

The Problem Framing Canvas

ART 418

Fill all four boxes with a partner. Then write one statement that carries all four.

NAME _____ DATE _____

WHO Who is experiencing this problem? How do we know that they are? _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	WHAT What is the nature of the problem? What signs point to there being one? _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
WHY Why is the problem worth solving? What does it cost the people who have it? _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	WHERE In what circumstances does it occur? In what circumstances does it not? _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

ONE STATEMENT THAT CARRIES ALL FOUR BOXES

One sentence. Not four.

Set the stage 2 min. Fill the boxes 10 min. Write the statement 10 min. The goal is understanding, not solving.

A box you cannot fill is a research question. WHERE is the box everyone skips.

After the Atlassian Team Playbook

Five Whys

ART 418

A complaint, and the patience to ask the same question five times.

NAME _____ DATE _____

	PROBLEM The complaint, exactly as you first heard it.

TICK ONE

☐	●	WHY?	
☐	●	WHY?	
☐	●	WHY?	
☐	●	WHY?	
☐	●	WHY?	

TICK THE RUNG YOU WILL FRAME

The bottom is not the "real" problem. Every rung is a problem someone could frame, and each one lets you design something different. The question is not how deep you can go. It is where you stop.

Stop where you can still reach the people. If you cannot get anyone at that level to answer a question, you have gone one rung too far for this course.

Dan Brown, Practical Design Discovery, ch. 2. His own chain runs from "the search engine needs to be fixed" to the company's revenue models.

Write It, Then Check It

ART 418

Write the sentence. Then run it against the traps, or swap sheets and run it on a partner's.

WRITER _____ CHECKED BY _____

THE SENTENCE

[Users] must have [need] to achieve [objective].

Be specific in the first slot. Not "members," but "members unfamiliar with how the organization works."

RUN IT AGAINST THE SIX TRAPS

Any tick means rewrite.

☐

Anchoring

Positions the problem in terms of an existing idea for a solution.

☐

Wishlisting

Describes the problem as a set of desired features.

☐

Frankensteining

Smushes two existing products together to imply a novel solution.

☐

Boiling the ocean

Suggests one problem is really the amalgam of many different problems.

☐

Amplifying feedback

Focuses on a message from a group that does not represent the whole.

☐

Being presumptuous

Assumes how people will behave, especially with respect to the product.

☐

Too broad. It could describe almost anyone, almost anywhere.

☐

Too prescriptive. It has quietly become a description of the solution.

REWRITE