



# IDENTIFYING A DESIGN PROJECT

## Tool Kit

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# Identifying a Design Project

Human-centered design is inherently exploratory. While the human-centered design behaviors are applicable to almost all of your work, the tools are not. When assessing which projects could benefit from Design Tools, consider the following criteria:

the problem is ill-defined or complex due to human dynamics

there is a clear participant, but an unclear participant need

you are unsure of the best way to tackle the challenge

the project could benefit from a fresh perspective

you have an idea you are excited about, but you aren't sure how people will use it or if it will be adopted

you want to reduce the risk of your solution failing

It's important to note that experienced designers rarely use all the tools for every project. Once you fully embrace the behaviors and hone your skill set, you will use different tools for different needs.

Human-centered design tools are NOT helpful when you already have an answer or very specific result in mind. The process is extremely organic and adaptive, so if you are hoping to use human-centered design tools for validation, don't waste your time. Still need help?

Try using the tool below to select a good project to practice your skills.

## 1 Identify potential projects

List three potential projects that are important to you and could benefit from a fresh perspective.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ End participant: \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_ End participant: \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_ End participant: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2 Scoping your design challenge

Plot potential projects on these spectra to assess your options. Projects that fall closest to the left of the spectra are better fits for a human-centered design approach.

**Pro tip: Seek extreme perspectives and those dissimilar to your own.**

quickest Access to an end participant slowest

most Tension between the end participant and business perspectives least

high Tolerance for change low

## 3 Craft your challenge language

For example: Reimagine the experience of opening your first bill after a medical event.

**Pro tip: We almost always start with the words designing, reimagining, or redesigning...**

make it aspirational

if you have boundaries that you know exist, include them in the statement (for example, if you are designing for clients, include them in the statement)

frame the challenge from a human perspective, not the company perspective