

# **DESIGN SPRINT**

## **BOOTCAMP**

**AJ&Smart**

**This booklet belongs to .....**

# EASH WINNER











# **In this booklet:**

<b>What is the Design Sprint?</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>When to use a Design Sprint</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>2-Day Training: Workshop Exercises</b>	<b>7-52</b>
<b>Materials &amp; Setup</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>Prototyping and Testing Tools</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>User Recruitment</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Prototyping</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>User Testing</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>The Iteration Sprint</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Common Questions</b>	<b>60</b>

# What is the Design Sprint?

## History

Inventor of the Design Sprint, Jake Knapp, was a believer in brainstorming until a fellow Googler dared to ask after a brainstorm session: how do we know they are actually working?

His mission was clear: design a process that combined the benefits of group work: diverse opinions and expertise, with the benefits of individual work: highly detailed solutions to problems. And so, the Design Sprint was born.

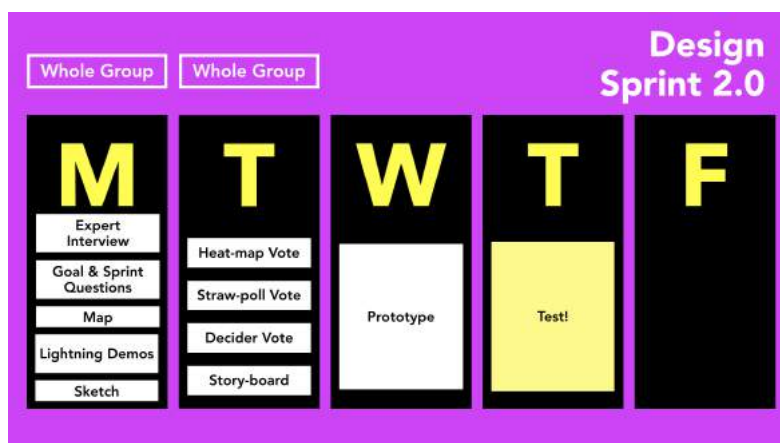
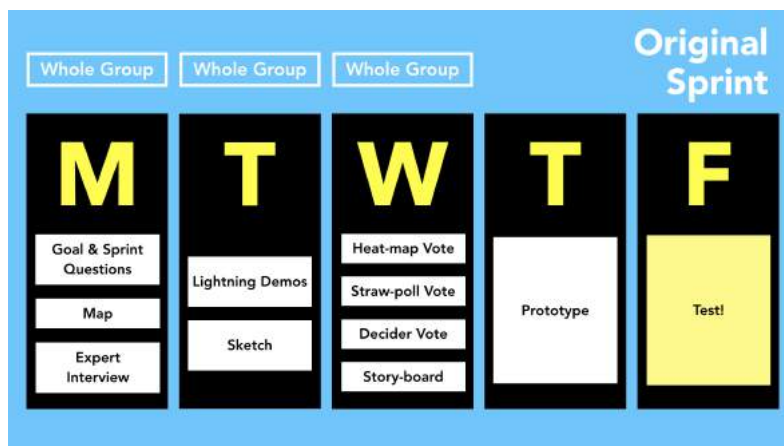
The Design Sprint methodology is a five-day process for testing ideas and solving complex problems. The principle behind it is simple: **getting started is more than important than being right.**

The goal of the sprint process is to convert vague ideas of “what’s wrong” and “will feature X fix it?” into concrete solutions you can actually test with your target users.

## What is the Design Sprint 2.0

Design Sprint 2.0 is AJ&Smart’s ultimate supercut of the original week-long sprint. It’s the only update approved by sprint-inventor Jake Knapp.

It shaves an entire day off the process so you leave with a testable solution in **just four days**, and is optimized to work not just in startups, but also in large organizations that may not be able to commit a full week. We encourage you to use that extra day to reflect on the Sprint week.





# What is the Design Sprint?

## Principles

### Working together alone

#### TOGETHER ALONE

The group works in the same room, while each person has time and space to form their own individual ideas and thoughts.

#### Why?

To equalize different personalities and levels of hierarchy.

### Tangible things over discussion

#### LESS DISCUSSION

Instead of discussing and trying to convince others of our point of view, we let the ideas speak for themselves by writing, sketching or showing examples.

#### Why?

To avoid different interpretations & misunderstandings.

### Getting started > being right

#### GETTING STARTED

Rather than waiting until we all agree that everything is "perfect", we make decisions, move forward, and test our hunches quickly.

#### Why?

To break the cycle of decision paralysis & make some progress!

### Don't rely on creativity

#### CREATIVITY

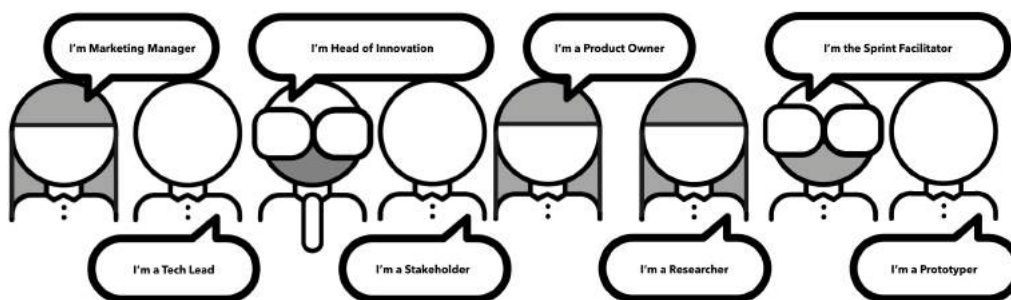
Instead of expecting each person to "feel" creative at the right moment, we use the process to inspire, inform and prepare for idea generation.

#### Why?

Because creativity is unpredictable.

## Team Roles

A Design Sprint should not be made up only of designers! There must be a diverse mix of knowledge and opinions in the room. If someone might cause trouble later by blocking or disagreeing with the outcome, then they should be in the team, so they feel that their opinion has been heard, they will be invested in the outcome, and they won't block it later!



### The Decider

This person will act as a tie-breaker and a decision maker at various points in the process. The Decider must be the person who has the real responsibility over the outcome of the project. In cases where the real decision maker can not join the Sprint they must delegate the responsibility fully to someone else and be prepared to accept the final outcome.

### Expert/s

Someone who knows a lot about the challenge topic. This person or people lead the conversation in the Expert Interview and bring their knowledge to the rest of the team.

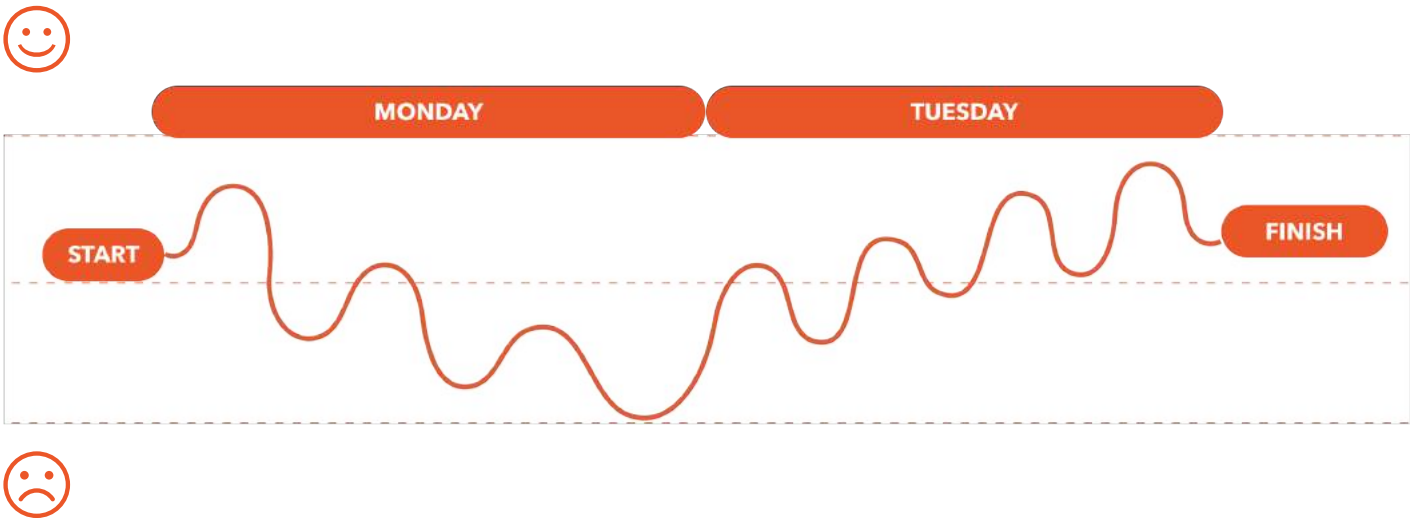
# What is the Design Sprint?

## How You Will Feel

During a Design Sprint there are often moments of doubt and confusion, and then times where everything feels like it's falling in to place.

You will probably feel these peaks and troughs during this training, and if you run a Design Sprint yourself, it will feel less intense if you know when to expect these highs and lows to hit.

Trust the process!





# When to use a Design Sprint?

## Yes, Use It

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- On a high risk challenge
- Offering something new to your market or customer
- When you need alignment and buy-in
- Either at the beginning of a project or at a crisis point

## No, better not

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- On a low impact challenge
- High confidence in proposed solution
- Proven desirability
- Challenge is too broad
- You can do it yourself

## Why We Sprint

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Unstructured brainstorming tends to reward extroverts, punish introverts and prioritize quantity over quality. Summary: they are a poor choice for generating useful solutions.

Here are the top reasons you should use the Design Sprint approach instead:

- Group work and individual work can peacefully and productively coexist in sprints. Structured, timed exercises encourage diverse perspectives and developed ideas (with minimal distractions).
- You get a tangible, repeatable problem-solving process that you can use at will to push your business ideas forward.
- Getting real feedback from your target users means you can champion design based on data, rather than bias or intuition.
- You can secure buy-in from stakeholders from the beginning, before investing lots of time and money.
- You walk away with a prototyped, tested solution.

## Purpose

To align and focus on the core parts of the challenge.

## Exercise

1. Each person starts with a block of rectangular post-its
2. Write "HMW" on the top of each one
3. Listen as the Expert talks, and re-write problems as "How Might We's"



## Examples

Once a customer has a bad experience we find it really hard to get them back

...another problem is that our whole system is really complicated and people don't understand where to start



## Common Pitfalls

- Writing to narrow or broad
- Writing things that already sound like solutions

## How to handle them

- Give examples of good HWMs
- Tell them to just rephrase the problems



# Personal Notes

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.

# Expert Interview (Categorization) Monday

TOGETHER ALONE

LESS DISCUSSION

## Purpose

To help people to read the post-its more easily and with less context switching.  
(Tip: the category names aren't actually that important)

## Exercise

1. Facilitator writes 3 to 5 categories and puts them at the top of the surface
2. Each person chooses their top 3 HWMs and sticks them under the relevant categories (if you can't decide, just pick one)
3. Remove duplicates  
(If anyone sees two post-its with exactly the same meaning they should take one and use it to cover the other post-it)



## Examples

Categories:



Duplicates:



## Common Pitfalls

- Spending time, worrying about the right categories
- Clustering of yellow HMW post-its

## How to handle them

- Tell your team and keep reminding them, that it doesn't need to be perfect, and that quick and dirty is totally fine
- Don't allow clustering. Tell participants to either cover duplicates, or leave them separate





# Expert Interview (Voting) Monday

TOGETHER ALONE

LESS DISCUSSION

GETTING STARTED

## Purpose

To give the whole team a **shared understanding** of the most important parts of the challenge. (we also come back these later and use them in The Map).

## Exercise

1. Each person gets 2 dots (the Decider gets 4)
2. Read all the post-its
3. Place dots on the post-its you think are the most important challenges

(Remember, you can put dots on your own post-its or multiple dots if you feel strongly about a specific problem!)

After voting: The Facilitator makes an ordered list of the post-its by the amount of votes. Leave out anything with no dots.



# Personal Notes

A series of horizontal dotted lines providing space for writing notes.



## Purpose

To give the team a north star so they are working towards a common direction for the rest of the Sprint.

## Exercise

1. Each person takes a block of rectangular post-its
2. And writes 1 sentence about what the future will look like, starting with "In 2 years time..."



## Good Examples:



## Not so useful:



## Common Pitfalls

- Goals that are too broad and vague
- Goals that are not optimistic enough

## How to handle them

- Remind the group that this should be very optimistic, but still needs to be tangible and give a strong future vision to align the team towards a common direction



# 2-Year Goal (Voting)

## Monday

TOGETHER ALONE

LESS DISCUSSION

GETTING STARTED

### Purpose

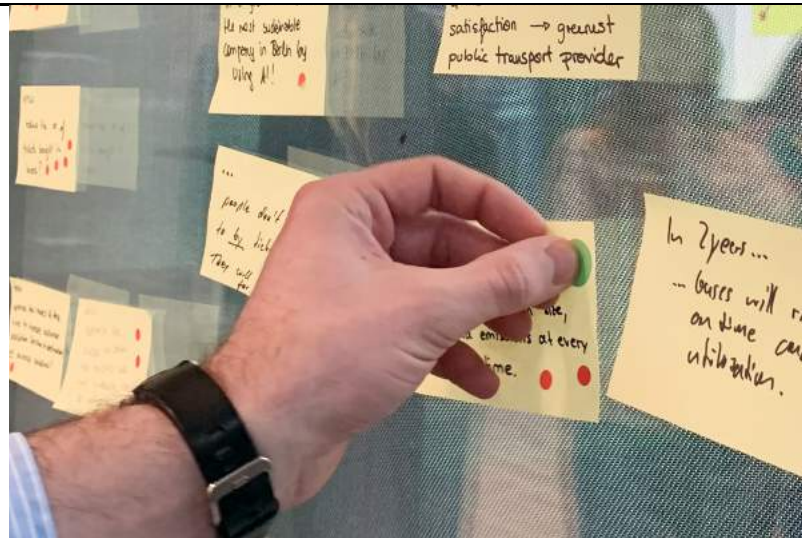
To give the team a north star so they are working towards a common direction for the rest of the Sprint.

### Exercise

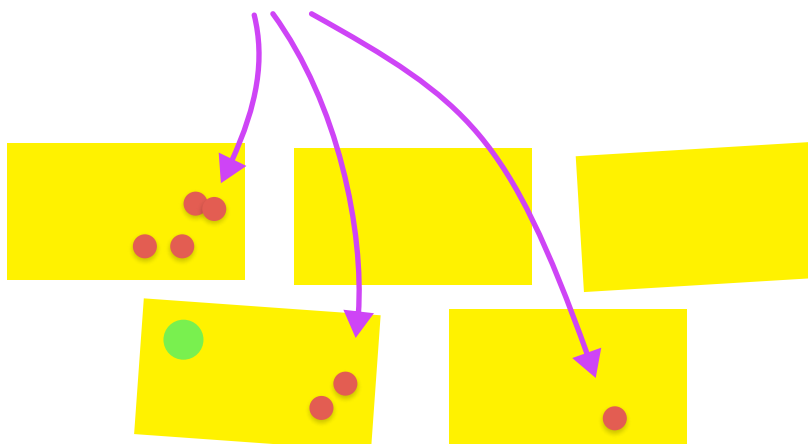
1. One person at a time
2. Stick your post-it on the wall and read it out loud to your team.

**Then:**

3. Each person takes one red dot (except the decider)
4. And chooses the 2-Year Goal they think has the clearest, most inspirational vision for the team
5. Decider makes the final choice with one green dot



### Opinions that help inform the decider







## Purpose

To choose the biggest 3 questions so that the team will stay focused on solving the same problems.

## Exercise

1. Each person takes the rectangular post-its
2. And thinks "what could stop us getting to our goal"
3. Then writes 1-2 questions that they think are important to answer

(Tip: think about the user and the product, rather than things like budget, project resourcing, etc...)



## Examples

### Good



### Not so useful



## Common Pitfalls

- Questions that can't get answered during the Sprint
- Questions that aren't related to the user/product

## How to handle them

- Remind them that we want to answer these by testing with users this week
- Coach the Decider to choose product related (answerable) Questions



## Purpose

To choose the biggest 3 questions so that the team will stay focused on solving the same problems.

## Exercise

1. One person at a time
2. Sticks their post-its on the wall
3. And reads them out loud to their team

### Then:

4. Each person takes 2 red dots (except the decider)
5. And votes for the questions they think are the most important to answer

### After everyone has voted:

6. Decider makes the final choice with three large green dots







## Purpose

To get a high-level overview of the **current** system as a user interacts with it. (So that later we can choose a problem area to work)

## Exercise

1. Facilitator takes the marker and consults the group
2. Write the Actor on the left
3. Write the Objective on the right
4. Write the headings Discover, Learn, Use
5. Fill in what happens in those stages (as much as you can until the time is up)



## Examples

Actor	Discover	Learn	Use	Objective
- Customer	- Google	- Landing/info page	- Signs up	- Fly safely
- User	- Social Media	- Reads article	- Browses catalog	- Get paid
- Employee	- Web ad	- Talks with friend	- Chooses item	- Stay connected
- Train Driver	- Word of mouth	- Goes through onboarding	- Goes to checkout	- Clothes get washed
- Business Passenger	- Flyer	- Explainer video	- Books appointment	- To get from home to work
- Sales Assistant	- Newsletter		- Drives to work	- To learn new skill
- Shopper	- Billboard		- Connects to WiFi	
- Investor	- App notification		- Comes back later	

## Common Pitfalls

- Getting caught up in small details
- Thinking about the future, not the current situation

## How to handle them

- Remind the group that this is about a high-level overview, no small details needed
- Remind that it's about the current situation



# The Map (Part 2 - Adding the HMWs) **Monday**

TOGETHER ALONE

LESS DISCUSSION

GETTING STARTED

## Purpose

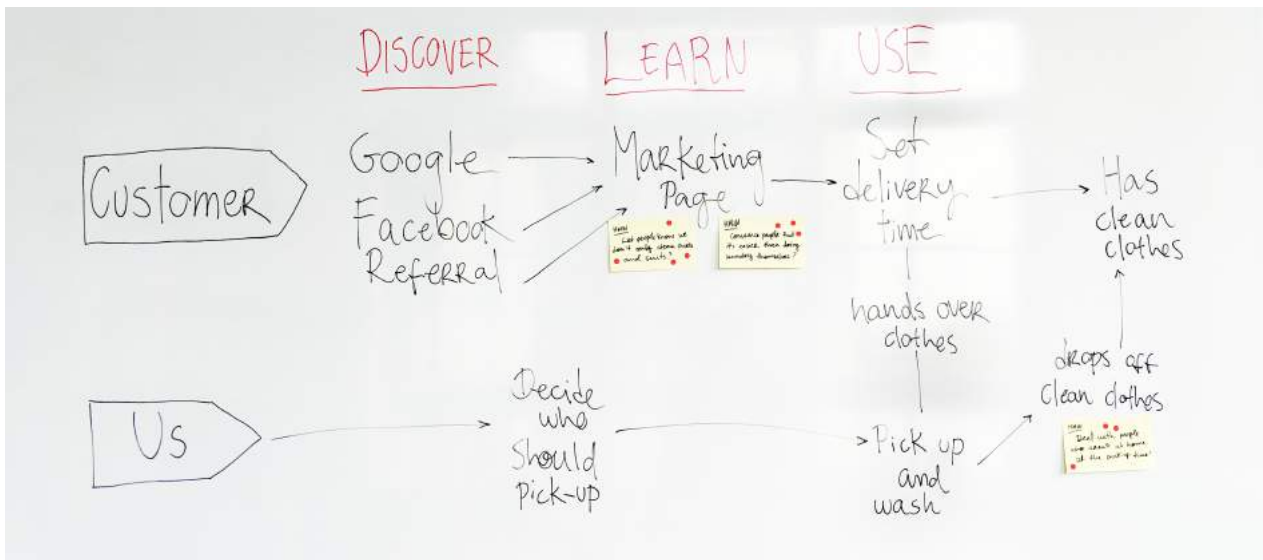
To see roughly where all the most important parts of the challenge sit inside the system (to give some transparency over where the problem area/s might be).

## Exercise

1. Facilitator takes the top HMW
2. Decide together where it fits on the Map (Don't discuss too long. If in doubt, go further left)
3. Place the other HMWs (until the time is up)



## Examples



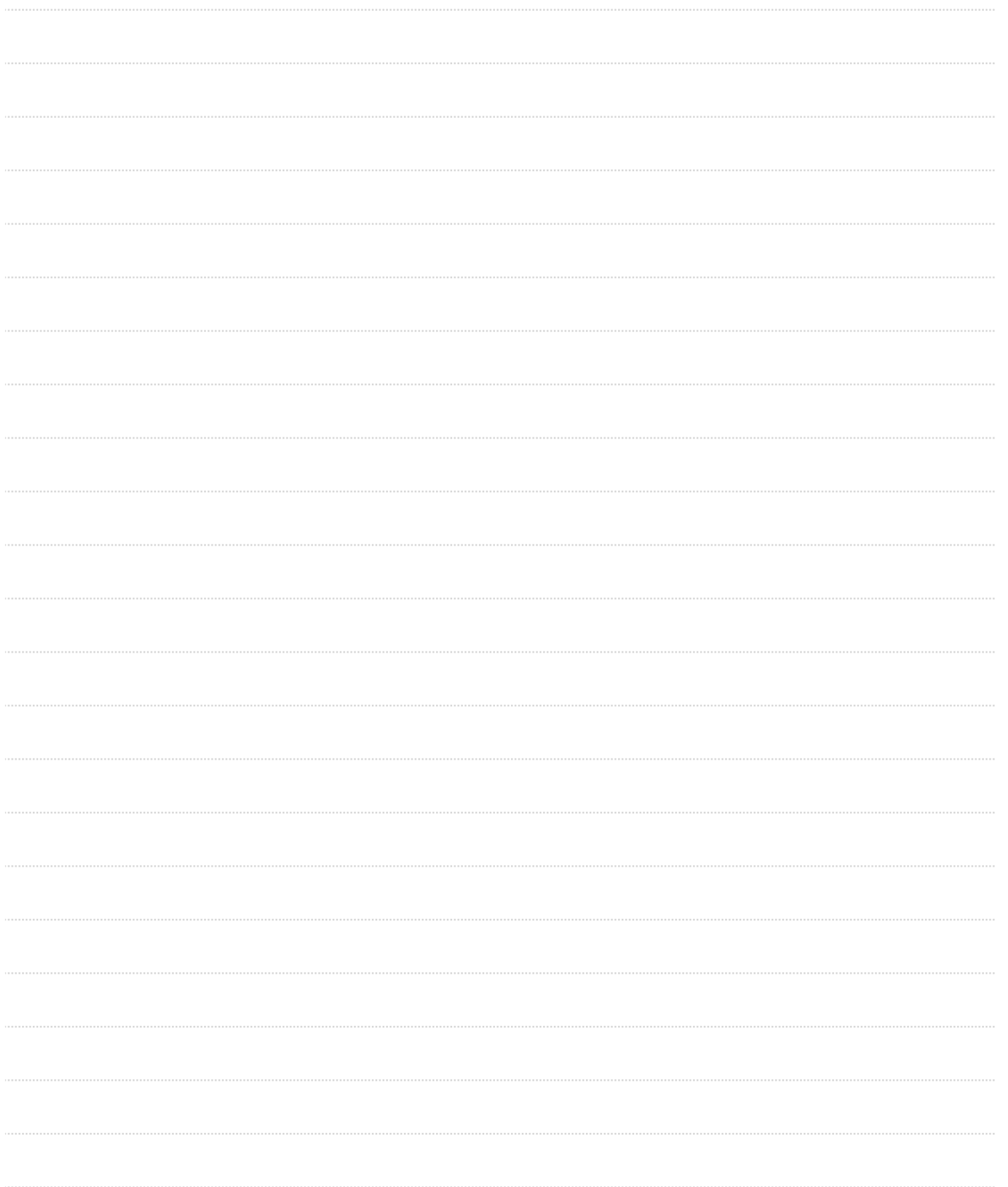
## Common Pitfalls

- Debating for too long where to place a single post-it

## How to handle them

- Remind your team that the position of a single post-it isn't critical. It's the overall trends we want to see.

# Personal Notes



The page contains 28 horizontal dotted lines for writing. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page, providing a guide for handwriting.

# The Map (Part 3 - Choosing the Target) **Monday**

TOGETHER ALONE

LESS DISCUSSION

GETTING STARTED

## Purpose

To choose a problem area in the current situation. One area to focus the team for the rest of the Sprint.

## Exercise

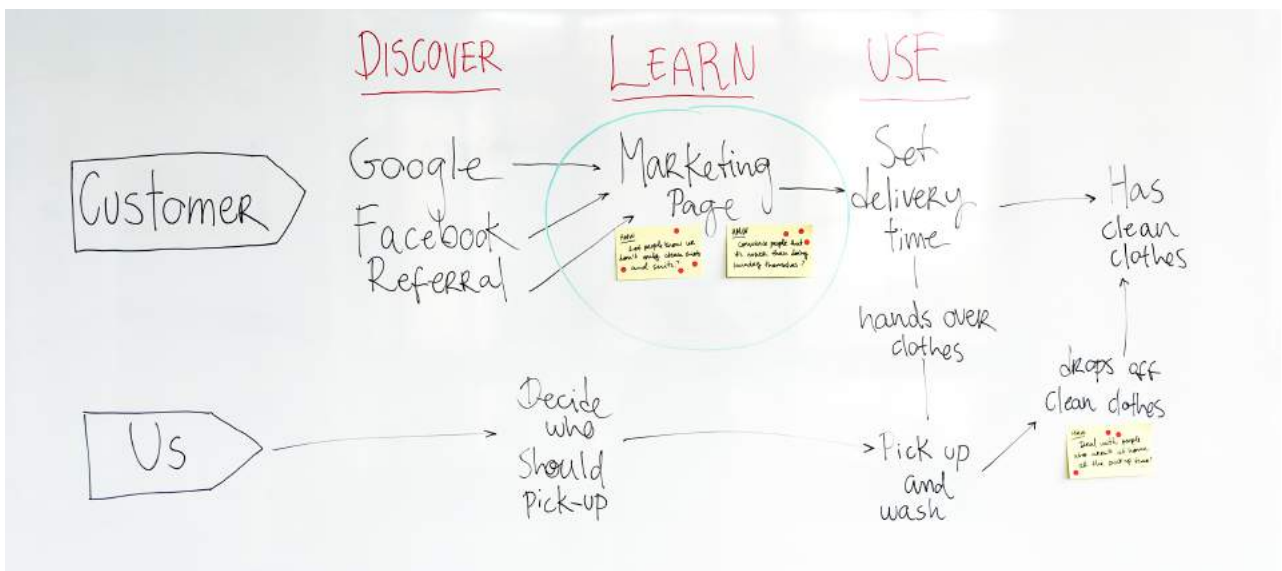
1. Decider takes a coloured marker
2. And chooses an area to focus on for this Sprint (They can consult the team, or just make a decision!)

Tips:

- Focus on the HMWs
- Don't discuss too long
- If in doubt go further left



## Examples



## Common Pitfalls

- Choosing to big of a Target area

## How to handle them

- Remember that the smaller the target area, the better (more focus on one specific thing)





## Purpose

To find inspiration from other products or industries that are already solving similar problems.

## Exercise

1. Use the internet
2. Find an inspiring example worth showing to your team
3. Write a post-it



## Examples

### Slack

**BIG IDEA:** Presentation of their marketing message

- leaves out content people are already familiar with
- focuses only on new features

### Amazon

**BIG IDEA:** Personalised suggestions based on user's choices

- uses data from other user's relevant behaviour
- automated and scaleable

### Google Maps

**BIG IDEA:** Personalized suggestions to explore a city

- uses reviews of other users for recommendations
- suggests events and activities near by

## Common Pitfalls

- Not keeping the Target area of the Map & Sprint Questions in mind

## How to handle them

- Remind team that you're trying to find solutions to the things you've chosen to focus on



## Purpose

To align the team on the solutions everyone thinks are valuable.

## Exercise

1. One minute per person
2. SHOW the team your Lightning Demo
3. Stick your post-it on the wall

### Tip:

- Turn your device around and show what you are talking about, even if it's just the webpage, or an image



## Common Pitfalls

- Not showing the team a tangible example
- Talking too long

## How to handle them

- Remind your team to SHOW if they don't
- Set a timer for every presentation



# 3-Part Sketching

## (Part 1 - Notes & Ideas) Monday

TOGETHER ALONE

GETTING STARTED

CREATIVITY

### Purpose

Writing words allows thoughts to form, gets the creative juices flowing and starts to flex your visual communication muscles.

### Exercise

1. Take a clip-board
2. Write the 2-Year Goal
3. Write the Sprint Questions
4. Write down your favourite Lightning Demos
5. Start to make some thoughts visual







# 3-Part Sketching (Part 2 - Crazy 8s) Monday

TOGETHER ALONE

GETTING STARTED

CREATIVITY

## Purpose

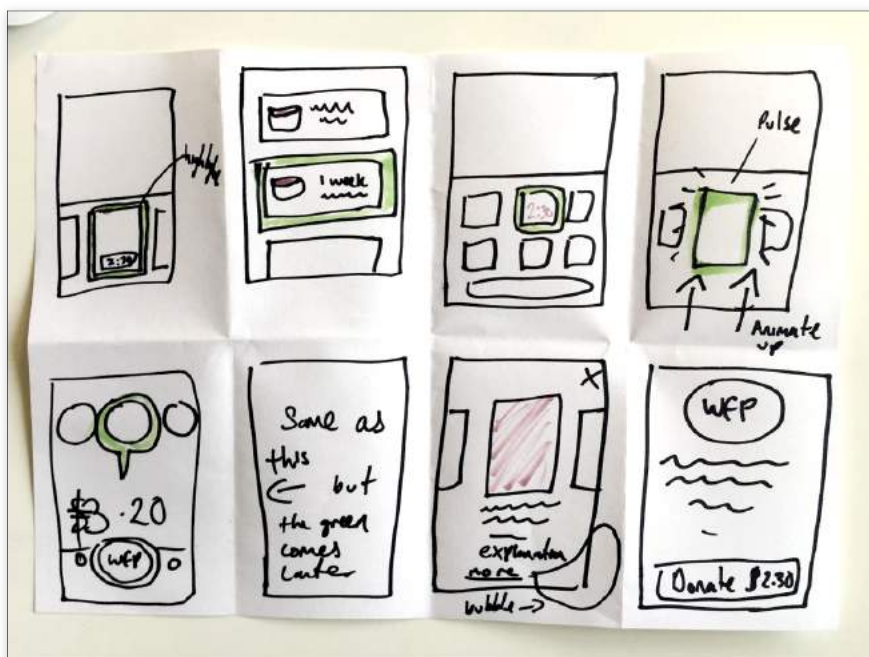
To push beyond your first thought.

## Exercise

1. Fold a sheet of paper 3 times
2. Now look back at your ideas
3. Choose 1 idea you'd like to pursue (circle it)
4. Draw it eight different ways  
(1 drawing for each minute)



## Example





# 3-Part Sketching

## (Part 3 - Concept Sketch) Monday

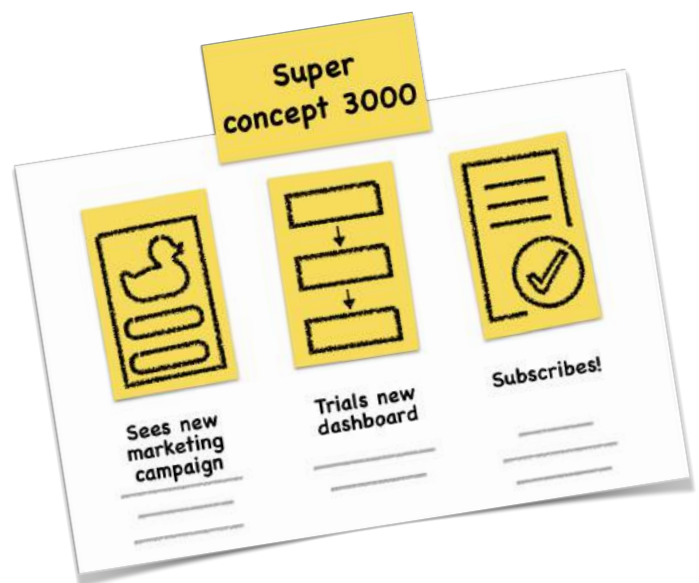
TOGETHER ALONE

### Purpose

Organise your ideas into a clear story so that your team-mates understand your ideas.

### Exercise

1. Sketch the story on 3 rectangular post-its
2. Stick them on a sheet of paper
3. Write a caption and a few annotations
4. Choose a catchy title for your concept



### Common Pitfalls

- Unclear annotations
- Messy handwriting

### How to handle them

- Remind your team that everyone on the Sprint has to understand what your idea is.
- The annotations are your voice. They are what you would say if you were able to pitch your idea.



## Purpose

To filter the ideas and collect a “heat map” of opinions. To help us make our “real vote” later.

## Exercise

1. Each person re-reads the sprint questions
2. Looks at each of the concepts
3. Places dots on each small idea that they think is a good way to answer one of the Questions
4. Use as many dots as you can!  
(it's about registering your interest)

### Tips:

- You could choose something crazy because it's a great time to take risks
- Or because it's a very simple idea and it just might work!



## Common Pitfalls

- Not using enough dots to make a clear “heat map”

## How to handle them

- Remind your team to use multiple dots on ideas that really stand out



# Personal Notes

A page of lined paper for personal notes. The page features a yellow header with the text 'Personal Notes' in a bold, black, sans-serif font. Below the header, the page is filled with horizontal dashed lines, providing a guide for writing. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins or other markings on the page.

## Purpose

To help inform the Decider about everyone's opinion, and why they think that it's the right way to go.

## Exercise

1. Everyone look back over the concepts (except the Decider)
2. Decide (in your head) on a concept you think we should prototype and test
3. Write the concept name on a post-it, and the reasons why you are choosing it (so you can explain quickly later)

### After everyone decided (in their head):

5. Write your initials on a large green dot (except the Decider)
6. Wait until everyone is ready
7. Place your dot at the same time as your team mates!



## Common Pitfalls

- Someone revealing their decision before everyone is ready to place their dots

## How to handle them

- Remind your team to wait and keep their decision a secret until it's time to place the dot



## Purpose

To make a fast decision and choose one direction to test first.

**Getting started is more important than being right!**

## Exercise

1. Each person takes turns to explain their vote to the Decider
2. When ready, the Decider has 2 green dots:
  - One to choose a main concept
  - And another to choose an extra feature
3. The Decider explains their choice to the team



## Common Pitfalls

- The Decider wanting to “cheat” and use more than 2 dots

## How to handle them

- Coach the Decider and remind them that we are here to make fast progress. No matter which concept is chosen, we will learn a lot from testing and find the right direction.

# Personal Notes

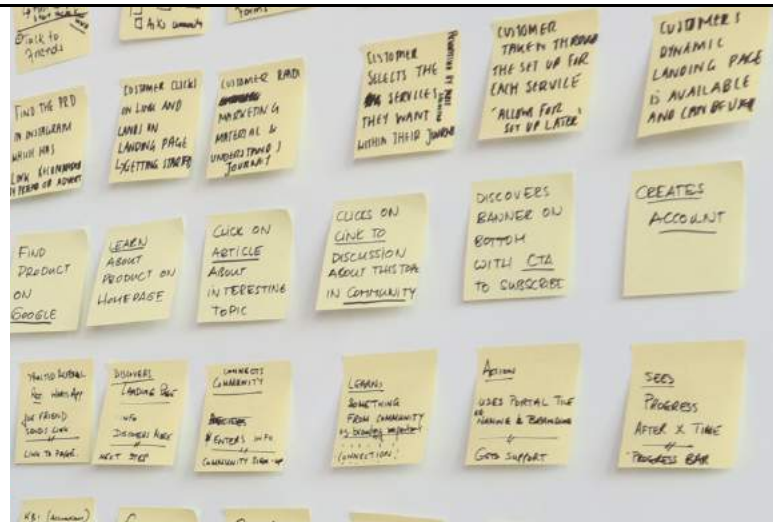
A series of horizontal dotted lines providing a template for writing notes.

### Purpose

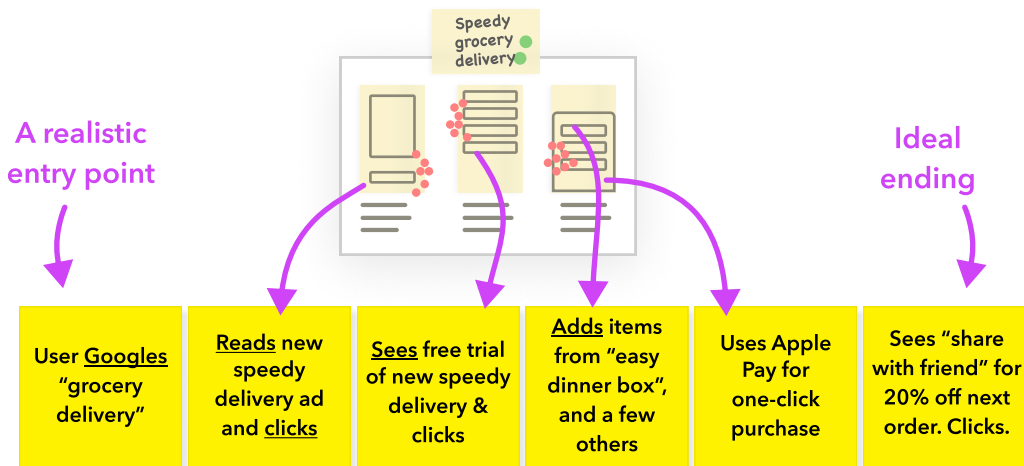
To decide what will be in our Prototype! How we will show the “winning” concept to a user, so that we can get their reactions to each part of the idea (including whether they are actually interested in our new idea!).

### Exercise

1. Everyone takes the square yellow post-its
2. Looks back at the “winning” solution sketch
3. Writes 6 steps that they think are a good way to guide a user through the solution



### Examples



### Common Pitfalls

- Forgetting that the first step (post-it) should be designed to test the user’s interest in the idea
- Thinking that the test flow has to cover the entire product (it’s only the things we want to test)

### How to handle them

- Remind the team to write the “entry point”
- Remind the team that the User Test Flow is only about creating a story to validate the idea with a simple prototype





## Purpose

To choose one simple, clear way to test our idea with users.

## Exercise

1. Starting with the Decider, each person takes turns to read out their post-its quickly and stick them up in the grid rows.
2. Take turns until they are all up.

### After everyone is done:

3. Everyone takes 1 red dot (except the decider)
4. And votes on the row they think is the clearest

### Then:

5. The Decider takes two large green dots
6. And chooses one row (blue A, B, C, ...)
7. And has one more optional dot for an extra step to include (yellow post-it)





## Purpose

The purpose of the storyboard is to leave no open questions for the prototypers. To avoid unnecessary effort we start by using relevant sketches that are already in the room.

## Exercise

1. Facilitator draws 8 "cells" on the whiteboard (a few more than the post-its)
2. Places User Test Flow post-its inside
3. Look at all the sketches & direct the team to find drawings we can re-use
4. Cut & stick them in the cells



## Examples



## Common Pitfalls

- Adding new ideas from other concepts

## How to handle them

- Make sure you are only collecting relevant sketches that illustrate existing ideas from the "winning" sketch. Not adding new ideas.



## Purpose

To visualise the prototype, and create all the details so that the prototypers don't need to create any new information the next day.

## Exercise

1. Fill in the missing pieces with drawings
2. Start with the first cell
3. Then the last cell
4. Then the rest



## Examples





## Purpose

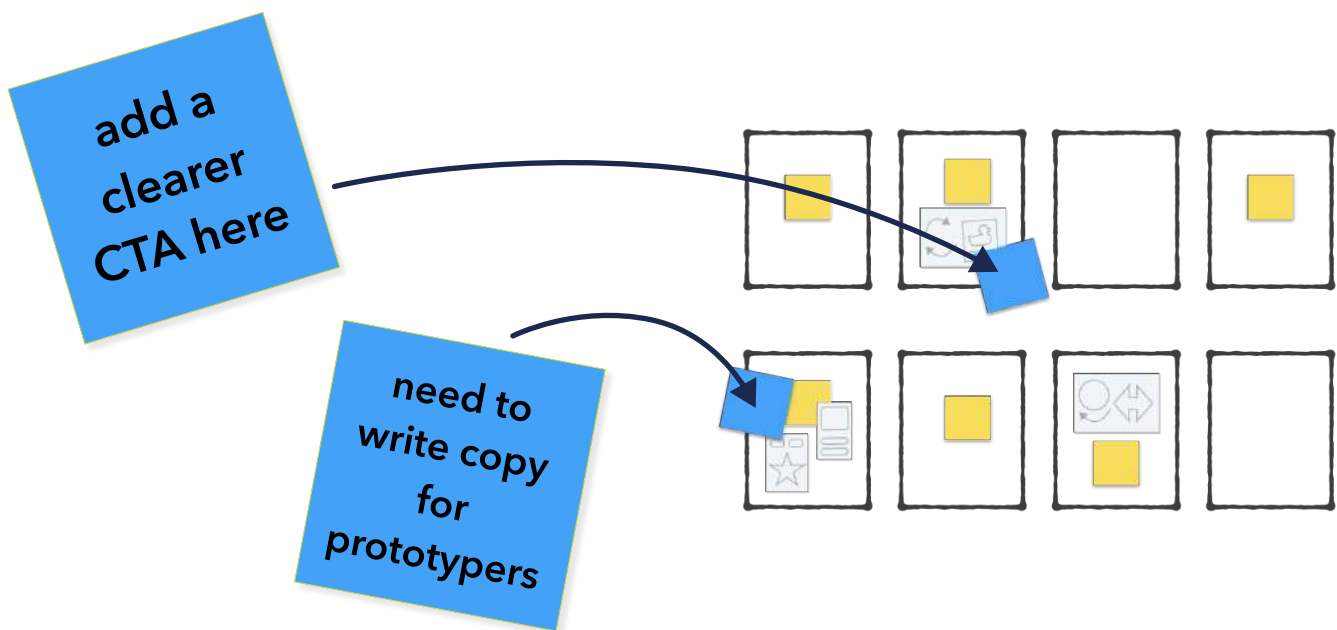
A final run through to make sure we didn't miss any big, important steps

## Exercise

1. One person narrates the whole storyboard out loud to the group
2. If any big gaps or problems are spotted, write it on a blue post-it, stick it on the board, and come back to it later. (1-3 post-its max.)
3. Use the remaining time to address any blue post-its



## Examples







## Workshop Materials

### Must have

- Rectangular post-its (yellow)
- Square post-its (yellow)
- Square post-its (blue or pink)
- Small red dots (8mm)
- Large green dots (18mm)
- Sharpies or thick markers
- Sticky tape
- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- White paper (A4 or letter size)
- Smaller notebook paper (A6 or half letter)
- Snacks & drinks

### Great to have

- Time Timer or other visual timer
- Magic Whiteboard Paper
- Camera to record activities
- Speaker for music
- A screen to show instructions or examples

### The Sprint space

- A dedicated room
- Table & chairs
- 2 large whiteboards  
(Magic Paper if whiteboards aren't possible)
- Natural light
- Access to fresh air



# Prototyping and Testing Tools

These are the tools that AJ&Smart is using as of 2019. You can use whichever tools you like or that your organisation already uses. This list is intended to give you a headstart if you don't know where to start.

## Prototyping

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### Digital prototypes

- Figma (collaborative UI design)
- Marvel (for connecting clickable screens)
- Keynote (for sales deck/pitch design)
- Online icon libraries (there are many)

### Physical prototypes

This list could be endless.  
Here are a few examples.

- Paper
- Cardboard
- Existing packaging / products
- Printer (e.g. quick labelling & branding)
- Scissors
- Glue

## User Recruitment

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- Facebook ads (to reach a specific pool of potential users)
- Typeform or Google Forms (for surveys to qualify target users)
- Amazon Gift Cards (for incentives)

## User Testing

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- Zoom (video conferencing)
- Loom (screen recording)

# User Recruitment

## Before the Sprint (or as early as possible)

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### Day 2 Afternoon & Day 3

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- Refine your target user profile on Day 2 afternoon (if needed)
- Manually choose a pool of 10 suitable testers from the survey respondents:
  - Email to confirm time slot
  - Choose a mix, e.g. gender, age, common behavior
  - Contact 10 testers first and if you do not hear back, contact others
  - Make sure you leave time for a lunch break!
  - For later time slots have 1 or 2 backup testers lined up
- Email the users with clear information about how the test interview will work:
  - They need a computer with a good internet connection
  - And a web cam (e.g. on a laptop)
  - Confirm the time of the call
  - The link to join the video call
- Send a calendar invite to all test users

## Decide on Key Screens/Pieces

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## Delegate and Assign Work

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- Before you start prototyping, decide who is working on which screen
- Start with a team huddle and make sure responsibilities are clear to everyone
- If you can, get help finding the right content (e.g. copy or photos from the marketing team)

## Two Check-Ins

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- Do two check-ins with the rest of the team (15 mins each)
  - Around midday or just before lunch
  - 1 hour before finish time (no new work should be started after this)
- Someone outside the prototyping team should organise drinks, snacks and lunch



## Preparation

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## User Test Interviews

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During the testing day, two people participate in the interview with the users. One person should do all the talking, and the other takes notes on two different colored post-its: one color for positive comments and one color for negative comments or confusion (we use green and orange).

One of the prototypers should sit in the back of the room and listen to be ready to make quick tweaks to parts of the prototype that influences the effectiveness of the test e.g. a button label which doesn't make sense to the user.

Example schedule:

9:00am	Team huddle
10:00am	1st interview
11:00am	Break & time for tweaking/fixing prototype "bugs"
12:00pm	2nd interview
1:00pm	3rd interview
2:00pm	Lunch (Back-up user also scheduled here)
3:00pm	4th interview
4:00pm	5th interview
5:00pm	Back-up user scheduled in case

## No-shows and Back-ups

In the case that someone cancels or doesn't show up you can quickly contact one of the back-up users.

Sending a short reminder email one hour before the interview greatly reduces the chance of no-shows. And if someone does cancel, you now have a little time to schedule a back-up.

If all the users show up you should email the back-up users as soon as possible and let them know they are not required but they will still receive the incentive (e.g. Amazon voucher).

## Incentives

Send the incentives to the users as soon as is convenient, e.g. the next day. And let the user know during the interview when they can expect to receive it.





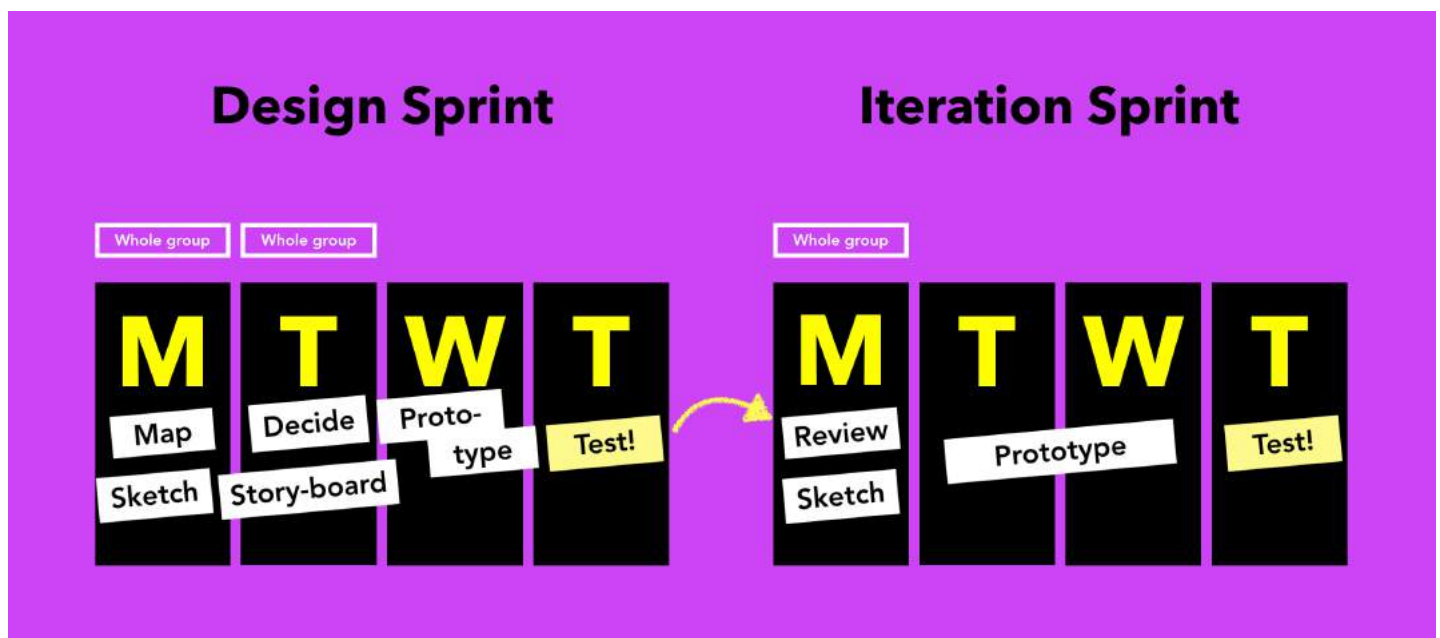
# The Iteration Sprint

## What is an Iteration Sprint?

The purpose of Design Sprints is to validate (or invalidate) a solution direction to find out if it's worth investing time, money and resources to make it.

In a single Design Sprint it's a totally valid outcome to identify that the solution is not worth building! In fact it's quite common to find that at least some parts of the solution direction didn't test well with users. It can also happen that the results are inconclusive. Perhaps the general direction could work, but the implementation needs some tweaking to get real user validation.

An Iteration Sprint is a second Sprint which is done immediately after a Design Sprint. But instead of starting again from scratch, you take the results and insights from the user test interviews and use those as a starting point.



In the Iteration Sprint, many parts of the process are similar, however there are some key differences.

There is only one workshop day instead of two. The Map & Target, 2-Year Goal, and original Sprint Questions do not change. So you don't need to repeat those steps (you will write three additional Sprint Questions for a total of six). You also don't need to repeat the Storyboard because you will only update pieces of the original Prototype, not start from scratch.

Because you save a day, you can take two days to create the updated Prototype. Making sure that you spend enough time to test all the things that you need validated and answered.

### Iteration Monday exercises:

- Review tester feedback
- Uncover main problems
- Write 3 extra Sprint Questions
- Lightning Demos (if needed)
- 3-Part Sketching
- Concept Voting
- Decider Vote (3 dots)

# Common Questions

## Before the Sprint

### **How do I find the right type and size of challenge for a Design Sprint?**

It should be high-risk, difficult to solve, have a tight deadline, or have a danger of misalignment between teams. Any one of those is reason enough. If your challenge has two or more of these criteria, even better! You will likely have more success with a Design Sprint than without.

However, it's a common mistake to start a Design Sprint with a challenge that is too broad. A good rule of thumb is to try and imagine how someone could sketch a solution idea on a piece of paper.

E.g. *"How will the new overnight delivery for our online clothing store work?"* You could imagine a sketch might include: how the customer chooses delivery preferences; messages keeping the customer informed of the status; and perhaps the mode of transport.

Now consider a challenge like *"Our online clothing store needs an overhaul! We need to update the site navigation, the browsing experience, the checkout process, the payment system and the home delivery service"*. Can you imagine how someone might sketch some ideas for that on a piece of paper? There are too many things to ask a group of people to focus on clear solutions. Break the challenge up and tackle the most important part first.

### **Which different people / roles do I need in a Sprint team?**

A good way to think about this is *"Which roles would be involved after the Sprint?"*, *"Who could block this or get in the way?"*. Those people (or representatives of those teams) should be in the Sprint. You might need to choose carefully so the team isn't too big as more than 6-8 people can be difficult to manage.

*Check out the front of this booklet for more on "Team Roles"*.

### **What if I can't get the "real" Decider to join the Design Sprint?**

It's very common that the person with the real decision-making power has a very senior role and can't join for two days. In this case they can and should delegate the decision-making power to someone else, and stick to it! It's a sign of a bottle-necked organisation if one person is solely responsible for owning decisions about too many things. Be wary of poisoning people against Design Sprints if the final outcome is rejected by someone who was not in the room.

### **If I can't get all the people / roles to join, should I still run a Design Sprint?**

If you can't get the "real" Decider to join or get them to delegate the authority, then you should not run a Design Sprint. There is a very high chance that the outcome will not be accepted when that person has not been there to decide the direction of the solution.

If you want someone to join but they can't, try to get them to delegate the position to a member of their team, or ask them to commit to accepting the outcome without their input. If you can't do this and a key position on the Sprint Team is missing it may be better to reschedule the Sprint.

## How can I convince people that Design Sprints are worth doing?

This is a very common question. It feels like a big commitment to take two full days from busy people to run the workshop part of the Sprint. Usually it's because people don't realise that this usually saves weeks or months of time later on. The best way to convince people is to SHOW them the outcomes.

The two best ways of doing this are: 1. Run a Design Sprint with some of your colleagues who are already interested (or perhaps with a charity for free), make sure you document the process with photos, and then show the results to the people you want to convince (your internal leadership team or potential clients); or 2. Run a short workshop that shows the power of this way of working (e.g. the Lightning Decision Jam) and people will experience the speed and effectiveness for themselves.

*Tip: Share this AJ&Smart YouTube video: "So why is EVERYONE using Design Sprints?"*

## How much preparation is needed, and what should I prepare?

You can go in to a Design Sprint with very little / no preparation! All the necessary "preparation" is actually built in to the Design Sprint, in the Expert Interview, Goal & Questions, and Map.

However, you *can* prepare some things to start with confidence as a facilitator and give yourself a higher likelihood of a smooth Sprint. At AJ&Smart we interview our clients before the Sprint, and from that prepare some draft options of HMWs, Goals, Sprint Questions, Lightning Demos and we sketch a draft Map. All these things are then expanded and voted upon during the Sprint workshop exercises. You should not skip any exercises with the group because you prepared them in advance. Preparation is there to get you started. It's not a pre-determined decision.

# The Workshop Days

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## What is the difference between HMWs and Can We questions?

It's no wonder that this is confusing. These two things look and feel very similar. The big difference between these two exercises is the purpose. What are we using them for?

The purpose of the HMW questions is to capture all the different parts of the challenge, and align the whole team on their understanding of the topic, especially the most important parts. The HMWs are about problem framing.

The purpose of the Can We questions (A.K.A. Sprint Questions) is to specifically define what obstacles we need to solve to find a successful solution. The Can We questions are used to guide Solution Sketching, Prototyping, and User Testing.

## What should we do with challenges and ideas that don't get chosen?

The Design Sprint helps teams focus on fewer things to make faster progress. When the team sees so many problems being raised and multiple potential solutions being defined, it's very tempting to want to save these topics to work on later. But if you give yourself another long to-do list you will find yourself back in the same loop of endless ideas and no real progress. We strongly recommend that you let go of the desire to keep everything and trust that the important topics will return next time.

# Common Questions

## **The Sprint Questions (Can We's) are so important. How do I make sure to have "good" ones?**

It's important to have clear and specific Sprint Questions that define the three most important obstacles, so that we can validate whether the chosen solutions will be successful.

The most common mistake is to choose Sprint Questions which aren't about the user. The Design Sprint is about validating a solution with users to confirm that when we invest time and money to build this, it will succeed.

If you see Questions that are relating to internal blockers (e.g. budget, approvals, resourcing) the Decider should be coached to not vote on these. These are challenges that fall outside of the Design Sprint process.

## **What should I do if I can't sketch at all? How will I get my ideas noticed?**

The idea of making a Solution Sketch can be very daunting, especially if you don't like to draw. Although it's called a "sketch" you don't actually have to do much drawing. You just need to show your solution idea clearly so that others can look at it and understand what you mean. You can use words, flow diagrams, stick-people, or even search for images online and copy them.

The most convincing ideas are simple, clear and well annotated. Remember the annotations are your voice. Think about what you would say to explain your idea, and then write that.

## **Prototyping**

### **What should I do if there are no designers in the team to make the prototype?**

Ideally your prototype should feel real, so that you get realistic reactions from test users. But it's not always possible to find a designer with the appropriate skills.

The important thing to remember is that it's always possible to find a way to test the idea. The Design Sprint prototype is not about making a mock-up of the final product. It's about finding a way to validate your chosen solution.

E.g. If your solution is a new bicycle sharing app, you could test the idea by mocking up a Facebook ad showing how it works and see how potential users react to the ad. Do they notice the ad? Do they click it? Do they sign up? All this without designing the actual app!

*Hint: you can find tons of design templates for Facebook ads (and more) with a quick Google search.*

### **Can I give the digital prototype directly to developers after the Sprint to start coding?**

It depends on the scale of your challenge and the complexity of the chosen solution. It is more likely that a digital prototype will need more design work before it can be implemented because the prototype is not intended to be a mock-up of the complete solution. It's about validating the fundamental idea.

If your Design Sprint is to figure out how an individual feature should work (e.g. adding a speedy transfer feature to a banking app) then your prototype might already be quite detailed.

However if you are running a Sprint on a larger challenge (e.g. how can we make transferring money simple and seamless for our customers) you might end up with a high-level prototype that is testing reactions to a few different ideas. After the ideas are validated it's likely that you will need to expand the designs before they can be implemented.

### **Is there a different process for non-digital prototypes?**

The short answer is no! You don't need to modify the structure of the Design Sprint at all for non-digital prototypes. However you might use different methods to create the prototype and perhaps to do the user tests than you would for a digital product. But the steps and timings remain the same.

For example: If you are creating a food product, you might hack together the packaging with cardboard, print out the branding, and even replicate the experience of being at the store shelf. Or if you are creating a new running shoe you might deconstruct other shoe pieces and stick them together, or even 3D print some parts to show how the shoe would look and feel.

## **Testing**

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### **When should I start recruiting users for testing?**

There are a few different answers to this.

You can start recruiting users in the afternoon of the 2nd workshop day. At this point you have decided on a solution to test, and you can choose which type of users to target (if you didn't already identify this in the Map exercise). This will mean that you have just over 1 day to collect a pool of potential users, filter through them, and confirm the test timings. This is totally doable (we've done it a lot) but can be stressful.

If you decide to spend some time preparing before the Sprint week starts, you can ask key stakeholders some questions (especially the Decider) to get a feeling for the types of people they might want to test ideas with. Then you can already start sending targeted recruitment ads/messages to collect a large pool of potential test users. As soon as you are sure about the types of people you'd like to test with, you can start sending out confirmations and locking in test times for Day 4.

If you are working with an external client, cooperation with their customer support or user research teams in advance removes some stress and allows for more focused targeting of user types/behaviours.

### **What if one of the test users cancels at the last minute?**

You should always have at least one or two back-up people locked in. If you end up not needing them, you can send them an incentive (e.g. Amazon voucher) anyway and thank them for reserving the time.

Back-up users should be scheduled for later in the day or during a break to avoid conflicts with other planned tests. If someone cancels or doesn't show, you can use that space for a break and fill the empty slot with the back-up user.

# Common Questions

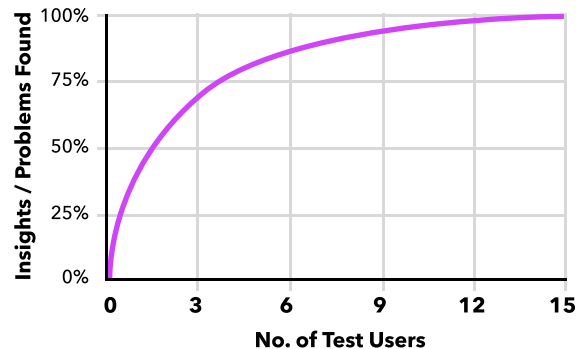
## Why do we only test with 5 people? Is it really enough?

The following is paraphrased from: [www.nngroup.com/articles/why-you-only-need-to-test-with-5-users/](http://www.nngroup.com/articles/why-you-only-need-to-test-with-5-users/)

The first user you test with already gives you a crazy amount of insight. The second user reacts in some similar ways, so there is some overlap in what you learn. There will be some new insight, but not nearly as much as from the first user.

The third user will do many things that you already observed. Plus, of course, the third user will generate a small amount of new insight.

The more people you test with, the less you learn each time, because you will keep seeing the same things again and again. After the fifth user, you are wasting your time by observing the same findings repeatedly but not learning much new.



## Facilitation

### Can you have more than one facilitator?

It depends. If there are two people who want to facilitate it can make for a less intense week if you share sections of the two workshop facilitation days. However one person should be responsible for the overall running and delivery of the Design Sprint outcome, otherwise it will be difficult to manage ownership of tasks.

For example: one person can lead the sprint organisation, be responsible for the main outcomes, and can also facilitate some of the workshop parts, and another person can facilitate some exercises to give the other some mental breaks.

### Can I facilitate, prototype, and do testing all on my own?

The answer is yes. This has been done many times. However you might find it to be a very intense week. If you can delegate the responsibility of creating the prototype, recruiting test users, conducting the user test interviews, and writing up the outcomes (e.g. in a report), you will be able to focus on running a smooth Sprint. And you will be more likely to be motivated to use Design Sprints again!

### Do I need to have a slide deck with instructions to facilitate a Design Sprint?

You definitely don't need a slide deck, but it can be a great help, more to remove the mental load for the Facilitator than because the process won't work without it. Having the instructions visible and also showing the purpose of the exercise will help reduce confusion and interruptions during the workshop.



## What do I do if the group keeps talking and debating and we're running out of time?

There are multiple parts to this answer.

Set expectations: Before you start the first workshop exercises you should let participants know what to expect, so they are not surprised when you try to enforce some rules.

- Phones and devices should not be on the table. We have come here to focus on one thing.
- You will be working "together alone" which means many activities are done in silence and people who are skilled at pitching and convincing won't get an unfair advantage.
- Some times it might feel unsatisfying to move on quickly instead of discussing longer. Remind people that we are here to make fast progress and get out of decision paralysis. Getting started is more important than being right!

Use the Time Timer: Once you have set the expectation of moving quickly it's much easier to use the Time Timer to your advantage. Remind participants that we could debate for another hour, or we could take what we have and make progress!

Defer to the Decider: The Decider has some specific tasks at certain points in the workshop, but they can (and should) be called on spontaneously to act as a tie-breaker when debate erupts (classic moments are at the Map and the Storyboard).

## After the Sprint

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### How should I deliver the results / outcomes of the Design Sprint?

There are so many reasons to document and summarize the results of your Sprint: to deliver clear next steps, to showcase the success of the process, to keep a record for reference. However you choose to do this just remember to take photos during the workshop and record the user test interviews (if you can). AJ&Smart chooses to deliver these things in a report to our clients, which also includes access to the prototype, clear answers to the Sprint Questions (Can We's), expert recommendations, and next steps.

### What if the solution idea is invalidated by the user tests? What do I do then?

It's important to remember before you start a 4-day Design Sprint that the purpose is to test whether you can find a solution worth building. It is still a valid outcome if you identify that the solution is not worth building.

However, if you want to guarantee a successful solution, you can run another 4-day "Iteration Sprint" which is very similar, but focuses on taking user feedback from the first Sprint and iterating (or pivoting) to confirm a successful way forward.







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