

Design Thinking Challenge: The Gift Giving Experience

(Adapted from [Stanford d.school Crash Course](#) for Springboard UX Design Workshop)

Introduction:

Gift giving experience design challenge

The challenge:

Identify a partner and redesign the gift giving experience for them: starting from the time they realize they need to give a gift, thinking of what gift to give, why they want to give that gift, purchasing or making it, giving it, and finally receiving gratitude (or not)."

The challenge is to design something *meaningful* and *useful* for your partner/user.

Introduction (cont.)

Interview a friend, family member, or colleague about their experience while giving gifts, and redesign a new experience that's meaningful for them. The point of involving users early is key to this exercise. Having their input at the beginning and throughout the project to understand their motivations, goals and desires is what user-centered design thinking is all about.

There are ten steps to this exercise. Each step has a specific amount of time associated with it. **Try to stick to the allocated time frames** as much as possible. Having to work quickly under a time constraint is not easy but it is a great way to get your mind thinking and generating new ideas - even if some are a bit "out there."

Note, you will need some paper, pens, craft materials, kitchen items, etc.. for step 9 on creating a physical prototype. Sketching and paper prototyping are incredibly useful tools in UX design, so please don't skip the hands on part of this exercise.

Submission Instructions

For the submission, download a copy of this worksheet from the "File" menu using "Download as" option. Fill and submit to your mentor using the "Submit Project" button in the curriculum.

Step 1: Interview Your Partner (Instructions)

Step 1: Interview your partner (4 minutes)

Gain **empathy** for your partner. Use this time to find out what's important to your partner.

Example: While there are lots of ways to gain empathy for someone else, a simple, easy way to do that is to have a conversation and ask open ended questions. "When was the last time you gave a gift? How did it go? What was your favorite part? Least favorite part? Etc"

Step 1: Interview Your Partner (Worksheet)

Write your notes from the interview here: (4 min)

Step 2: Dig Deeper (Instructions)

Step 2: Dig deeper (4 minutes)

Ask “Why?” often.

Take what you already found out from your partners in the first interview and dig a little deeper. You know what’s important to your partner from the first interview, now it’s time to find out why it’s important. You can do this by asking the right questions. Again, listening is key here. If there a moment of silence, embrace it.

For example, if your user mentioned that it’s challenging to decide on which gift to purchase, ask why? Maybe it’s because they don’t really know what the other person wants; or maybe it’s because they’re afraid of what the gift says about THEM as the giver – any answer will lead you to understand your user (the gift giver) better. The key is to identify anywhere you’re making assumptions and then ask a question to test whether your assumption is valid.

Step 2: Dig Deeper (Worksheet)

Take notes from your 2nd interview here: (4 min)

Step 3: Capture Findings (Instructions)

Step 3: Capture Findings (3 minutes)

- Try to synthesize your learning into a few 'needs' that you have discovered and a few "insights" that you find interesting.
- Needs should be verbs - with gift giving, what is the user trying to accomplish? What does the gift do for them?
- Insights are discoveries that you might be able to use to create solutions

Step 3: Capture Findings (Worksheet)

Add notes here about things they are trying to do (use verbs): (3 min)

Add insights here on new things about your partner's feelings/worldview to leverage in your design:

Step 4: Define a problem statement (Instructions)

Step 4: Define a problem statement/point of view (4 minutes)

- This is your point of view.
- Take a stand by specifically stating the challenge you are going to take on.
- It should feel like a problem worth tackling.
- This is a statement you are going to address with your design so make sure it is juicy and actionable.

Example: Maybe you found that your partner is really trying to reunite the family; or reignite a lost love; or infuse adventure into a boring suburban existence; or reconnect with an old friend; or demonstrate his own creativity!

Step 4: Define a problem statement (Worksheet)

(4 min)

Write partner name/description here: _____

Needs a way to (user's need) _____

Surprisingly // because // but... (circle one)

Add insights here:

Step 5: Sketch to Ideate (Instructions)

Step 5: Sketch to Ideate (4 minutes)

- Rewrite your problem at the top of the page.
- Start creating solutions to the problem you identified.
- Don't focus on one idea, try to get five ideas down in allocated amount of time. Knowing that you only have a set amount of time to think of ideas may help broaden your mindset and open the doors for more creative ideas to come to fruition.
- Go for **VOLUME**. This is not about evaluation but for idea generation.
- You do not need to draw well! Squiggly lines and stick figures are a-ok!
- We are all very used to using words to describe our ideas. Try not to use alpha-numeric symbols. This exercise is about challenging yourself and sketching your ideas on paper. This might initially make you uncomfortable, but just go for it! Remember, this is not about being a "perfect artist."

Step 5: Sketch to Ideate (Worksheet)

Sketch at least five *radical ways* to meet your user's needs (4 min)

Write problem statement here: _____

**there are additional pages below to sketch more ideas*

Step 5: Sketch to Ideate (Worksheet) cont.

Add more sketches here:

Step 6: Share solutions & capture feedback (Instructions)

Step 6: Share solutions and capture feedback (4 minutes)

- Spend time LISTENING to your partner's feedback.
- Fight the urge to defend your ideas. This is not about validation.
- Rather, this is about learning about your partner's feelings and motivations (empathy!)

Step 6: Share solutions & capture feedback (Worksheet)

Add your notes here: (4 min)

Step 7: Reflect and generate a new solution through iteration (Instructions)

Step 7: Reflect and generate a new solution (3 minutes)

Take time to think about what you learned from your partner and the solutions the solutions you generated. From this new understanding of your partner and his or her needs, sketch a new idea. The solution may be a variation on an idea from before or something completely new.

Ask yourself: how will this solution fit into the context of your partner's life?

Step 7: Reflect and generate a new solution through iteration (Worksheet)

Sketch your **big idea** here. Note details if necessary. (3 min)

Step 8: Build your solution (Instructions)

Step 8: Build (10 minutes)

- Create a physical prototype of your solution using cheap and everyday items you find in your home (aluminium foil, paper, tape, etc...)
- Create something or an experience your partner can interact with. You can learn a lot through simple observation.
- You can focus on one aspect of the solution if you want.
- If you are designing an app try creating a paper prototype using sticky notes that are moveable so your partner can still interact with it.
- **Tip: Take pictures of your prototype to share with your mentor.**

Text

Step 8: Build your solution (Worksheet)

Add pictures of your solution here (10 minutes)

Step 9: Share your solution & get feedback through testing (Instructions)

Step 9: Share your solution and get feedback (4 minutes)

- Don't defend your prototype. Rather use that time to watch how your partner uses and misuses it.
- Remember to look at this as a process to learn as much as you can about your user. It is not about validating your own ideas. You are not a salesperson - but rather an anthropologist.

Step 9: Share your solution & get feedback through testing (Worksheet)

+ What worked

- What can be improved

? Questions

! Ideas

Step 10: Reflect & answer the following questions (Worksheet)

Step 10: Answer the following questions (use additional paper if needed)

1. How did engaging with a real person and testing with a real person, change the direction your prototype took?
2. What was it like showing unfinished work to another person?
3. How did the pace feel? Regarding the quick iterative cycles – how did that feel to how you normally work?

Step 11: Submit documentation

- Submit your completed worksheets and any additional sketches or answers to the questions to your mentor via the Springboard platform.
- Feel free to use Google docs, Word docs, Powerpoint, Keynote or whatever you are most comfortable with for these deliverables.
- You will discuss your findings during your next weekly mentor session.

Optional video

Before diving into the design challenge, you can optionally [watch this video](#) of an actual Stanford d.school crash course where participants work on this challenge in class. It offers additional insights about the objectives from a Stanford d.school instructor and you can see how other students have tackled this project, and how to best approach this assignment.

We adapted the course to make sense for our online UX design workshop, so there are a few differences between what you will see in the video and what we are asking you to complete. For example, they have both partners complete all the steps where for this workshop you will be the sole interviewer and your partner will be the user. **You do not need to switch roles like they do in the video.**

The video contains several sections where d.school students are completing the tasks. You do not need to watch the whole video so **feel free to skip ahead during class activities**. The total active duration of this video is 30 minutes.