



# NEED FINDING

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# TEAM MEMBERS

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**CS/MATH + MUSIC  
CLASS OF 2021**

**NIK MARDA**



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**SYMBOLIC SYSTEMS  
CLASS OF 2019**

**WILLIAM YIN**



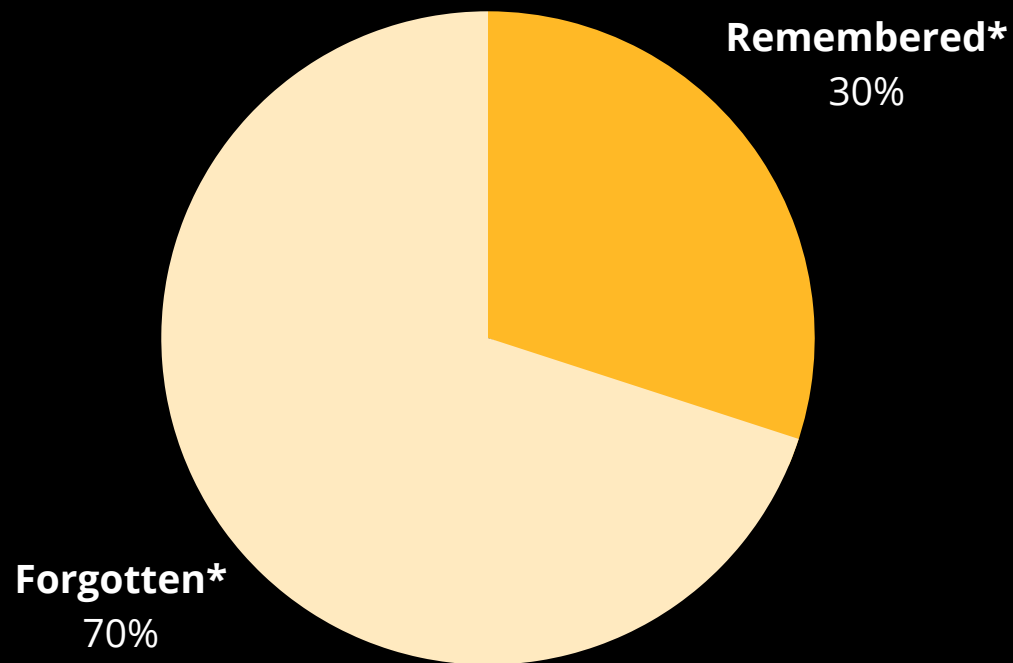
**CS/MATH + NEURO  
CLASS OF 2021**



**IDEA & GOAL  
MANAGEMENT**

# HARD TO PROCESS

MOST IDEAS ARE FORGOTTEN IN 48 HOURS



\*approximately - see research on Ebbinghaus' Forgetting Curve

# WHO WE INTERVIEWED

**MARK WHITING**



**HCI POSTDOC  
@STANFORD**

**BILL COCKAYNE**



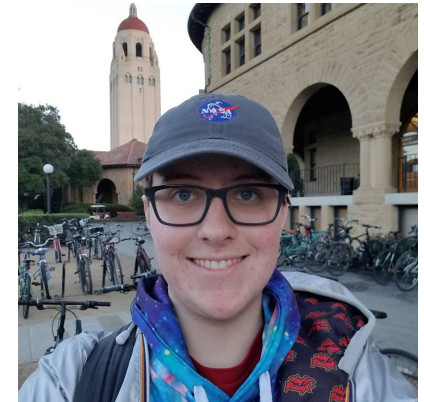
**TECH EXECUTIVE &  
INVENTOR**

**EDDY**



**BIOCOMP RESEARCH  
@STANFORD**

**JACOB RAY**



**EE/CS STUDENT  
@STANFORD'21**

# MARK WHITING



HCI Postdoc

Studies creative decisions

Had mentioned idea management

Gates 358 (Conference room)

Asked about:

His current idea system

What he wished he had

Why he thinks others failed



# BILL COCKAYNE



Tech executive & innovator  
Consults about innovation  
Teaches the ideation process  
Tressider Memorial Union

Asked about:

Fleshing out ideas & goals

History of this problem

How businesses manage ideas



# EDDY

Works in computational biology lab

Between FedEx and Treehouse



Asked about:

How he manages goals in a creative setting

His aversion to tech productivity solutions



# JACOB RAY



Stanford Student '21

Studies EE/CS

Has lots of engineering ideas

The Axe and Palm

Asked about:

Finding relevant information

How he manages his busy life

What works for him now?



# RESULTS

**MARK WHITING**



**EXTREME USER**

**WRITES IDEAS IN  
IOS NOTES**

**^IN MEETINGS TOO**

**WANTS IT TO ASK  
LEADING QUESTIONS**

**"[I'LL] WANT TO  
REMEMBER, BUT I  
DON'T KNOW WHEN"**

**BILL COCKAYNE**



**EXTREME USER**

**HAS TRIED  
EVERYTHING**

**VALUABLE IN  
BUSINESS (OKR)**

**SMART REMINDERS  
FOR GOALS**

**"MEASURE WHAT  
MATTERS"**

**EDDY**



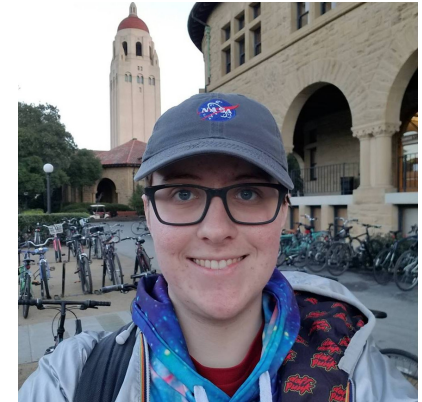
**NON-USER**

**PROCESSES IDEAS  
IN HIS HEAD**

**VIEWS TECH AS A  
DISTRACTION**

**"I DON'T WANT  
SOMETHING ELSE  
TELLING ME WHAT  
[I'M] THINKING"**

**JACOB RAY**



**AVERAGE USER**

**DOESN'T HAVE  
PERMANENT SETUP**

**WANTS TO SEE  
RELATED IDEAS FOR  
A GIVEN GOAL**

**"USING DUE DATES  
AS REMINDERS  
SEEMS WRONG"**

# EMPATHY MAP

## Say

**"Writing down next steps serves as a gut check"**

"[Tracking ideas] gives me the heeby-jeebies"

"I hate not being able to switch into a different application"

**"Make me do the least amount of work"**

"Management is like 'weren't we working on this five years ago?' And the answer is yes"

"It's not that I care what I wrote - only what it made me feel"

"I often forget to process [my ideas] every Sunday like I planned to"

## Think

**"No external tool can address my own shortcomings"**

"I want to record more of my thoughts"

"Anything I forget just wasn't important enough to remember"

**"I could be more creative if I had a computer processing my thoughts and finding connections between them"**

"Businesses could avoid having things slip through the cracks"

"Maybe I'll achieve some of my bucket list items if I'm constantly reminded to do them"

# EMPATHY MAP

## Do

Laughed when asked if calendar reminders to work on a project help

**Eyes widened at the idea of being able to see related notes when typing a new one**

Cringed at the idea of software knowing his thoughts better than him

**Smirked at the prospect of Evernote making their product better in the next five years**

Rolled eyes about his own note-taking habits

Pulled out phone to show us a mental health app with a beautiful UI/UX

## Feel

Confident in own systems, but a little unsatisfied with not reaching full potential

Annoyed that they can't find their old ideas

**Freaked out by tech that "learns" the user**

Frustrated that they don't accomplish items on their bucket list

**Tired of tech with transition costs larger than the productivity boosts**

Constantly annoyed at setting multiple reminders to start on a project

# SURPRISES

**# 1**

No one had an idea management system they really liked, though most of them looked for one

**# 2**

All of them used some form of repeated preemptive reminders


**# 3**

The boundary between "idea" and "goal" is often fuzzy



# KEY PROBLEMS

Multiple interviewees wanted something that...

- # 1** ...processed their thoughts with limited user input
  - # 2** ...reminded them of ideas/goals periodically and intelligently
  - # 3** ...captured information quickly without rigid input structure
- 



# INSIGHTS & NEEDS

People want to capture their ideas and goals *quickly*

The backend should do a lot of the processing

There should be scaffolding to help the user develop ideas

Smart reminders for goals could be powerful if done right





# QUESTIONS

How do you design for people sharing only the same core problem?

How can you seamlessly integrate "ideas" and "goals" into one platform?

Where would the backend get info to process ideas if the input is freeform?

When should "smart reminders" pop up and how should they be set up?







**QUESTIONS?**