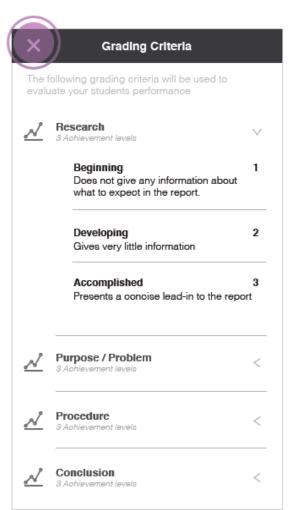












1. Start with your scenarios and storyboards.

Using the storyboards as a starting point, sketch a loose wireframe for each screen the user will encounter. Acknowledge that this is a scrap copy and will be thrown away.

Consider elements that show up on every page (navigation, framing devices) as anchors for understanding, and make sure that the user can understand where they are, where they've been, and where they're going.



2. Sketch the story again.

Redraw the entire flow, increasing your attention to detail. Make your lines crisper and stronger, and make sure things line up clearly.

As you redraw the flow, begin to notice paths that haven't been clearly defined

- buttons, links, or controls that "lead nowhere". Make a list of these dead ends.



3. Sketch the dead ends.

Draw the screens that don't exist. This will force you to extend your scenario; at this point, you no longer need to conform to the story, as you are completing the designed system.



4. Refactor and revise the flow.

Look at the entire set of wireframes, arranged on the wall in front of you.

Are there elements that you didn't account for on some screens, that became important on other screens?

Is the navigation consistent?

Will someone know what to do on each screen?

Can someone find their way back?

Redraw the entire set of wireframes, again.



Always show a flow.



Details matter, no matter what fidelity you are sketching at.



Always indicate interaction points.



No fake text!



Level of effort & fidelity

Key pages, functions, and states Few or no annotations Simple wires, few details All pages, including edge-cases and errors
Full annotations ("detailed specification")
Complicated wires: all content, all features, all details, etc.



Early stages of design Simple product or service Small quantity of stakeholders Control over implementation Final stages of design Complex ("large") product or service Large quantity of stakeholders Limited or no control over implementation

Fast and Cheap Lack of planning can be detrimental later Slow, tedious, and expensive Forces thought for every design detail



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CREATING WIREFRAMES/

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Critique

A special, structured format for identifying problems and proposing solutions.

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A GOOD CRITIQUE/

- Advances the fidelity of an idea
- 2. Is extraordinarily detailed
- 3. Is focused and time-controlled
- 4. Focuses on execution rather than intention

This is not a standard presentation – different rules apply.

1. Think before you speak.

- First, consider the piece of the design you are responding to. Zoom in, and make sure you are thinking as detailed as possible.
- Next, think about why you feel that piece is not successful.
- Then, think about how you can make your criticism actionable: if you were to receive this criticism, would you know what steps to take to fix it?
- Finally, think about your delivery style.



2. Be succinct and very, very detailed.

- A rambling critique is not about the design it's about you. Describe your criticism in as concise a manner as possible.
- Be as specific as you can about the piece of the product you are responding to.
- Be as specific as you can about what's wrong with it.
- Be as specific as you can about how you might fix it.



- 3. Do not point out something good (unless it's relevant to make your point clearer) no "shit sandwich".
 - A critique is not intended to highlight the parts of a design that are successful – it's intended to point out the parts that are not successful.
 - It may be useful to compare something that is working to something that is not working; this is a good use of positive criticism.



- 4. Critique the design, never the person.
 - Direct your comments exclusively to the work. "You didn't..." is directed at a person. "The design doesn't..." is directed at the work.



- 1. Offer a succinct walkthrough of your design.
 - Present the work at a meta level, so we know what we are responding to.
 - Direct the criticism. What do you want feedback on? What do you *not* want feedback on?
 - Do not self-deprecate. Your work is what it is; do not say things like:

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"I just didn't have enough time..."
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"I know this isn't great, but..."

"I know what I need to change on these already..."



2. Do not defend or explain your work.

- Contain <u>all</u> of your comments to clarifications, and only clarify the design (if someone asks), not the intent.
- Never defend a design decision in a critique; remember that not all presentations are critiques, and it's completely appropriate to defend your design in *other* contexts.



3. Make sure you understand the comments.

- Critique comes quickly, and there are often a lot of voices contributing to the discussion. Make sure you understand the comments.
- If you are unsure, repeat the point of criticism back to the person who asked it, and have them validate that you heard it correctly.
- If the comment is not actionable, turn the comment around: ask the person "What would you do in this case?"



4. Write it all down, and suspend judgement until later.

- Write down every single piece of feedback. Write directly on the work artifacts that are printed out.
- Suspend judgment on the feedback until later; try not to decide which suggestions are good and bad during the critique. Instead, just try to understand them and capture them.
- You don't have to do any of the things you hear in critique. These are
 opinions and outside perspectives; they should be useful, but often they are
 not.



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Jon Kolko Director, Austin Center for Design jkolko@ac4d.com