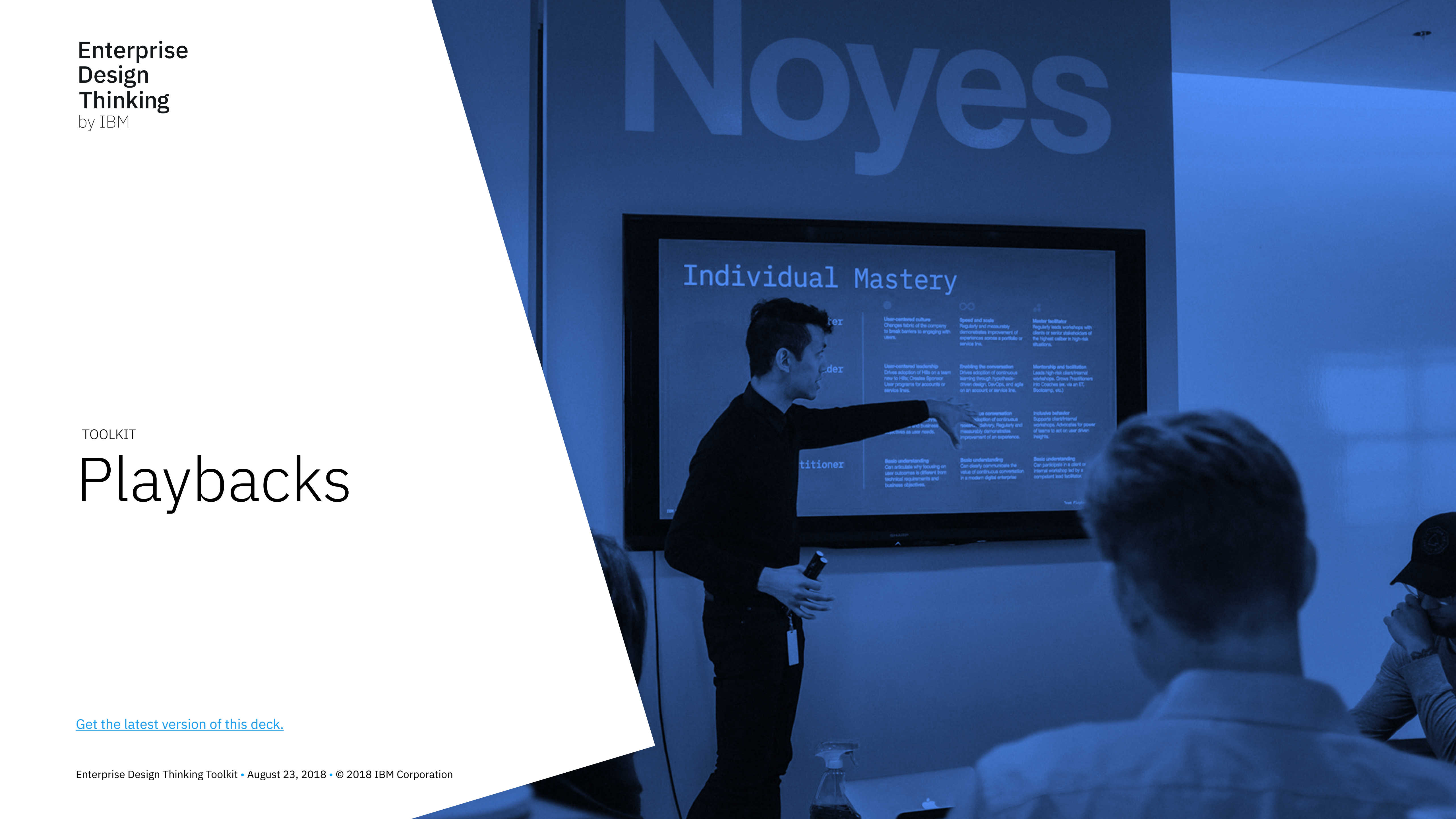


TOOLKIT

# Playbacks

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## INTRODUCTION

Why do you use this activity?

Playbacks are distinct, story-like presentations that align your team, stakeholders, and clients on a future user experience.

## INTRODUCTION

When should you use this activity?

When your team needs to get on the same page or anytime you want to share something new you've learned or made. Have routine Playbacks with your team at key moments throughout a project.

## INTRODUCTION

# What makes a good Playback?

- Delivers a story
- Creates an emotional connection
- Gives a compelling sales pitch
- Presents a solution

## INTRODUCTION

Playbacks with a capital ‘P’—often referred to as *Milestone Playbacks*—are formal presentations to align your team and stakeholders at key points in your process.

p P

## INTRODUCTION

More informal playbacks with a lower case 'p' can happen at any time to align your team and make sure you move in the right direction.

pP

## INTRODUCTION

How polished should your Playbacks be?

Match your playback style and content to your audience. What you play back informally to your team will likely vary greatly from the Playback format to executive stakeholders.

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.



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# Ready, set, go!



INVITE STAKEHOLDERS

Playbacks bring stakeholders together across organizational silos and levels of hierarchy, uplift diverse perspectives, and promote a culture of transparency and inclusion.





## INVITE STAKEHOLDERS

Consider the work you intend to share, and the stakeholders it might impact.

- Ask yourself, “Who will benefit from knowing more about what my team’s working on?”





## MAKE IT ABOUT USERS

Share what you've observed, reflected on, and made by telling a story about your users. Stories will make stakeholders care about and see the value in your work.





**LISTEN TO FEEDBACK**

Give everyone a chance to make their feedback heard. Capture what you hear without judgement.





## LISTEN TO FEEDBACK

Playbacks reveal alignment or misalignment on a team. If disagreements arise, don't panic. The goal isn't perfection—it's clear, engaging communication.





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TOOLKIT

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