

PROTOTYPING PLAN



TOOL

Description:

Making the prototyping plan is a point of convergence in your process. Even though you will have narrowed into one promising solution to explore through prototyping, that solution will have many different pieces to test. This prototyping plan helps you get specific about a next wise move in your prototyping, so that you can crystallize around something specific enough to actually test and learn from in the real world.

Time needed: 45 - 60 minutes

Set-up: Work can be done individually or in small prototyping teams. Have 11x17 copies of the prototyping plan, writing, and drawing supplies available. It may also be beneficial to have some basic “making” supplies in case people would like to use lego, pipe cleaners, wooden figures, cardboard, or other materials to make their prototype concept more three dimensional and interactive, rather than drawing it on the storyboard.

How it works:

- Have your previous work connected to the prototype concept available for easy reference: design brief; action research; systems mapping; fractals and leverage points; creative question canvas; ideation materials; and storyboards. You will very likely be drawing from this wealth of thinking as you crystallize.
- Remember the idea of fractals as you get specific about your prototype. Is this prototype a fractal of the larger system that you are trying to change? It's easy to start defaulting to habitual ways of thinking and acting at this stage, so work hard to stay systemic and work at both the smaller and larger scales at the same time.
- From the longer storyboards, choose a first interaction or touchpoint to begin with. A good place to start is always the interaction where you have the most untested assumptions or the most questions. Draw this interaction in detail.
- Then round out the rest of the elements of this worksheet to help you figure out how the first user testing of your prototype will work. A good question to ask yourselves in the earliest stages is “how simple, quick, and cheap can we make this first test?” Remember that you are not trying to build a pilot, program or new policy. You are doing some very early, low-fidelity testing to see if you are even heading in a promising direction.
- Once you have your plan, get out there and run your first test. Do this sooner rather than later, and then iterate your prototype concept quickly, based on what you are learning. You can use this tool to make new plans as you go, and then you'll also have a record of what you tried and learned, and why you pivoted the way that you did.

