

See *and* Experience

Developing empathy and understanding to identify the ideal state.

While you may have worked in the industry for many years or are quite familiar with a particular aspect of everyday life, spending time really looking at and understanding what happens in a given context leads to insight. This is no time for stereotypical descriptions, conventional understanding, or common sense. It's critical you immerse yourself in the world of who you're designing for, see it with fresh eyes, and question why it is the way it is.



See and Experience

Develop empathy and understanding to identify the ideal state.

GET STARTED

- 1 Pick a subject; a person or physical space to focus on. Get specific.
- 2 Generate a short set of questions about what you want to learn.
Our natural inclination is to get super focused. Rewrite your first set of questions a bit broader to expand your scope for more context.
- 3 Keep your questions open-ended. While they might seem vague, open-ended questions lead to important user insight.
- 4 Determine how to capture what you're learning, ideally both visuals and audio. If possible, bring a buddy to help record notes.
- 5 Document your thoughts immediately following your See and Experience session. Reflect and synthesize as you go.

SEE AND EXPERIENCE IN A NUTSHELL



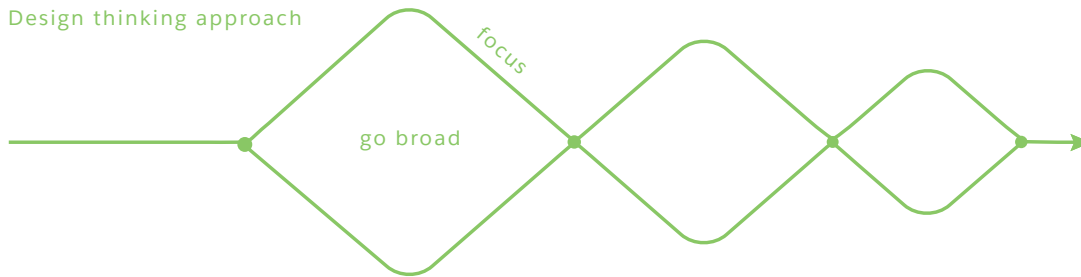
Collect rich data—the why and how of people’s behaviors—to uncover new opportunity grounded in what people value.

Develop deep understanding and empathy for users in order to help you prioritize and navigate opportunities for solutions.

Look for new patterns and what matters most to your users to inform your problem framing.

DAY-TO-DAY PRACTICES

Design thinking approach



When starting a project, list topics you need to learn more about. Clarify learning objectives and create a structure to guide your meeting with users, customers, teams or employees.

In conversation, zoom out a level to understand the broader context.
e.g. listen for users’ needs not opportunities to implement a solution.

To uncover more detail about a situation create stimuli and share with users to facilitate a more nuanced or forward-looking conversation.

Conduct interviews with extreme users.
e.g. early adopters or diehards, for inspiration before solution ideation.

Ask your teammate or user to show you the technical thing they are explaining in words.

Go out and experience competitive products first hand to learn and inspire.

Revisit your users to focus on particular parts of their experience as you approach implementation.

Observation



Given our familiarity with workplaces and the routines of everyday life, we don't see and reflect on what's really going on. Focused observation is a powerful tool.

HOW TO

- 1 Think about and decide what environment or context you'd like to spend time observing.
- 2 Take a notebook, pen, and a simple note taking framework of AEIOU (Activities, Environment, Interactions, Objects, and Users).
- 3 Find a place to sit and observe without being in the way. Don't hide, but don't impede. Let the people know you're there to learn, not to evaluate.
- 4 As you observe the action, note what grabs your attention and what raises questions in your mind.
- 5 Sketch out the environment. Make a list of things for a specific category. Count things. What's interesting?
- 6 Take pictures and record video. Watch the video and pin up pictures. In reviewing, you'll often see things you didn't notice the first time.

TIPS + TRICKS

Be yourself, not a sterile observer. Build rapport with the people. Show interest in what they do and tell them so. Note how they are feeling and what their experiences are like.

PAIRS WELL WITH

- Empathy Mapping
- Ways of Statements

TIME

45-60 minutes

TEAM SIZES

1 or 2 people

MATERIALS

Video camera with good mic, camera phone, consent form

Show and Tell Interview



The best way to get better at learning from users and your colleagues is to have them “show and tell” you about what they do. You listen, capture, and learn.

HOW TO

- 1** Before meeting your participant, prepare by writing down things about their situation, job or life you'd like to see and understand.
- 2** Be transparent with your participant about what you're trying to learn. Emphasize you'd like to know how things really are, not the conventional notion of how we think things should be.
- 3** Start out with a broad background question. “Tell me a little about yourself and how you got here.” Use what the participant says to ask more specific questions. Use “Tell me about...” on every topic.
- 4** Make sure you cover ground and don't get caught on one topic too long.
- 5** Collect things or pictures of things that support the user's experience: references, diagrams, tools, etc.

TIPS + TRICKS

Avoid assumptions.
Have participants explain details in their own words and demonstrate the activity.
Ask open-ended questions that avoid short yes/no or discreet choice answers.

PAIRS WELL WITH

- Empathy Mapping
- Ways of Statements

TIME

45-60 minutes

TEAM SIZES

1 or 2 people

MATERIALS

Video camera with good mic, camera phone, consent form

Trend Immersion



Trend immersion provides an understanding of what is shaping popular culture so solutions can be relevant, timely and interesting.

HOW TO

- 1 Consider more general trend areas like technology, lifestyle, health, food, etc. and how they affect the topic at hand (*e.g. snack mix*).
- 2 Search the internet for articles and images relating to the relevant trends (*e.g. tech in food delivery, ethnic flavor trends 2015, etc.*).
- 3 Rename and save images in a folder for easy sorting and reference later.
- 4 Use a variety of sources - indie food and lifestyle magazines (Lucky Peach, Cherry Bombe, Gather, Fool), blogs, industry newsletters and publications (QSR, Food Product Design, McCormick Flavor Forecast), Pinterest, Instagram, design websites (Dieline, Oh Beautiful Beer, notcot).
- 5 Also look for trends relating to the areas of the experience canvas (*packaging, flavor, channel, etc.*).
- 6 Brainstorm ways to incorporate trends into your ideas (*e.g. packaging material, form, flavor, channel*).

TIPS + TRICKS

Specify dates (within the past year) using the search tools function to ensure timeliness of information.

Update Pinterest boards and visit blogs regularly to keep track of how trends change and forecast where they might go in the future.

Consider how your own innovation and production cycles fit with trend cycles and plan accordingly.

PAIRS WELL WITH

- Product Immersion
-

TIME

30-60 minutes

TEAM SIZES

1 person