The Power of Design Sprints For Product Teams
Introductions

Principal advisor at adaptiveX, a boutique product design and innovation consultancy.

Helping organizations build better products, faster, by using the latest in human-centered design, business strategy and agile methods.

We also help teams embed these principles and practices into their way of working through training and development programs.

@withCarlosO
The purpose of this workshop is to enable you to:

- Learn about design sprints, how they solve big challenges and help teams iterate on solutions
- Learn ways to implement design sprints on product teams
- Understand the guiding principles behind design sprints

The intent is to get you to understand the process and try some of the techniques (so you can take them back to work).
Workshop Agreements

The following are some agreements for our workshop:

Timeboxing

Hands Up

No Devices

Questions
A Design Sprint is a structured, interactive process for (quickly) solving big challenges, creating new products/services and/or processes, or improving existing ones.
A greatest hits of agile, lean and design thinking

✓ Agile/Scrum
  - Individuals and interactions, timeboxed iterations, collaboration, diversity in thinking, leveraging each others skills and ideas

✓ Lean Startup
  - Experimentation mindset, testing riskiest assumptions, think big, start small, move fast

✓ Design Thinking
  - Tools of empathy, problem definition, ideation, and prototyping
A tip of the hat to some of the groundbreakers
Product Development Challenges

✓ Alignment of common objectives, lack of clarity
✓ Endless internal discussions/delayed decisions
✓ Lack of objective data and evidence to make decisions
✓ Pressure to be innovative...how/where to start
Idea - - - - - - - - ? - - - - - - - - Launch
Idea \(\rightarrow\) Data \(\rightarrow\) Launch \(\rightarrow\) Idea

B... u... i... l... d
Increases the likelihood of building the wrong thing

Slide Credit: Jake Knapp and John Zeratzky
Idea

Data
Options + Iterations = Success

"When teams iterate on five or more different solutions, they are 50% more likely to launch successfully."
What does a sprint look like?

Storyboarding

Customer Research

Sketching

Structured Critique

Prototyping
Goal for the Sprint Week:

By the end of a sprint week, the team will have...

✓ decided on a problem to tackle
✓ ideated solution(s) to this challenge
✓ tested the idea prototype with real users
1. Together alone
2. Tangible over discussion
3. Getting **started** (not being right)
4. Don’t rely on creativity!
Important Roles

Decider
The official decision maker for the topic

Expert(s)
The person who knows a lot about the topic/challenges

Facilitator
The person leading the team through the exercises

Could be the same person
The Decider Role

Product Owner
Project Leader
CEO
Product Manager
Head of Design
The Facilitator Role

- Passionate Team Member
- Scrum Master
- Design Lead
- Product Analyst
- UX Researcher
“Practice Trumps Theory”
Ash Maurya
Form a group at your table

- Form a group of 3 to 5 people.
- Each table can only have a max of 2 groups.
Assign Roles

Person in the group whose birthday is next: **Facilitator**

Person in the group whose birthday most recently passed: **Decider**
“The Materials”

**Everyone Must-Have**

- (5) Rectangular Post-It Notes (3x5)
- (1) Sharpies / markers
- (4) big blue dots
- (10) or so small dots (red or other colour)
- (2) handouts
- (2) sheets of paper to keep track of ideas
Let’s start with our challenge
This is Richard!

A fitness professional who is passionate about helping people live longer and healthier lives.
Fix Your Posture for Good.

Bad Posture

Good Posture
Day 1:
Explore the
Challenge

1. Long-term Goal
2. Metric
3. Sprint Questions
4. Start HMWs
5. Ask the Experts
6. Journey Map
7. Sort HMWs
8. Choose Target
Day 1: Explore the Challenge

1. Long-term Goal
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Long Term Goal

• Helps to anchor the sprint in terms of our business goals

• Super optimistic, in two years, what does the ideal world look like if your project was successful?
Long Term Goal

• Helps to anchor the sprint in terms of our business goals

• Super optimistic, in two years, what does the ideal world look like if your project was successful?

LTG
Our product will be a household name & the most effective way to reduce back pain.
Day 1: Explore the Challenge

1. Long-term Goal
2. Metric
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Metric

• How do we know when we’ve achieved our goal?

• What outcomes are we looking to achieve?

• How can we measure those outcomes?
Metric

• How do we know when we’ve achieved our goal?

• What outcomes are we looking to achieve?

• How can we measure those outcomes?
Day 1:
Explore the Challenge

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What things could stop us getting to our goal?
(super pessimistic)
Sprint Questions

- Helps us focus on the most important learning
- Provides orientation towards sprint outcomes
- Identify risky assumptions (desirability/feasibility/viability)
WE WILL FAIL IF...

“People don’t trust our product”

Can we...

get people to trust our product?
Exercise: “Sprint Questions”

1. Take the rectangular post-its

   can we...
Exercise: “Sprint Questions”

1. Take the rectangular post-its
2. Write 1-2 questions that you think are important to answer
Exercise: “Sprint Questions”

1. Take the rectangular post-its
2. Write 1-2 questions that you think are important to answer
   (next we’ll vote on the top 3)

See Tip #1
Now we find the top 3 questions
Exercise: “Sprint Questions”

1. One person at a time
Exercise: “Sprint Questions”

1. One person at a time
2. Stick your post-its on the table
Exercise: “Sprint Questions”

1. One person at a time
2. Stick your post-its on the table
3. And read them out loud to your team.
Exercise: “Vote”

1. Everyone, except the decider takes 2 dots
Exercise: “Vote”

1. Everyone, except the decider takes 2 dots

2. Vote for the questions you think are the most important to answer
Exercise: “Sprint Questions”

1. Decider takes three large dots
Exercise: “Sprint Questions”

1. Decider takes three large dots
2. Chooses the questions THEY think are the most important to answer
“Can we” questions, make excellent learning goals!
“The Note & Vote Process”

- Stick
- Note
- Vote
- Pick

Courtesy of AJ&Smart
Day 1: Explore the Challenge

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How Might We

• Help us to identify and capture stakeholder perspectives
• Make sense of the user needs, pains & gains
• Frame problems and opportunities
• Align team members
HMW = “How Might We”

HMW

Encourage people to refer friends to our product when they haven’t tried it?
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Ask the Experts

• Get different perspectives on the challenge and outcomes.

• Capture knowledge and information across different domains

• Gather data & insights
**Post-it Notes**

- **How**: Make intangible things like motivation, drive, ... tangible? Visible?
- **How**: Increase graduation rates
- **How**: Let students overcome themselves?
- **How**: Get students hooked?
- **How**: Understand how much growth potential there is with all of our users?
Day 1: Explore the Challenge

1. Long-term Goal
2. Metric
3. Sprint Questions
4. Start HMWs
5. Ask the Experts
6. Journey Map
7. Sort HMWs
8. Choose Target
Example
Richard’s Magic Jacket
Richard’s Magic Jacket
Richard’s Magic Jacket

User

Customer

User’s objective

Reduce Back Pain
Richard’s Magic Jacket

User

Steps in the journey (headings help)

Discover  Learn  Use

User’s objective

Customer

Example

Reduce
Back
Pain
Richard’s Magic Jacket

Steps in the journey (headings help)

Discover

Google

Referral

Learn

Fb Advert

Use

Customer

User’s objective

Reduce Back Pain
Richard’s Magic Jacket

Steps in the journey (headings help)

Discover
Learn
Use

Marketing Page

Customer

User

Google
Referral
Fb Advert

User’s objective

Reduce
Back
Pain
Richard’s Magic Jacket

Steps in the journey (headings help)

Discover
Learn
Use

Discover
Google
Referral
Fb Advert

Marketing Page
Request Trial
Offer

User

User’s objective

Customer

Reduce
Back
Pain
Richard’s Magic Jacket

Steps in the journey (headings help)

Discover
Learn
Use

Marketing Page

Request Trial
Offer

User’s objective
Reduce Back Pain

User

Customer

Google
Referral
Fb Advert

Get Jacket and Wear It

Richard

Example
Richard’s Magic Jacket

Steps in the journey (headings help)

Discover
Learn
Use

Marketing Page

Request Trial
Offer
Wear it for a month

User’s objective
Reduce Back Pain

User

Customer

Get Jacket and Wear It

Richard

Example

User’s objective

Discover
Google
Referral
Fb Advert

Marketing Page

Get Jacket and Wear It

Richard

User
Day 1: Explore the Challenge

1. Long-term Goal
2. Metric
3. Sprint Questions
4. Start HMWs
5. Ask the Experts
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7. Sort HMWs
8. Choose Target
**HWW MAKE INTANGIBLE THINGS LIKE MOTIVATION, DRIVE, ... TANGIBLE? VISIBLE?**

**HWW**

Let students overcome themselves?

**HWW**

Get students Hooked?

**HWW**

Increase graduation rates

**HWW**

Understand how much growth potential there is with all of our users?

**HWW**

Help students

**HWW**

Learn more about students
HMW

Compete against chiropractors and physio
Day 1: Explore the Challenge

1. Long-term Goal
2. Metric
3. Sprint Questions
4. Start HMW's
5. Ask the Experts
6. Journey Map
7. Sort HMW's
8. Choose Target
Richard’s Magic Jacket

Steps in the journey (headings help)

User

User’s objective

Customer

Google

Marketing

Fb Advert

Has clean clothes

Marketing

Page

Learn

HMW
Encourage new people to try our product

HMW
Let people know we don’t only offer jackets

HMW
Get new people to discover us

Reduce Back Pain

effective

Offer

Get Jacket and Wear It

Wear it for a month

Get more revenue per customer

Compete against chiropractors and physio

Request Trial

Discover

Learn

Use

Example

Richard
High fives all around!
Managing the time and energy

Visualization by Alan Colville – See blog post: How to put people at the heart of your design sprint.
Day 2: Produce Solutions

1. Lightening Demos

2. 4-Part Sketching:
   → Notes
   → Ideas
   → Crazy 8s
   → Solution Sketching
Lightning Demos

• Get inspired by great design patterns

• Lateral thinking & analogous settings to isolate elements (experience, interaction, product etc.)

• Apply them to the design challenge at hand

Image Credit: of AJ&Smart
Day 2: Produce Solutions

1. Lightening Demos
2. 4-Part Sketching:
   → Notes
   → Ideas
   → Crazy 8s
   → Solution Sketching
4 Part Sketching

Notes  Ideas  Crazy Eights  3-Step Sketch

IllustrationCourtesy of AJ&Smart
The human brain processes images 60,000 times faster than text, and 90 percent of information transmitted to the brain is visual.

Crazy Eights
Crazy-4’s
Come up with ideas

Self-explanatory
Anonymous
Ugly is okay
Words matter
Catchy title
Exercise: “Crazy Fours”

1. Fold a sheet of paper 2 times
Exercise: “Crazy Fours”

1. Fold a sheet of paper 2 times
2. Now look back at your sprint questions, map and target area
Exercise: “Crazy Fours”

1. Fold a sheet of paper 2 times
2. Now look back at your sprint questions, map and target area
3. You will have 4 minutes to draw up to 4 ideas, or 1 idea in 4 different ways
Exercise: “Crazy Fours”

1. Fold a sheet of paper 2 times
2. Now look back at your sprint questions, map and target area
3. You will have 4 minutes to draw up to 4 ideas, or 1 idea in 4 iterations
4. Remember: Words matter, try and make it readable and don’t forget to draw something, boxes, lines or people showing what it is
Push beyond your first thought
3 Step Concept
Day 1: Explore the Challenge

1. Long-term Goal
2. Metric
3. Sprint Questions
4. Start HMWs
5. Ask the Experts
6. Journey Map
7. Sort HMWs
8. Choose Target

Day 2: Produce Solutions

1. Lightening Demos
2. 4-Part Sketching:
   - Notes
   - Ideas
   → Crazy 8s
   → Solution Sketching
Day 1: Explore the Challenge

1. Long-term Goal
2. Metric
3. Sprint Questions
4. Start HMWs
5. Ask the Experts
6. Journey Map
7. Sort HMWs
8. Choose Target

Day 2: Produce Solutions

1. Lightening Demos
2. 4-Part Sketching:
   - Notes
   - Ideas
   - Crazy 8s
   - Solution Sketching

What really matters
Day 1: Explore the Challenge

1. Long-term Goal
2. Metric
3. Sprint Question
4. Start HMWs
5. Ask the Experts
6. Journey Map
7. Sort HMWs
8. Choose Target

Day 2: Produce Solutions

1. Lightening Demos
2. 4-Part Sketching:
   - Notes
   - Ideas
   - Crazy 8s
   - Solution Sketching

DONE
Day 3: Vote on Solutions

1. Art Museum
2. Heat Map
3. Speed Critique
4. Straw Poll
5. Supervote
6. Storyboard
Day 3: Vote on Solutions

1. Art Museum
2. Heat Map
3. Speed Critique
4. Straw Poll
5. Supervote
6. Storyboard
Making Decisions

• Silent review of the work

• Place dots for ideas that best answer the question and move us forward in coming up with a solution

• It’s about collecting a “heat map” of opinions to help us make our “real vote” later
Example
Richard’s Magic Jacket
1. Re-read the sprint questions and look at the map + target
Exercise: “Heat Map Vote”

1. Re-read the sprint questions and look at the map + target

2. Look at each of the concepts
Exercise: “Heat Map Vote”

1. Re-read the sprint questions and look at the map + target

2. Look at each of the concepts

3. Place dots on each idea you think is a good way to answer one of the questions
Exercise: “Heat Map Vote”

1. Re-read the sprint questions and look at the target
2. Look at each of the concepts
3. Place dots on each idea you think is a good way to answer one of the questions
Exercise: “Heat Map Vote”

1. Re-read the sprint questions and look at the target

2. Look at each of the concepts

3. Place dots on each idea you think is a good way to answer one of the questions

4. Use as many dots as you can! (it’s about registering your interest)
Day 3: Vote on Solutions

1. Art Museum
2. Heat Map
3. Speed Critique
4. Straw Poll
5. Supervote
6. Storyboard
Solution Presentation
Align understanding of the concepts
Day 3: Vote on Solutions

1. Art Museum
2. Heat Map
3. Speed Critique
4. Straw Poll
5. Supervote
6. Storyboard
Straw Poll:
Informs the decider of groups opinions
Exercise: “Straw Poll”

1. Everyone (except the decider)
Exercise: “Straw Poll”

1. Everyone (except the decider)
2. Look back over the concepts
Exercise: “Straw Poll”

1. Everyone (except the decider)
2. Look back over the concepts
3. Decide (in your head) on a concept or feature you think we should prototype and test
Exercise: “Straw Poll”

1. Everyone (except the decider)
2. Look back over the concepts
3. Decide (in your head) on a concept or feature you think we should prototype and test
4. Write the name/idea on a post-it
Exercise: “Straw Poll”

1. Everyone (except the decider)
2. Look back over the concepts
3. Decide (in your head) on a concept or feature you think we should prototype and test
4. Write the name/idea on a post-it
5. And the reasons (so you can explain quickly later)
Synchronized voting!
Exercise: “Straw Poll”

1. Write your initials on a large blue dot
Exercise: “Straw Poll”

1. Write your initials on a large blue dot
2. Wait until everyone is ready
Exercise: “Straw Poll”

1. Write your initials on a large blue dot
2. Wait until everyone is ready
3. Place your dot at the same time as your team mates!
Exercise: “Straw Poll”

1. Write your initials on a large blue dot
2. Wait until everyone is ready
3. Place your dot at the same time as your team mates!
Exercise: “Straw Poll”

1. Write your initials on a large blue dot
2. Wait until everyone is ready
3. Place your dot at the same time as your team mates!
Exercise: “Straw Poll”

1. Write your initials on a large dot
2. **Wait** until everyone is ready
3. Place your dot at the same time as your team mates!

GO!
Day 3:
Vote on Solutions

1. Art Museum
2. Heat Map
3. Speed Critique
4. Straw Poll
5. Supervote
6. Storyboard
It’s everyone’s responsibility to inform the decider
Exercise: “Decider Vote”

1. Take turns to explain your vote to the Decider (1 min each)
Exercise: “Decider Vote”

1. Take turns to explain your vote to the Decider (1 min each)

2. When ready, the Decider can place their special dot on a concept (and explain their choice to the team)
“It’s about placing a bet”

(not about being 100% certain)
You Did It!
High fives all around!
Day 3: 
Vote on Solutions

1. Art Museum
2. Heat Map
3. Speed Critique
4. Straw Poll
5. Supervote
6. Storyboard
Now offering:
Try our free, wireless charging for your device.
Get a free drink to go!

Charge your phone. For free. Because it’s cool. And easy.

Welcome to LionCharge! Welcome to the future.

Our wireless charging is now 
charged and ready. 

Charge your phone. 
Wirelessly. And securely.

Charge your phone online. 
Over 1500 locations throughout the city.

Activate SuperCharge and 
charge your phone to 100%. 

What is SuperCharge?

You are now charging 
with SuperCharge.

Time: 02:30

SuperCharge Active?

51%

7 min to full charge! 
charge now set.

What is SuperCharge?

If you use your phone, 
you can charge your 
device. Just tap it on the 
matrix.

Start charging...

50% charge

Please to full charge: 
about 72%

what time?

Charge your phone here.

90% charge

Max charge: 
about 72%

Charge your phone here.

100% charge

Max charge: 
about 72%

Charge your phone here.
Day 4: Prototyping

Day 5: Customer Research
Prototyping

- Build something that will solicit feedback from real people to gather just enough data to move forward, pivot or kill the idea.

- The fidelity of your prototype follows the purpose of your test

- You can prototype anything
Day 4: Prototyping

Day 5: Customer Research
User Research

- Start recruiting users after Day 1. Use Facebook Ads, post in forums and social media, use an online survey to qualify people, give people Amazon (or other) gift cards.

- Keep track of learnings on a big visible wall in another room.

- What do you no longer believe? What new information did you learn? What questions do you still have? What new ideas would you like to try?
Iteration Sprints

• An iteration is where the magic happens

• Review feedback, uncover main problems and sketch for better solutions

• Re-fine prototype(s) and re-test
When to run a design sprint?

- At the beginning of a complex project
- When new uncertain and complex scope has entered your backlog
- When the problem is difficult and the outcome is uncertain
**How teams run sprints?**

**Team 1**  
(Discovery)  

**Team 2**  
(Delivery)  

- Two completely different teams

**Team**  

- One team, uses a design sprint when needed

**Team**  

- One team, uses a sprint when needed in parallel to delivery work
In Closing

- Design sprints help teams solve complex problems
- Test new ideas and get real data
- Align team members across common goals
Questions or Comments?

✓ What new information did you learn?
✓ What surprised you the most?
✓ What questions do you still have?
✓ What ideas would you like to try?
Get in touch any time!

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