

**Design for Us**

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submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of:

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Program Authorized to Offer Degree:  
**Art**

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# INTRODUCTION

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Preface

Why This Toolkit?

Who Uses This Toolkit?

How Do I Use This Toolkit?

THIS TOOLKIT EQUIPS GRAPHIC DESIGNERS WITH RESOURCES AND STRATEGIES FOR FACILITATING COMMUNITY-LED DESIGN PROJECTS.

The content is based on my experiences both leading and assisting participation-driven design workshops that focused on community empowerment. In this Toolkit, you'll find stories that refer to those experiences in the sidebars as well as strategic principles and tips for good practice. You will find that it's designed to be flexible, based on your community's needs and circumstances.

The Toolkit will continue to be modified based on the stories and experiences that designers like you encounter in your efforts. To contribute your story or feedback, please visit [www.designforus.org](http://www.designforus.org) and help improve our collective efforts.

—Mike Fretto

## INTRODUCTION

- × Preface
- Why This Toolkit?
- Who Uses This Toolkit?
- How Do I Use This Toolkit?

that was missing before—the voices of those whom my design intentions would ultimately impact.

My first opportunity putting notions of this theory into practice came my second year of graduate school when working on a project with Tad Hirsch, Assistant Professor of Interaction Design at UW, and Laura O'Quin, community art and design advocate from the Frye Art Museum in Seattle. Their project, *Intangible Effects No. 1*, focused on Yesler Terrace, a public housing development in Seattle's First Hill neighborhood. For eight weeks, I assisted them in facilitating a community

Assaye Abunie, founder of Multimedia Resources Technology Institute, with a proposal to facilitate a winter workshop with high school-aged youth from Seattle. The general idea was to introduce participants to the fundamentals of graphic design and assist them in developing real-world design campaigns that addressed an issue they each cared about. Together, we successfully recruited fourteen participants, mostly East African immigrants ages 14–21 years old. We met at two different locations for six weeks and designed posters that addressed issues ranging from rights for the mentally ill, public school budget cuts, internet censorship, suicide, and life as an immigrant in the U.S. By the end, participants took stacks of posters home that they personally designed and screenprinted, which they planned to hang in various locations around Seattle.

This was a valuable learning experience that yielded interesting results, though it wasn't squeaky clean. Navigating ambiguous spaces, learning new skills, and facing continuous hurdles compelled me to put together a reference guide for others who might wish to embark on similar pursuits. It includes tools, tips, strategies, and examples to help you plan and facilitate a design workshop with a community group. This Toolkit is far from perfect; it certainly doesn't provide all of the answers, nor do I promise it will work for you, but it's my hope that in discussing the processes I learned (as well as my successes and failures), you might consider how to make designing for social change more inclusive and valuable for the people whom those efforts ultimately affect. *Design for Us* gives those people a voice. It's an avenue for *their* issues, needs, and concerns to be heard—and grants them the opportunity to affect change how *they* choose, through the powerful tools of visual communication design.

# PREFACE

I remember when I first heard the words “participatory” and “design” used together. It was mentioned in Axel Roesler's Design Seminar, a course I was taking at the University of Washington. The idea of empowering stakeholders and engaging them in the design process, particularly in projects dealing with social issues, was incredibly intriguing. Prior to studying at UW, I was running a non-profit, called Rosa Loves, which I founded in 2005. Rosa Loves was an effective social enterprise that harnessed the power of storytelling and design to fundraise for people in need through selling t-shirts. It was a satisfying experience; I learned a lot about the power of empathy and storytelling in the context of social change. However, I constantly grappled with defining my role as a graphic designer affecting social change. Helping people in need was always my intention, but in the end, I questioned whether my interventions were truly helping or just making a complicated situation more complicated. Participation in design appealed to me because it included something

workshop with Seattle youth, whom we helped collect field recordings, interviews, and performances by residents of Yesler Terrace. As a production assistant, I had the opportunity to learn about organizing a participatory workshop—one that involved community members and stakeholders having a say in a project. In this case, the project outcome was an interactive exhibit housed in the Frye Art Museum, but I began to see how similar strategies might be realized in my own pursuits toward a more responsible and meaningful future in social impact design. As result, I decided to organize a workshop that I would lead during the following quarter, which eventually became the nucleus of my Master's thesis.

Due to the strong relationships established with both the participants and community groups with whom I had previously worked, I was able to avoid “helicoptering” into a new group and setting. Having Tad as my advocate, we approached Asfaha Lemlem, director of Yesler Community Center, and

# WHY THIS TOOLKIT?

This Toolkit is for graphic designers and community groups who want to leverage the power of visual communication design to voice concerns in their community.

## POWER TO THE PEOPLE!

By equipping people with the basic tools of visual communication design, this Toolkit empowers them with their own voice rather than relying on someone else. As result, a sense of ownership and pride emerge. Fostering long-term efforts become more realistic, since they are powered from community members themselves, rather than an outside group.

## HOME-GROWN

“Designing for good” sometimes falls short. Misunderstanding needs can, at times, have unintended consequences, and cause detrimental effects on a well-intentioned design project. The methods of this Toolkit aim to avoid these outcomes by allowing design concepts to be produced by those who best understand the problems fully—the community members themselves.

## CUT OUT THE MIDDLEMAN

As an advocate, it can sometimes be challenging to articulate other peoples’ true needs. It’s complicated, but this Toolkit offers help. When equipped with design tools, people can voice issues in a different way. Design requires them to address a specific audience and further enables them to use simplified imagery to communicate a complicated idea. It’s this process that opens up opportunities to hear from people and enable meaningful reflection upon needs and concerns.

## PEOPLE ARE HEARD

Whatever the socio-economic barrier, many people don’t have opportunities to speak up and be heard. Strategies in this Toolkit are built around hearing from them—offering options and resources to voice their concerns.

## INTRODUCTION

Preface

Why This Toolkit?

× Who Uses This Toolkit?

How Do I Use This Toolkit?

# WHO USES THIS TOOLKIT?

This Toolkit is about empowering community members to explore, articulate, and act upon issues that matter to them. This process affords interesting possibilities for both community members and designers.

## DESIGNERS

### Gathering insights/contextual community research

Active participation in a project like this can reveal insights into peoples' values, perceptions, behaviors, and family dynamics. These insights can prove useful for research-based design practices.

### Educational Experience

The role of the designer continues to expand, requiring new skills and craft. Designers are expected to lead conversations, co-create, and foster relationships. Design students are generally trained to work with paid clients, treating design strictly as a provided service. This Toolkit, if it involves design students, helps build these newly sought-after skills by putting them in direct contact with community members who can benefit from their training.

## THE COMMUNITY

### Advocacy Tool

Although these processes are created to be led by someone with experience in professional graphic design, this Toolkit also sheds light on how community proponents might also adopt design-based methods. Visual communication design requires careful preparation in crafting a message to have a desired effect on a specific audience. This process requires critical thinking and creative problem solving, which at times offer glimpses into peoples' needs and concerns. If implemented, exercises in this Toolkit can provide advocates with revitalized methods and resources to represent peoples' needs.

### Community Empowerment

Providing people with the opportunity to articulate issues they care about with communication design skills, instills a sense of ownership. Design has a lot to offer communities with something to say!

## INTRODUCTION

Preface

Why This Toolkit?

Who Uses This Toolkit?

× How Do I Use This Toolkit?

# HOW DO I USE THIS TOOLKIT?

## STRUCTURE AND FORMAT

As for its structure, the Toolkit begins by walking you through how to use it (somewhat of a Toolkit for the Toolkit, of sorts).

Who knew Toolkits can get all *Inception* on you like that?

Next, it introduces the preliminary details. You know—the fun stuff like organizing, recruitment, and planning (all the things that designers love). The Toolkit splits up each section with *Principles* and *Practices*. *Principles* are overarching ideas, attitudes, and general expectations for that particular phase (think: topics like keeping up morale, maintaining trust with stakeholders, etc.). *Practices* are more tangible and specific (more along the lines of how to lead a discussion or develop a plan of action, etc.). Towards the end of the book, it gets into follow-up strategies, conclusions, as well as an appendix full of documents, worksheets, examples, and a partridge in a pear tree. Digital working files in the Appendix can be downloaded at: [www.designforus.com/resources](http://www.designforus.com/resources).

### One-off Workshop

The Toolkit's primary use is to enable you with the tools and resources to plan and execute a workshop with multiple stakeholders.

### Piggybacking

This project can certainly supplement another project, although it's designed to help you start one from scratch. It should be flexible enough to tailor to the needs of your group. Timeframe, though, as many of the strategies covered take significant amount of time. Give yourself a minimum of six weeks (meeting at least twice per week) in order to make the most progress.

## TOOLKIT GUTS:

### FLEXIBLE

While it gives scheduling suggestions at times, it's designed to be used at your own pace.

### CHRONOLOGICAL

Each section is divided up into phases to guide you through the process step-by-step chronologically.

### ANECDOTAL

Colored callouts throughout the Toolkit provide stories that refer to my personal experiences.

# GETTING READY

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[Preliminary Decisions](#)

[Assembling Your Group](#)

[Setting Expectations](#)

[Nuts and Bolts](#)

DESIGNERS ARE GIFTED  
PLANNERS AND LOGISTICAL-  
MINDED THINKERS, RIGHT?  
NOT SO MUCH.

WELL, FEAR NOT; THIS SECTION  
OF THE TOOLKIT SHOULD HELP  
WITH SOME OF THAT HEAVY  
LIFTING. YOU'RE WELCOME.

## GETTING READY

- × Preliminary Decisions
- Assembling Your Group
- Setting Expectations
- Nuts & Bolts

# PRELIMINARY DECISIONS

## Have a Project in Mind

This Toolkit allows you to use your design expertise to help a group of community members articulate an issue they care about through graphic design. Begin thinking of a design project. What media is relatively easy to work with? What's realistic in terms of production? Keep it simple. Posters, t-shirts, zines, flyers, and postcards are examples of projects that can easily be tackled. This Toolkit provides you with principles and practices that will help you lead projects like these.

## Funding

Your workshop will require you to have some funding or in-kind donations. Costs will include unavoidable things like your time, a physical space, power/utilities, and transportation. Be aware that you'll need computers, a scanner, printer/photocopying machine, and a camera, as well as supplies like writing utensils and Post-It notes (and lots of coffee).

## SAMPLE BUDGET

ITEM	COST
Screen printing 101 Intro Class Fee	\$ 30.00
French Paper Muscletone #110 Cover 25 x 19", 300 qty	170.25
UPS Ground Shipping (poster paper)	35.95
Participant screen printing fees (screens, emulsion, supplies, and studio time)	300.00
Exhibition supply costs (foam core, plotter prints, fixtures)	225.00
Celebration pizza and refreshments	135.00
Workshop materials (color printing, Post-It notes, markers, presentation pad, scissors)	85.00
36 meals for 3 Co-Designers (2/week @ 6 weeks) \$10/meal	360.00
Transportation vouchers for participants	160.00
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES:</b>	<b>\$ 1,501.20</b>

## GETTING READY

- ..... Preliminary Decisions
- × Assembling Your Group
- ..... Setting Expectations
- ..... Nuts & Bolts

# ASSEMBLING YOUR GROUP

## 1 COMMUNITY PARTNER

### THINGS TO LOOK FOR IN A GOOD COMMUNITY PARTNER:

- × Commitment to assisting you in your workshop
- × Willingness to advocate for your ideas
- × Rapport with other community members
- × Access to resources (physical space, technology, transportation, etc.)

Look for a champion, an insider—someone who will advocate for you in the community you're interested in. Ideally, this could be an individual or a small group that is established within the community like a non-profit\*, school, church, cultural center, museum, activist group, or another type of government association. Identifying a community partner and initiating a relationship with them is integral to your workshop.

### TIPS

#### Get used to ambiguity

Trying something new, leading a group, working with unfamiliar people in an unfamiliar place can lead to ambiguous and unexplored territory. This is normal in the beginning. It's only unavoidable if you are a wizard. Press on and proceed down the dark and scary path forward—it gets easier in time.

### Venturing Out

Be aware of the surrounding community. Who does this workshop affect outside of those involved in the workshop? Chances are, there's an expansive network of stakeholders outside of this immediate circle. Think of family members, friends, co-workers, businesses, local government, etc. How will your workshop affect them? Should they have a say? Are there any opportunities to form relationships with them? Make time to attend events, visit local businesses and restaurants—or perhaps even volunteer for organizations linked to community you're working with. Spend time on their turf on their terms, do more listening than talking. Take notice of how lifestyles and values. Paying attention to these things and going the extra mile to foster these relationships outside of the workshop can be very beneficial for all involved. Most of all, it helps build trust and understanding, which you can never get enough of.

*\*Non-profits and other community groups are generally open to working with outside collaborators. You may be surprised how by much interest there is in a graphic design workshop. And yes—this means there will be even more people begging you to design them a new logo.*

## GETTING READY

- .....
- Preliminary Decisions
- × Assembling Your Group
- Setting Expectations
- Nuts & Bolts

# 2 TARGET AUDIENCE

Who are the participants you'd like to work with? You may have already determined this, but if not, ask yourself if there is group in your community that you're particularly drawn to. Is there a certain social class or demographic nearby that you identify with?

## GROUP DYNAMICS

Early on while recruiting, Asfaha, my community partner who was leading recruitment efforts, shared the list of people who had signed up for the workshop up to that point. On all of our ads, we asked for interested participants that were between 14–18. However, three adults, including a twenty-one year old, had signed up. With every intention to make this workshop as inclusive as possible, I contemplated whether I should turn down the adults. It was a tough predicament. On one hand, three adults were very interested and eager to learn. On the other, I worried about how it might affect the younger participants—some as young as 14. In the end, I accepted only the twenty-one year old. He participated in the workshop for a few weeks before dropping out. Having him was beneficial: he was confident, outspoken and interested to learn. However, there were moments when he intimidated the group. As someone older, he commanded an unspoken respect from the others, which affected their comfort levels at times. This was frequently a challenge to deal with.

## TIPS

### Age is a Factor

Are you comfortable working with people older than you? In some instances—but not all—this can make for awkward social dynamics for those involved. For example, a mixed group consisting of 16-18 year-old kids and adults in their thirties might be create tension and affect participation. Consider dynamics like these and how they might affect the group as a whole. Then decide on the scenario that allows for a comfortable environment for your participants' age group.

## GETTING READY

Preliminary Decisions

× Assembling Your Group

Setting Expectations

Nuts & Bolts

## TIPS

### Cheers!

Thoughtful gestures like covering your co-designers meals or buying beers can help show your appreciation for their time and effort.

### Gender Representation

Are you a team of all dudes? Running an all-gal squad? Think about mixing it up a little. A diverse team, of course, has many benefits, but having representation of both male and female co-designers is important. For example, you may run into challenges if your team of co-designers consists only of men while half of your participants are females. It's not that men or women aren't capable of facilitating a workshop on their own, but it is wise to consider participants' needs and preferences in terms of who they feel comfortable working with and relating to.

## YOUR RALLYING CRY

Though I had the perfect assistant, I wish I had more help. There were many needs and not enough hands. If I could do it over, I'd take a different approach in recruiting co-designers. I originally reached out to the UW design faculty, asking them to suggest students with relevant interests. A few emails and individual meetings later, Taylor, a fun and talented undergraduate design student, quickly agreed to help me, nearly a month before my workshop began. This was great, but I would have liked to have at least one other person on board; I recruited too late and perhaps not effectively. If I could re-do it, I'd try to get in front of people, to talk about my project. A five minute presentation at an event, a brief announcement to a design class, or a short discussion with co-workers could have gone a lot further. Personal interactions like these seem to reach people on a different level. If done right, they have the potential to inspire and motivate people—something that an e-mail has a much harder time doing.

# 3 CO-DESIGNERS

It's challenging to lead a workshop alone. Are there others willing to be your wingmen? Fellow graphic designers or even students with an interest in social impact design make ideal co-designers. One per three participants is ideal.

## GETTING READY

Preliminary Decisions

- ✗ Assembling Your Group
- Setting Expectations
- Nuts & Bolts

# 4

## PROFESSIONAL PARTNERS

Consider partnering with professionals who can help you in the final execution phases of your project. This could be a local screen printer, commercial printer, venue, or artist depending on what your final project and needs are. For example, if designing t-shirts, hunt down a local screen printer who might be willing to involve your participants in the printing process. This isn't always feasible, but great if you can set this up. The more participants are actively involved in every phase of the project, the better!

# 5

## FUNDERS

Consider those who may be willing to finance the workshop—a grantor, an institution, business, or sugar daddy. Finding these outside funding sources can perhaps be daunting. If grants and donations are out-of-reach, think about in-kind donations. Who do you know that might be able to contribute goods and/or services rather than finances? Your Community Partner may be willing to donate the space and any other necessary equipment they have onsite. Co-designers might loan laptops, scanners, cameras, and their time to the workshop as well. Think broadly when considering the non-financial resources around you; you'll be surprised how many people are willing to lend a hand!



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## GETTING READY

Preliminary Decisions

Assembling Your Group

× Setting Expectations

Nuts & Bolts

# SETTING EXPECTATIONS

Once you have identified stakeholders, keep in mind the following points that may help you get on track and avoid hiccups later on.

## EARLY DISCUSSIONS WITH YOUR COMMUNITY PARTNER

Reach out to your community partner and find out what they are willing and able to contribute. Try to get a sense of how they view their involvement and time commitment. Are there materials and/or resources they can offer? Can they help you recruit participants? These types of issues can be incredibly helpful before you begin planning:

### 1. Define Shared Goals

What are the goals you have for this workshop? Can these be flexible? Next, and more importantly, hear from your partner. Do they accept your goals as valid and beneficial for the target audience? Are the goals attainable? Ask them what they want to see achieved as result of the workshop. This isn't always an easy process—and you may discover that your goals differ from your partners'. Nevertheless, getting a sense of your Community Partner and/or Funders' values, desires, and needs is an important step. This will make expectations known, build trust, and help gauge the success of outcomes later in the workshop.

## TIPS

### Measure for Good Measure

Having a solid plan to measure outcomes can help you secure more opportunities to get funding in the future. Funders like to see numbers and take pleasure in knowing how their funds will be used and depending on who they are, they may require it.

## GETTING READY

- Preliminary Decisions
- Assembling Your Group
- ✗ Setting Expectations
- Nuts & Bolts

## 2. Define Successful Outcomes

What does success look like, and how will you know? Did your efforts fall short? Looking ahead at these questions now will help you accurately address them later. Reflect on the goals that you and your stakeholders value most. What are the metrics you'll use to assess these outcomes most effectively? Both quantitative data (deals with numbers and is calculable) and qualitative data (gathered from observation and is more nuanced) can provide you with ways to evaluate the workshop's progress.

For example, if one of your outcomes is to successfully recruit a diverse group of participants, how will you measure whether you were effective? You might apply a quantitative method by looking at numbers concerning age, gender, ethnicity, etc. of those who signed up. A qualitative method of evaluating your impact might involve interviewing or surveying your participants. Refer to the form below as a guide to help you identify these actionable components:

**SUCCESS IS...** *Having a group of engaged, interested participants from the start of the workshop to its completion.*

**THIS WILL BE ACHIEVED WHEN:** *Participants are present, paying attention, and enjoying the activities.*

**THE METRICS I'LL USE TO MEASURE ARE:** *Keeping attendance records, analyzing drawings/digital file, and conduct*

*one-on-one interviews three times throughout the workshop.*

*Fill in the template below or use the one found in the Appendix A.*

**SUCCESS IS...**

**THIS WILL BE ACHIEVED WHEN:**

**THE METRICS I'LL USE TO MEASURE ARE:**

## SHOULDA, COULDA, WOULDDA...

My project began with conversing with Asfaha and Assaye about shared goals and successful outcomes, but I regretfully did not set up as many evaluative mechanisms as I should have. For example, I realized toward the end of my workshop that I had not done a good job at evaluating whether I was successful in engaging my participants during certain activities. I loosely judged these outcomes based on the feedback I solicited from my assistant Taylor and their behavior during the activities. I noticed that a few of the

participants seemed uninterested at times, but if I had planned ahead, I could have found better ways to gauge this. Situations like this didn't have a huge impact on things in the end, but looking back on it, I wish I had been more diligent about establishing a way to measure the outcomes. I realized that not everyone will be engaged all the time. People come in with their own baggage, distractions, and issues. I learned to roll with it. You'll win some, and you'll lose some!

## GETTING READY

- Preliminary Decisions
- Assembling Your Group
- ✗ Setting Expectations
- Nuts & Bolts

### 3. Who Claims Ownership of this Project?

You are now collaborating with a host of different stakeholders who are all contributing to the project in different ways. So, first, who gets the credit for it? Approach this question in two phases. First, spread the wealth. The more people who want to take credit for it, the better. Everyone has a stake in the project. Therefore, encourage your stakeholders to share ownership. Be there to facilitate the workshop; don't be overly concerned with the credit you will or will not receive. Next, think over how to talk about ownership. In many cases, especially when working with funders—*how* you talk about ownership is critical

conversation to have. Discuss ways that you would and would not want your partners/funders/co-designers talking about the project in terms of ownership. How will everyone's involvement be labeled and communicated to others outside the project? Get your stakeholders on the same page quickly. This may seem like a non-issue, but it's worth bringing it up early before it becomes an issue. So much of this work depends on healthy relationships with the community. If anything, conversations like these only strengthen those relationships.

## EARLY DISCUSSIONS WITH YOUR CO-DESIGNERS

It's important to communicate expectations with your Co-Designers. What are we aiming for? What will we consider "good work?" How will decisions be made—will there be votes? How will issues be raised in the group—is this done over email or in person? The details may very likely make your head spin, but they're crucial to developing a well-oiled co-designing machine.

Responsibilities do not need to be divided up this way, but below are some of the roles and responsibilities that you can expect to be critical to your workshop functioning:

### PROJECT MANAGEMENT RECRUITMENT

Prepares and facilitates workshop sessions, conducts demos, and leads discussions.

Manages inquiries from participants, conducts interviews, background checks, etc.

### FUNDRAISING

Solicits funding, handles the books, manages any payroll and/or tax responsibilities.

### COMMUNICATIONS

Promotes the workshop, and identifies future partnership opportunities.

### LOGISTICS

Schedules meetings/events/sessions/agendas, and keeps team organized and up-to-date on the workshop details and to-do's.

### DOCUMENTATION

Keeps a video/photo record of process, handles technical needs, gets photo releases signed/filed, and keeps a daily journal.

## NOTE TO SELF: THE ART OF AUDIO JOURNALING

After my workshops, I was exhausted. I'd come home and the last thing I wanted to do was sit down in front of my computer and draft a journal entry. Halfway through my workshop, I had an ingenious idea: instead of laboring over these journals in a word processor, I should record them into my phone! Audio journals worked well for me because I could do them immediately after a workshop while thoughts were still fresh in my mind. I would make note of what we did that day, talk about things that worked or didn't, and reflect on anything else significant that I noticed. It was convenient for me to record these notes in my car while driving home after workshops, though I don't recommend it. There was once a time I witnessed a hit-and-run while recording a journal (the victim was okay, but driver got away). It was unnerving relistening to that audio, hearing screeching tires and my reaction in real time). After that I stopped recording in the car, realizing that using my phone while driving was super risky and dangerous (even when talking to myself)! I didn't want to take anymore chances, and neither should you. Don't journal and drive!

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## GETTING READY

Preliminary Decisions

Assembling Your Group

Setting Expectations

× Nuts & Bolts

# NUTS & BOLTS

You'll want to dedicate a good chunk of time for this phase. There's a fair bit of meeting and planning involved in the following sections that require you to flex muscles that probably don't get used often as a designer.

## BACK THAT THING UP

It was the last week that participants had to finish their poster designs and a few of them needed more time. Asfaha generously offered the computer lab for an extra day at the end of the week (a day before they needed to finish the posters). When that day rolled around, I got a phone call from him shortly before heading over to the community center. He had troubling news: the Yesler Community Center was on lockdown because of a shooting that had happened at nearby city building. Since the shooter was still at large, many government buildings immediately closed down for the day as a precautionary measure. It also put our plans in a bind. Two participants who had planned on finishing their posters that day would now not be able to finish before going to print. I didn't have a backup plan for this situation, but eventually worked it out with Rayshawn and Michael by helping them finish. Freakish things like this can and will happen to disrupt your plans. The best you can do is watch out for them and realize that things will take longer than you've planned sometimes.

## CONTINGENCY PLANS ARE YOUR FRIEND!

Something won't go as planned; accept this fact! The workshop will likely encounter some bumps in the road no matter what—and working with human beings sometimes gets messy. Some of these bumps are unavoidable, but others can be sidestepped—especially this early in the planning stage. A healthy dose of mild paranoia can help you generate scenarios that may warrant contingency plans. You might ask yourself the following: What happens if I can't recruit enough participants? What if nobody shows up? How will an act of God (i.e. snow storm, earthquake, apocalypse, etc.) affect workshop scheduling? It doesn't hurt to consider a backup plan for vulnerable aspects of your workshop. Preparing for them early allows you proper time to inquire, plan—and act fast if zombies attack.

## GETTING READY

Preliminary Decisions

Assembling Your Group

Setting Expectations

✗ Nuts & Bolts



### SPACE AND ROOM LAYOUT MATTER!

Because my workshop met at one location on Tuesdays and another on Thursdays, I started to notice how space and room layout affected our progress. One location had more open space; desks were spread out, aisles were wide and there was a communal space. This layout seemed to encourage people to move about and cultivate better discussions. The other location was smaller and more partitioned. Desks were in rows

with narrow aisles and there very little communal space. This particular layout allowed less movement and seemed to direct participants' focus to their individual work, which made them more productive. Because each location's spaces were different, it allowed for different activities to flourish on separate days. Think about how space and layout can contribute to the right environment for your participants.

### PHYSICAL SPACE

Where will you host your workshop? First, consider locations that have access to technology resources. Find out what's available in terms of computers, internet, and design software. Next, think about physical location. Will your participants be able to get there easily? Keep in mind those who may use public transportation.

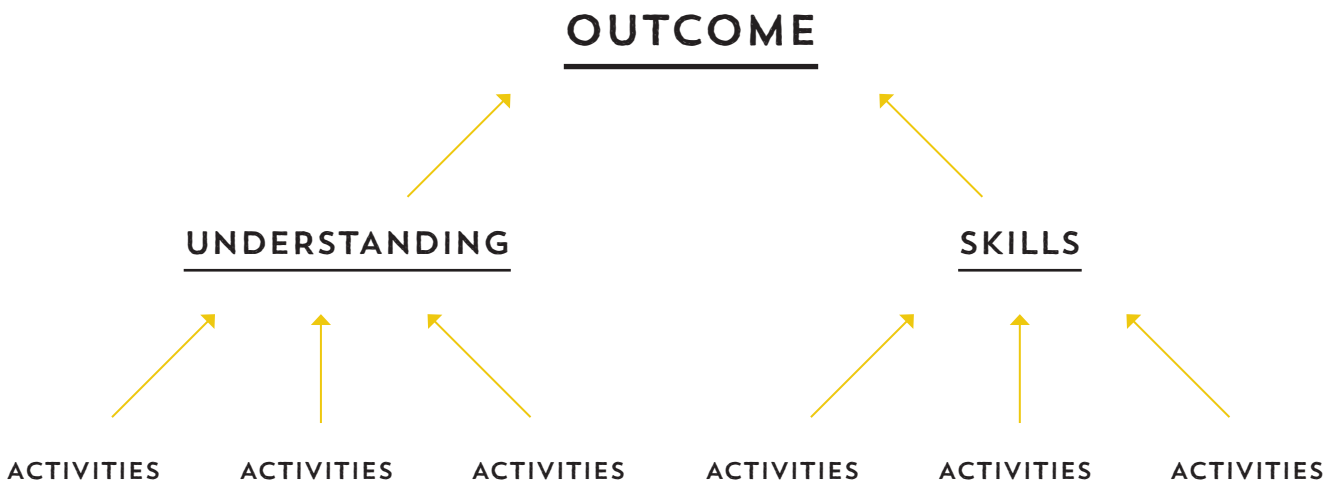
## GETTING READY

- .....
- Preliminary Decisions
- Assembling Your Group
- Setting Expectations
- × Nuts & Bolts

# PLANNING YOUR SESSIONS

## Scaffolding

You've sat down with stakeholders, set expectations, and thought long and hard about the workshop. Now what? How do you actually plan for this thing?



### 1. DEFINE OUTCOME

Think of your workshop goal(s) as a large structure like a building or monument. In order to construct it, you first have to identify what kind of structure you're building. So, in your case, your structure might be "participants designing a print campaign that voices a personal concern."

### 2. BUILD FOUNDATION

Next, you'll have to identify what type of foundation is needed to support your outcome. Look at this in two ways: understandings and skills—both of which are needed to execute a project. For example, they may need to understand basic design components (composition, color, balance, layout, type, etc.). Then, their skills can developed (to create compositions, utilize color schemes, and layout type, using design software, etc.).

### 3. PLAN ACTIVITIES

Once you've identified the foundational elements, choose the materials that hold this structure together. These, in your case, are activities, exercises, or experiences that support your foundational elements. For example, in order to support a foundational aim of showing someone how to "create a composition," you must develop an exercise that introduces this material. You might plan a "cut-and-paste" composition exercise or an asymmetrical vs. symmetrical demonstration.

### 4. SCAFFOLD ACTIVITIES

After you identify the outcomes, their foundational elements and supportive materials, you can begin planning your sessions. Print out a calendar, collect your activities and exercises, and input them into the days that you've allocated for your workshop. Order them in ways that allow each activity to build upon prior activities (example: don't plan to lead an exercise on composition unless you have built an understanding of what composition is and how it works). You can essentially plan every session this way.

Sample session plans can be found in Appendix G1 and G2.

**GETTING READY**

- Preliminary Decisions
- Assembling Your Group
- Setting Expectations
- × Nuts & Bolts

**OUTCOME**

Participant designs a poster using shapes and/or type

**UNDERSTANDINGS**

How to identify effective visual communication design

**SKILLS**

Design a dynamic composition using shapes and type

**ACTIVITIES**

1. Handbook exercise
2. Present examples of effective poster design
3. Discussion about elements & principles of design

**ACTIVITIES**

1. Cut-and-paste composition exercise
2. Type "scavenger hunt" activity
3. Photoshop tutorial (cover shape, line, and typography)

The sample above is a generalized example of how to think about structuring your session plans. In reality, there will be multiple levels of skills and understanding needed to work toward an outcome. Hopefully this gives you a better idea of where to begin.

**OUTCOME**

**UNDERSTANDINGS**

**SKILLS**

**ACTIVITIES**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**ACTIVITIES**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

## GETTING READY

- Preliminary Decisions
- Assembling Your Group
- Setting Expectations
- × Nuts & Bolts

# SAMPLE SCHEDULE

<b>Week 1: Introductions</b>	Tuesday	Feb 5	Yesler CC	Overview
	Thursday	Feb 7	MMRTI	Elements & principles of design exercise
<b>Week 2: Design Exercises</b>	Tuesday	Feb 12	Yesler CC	Composition exercises
	Thursday	Feb 14	MMRTI	Typography exercises & poster topic discussion
<b>Week 3: Learning Photoshop</b>	Tuesday	Feb 19	Yesler CC	Intro to Photoshop Elements & choose topic
	Thursday	Feb 21	MMRTI	Photoshop Elements tutorials & topic discussion
<b>Week 4: Designing Posters</b>	Tuesday	Feb 26	Yesler CC	Work on posters
	Thursday	Feb 28	MMRTI	Critique and work session
<b>Week 5: Wrap-up/Studio Tour</b>	Tuesday	Mar 5	Yesler CC	Wrap-up
	Thursday	Mar 7	Yesler CC	Studio tour
<b>Week 6: Print Posters</b>	Tuesday	Mar 12	Yesler CC	Print posters
	Thursday	Mar 14	Yesler CC	Exhibition and celebration

After you get an idea of what you'd like to cover in your workshop, you can begin to create a schedule like the one above. An overall schedule like this is helpful in seeing the long-term plan. Having this early on in the planning stages also allows you to communicate it to the Community Partners/participants.

## TIPS

### The More Time, the Better!

Generally speaking, two 90 minute workshops per week for at least eight weeks is a comfortable frequency/ amount of time to conduct a workshop. 90 minutes will typically suffice, but it would benefit you to schedule two hour sessions for later in the execution phase. Designating the days for your workshop can be tricky depending on all the variables at play, so consult with your Community Partner about the best possible days for the workshop.

## 6 WEEKS: TOO SHORT

My workshop lasted six weeks, which was not long enough. Unfortunately I didn't have much of an option about timing, since I had to work around Asfaha and Assaye's schedule, but an extra two weeks would have been perfect! If you can, schedule a few extra work days for those who may need it.

## GETTING READY

- Preliminary Decisions
- Assembling Your Group
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- × Nuts & Bolts

## Have a Plan Everyday

Write out a schedule for each session. Include a timeline detailing all of the scheduled activities. This may seem rigid—and it is, but in a good way. Keeping a detailed schedule of your plan for each workshop session is like sketching a concept prior designing it on the computer. It will serve as a reference and help you time each session. It allows you to learn from

your mistakes (mark up your plan after each session with comments about results, what worked/what didn't). Refer to the sample plan to get an idea of how these work. Print copies to take with you to the session for your co-designers and yourself. Below is an example of how to put together a daily plan. Make notes to help you improve your efforts next time around.

### Lesson Plan

Tues. Feb. 12

Write on the board: Why is this issue important to you? Who is affected by it? How might this issue be fixed or resolved in some way? Where is it taking place? -- Agenda: discuss topics, introduce line and shape, short PS demo, design 2 posters -- Set up tripod, an area to allow students to talk about the issues they're considering on camera.

#### Initial Conversation:

Talk about what we're doing: Talk about our topics, discuss line and shape, run a short demo, and then create two poster concepts by the end of class. We may film you as well, talking about your issue on camera.

#### 1. Discussion of topics (4:30 - 4:40 pm)

Ask students to share their three issues with a partner, discuss the topics with each other (Why is this important to you? Who else is affected by this issue? How might you go about resolving the problem or addressing it in some way? Where is this issue taking place?)

#### 2. Posting of topics (4:40 - 4:50 pm)

Each prompt from the previous week's worksheet will be listed on four sheets of paper hanging up in different places of the classroom. Ask the students to write down their top three important issues within the designated areas on the pieces of paper when they are finished discussing the previous questions with their partner. Hand your worksheet in to Mike.

#### 3. Identifying with each others' issues (4:50 pm - 4:55 pm)

When students are finished writing down their top three issues, invite them to walk around the room to read their peers' responses. Ask them: what is it that you see in these responses? Are there any that you identify with? Any that you too find to be an issue that you care about? Ask them to pin one sticky note next to other peoples' topics that they can most relate to.

#### 4. Instagram (4:55 - 5:05 pm)

Demonstrate how Instagram works and how to tag their photos. Any photos related to the workshop can be tagged. An example would be seeing something outside of the workshop that reminds you of what you're working on. You could also take photos in class, whether it's taken of your work or other people in the class.

#### 5. Presentation of Line and Shape (5:05 - 5:10 pm)

Make a presentation on line and shape. At the end, ask the students to identify the differences by showing them examples of both on screen.

#### 6. Demo (5:10 - 5:30 pm)

Open up Photoshop Elements. Demonstrate how basic lines and shapes can be created.

##### Shapes:

1. Marquee selection/lasso tool + fill
  - Adding, subtracting and intersecting fills
  - Fixed sizes
  - 2 types of fill edit > fill or paint bucket
2. Shape Line tool
  - Adjust the size (unconstrained, square, fixed size, proportional)

#### 7. Begin sketching concepts/designing poster ideas (5:30 - 6 pm)

Start to think about how this issue might translate into a poster. What's the message you are trying to communicate? Is there a problem to be addressed? Who is your audience?

Assignment: Create one poster concept that uses just lines and another that uses shapes. Must be in black and white on 8.5 x 11" Find ways to incorporate one of your three issues. Can look at books for reference/ideas.

#### 8. Interview students individually in a separate room. (5:30 - 6 pm)

NOT ENOUGH TIME!

THIS WORKED REALLY WELL. STUDENTS ENGAGED, TALKED ABOUT GUN VIOLENCE

INTERESTING CONVERSATION ABOUT HOW TRAFFIC AFFECTS PEOPLE.

1 STUDENT HAD INSTAGRAM, 1 STUDENT HAS HEARD OF IT (THIS WAS THE SAME KID)

THIS SUCKED

- NEED MORE GENERAL OVERVIEWS
- DIDN'T TRANSLATE WELL INTO THIS ACTIVITY

EH... FIND A TUTORIAL THEY CAN FOLLOW ALONG TO

## GETTING READY

- Preliminary Decisions
- Assembling Your Group
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- × Nuts & Bolts

### Studio Tour

Depending on your group, a tour of a local design studio could be an exciting experience for your participants. They may not be interested in the design profession per se, but there are certainly other benefits to this experience. Professionals can offer participants encouragement and feedback on their designs, can offer their support in getting the message out, and can give helpful insights into their own unique design process. A studio tour also helps break up your activities in the schedule.



### STUDIO TOUR EXPERIENCE

I was very fortunate to find professionals in the community who were supportive of my efforts. Civilization ([www.wearecivilized.us](http://www.wearecivilized.us)), was incredibly generous to host my group. A small and hip design studio in Seattle's Capitol Hill neighborhood, Civilization has developed eye-catching solutions for clients like Sub Pop Records, LEGO, and Adobe, as well as various public projects like Seattle SoundTransit and King County Public Health. They invited everyone involved in the workshop to their location for a tour and pizza party. It was fantastic! They talked about their work, answered questions about their design process, and interacted with the participants. All of the kids' posters hung on their wall, and they offered thoughtful analysis and compliments on each. It was a wonderful experience, especially for these young participants. Getting an inside look at a real design studio, seeing how it functioned, and having professionals view their work further helped shape their perception of design as something accessible and inclusive.

### End-of-Workshop Exhibition

It's also great if you're able to schedule a time at the end of your workshop to publicly exhibit the participants' final work. Hang print pieces in a space where others can see and interact with them, make a presentation, or show photos. You can plan an opening event and encourage your participants, their friends and families to attend.

### Celebration

Plan a time for your participants to celebrate the completion of their project (this may be in conjunction with the exhibit). Participants can invite family, friends, colleagues—whomever they'd like. If your budget allows, provide food and drinks for the group.

### Plan a Field Trip

Keep in mind that your participants may not fully understand or envision the final project's outcome. It helps if you can illuminate it. This can be done in a couple of ways. For example, if you are planning on designing and printing posters, it would definitely help to bring in a few samples of printed posters. However, you can go further by planning a field trip to the screen printing shop. Demonstrate how the posters will be printed, get participants familiar with the printing process, and most of all, get them excited about it. This enthusiasm and understanding will help you through the remaining weeks of the design process. You may even see less of them drop out. If there's an opportunity to do something like this, go for it!

## GETTING READY

Preliminary Decisions

Assembling Your Group

Setting Expectations

✕ Nuts & Bolts

# RECRUITMENT

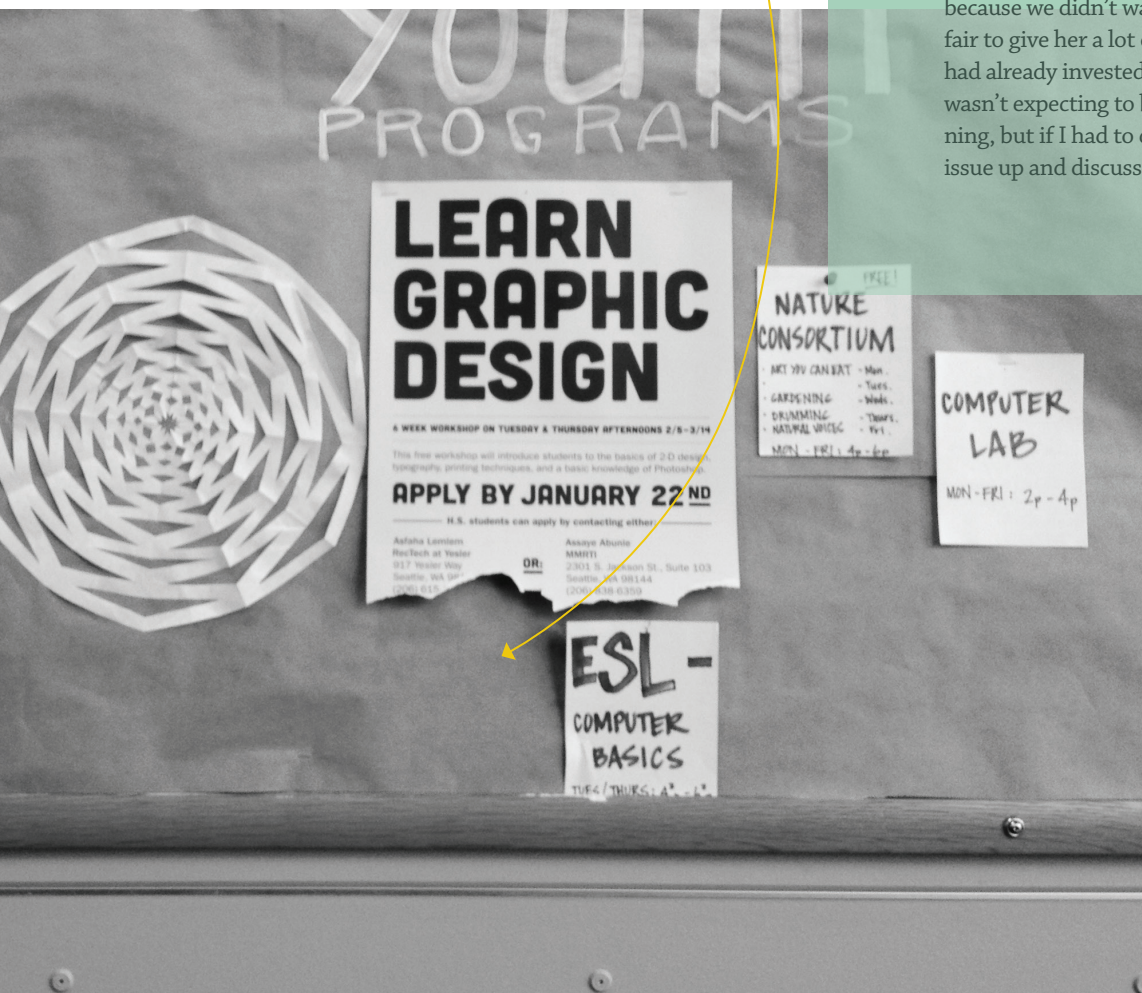
Recruitment isn't easy. Your Community Partner can likely help, and it's wise to let them! Because you're a graphic designer, you may already have ideas for promotion (great!). Be open to hearing ideas from your Community Partner. They will probably be aware of good ways to target the candidates you want.

## Promotional Materials

Consider who you're trying to reach. As for print promotion, "tear-off" posters are effective so that people can take workshop information with them after encountering your ad. Consider any email lists, social media, or digital press that you or your Community Partner may have access to.

## LATE-COMERS

During a session near the end of my workshop, Assaye brought in a girl who wanted to get involved. My initial reaction was, great—more the merrier (we had two girls coming at the beginning of the workshop, but stopped attending halfway through). Assaye clearly wanted her to be a part of the group, as did I. But I quickly ran into an issue. It was challenging to catch her up to speed since we only had two weeks left. She was very eager to learn, but demanded too much time from Taylor and me. This inevitably took away time from other participants who had been regularly attending since the beginning, which caused some tension. I tried my best to work with both the others and her, but in the end had to make a decision to spend my time with other participants. We gave her worksheets and exercises that the group had previously done, and briefly explained them to her but overall couldn't dedicate more time than that. This put Taylor and me in an awkward position, simply because we didn't want to ignore her, but felt it was unfair to give her a lot of one-on-one time when the others had already invested so much in the project. Naturally I wasn't expecting to be put in this situation in the beginning, but if I had to do it again, I'd probably bring this issue up and discuss clearer expectations for the future.



## GETTING READY

- Preliminary Decisions
- Assembling Your Group
- Setting Expectations
- ✗ Nuts & Bolts

### When Targeting Youth

If you are considering working with young participants (18 or younger), you may want to also think about appealing to their parents. This approach can be valuable. If you first sell the parents, they will most likely then appeal to their child. Another benefit to this approach is that youth may be more likely to arrive on time, take more interest in the workshop, and ultimately become more active participants in your workshop if parents are offering their support.

### Rewarding Your Participants

Will you offer incentives to your participants? This gesture may seem odd; however, depending on your circumstances, paying your participants can be an effective way to compete with other programs and maintain regular participation. A good example of this is if you are offering a youth workshop during the summer. The summer time is an opportunity for many teens to earn money. If they have to choose between making money at a summer job or participating in your workshop, you may be out of luck. Offering a monetary stipend incentive to your participants may help boost attendance and/or enthusiasm. Of course, be cautious—you'll want to be clear about what your expectations are from the beginning. Also, determine how and when you will distribute funds. At any rate, compensating participants has sparked an ongoing debate within the civic engagement community. Consider this an option depending on your situation, and take every opportunity to seek counsel from your partners.

### Pay Attention to the Attrition Rate

Expect your attrition rate to fall somewhere around 40%. If you start with ten participants, expect to end with six or seven. This can obviously change, depending on the circumstance, but it doesn't hurt to account for this in your plans. It's wise to first determine your ideal group size, then add a 40% buffer. So, for example, if you wanted to work with a group of eight, try to begin with a group of thirteen or fourteen. Unfortunately, certain participants will either lose interest or motivation. Whatever the reason, don't take it personally. It's just the way it is; keep plugging along!

## TO PAY OR NOT TO PAY

Given the fact that most workshops that are hosted at Yesler Community Center have funds to pay their participants, my workshop almost didn't even happen. Funding was scarce at the time and Asfaha expressed doubts about whether we could expect young participants to sign up for my workshop, since they would not be compensated. I worried when I realized that people have grown accustomed to being paid, but decided to take my chances and see how many people signed up. Luckily we had an overwhelming response and exceeded our initial goal of thirteen registrants. It was clear that there was an interest in the workshop, which was steadily maintained throughout the six weeks. Participants weren't being paid like they were used to, yet they kept attending the workshop.

## OTHER WAYS YOU CAN REWARD YOUR PARTICIPANTS:

- ✗ **Food/snacks** can go a long way! Serving them in the first ten minutes of each session can help avoid distractions later.
- ✗ **Community service hours** can be given to young participants. Some school districts and educational programs require community service hours in their graduation or institutional requirements. In some cases, your workshop may qualify to award these hours. Consult with your Community Partner about how you might incorporate this.
- ✗ **Transportation** can help participants who may not have access. Are there public transportation options, carpools, or other alternatives that will help your participants get to and from your workshop?

## GETTING READY

Preliminary Decisions

Assembling Your Group

Setting Expectations

× Nuts & Bolts

# MATERIALS

Needed materials will vary based on your project, budget, participants and resources. The list below gives you a rough idea of what to expect and how to prioritize if you're not able to get your hands on everything listed.

## Permission to Use Photography & Video

It's crucial to document the workshop process. Check with your Community Partner to be sure they approve of the use of photography or video. Be sure to get photo/video release forms signed by everyone involved in the workshop. Refer to a sample release form in the Appendix B.

## PRIORITY ITEMS

### × DESIGN SOFTWARE

Use whatever design software you feel most comfortable teaching. However, it's recommended that you use Adobe programs, which may be a selling point when recruiting participants (many people want to learn these programs). Adobe offers free trial versions and temporary paid subscriptions. Visit [www.adobe.com/products](http://www.adobe.com/products) to see what fits your needs and time frame. As an alternative, check out open-source editing program, such as GIMP ([www.gimp.org](http://www.gimp.org)), which is compatible on both Mac and PC platforms.

### × DIGITAL FILE STORAGE

Your participants need a reliable method of storing their files. This can easily be done with small USB thumb drives or with a cloud sharing solution (Dropbox: [www.dropbox.com](http://www.dropbox.com) or Google Drive: [www.drive.google.com](http://www.drive.google.com) are especially good options). If participants save files to the computers they're working on, you risk losing them if there are other users that access these computers outside of your workshop. It's best to play it safe and keep files separate!

### × SUPPLIES

These include basic supplies like drawing paper (you could use printer paper), a place to write that your participants can see (whiteboard or those huge 3M sticky easel-size pads), and writing utensils.

### × COMPUTERS

Whether PC or Mac, laptop or desktop, you simply want a computer that's reliable and capable of running design software. One computer per participant is ideal.

### × PRINTER

You'll need to print handouts and forms. Depending on your project and budget, you can also use a printer to create Design Handbooks for participants (more on this later).

## NON-ESSENTIALS, BUT AWESOME TO HAVE

### × SCANNER

It's helpful if you have access to a scanner for a few reasons. First, depending on the project, participants may want to use a scanner in order to incorporate certain elements in their design. You may also find it useful when scanning participants' sketches as copies (in case the originals get lost somehow).

### × DIGITAL CAMERA

It's important to document process. Use a digital camera to take photos at as many sessions as possible and use video to interview participants.

## GETTING READY

Preliminary Decisions

Assembling Your Group

Setting Expectations

× Nuts & Bolts

### 3 Contrast

**Contrast**, one of the most important principles of design, is the juxtaposition of opposing design elements (color, line, shape, size, value, texture, or space). This technique can be used to draw focus to certain parts of the composition.



The example on the far left demonstrates contrast in color by placing the dark type on a light-colored background. The middle example has mostly low contrast, since the blacks are close in value—but the yellow on the 'y' stand out because of high contrast. The example on the right has contrast in style (hand-written type vs. computer-generated type).

### 4 Repetition

**Repetition** with variation is interesting, without variation repetition can become monotonous.



CAN YOU RECOGNIZE THE ELEMENTS IN THESE TWO COMPOSITIONS THAT ARE USING REPETITION?

ANSWERS:  
RIGHT: EYES, SHAPES  
LEFT: LETTERS

### 5 Unity + Variety

Unity and variety are very important in design. **Unity** refers to a cohesiveness of elements represented by similar qualities. **Variety** refers to differences of those elements. Too much unity is not interesting, as is not enough variety. Finding a balance of both is the key to success! Below are some examples.

ACHIEVE UNITY AND VARIETY BY CAREFULLY COMBINING DESIGN'S ELEMENTS



**UNITY:** Shapes of roofs and houses, windows

**VARIETY:** Colors and textures of roofs

**UNITY:** Triangles, color

**VARIETY:** Cropped photographs of dancers

**UNITY:** Watermelons and colors

**VARIETY:** Arrangement and placement

EXPLAIN HOW UNITY AND VARIETY ARE WORKING TOGETHER IN THIS EXAMPLE:



## DESIGN HANDBOOK

Learning every aspect of graphic design in a couple of months is impossible. That's why it's helpful to provide your participants with a more detailed reference guide that they can access on their own time. There's also space for journaling, notes, and a to-do list. You can easily design your own with 8.5 x 11" printer paper and cardstock.

Download a PDF of the Design Handbook I used for my workshop and its working-files at:

[www.designforus.org/resources](http://www.designforus.org/resources)

# PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

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Introductions

Skills Building & Topic Exploration

Ideation

Execution

Public Engagement & Follow-up

YOU'VE BUILT A TEAM, YOU'VE  
PLANNED YOUR BRAINS OUT—  
NOW YOU'RE READY TO BEGIN  
THE WORKSHOP.

Let's do this! Starting off can feel a bit daunting, especially if you haven't ever done anything like it before. This is a good time to start preparing yourself and your team for the weeks ahead. You'll be forming new relationships and learning how to interact with your participants. You'll help them build design skills and assist them in finding a topic to explore through visual communication design. It may in fact be the first time they have ever considered what design is and the role it plays in their lives). You'll have interesting discussions, hear about their lives, and empower them with the tools of graphic design. This will allow them to address an issue that they care about and speak directly to a specific audience. Exciting stuff ahead!

## PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

- × Launch
- Skills Building & Topic Exploration
- Ideation
- Execution
- Public Engagement & Follow-up

# LAUNCH

## PRINCIPLES

### Keep it Active

One way to keep your participants engaged is by making things active. Avoid “speaking at” people, lecturing, or slow-moving activities. If your workshop is being held in the evening time, be aware that your participants might have already spent eight hours or more at work or school. If that’s the case, your enthusiasm (or lack thereof) will affect their fading energy level and attention span. Are there games you can introduce? Can you plan activities that require them to move around the space rather than sitting? Be creative and have fun. More active engagement energizes them, maintains their attention, and makes the workshop more interesting for all involved.

*Be intentional about building relationships with them from the beginning. Arrive at the workshop location early—learn names quickly, ask questions, make a genuine effort to remember things about them.*

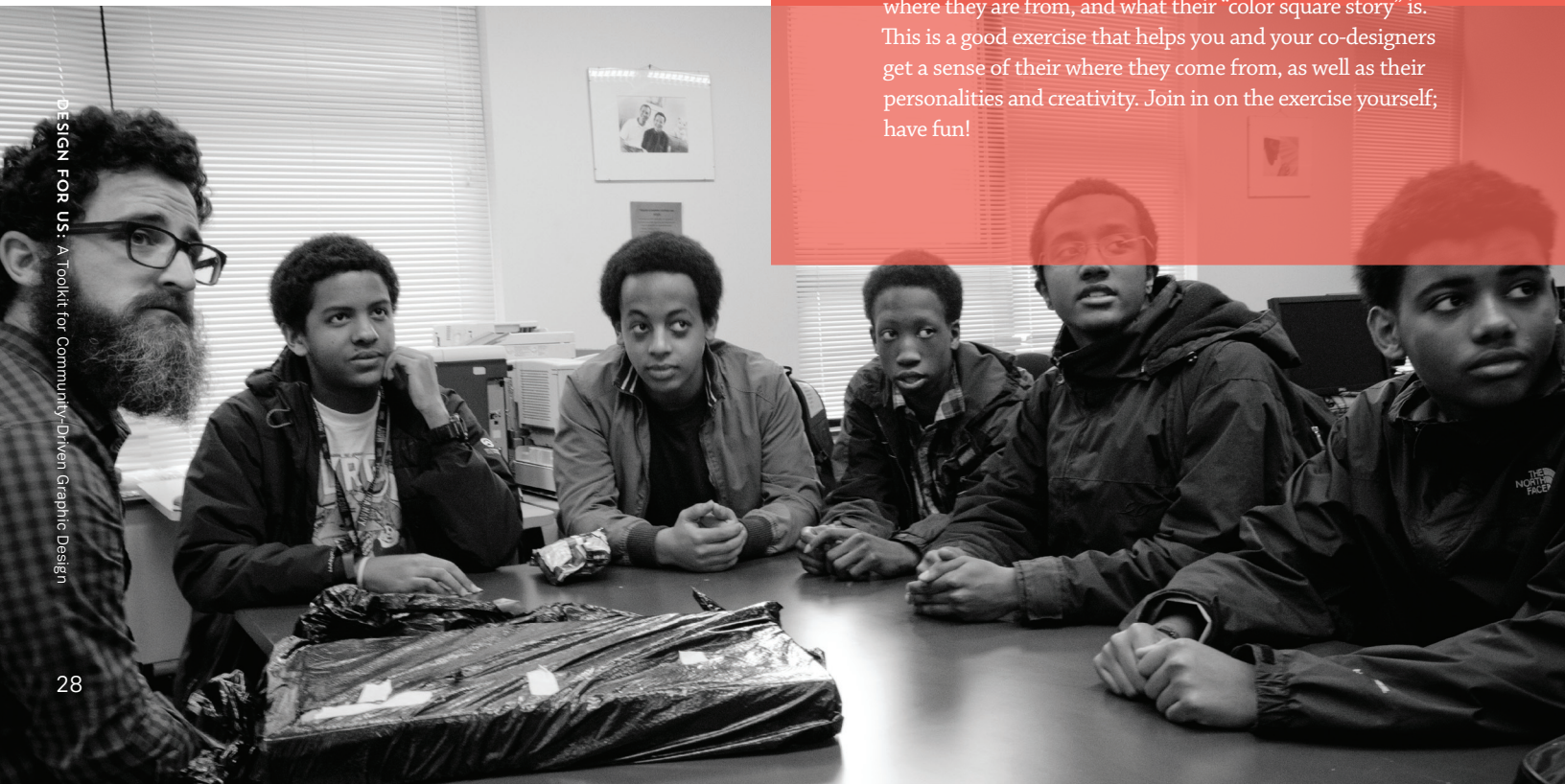
## PRACTICES

### Get to Know Your Participants

Nervous about the first week? You’re probably not alone. Find a way to ease the tension and start the workshop by getting to know everyone. Plan an activity that allows your participants to acclimate themselves with you, your co-designers, and the rest of the group. Incorporate ways to learn more about them, their background, and interest in the workshop.

### ICE-BREAKER ACTIVITY: COLOR SQUARE STORIES

Visit your local home improvement store or paint supplier and gather a hand-full of paint color swatches. Cut them up into small 2" squares that are a variety of colors. Combine the color squares in a pile and ask participants to choose one. After they’ve picked a color, ask them to think of a personal story that their color square reminds them of. Give them a few minutes to think about it. When everyone is ready to share, encourage each participant to introduce themselves, where they are from, and what their “color square story” is. This is a good exercise that helps you and your co-designers get a sense of their where they come from, as well as their personalities and creativity. Join in on the exercise yourself; have fun!



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## PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

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- × Launch
- Skills Building & Topic Exploration
- Ideation
- Execution
- Public Engagement & Follow-up

### Start the Conversation

What do your participants already know about design? Find out by opening up a discussion about it in a broader context. What are some examples of design they can identify in their lives? (Think graphic design, interaction design, industrial

design among others). How does design differ from art? What is good/poor design? These types of questions can help them begin thinking about design in terms of its effects on their personal lives.

## LEADING A GROUP DISCUSSION

Not every designer is comfortable speaking in front of groups, not to mention leading a discussion! If this is your first time and you find yourself nervously shaking in your thick-framed glasses, keep a few of these tips in mind to make your first group discussion a success:

### × BE PREPARED

Set your goals ahead of time. Know what you'd like to talk about and be familiar with the material.

---

### × SET THE TONE

Discussions work best when people don't feel intimidated or afraid to contribute. Your role isn't to dictate but to facilitate. Prompt questions, encourage openness, and listen closely to their answers. Laughing at people or discrediting their ideas can be damaging. Create a sense of openness and acceptance where people feel respected and comfortable sharing their opinions.

---

### × ASK GOOD QUESTIONS AND "WHY?"

Avoid asking questions that can be answered with a simple "yes" or "no." An example of this would be like asking, "Have you ever seen typography on a street sign?" Uh, yeah, I've seen type on a street sign (your discussion will die here). Instead, a better way to get at it is by asking, "What are some examples of graphic design that affect us everyday?" Additionally, continuing to ask "why?" after vague or incomplete responses can help unpack issues and spur more participation. Validating comments in your discussion helps reinforce discussion points and encourages other people to speak up.

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### × REMEMBER THE NON-TALKERS

To involve those who are shy, less assertive or can't get a word in edgewise, you might reach out to them directly or find a more subtle way of encouraging them (body language, eye-contact or smile, etc.). Make sure all participants' voices are heard!

### × WRITE WHERE EVERYBODY CAN SEE

It helps to map out your discussion by writing on a whiteboard or large pad. When doing so, write largely and legibly so that everyone can see.

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### × MAKE CONNECTIONS

It's important to not just summarize points but also to draw connections to points mentioned earlier in your discussion. This isn't always easy to do on the fly, but look for similar opinions and ideas and link them together in the conversation. Here's an example scenario: you're talking to a group of young people about issues they deal with in their neighborhood. One individual brings up gun violence, and says that he's afraid of the gang who runs his block. Later in the discussion, someone else expresses his view about how background checks should be required in order to buy a gun. This might be an opportunity to make a connecting by acknowledging the two separate concerns. What do they have in common? How are they connected? Identifying these connections and prompting the group to engage in conversation about them helps spur an interesting discussion.

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### × KNOW WHEN TO END IT

For whatever reason, your group may be tired, bored, uninspired, or uninterested. As the discussion facilitator, it's important to pay attention to cues from the group. React to their their body language. Is your group turned away, looking at their phones, yawning, or slouched? Those might be signs to end your discussion and pivot into a more active exercise.

## PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

- × Launch
- Skills Building & Topic Exploration
- Ideation
- Execution
- Public Engagement & Follow-up



### DON'T ASK "LEADING QUESTIONS"

On the first day of my workshop I had a great discussion with high school-aged participants around the question, “what makes design good or poor?” There were colorful responses and many different perspectives discussed but one student in particular made a great point. He implied that design is poor when it doesn’t deliver what is promised, as in a vacuum cleaner that boasts of durability but then breaks days after you buy it. The whole issue, though, was that he didn’t actually articulate it as such. The point was buried under other comments he made about honesty. As the discussion facilitator, I wanted to prod deeper, bringing the issue to the surface. But in doing so, I was asking leading questions. I forced the discussion in one direction in efforts to illuminate the point that was almost made earlier. One of the oldest participants was on to me. He asked, out of frustration, “Do you just want us to say that design can be dishonest? Because it just feels like all you’re trying to do is get us to say that!” Bold! I moved on confident, but was embarrassed. I realized that while trying to remain neutral, I simply pushed too hard for the point. Looking back on it now, I probably should have spoken up and made the point myself.

### TIPS

#### HELP! My Participants Are Not Talking!

Consider trying “Think/Pair/Share,” a technique that makes it easier for participants to speak up in a group setting. First, bring up an idea that you’d like the group to think about individually. Then ask them to pair up with a partner and share their responses with each other. Finally, one of them will present their collective responses to the group. This method yields productive discussions, especially if you have shy participants.

## PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

- × Launch
- Skills Building & Topic Exploration
- Ideation
- Execution
- Public Engagement & Follow-up

### Discuss Goals and Expectations

These will depend on what you, your Co-Designers and community partner previously discussed. What are the outcomes? What can participants expect to get out of this workshop? Now, in the first session, is a good time to talk about the workshop schedule and design process, at-home exercises, and any other necessary expectations (punctuality, honesty/openness, respect of each other and equipment, etc).

***There may be tension here.** You met with Community Partner, Co-designers, and now Participants. Each have their own set of expectations, stakes, and perhaps competing agendas for the workshop. It's best if all involved have a complete understanding of what is trying to be accomplished with the workshop. Be sure to give people the opportunity for their voice to be heard, and encourage them to bring up any potential issues that might arise later in the workshop. Discuss ways that you all can work together to avoid them. Lastly, be sure to keep the lines of communication open.*

## TIPS

### #trysocialmedia

Depending on the age and background of your participants, you might be able to take advantage of social media. Initiate a conversation with your group about whether they think Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram might help enhance their efforts to voice issues in the workshop. How might documenting this benefit their experience? Can it contribute in reaching their audience? Consider designating a unique hashtag to organize tweets or photos.

### SOCIAL MEDIA FELL FLAT WITH TEENS

So, you're working with youth. I bet you're thinking, "let's incorporate hip social media like Twitter or Instagram somehow in our workshop!" That's what I was thinking at least, but it totally fell flat. I was surprised by how many of the kids haven't heard of Instagram (only one student had it on their phone). Another shocker was that only one student (the same one who had Instagram) knew what a hashtag was. #socialmediaiscoolbutdontassumeitwillalwayswork!

## PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

- Launch
- × Skills Building & Topic Exploration
- Ideation
- Execution
- Public Engagement & Follow-up

# SKILLS BUILDING & TOPIC EXPLORATION

Feet are wet; now you're ready to swim in the deep end of the pool. Here's where you'll work with participants to develop their topic, teach them design skills, and help them sketch out a plan of action.

## PRINCIPLES

### Maintaining trust with participants

Because your participants may be sharing personal, and perhaps sensitive, issues with you, be aware of how sacred their trust is. Give them the opportunity to share what they are comfortable sharing and don't push them to talk about things that they may not be comfortable discussing. Acknowledge when they put their trust in you and thank them for sharing something personal. This thoughtful and respectful attitude will go a long way when building relationships with your participants.

### THE LITTLE THINGS COUNT

It was really important to me to build trust with my participants. I wanted them to feel comfortable with me and hoped that they'd feel free to talk about anything with me and the group. Fortunately, I knew many of them from the previous workshop that I assisted Tad with, which made it easier. However, I still needed to establish relationships with some of the others. In an effort to do so, I tried to pay attention to details when getting to know them. Their free-time hobbies, sports they play, subjects they're interested in, or things about their family were all things I'd ask →

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## PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

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Launch

- × Skills Building & Topic Exploration
- Ideation
- Execution
- Public Engagement & Follow-up

## PRACTICES

### Visual Design Basics

What does your group know about graphic design? You should have a good indication after your first week. How interested are they in learning more about it? You and the co-designers might consider delivering short presentations that introduce the basics of visual communication design. Given the amount of time of the workshop and its individual sessions, it's impossible to cover everything. Additionally, because there's not enough time to incorporate all of these principles into practice, you may not want to spend a ton of energy digging into educating your group in the nitty gritty details of design. However, it helps to cover a few basics (prepare to travel back in time to your Design 101 course).

- × **THE ELEMENTS OF DESIGN**

Line, shape, size, texture, color, value

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- × **THE PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN**

Movement, balance, contrast, repetition, unity & variety

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- × **TYPOGRAPHY**

Classification, type setting, tone

Access samples of "Visual Design Basics" slide decks that are free to download and use in your presentations at: [www.designforus.org/resources](http://www.designforus.org/resources).

about and try my best to remember. The next time seeing them, I'd follow up with them. Listening, remembering, and following up with people sounds like common sense (and perhaps a bit contrived in this context), but it allowed me practical ways to let the kids know that I'm someone they can trust. It wasn't always easy peasy, but for the most part, it went a long way. By earning this trust, participants might have felt more comfortable sharing information with me later. I followed through by making it a point to personally thank each of them after each session as we packed up. Handshakes and words of encouragement helped. In hindsight, these details helped me solidify a more trusting relationship with the new kids and bolstered the rapport I had with the others I already knew.



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## PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

- Launch
- × Skills Building & Topic Exploration
- Ideation
- Execution
- Public Engagement & Follow-up

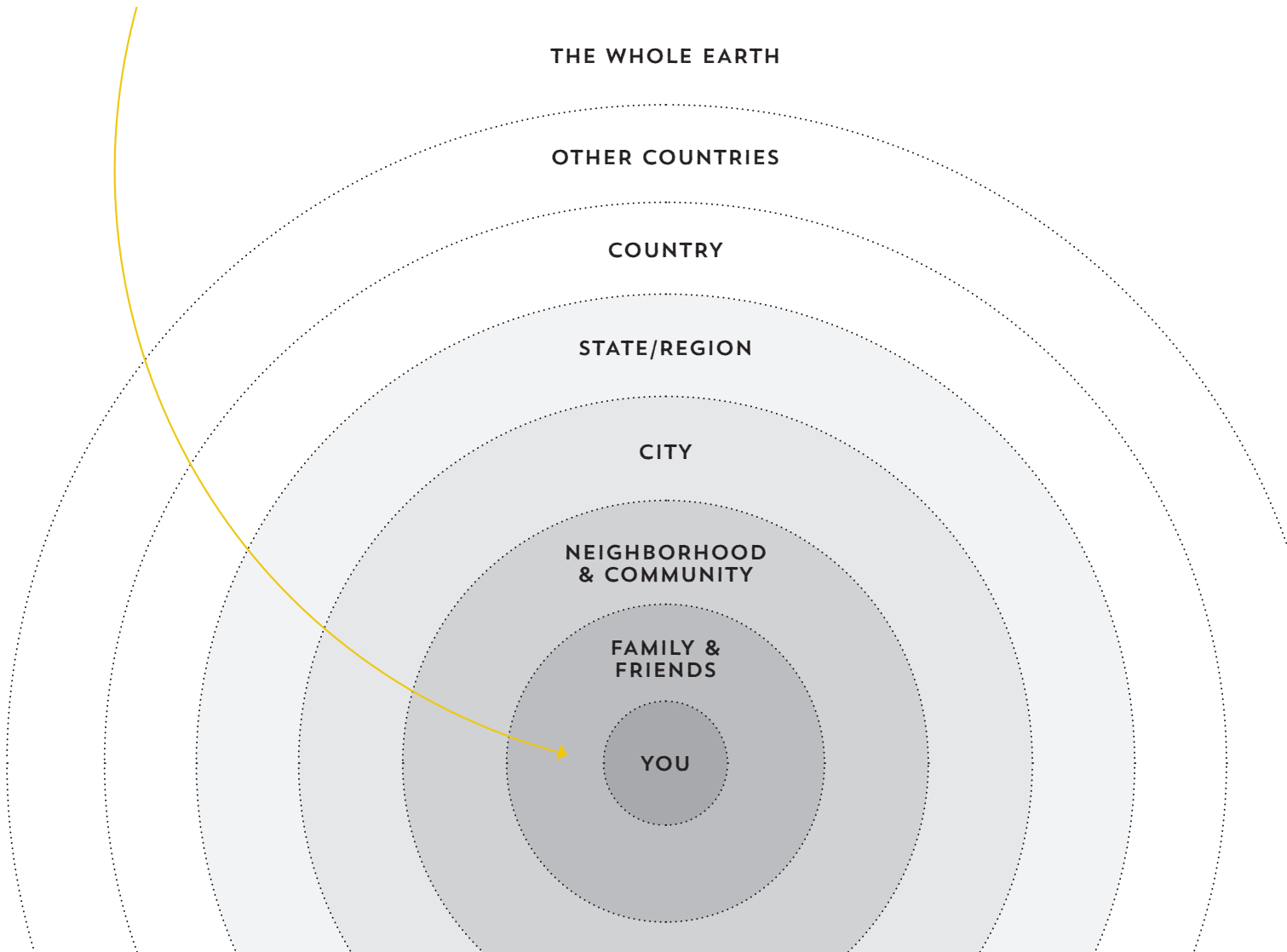
### Personal Investment in Topic

Encouraging people to openly communicate about an issue can be challenging. If your project topics aren't predetermined, how do you get your participants to communicate an issue important to them? You can start by simply asking, but this doesn't always work. One useful approach is challenging them to think of it in chunks. For example, first ask them to talk about issues closest to them. This might be a personal

problem like a learning disability or health problem, but could also be a social problem like bullying or discrimination—something that affects your participant directly. It may be difficult to begin here; if so, broaden the inquiries. Ask what issues affect their family, neighborhood, and city. Next, ask them to focus on issues that affect their family and neighborhood. Broaden the spaces to city, state, country, and beyond.

## EXAMINING CIRCLES OF INFLUENCE

Encourage your participants to focus on issues that fall within their tighter circles of influence, shown in grey in the diagram below. Choosing a personal topic will help motivate the participant and will be more likely sustain his efforts in addressing this issue after the conclusion of the workshop.



## PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

- Launch
- ✗ Skills Building & Topic Exploration
- Ideation
- Execution
- Public Engagement & Follow-up

### THE NEED FOR PERSONAL INVESTMENT IN TOPIC VS. COOL DESIGN

One of my participants seemed indifferent about his topic at one point. The topic he picked was obesity, but we could not get him to expound upon the details of why this was personally important to him. Early on he vaguely mentioned that knew people who were affected by obesity, but that was about it. He clung to the idea for a while, and, of course, we didn't want to stand in his way. As time went on, his enthusiasm dwindled. I suspected that he may have chosen that topic because he thought it would make for a cool poster rather than an issue that he cared deeply about. In hindsight, more one-on-one time with Naod could have helped him articulate a more personal topic. His poster was fantastic! It was clever and eye-catching, but I felt that he lacked the personal connection to it compared to others in the group.

In addition to the “What’s Your Beef” worksheet (found in Appendix C), these questions may also be helpful to ask in topic exploration:

*What’s something that bothers you?*

*What’s an issue you wish you could change something about?*

*What do you wish people cared more about?*

*What are you passionate about?*

*Is there an aspect in your life and/or society that you wish was different?*



## PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

- Launch
- × Skills Building & Topic Exploration
- Ideation
- Execution
- Public Engagement & Follow-up

### Facilitate a “Group Post-n-Share”

An additional method of exploring potential topics is to conduct a “Group Post-n-Share.” A Group Post-n-Share is an activity that involves individuals sharing their ideas on Post-It notes around the room. Here’s how it works:

#### 1. SET THE STAGE

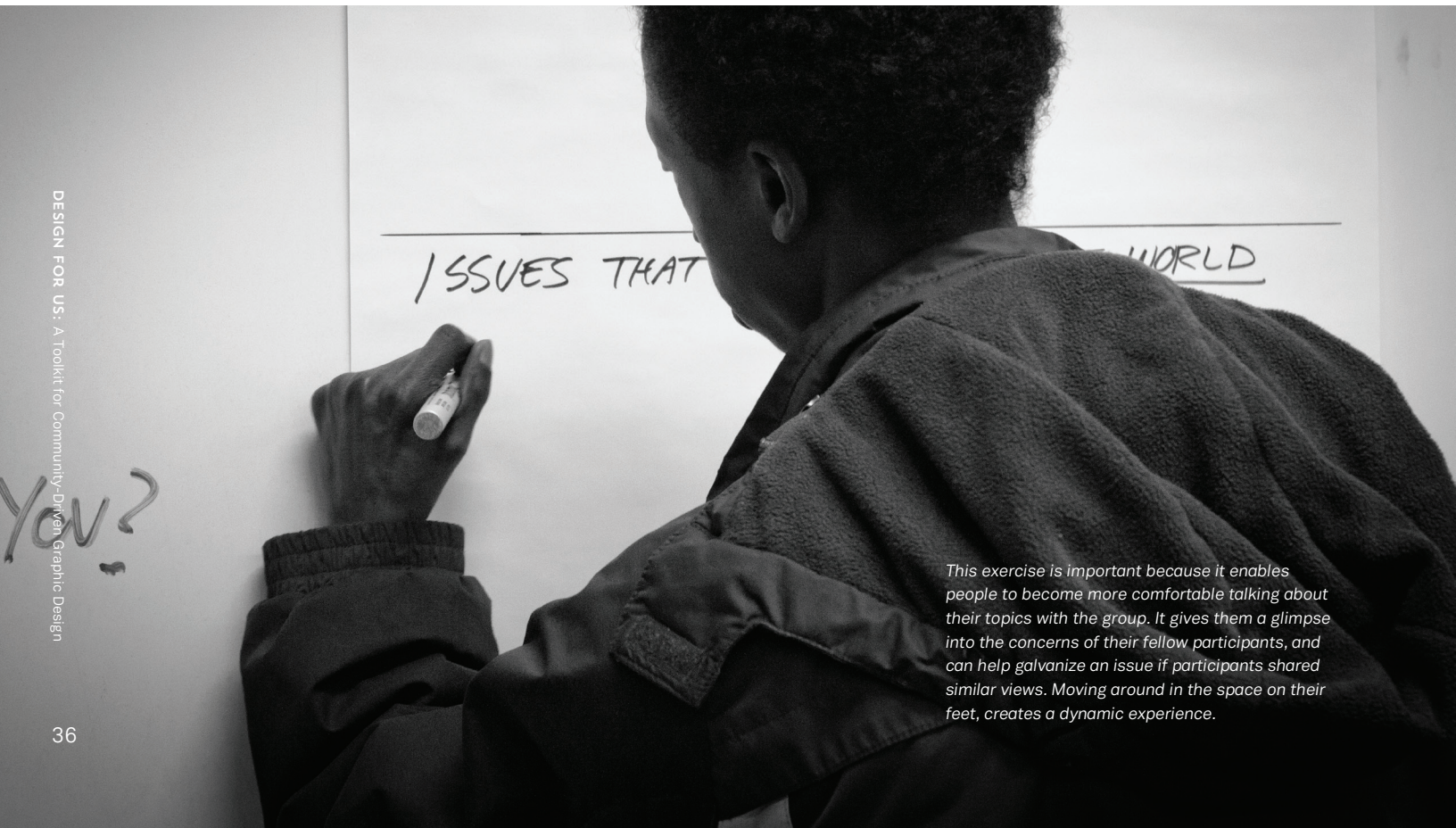
Hang eight giant sheets paper up in different locations around the room. Each sheet of paper should have each section of the Circle of Influence on it (issues that affect YOU, issues that affect YOUR FAMILY, etc.)

#### 2. POST

Ask participants to write their top three choices of issues they care most about on separate Post-It notes and then stick them under the topic categories. As they walk around the room surveying what others have written, ask them: what is it that you see in these responses? Are there any, besides your own, that you identify with? What issues do you care about? Ask them to write their name on one more Post-It note and stick it next to someone else’s topic that they can most relate to.

#### 3. SHARE

When everyone has listed their three topics and identified a shared concern, gather them at one of the stations and begin to discuss all of the results. Start at “Issues that affect YOU.” Ask participants to discuss any Post-It notes within this category. Why did they choose them? What about them resonates most? Try to make connections to participants, identify commonalities, and encourage them to share as much as they are willing, then move onto the next category.



*This exercise is important because it enables people to become more comfortable talking about their topics with the group. It gives them a glimpse into the concerns of their fellow participants, and can help galvanize an issue if participants shared similar views. Moving around in the space on their feet, creates a dynamic experience.*

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## PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

- Launch
- ✗ Skills Building & Topic Exploration
- Ideation
- Execution
- Public Engagement & Follow-up

### Research

Urge participants to narrow down their topics to one that they care most about. Encourage them to find out more about the issue. Challenge them to think about the following: What groups are addressing this issue? Who else is affected by it? Are there actions being taken to intervene in the issue? Research can be

done individually or as a group. Can your participants conduct their research firsthand, out in the community? Can they record audio from interviews on their phone? What information is available online?

### One-on-one Consulting

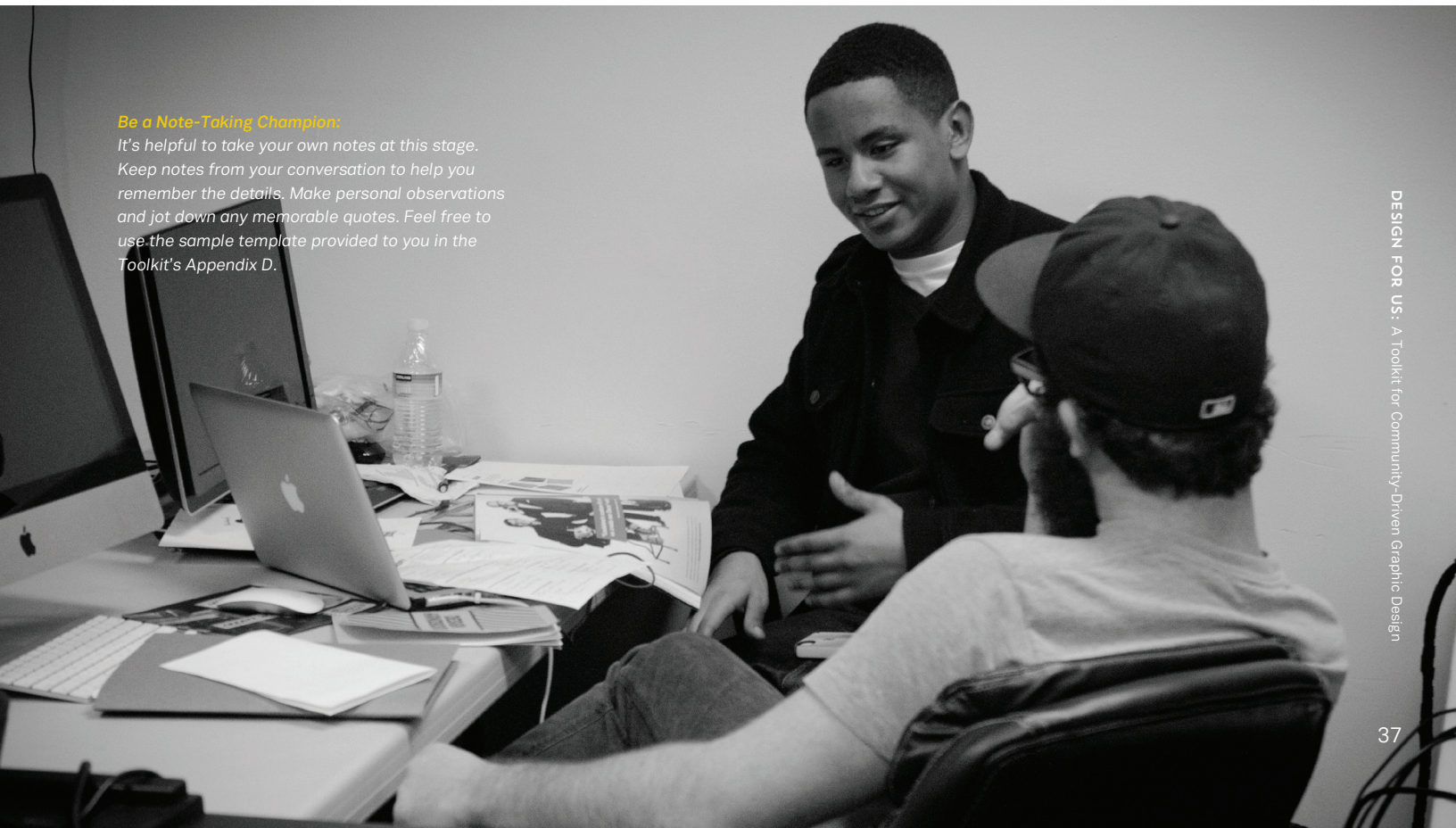
Some participants will need help developing their topics. They may still be trying to identify it. Others might be thinking too broadly and need help focusing. Wherever they are in the process, a one-on-one conversation can go a long way. Conversations are more personal. They put people a bit more at ease and allow them to share things they may not share in a group setting.

Treat these conversations as informally as possible and help them unfold as organically as possible. Start off the conversation light. Ask questions about life, school, and their general interests (this may help relieve any tension or nervousness they may feel). Next, get an idea of where they stand on their project. What personal experience are they bringing to

their topic? Why are they interested in it? Work to understand where they are coming from and try to understand it in context. It doesn't hurt to ask "why?" as much as possible. This puts you in somewhat of a counselor role, helping them identify issues that they might not be consciously aware of. Listen closely and encourage them to share. Encourage them when they have a promising idea that they care about. Sometimes it's hard to imagine how an issue gets translated into a design piece, but assure them that you're there to help them figure that out. At the end of the conversation, try to recap what your participant shared, highlight key issues and share any thoughts you have about ones that you believe are most important to them.

#### Be a Note-Taking Champion:

*It's helpful to take your own notes at this stage. Keep notes from your conversation to help you remember the details. Make personal observations and jot down any memorable quotes. Feel free to use the sample template provided to you in the Toolkit's Appendix D.*



**PUTTING IT INTO ACTION**

- Launch
- × Skills Building & Topic Exploration
- Ideation
- Execution
- Public Engagement & Follow-up

**Identifying Project Brief**

Participants might begin thinking about how their topic might translate into the final project. Before jumping into the design, urge them to write a basic project brief:

**PROBLEM STATEMENT:**

.....

**TARGET AUDIENCE:**

.....

**OBJECTIVE:**

.....

.....

**MESSAGE:**

.....

.....

.....

**PROBLEM STATEMENT:** Explain what problem your project topic addresses in one sentence.

**TARGET AUDIENCE:** Who does your project speak to? (Youth, elderly, male/female, neighbors?)

**OBJECTIVE:** What would you like to accomplish with this project?

**MESSAGE:** What is the one thing that you want to communicate to your audience? What are you asking them to do?



*If you'd like, refer to the sample project brief template provided in this Toolkit's Appendix E.*

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## PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

- Launch
- × Skills Building & Topic Exploration
- Ideation
- Execution
- Public Engagement & Follow-up

### Developing a Plan of Action

Challenge them to think about where and how the piece(s) will be displayed and/or distributed, whom they may need to work with to get their message out, and any materials needed or logistical things to plan for. Use the POA Worksheet found in Appendix F as a guide; see example below:

**DISTRIBUTION MISSION:** display my poster about internet censorship in front of people who regularly use the internet

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**WHERE MISSION CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED:** coffee shops, libraries, schools, cafes and restaurants

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**HELP NEEDED:** business/cafe owners, librarian (ask permission to hang posters in their space).

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**MATERIALS NEEDED:** tape

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**ANYTHING ELSE NEEDED:** be prepared to explain my poster, take photos of my posters hung up with my phone/use social media  
to share with others

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## PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

- Launch
- × Skills Building & Topic Exploration
- Ideation
- Execution
- Public Engagement & Follow-up

### Introducing Design Software

Think about how you want to begin introducing the design software. Do any of your participants have experience with the software you're introducing? Gauge their knowledge and then find a good starting point. For beginners, you may want to start by first introducing the tools and general layout of the program. From there, you can build a foundation of knowledge that can then make it easier to explain how the tools work.

#### COMMAND-Z

Photoshop has an evil stepsister, named Photoshop Elements. I used this software in the beginning of my workshop, essentially because it was the only software available on the computers provided by my community partner. It's not a bad program; its capabilities are just very pared down. I was unaware that PS Elements does not support the pen tool, which I was planning on presenting to my participants in a demo. I found out too late and ended up having to improvise some of my demonstration and had to find workarounds for some of my participants. Lesson learned: test the software before teaching it.

#### WISH I HAD STARTED EARLIER

Because we only had six weeks, software demos were difficult on top of all of the other activities. I decided to introduce Photoshop three weeks in, which was a mistake. Participants felt rushed and they didn't have as much background in the software as I hoped they would. It would have been smarter to start sooner, perhaps a week earlier.

## TIPS

### Presentation

It could help if you connect your computer to a LCD projector, so your participants can follow along from their workstations. Co-designers can be helpful floating among the group and assisting participants with questions.

### Prep Yo'self Before You Present Yo'self

How well do you know the software you're introducing? It would be wise to test it out, run through any demonstrations you plan on giving beforehand.

### What's Realistic Given Your Timeframe?

You may find that demos take longer than you think. This raises concerns when you are trying to simultaneously foster project ideas. Be conscious of your time frame; it doesn't hurt to introduce software early on in your workshop.

## PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

- Launch
- Skills Building & Topic Exploration
- × Ideation
- Execution
- Public Engagement & Follow-up

# IDEATION

Here's when you'll help participants transform their topics into design concepts for their final project.

## ENERGY JOLT

There was a moment when my workshop got pretty stale. A few kids dropped out, enthusiasm seemed to be dwindling, and I wasn't sure what to do. After a conversation with my advisor, I decided to organize a field trip for the following week. My participants were working on a poster design, so I scheduled a trip to visit The VERA Project, a local non-profit music venue for teens that also teaches screen printing. This was where we were planning on printing the final posters. The impromptu trip wasn't in the original schedule, but I quickly coordinated with my community partners, who provided transportation. The good folks at VERA were incredibly cooperative. The trip provided a jolt of motivation for the group. Allowing participants to see how the final project would be executed was invaluable and proved to be a huge morale booster in the last weeks of our workshop.

## PRINCIPLES

### Momentum

Don't be discouraged if you're not seeing progress. You're a designer who does this for a living every day; you're probably used to seeing fast results, right? This will almost never be the same in a workshop setting. Progress takes time. If you feel that you participants are uninspired, consider what might be needed in order to revive the momentum. How might you shake things up? Perhaps there is a fun exercise to introduce? A guest speaker? An interesting presentation? A dance party?



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## PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

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- Launch
- Skills Building & Topic Exploration
- ✗ Ideation
- Execution
- Public Engagement & Follow-up

### How Far Do You Direct?

It's in our nature to envision a final product. We do it even when we're not working. "Oh man, you know what would be cool? If they did this and that, changed this around, and summed it up like that!" Sound familiar? We look at things and imagine what they could be. Nothing is ever finished nor is it perfect in the eyes of most graphic designers. This obviously is both a blessing and a curse, since we earn a living from this mentality, but rarely

are we truly satisfied with our work. It becomes even more problematic when facilitating a workshop like this. How do we tame our instinct to direct vision if we are not the ones designing? Direction isn't a bad thing at all; in fact it can be helpful in this workshop—but it's valuable to know how much and when to do it. Here are a few strategies that might help:

#### ✗ EXPECTATIONS

What's important to your stakeholder? Are they expecting professional quality design or are they simply expecting to gain skills and a unique experience? The answer this question will dictate how much or how little involved you'll be from a direction standpoint.

.....

#### ✗ BETTER TO ASK THAN TELL

If you have a suggestion in mind, it is sometimes better to deliver it in the form of a question. This may seem odd, but we've all seen it at some point. Example: "Hey, are you sure you want to make the background sea foam green? Have you thought about using orange?" This obviously happens in the workplace. When used at the right time, this method can be helpful by lessening the distance between you and the participant—who might not respond well to your more straightforward, blunt feedback. This also helps the participant maintain ownership, feeling a sense of responsibility for the decisions made on the project (without somebody dictating them).

.....

#### ✗ SHARE EXAMPLES

Many of your participants won't have a frame of reference of what makes graphic design effective. When you show them examples, point out what's working best. How well does the piece communicate the message? In what ways does color help this design? Point out basic concepts like the effectiveness of white space, how your eye moves across a composition, or which elements evoke emotional responses. These fundamentals help even a beginner understand what works and what doesn't in visual communication. It also allows you to practice using appropriate design vocabulary with them, which gives them a frame of reference when talking about it.

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#### ✗ REMEMBER WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT

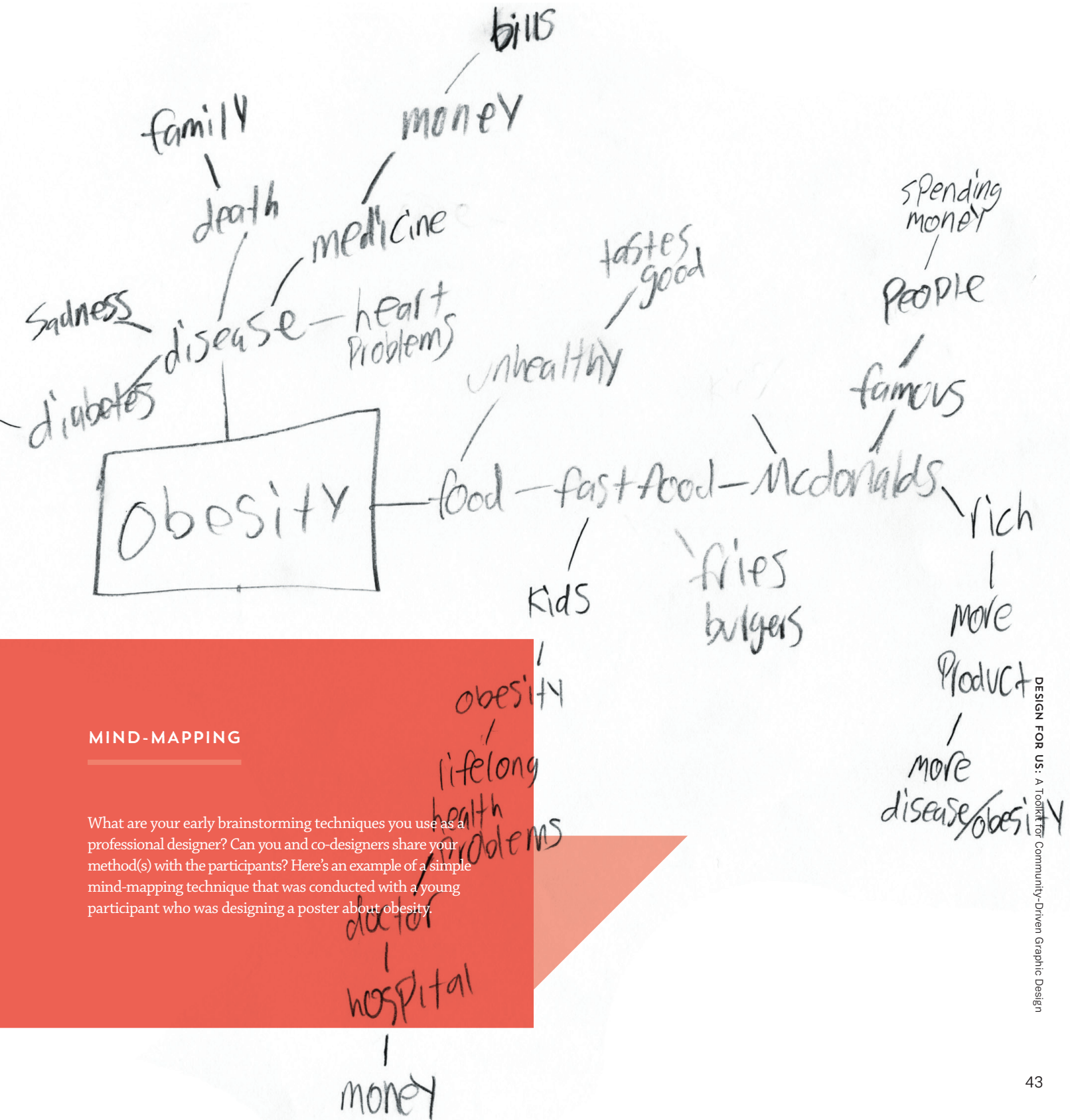
This Toolkit was created to help empower people with design, not to art direct them. With that being said, be aware of what's behind the feedback you're providing. If it's more about conveying your concept to them, as opposed to helping them develop their own, you may need to chill.

#### ✗ LEARN TO LET GO

Sometimes, despite your best efforts, participants will insist on choosing a design direction that you might completely disagree with. This may be difficult to accept. Be open to that fact that the participant may know best. Offer help, but don't get in their way if they turn it down.

PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

- Launch
- Skills Building & Topic Exploration
- ✗ Ideation
- Execution
- Public Engagement & Follow-up



MIND-MAPPING

What are your early brainstorming techniques you use as a professional designer? Can you and co-designers share your method(s) with the participants? Here's an example of a simple mind-mapping technique that was conducted with a young participant who was designing a poster about obesity.

## PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

- Launch
- Skills Building & Topic Exploration
- ✗ Ideation
- Execution
- Public Engagement & Follow-up



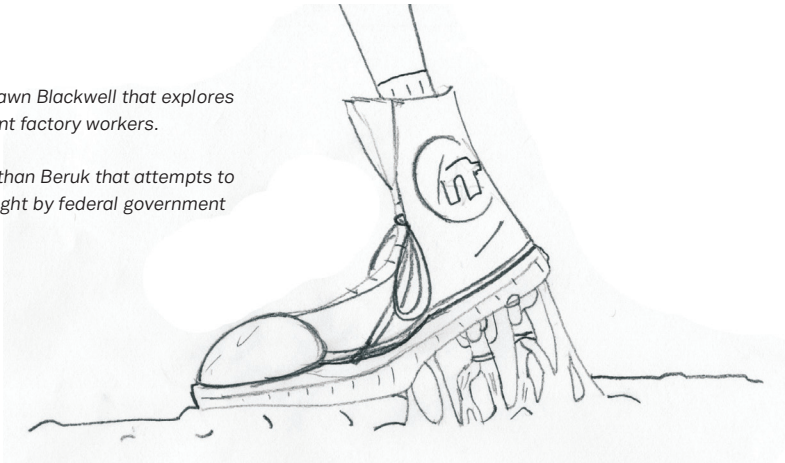
### Initial Sketches

Encourage your participants to sketch their ideas on paper before going to the computer. Remind them they don't have to be great at drawing (show love for stick figures!). This is simply a quick and efficient way of getting an idea on paper.

While sketching, it's good to direct them to their Project Briefs in this phase. Remind them to consider the problem, audience, and message. It's smart scan sketches for your participants since they can easily get lost in the future.

**Left:** Sketched concept by Rayshawn Blackwell that explores the "costs" of unfairly paid garment factory workers.

**Right:** Sketched concept by Yonathan Beruk that attempts to bring attention the damages brought by federal government budget cuts in education.



## PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

- Launch
- Skills Building & Topic Exploration
- × Ideation
- Execution
- Public Engagement & Follow-up

## SPEED-DESIGNING EXERCISE

In the middle of the workshop I decided to try a “speed designing” exercise inspired by a workshop that I saw led by interaction designer, Ward Andrews, of Draw Backwards ([www.drawbackwards.com](http://www.drawbackwards.com)). The exercise helps people focus on the core message of a concept without getting caught up in the details.

In my experience with this exercise, participants were successfully identified the raw essential bits of the topic and were able to get it down on paper relatively quickly. A few complained that the time constraints was stressful, but enabled their idea to develop faster and more efficiently. As a result, of some of their weaker ideas were strengthened.

One participant said, “In order to come up with good designs, it’s less about getting onto the computer and going for it right away—but rather coming up with a good idea on paper first.”

## PRACTICES

### Rapid Prototyping

It’s easy to get stuck. Designers deal with it all the time. Whether it’s lack of inspiration or a brain-freeze, these creativity lulls can be difficult to pull yourself out of. If you find that your participants are getting hung up, try an exercise that can refocus their attention. Time constraints and limitations can allow better ideas to surface.

Pass out one sheet of paper (8.5 x 11") and one Post-It note to each participant. Run through these steps with the highlighted time constraints:

1. Ask them to write the their topic on the sheet of paper.  
**1 MINUTE** (After one minute passes, shout, “time’s up!” as loud as you can to add dramatic effect. This helps ratchets up the pressure, if you like to be a little cruel).
2. Write “why your topic is important” (The more descriptive, the better).  
**1 MINUTE**
3. Google your topic and find other things that it relates to. Write them all down.  
**2 MINUTES**
4. Now, write why your topic is so important, but this time use five words or less.  
**1 MINUTE**
5. Draw one image that represents why your topic is important.  
**2 MINUTES**
6. Finally, draw an image with words on a Post-It note. It should convince people that your topic is important!  
**2 MINUTES**
7. Ask them to share their designs with the group.

## TIPS

### Have Fun With This Exercise!

Switch this up, perhaps as a practice round, by asking participants to instead base this exercise off something fun like their favorite movie, band, sports team, public figure, etc.

## PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

- Launch
- Skills Building & Topic Exploration
- ✗ Ideation
- Execution
- Public Engagement & Follow-up

### Interviews + Check-Ins

Individual interviews and/or check-ins are helpful in this phase. Lay out all of their sketches and ask how they feel about them. From a technical standpoint, do your best to help them identify things that are working and things that need more attention. Are participants being heard? Are their concerns well reflected in the sketches? Try to get a sense of how they feel about them.

### Sketches to Digital

When it's time to transfer sketches onto the computer, it's helpful to know that this process may not make sense to people. It's helpful to walk them through the process of building a file, using layers, etc. Consider leading a demonstration with an example. First, sketch up a fictitious concept. Next, open a new file and walk them through how to add elements. Think about how this demonstration can be executed in multiple ways. For example, if creating a shape: demonstrate how to trace an image, draw it freehand, use shape tools, etc. It can be helpful to give multiple options, but equally as overwhelming if you get carried away with difficult or complicated tricks and shortcuts. Keep it as simple as possible even if you are a Photoshop whiz!

## TIPS

### Share Your Visual Inspiration

It's helpful to have visual inspiration on hand. Chances are you have stacks of books, magazines, and posters, or a few cool t-shirts stocked up. Bring them in and share them with participants. Like designers, they may find inspiration in these items!

### On-Camera Interviews

This may also be a good time to conduct on-camera interviews to use later in your evaluations.



## PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

- Launch
- Skills Building & Topic Exploration
- ✗ Ideation
- Execution
- Public Engagement & Follow-up

### Group Feedback

Feedback from fellow participants can be incredibly helpful. Print their work and pin it up around the room. Participants will look to you and your co-designers to set the tone for this occasion (remember that not everyone has experience working in a critique/feedback format). It's probably wise to explain the goals and expectations of this activity, and provide examples of how to give constructive feedback.

Besides the typical, "what's working/what's not?" questions, keep it basic. Think of raising both objective and subjective talking points:

#### EXAMPLES OF OBJECTIVE QUESTIONS

*What is the focal point(s) and how the composition work?  
What is being communicated?*

#### EXAMPLES OF SUBJECTIVE QUESTIONS

*How does it affect you? Does the design make you more or less interested in the message?*

## TIPS

### Giving & Receiving Feedback

For more professional tips about feedback, refer to "How to Survive a Critique: A Guide to Giving and Receiving Feedback," an insightful article by design educator Karen Cheng: [www.aiga.org/how-to-survive-a-critique](http://www.aiga.org/how-to-survive-a-critique)



## PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

- Launch
- Skills Building & Topic Exploration
- Ideation
- × Execution
- Public Engagement & Follow-up

# EXECUTION

## PRINCIPLES

### Hey, look—I made this!

This phase is one of the most rewarding as a facilitator. You and your co-designers will begin to see your participants' ideas become a reality. Sketching and working on the computer are one thing, but seeing a printed piece—something tangible that was produced by their hands, is something powerful to experience.

Pay attention to when your participants look at the final product and say, "Hey, look—I made this!" Reiterate the importance of this accomplishment and acknowledge their hard work and contributions.

## WITNESSING EMPOWERMENT

If there was any point that I felt the kids were truly being empowered, it was when I saw them print their poster for the first time. After filling the screen with ink and squaring-up their paper, they pulled a print. I watched them lift the screen up to discover the print underneath. They were mesmerized, proud, and giddy when they saw what they had created. The act of making something and getting their hands dirty seemed to change them. Making something from concept to production, put power in their hands.



## PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

- Launch
- Skills Building & Topic Exploration
- Ideation
- ✗ Execution
- Public Engagement & Follow-up



## PRACTICES

### Production

When designs are finalized, think about how to incorporate the participants in the production. An example: If your group was designing posters or flyers, you could facilitate a print session. Participants can screen print their own posters lead a press check. Give them as many opportunities to be involved in the decisions and tasks necessary to produce the final product. Educate them as much as possible about this process.

### Review the Plan of Action

Revisit the plan of action that participants wrote when developing their project concepts. Will they be hanging posters around their neighborhood? Distributing informational packets to the community? Whatever their plan, walk them through the actionable steps that still need to be completed. Are there resources that your participants still need in order to carry out their plan? Are they connected to their audience? Do they plan on documenting it? Most importantly, when will they carry out their plan?

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## PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

- Launch
- Skills Building & Topic Exploration
- Ideation
- Execution
- × Public Engagement & Follow-up

# PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT & FOLLOW-UP

## PRINCIPLES

### What Taking Action Looks Like

An important step to this workshop is the follow-up phase. Check in with your participants to see how their distribution efforts have panned out. What have they done? Did they run into any challenges? Set up a group discussion that allows participants to share updates

with the group. Encourage them to share any documentation they may have (did they take any photos or video?). Opening this discussion to a group may allows other participants to get ideas about distribution.



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## PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

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- Launch
- Skills Building & Topic Exploration
- Ideation
- Execution
- × Public Engagement & Follow-up

## PRACTICES

### Exhibiting Work

Your participants have a plan in place for distributing their projects to their audience, but are there opportunities to show their work elsewhere? Might there be any local businesses, institutions, or public art spaces that might serve as a venue to exhibit your participants' work? Talk with your participants and community partners about how their work can become more integrated into the general public.

### Celebration

Congratulations, it's party time! Gather your participants, their families and friends, along with everyone involved (co-designers, community partners, professionals, and any advisors) to commemorate their achievement. This may not seem necessary, but hosting a celebration is an important step in the process. You want your participants to take ownership of their projects and have pride in what they have created. This helps by having their support network present. Display their work, and provide food and refreshments if possible. Go all out; it can be as relaxed or formal as you wish. Encourage participants to share their work with the guests. Socialize, have fun, and make this a memorable and meaningful experience for everyone involved.



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## PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

- Launch
- Skills Building & Topic Exploration
- Ideation
- Execution
- ✗ Public Engagement & Follow-up

### Reflection & Evaluation

After everything is over, be intentional about sitting down with your stakeholders and participants. Revisit your shared outcomes, and be honest about both the successes and shortcomings of the workshop. What are the takeaways?

Make note of these conversations somehow so that you don't forget about them (consider recording video). Here are some examples of reflective questions to consider as starting points for the conversation:

#### PARTICIPANTS:

*How do you feel that you have best contributed?*

*What have you gained most from this experience?*

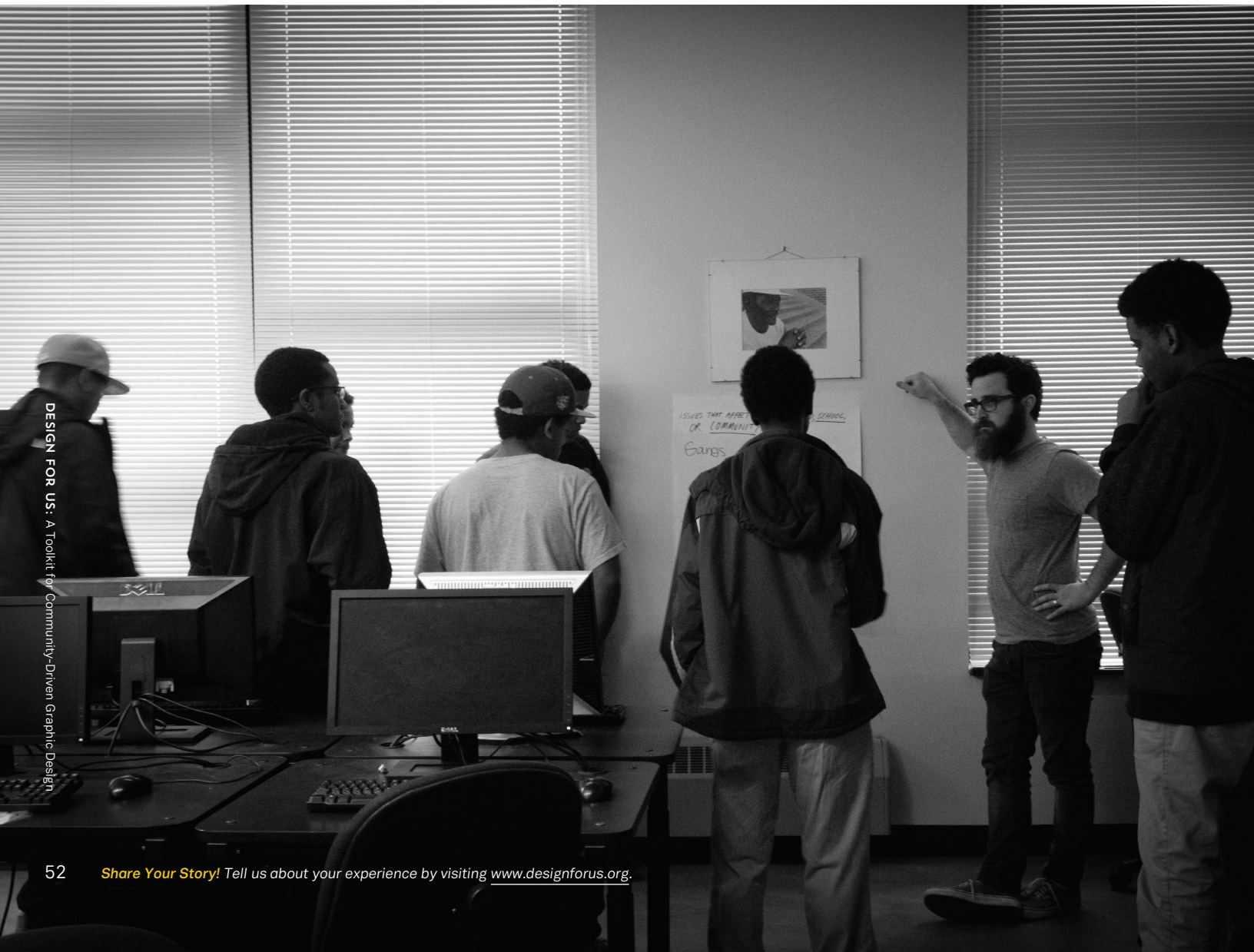
*If you could go back to change anything, what would it be?*

#### STAKEHOLDERS:

*What did the participants take away from this experience?*

*How might this experience be more beneficial in the future?*

*Where did this workshop fall short?*



# CONCLUSIONS

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Design for Us Principles

## CONGRATULATIONS TO YOU, YOUR PARTICIPANTS, AND ALL OF YOUR PARTNERS!

Nice job, you've made it! The workshop is complete, but your efforts will continue to have an impact on those who were involved. Hopefully by now, you have witnessed how design can empower people. Those who participated in this workshop hopefully view design in a new light—as an opportunity, a vessel, or platform to affect changes they want in their community. Of course, these changes may not happen quickly. In most cases, they move slowly over time. But moving forward we ought to share our experiences and discuss how future efforts can improve.

- × The Design for Us Principles
- × Share Your Story

# THE DESIGN FOR US PRINCIPLES

× **LISTEN UP!**

The act of listening is important. Challenge yourself to listen more than you speak. You'll be surprised by what you hear.

× **DESIGNER → FACILITATOR**

This is an invitation to try on a new role as a graphic designer. It may feel a bit unnatural and itchy at times—but this toolkit can provide you with helpful resources a generous dose of advice in developing your role as a design facilitator.

× **PROCESS**

Don't get too fixated on final outcomes; embrace the process. Sure, the outcomes are important, but this workshop has so much to gain from the experiences that carry you and the participants to the end.

× **YIELD TO PARTICIPANTS**

As a designer, it's in your blood to improve the world around you. Avoid the instinct to "direct" participants. Instead, ask questions, prompt thinking—challenge them develop a vision of their own, rather than developing a vision for them.

× **LET FEAR BE YOUR MAGNET**

Butterflies: if you haven't felt them yet, you will. Leading this workshop is nerve-wracking. Your comfort zone can be shattered and you'll find yourself in unfamiliar and uncomfortable circumstances. Don't shy away from this; approach it head-on and you'll be a stronger person.

**GO WITH THE FLOW**

× More times than not, things will get messy. Human beings can be complicated, difficult to understand, unreliable, and unpredictable. Learn to roll with it!

# SHARE YOUR STORY

If you have completed a design workshop, we'd love to hear from you! Visit [www.designforus.org](http://www.designforus.org), and share your stories, ideas, and feedback. Doing so will improve this ongoing experiment for many people to come!

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# APPENDIX

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# MEASURING SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES

Complete each of the following areas to help plan for and evaluate your final outcomes.

**SUCCESS IS...**

.....

.....

**THIS WILL BE ACHIEVED WHEN:**

.....

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**THE METRICS I'LL USE TO MEASURE ARE:**

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**SUCCESS IS...**

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**THIS WILL BE ACHIEVED WHEN:**

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**THE METRICS I'LL USE TO MEASURE ARE:**

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Name: .....

Date: .....

# WHAT'S YOUR BEEF?

The strongest design concepts will come from issues that you care most about on a personal level. The purpose of this activity is to give you an opportunity to think about all of those issues, both at home and beyond. List issues that you have a meaningful connection to in each area of your life.

## HELPFUL QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WHEN SELECTING ISSUES:

- *What's something that bothers you?*
- *What's an issue you wish you could change something about?*
- *What do you wish people cared more about?*
- *What are you passionate about?*
- *Is there an aspect in your community that you wish was different?*

Issues that affect **ME**:

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....

Issues that affect my **FAMILY & FRIENDS**:

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....

Issues that affect my **NEIGHBORHOOD & COMMUNITY**:

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....

Issues that affect my **CITY**:

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....

Issues that affect my **STATE/REGION OF THE COUNTRY**:

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....

Issues that affect my **COUNTRY**:

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....

Issues that affect **OTHER COUNTRIES**:

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....

Issues that affect **THE WHOLE EARTH**:

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....

Name: ..... Date: .....

**TOPICS:**

.....  
.....

**MEMORABLE QUOTES:**

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**ADDITIONAL NOTES:**

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.....  
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Name: ..... Date: .....

**TOPICS:**

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**MEMORABLE QUOTES:**

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**ADDITIONAL NOTES:**

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Name: .....

Date: .....

# PROJECT BRIEF

One can't design something without a plan. Take this opportunity to think through all of the details about your project and what you'd like to communicate to your audience.

## PROBLEM STATEMENT

Explain what problem your poster topic addresses in one sentence.

.....

## TARGET AUDIENCE

Who does your poster speak to? Is it Seattle youth, males, females, elderly, homeless people? Be specific!

.....

.....

.....

## OBJECTIVE

What would you like to be accomplished with your poster?

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## MESSAGE

What is the one thing that you want to communicate to your target audience? What are you asking them to do?

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## DISTRIBUTION

How do you plan on getting the posters in front of your audience? Where will they placed? Is size an issue?

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# PLAN OF ACTION

Consider how you'll get the word out once your project is complete. Think through all of the steps and resources needed to distribute your message.

**DISTRIBUTION MISSION:**

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**WHERE MISSION CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED:**

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**HELP NEEDED:**

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**MATERIALS NEEDED:**

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.....

**ANYTHING ELSE NEEDED:**

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.....

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.....

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# Sample Lesson Plan #1

## 4:30 – 4:40 pm

Show my poster examples

Explain one color printing: You will have 25 copies of your poster, can trim it down, design two if you'd like (cut in half)

## 4:40 – 4:55 pm

Lay out all of the poster ideas, discuss which are working most effectively

- What will translate best into a poster
- What gets the point across quickest and most effectively

## 4:55 pm – 5:10 pm

MY SKETCHES/DEMO

Show my example sketches)

Explain how I applied different concepts to the same idea

Translate into digital

Creating shapes/lines:

1. Brush strokes (SHOW TRACING EXAMPLE)
  - Weight
  - Style (calligraphic)
  - Hold down shift for straight lines
2. Marquee tool (SHOW TWO SIDES EXAMPLE)
  - Add and removing
  - Straight lines or curved
  - Explain how to fill these selections with paint bucket or "EDIT > FILL SELECTION"

\*ALSO: selection brush: straight lines or curved
3. Vector shapes (Show how I imported smooth vector into PSE)
4. Scanning in an image instead (SHOW SCANNED EXAMPLE)
  - Enhance > "auto levels" or "auto contrast"
5. Halftone

## 5:10 – 5:12 pm:

GOOD FILES & BAD FILES

What a good file looks like and what a bad file looks like

## 5:13 – 5:50 pm:

WORK ON POSTERS

Mike and Taylor will walk around and assist with Photoshop Elements questions

## 5:50 – 6:00 pm:

TALK OVER PRINT-OUTS

## Sample Lesson Plan #2

### 4:30 – 4:35 pm

Greeting/explain color chip game

(Name, school, why they did this workshop, and a story that reminds them of color)

### 4:35 – 4:55 pm

Color chips/introductions

### 4:55 – 5:05 pm

Go through schedule

### 5:05 – 5:15 pm

Expectations

- **Be here on time** (try to get here early so that we can start on time and have the most time to work on the computers, make sure you have transportation. we need you to be here to make this happen, but if you can't make it, you need to let me, Asfaha or Assaye know ahead of time)
- **Be nice** (nobody likes to be around punks)
- **Be open** (we will be doing a lot of group talks and discussions, critiques. Communicate your interests and talk about what matters to YOU!)
- **Be honest** (in order for this to be rewarding and fun, we have to communicate and be honest with each other especially when we are talking about each others' work. We will all want constructive feedback in here).
- **Indy projects** (it's important to fulfill some of the at-home projects because they relate to the work we will be doing here in the workshop. It's not like homework, it's fun!)

### 5:15 – 5:30 pm

Discussion - What is design?

Discuss some examples with a partner

Why is design necessary? What are some examples of it? How is it different than art?

Problem solving, different disciplines will solve different problems (app - find your bus, mags - information, a desk chair provides comfortable seating, etc.)

They may talk about product design, interactive design, and graphic design

### 5:30 – 5:45 pm

What is graphic design?

Give me some examples of graphic design that you encounter everyday (books, magazines, signs, packaging, websites, apps, graphics on clothing, money, bills, )

### 5:45 - 6:00 pm

What do we mean when we say something is designed well or poorly?

Questions/Pass out hand-books

Does anyone have a camera on their phone? Who is on Instagram?

Hand out the handbooks, release forms

Bring three cut-outs or samples of good graphic design for next class + get form signed