

TOOLKIT

# Big Idea Vignettes

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## INTRODUCTION

Why do we do this activity?

Rapidly diverge on a breadth of possible solutions to meet your users' needs.

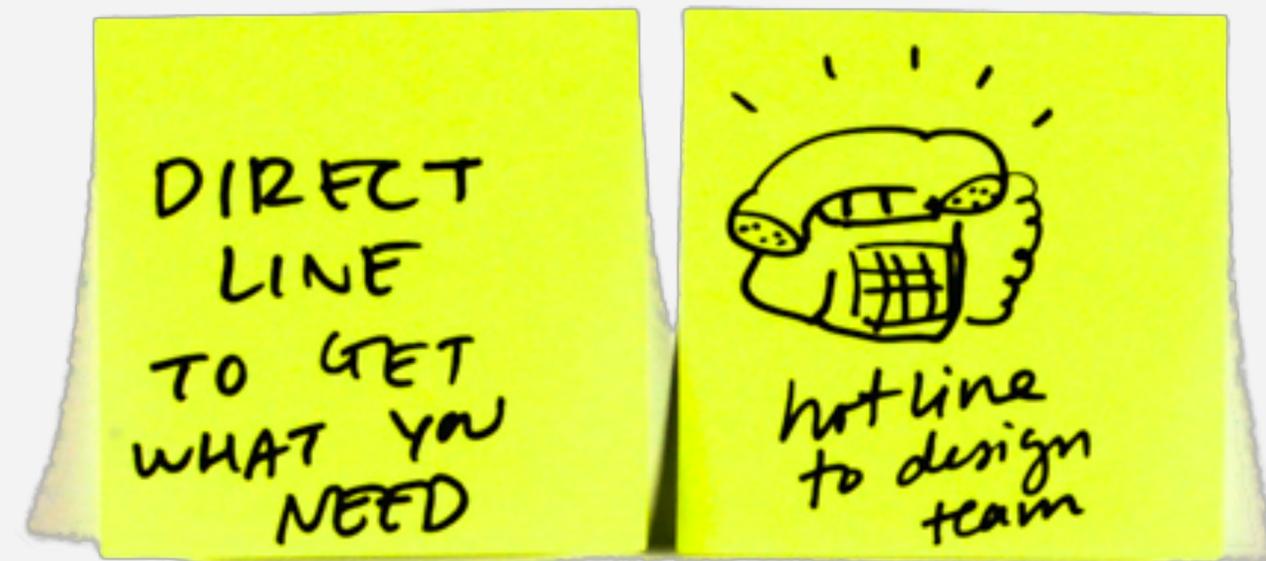
## INTRODUCTION

When should you use this activity?

Any time your team gets stuck or wants to improve something, ideate with the whole team. Everyone provides a unique perspective on the user and the problem, so everyone should contribute ideas for solutions.

**INTRODUCTION**

Think of a Big Idea as a single frame of a storyboard. Try sketching a visual depiction of what the idea might feel like. Label it with a one or two-word headline.



### BIG IDEA VIGNETTES

The whiteboard features several hand-drawn vignettes and sticky notes:

- SONAR DETECTION**: A blue sticky note with a sketch of a person and text: "SONAR DETECTION your way to the shore".
- have a shark**: A yellow sticky note with a sketch of a shark and text: "have a shark".
- WIND SURFING**: A blue sticky note with a sketch of a person on a surfboard and text: "WIND SURFING leverage natural resource".
- The Michael Phelps SWIM really fast**: A pink sticky note with a sketch of a swimmer and text: "The Michael Phelps SWIM really fast".
- craft a boat out of ice**: A yellow sticky note with text: "craft a boat out of ice".
- Motor life boats get away first**: A pink sticky note with a sketch of a motorboat and text: "Motor life boats get away first".
- use dead babies**: A yellow sticky note with a sketch of a baby and text: "use dead babies".
- Aliens**: A yellow sticky note with a sketch of an alien and text: "Aliens".
- Couch cushion raft**: A yellow sticky note with a sketch of a person on a raft and text: "Couch cushion raft".



**INTRODUCTION**

We suggest **30 minutes** for this activity.  
How much time you spend is up to you!

- **Write before you talk.** Write or sketch lots of your ideas on sticky notes *before* talking about them. During discussions, capture the main points on sticky notes and post to the wall.
- **There are no bad ideas.** Start big. Diverge to get everyone's ideas out there. Come back together to discuss, cluster, and seek patterns. Then, converge to determine the strongest ideas.
- **Stay focused on your users.** Tell stories about users to keep them at the center of your attention.
- **Everyone participates.** Everyone has a marker and a pad of sticky notes.
- **Stay engaged.** Avoid side conversations. Use a “parking lot” to capture issues that are off-topic.
- **Start on time, stay on time.** To meet our goals, we need to watch the clock and stick to the plan.
- **Yes, and...** Instead of dismissing the ideas that your teammates suggest, push yourself to build on them.

Ready, set, go!

**SET UP**

Begin the activity with a good prompt, such as a needs statement, a user story, a Hill, or just a pain point identified in an As-is Scenario Map. Write this prompt somewhere everyone can see.

DEVELOPERS NEED A WAY  
TO INTERACT WITH THEIR  
DESIGN TEAMS SO THEY  
CAN PROTOTYPE FASTER.

**DIVERGE**

Generate ideas, not features. A big idea describes how a user might experience the solution. Features describe the implementation of a solution.



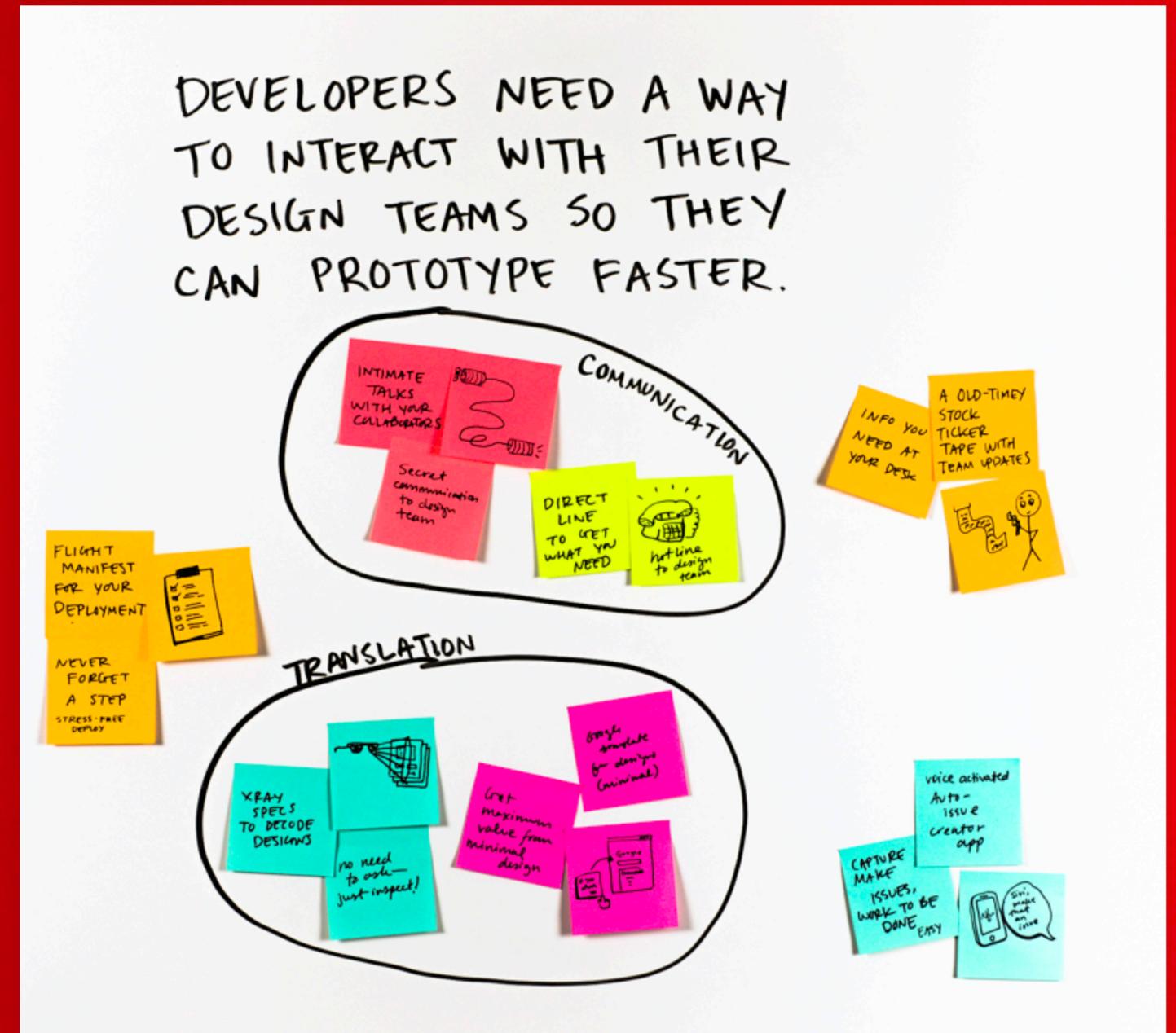
**DIVERGE**

Create many Big Ideas and quickly share them with each other. Build off others' ideas, but stay out of the weeds and avoid drifting into features or talking about implementation details.



**CONVERGE**

Look for similar ideas and natural affinities. Move them physically closer together. As you do, name the clusters. Converge on a set that you all want to pursue.



**PLAYBACK**

Choose one person to play back each cluster of ideas.

- Feel free to discuss and add more ideas as you all review the clusters.



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