Formulating a Hypothesis as Part of the Design Process

WHEN TO USE

At the beginning of the design process and throughout the project as an iterative tool for reflection and adaptation.

DESIRED OUTCOME

Strong hypotheses that are specific and measurable, guiding the research and decision-making process effectively.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this job aid is to help you formulate your hypothesis and establish clear validation criteria early in the design process. It serves as a guiding tool for teams to focus their efforts on defined goals and adapt as needed, ensuring the delivery of planned value.

HOW TO USE

Draft your problem statement

- Clearly articulate the problem you aim to address, providing a foundation for your hypothesis.
- Refer to The Design Process: Understanding the Problem (DDN237) for detailed guidance on formulating a robust problem statement.

Draft your potential solution

- Develop a potential solution that directly addresses the identified problem.
- Ensure your solution is actionable and aligned with the objectives outlined in your problem statement.
- Refer to The Design Process: Ideation and Conceptualization (DDN246) for how to ideate and conceptualize potential solutions.

Frame the potential solution as a hypothesis

- Ensure your hypothesis is specific and measurable by using the following template:

  - Specific: “Because [problem statement] _____, we believe that [variable or variables] _____ will result in [specific metric] _____.”
  - Measurable: “We will know that our hypothesis is true or that our solution works when there is a [change %] _____ [increase/decrease] _____ in [variable] _____, by [change %] _____ from [current value] _____ to [expected value] _____.”
    - Clearly define the variable, change %, current value, and expected value.