

Prototyping is the act of making your ideas real—at any stage of their development.

1. Choose something in your work that's ripe for prototyping, and write it in the space below.

- + An idea sparked from a new insight about your industry, your customers, or your company.
- + An early concept your team has been debating or spinning on, but hasn't really been fleshed out.
- + Something you want to get buy in for, or feedback on from others.

Remember, almost anything can be prototyped:

- a product
- a feature
- a service
- an experience
- a space
- a brand
- a story
- a behavior
- a process
- a system
- a ritual
- an organization

I'm going to prototype:

Creativity:

Prototyping a way forward

Name: _____

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3. Unfold this booklet, and use the other side as your prototyping space.

Do some quick-and-dirty, back-of-the-napkin financial calculations of the inputs and outputs of your idea. Estimate the market. Think ballpark percentages. Do one conservative and one optimistic version. What are the critical variables? Make note of your assumptions and the questions you need answered before moving forward.

Do quick math

Sketch an image or a series of images that represent your concept. Be as literal or abstract as you like. Label ideas and connections if it helps.

Sketch it

Tell the story of your idea using your customer (or an employee) as the hero. Map out the specific steps of their journey and note what they are thinking and feeling along the way. If you can, use both narrative and illustration.

Write a story

Visualize the flow of activity or information through all the phases of your process or system. This is a great way to explain the entire system as well as pinpoint bottlenecks and opportunities for improvement.

Diagram it

Map all of the parts of your concept or system and label the connections between them—things like similarity, dependence, association, proximity, etc. This allows you to identify relationships between elements to expose opportunities for innovation.

Make connections

2. Pick a prototyping method that feels right for your idea.

SYPartners

SYPartners helps human beings, organizations, and societies build the capability to become fuller and more vibrant versions of themselves—so they can constantly transform and have a positive impact in the world.

For more than 20 years, we've worked with executive teams at some of the world's most influential companies, including Starbucks, IBM, Facebook, Apple, Nike, Target Corporation, Planned Parenthood, and AARP, and alongside leaders tackling the toughest issues of our time—education, diversity, health care, gender equality. In addition to our consulting practice, we develop products and tools that help individuals and teams unlock their full potential.

We are based in San Francisco and New York, and are a founding member of kyu, a collective of best-in-class creative firms.

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Prototyping space

**What did
prototyping
unlock for you?**