

Concept Videos

Prof. James A. Landay
Computer Science Department
Stanford University

Autumn 2025

October 8, 2025

Music: <https://soundcloud.com/dansuneroquette>

Hall of Fame or Shame?



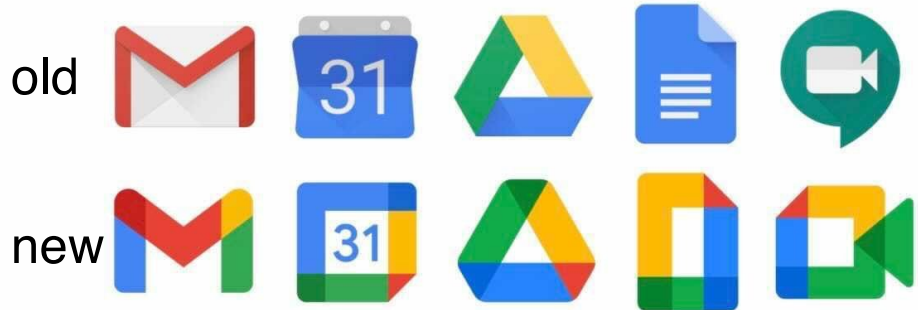
old

new



Google app logos

Hall of Shame!



Google app logos

Good

- colorful
- consistent

Bad

- cannot tell what is what at a glance

Pioneers in Design

Loretta Staples

- One of the early important UI designers
- Although trained at top art & design schools, she didn't see where she fit in
- As digital design was rapidly changing in the late 80s, she was at the forefront

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/18/style/loretta-staples-ui-design.html>



Sasha Rudensky for The New York Times

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Outline

- Tasks
- Video Prototypes
- Concept Videos
- Administrivia
- Team Break
- Making a Concept Video
- High-fidelity Video Examples

Task. The structured **set of activities** or high-level **actions** required to **achieve** a high-level **user goal**.

what a user wants to do

* not how

Task = What

Interface = How

Find interesting ingredients for a new meal



Prepare a new meal



Eat together



Initial image by ChatGPT. Edited heavily by JAL.

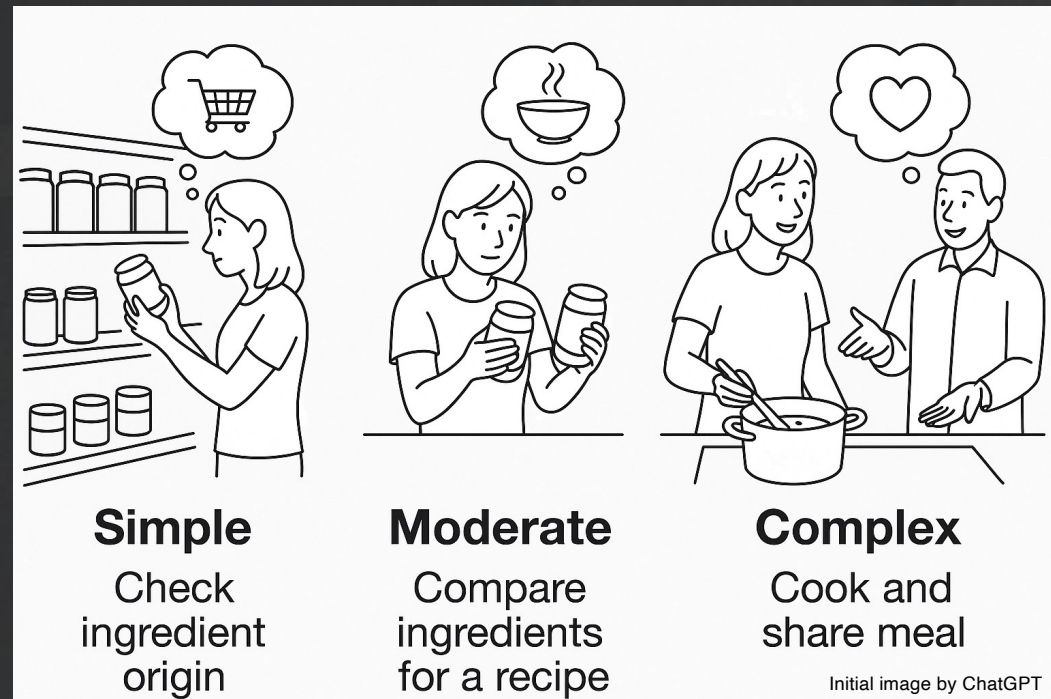
Task-based Design & Evaluation

- Real tasks customers have faced / will face
 - collect any necessary materials
- Do your tasks support the problem you are solving?

Task-based Design & Evaluation

Mixture of simple & complex tasks

- simple task (common or introductory)
- moderate task
- complex task (infrequent or for power customers)



What Should Tasks Look Like?

- Say what customer **wants to do**, but **not how**
 - allows comparing different design alternatives

Good (Task)



Tony is visiting London and wants to find the pub that his friend told him about. He is walking down the street using his phone to navigate to the place that he has previously looked up.

What Should Tasks Look Like?

- Say what customer **wants to do**, but **not how**
 - allows comparing different design alternatives

Bad (this is a *Task flow*)



Tony clicks on the Charing Cross Pub icon and selects “directions to” as he walks down the street.

What Should Tasks Look Like?

- Say what customer **wants to do**, but **not how**
 - allows comparing different design alternatives
- Be specific – stories **based on facts!**
 - say who customers are (use people in your POVs)
 - design can really differ depending on who
 - name names (allows getting more info later)
 - characteristics of customers (job, expertise, etc.)
 - forces us to fill out description w/ relevant details
- Tasks should usually describe a **complete goal**
 - forces us to consider how features work together
 - example: phone-in bank functions

Using Tasks in Design

- Write up a description of tasks
 - formally or informally
 - run by customers and rest of the design team
 - get more information where needed

Let my friends know where I am

Manny is in the city at a club that he wasn't planning to go to and would like to let his girlfriend, Sherry, know where he is and be notified when she is about to get to the club.

task title

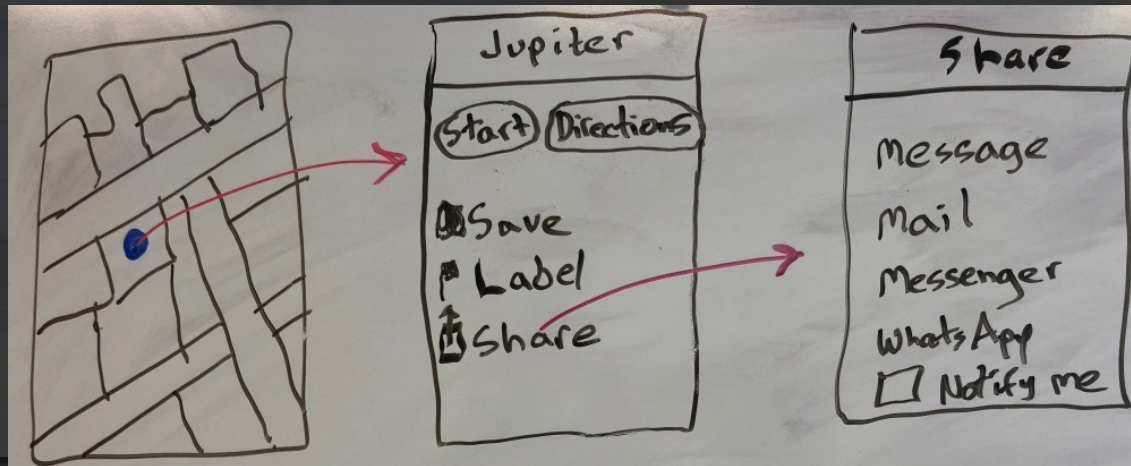
task description

Using Tasks in Design (cont.)

- Rough out an interface design
 - discard features that don't support your tasks
 - major screens & functions (not too detailed)
 - hand sketched
- Produce *task flows* for each task
 - **how** customer completes task & what they would **see**
 - step-by-step performance of task
 - illustrate using storyboards (AKA **wireframes**)
 - sequences of sketches showing screens & transitions

Task Flows Show How to Do the Task

- Task Flows are *design specific*, tasks aren't
- Task Flows force us to
 - show how various features will work together
 - settle design arguments by seeing examples
- Show users taskflows to get feedback



Recap

How might we make the wait the most exciting part of the trip?

Solution: An app that leads kids on a scavenger hunt adventure around the airport.

What are the tasks?

SIMPLE: hunt for treasure

MODERATE: set up a custom scavenger hunt for your kids

COMPLEX: create teams & compete against other kids/families

DO IT NOW

Work in groups of 3-4 to generate a set of **simple**, **moderate**, and **complex** tasks for this HMW/solution pair:

HMW make fellow passengers joyful around kids?

Solution: An interactive game wall with activities at varied heights that both kids and adults can play with.

Post your **best tasks** in slack when done.

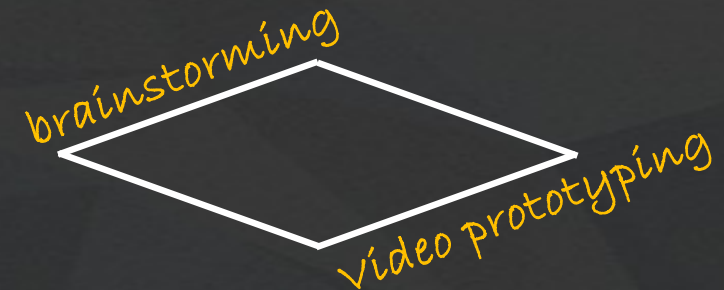
What ← → **How**

Task ← → **Task
Flow**

**Concept
Video** ← → **Video
Prototype**

Video Prototypes

- Illustrate **how users will interact** w/ system
- Unlike brainstorming, video prototyping contracts the design space
- Quick & inexpensive to build
- Forces designers to consider details of how users will **interact** with & **react** to the design
- May better illustrate **context** of use



Video Prototype Characteristics



Paper Prototypes, Interactive Prototype, Existing Software or Projected Images as a background



Optional Narration, Conversation preferred
narrator explains events & others move images/illustrate interaction while actors perform movements—viewer expected to **understand w/o voice-over**

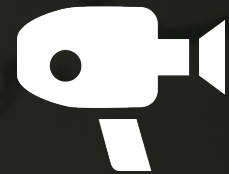


With **good storyboards**, a good short film can be shot in 2-3 hours
*With **good prompts**, a good short scene can be generated in minutes?*

Video Prototype Examples



Carbon Shopper



Concept (Vision) Videos

How to capture an early
concept and tell a story

It's About Stories



It's About Details



Key Pieces of Successful Concept Videos



People
(roles)

Kid & parents



Context
(scene)

Wants to use force, but failing
Upper middle class – VW land



The Solution
(props)

Dad's car let's you remotely
turn it on. The force is alive!



Keep it Simple

Use what you **know** and what you **have** (or can easily **get/generate**)

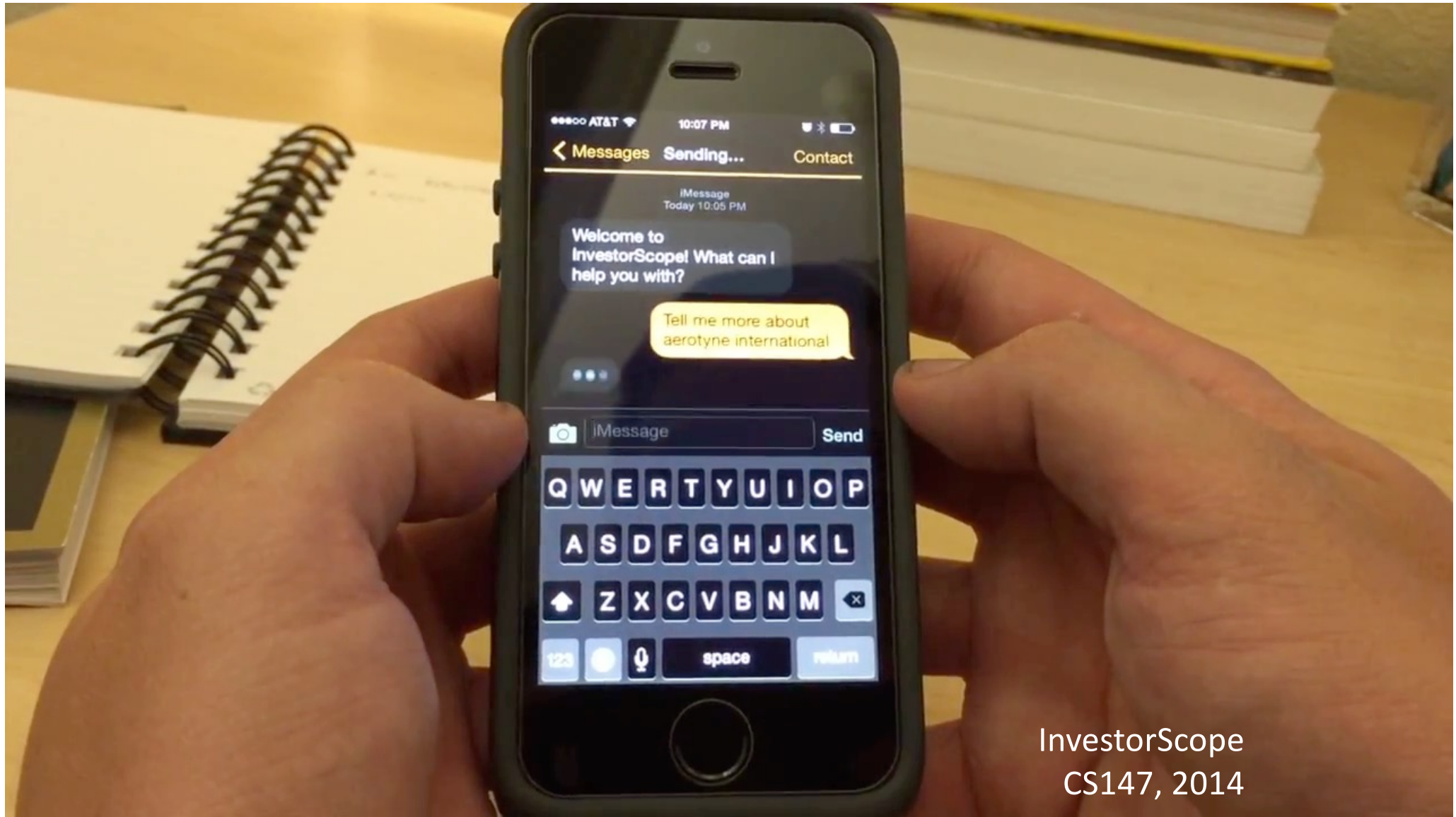
Concept Video Examples



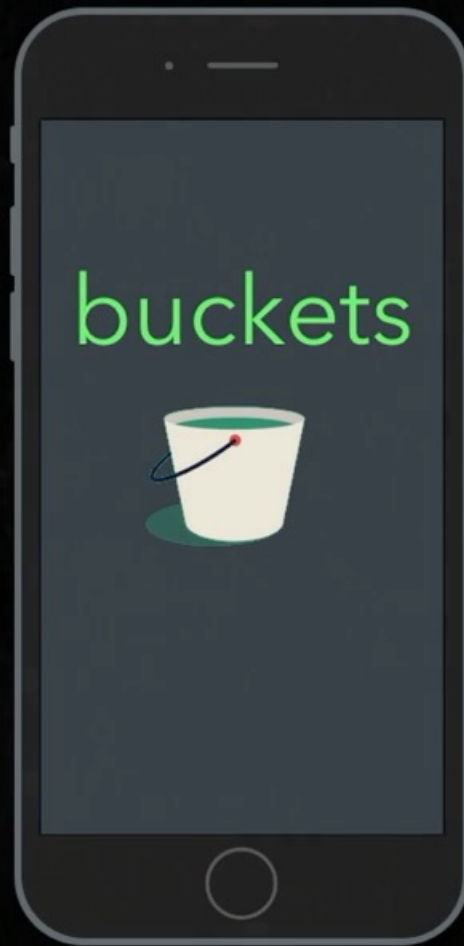
micro**health**

A little goes a long way

MicroHealth



InvestorScope
CS147, 2014



Buckets
CS147 Film Festival winner 2015

Administrivia

- Watch (if you haven't already)
 - *Experience Prototypes Tutorial*
by 2022wi Head CA Kristina Inouye (23 min)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QAWQIeGon0k>
- More workshops coming up led by our great CAs
 - recorded website workshop already online
 - poll coming this week for next weeks' figma workshop
- Only apps?
 - “all projects mobile/wearable/off desktop (e.g., AR/VR)/AI”

Administrivia: Assignment 1 Grades/Feedback

A1 Group Needfinding:	-: 0%	✓ -: 0%	✓ -: 4%	✓ : 48%	✓ +: 48%	✓ ++: 0%
A1 Individual Presentation:	-: 0%	✓ -: 0%	✓ -: 4%	✓ : 26%	✓ +: 61%	✓ ++: 9%

We liked

- “Went above and beyond in the number of in-person interviews”
- “asking open-ended, non-leading questions”
- “thoroughness of empathy maps”
- “intentionality behind the diversity of interviewees”

We wished

- “more interpretation put into *insights*. Many just observations”
- “artifacts displayed an *interesting observation, rather than a selfie* with the interviewee”
- “needs were *grounded in deeper human emotions*”
- “insights revealed a *greater leap/guess* about the user”
- “more time spent on *empathy map synthesis* rather than quantity of empathy maps”
- “greater intentionality on *how an ‘extreme’ user was defined*”
- “stronger *link between the selected quotes and the gleaned insight*”
- “more *discussion of the implications* of findings on the user”
- “*less slide text* during verbal presentations; *put it in the appendix* instead”

Assignment Grading Buckets



Far exceeds expectations: Reserved for ~ the top 1-3 submissions that can be used as examples in class. This is an A+, often a perfect or > 97% score.



Fulfills the expectations in the spec and **some elements exceed expectations**. Strong engagement with the design process. Excellent presentation of the work. This is an A range grade (93 - 97%).

Average Grade in CS147



Fulfills the expectations in the spec. Students engaged with the design process, though maybe **some small issues remain**. Presentation understandable. This is a B+/A- range grade (88 - 92%).



Relatively complete, but there are components of unsatisfactory quality. Presentation may fall short (e.g., poor image resolution, too much text). This is a B range grade (83 - 87%).



Incomplete or multiple parts are of unsatisfactory quality. Shows sub-par engagement with the design process. Presentation likely falls short in many ways. This is a C+/B- range grade (78 - 82%).



Missing substantial assignment components and/or mostly poor quality. Does not represent engagement with the design process. This is a C range grade or lower (< 78%).

Interviewees + Extreme User

Frequency of Doctor Visits

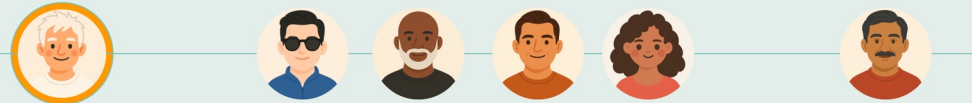


Extreme User:

- Adam
- Visits the hospital everyday
- Intense exposure to healthcare

Interviewees + Extreme User

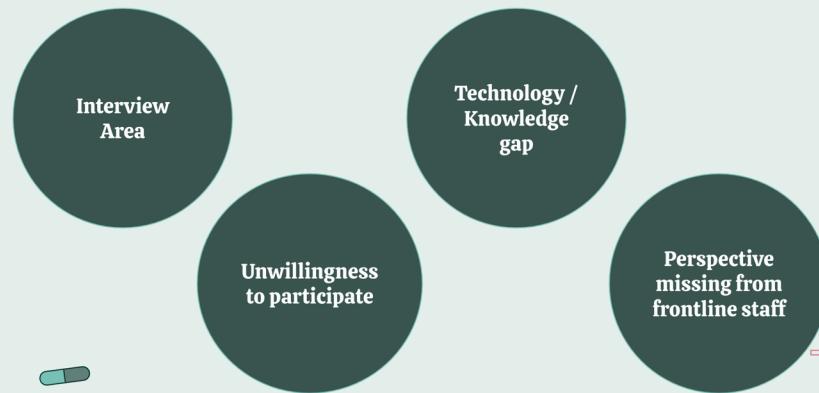
Financial Status



Extreme User:

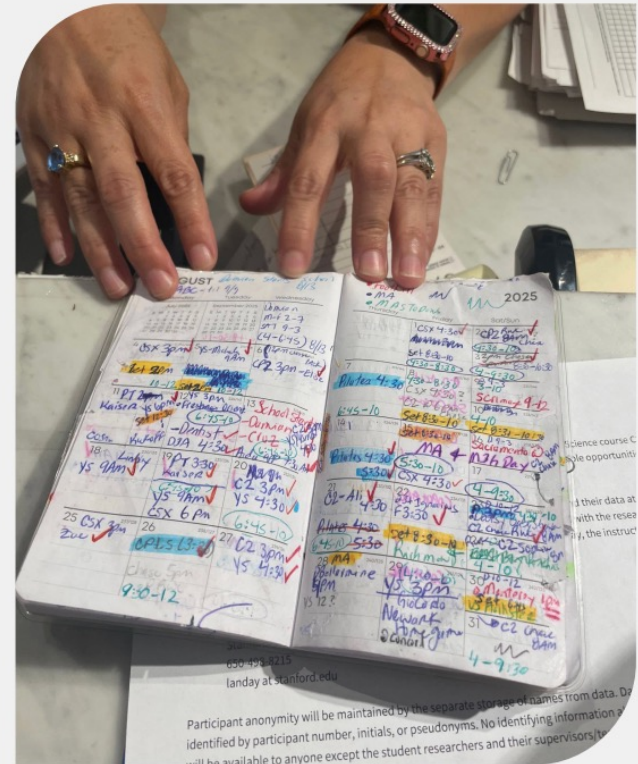
- Eric
- Far end of financial spectrum
- Relies on informal systems
- Excluded from digital-only systems

Missing Perspectives



Lucia, 44

“I don't have much social life besides my kids, so it's nice talking to ladies!”



Participant anonymity will be maintained by the separate storage of names from data. Data identified by participant number, initials, or pseudonyms. No identifying information will be available to anyone except the student researchers and their supervisors.

EMPATHY MAP

"If you're not gonna be efficient, then [your time] should be time that you do things that bring you joy and happiness."

Gil S

sighs and kind of winces when he talks about how he spends his free time on tiktok

Gabriella

"[My dad] has failed 1000 times why should I fail too?"

Gabriella

Productivity is about maximizing time that betters you. (emphasis on work but including time for joy)

Gabriella

Casey

SAY

Gabriella Michele Anselmi Ugozzoni

"If you're not gonna be efficient, then [your time] should be time that you do things that bring you joy and happiness."
Gil Siva

"When you have a goal and you can see the end of that goal...it makes it possible...otherwise you don't know what you're running for"
annabianagras

"You are not always going to be working so things like playing video games is not unproductive because that's something that brings you joy"
annabianagras

"Stressing out for 20 minutes is unproductive because you're not relaxing or working."
Gil Siva

"I got half off on my Lit presentation because I didn't include a summary which was just in the instructions and I couldn't read it"
annabianagras

"I don't use my phone an hour before bed and an hour after I wake up. I get 8 hours of sleep and those 8 hours help me have better practices"
annabianagras

"I talked to it [AI] about AP Lit and I have it to the side of me and I ask it simple questions in live response instead of having to look it up"
annabianagras

being unproductive is "having meaningless time"
Gabriella Michele Anselmi Ugozzoni

"If I were to sit down and play video games I wouldn't consider that unproductive...because I'm kind of in my own world and its something I enjoy to do"
Gabriella Michele Anselmi Ugozzoni

"I never want to be behind in those classes...I always do half or three-quarters when it's assigned so when I come back I can finish it quickly"
annabianagras

"My dad] has failed 1000 times why should I fail too?"
Gabriella Michele Anselmi Ugozzoni

"tikcher"
Gabriella Michele Anselmi Ugozzoni

DO

Gabriella Michele Anselmi Ugozzoni

sighs and kind of winces when he talks about how he spends his free time on tiktok
Gabriella Michele Anselmi Ugozzoni

sighs when he talks about his least motivated day
Gabriella Michele Anselmi Ugozzoni

when he talks about talking "unproductive" when "that he does while listening to audiobooks he uses a lot of hand gestures."
Gabriella Michele Anselmi Ugozzoni

pushes out when talking about stopping using his phone to focus
Gabriella Michele Anselmi Ugozzoni

Chuckles when thinking about his unproductive friend that always says "It's all going to work out", but doesn't take actionable steps.
annabianagras

physically gestures to the side when talking about AI Assistant
Gabriella Michele Anselmi Ugozzoni

Physically gestures to parts of the table when talking about breaking up tasks.
annabianagras

Says a lot of "um" and "uh" when asked about prioritizing tasks outside of his academics.
annabianagras

Smiles sheepishly when talking about how he uses AI to help him refocus his thoughts and says "It's kind of weird, but I just talk to it."
annabianagras

Immediately grabs phone and puts in airplane after the interview concludes.
annabianagras

THINK

Gabriella Michele Anselmi Ugozzoni

Productivity is about maximizing time that betters you (emphasis on work but including time for joy)
Gabriella Michele Anselmi Ugozzoni

Being around others that have achieved goals that you are interested in pursuing makes them feel more attainable.
annabianagras

Learning from others, like your parents, and accepting their guidance allows you to avoid failures that they have already undergone.
annabianagras

Believes in incremental progress: breaking big goals into smaller tasks.
Gil Siva

Scheduling free time to hang out with friends or skipping things like sports practices is also important because those are things that bring joy.
annabianagras

Building momentum for tasks by starting when its assigned allows you to feel less stressed and makes the task more approachable.
annabianagras

It is easier to focus when you are listening to an audiobook or podcast because it is easy to zone out in silence.
annabianagras

Working in spaces with people nearby but not people next to you helps with productivity.
annabianagras

Being friends with people and families that have similar ambitions allows you to stay motivated and accountable.
annabianagras

Tools like AI assistants help you feel more organized but also can't do deeper work just surface level help.
annabianagras

less conscious of prioritization of tasks outside of main "work" (this audience)
Gabriella Michele Anselmi Ugozzoni

FEEL

Gabriella Michele Anselmi Ugozzoni

Frustration/annoyance with self when he falls short of expectations (e.g., AP Lit presentation).
Gil Siva

Admiration for friends with consistent discipline.
Gil Siva

Motivated mid-week when momentum builds, but physically drained on Saturdays after a long week.
annabianagras

Calm and centered when he meditates or stretches.
annabianagras

Connected to peers through shared accountability, but also competitive in Palo Alto's intense environment.
annabianagras

Encouraged and inspired when he sees friends succeed, making his own goals (like pursuing law) feel possible.
annabianagras

Reverent when thinking about his dad and how he passes his wisdom down.
annabianagras

Amused when thinking about his unproductive friend that always says "It's all going to work out", but doesn't take actionable steps.
annabianagras

Reminiscent when talking about his middle school years when he would work at his dad's office and could focus on tasks without background noise.
annabianagras

Feels guilty when mentioning that he skips sports practices sometimes to make time for his friends.
annabianagras



Administrivia

- Goal of project presentations this week is to select a project direction for the quarter using feedback from TA & peers
- Project Selection Criteria
 - novelty (e.g., with respect to market & past CS147 projects)
 - significant UI component
 - e.g., bad if all smart AI but no UI
 - impact (e.g., frequency, density & pain)
 - team is excited to work on it
 - could this be harmful to individuals & communities? (is it ethical?)
- Selection is not about
 - business feasibility
 - implementation feasibly in 1 quarter
 - need only a way to approximate (high-fi prototypes are functioning apps, but do not have everything in them – e.g., may be missing a backend, a real social network, or help)

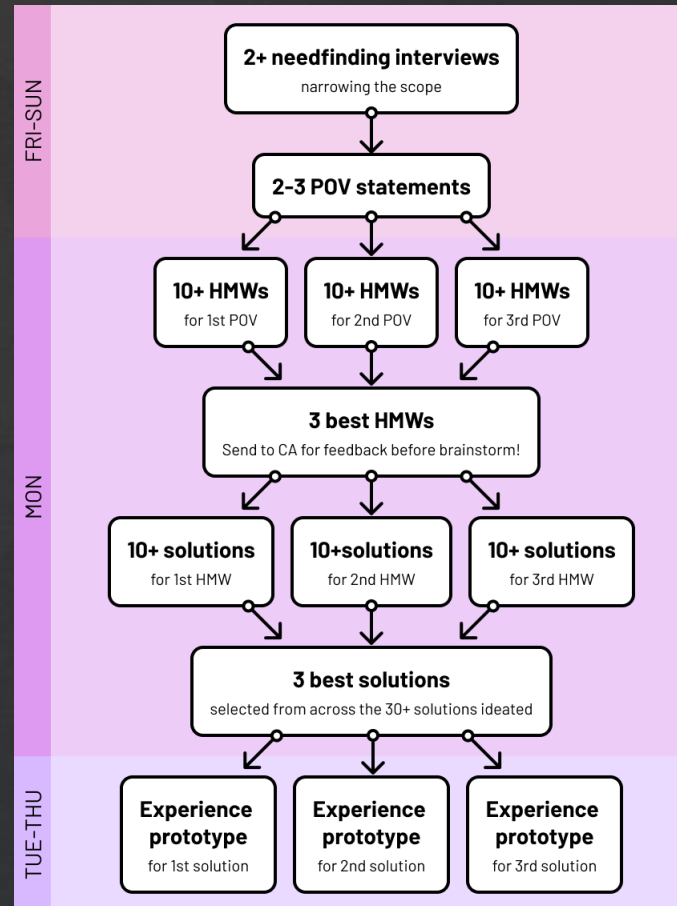
Exit Tickets & Attendance

- Reminder that attendance is recorded at every lecture!
- There will be 1 exit ticket/week. You will have 24 hours from the end of lecture to turn it in.
 - exit tickets shouldn't take longer than 5-10 minutes to complete, and will be based on both lecture and readings/videos/podcasts
 - exit tickets graded on accuracy & will count as a part of your participation grade (participation worth 10% of your grade).
 - there is an optional feedback section at the end of every exit ticket; we **encourage** you to fill it out! We read all feedback!

Class Feedback

- Keep giving feedback on readings (we make some optional/remove based on feedback)
 - also note readings will reduce as quarter progresses
- Trying to keep giving at least 20 min of team time

Next Assignment (due this week's studio)



3-4 hours

Team Break

- CAs will give answer questions on A1
- Do POVs/HMWs/Solutions/EPs/Slides for A2
 - share on your studio slack to get feedback
- Ask the Teaching Staff Questions on A2!



The Goal of any good
conceptual film...

Making a Concept Video



Define

What is the **message** of the film?

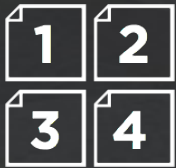
What is the **value proposition** you offer?

Can you describe it in a few lines?



Make a basic **plot**

Discuss plot ideas until you get a few that really make sense,
decide characters



Storyboard

Turn these into storyboards of scenes to plan how you will film it

* note: **not** UI storyboards!

1 2
3 4

Storyboarding

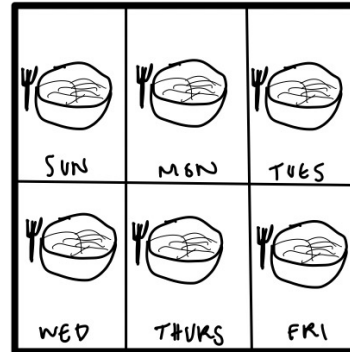
Use sticky notes so scenes can be moved

Include lines to be spoken if necessary

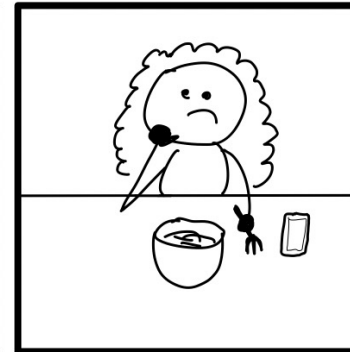
Use appropriate camera angles

1 2
3 4

Storyboarding



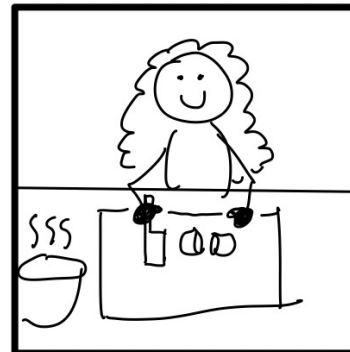
same boring food every day
sounds: microwave, dish scraping, silverware clatter



* emotion - look bored *



* buzz buzz *
animate typing?
ding!



* cooking sounds: chop, sizzle *
happy! excited!!



looks yum, tastes yum - emotion

Spice

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4

Storyboarding



1 2
3 4

Storyboarding

SCENE 4

Words On Screen: Investigate

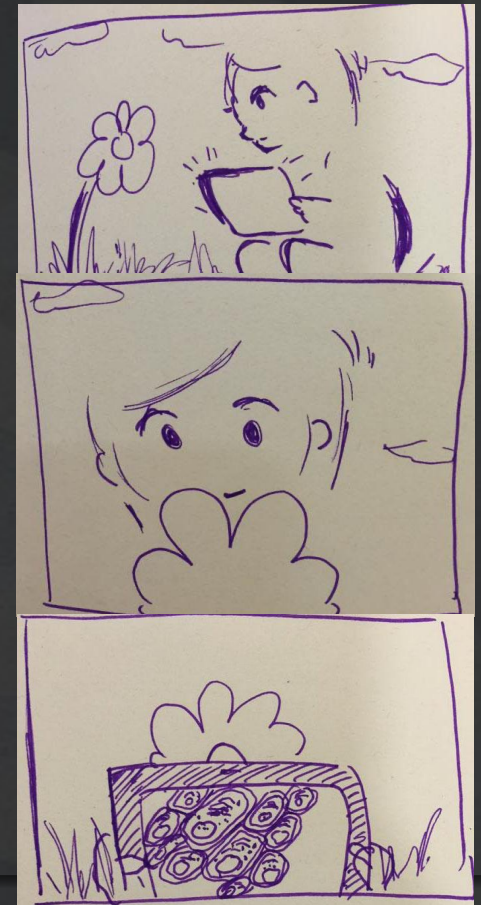
Voiceover: The mitochondria are the powerhouse of the cell

SHOT 1

beautiful flower, child's eyes are wide looking at it head is cocked to the side, inquisitive

SHOT 2

tablet pans into view, image on screen shows the cellular structure of the plant





Shoot your Film

Get as many shots (angles, close ups, distance...) as you can! you never know what might be useful later.



If you choose to use music

Now is a good time to pick some songs. Music can be very powerful if chosen well. (see Vimeo for music you can use free)



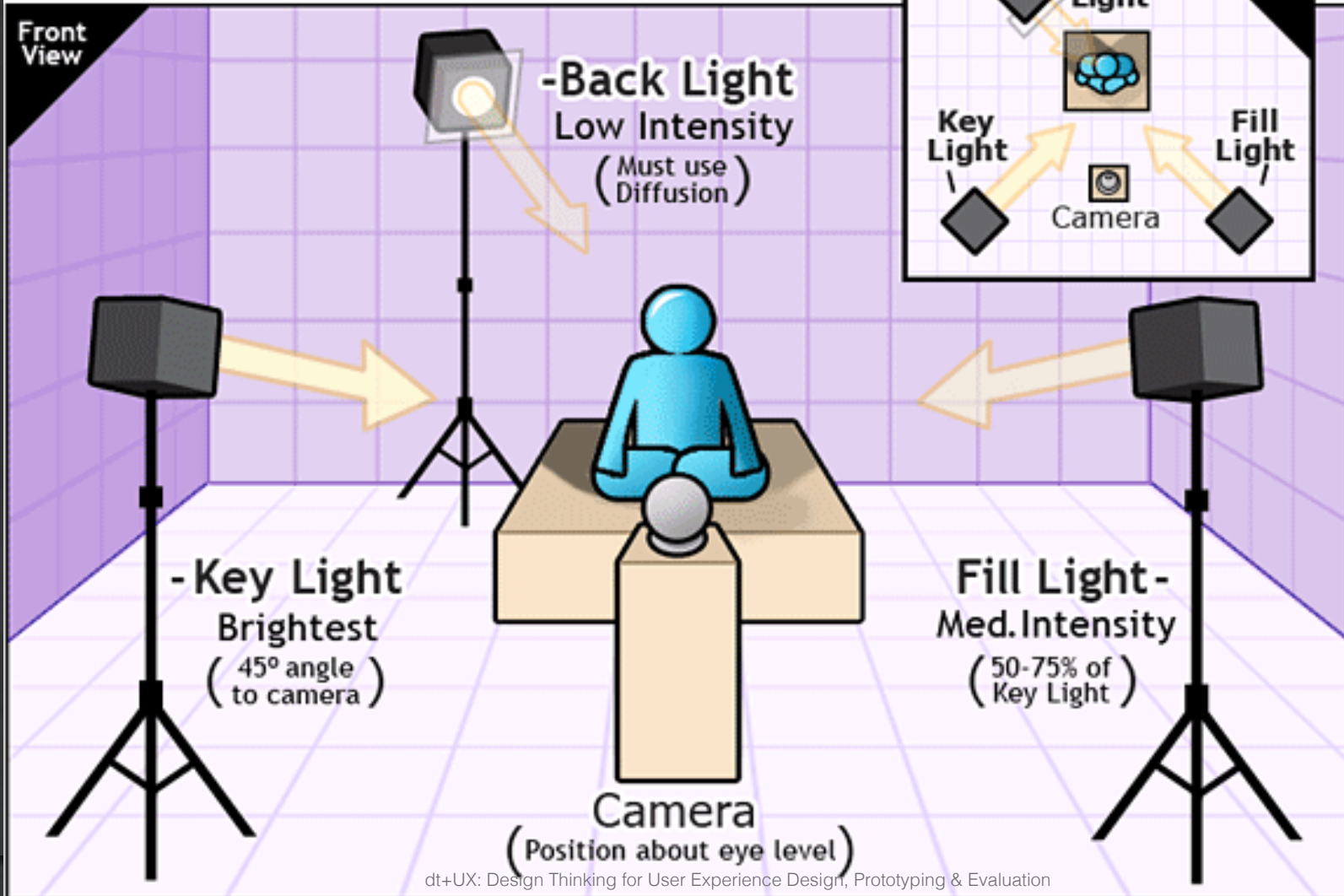
Edit your Film

Use your storyboard! This part should be simple if you have storyboarded correctly.

Lighting

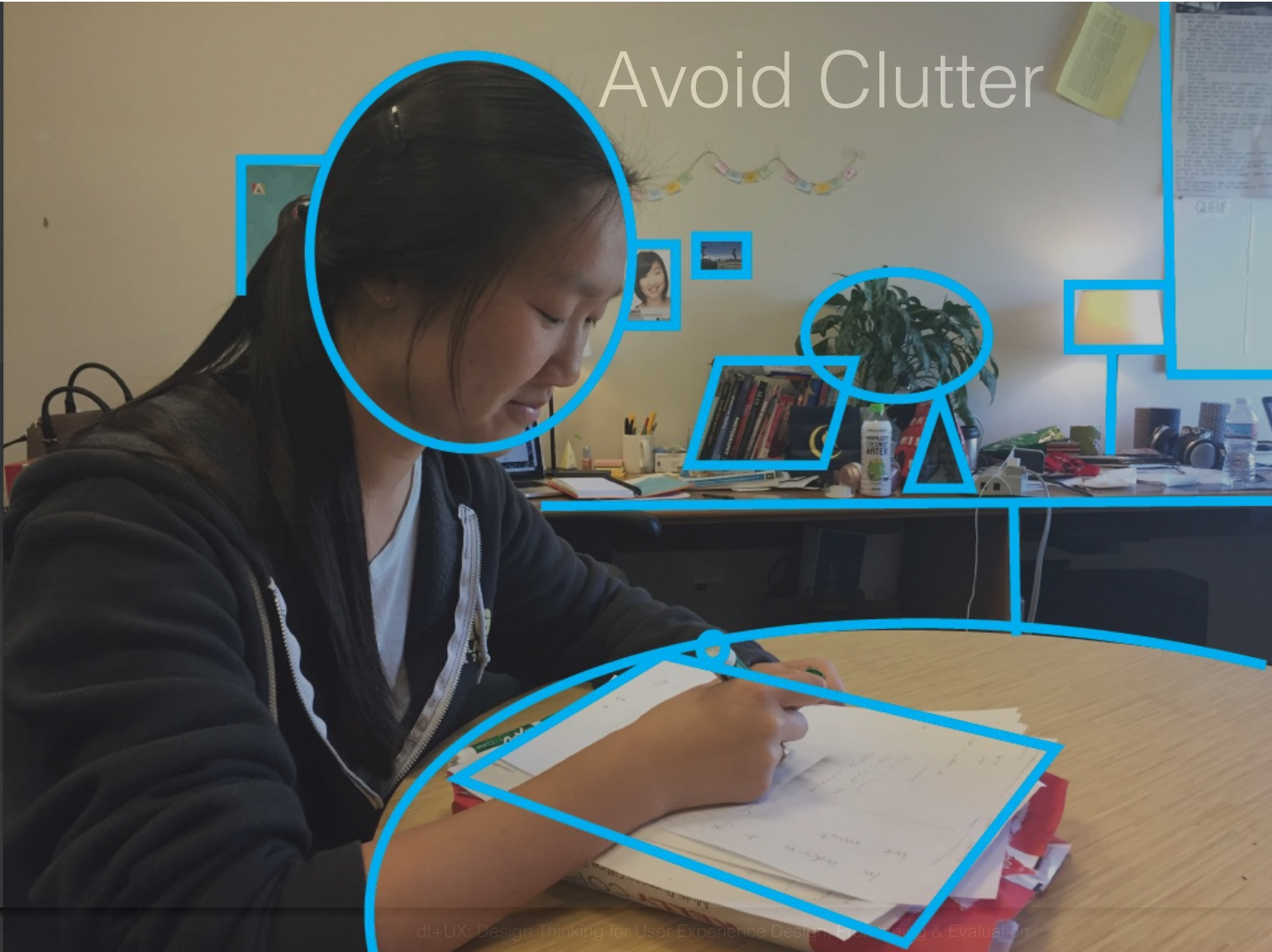


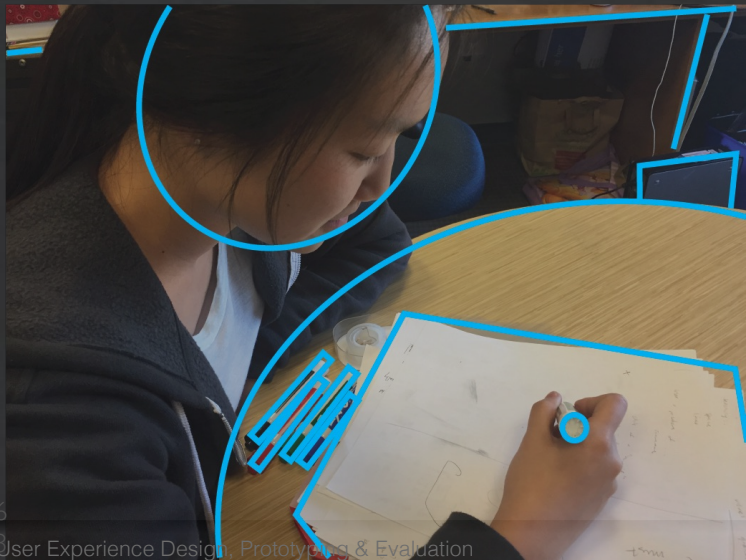
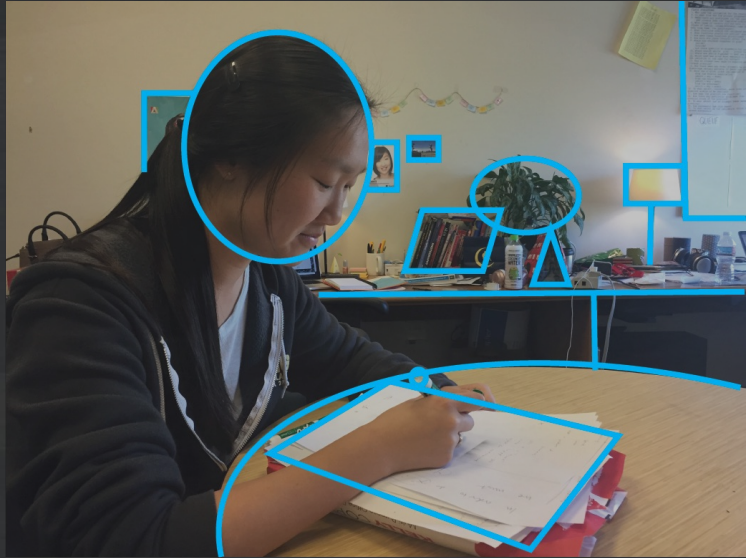
Basic 3 Point Lighting Setup





Avoid Clutter







AWI
Vink, Cauchard, & Landay



People

Use Close-Up shots

Capture emotion

Avoid conversation
(This is the hardest to get right
and ends up distracting)

Use the right person
for the role-ask friends



Context

Plan your story –
Storyboard it.

Is the story believable?

Film multiple angles

Film longer than the
shot needs (you can
always cut down)



The Solution

Wow Effect

Show your solution at it's best, save the best for last

Subtlety

Show how the solution makes the user *feel* – subtly

Don't 'Sell' it

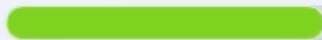
Don't tell people to use your solution, *show* them why

ChoreoLab (2015 runner up)

Dan
San Francisco



1 / 5





Munch (2015 runner up)

Cabana (2017 winner)

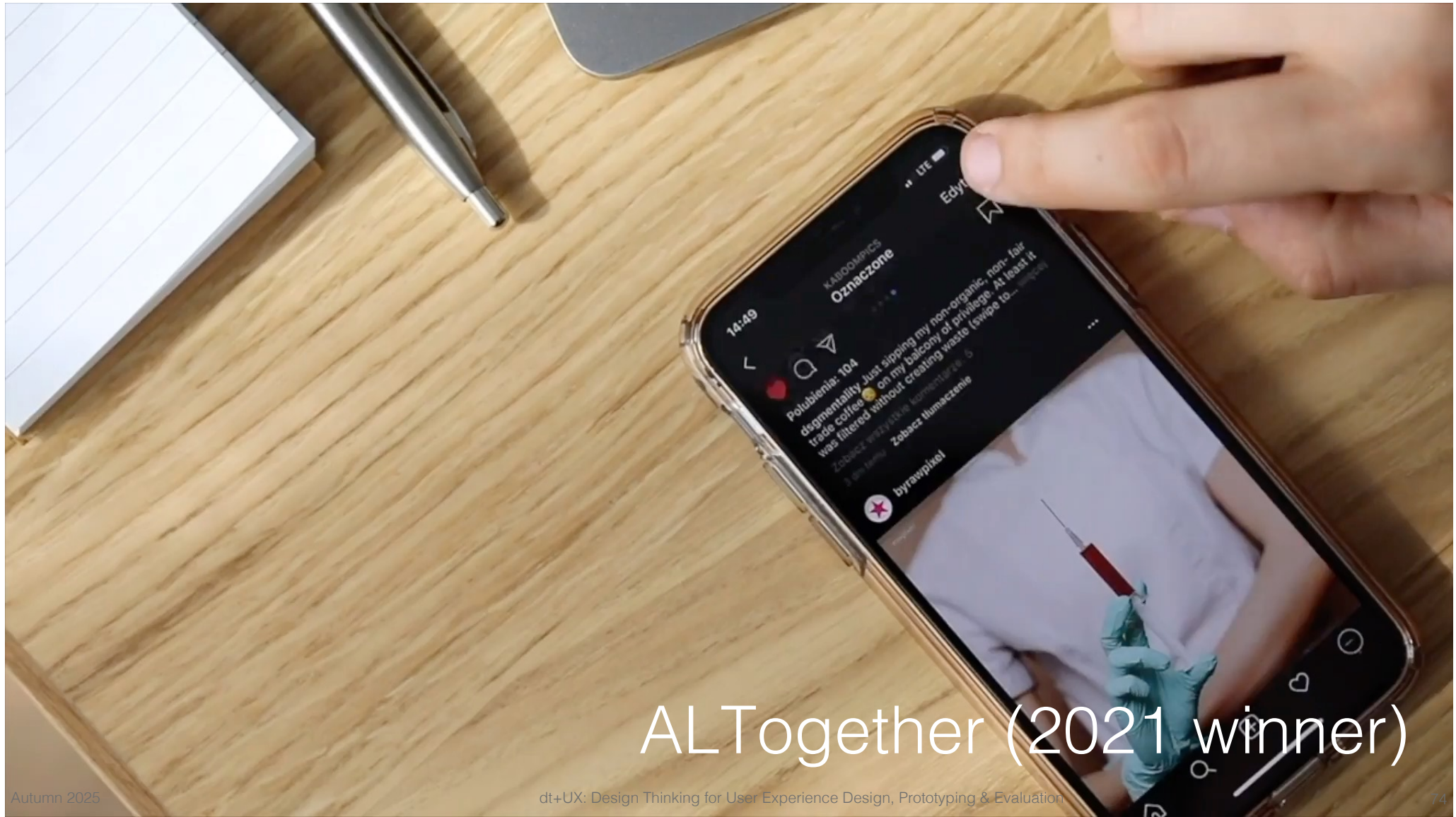


Token (Concept Video)

TOKEN

DISCOVER, RELIVE, AND SHARE MEMORIES
OVER TIME AND SPACE





ALTogether (2021 winner)



High Fidelity Concept Videos



BONES

Pedro Andrade, CIID

High Fidelity Concept Videos



parqtheapp

High Fidelity Concept Videos

Smart Primer

active learning in the real world



Stanford HCI Group

Smart Primer

High Fidelity Video Prototype Examples

Token (hi-fi video prototype)



High Fidelity Video Prototypes



Summary

- Video prototypes allow us to quickly communicate **how** a user will **use** a design
- Concept videos tell the **story & context** of use
- Both techniques are useful
 - your projects are at the concept video stage

Next Time

- Project & Studio (this week)
 - create/test experience prototypes for top 3 solutions
 - test each prototype with at least 1 target user (**new participants!**)
 - in presentation, get across what you **learned!** Were **assumptions valid?**
 - studio will be used to select the idea to move forward
- Project Assignment 4: Concept Video (due next Thur/Fri Oct 16/17)
 - define your tasks starting in studio this week
 - shoot & edit a Concept Video
- Lecture (Mon)
 - Design Exploration
 - Read
 - Pg. 135-151 from [Buxton's Sketching User Experience](#) (pw: hcid)
 - Tohidi, Buxton, Baecker, Sellen, "[Getting the Right Design and the Design Right: Testing Many Is Better Than One](#)", CHI 2006.
- Assignment 3: Project Web Site
 - online later this week
 - not graded until part way check-in & near end of quarter
 - all project assignments need to be linked off this site (**relative links**)