

Welcome to Longwood University's



Virtual Life Design Workshop

May 10 2024

WORKBOOK

Workshop Preparation

Write your Workview (~250 words)

As you reflect on your workview, you may want to think about the sources of the views that you have. We all develop our perspectives based on a range of things in our lives: who we are surrounded by, the places we grew up, the times we are living in, and how we are each uniquely situated within all of this. Our perspectives often change over time and with new experiences—so the “views” you have now might change in the future.

You may also want to consider whether you tend to think of your views in respect to yourself alone, or if you tend to ground them within others’ expectations or needs.

It may also feel as if there is only one “right” way to think about these things or that one’s options are limited. In addition, for some, working on this kind of assignment can feel frustrating or confusing. For others, thinking about one’s future may seem impossible, indulgent or simply too late in the game.

Past participants have suggested to their peers to try to stick with it through these challenges, even if you need to take a break and return to it later. Make note of when you feel challenged and take time to reflect a little—just jot some things down on paper—about when it happens and what’s coming up for you. Feel free to reach out to us or one of your peers to talk it over or bring your questions to the workshop. Sometimes we learn a lot about ourselves by understanding these places of tension or disconnect.

WORKVIEW

A “workview” addresses the critical issues related to what work is and what it means to you. It is not just a list of what you want from or out of work, but a statement of your view and philosophy of work. A workview may address such questions as:

- Why work?
- What's work for?
- What's it mean?
- How does it relate to the individual, others, society?
- What defines good or worthwhile work? Impactful work?
- What does money have to do with it?
- What does experience, growth, fulfillment have to do with it?
- What do family and community have to do with it?

(next page)

WORKVIEW

(continued)

The idea of a workview may be a new one for many. When people get stuck on this assignment, they tend to just write what they're looking for in a job or an employment situation, which is a fine thing to understand but is not a workview (or "theory of work"). What we're after is your philosophy of work - what it's for, what it means. It's essentially your work manifesto.

When using the term "work" we mean the broadest definition - not just what you do to make money or for "a job". Work is your active engagement with your community and the world and can extend well beyond a narrow definition of job or labor or even career. It may include unpaid labor, caregiving and work done as a volunteer.

Work is the largest single component of most people's waking lives. Over a lifetime it occupies more of our attention and energy than any other single category. Accordingly, we're suggesting you take the time and reflection to articulate what work and vocation mean to you (and perhaps what you hope it means for others as well).

WORKVIEW



Why are you here today?

Jot down a few notes about what drew you to sign up.

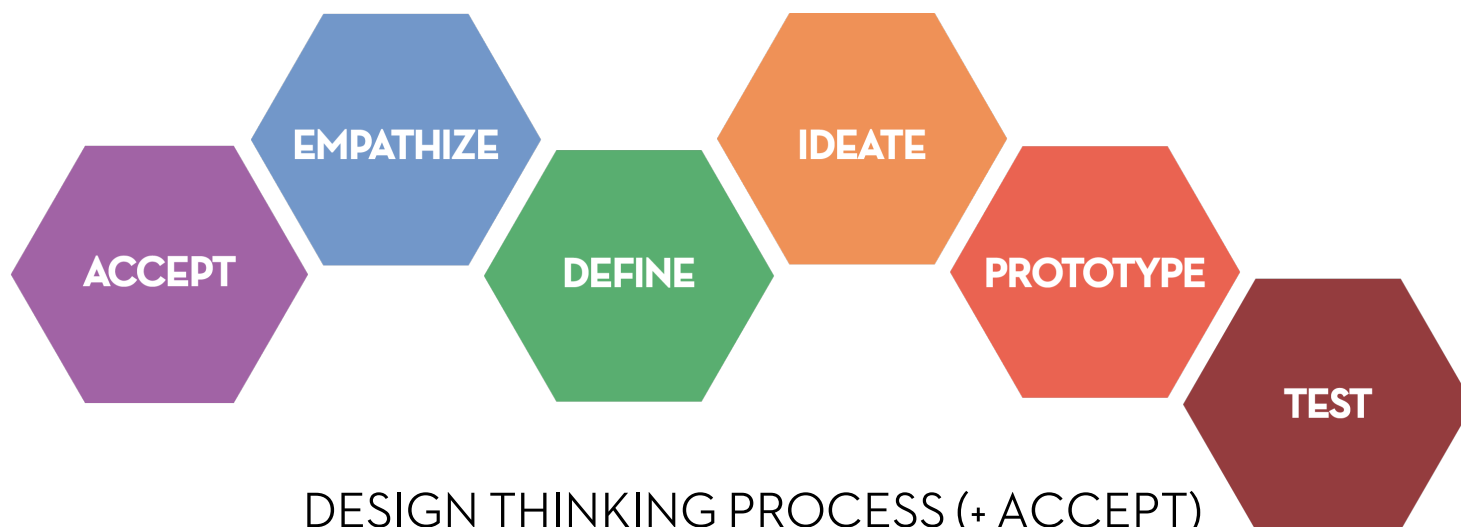
What do you hope to get out of this experience?

Breakout room #1

COURSE FRAMEWORK

MEANING-MAKING

POV, Workview, Worldview



DESIGN THINKING PROCESS (+ ACCEPT)

DISCOVERY & SUPPORT

Practices, Discernment, Mentors, Community

LIFE DESIGN MINDSETS



REFRAMING

Designers get unstuck by viewing a problem from another perspective. Reframing allows us to step back, examine biases, and reframe dysfunctional beliefs.



CURIOSITY

Curiosity makes everything new and invites exploration. It helps us notice new opportunities and connect with people. It allows us to look beyond preconceptions and be open to possibility.



BIAS TOWARD ACTION

Designers test things out. They run small experiments and prototypes as opportunities to learn, regardless of outcome. They try things and iterate toward success, rather than waiting until they can get it “right” the first time.



MINDFULNESS OF PROCESS

Designers are aware of what stage of the processes they are engaged in, being thoughtful about not just what they are doing, but of how they are doing it. They recognize that things can take time or can be broken down into steps.



RADICAL COLLABORATION

Design is a collaborative, interdisciplinary process. Many of the best ideas are going to come from other people with experiences both similar and different from your own. Seek advisers, mentors, and a supportive community to help.



STORYTELLING

Designers tell stories, both to connect the dots for themselves and to connect with others. Stories are a great way to build relationships, create opportunities and inspire action.

INSTRUCTIONS for Breakout Room: Workview Share

Step 1. Get Organized - 1 minute total

Introduce yourselves

First Speaker: Birthday furthest from today.

Timekeeper: You have the longest sleeves.

Step 2. Share Your Workview

Speaker: Read your workview out loud. Just read it!

Listeners: Listen generously and notice:

When was the reader most authentic?

When was the reader most energized?

What key principles did you notice?

4 minutes each/12 minutes total

Impact & Change: 1 minute journal ⁹

What kind of impact do you like or want to make in your work?
(ex., at small → big scale, individual, group, system?)

How do you feel about change, as it relates to work?
(ex., responsibilities, environment, goals, relationships, new developments in your field, learning new skills)

Impact and Change Map

List 5-7 possible roles (include past, current, future possible).
If a "job" has multiple roles, you can map roles separately

Energy & Flow

Flow Definition

In his seminal work, *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*, Csíkszentmihályi outlines his theory that people are most happy when they are in a state of flow—a Zen-like state of total oneness with the activity at hand and the situation. The idea of flow is identical to the feeling of being in the zone or in the groove. The flow state is one of intrinsic motivation, where the person is fully immersed in what he or she is doing. It is characterized by a feeling of great freedom, enjoyment, fulfillment, and skill—and during which temporal concerns (time, food, ego-self, etc.) are typically ignored.

In an interview with *Wired* magazine, Csíkszentmihályi described flow as "being completely involved in an activity for its own sake. The ego falls away. Time flies. Every action, movement, and thought follows inevitably from the previous one, like playing jazz. Your whole being is involved, and you're using your skills to the utmost." [2]

To achieve a flow state, a balance must be struck between the challenge of the task and the skill of the performer. If the task is too easy or too difficult, flow cannot occur. The flow state also implies a kind of focused attention, and indeed, it has been noted that mindfulness meditation, yoga, and martial arts seem to improve a person's capacity for flow. Among other benefits, all of these activities train and improve attention.

In short, flow could be described as a state where attention, motivation, and the situation meet, resulting in a kind of productive harmony or feedback.

Wikipedia excerpt (see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mihaly_Csikszentmihalyi)

ENERGY ENGAGEMENT MAP

STEP 1 MAP:

Map your energy giving or draining regular activities/engagements, by drawing a bar of each one's (+) or (-) energy effect, as it shows up in your typical week.

STEP 2 NOTICE

What do you notice about your energy patterns?

STEP 3

INCREMENTAL CHANGES:

What accessible changes can you make to improve your balance and energy flows? (Check out the list on the next page for inspiration...)



BALANCE & ENERGY: INCREMENTAL CHANGES

A few kinds of incremental changes you might consider:

- 1. Reprioritize** - Change how you allocate time to important parts of your life.
- 2. Re-sequence Activities** - Change when you do certain activities.
- 3. Reframe** - Change your mind and see the situation from a different perspective.
- 4. 2-for-1 Activities** - Notice which activities give you more than one benefit and design them into your day/life.
- 5. Compromise and Defer** - When circumstances change and you have to put more time and energy into a part of your life, define new balance and energy gauges/levels and make this explicit to family and friends.
- 6. Time Box** - Schedule start and stop times per activity, only devoting the time you are willing to spend on each.
- 7. Change location** - Your environment can impact your experience so consider how places affect you..
- 8. Change people or tools** - Having the right companions or the appropriate tools for the job can change your experience.
- 9. Others?**

Ideate 1-2 incremental improvements you could try this week.

BALANCE & ENERGY: PAIR SHARE (10 min)

SHARING:

- Share your balance assessment and energy map and any insights you had.
- Share how your balance and energy are related.
- Share an incremental change that could have the most impact on your levels of engagement and/or other areas of your life?

LISTENING:

Jot down what you notice as your partner shares.

Any ideas for them?

Afternoon Session Homework

1. Complete the Job Redesign Worksheet (see workbook page 19)
2. Identify two professional interests (i.e., a role, a field, an area of service)
3. Identify three people in the Longwood/Farmville community with whom you are curious to have a conversation using these criteria:
 - a. Someone in the area you work now, who has more experience
 - b. Someone in a different department or area on campus, who has a role similar to yours
 - c. Someone whose role you are curious about, but is very different from yours

FRAMING & REFRAMING

Framing

Framing is important, because how you define your problem sets the boundaries and constraints for possible solutions.



Reframing

Designers state the original problem, then examine ways to look at it differently, unexpectedly, or through new lenses to increase the opportunity for innovation in the solution space.

Zoom Whiteboard: Networking Activity

The “Perfect Job” ... or Making Your Job More Perfect? 19

What do you love about your job?

What do you not like about your job?

What could you stop doing that would make the biggest difference to your satisfaction?

What's missing in your job?

What could you start doing to fill this gap?

What growth goals do you have as a professional in this role?



PROTOTYPE to:

- Reduce risk
- Expose assumptions
- Engage others with your ideas
- Learn!



A GOOD PROTOTYPE is:

- Cheap
- Quick
- Easy



Life Design PROTOTYPES are:

1. Prototype Conversations

(speaking with someone who is living a future you are curious about in order to learn from their story)

2. Prototype Experiences

(getting a quick, felt sense of an experience you are curious about before investing more time and resources)

5 STEPS OF IDEATION

TOOLS



FRAME a good problem.

- How Might I...



WARM UP to move from your rational/analytic brain to your synthesizing brain.

- Visual games - Point & Shout
- Kinesthetic games - Improv
- 3D exercises - paper planes, Play-Doh creatures



IDEATE using RADICAL COLLABORATION and IDEATION RULES to get lots and lots of ideas.

- Defer judgment.
- Go for volume.
- Encourage wild ideas.
- Build on the ideas of other.



SELECT ideas based on a specific, unusual criterion.

- Most delightful
- Wildest
- Most intriguing
- Greatest promise of long-term impact



EXTRACT INSIGHTS for follow-up ACTION.

- Underlying insights? Assumptions? Constraints?
- What can I DO next as a result?

PROTOTYPE FRAMING QUESTION

“ How Might I
Prototype: _____ ”
?

IDEATION FOR PROTOTYPES



ODYSSEYS

CONTENT

- Three different 5-year visions from this moment forward
- Template sheets provided for use if you like on following pages but we invite you to be creative! We've had videos, crayon sketches, even cakes! Any visual form that satisfies the assignment and can be presented is okay.

Guidelines:

- These should be 3 radically different lives - as different from one another as possible. A life as a management consultant at McKinsey, and a life as a management consultant at Bain are not 2 different lives - they are variations of the same life. Go broad! If you are having trouble coming up with alternatives, one lens on this might be:
 - Life 1: The story you tell (to your colleagues / boss / advisor/ parents, friends) today
 - Life 2: The life you might pursue if Life 1 was no longer an option
 - Life 3: The wild idea: your basic needs are assured to be met - no constraints
- Elements
 - A visual/graphical timeline
 - At least one personal and one professional milestone per year on each timeline. Template sheets below (all on one page or 1 timeline per page - your choice!) Or make your own that illustrates and brings personality to your ideas.
 - A six-word headline
 - Describe the essence of this timeline with a quick title phrase.
 - A dashboard - After you make all 3 timelines, take stock. What do you notice about the resources you have available to make the ideas real? How do you like each one? What is your level of confidence? How coherent is each life with your workview and worldview? With your balance and energy aspirations? With your own authentic voice?
 - 2-3 questions that this timeline might help you answer
 - This timeline, in addition to being an idea of the future, can also act as a good prototype. A prototype tests assumptions and reveals new insights. In each potential timeline, you will investigate different possibilities and learn different things about yourself and the world. What kinds of things do you want to test and explore in each?

DELIVERY

You will share your Odysseys with others verbally in a **5-minute** presentation.

ODYSSEYS

How might you explore, engage or learn about the multiple great lives within you?

TITLE: _____

DASHBOARD

QUESTIONS

TITLE: _____

DASHBOARD

QUESTIONS

TITLE: _____

DASHBOARD

QUESTIONS

0	1	2	3	4



Resources



I Like It



Confidence



Coherence

6 word title:

Questions this path raises:

0	1	2	3	4



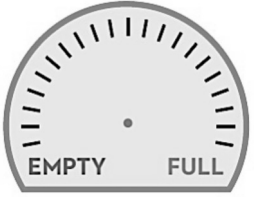
Resources



I Like It



Confidence



Coherence

6 word title:

Questions this path raises:

0	1	2	3	4



Resources



I Like It



Confidence



Coherence

6 word title:

Questions this path raises:

ODYSSEY NOTES AND REFLECTION

WORLDVIEW

Write a brief summary of your worldview (~250 words).

As with workview, you may want to think about the sources of the views that you have. Especially in matters of existential import, we all develop our perspectives based on our own identities and experiences: who we are surrounded by, the places we grew up, the times we are living in, and how we are each uniquely situated within all of this. Our perspectives often change over time and with new experiences—so the “views” you have now might change in the future. You may also want to consider whether you tend to think of your views with respect to yourself alone or ground them within others’ expectations or needs. It may also feel as if there is only one “right” way to think about these things or that one’s options are limited.

There are many approaches to worldviews and various prescriptions of what they need to include. Below are some questions which are classically addressed in a worldview, though which are the important questions is a matter of choice. The key thing is to address those highest order values and perspectives that provide the ordering basis for your life, that create the platform that interprets and organizes how you see and understand the world and assign order (or disorder) to it. Your worldview is that which provides your definition of “matters of ultimate concern.”

You may wish to consider the following questions (and no - of course not comprehensively):

- Why are we here?
- What is the meaning/purpose of life? of death?
- What is the relationship between the individual and others? - between persons and the rest of life (and perhaps inanimate) and reality?
- What is good or worthwhile?
- What is the meaning of time, of eternity?
- Is there a higher power, transcendency, God and if so - of what nature and to what import for your life?
- What of joy, sorrow, justice, injustice, love, peace, strife, good & evil?

A word about confidentiality:

This experience involves engaging with material with your peers on very personal and substantive matters. In order to help you in your pursuit of a coherent and authentic life, we need to relate to these important questions. We do so recognizing that they are intensely personal and matter deeply - and our responses and positions will vary widely. Among us are people of every stripe and all are welcome. We will respect and regard all points of view and work to help everyone in growing closer and clearer on their own best insights in such matters. We hold your worldviews, and all your personal material, in confidence, and hope you will feel free to be candid in order to obtain the most from the experience.

WORLDVIEW