Defining the Problem and Solution

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The Mindset

Better to be specifically wrong than vaguely right.

What’s Your Problem?

• What problem are you solving? Who has it (and how badly)?
• What is your solution?
• What makes your solution valuable?
Overview

- Methods for Needfinding
  - Deep needs
- Process Mapping
- The 5 Whys
- Practice applying what you learned

What’s Your Solution?

- Define your work in terms of a solution to the problem you’ve identified
- Describe the primary benefits
What’s the Value Proposition?

- For the user, what’s the most important benefit?
- How would you measure its value (to the user)?

To a child with a hammer, everything looks like a nail.
Nothing is more dangerous than an idea when it is the only one we have.
Solve the problem
Don’t just make a “better” cab

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vs.

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Know the problem
Don’t just build a “better” store

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Methods for Needfinding

Broad Needfinding
- Buglists
- Observations
- Mindmapping

Deep Needfinding
- Structured interviews and observations
- Process mapping
- 5 Whys analysis
What Is The Underlying Problem?

“Customers don’t want drills, they want holes...”

...or do they?

Deep Needs

Needs that are:

• Not obvious without a deep understanding of the people engaged in the activities

• Relatively timeless and significant
$3 \text{ or } $27

Working alone for 5 minutes, then sharing in your groups for 10 minutes.

Revisit the first draft definition of the real world problem you are solving.
Find the Deep Needs

Bug Lists

- A great way to discover unmet needs is to keep a bug list. Any time that you notice something that takes too much time, is complicated, or seems inconvenient to your consumer, write it down on your list.
- Refer to your bug list later to see if it sparks any ideas for inventions or improvements.
Process Mapping

- Process mapping is a tool to understand the complete experience surrounding a problem/process/activity
- Start with the problem/activity you are considering (e.g. digital photography)
  - Take the user’s point of view, and mentally pull back to the earliest stage of the process (e.g. planning a trip, packing a camera, anticipating a shot, etc.)
  - Step through every element of the activity, recording it
  - Analyze your map: what happens at each of these stages? Why? How do the stages relate? What opportunities do you see?

The 5 Whys

A technique for quickly finding the root cause of a problem.

Developed in the Toyota Production System, the 5 Whys involves looking at any problem and asking:

- “Why?”
- “What caused this problem?”

Use it to explore the cause/effect relationships underlying a particular problem.
The 5 Whys: Example

Applying What You’ve Learned

Take 5 minutes to identify your problem and solution and we’ll report out

Remember, don’t sell the solution...sell the problem