# Problem Finding

Finding underlying problems in a user's experience by observing the people, tools, processes, systems, and cultures that shape their interactions over time.

## **Research Planning**

The ability to craft a plan to guide user research, describing the behaviors to observe, who to speak with, how to recruit them, and what to ask them

#### **Activity Creation** Framing Creating open-ended questions to Creating participatory research Identifying the behaviors to Identifying the context in which Creating a research focus activities to guide the discussion guide the discussion without observe and explore these behaviors can be observed leading the participant during complex topics or contexts Creating participatory design Identifying the people who will activities that help participants be observed externalize concepts or ideas Recruiting Identifying tools and processes to observe that influence on the Describing and locating the types Communicating the purpose and participant's actions or behavior of participants who fit the scope of research to potential participant framing criteria participants Screening Creating a participant screener to filter the best candidates from the available population

### Researching

The ability to conduct ethnographic research that uses a mentor / apprentice approach to build empathy with participants, in order to observe their behaviors and participate in their day-to-day activities

## Moderating

**Note Taking** 

Explaining the purpose and scope of the research to a participant using language they understand

Capturing written notes in

complete sentences that make

sense after the interview

Securing permission to record the session (audio, photographs, and video)

Observing and capturing

notable participant emotions

and physical behaviors

Observing and capturing

notable participant quotes

Observing and capturing

notable environmental

details that contribute to the

feeling of the site

→ Guiding the discussion while
→ maintaining awareness of feelings,
the research plan, and time

Asking responsive, open-ended questions to uncover unique, surprising, and compelling anecdotes and behaviors

Identifying contextual clues, objects, or behaviors that might suggest unique, surprising, or compelling anecdotes and behaviors

## Photographing

Capturing photos of the participant, context, and activities without being disruptive to the discussion

Capturing photos of unique attributes of the participant, including their face, hands, and their artifacts

Capturing photos of physical artifacts and environmental details that contribute to the feeling of the site

## Externalizing

The ability to produce an accurate and tangible representation of the data collected during research to support future synthesis processes

## **Organizing and Labeling**

Establishing and maintaining a digital organization system to capture photographs, notes, and transcripts

Establishing and maintaining anonymity for participants across all artifacts

## **Affinity Diagramming Preparation**

Transcribing and printing utterances

Highlighting and pinning to a physical space in an organized manner

## **Multi-Media Preparation**

Printing representative photos of each participant, and arranging these in the physical space

Selecting representative photos of completed participatory activities or contextual highlights and arranging these in the physical space

## **Finding Areas of Interest**

The ability to identify tangential problem spaces or "areas of interest," describe the overlap with your current focus, and communicate why there might be value in investigating this additional domain

## Orienting Stakeholders

The ability to draw out and reframe stakeholder assumptions ("test the appetite for innovation") around strategic design programs

## **Evangelizing the Process**

The ability to contextualize the strategic design process to a skeptical or uninformed audience and build support for the methods and theory associated with this approach

## **Empathetic Storytelling**

The ability to craft and deliver stories that build feelings of empathy, association, and/or cognitive dissonance within an audience, while maintaining an optimistic stance about the future

## **Qualifying Raw Data**

The ability to assess the intangible quality of qualitative data, while it is being collected, and pivot as needed

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