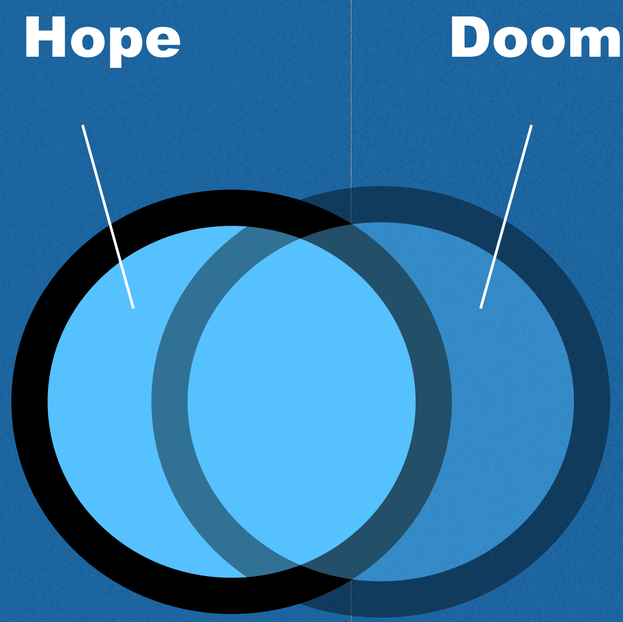
Why Design Is Hard - the book

Scott Berkun & Bryan Zug

whydesignishard.substack.com



WE WANT BETTER DESIGNED PRODUCTS, GOVERNMENTS, SYSTEMS AND SOCIETIES

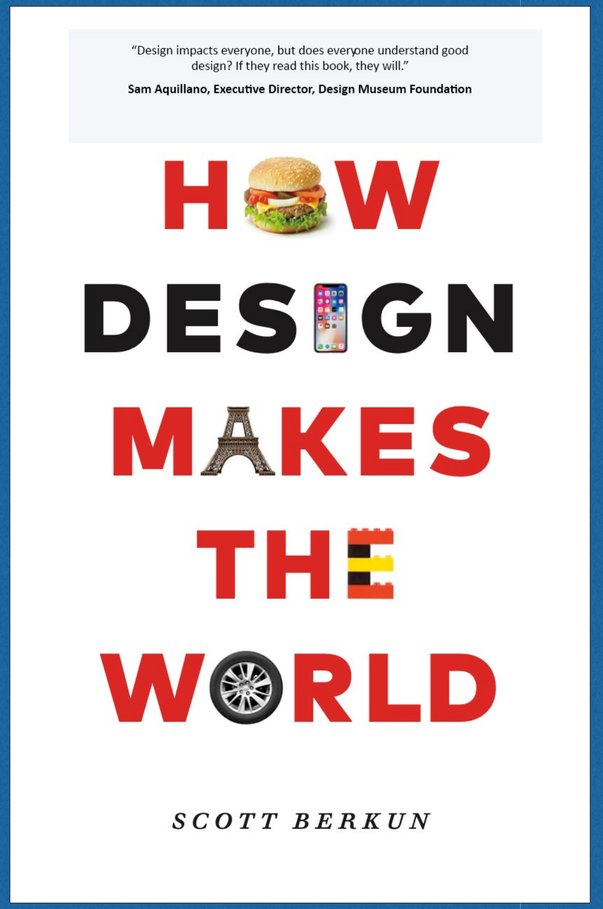
HOW DESIGN MAKES THE WORLD (2020)

1. Explain good design to anyone
2. Be the best starter book
3. Diversify stories and references

The four questions of design:

1. What are you trying to improve?
2. Who are you trying to improve it for?
3. How will you ensure you are successful?
4. Who might be hurt by your work? Now or in the future?

SCOTT BERKUN
HOW DESIGN MAKES THE WORLD



WHY DESIGN IS HARD (2024)

1. Written for designers (tough love)
2. Reframe frustrations into action
3. Focus on power and influence
4. Low pretense, informal and fun

Coming this summer

Paula Scher's $1.5 Million Sketch

citi SM

Paula Scher's $1.5 Million Sketch

"The design... is never really the hard part... it is persuading...people to use it.

...to get either an individual, a group of people, or a whole corporation to be able to see... there were a million meetings trying to get buy in."

Abstract: The Art of Design | Paula Scher

Netflix
28M subscribers

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WHY SHOULD I HAVE TO?

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TWO YEARS

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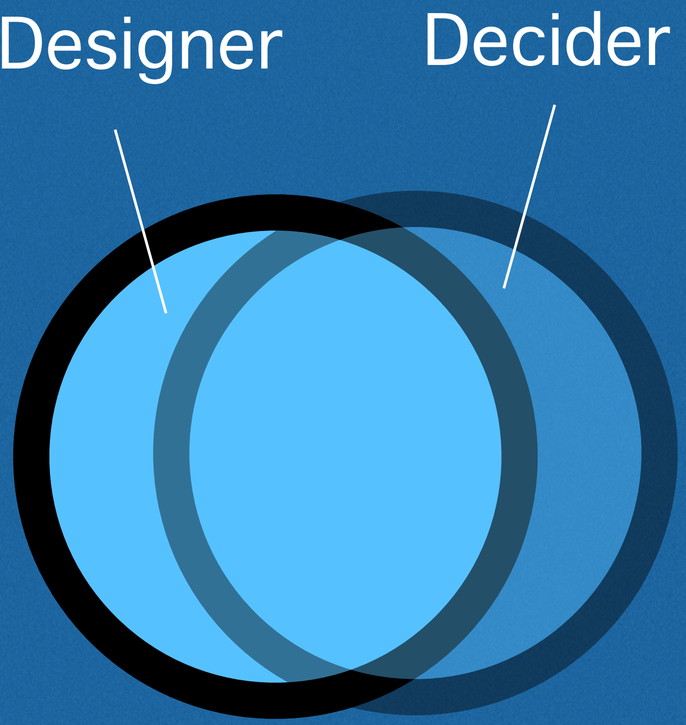
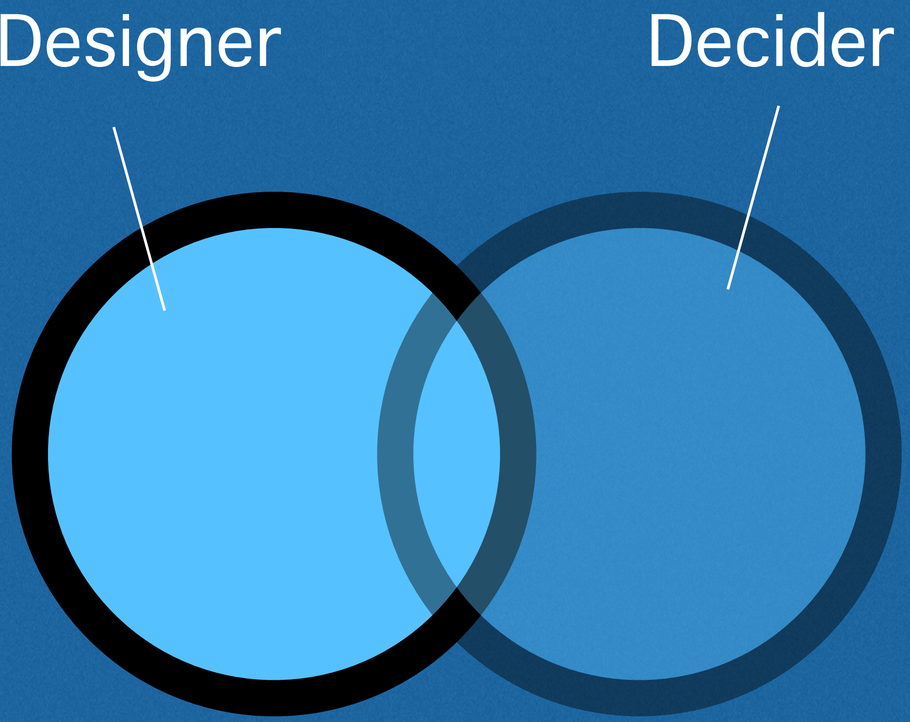
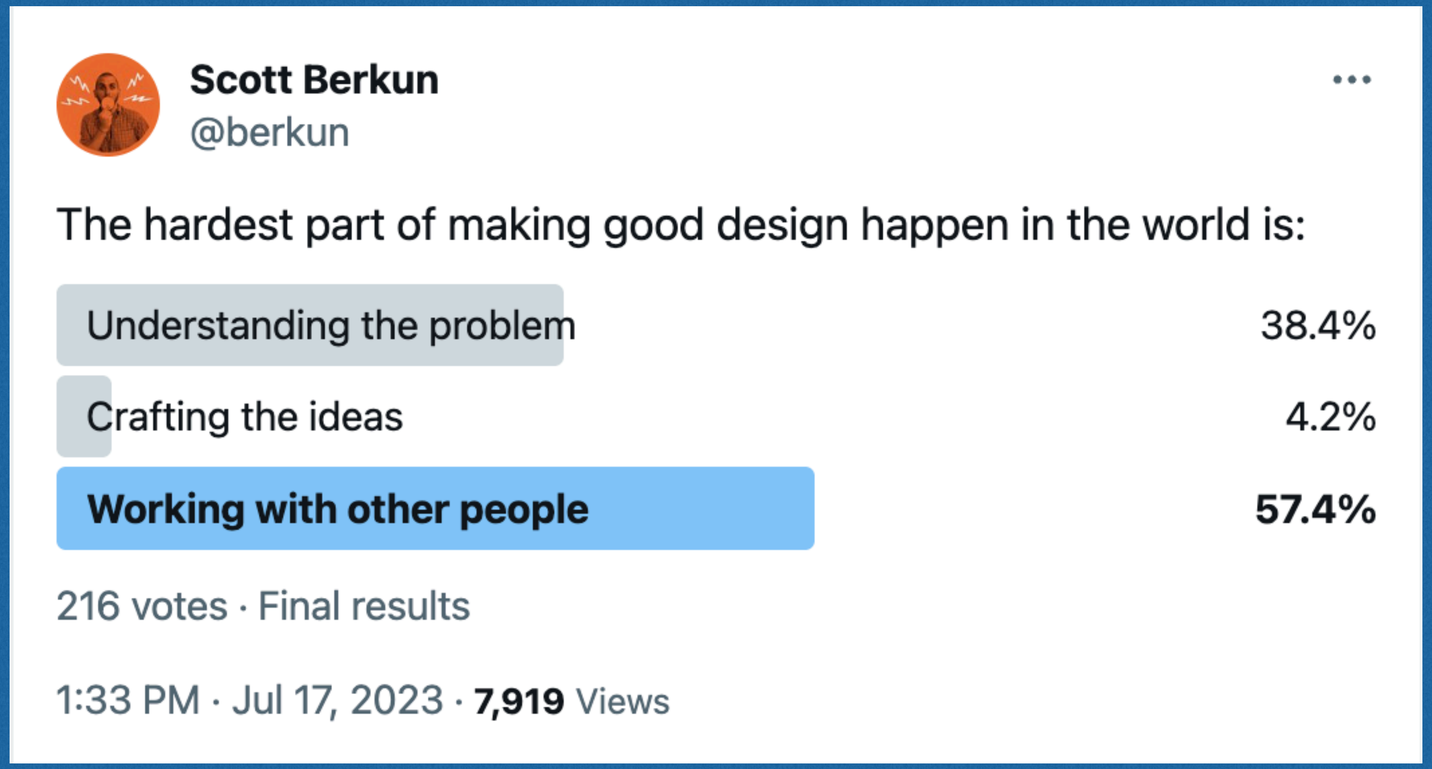
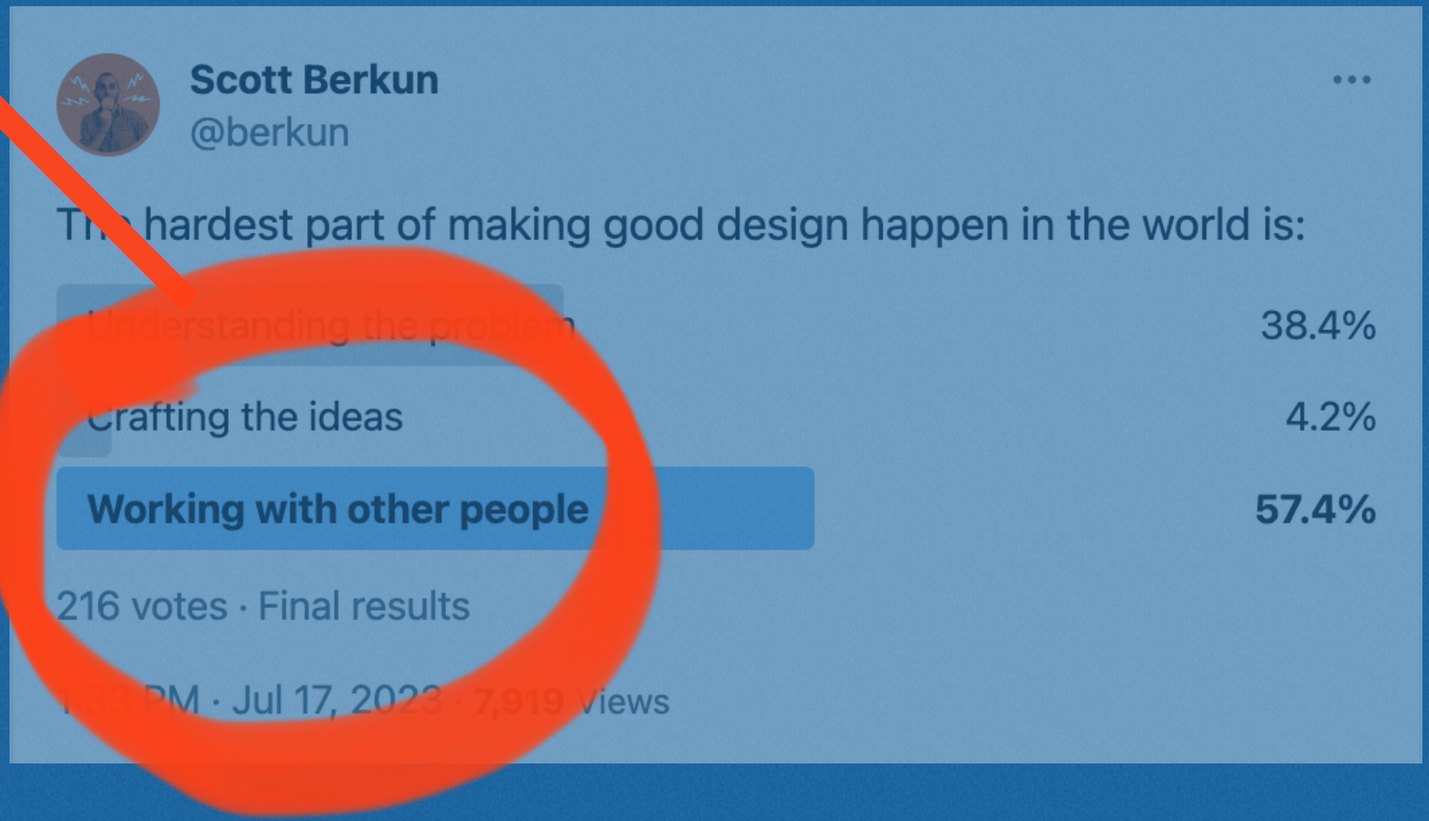

Designer
Decider

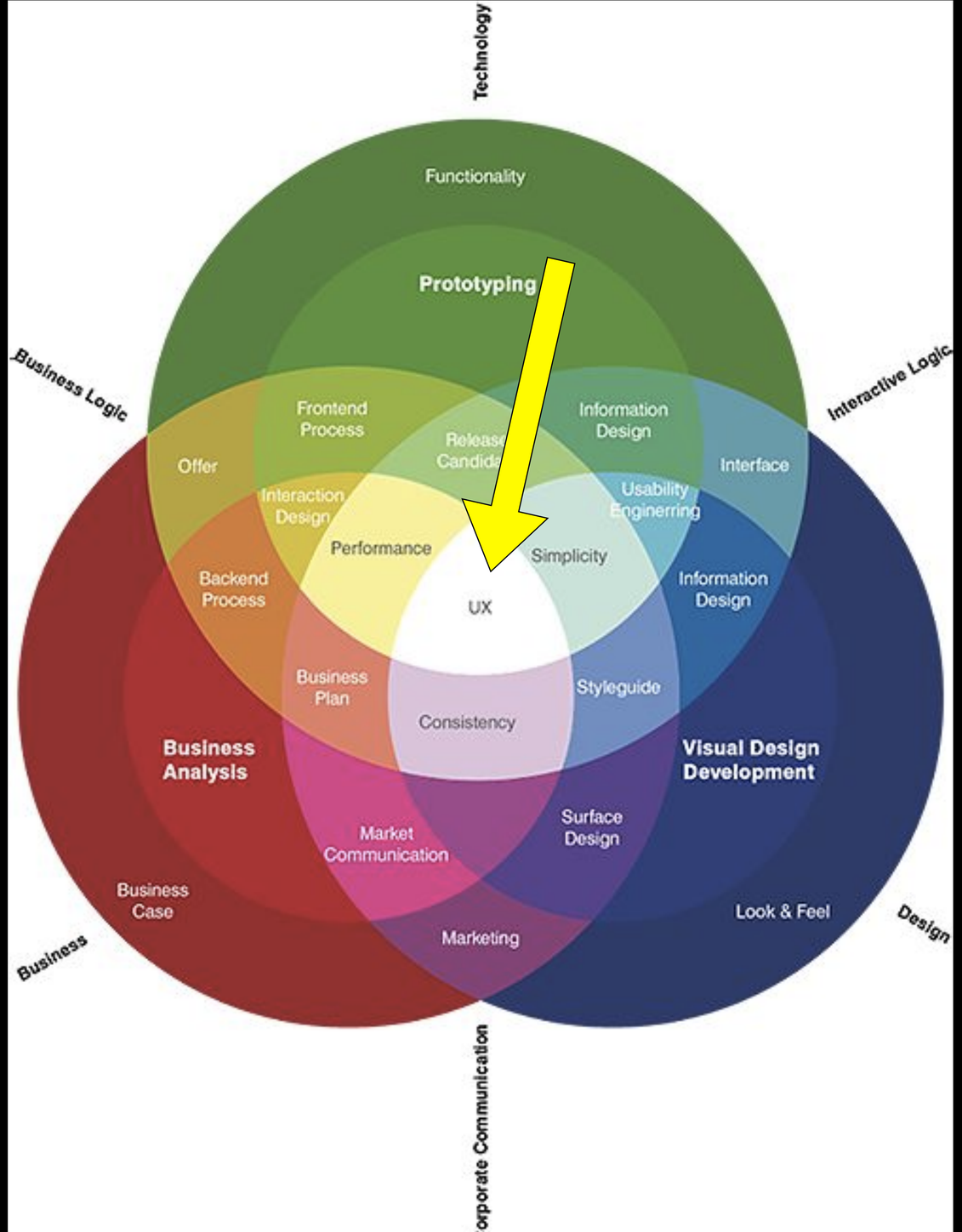

Designer
Decider

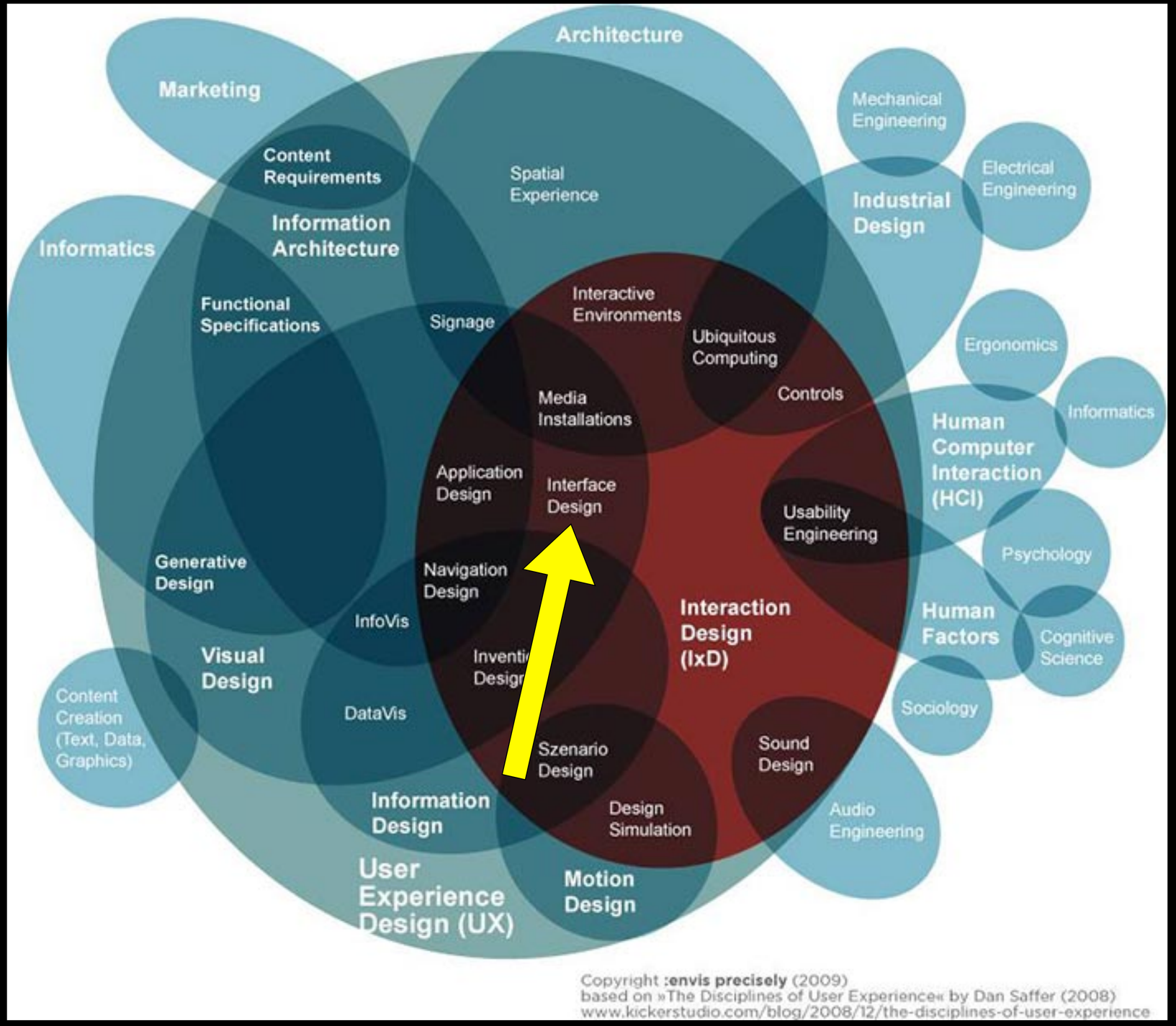
What makes design hard?



Why don’t we treat this like a design problem?




Technology
Functionality
Prototyping
Business Logic
Interactive Logic
Frontend Process
Information Design
Offer
Interface
Interaction Design
Usability Engineering
Performance
Simplicity
Backend Process
Information Design
UX
Business Plan
Styleguide
Consistency
Business Analysis
Visual Design Development
Market Communication
Surface Design
Business Case
Look & Feel
Marketing
Business
Design
orporate Communication



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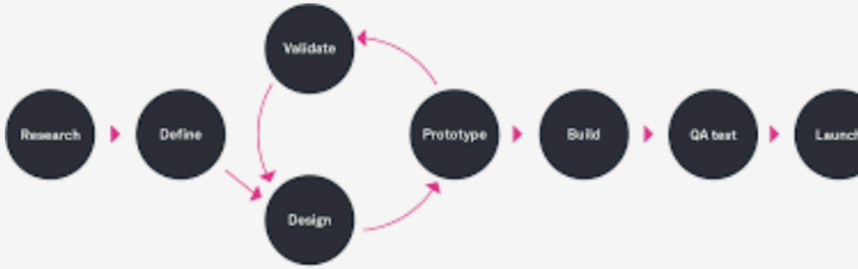
based on »The Disciplines of User Experience« by Dan Saffer (2008)
www.kickerstudio.com/blog/2008/12/the-disciplines-of-user-experience

June UX

UX Research Playbook: When to Use Which ...

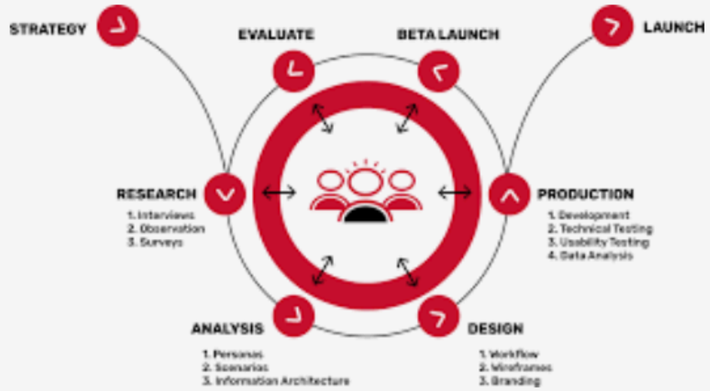
Eleven Peppers Studios

Our UX Process • Eleven Peppers Studios



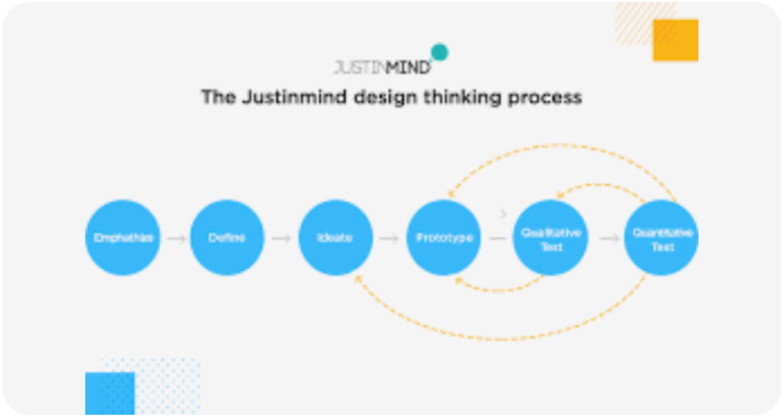
UX Design Institute

What is the UX design process? A step ...



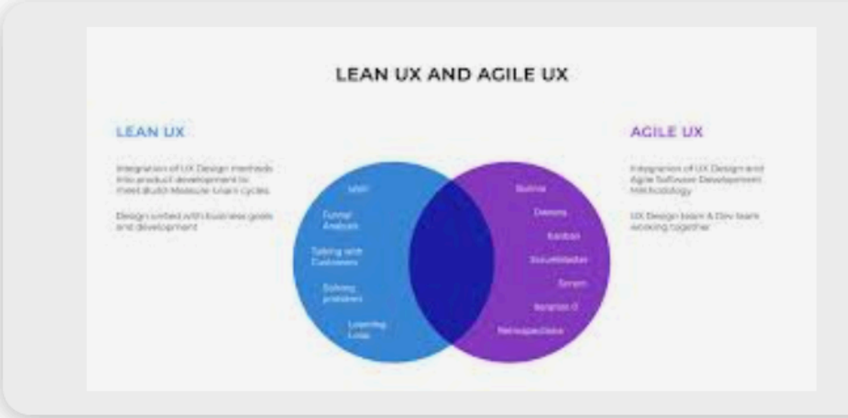
Think360 Studio

User Experience Design Process ...



Justinmind

design thinking process for better UX ...



RightFirms

8 Steps of UX Design Process: All You ...

Flawed assumptions we commonly have:

- Design is valued and leaders know how to leverage it
- Better design is good for the business model
- There is a healthy process for making project-level decisions
- The organization is free from chronic political tensions
- People will give up their favorite parts of their jobs to us
- Leaders will quickly trust us with strategic decisions
- ....

Flawed assumptions we commonly have:

- D[illegible]gn is val[illegible] and [illegible]ders kn[illegible] how [illegible] leverage
- Be[illegible] de[illegible]s good [illegible] the [illegible]ness m[illegible]
- There [illegible]ealthy proce[illegible]making proje[illegible]el decisions
- The [illegible]tion is free [illegible]ronic polit[illegible]ions
- P[illegible]e wi[illegible] up th[illegible]vorit[illegible]rts of [illegible] job[illegible]us
- Le[illegible]ders will q[illegible]ickly t[illegible]st us with [illegible]strateg[illegible] decision[illegible]
- ….

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WHY SHOULD I HAVE TO?

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THE THREE CHOICES

A) **Power.** To design you need the power to make decisions.

B) **Influence.** Without power, you must persuade the powerful.

C) **Be self-aware**. If you don’t want power or influence, accept your situation.

Instead… lets be realistic!

- You will explain design basics forever – enjoy it
- Politics is human nature – embrace it
- See organization as systems so they can be navigated
- We will have to earn trust before we gain influence

Q&A

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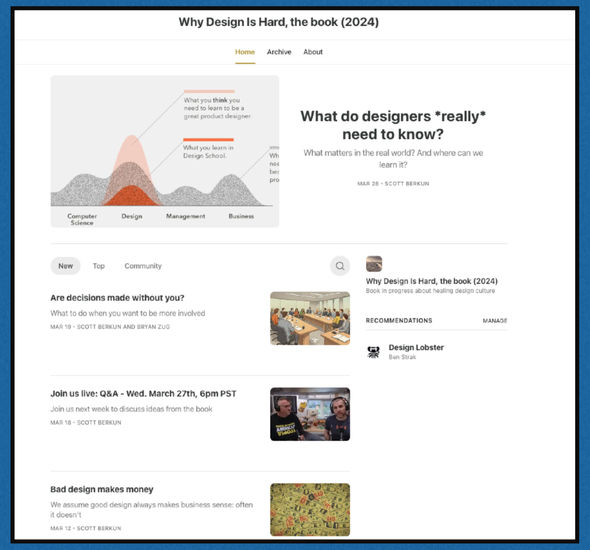

whydesignishard.substack.com

(new post every Tuesday)

The situations

- No one knows what you do
- You are told there isn’t time for UX
- Decisions are made without you
- No one takes your suggestions
- Someone challenges you on UX basics
- They think a tool can replace your job
- The resources you were promised disappear
- You get a seat at the table, but it’s chaos