

Focus and Empathy worksheet

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Key takeaway: Designing great experiences is central to creating value. Focus and Empathy can help you design great experiences for your users. Challenge yourself to incorporate these ideas into your design process!

Make it actionable: What project (your key priority at work, side project, dissertation...) is your focus here?

Strategy is about FOCUS

Come up with a mantra for your project.

Reverse engineer the user experience principles of a product or service you like (e.g. Mint, Flip, iPhone, etc.).

Brainstorm two or three key experience principles for your project.

Sketch, mock up, or draft an “artifact from the future” (product box, newspaper article, etc.) for your project. (See <http://tinyurl.com/product-vision> for more details).

Think about features or product themes you're considering or working on. Which could you say “no” to?

Research is about EMPATHY

Describe one of your customers, in as much detail as possible. Give him or her a name and sketch a picture.

Now describe the key need, motivation or pain point you are addressing for the person you just described.

Walk through your current product, service, or prototype, step by step. Putting yourself in the shoes of the customer you sketched (above), ask:

- How obvious and easy to access are the most important actions?
- Are we using plain language that communicates quickly and is easy for our customers to understand?

What's one small thing you can do THIS WEEK to get “outside the building” and reach out to a customer, like the person you just described? Questions to consider (more at <http://tinyurl.com/customer-development-interview>)...

- How is your customer currently dealing with this task/problem? (What solution/process are they using?)
- What do they like about their current solution/process?
- What do they wish they could do that currently isn't possible or practical?
- If they could do [answer to the above question], how would that make their lives better?
- Who is involved with this solution/process? How long does it take?
- What is their state of mind when doing this task? How busy/hurried/stressed/bored/frustrated?
[note: learn this by watching their facial expressions and listening to their voice]
- How much time or money would they be willing to invest in a solution that made their lives easier?

Interview guidelines and tips: <http://tinyurl.com/ux-interviews>

Recommended reading: [Click](#) (Brafman) and [Just Listen](#) (Goulston).

If you are already interacting with users/customers in your work, reflect on what methods and techniques you are using. Can you gain additional insights by adding observational methods to complement interviews (or vice versa)? Can you improve the depth of understanding you gain from your research by asking better questions or improving your listening?

Be Present: Intentional, Mutual, Individual, and Attentive.

Listen: Rewire Yourself to Listen, Make the Other Person Feel “Felt”, Be More Interested Than Interesting...