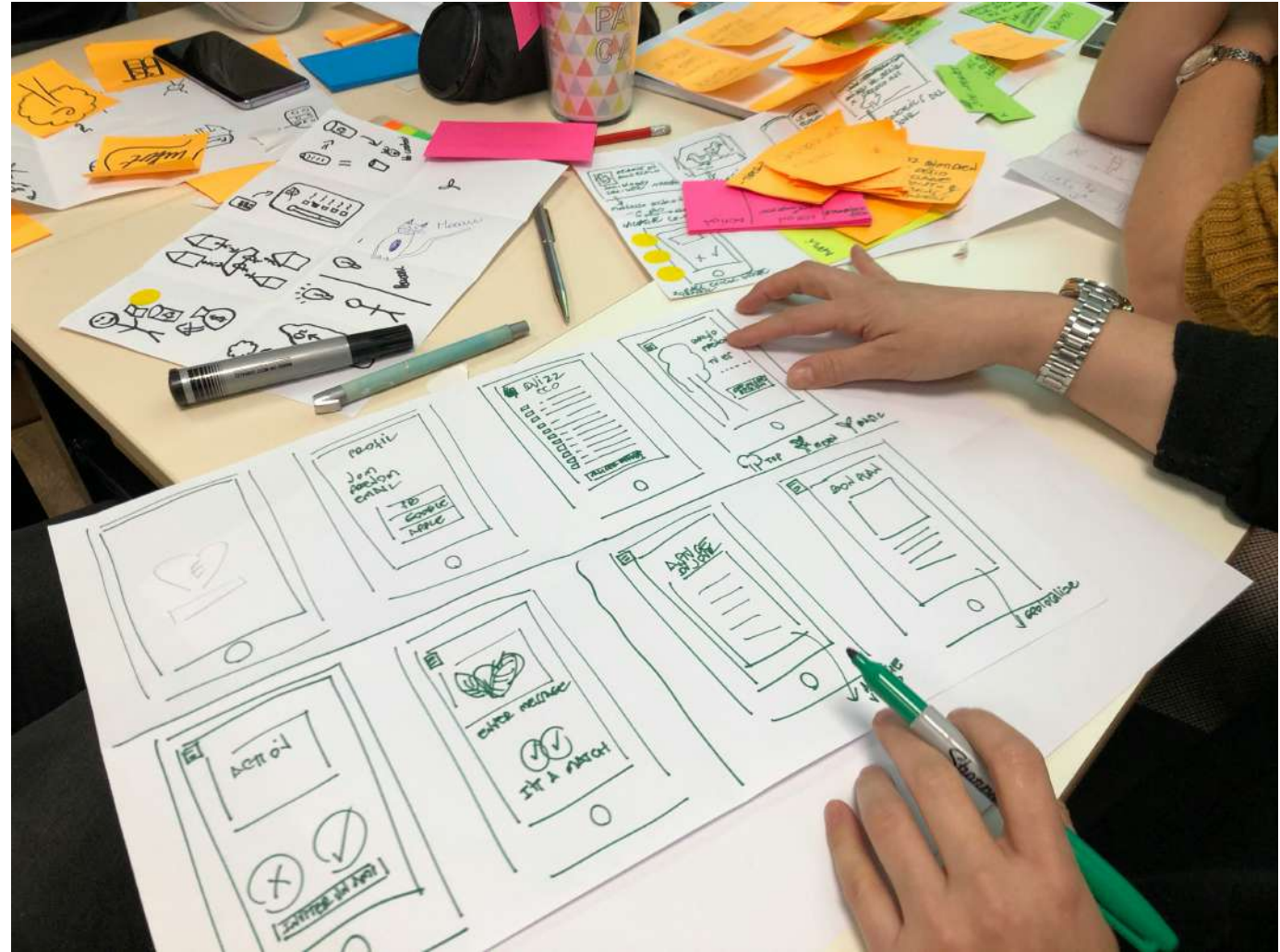


Design Sprints: learn fast, decide faster

Welcome to Design Sprint

In this lesson you'll learn what Design Sprints are, when they are useful, and how to start introducing them in your workflow and innovation process.

By the end, you'll know the key steps day by day, the roles you need, and what 'good' looks like at each stage.



Introduction

Design

It is about deliberately shaping a solution around real user needs, not about make something look “nice”.

Sprint

Borrowed from agile and product development methods, where the team focuses on one challenge and moves fast.

Introduction: what is it?

Design Sprints are a series of workshops where a small team aligns on a problem, generates options, chooses one direction, builds a realistic prototype, and tests it quickly with real users, so they can make a decision with evidences.

Introduction: what is it?

The Design Sprint was created by Jake Knapp at Google (around 2010), and then developed at Google Ventures (GV) with the GV design team, most notably John Zeratsky and Braden Kowitz.



Introduction: why it works?



The timebox structure forces focus, no endless debating.



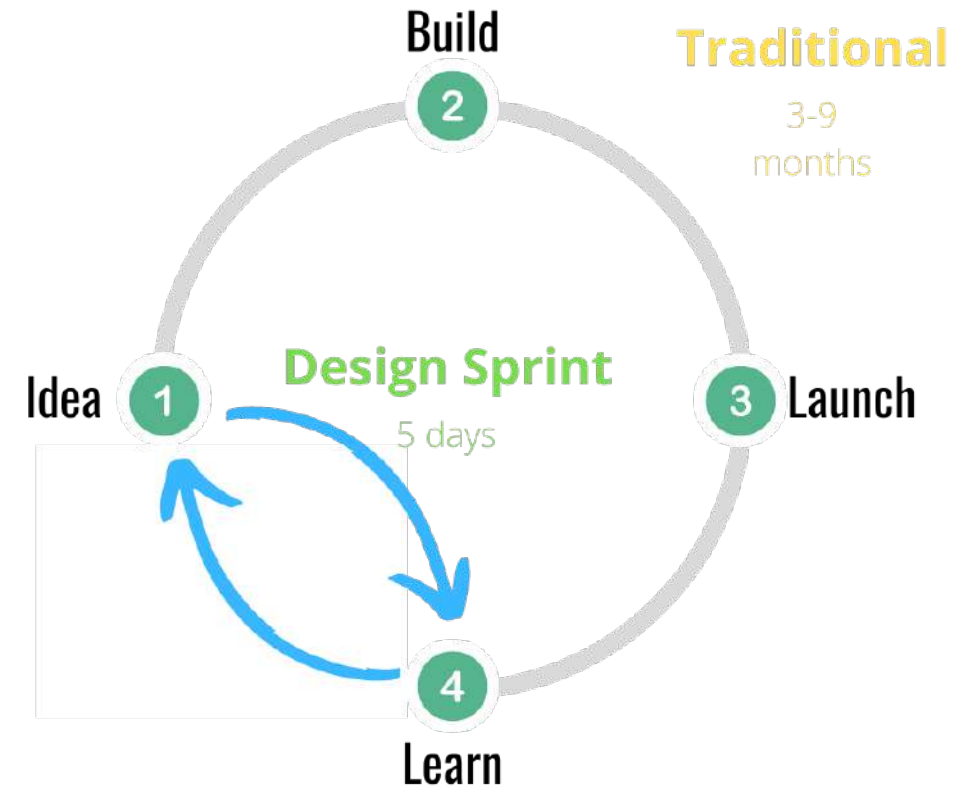
They create alignment through shared tools and a safe space to experiment.



They bring reality in early, mitigating the risk of failure after a big investment of resources.

Introduction: why it works?

It shortcuts many days or months of traditional innovation into five impactful days aimed at delivering something tangible.



When to use / when not to



You need to make a real decision under high uncertainty, for example, a new product/service, a key customer journey, or a risky bet—and you can test a prototype with real users quickly.



Don't use a sprint for pure execution work, problems that are already solved, or situations where there's no decision-maker, no access to users, or no willingness to change direction based on evidence.

When to use / when not to

A sprint without real users is theatre.

A sprint without decisions is just a (bad) meeting.

What is needed to start?



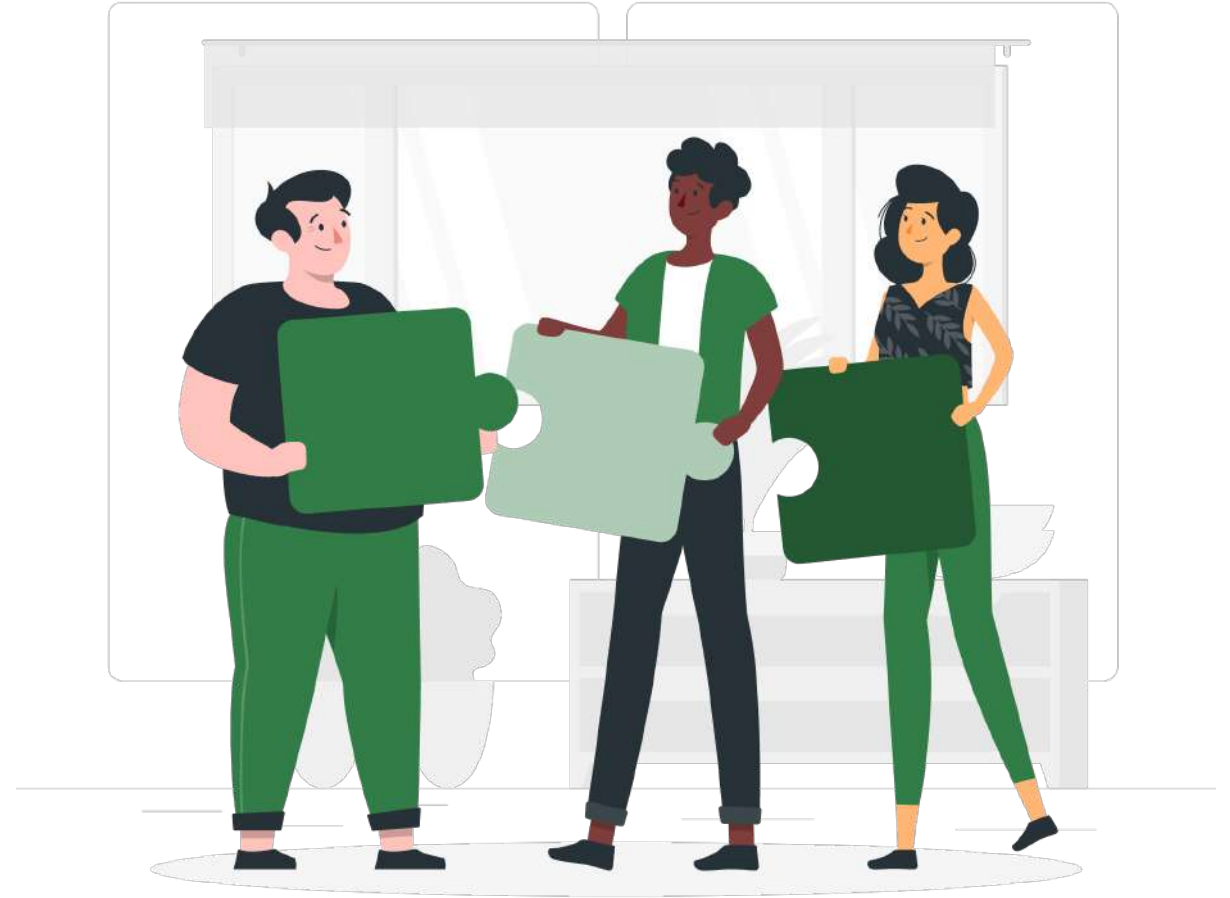
Team roles

Decider: is critical, in that they have the authority within the organisation to make the big calls

Facilitator: it's best to have an external facilitator to allow the team to work on the sprint

Core team: aim for a good mix of cross-functional roles

Experts: internal or external

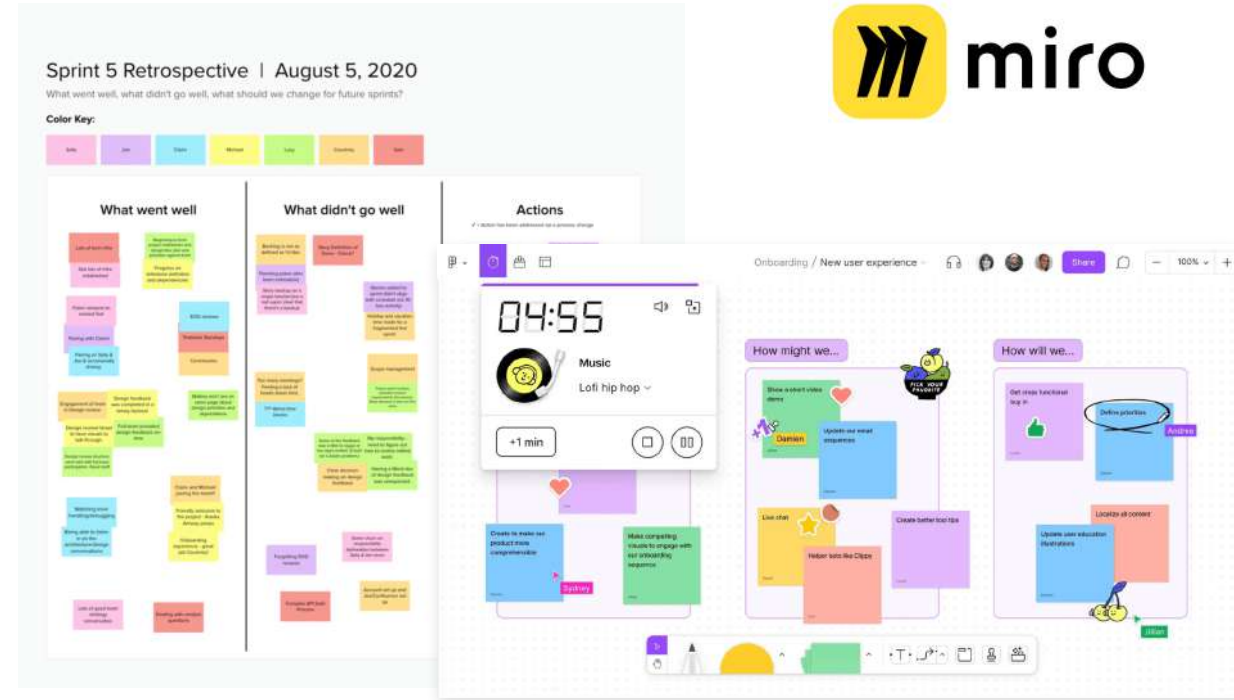


Tools

In person you need a whiteboard, sticky notes, timers, and a space where work stays visible.

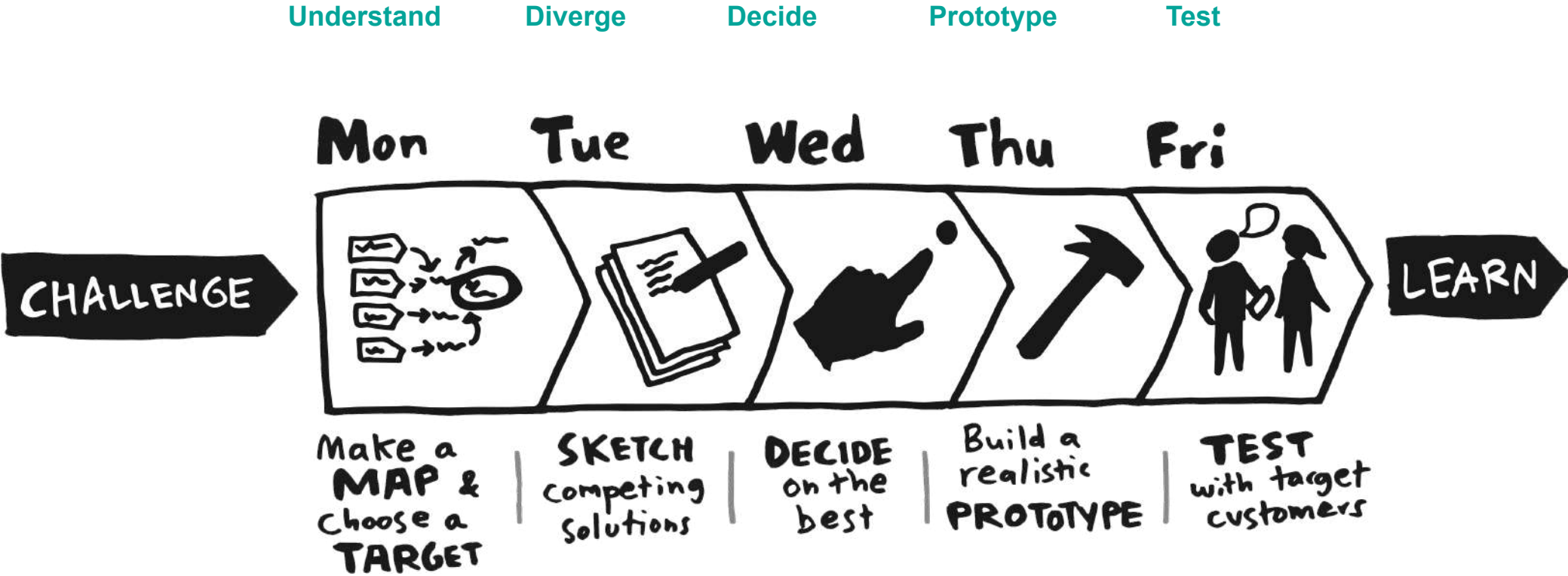


Remote, you need a collaborative board, and a simple way to prototype. Keep tools simple. Complexity kills momentum.



The 5-day model

The original model



Day 1: Understand

Set the goal: start from initial assumptions and questions, mapping a challenge that is aspirational, optimistic and feels achievable in the near term.

Prompt:

In two years time [...]

Validate and focus

Conduct interviews and pick a target user and target moment to focus your sprint challenge on.

Prompt:

How might we [...]

e.g.: make the wait the most exciting part of the trip?



Day 2: Diverge

Collecting existing patterns

Capture anything that you think might be useful, from competitors, to similar concepts and solutions from different fields that solve the same sort of problem.

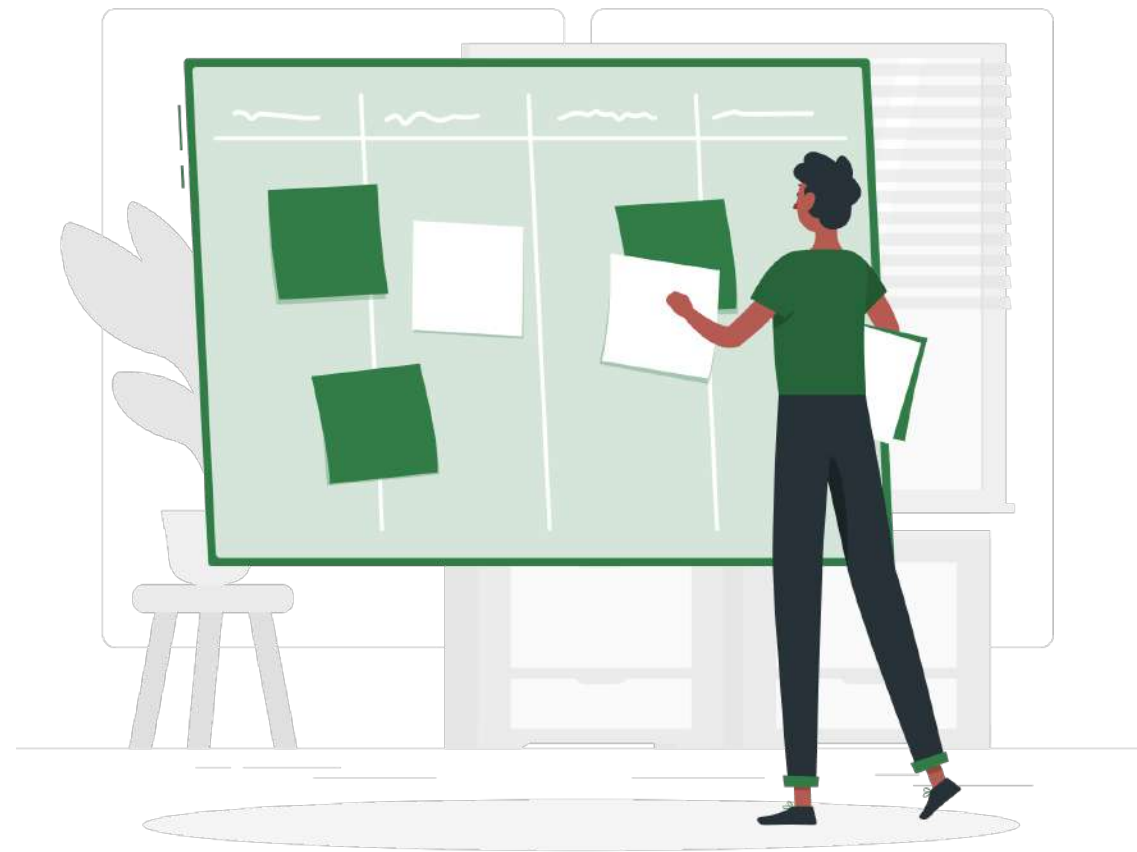
Tools:

Sketching notes

Ideas

Crazy 8s

Refined sketch / idea



Day 3: Decide

Collect the team's opinion

Review the pile of ideas from today 2, and conduct a structured critique session, using for example, dot voting, to narrow directions.

The selected concepts become the basis for the prototype.

Plan for the prototype



Day 4: Prototype

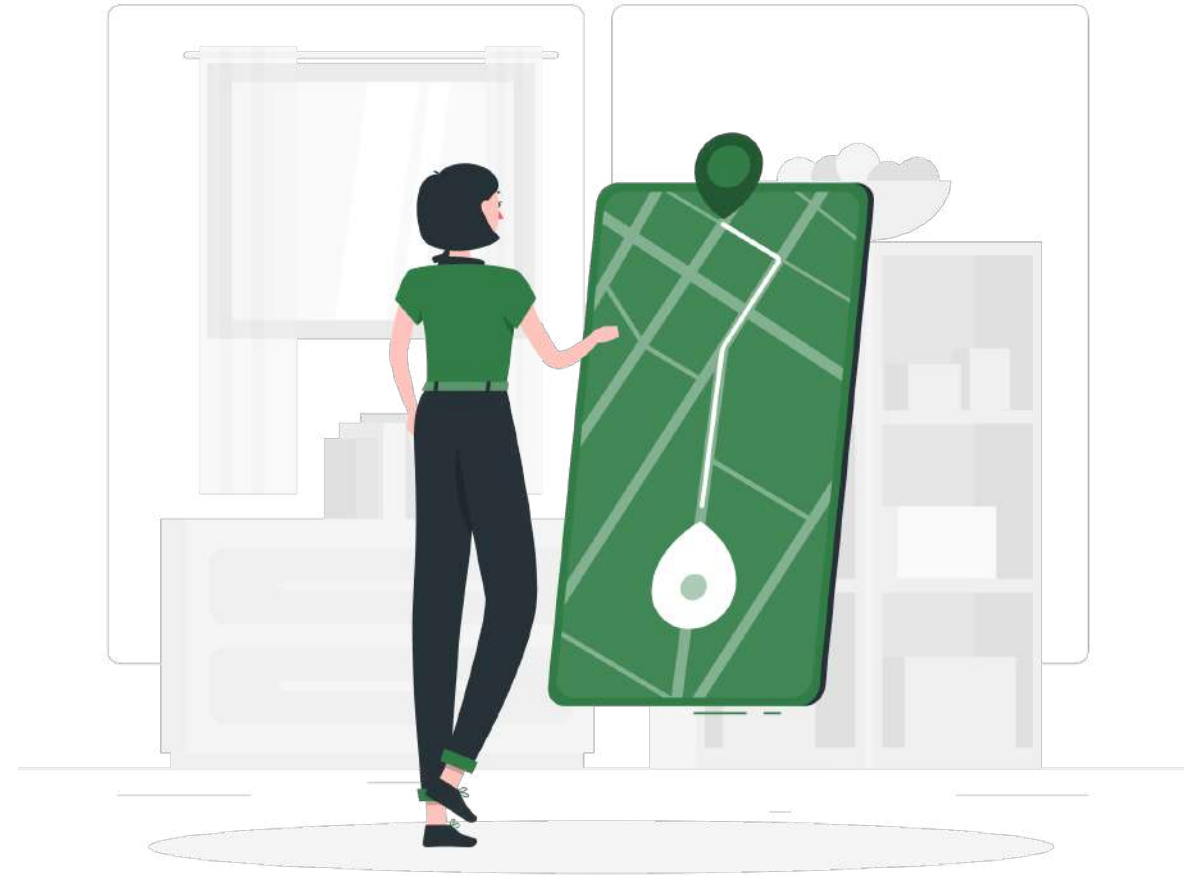
Build a prototype to learn, not to impress

A prototype is a facade or just enough to be believable for testing on day five.

Prototype types: interface / service / concierge

Tip:

Fake the backend, keep the front real.



Day 5: Test

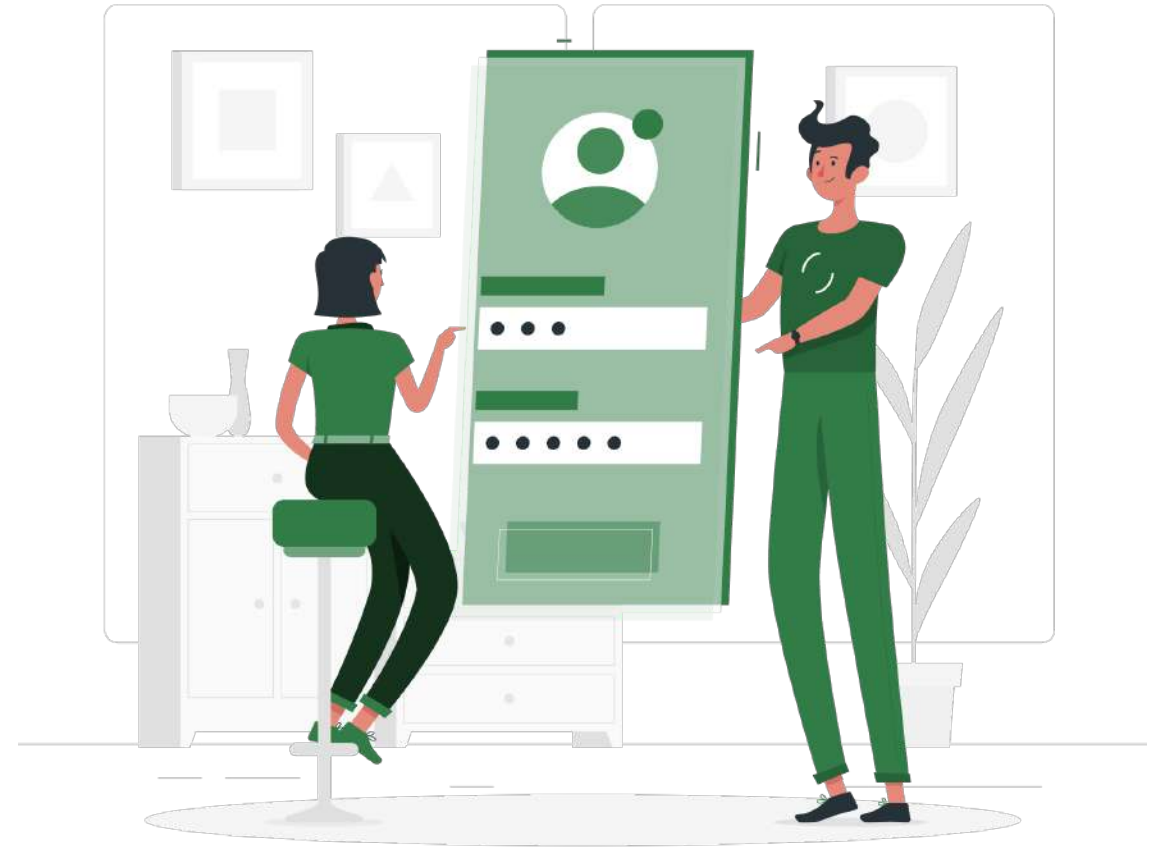
Test what you need to take new decisions

It's guided observation. You give the user realistic scenarios and watch what they do.

Look for signals and repeating patterns.

Assess whether you have answered the key sprint questions, determine what has been learned, and decide on the next steps

How many users are enough?



Final considerations

Final considerations

What success look like?

Success isn't a perfect prototype.

Success is learning velocity:

- what users value
- what confuses them
- what they trust
- what would make this viable.

If you can make a confident next decision, the sprint worked.

Sprint formats

Use the minimum format that answers your questions. Sometimes 1-2 day sprint could be enough.

After the sprint

If signals are strong, move into delivery, otherwise iterate, pivot or stop.

**“The greatest
risk is building
something
nobody wants.”**

Jake Knapp

Credits & resources

Photos & graphics

[Amélie Mourichon](#)

[Vitaly Gariev](#)

[Sebastien Bonneval](#)

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[Danka & Peter](#)

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Sites

thesprintbook.com

Wayfair's [presentation template](#)

Get checklists [here](#)

The facilitators handbook [here](#).

newhaircut.com/design-sprint-training



Thank you.

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10 A JOURNEY
IN 10 MEDAFRICAN
COUNTRIES FOR
ECO-INNOVATIONS



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