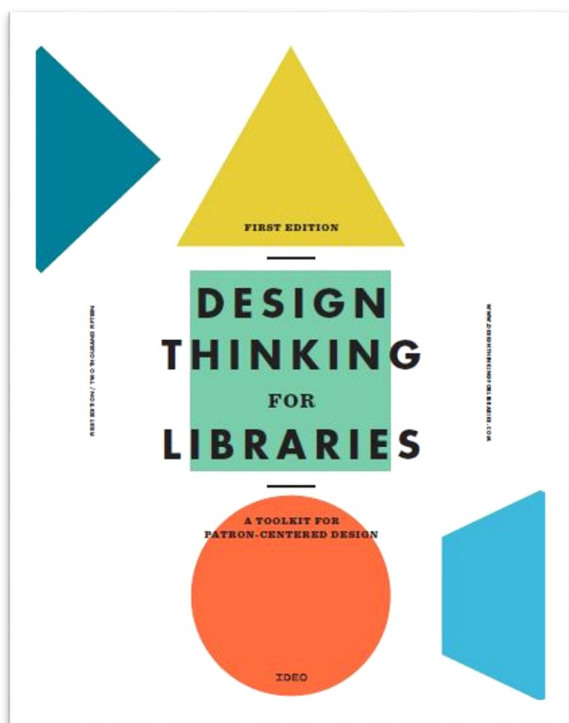

DESIGN THINKING for Small Libraries Create Smart Spaces

BRAINSTORMING RULES



ATTRIBUTION

These activities and worksheets are adapted from sections of the [Design Thinking for Libraries Toolkit](#).

The design firm IDEO created this library-specific version of their innovative design thinking approach with a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and partnerships with Chicago Public Library and Aarhus (Denmark) Public Libraries.

The full toolkit is available for free download.



A CLOSER LOOK:

BRAINSTORM RULES

These seven rules will make your brainstorming session focused, effective, and fun. Introduce them at the start of every brainstorm to ensure that there's agreement amongst the team to follow the rules.

DEFER JUDGMENT



There are no bad ideas in a brainstorm, so keep your critique to yourself. You want to create a safe space that encourages even the shyest people at the table to contribute ideas.

ONE CONVERSATION AT A TIME



All ideas should be heard, so only one person should talk at a time. Wait your turn to share, and make sure the whole group is listening.

ENCOURAGE WILD IDEAS



There is no better time than a brainstorm to bring up crazy, aspirational ideas. Even if an idea doesn't seem realistic, it may spark an idea for someone else.

BE VISUAL



Draw your ideas, as opposed to just writing them down. Stick figures and simple sketches can say much more than a string of words, and they will be easier to remember and build upon. For more on being visual, check out the HOW-TO on the next page.

BUILD ON THE IDEAS OF OTHERS



When you hear an idea from a teammate, think "and..." rather than "but..." in order to be as generative and open as possible. Think about how you would combine or extend the ideas into new territory.

GO FOR QUANTITY



Set an outrageous goal for the number of ideas you will generate—then try to surpass it. We have found that the best way to find a good idea is to first have lots of ideas, so try not to second-guess yourself while quickly producing many possibilities.

STAY FOCUSED ON TOPIC



Keep your brainstorming focused on the How Might We question at hand. Keep up a rhythm and pace that creates momentum around the topic, and avoid the rhetorical and philosophical unknown.



HOW-TO MAKE IDEAS VISUAL *Part 1 of 2*

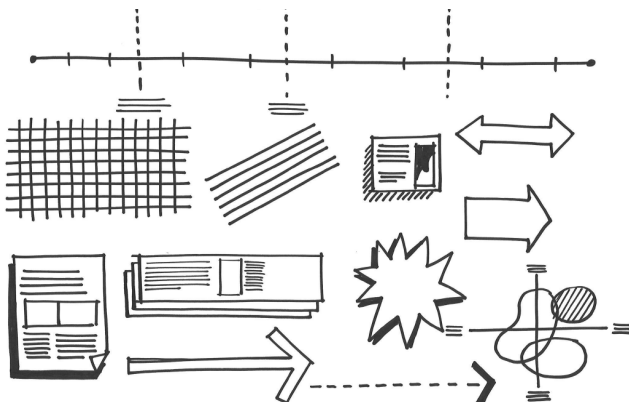
One of the keys to creative, effective concepts is to make your ideas visual. It helps others immediately understand your idea, while leaving the door open for others to build upon or interpret your idea in meaningful ways. We firmly believe that anyone can be visual, but it does take some practice. During your free time, amp up your skills sketching the items below.

STRAIGHT LINES

It may sound surprising, but circles and lines are the building blocks to almost 80% of what you will need when sketching. Start with lines. Instead of timidly drawing a series of lines, think about a straight line as a direct shot from point A to point B. Draw two endpoints, and then keep your eye trained on point B as you put pen to paper from point A. Visualize where you want the pen to go, and confidently draw those strokes.

Straight lines create:

- Frames
- Squares
- Rectangles
- Arrows
- Shadows
- Frameworks



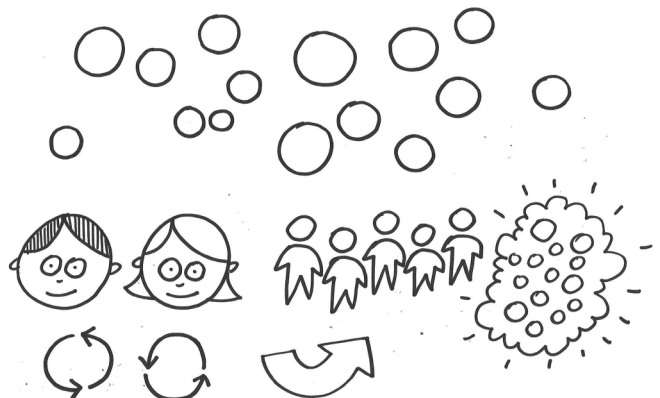
Soon, you will find that communicating visually is almost always more effective (and fun!) than a written explanation. As you begin practicing, make sure you have enough room to freely move not only your hand but your body. Have a stack of blank scratch paper ready, and just keep practicing until these pieces start flowing from your hand with ease.

CIRCLES

Circles are your other best friend when it comes to creating great visuals. Stop worrying about creating the 'perfect' circle and focus on quickly drawing many circles, from small to large. Focus on a consistent shape and weight of pen to paper. Finally, once you have gotten the motion down, try to make your starting and stopping points meet in a nice, smooth circle.

Circles create:

- Heads
- Clouds
- Cycles
- Texture
- Curved Arrows

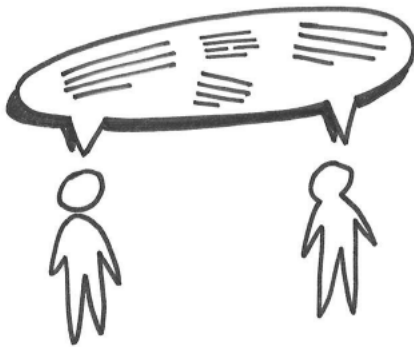




HOW-TO MAKE IDEAS VISUAL *Part 2 of 2*

PEOPLE

The secret to drawing people is abstraction. Stick figures are fine, but the next step up (which is just as easy!) is to use a circle as a head and a starburst shape as a body. Heads are surprisingly easy, too. All you have to do is a circle for the outline of a face, use two more circles for eyes, and semi-circles for ears and hair.



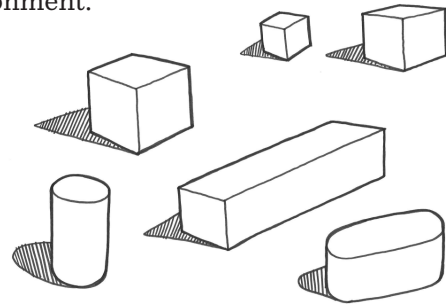
TOOLS

When we sketch ideas around service, we often incorporate common tools and interfaces (such as an iPad screen or that might contribute to the overall concept. Practice drawing circles and lines with slight curvatures at the edges to form things like iPhone screens, kiosks, laptops, and other devices.



SCENES

If some part of your concept or idea takes place indoors, consider setting the stage using a few simple strokes to indicate a space or room. Practice drawing boxes and cubes, which can represent a building, or a room from a birds-eye view. Varying the dimensions of that cube can produce shelves, desks, walls, flooring, or other aspects of an environment.



SEQUENCES AND JOURNEYS

For some concepts, it is important to sketch out a sequence of events over time. This is especially true if you are depicting a user journey across a series of steps. For example, what happens at home, on the way to the library, at the library, and after the visit. In these cases, number the sequence so that it's clear what happens first, and use arrows to show progression. Try to highlight the parts of your sketch at each stage that you feel are most important to understanding the overall idea.

