Innoverse Booklet

Grow your idea into a great one!

Workbook for innovation challenge participants

1030 INNOVATION

Let's get started

The Innoverse Booklet is a resource for innovation challenge participants and provides guidance on how to develop innovative ideas and to further improve them.

Find your challenge task on the right. The following pages guide you through the whole process of developing ideas, evaluating them and ultimately presenting them to a jury who will decide on the next steps.

We wish you lots of success and happy innovating!

Your challenge task

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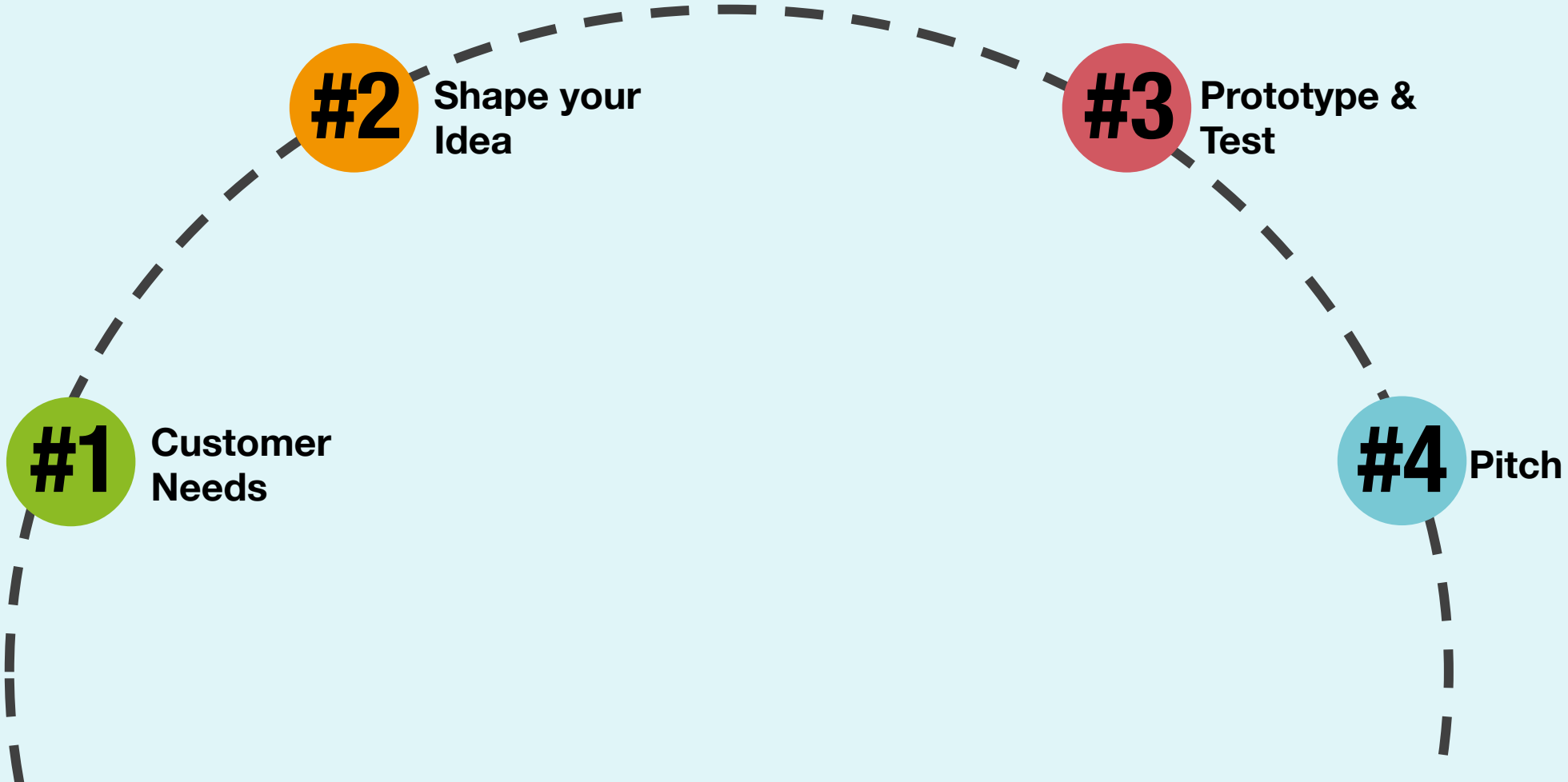
Overview

The development of new innovative concepts essentially follows a 4 steps process.



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#1 Customer Needs

#1 Customer Needs

The first step is all about understanding your customers and their needs. This will help you develop ideas around a highly relevant problem.

→ Observe

Attentively observe customers in situations that are typical for your challenge task. Take notes on their behaviour under different circumstances.

→ Ask

Talk to customers and conduct qualitative interviews with open ended questions on different aspects of your challenge task.

→ Immerse

Change the perspective and step into the shoes of your customers. Try to experience typical situations from their point of view. This helps you get a deep understanding for their challenges and needs.

→ Analyse

Summarise your findings using the 2 tools on the following pages. The persona profile and the empathy map will help you structure your findings.

- → The Persona Profile is a very good tool to capture different customer types and their general preferences, motivations and frustrations.
- → The Empathy Map helps you better understand the different personas in the context of your challenge task.

#1 Customer Needs

Tool: Persona Profile

Personas are fictional characters representing typical customer types and everything you found out about them. Create a variety of profiles showcasing major target customer segments following the structure below.

Hi! My name is …

Demographics & Lifestyle

What is the persona's age, gender, family status, appearance, living situation, education, job?

Communication

Where does the persona get information from? How fit are they with digital channels? Which channels do they use to communicate?

Motivation

What is of interest to your persona? What do they benefit from? Which goals do they pursue? What is important to them?

Frustration

What are problems of your persona? What are they annoyed by or have difficulties with?

#1 Customer Needs

Example: Persona Profile ‘Erasmus Student’

Below you can find an example how to use the persona template.

Hi! My name is Maria!
→ I am an Erasmus student and eager for knowledge and success!

Demographics & Lifestyle

- Female
- 25 years
- Economics student
- Lives in a flatshare in a large German city
- Comes from France

Communication

- Active on social media such as Instagram and TikTok
- Daily digital interaction through videoconferences
- Information through online newspapers

Motivation

- Finishing her studies in time
- Finding a good job and pay off student debt
- Staying in touch with friends & family who are far away

Frustration

- Struggling to finish master thesis
- Lacking information & guidance from university
- Constantly needing to buy books for classes

1030 INNOVATION

#1 Customer Needs

Tool: Empathy Map

Empathy maps help you understand your persona's preferences in the context of your challenge task. Visualize a typical situation reflecting the topic you are working on. What does the persona think, feel, see, hear, say or do in this situation? Create a separate empathy map for each of your personas.

What **Gains** does the Persona experience?
Which benefits and pleasures do they find?

What does the Persona
THINK & FEEL?
What really matters to them, what are their major worries or aspirations?

What does the Persona
HEAR?
What do people say to them?

What does the Persona
SEE?
What kind of environment do they have?

What does the Persona
SAY & DO?
What is their attitude in public, their behaviour towards others?

What **Pains** does the Persona experience?
Which problems do they run into?

What is a typical
Situation for your challenge task?
What is the specific situation we observe the Persona in?

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#1 Customer Needs

Example: Empathy Map ‘Erasmus Student – Library Experience’

Let’s now look at the persona example in the context of her ‘library experience abroad’

Which **Gains** does Maria experience?

She finds advice on how to finish her studies. As a student she can borrow the books for free, so that her study debt won’t rise.

What does Maria **THINK & FEEL?**

Maria hopes she can find appropriate books to borrow, so she does not have to buy new ones.

What does Maria **HEAR?**

She hears advice and gets information that helps her to reach the bookshelf she was looking for.

What does Maria **SEE?**

Maria sees the huge university library with lots of people quietly studying together with their friends.

What does Maria **SAY & DO?**

Maria asks the library personnel about where to find appropriate books and which they would recommend to her.

Which **Pains** does Maria experience?

Maria needs some time and assistance to find the books she needs, as the library system is not self-explanatory. She also misses her friends back at home, as she sees other groups of friends studying together.

What **SITUATION** are we looking at?

Maria is about to search and borrow some books at the university library.

1030 INNOVATION

#1 Customer Needs

Before you start developing ideas, you should analyse your persona profiles and empathy maps to identify customer needs that are worth being addressed.

Look at all the profiles and maps you have developed.
Are there patterns and common themes that pop out?

Deepen the identified themes and explore new aspects.
What customer needs and unaddressed problems do you recognize?

Translate the discovered customer needs and problems into concise problem statements (find guidance on the following page).

#1 Customer Needs

Method: Problem Statement

Innovators look for unsolved problems. Therefore, phrasing the problem concisely is an important basis for the idea development.

When phrasing the statement, include the four W's:

WHO is experiencing the problem?
WHAT is the problem?
WHERE does the problem present itself?
WHY does it matter?

Example:
"Our young internationally oriented student struggles with acquiring knowledge and assistance at the host university abroad in an efficient and cost-effective way. This is mainly due to a confusing information system as well as a language barrier."

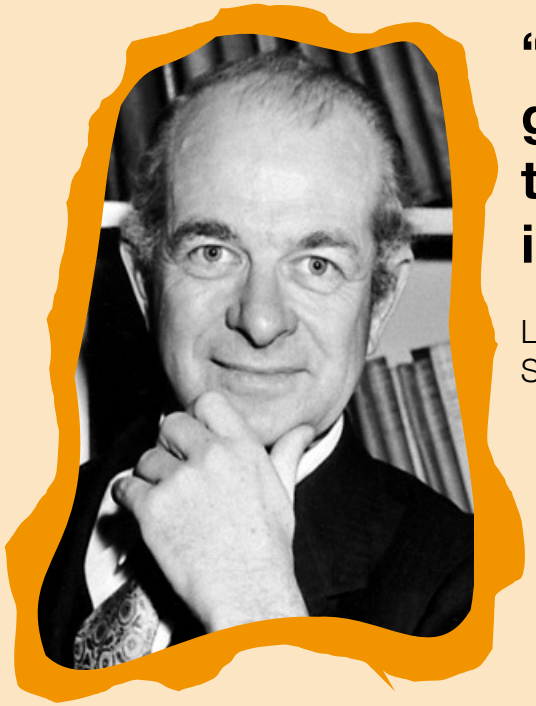
#2
Shape your idea

#2 Shape your idea

You have a clearly defined problem you want to solve. Now, you can start developing creative ideas addressing an issue which really matters for your customers. Bear in mind the ideation rules below.

Ideation Rules

- → Create an appropriate environment and headspace
- → Keep your focus on your problem statements
- → Develop lots of ideas: quantity over quality
- → Combine and build on each other's ideas
- → Defer judgement



"The best way to get a good idea is to have a lot of ideas."

Linus Pauling (1901 – 1994)
Scientist & Nobel Price Winner

#2 Shape your idea

Use these brainstorming methods to come up with creative ideas and evaluate the ideas after each ideation session.

Rapid Ideation

You need
- A wall
- Post-its and pens
- A team of 3-5 people

Set a time frame and try to come up with as many ideas as possible. Build upon each other's ideas and combine them.

Figure Storming

You need
- To agree on a prominent person everyone knows
- Post-its and pens
- A team of 3-5 people

Don't think about how YOU would solve a problem, but how your chosen celebrity would.

Idea Evaluation

- Cluster your ideas and combine all thoughts that belong together.
- Prioritize your developed ideas based on their potential (e.g. via sticker voting within your team).
- The result will be a shortlist of ideas to be further elaborated on.

#2 Shape your idea

Tool: Starburst Method

This tool helps you to further elaborate on your prioritized ideas by answering the 5 questions around the star.

→ Your idea
Name your idea briefly.

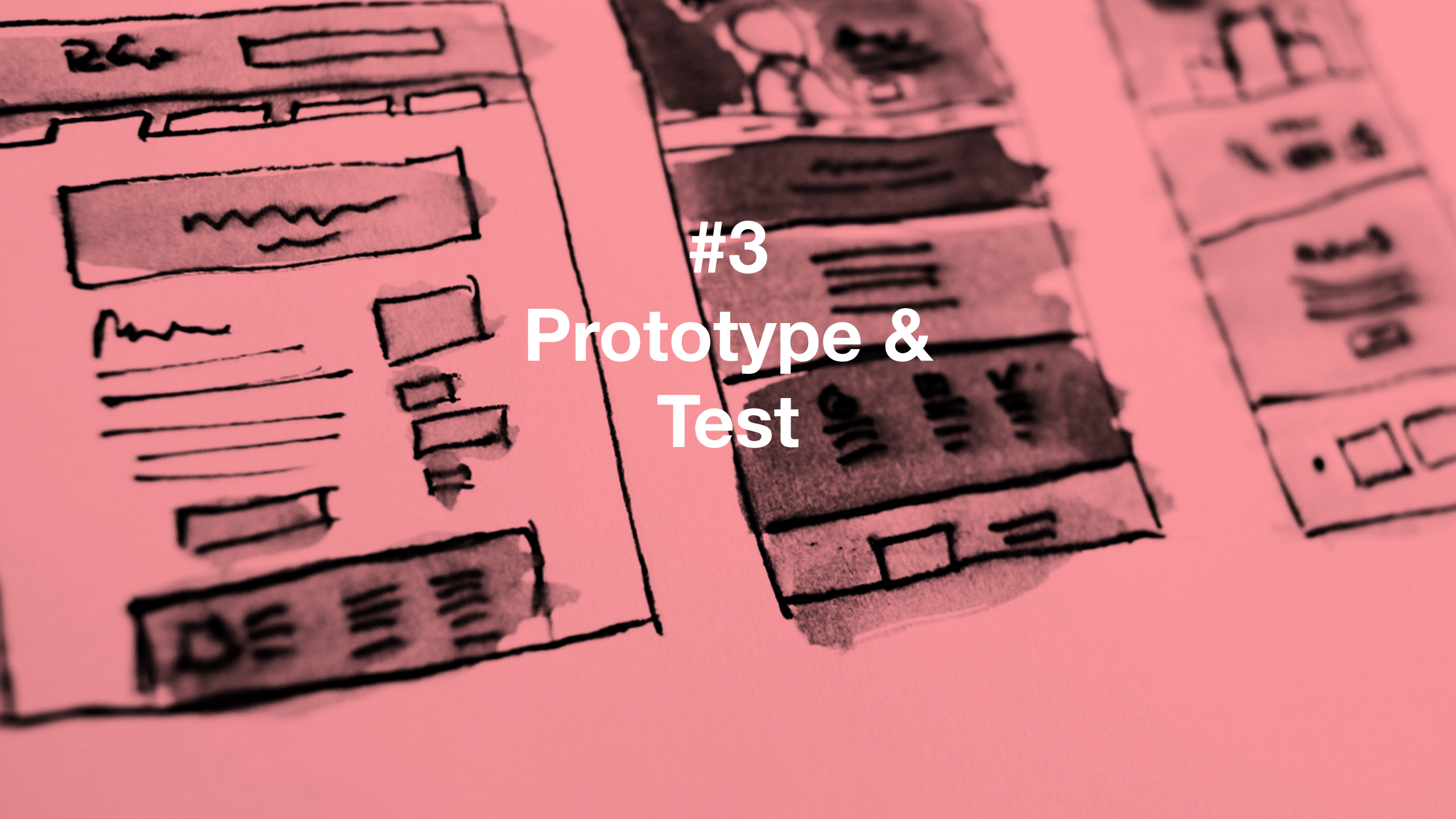
→ What
Describe in more detail what your idea is all about.

→ Who
Describe the target audience for your idea.

→ Why
Describe what problem you solve with your idea. What is the added value for the customer and how does your company benefit from it?

→ How
Describe how the idea functions and which resources you would need to make it work.

→ Where
Describe through which channels your idea creates an impact.



#3 Prototype & Test

#3 Prototype & Test

Rapid prototyping is about creating tangible first models of your prioritized ideas. Prototypes are a great basis to test ideas with customers and receive feedback.

?

What is a prototype?

A prototype is an early modelled version of your idea. It does not have to be perfect, but showcase all major features of your idea in a visual and understandable way. The mantra is: rough, rapid, right.

!

Why is a prototype needed?

→ Make your ideas tangible
→ A basis for testing
→ Fast and cheap feedback
→ Stimulating your creative thinking
→ Quick improvements of your ideas

How can you create a prototype? Find out on the following pages!

Method: 3D Modelling

What is a 3D model?

A rough mock-up of your idea showcasing different features and aspects.

How to do it?

Build a physical version of your idea using different materials you have at hand. The goal is to produce a simple visualization of your idea, testers can interact with. You can use Lego blocks, cardboard, paper, tape, cord, whatever works best. Look around in your office, there are for sure plenty of materials available you can use.

Keep it simple and don't make it too perfect. This increases the chance to get honest and quick feedback.

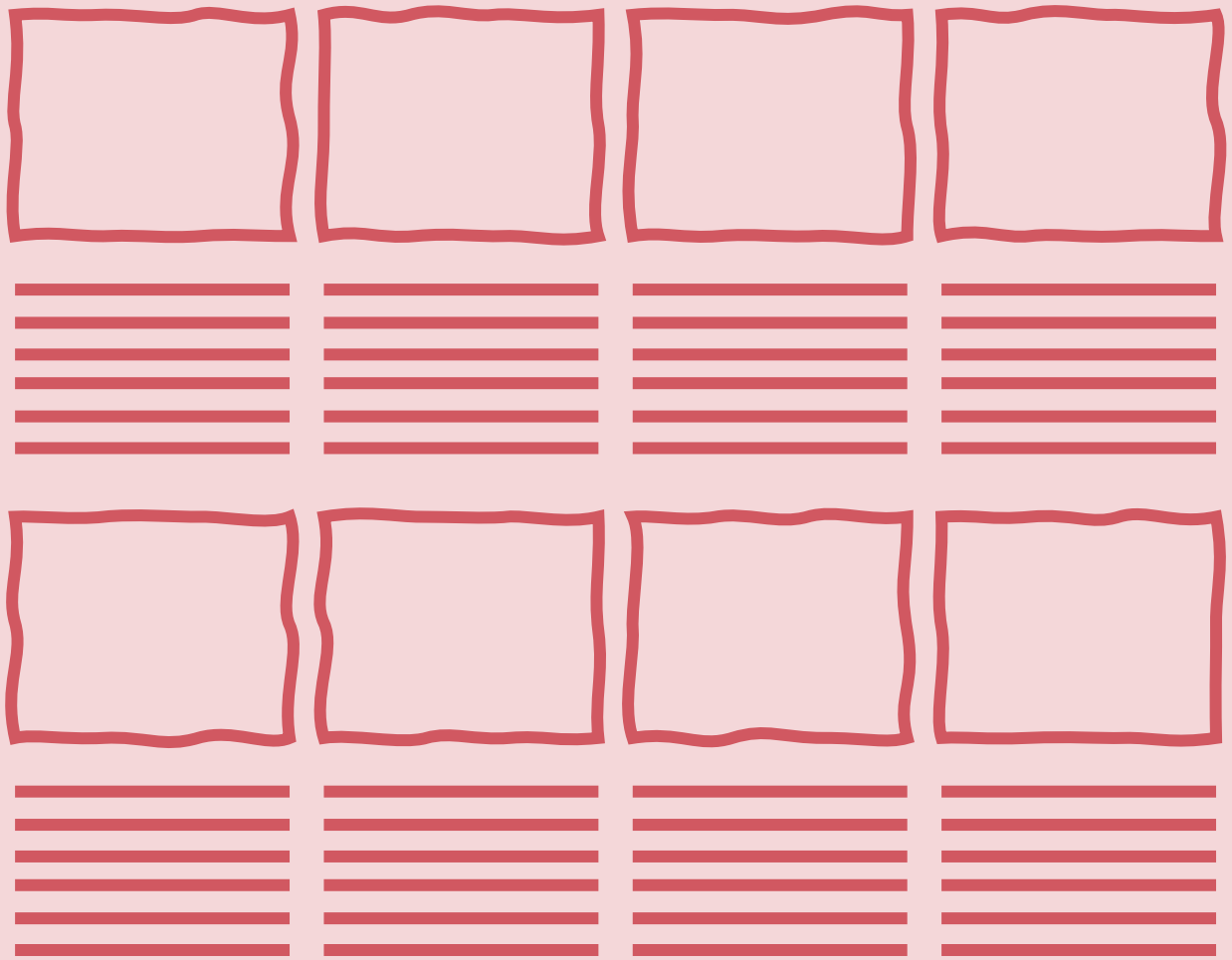
Method: Storyboard

What is a storyboard?

Storyboards are a suitable tool to prototype service ideas or the process a customer is going through while using a product. They are displayed in a chronological narrative.

How to do it?

The easiest way to create a storyboard is to use a poster template, such as the one on the right. Visualize each step of the journey either with sketches or alternatively with as a collage of magazine pictures. Explain each step briefly with text.



#3 Prototype & Test

Example: Storyboard – ‘Erasmus Student – Optimal Library Experience’

Below you find an example of a simple storyboard showcasing a tangible solution to Maria’s problem.

Maria is an ambitious student spending a semester abroad and planning to finish her studies soon.

She is writing her master thesis, but needs more books and information to finish.

Fortunately, her host university offers an app in English to make access to information easier for everyone.

She quickly finds the library register and looks up the topics she needs information about. The university app tells her where to find them.

In the library, she simply follows her phone’s instructions and is directly guided towards the section she needs.

Finally, Maria is able to finish her studies quickly and lands a great job back in her home country.

#3 Prototype & Test

Now it is time to test your prototypes with volunteers.
Do several testing and feedback rounds.

#1 Minimal Description

Let the customer jump directly into the interaction without extensive explanation from your side. Capture the first reaction of your tester!

#2 Thinking out loud

During the interaction, testers explain their thoughts.

#3 Feedback

After the interaction, testers give feedback and answer further questions regarding their experience.

#4 Implementation & further testing

The project team responds to the feedback, adapts the model and starts testing it again to further develop it step by step.

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#4
Pitch

#4 Pitch

The big day is coming where you will pitch your idea to a jury of decision makers. It is very important to showcase all the work you have done in a concise and catchy way in order to convince them to invest in your concept.

- Prepare your presentation and rehearse it a few times, ask others for feedback
- Get to the essence of your idea
- Try to speak freely
- Know your audience and engage with them
- Use storytelling and analogies for people to follow you easily
- Be ready to answer critical questions

#4 Pitch

The following components are essential for a successful pitch. Make sure you include all relevant elements.

Problem & Target group
What relevant problem does your idea solve and which customer group benefits from it?

Brief idea description
What is your idea about and how does it work?

Why & How
State why your idea is beneficial for your company by presenting a simple business case. Show what you need to implement the idea (budget, resources, etc.).

Be visual
Use your prototype or other forms of visualisation to make the idea tangible.

Call to action
Have a specific request or next step prepared for the jury.

What is the jury looking for?

Promising business model, innovative approach, market potential, scalability

Get in touch!

1030 Innovation Consulting

E: office@innovation1030.com
T: +4319674679

Altgasse 8-10/8
1130 Vienna, Austria

www.innovation1030.com
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lIAP272gOzU

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