

# IDEATE



Brainstorm creative, human-centred ideas.

## Why ideate ?



This is the most creative stage in the Design Thinking process, as it is where you generate potential solutions to the previously defined problem statements. Several ideation techniques exist to encourage creativity in (or as) individuals, before collaborating as a team to develop and move forward with the best concepts. Following Design Thinking principles at this stage allows you to:

- bring together diverse perspectives in a judgement-free environment, which allows people to be open about their ideas
- generate innovative solutions which offer an advantage over competitors, by thinking beyond any technical or business constraints
- achieve a sense of shared ownership and buy-in to ideas by stakeholders, as they are personally involved in the creation process.

## Steps to success

1

### Lead with user needs.

Use problem statements from the Define stage to frame ideation around challenges in the experience, by turning each one into an opportunity. It should be clear whether you are focusing on a certain step in the user journey, a specific persona, or the overall experience. Recapping relevant knowledge upfront will ensure the whole team has a clear, shared understanding of the user needs.

2

### Involve multifunctional teams.

Bring together stakeholders from different areas of the business including user experience, engineering and marketing in order to obtain varied knowledge, skillsets and perspectives. This will facilitate collaboration, as people can build on the ideas of others, before providing expertise to consider feasibility during evaluation activities.

3

### Lay down the rules.

Set clear rules at the start of ideation sessions to encourage free thinking and creativity, while ensuring that everyone gets an equal opportunity to contribute. We recommend asking people to keep an open mind, stay on topic, be visual, avoid judgement and hold one conversation at a time.

4

### Separate idea generation and evaluation.

The ideation process should be broken down into smaller activities that allow you to diverge then converge on the best solutions. This approach allows you to go beyond obvious answers by focusing on the quantity instead of quality of ideas before they are evaluated democratically against set criteria.

5

### Think about how to communicate ideas.

Start considering what level of detail you want to prototype and test with users, as well as the best medium to get your ideas across. If you want users to interact with a screen mock-up for example, you will need to consider additional elements compared to when showing them a storyboard or video of the concept. It makes sense to agree on this at the end of an ideation session when you have the whole team together.

## Top tips

### Make the most of artefacts.

Make it easy for people to refer back to the research insights during workshops by making artefacts such as personas readily available. You could consider providing insight packs, sticking things up on the wall, or having a knowledge station in one area of the room.

### Vary activities to retain engagement.

Mix up ideation techniques to accommodate different ways of thinking and keep members of the session energised. Imposing time limits on activities can also remove inhibitions, allowing you to reach crazy but brilliant ideas! Look up some of the following techniques to get started:

- Crazy 8's
- SCAMPER
- Storyboarding (Who, What, Why, How)
- Worst possible idea
- Brainstorming
- Bodystorming

### Apply Design Sprint techniques.

Focus on consolidating what you have learned in a modified 'Understand' step to help bring focus to the 'Sketch' & 'Decide' phases, where ideas can be generated and decisions can be made quickly and collaboratively.

### Consider involving real users.

Involving users can help to inspire creativity as they are likely to think more freely than stakeholders who are aware of business limitations. By exploring their ideas, it is possible to tap into the underlying needs they are trying to address, which can bring fresh inspiration and new thinking to the team's ideation activities.

If you need support with ideation, please reach out to our UX team via:

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Take a look at [our practical hints and tips for running successful workshops.](#)