

Case Studies

for IMITATE

2021



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IMITATE

Video-based mobile communication platform that accelerates acquisition of skills like public speaking, sales and interpersonal communication.

Tools & Tech Used

Adobe XD

Illustrator

HTML

CSS/SASS

Angular

Miro

DevOps

Developed For

iPad

Desktop

User Persona



Sgt. First Class Smith

“I am ready and willing to serve my country and do everything I can for my fellow soldier. These men and women are family.”

Stats

26-37 yrs old / male / Fort Bragg, NC / associates degree / Army, 82nd Airborne Division / married with 1 child

Bio

Sgt First Class Smith has been in the military for 9 years now and will be deploying for his 4th time to the Middle East soon. He is in charge of several young soldiers and wants to ensure they all are able to perform well out in the field. Smith is worried that the technology could get in his way.

Goals

- + Quickly and adequately prepare soldiers for real-life situations
- + Make a difference in the war

Frustrations

- + He's already overwhelmed during training, a new tool could be an obstacle
- + He is still dealing with mild PTSD

Authoring

Challenge

Rating systems are used to rate learners' performance. They are composed of KPAs, behaviors, and anchors.

We needed a way to manage and author rating systems. When authoring, we wanted to give users the ability to cherry-pick definitions from existing rating systems.

My Role

I was the UX designer on a team of 7 who closely worked with the project manager, research associate and web developers.



IMITATE / Authoring

Using Existing Style Guide

IMITATE already had a well-defined style that I could work from. I reused components like buttons and cards for the Manage Rating Systems list.

Rating System 1	In-Progress
<p>Description</p> <p>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua.</p> <p>KPAs</p> <p>Communication & Delivery, Learning Environment, Instructional Technique, Subject Matter Expertise, Assessing Effectiveness</p>	<p>Last Edited</p> <p>Mar 15, 2019</p>
 View	 Edit
Rating System 3	Active
<p>Description</p> <p>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua.</p> <p>KPAs</p> <p>Communication & Delivery, Learning Environment, Instructional Technique, Subject Matter Expertise, Assessing Effectiveness</p>	<p>Date Created</p> <p>Mar 18, 2019</p>
 View	 Create New From
Rating System 4	Active
<p>Description</p> <p>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua.</p> <p>KPAs</p> <p>Communication & Delivery, Learning Environment, Instructional Technique, Subject Matter Expertise, Assessing Effectiveness</p>	<p>Date Created</p> <p>Mar 19, 2019</p>
 View	 Create New From

IMITATE / Authoring

Drawing Inspiration From Previous Designs

The original design I inherited came with a card and a sidebar. Entering information into the sidebar on the right changed content on the left-hand card. Users could select a KPA or behavior rectangle but not type into it.

The screenshot shows the IMITATE application interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links: DASHBOARD, RATE, RESULTS, PRACTICE VIDEOS, LESSONS, RATING SYSTEMS (which is highlighted in orange), RECOMMENDATIONS, STORAGE, and USERS. On the far right, there is a user profile for "Gwen Campbell" (Administrator) and icons for help and refresh.

In the main content area, there is a header for "INTEL School Inter-professional Skills". Below this, there is a list of existing KPA entries:

- Untitled KPA** (2 behaviors): Contains two sub-items: "Untitled Behavior" and "Untitled Behavior 2". Each has a delete icon (X). Below this is a "+ Add Behavior" button.
- Untitled KPA 2** (5 behaviors): This entry is currently empty.

At the bottom of the list, there is a "+ Add KPA" button.

On the right side of the screen, there is a sidebar for creating a new KPA:

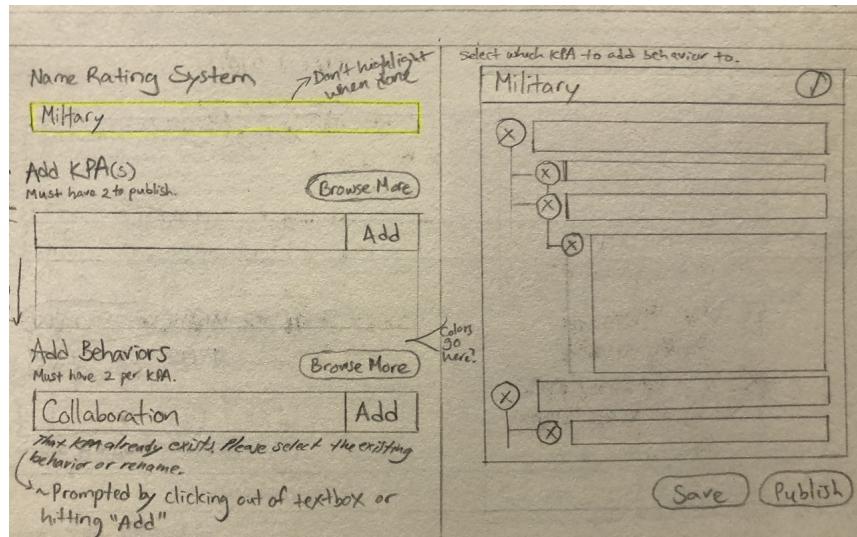
- KPA Name ***: A text input field containing "Untitled KPA (50 character limit)".
- KPA Definition**: A text input field with placeholder text: "Summarize the purpose of this KPA (200 character limit)".
- KPA Color ***: A color palette grid with 12 colored circles.

At the bottom of the sidebar, there are "Cancel", "Publish", and "Save" buttons.

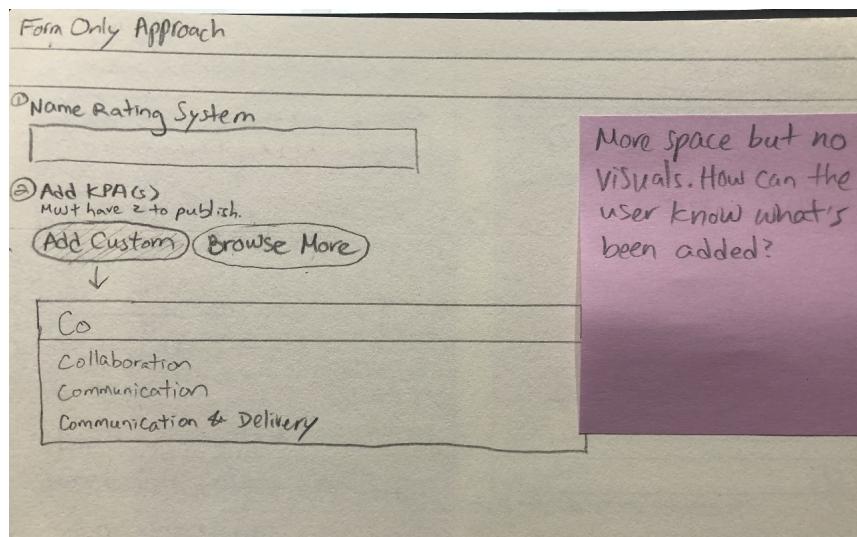
IMITATE / Authoring

Lo-Fidelity Wireframes

After sketching out many variations, I realized I wanted to be able to interact with the content directly.



At first, I tried to maintain the old system, except with the layout reversed. The form went on the left and the card on the right.



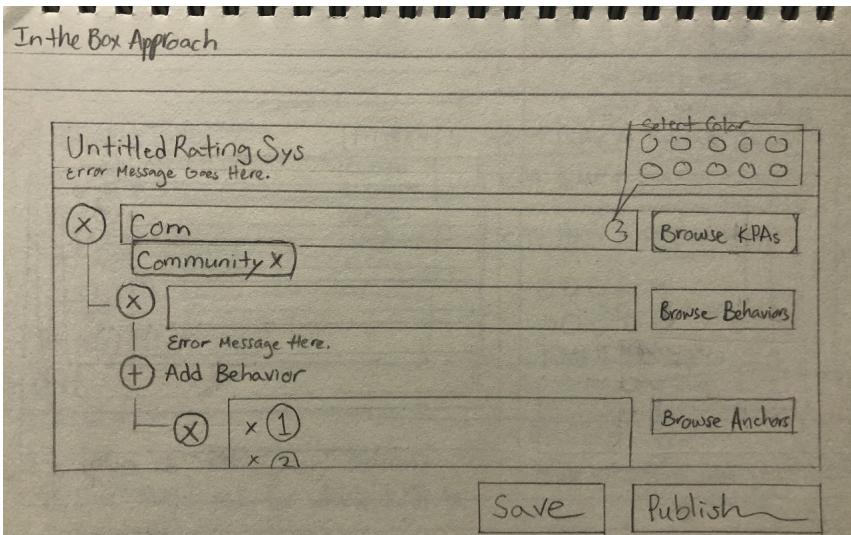
I attempted a "form only" approach but that came with obvious drawbacks.

There was more space for the form but no visuals, making it difficult for the user to tell what had been added.

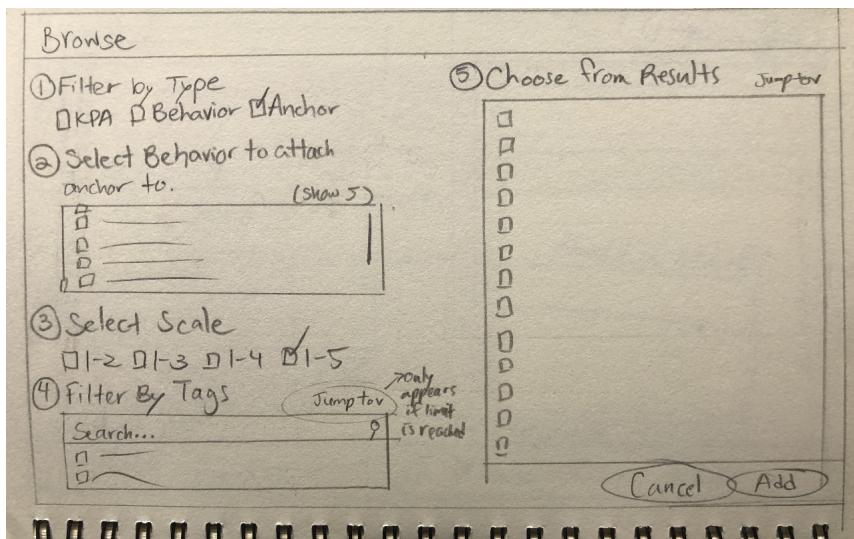
Here, the user can choose from the autocomplete dropdown, create a new custom KPA, or browse more options. This design was wholly unintuitive.

IMITATE / Authoring

Lo-Fidelity Wireframes



Then, I eliminated the form in favor of the card. I tried slightly different visual for autocomplete that I hoped was unintrusive.



If the user clicked "Browse...", a pop-up would appear allowing the user to bulk add KPAs, behaviors, and anchors.

In the end, I realized it was best to limit the amount of information the user saw at once.

IMITATE / Authoring

Troubleshooting Challenge

The project manager requested that we allow users to cherry-pick KPAs, behaviors, and anchors and decide the number of each. This would potentially allow countless mixing-and-matching combinations.

From a UX perspective, burdening the user with too many decisions would not be conducive to a pleasant app experience. The user might even grow frustrated and abandon the authoring process altogether.

It might be easier to have users add KPAs and their related behaviors together instead of picking them separately.

After speaking to my teammates, I learned this was an issue on the research and development side too.

From the RA's perspective, anchors would not make sense out-of-context from their behaviors (because they are a rating scale defined in relation to their behavior).

From the devs' perspective, the numerous combinations create a mess in the database. Moreover, pre-existing tables tied behaviors and anchors together and would take significant technical effort to overhaul.

Our collective concerns led the team to a compromise: Behaviors and anchors must always be tied together, with the number of anchors staying the same.

IMITATE / Authoring

Hi-Fidelity Mockups and Final Prototype

On the right, a search function pulls from existing content.

On the left, users edit the rating system name and description, pick KPA colors, and fill fields using autocomplete.

To conserve space, unfocused KPAs and behaviors are collapsed.

The screenshot displays the IMITATE platform's authoring interface. On the left, a modal window titled "Untitled Rating System" shows a hierarchical structure of KPA and Behavior items. A "Save" button is at the bottom. On the right, a sidebar titled "Browse Existing Content" includes a search bar and a dropdown for "Rating System". The top navigation bar features tabs for DASHBOARD, RESULTS, RATE, TRAINING CONTENT, RATING SYSTEMS (which is highlighted), and USERS. A user profile for "Laura Smith" (Admin) is visible on the far right.

IMITATE / Authoring

The screenshot shows the IMITATE / Authoring application interface. At the top, there's a header bar with the IMITATE logo, user information (Laura Smith, Admin), and navigation links for DASHBOARD, RESULTS, RATE, TRAINING CONTENT, RATING SYSTEMS (which is currently selected), and USERS.

In the main content area, there are two sections:

- Untitled Rating System**: This section contains a tree-like structure for managing KPA (Knowledge Performance Area) and Behavior items. It includes buttons for "Edit", "Add Behavior", and "Add KPA".
- Browse Existing Content**: This section allows users to search for existing content by KPA or Behavior. It includes a search bar, a dropdown for "Rating System" set to "Intel", and a list of categories with "Add" buttons next to them.

Category	Action
Assessing Effectiveness	Add
Communication & Delivery	Add
Instructional Technique	Add
Learning Environment	Add
Subject Matter Expertise	Add
Subject Matter Expertise 2	Add
Subject Matter Expertise 3	Add

In this view, the user searches by KPA. Clicking "Add" fills in the selected KPA on the left.

IMITATE / Authoring

The screenshot shows the IMITATE / Authoring application interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with icons for file operations, a user icon labeled "Codeante", and a dropdown menu "bluefirex". Below the header, the main menu includes "DASHBOARD", "RESULTS", "RATE", "TRAINING CONTENT", "RATING SYSTEMS" (which is highlighted in orange), and "USERS". On the left, under "RATING SYSTEMS", there are buttons for "Manage Rating Systems" and "Create New Rating System". The main content area displays a "Untitled Rating System" panel titled "Assessing Effectiveness". This panel contains a tree-like structure with nodes like "Untitled Behavior" and "Untitled Behavior" under "Assessing Effectiveness". Each node has an "Edit" button and an "X" icon to delete it. To the right, a search interface titled "Browse Existing Content" is shown. It includes a "Type*" field with "KPA" and "Behavior" options, a "Rating System" dropdown set to "Intel", a "Search" input field, and a list of content items with "Add" buttons: "Adaptation to Audience", "Creating Dialogue and Participation", "Establishing Credibility", "Nature of Checks on Participation", and "Setting a Learning Environment". Each item also has a "View Anchors" link.

In this view, the user searches by behavior. The user can click "View Anchors" to expand information or "Add" to fill in the selected behavior and anchors on the left.

IMITATE / Authoring

Lessons Learned

Include developers early in the design process. Learning what is technically feasible prevents the team from wasting time.

After receiving more feedback from other designers, I would combine the form and the search component into one card so users could understand their relation to each other better.

Finally, thanks to some feedback from the Marines who used the BETA, we added the ability to add an existing KPA and its attached set of behaviors in one click (seen below).

The screenshot shows the IMITATE software interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with tabs: DASHBOARD, RESULTS, RATE, TRAINING CONTENT, RATING SYSTEMS (which is currently selected), and USERS. Below this, there are two buttons: 'Manage Rating Systems' and 'Create New Rating System'. The main area displays a list of rating systems. One system is titled 'Untitled Rating System' and contains an 'Untitled KPA' which has two associated 'Untitled Behavior' items. There are also buttons to 'Edit' or delete the KPA and to 'Add Behavior'. Another section shows a list of 'Untitled KPA' entries with a 'Add KPA' button. To the right, a modal window titled 'Browse Existing Content' is open. It has filters for 'Type*' (set to 'KPA') and 'Rating System' (set to 'Intel'). A search bar labeled 'Search by KPA' is followed by a list of existing KPA categories: 'Communication', 'Professionalism and Respect', 'Complete and Concise', 'Closed-Loop Communication', 'Cooperation and Resource Management', 'Professionalism and Respect', and 'Complete and Concise'. Each category has an 'Add' button next to it.

Manage Lessons

Challenge

Users of IMITATE are able to view lesson content and download attached media, such as audio, documents, or presentations.

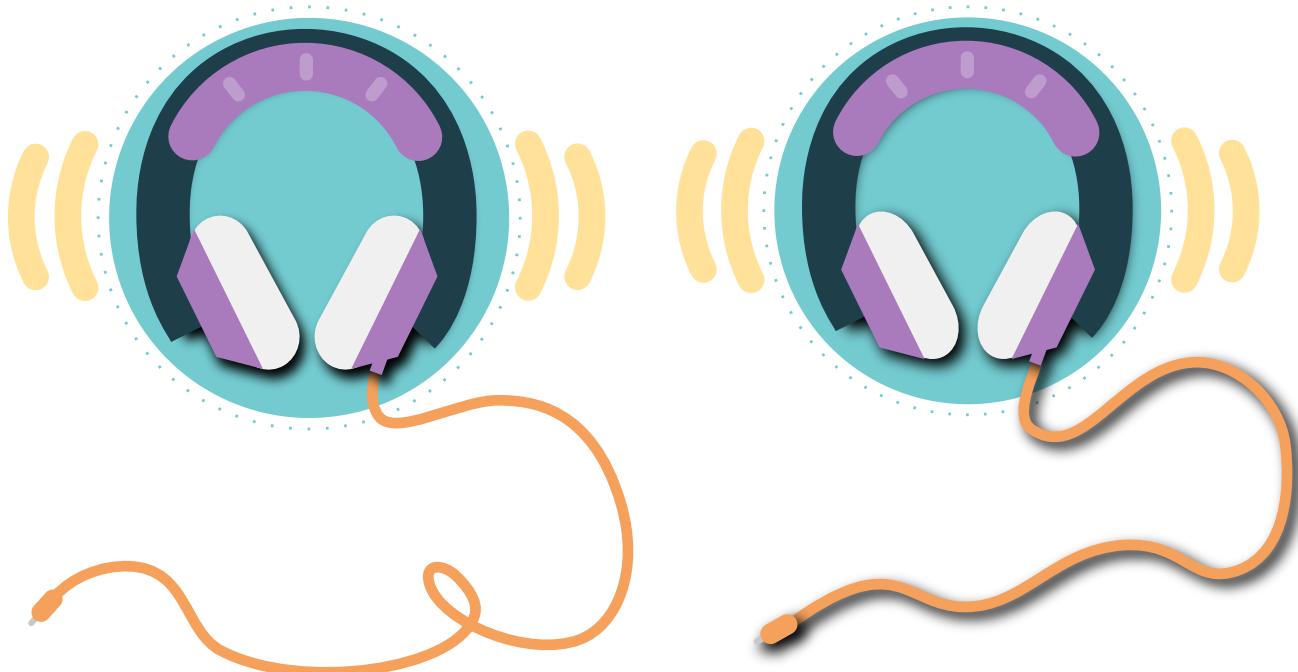
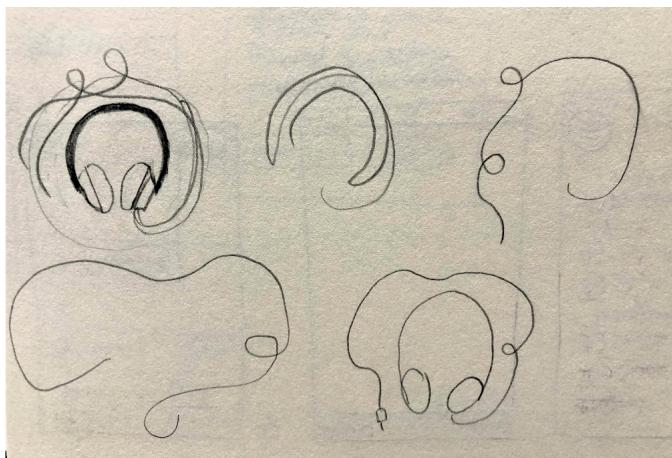
We needed to find a way to utilize empty space and convey the type of media that could be downloaded.

The screenshot shows the IMITATE application interface. At the top, there is a header bar with a user icon, the name "Codeante", and a dropdown menu "bluefirex". Below the header is a navigation bar with icons for back, forward, home, and search. The main menu includes "DASHBOARD", "LESSONS" (which is highlighted with an orange underline), "RESULTS", and "SELF-REFLECTION TOOL". On the right side, there is a user profile for "Laura Smith" (User) with a question mark icon. The main content area displays a lesson titled "Title of Lesson Lorem Ipsum ⓘ Communication and Delivery: Presence as a Public". Below the title, there are two tabs: "INTRODUCTION" (underlined in orange) and "SUMMARY". The introduction text reads: "Presence as a Public Speaker is about having the sufficient amount of knowledge in a subject matter to clearly, comfortably, and confidently explain the material to an audience. The more knowledgeable an instructor is with the material, the more relaxed he or she will be with presenting the topic, allowing the instructor to focus on charismatic and dynamic speaking abilities in their delivery. The strength of an instructor's delivery and their presence as a public speaker directly influences the audience's view of the instructor's credibility and knowledge in the subject matter."

IMITATE / Manage Lessons

Design Process

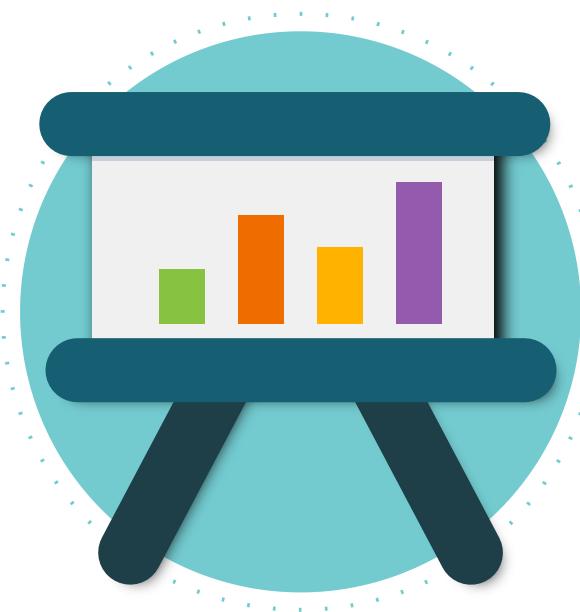
My early sketches tended to be a bit too complex. When I put the graphics together in Illustrator, I simplified features and made several versions.



IMITATE / Manage Lessons

Final Graphics

To maintain consistency, I used the same circle background and rounded corners. (The presentation graphic reuses an existing graphic.)



IMITATE / Manage Lessons

Final Mockup

I sought to bring attention to the call-to-action with the final mockups.

