

Module 7 – How to Prototype

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Introduction

Now that you have an idea to work with, let's talk about how to prototype it.

In this session, you are expected to outline your solution. That might be creating a physical object, or sketching the new policy recommendation.

So what is a prototype, and how can it help?

Prototyping

Prototyping is about bringing ideas to life quickly, sharing them with the people you are designing for, and then continuously learning and evolving your ideas to lead to more effective, impactful solutions.

Traditionally, implementing a solution or bringing a idea to market may have meant allocating significant resources, time, and money.

This rush- to-market approach often brought with it a high risk of failure.

Why Prototyping

There are mainly couple of reasons as follow;

1. To shape your ideas
2. To continue reflecting on and refining your idea
3. To test your idea and see if you need to pursue it

4. To reduce risks of failure

As said, Prototyping, significantly reduces this risk by encouraging small, rough experiments and in-context field-testing early and often throughout the design process to catch potential failures while you can still learn from them.

By getting feedback, learning from failures, integrating these lessons into your design, and evolving ideas quickly, you'll watch your idea prove its value.

How to prototype

While there are many methods you can use to Prototype, we will focus on these core four: Storyboarding, Rapid Prototyping, Getting Feedback, and Integrating Feedback and Iterating.

It can be helpful to start prototyping by breaking your idea into smaller, key moments. A great way to do this is by creating a Storyboard that illustrates how a customer/user might potentially interact with your idea over time.

In addition to Storyboarding, you'll want to build out prototypes that make the idea even more tangible.

This lets people try out and experience your solution so they can give you feedback.

This may require building some simple physical objects or tools, sketching out some rough digital mockups, redesigning an environment to better support new behaviors, or perhaps role playing the service experience with the help of a few supporting props.

You'll notice from the photos that all of these prototypes can be very rough and simple. Build out just enough to get your core idea across and to get useful feedback from your design team and then from the person you're testing your idea with. In the case of digital prototyping, for example, a human-centered designer would first test an idea by sketching possible key screens on Post-its and then testing the flow with a user before trying to write code for an actual mobile phone app.

Putting your prototype into the hands of real people and getting feedback is the first step toward improving your solution. Feedback will enable you to learn from your audience, understand what's working, and gain inspiration on how to make your idea even better. When asking for feedback, keep the following in mind:

- Introduce your prototype as a work in progress. Tell those who are testing it that you'd like their feedback to help make it better.
- Invite participants to treat your rough prototype as if it were real.
- Invite honesty, stay neutral, and be curious. Rather than trying to 'sell' your idea to people, genuinely try to understand how they feel about it and experience it. Otherwise, they may just say what they think you want them to say. What excites them about the idea? What seems to confuse or frustrate them? How would they want to make it better?
- Be prepared to integrate feedback and iterate on-the-fly.

Prototyping Methods

Let's imagine that you develop an application called Citizen which allows citizens to work with the municipality to report breakage and urban damages. In this case, you can use following methods for prototyping:

Journey Map: Imagine the life cycle of your application from the moment the user hears about your product until they share it with another person.

Storyboard: View different environments (inside the car, on foot...) during which the user is using the application and anticipate any constraints that may arise.

Roleplay: Create a scenario of the language and approach of the prototype that could convince municipality officials to embrace the concept and become strategic and technical partners.

Physical (Quick) Prototype: Create screenshots of the various interfaces and imagine the user's interaction with the application's features.

Assignment

Now it's time for you to build! Work with your team to begin to bring your idea to life through a rough prototype.

So build quickly and focus on the one or two parts of your prototype to learn more about in the field.

Consider what questions you're trying to answer and how much (or how little) you need to build in order to learn the answer.

Please make first rough prototype and take into account that this prototype is meant to be a test with potential users to learn more about how they could really work

In this session, we just want you to focus on how users try and respond to your prototype, as well as what they do or do not find valuable about your initial concept.