



HOW TO COMPOSE A HOW MIGHT WE QUESTION (DDN2-J15)

DESCRIPTION

This job aid serves as a guide for developing a structured “how might we” question as a way to generate new ideas for solving known problems by reframing a user problem into an opportunity.

WHEN TO USE

After conducting design research and data synthesis but before ideation.

When you want to reframe your current problem statement to more easily uncover opportunities.



PAIRS WELL WITH

- How to Compose a Point-of-View Problem Statement (DDN2-J06)
- Persona Checklist (DDN2-J12)

PURPOSE

HMW questions can be used to highlight potential opportunities for ideation based on insights found during design research.

DESIRED OUTCOME

A set of structured questions to work on at the ideation stage of the design process.



HOW TO USE

1. Thinking about your point-of-view (POV) problem statement, use the following template to ask specific questions starting with “How might we?”:

How might we [action/what] for [user/other stakeholders] in order to [enact a change]?

2. If you’re having trouble coming up with HMW questions, break the bigger problem into smaller ones, and then start writing HMW in front of each smaller problem.

3. Write as many HMW questions as you can. Use the following criteria to assess each of your HMW questions:

Criteria	Yes	No
Focuses on the desired outcome		
Specific enough		
Does not suggest a solution		
Not too broad		
Not too narrow		
Phrased positively		



HOW TO USE

4. If you find yourself with more than one HMW question that meets all of the above criteria:
 - Find any overlap between the HMW questions and see if you can combine some into one.
 - Prioritize any remaining HMW questions by their impact on the project.
 - Select the HMW question with the highest impact to answer.

