

CS 147 Learning Studio Assignment 2 POVs, HMWs, and Experience Prototypes

Meet the Team



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We are a team of Stanford juniors in the Education/Learning studio.

Problem Domain

Our problem domain is unfamiliarity with new customs and cultures. In particular, when young adults first move to a new country, perhaps for higher education, they find themselves struggling in a new environment. We further broke this struggle into three subproblems through field research: not knowing what to expect, being unwilling to step out of one's comfort zone, and failing to connect with locals beyond a superficial level.

Points of View

Preliminary POV

We met **Leeno**, who was born in China, went to Japan for her undergraduate education, and came to the US for graduate school. We were amazed to learn that she felt much more comfortable in Japan than the US, despite knowing nothing about either culture. It would be game-changing to eliminate the discomfort in interacting with unfamiliar people/backgrounds/races.

Additional Needfinding Results

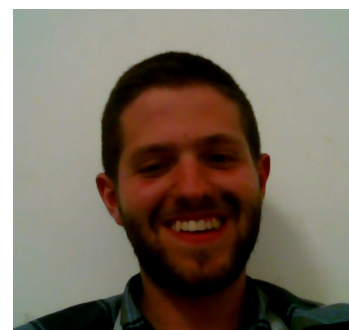
To further test our POV, we conducted 7 additional needfinding interviews. Below are the key findings from selected interviews; notes on the rest can be found in Appendix A.

We talked with **Derry**, a software engineer from China who moved here in his 20s. Derry struggled with stepping out of his comfort zone and finding the confidence to ask strangers questions. In particular, Derry struggled with approaching people when he needed help or information immediately (such as when he needed to understand how to register for class).



We met **Vimbai**, an international student from Zimbabwe. Vimbai viewed her move as a big adventure, and thus didn't find herself too lost in the transition. When asked what helped her manage the transition, she told us the constant excitement of NSO and freshman year kept her going.

We interviewed **Micah**, a college student currently abroad in Israel. He recalled an awkward situation where he tried to shake a woman's hand, but she was not allowed to touch men outside of her family. Micah would have loved a resource with "everything you need to know about Israeli culture."

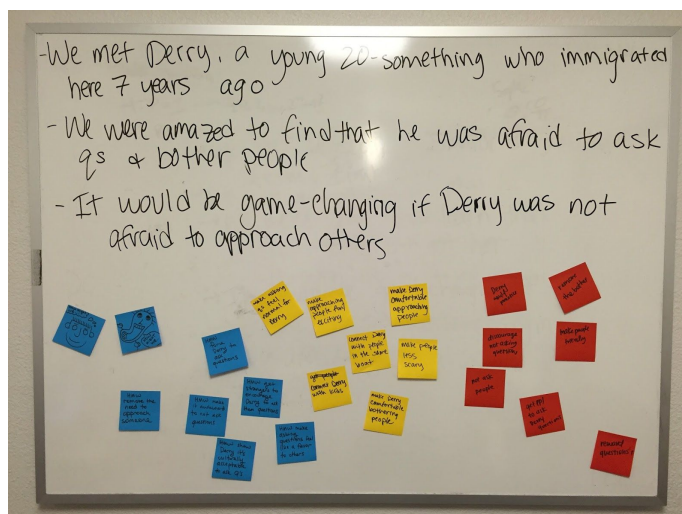


We talked with **Tony**, a local handyman who's always lived in the area. He considered himself a very culturally aware individual, a result of living in such a diverse area. We were particularly interested in Tony's positive view of tourists, and the added diversity they bring with them.

How Might We's

Derry

We met Derry, a twenty-something engineer who immigrated from China seven years ago. We were amazed to learn that he was afraid to ask questions when he first arrived because he was afraid of bothering people. It would be game-changing if Derry wasn't afraid of approaching others and asking for help.

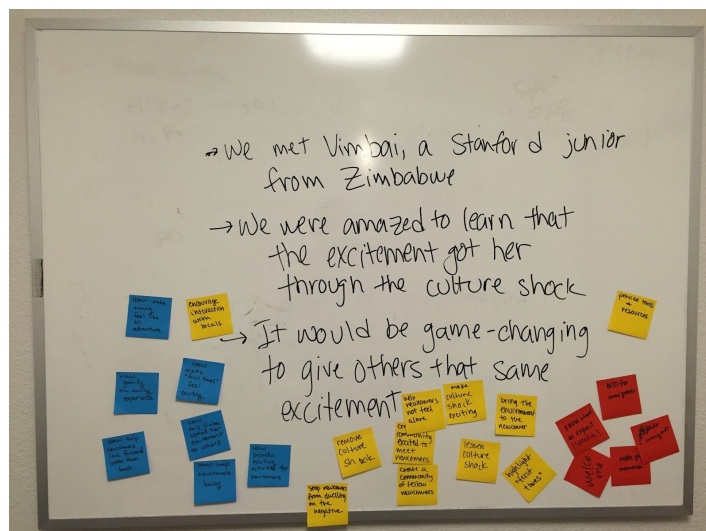


How might we

- **make approaching people fun and exciting?**
- connect Derry with people in the same boat?
- make asking questions feel normal for Derry?
- get strangers to encourage Derry to ask them questions?
- make asking questions feel like a favor for others?
- get people to ask Derry questions?
- remove the bother?

Vimbai

We met Vimbai, a Stanford junior who grew up in Zimbabwe and came to the United States for the first time two years ago. We were amazed to discover that the only way she made it through the stress and culture shock of moving was the overpowering excitement of embarking on a new adventure. It would be game changing to give other newcomers to the country that same excitement to help them get out, interact, and adapt to their new environment.



How might we...

- help newcomers know what to expect?
- create a community excited to meet newcomers?
- keep newcomers busy?
- make culture shock exciting?
- create a community of fellow newcomers?
- encourage interaction with locals?
- gamify the moving experience?

Top 3 HMWs

HMW make approaching people fun and exciting? (Derry)

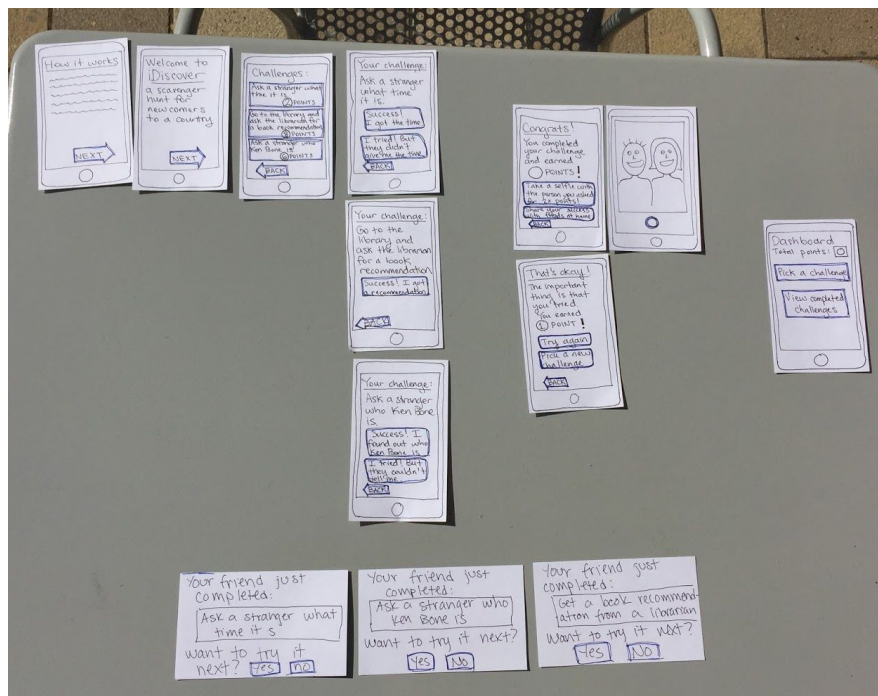
HMW help newcomers know what to expect? (Vim'bai)

HMW create a community of fellow newcomers? (Vim'bai)

Solutions & Prototypes

Experience Prototype 1: iDiscover

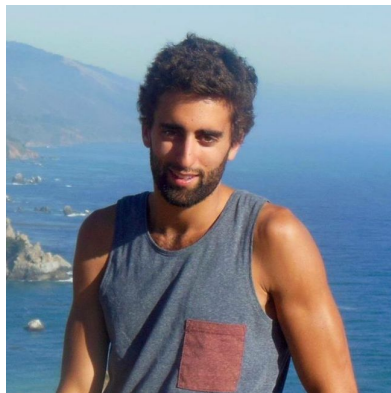
HMW: make approaching people fun and exciting?



iDiscover Prototype

Description: We tried to gamify the process of learning about a new place. We simulated a scavenger hunt, with questions geared toward learning about the US (pop culture, literature, etc.) as well as questions to get the user interacting with locals (ask someone what time it is). We made our prototype by creating a series of wireframes that followed the envisioned flow of our app.

The “app” included 3 challenges, as well as appropriate responses for completing or attempting a challenge. Each challenge required the user to interact with a stranger, roleplayed by our team. We tested two scenarios: one in which the user was able to get an answer from a stranger successfully (e.g. getting the time from a stranger), and one in which the user could not get an answer (e.g. a stranger who did not know who Ken Bone is).



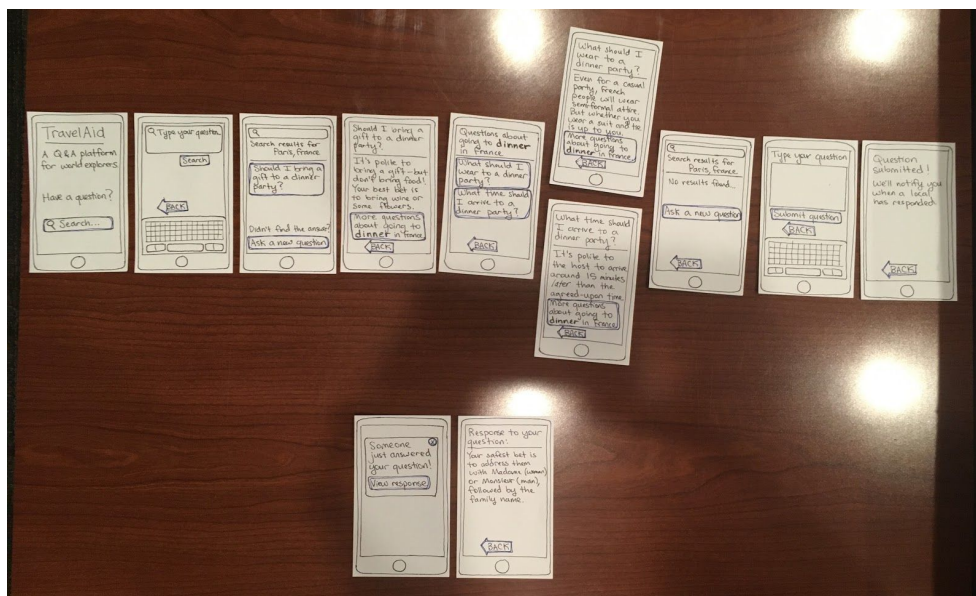
Tester: Bertrand, a master's student who moved to the States just a few weeks ago from France.

Result: With this prototype, we assumed our user would struggle with the challenge of approaching locals. However, Bertrand had no trouble with this at all. While we are hoping this app would be useful to those struggling to be social in a new place, we will also be adjusting our challenges to engage very social newcomers like Bertrand.

Overall, our prototyping session elicited a positive response from Bertrand. He enjoyed completing the challenges and found the idea intuitive and simple, excited at the ways you could earn more points (e.g. taking a selfie with the stranger). However, he noted that he would not want to play this in isolation, and would hope to meet people through the app that he could eventually compete with and share more meaningful interactions outside the app. Bertrand saw the target user for our app as a newcomer who already has a community of fellow newcomers with whom he can participate in the scavenger hunt.

Experience Prototype 2: TravelAid

HMW: help the newcomer know what to expect?



TravelAid Prototype

Description: We wanted to create a space where newcomers could ask specific questions and receive concrete answers from knowledgeable locals. Our goal was to create a more personal platform for Q & A related to being in a new environment—something more personal than a page of Google search results.

We created a scenario in which our user had recently arrived in France, and had just been invited to a dinner party by a coworker. Naturally, our user had some questions about the proper etiquette for a French dinner party, and he was able to turn to our “app.”

The app consists again of a series of notecards. The notecards flow through opening the app, searching for a question, looking at answers, and asking a new question. The app already contains previously asked questions (What do I wear to a dinner party? What time should I arrive? Do I bring a gift?) answered by knowledgeable locals. Users can also see related questions, allowing them to explore what they “didn’t know they didn’t know.” For example, in France, one should generally arrive 15 minutes late—but a user would likely have no idea they should even ask about arrival times if they came from the States. If a question is not found, the user can ask it, and receive an answer from a local.

Tester: Bao, a man in his mid-twenties who was born and raised in the Bay Area. At the start of his twenties, he lived in Japan for five years, so he has experience with being in a new, unfamiliar culture.

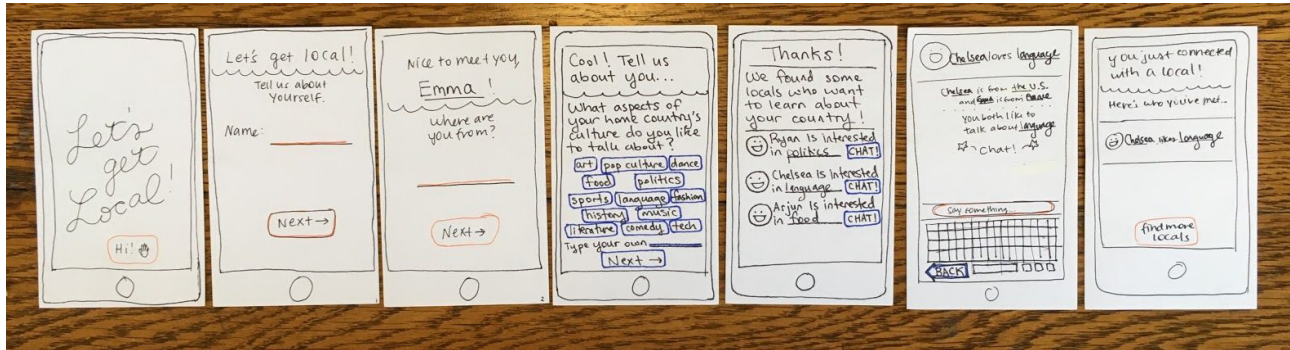
With this prototype, we assumed our user would be interested in getting information from locals, rather than sifting through impersonal Google results. Bao confirmed this, stating that “local flair” would have drawn him to something like this.

Results: Bao seemed appreciative of our prototype. He liked the idea of getting answers directly from locals, as well as the time-sensitive flag for questions. He would have found something like this useful, but was concerned that it would need a large database of questions before actually becoming practical.



Experience Prototype 3: Let's Get Local

HMW: create a community excited to meet newcomers?



Description: We wanted newcomers to make connections with locals beyond a superficial level. Our concept was to link newcomers and locals with shared interests, or complementary education interests. For example, a newcomer from France who wants to learn about American pop culture might be paired with a local who wants to hear about French government. Both parties would be near each other location-wise.

We created a scenario in which a user had recently arrived from France, and was looking to connect with and meet some locals.

We drew a series of wireframes illustrating the flow through our app: filling out personal information and location, as well as cultural interests you want to talk about. After being paired with someone, our user is able to chat and get to know her partner, eventually leading to an offline meetup. Our users can have multiple learning buddies, for their varied interests. Through this app, we sought to incentivize locals to welcome and connect with newcomers.

Tester: **Emma**, was a freshman who was born and raised in France, and just came to the US for school.

Results: With this prototype, we assumed our user would be excited and willing to jump right into meeting locals. However, as Emma pointed out, that is not as natural as starting the conversation with a local while still in your home country, and building that relationship up before arriving in your new destination. Accordingly, we plan to adjust our concept so that someone who is moving soon can get on the app, select their destination, and starting building connections before landing in the new country.



Most successful prototype

We found our most successful prototype to be **iDiscover**, the gamifying solution. This solution was the most engaging in terms of interactivity, and elicited the strongest positive reaction out of our three testers. One of the most striking themes from our initial interviews was the need to make moving exciting, and something to look forward to. iDiscover achieves that best, introducing elements of games, competition, and social interaction.

Appendix A: Further Interviews

Jeffrey

We interviewed Jeffrey, a salesperson at Nest Bedding on University Avenue. He was born and raised in LA, and has been in the Bay Area for four years. Jeffrey considered himself to be very culturally aware, as a result of his upbringing—“do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” He offered interesting insights about his fiancée and her family, who are from the Phillipines. We found that Jeffrey understood their different values, including their emphasis on family, but still struggled to accept when her parents stayed with them for six months.



Caro

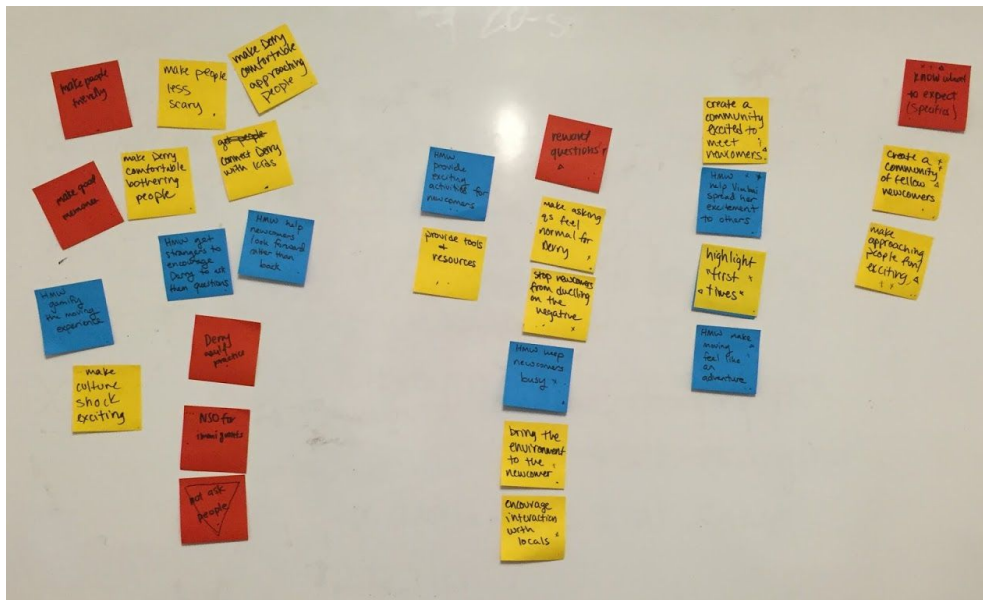
We met Caro, a current Junior at Stanford who grew up in Mexico City. One of her struggles in moving here was understanding people’s perceptions of Mexico. Someone once suggested she must be very comfortable at Stanford because of the Spanish architecture. Caro now corrects people and their mistaken perceptions of her or Mexico only when she feels their perceptions are particularly problematic, but wishes there were some way to educate everyone.

Clif and Nelda

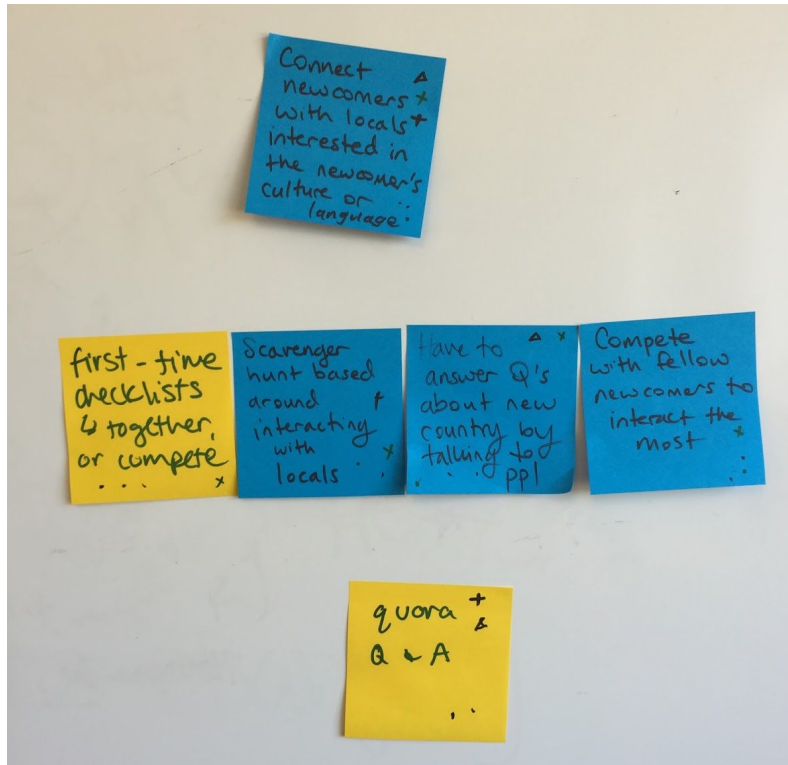
We talked with Clif and Nelda, a well-traveled couple who also run an Airbnb. Through their own travels, they noted it would have been useful to have a guide to cultural differences—in fact, Nelda figured she could have found such a guide in a travel guidebook, but thought it was too much of a hassle to look that up. As Airbnb hosts, they often wished there was a way to communicate more with their guests, especially the international ones. One particular Pakistani couple left an impression when the husband could not shake Nelda’s hand, but did not explain why.



HMWs for Vimbai and Derry: Combined and clustered by topic



HMWs: after two rounds of voting for our favorite



Final 3 solutions. The middle row is a combination of several ideas.