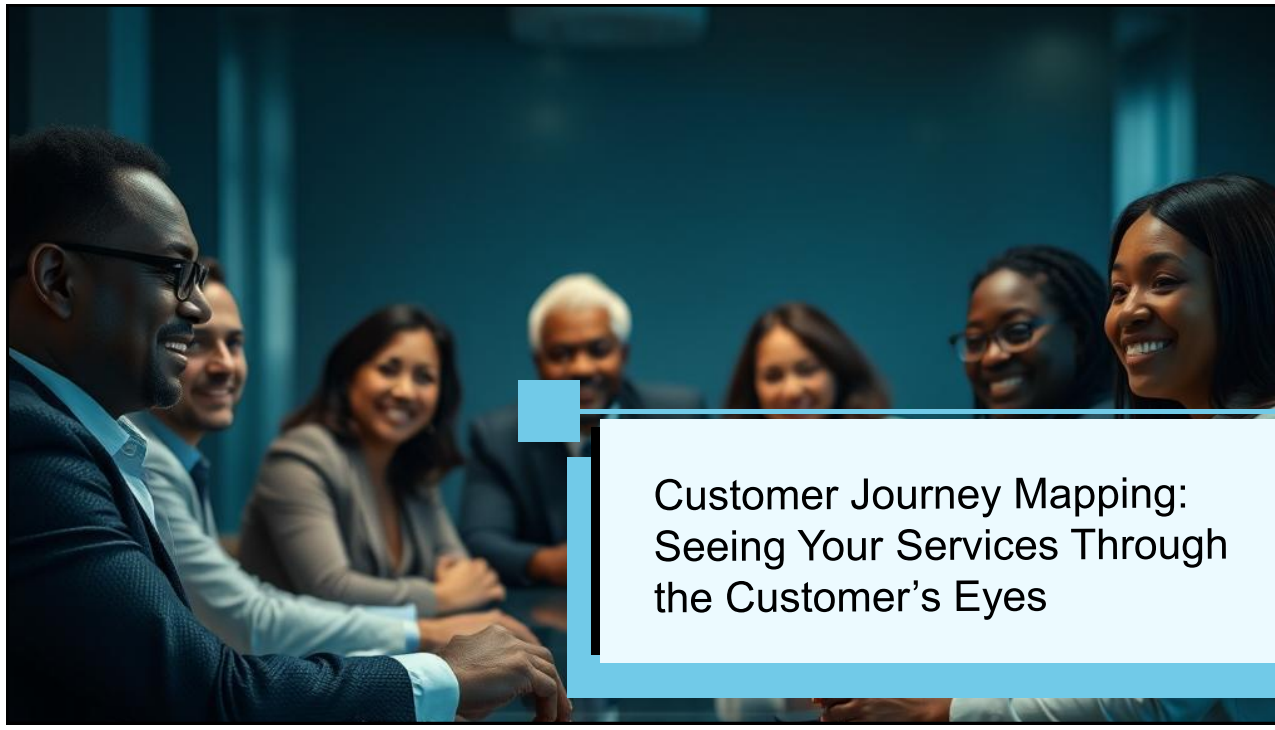
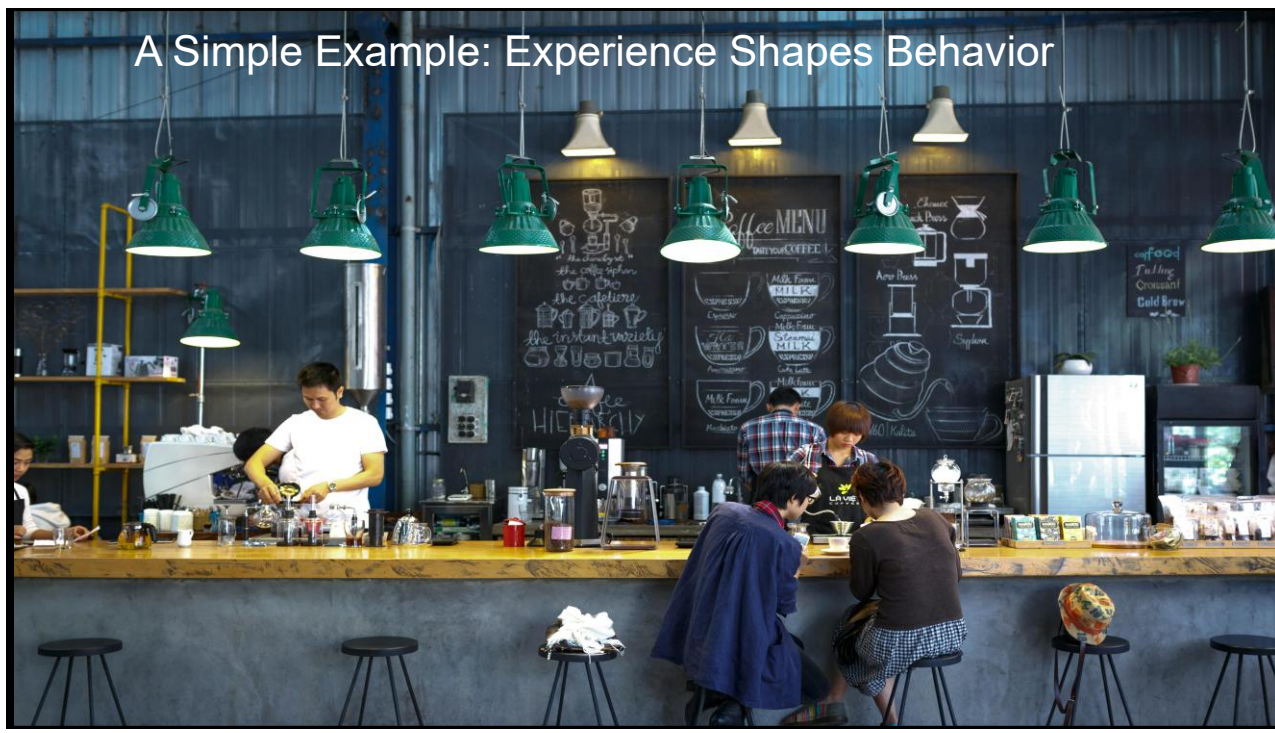


Customer Journey Mapping: Seeing Your Services Through the Customer's Eyes

1



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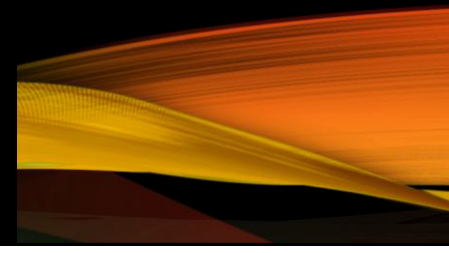
Public Programs Work the Same Way

3

SEEING THE EXPERIENCE CLEARLY



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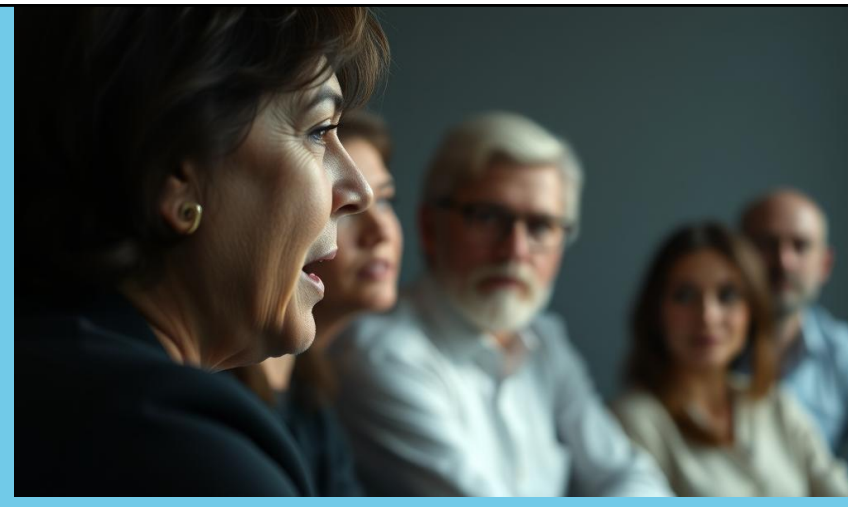
Why This Matters for Real Engagement

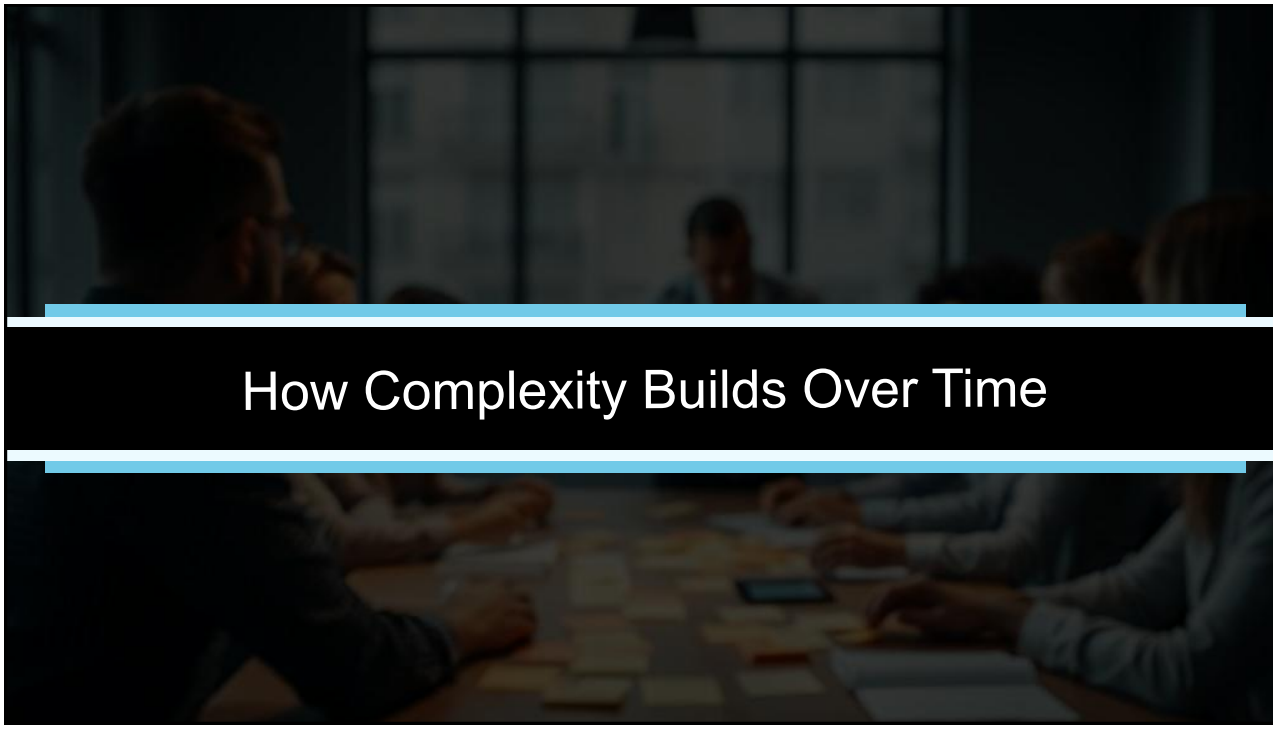


Customer Journey Mapping is a practical tool for customer-centered design — it helps us design programs around real human behavior.

5

How to Think About Today's Session

6


How Complexity Builds Over Time

7

RISK
REWARD
The Continuous Evaluation of Value
Throughout their journey, customers assess value, questioning if it's worth their time, if they're understood, and if respect is shown. Positive answers foster engagement.

8

Customer-Centered ≠ Staff-Centered

9

Word on the Street Matters

Customers Talk

Customers share experiences instantly.

Build Trust

Good experiences build partnerships.

Faster than Positive Feedback

Negative feedback travels fast.

Reputation

Trust is built through positive journeys.

10

The Customer Journey Mapping Process

A structured approach to understanding customer experiences.

Create a Persona

Identify Touchpoints

Thoughts

What is the customer thinking at each touchpoint?

Identify Emotions

Identify Pain Points

Design Solutions

11

STEP 1: CREATING A PERSONA

Divide your customer base into distinct groups that have distinct needs

- Dislocated worker
- Out-of-school youth
- In school youth
- Adult
- Trade adjustment impacted worker
- Older worker

- Small Business Owner
- Owner/Operator
- Expansion Focused Business
- Employer New to Public Programs
- Repeat Employer
- Industry segmentation

12

Why Personas Make it Easier

Ned

STEP One

Education and Work History
- Unemployed
- Has one non-violent conviction
- High school graduate
- Has gaps in his work history from periods of unemployment.

Biggest Fears:
- That he will get stuck in a job he doesn't like
- His children will think he isn't a good dad because he doesn't have money to do things with them.
- If he doesn't get a job soon, he will get so far behind in bills that he won't catch up.
- That coming to the program will be a waste of time.

Demographics:
- Male
- Age 29
- Annual income: $10,500
- Lives in substandard housing as a renter.

Goals:
- Just wants a livable income
- Wants to see his children more and have money to do fun things with them
- Wants more of a future than he currently sees.

Life Challenges
- Behind on his bills
- Needs a job fast, so is impatient with long processes
- Has one conviction
- Doesn't own a car, so relies on public transportation and rides from friends.
- Expects program to get job for him.

Quote/Dialogue:
- "The other program didn't help me to get a job, so I am a little suspicious that this experience will be similar."
- "I went to training, but he didn't get a job based on those skills."

13

Persona: "Mark" — Expanding Business Owner
Profile
•**Name:** Mark Thompson
•**Age:** 42–55
•**Role:** Owner / Managing Partner
•**Business:** Light manufacturing or professional services firm
•**Current Location:** Indiana or Wisconsin
•**Goal:** Expand operations into Illinois within the next 6–12 months

Business Context
•Has an established, profitable business
•Employs 20–75 people
•Expansion driven by:
- Access to new markets
- Talent availability
- Proximity to customers or suppliers

What Mark Is Trying to Do
•Understand the **costs and requirements** of operating in Illinois
•Figure out **permits, taxes, workforce regulations**, and timelines
•Identify **incentives or supports** available to offset expansion costs
•Hire qualified workers quickly without disrupting current operations

What Matters Most to Him
•**Clarity:** Wants straightforward, accurate information
•**Time:** Every delay costs money
•**Predictability:** Hates surprises late in the process
•**Competence:** Wants to feel he's dealing with people who understand business
•**Respect:** Doesn't want to feel "sold to" or talked down to

Mindset Coming In
•Optimistic but cautious
•Comparing Illinois to other states
•Assumes government processes will be:
- Fragmented
- Slow
- Hard to navigate

Pain Points He's Sensitive To
•Being passed between agencies without clear ownership
•Getting different answers from different staff
•Long forms or requirements that aren't clearly explained
•Not knowing what will happen next or how long it will take

What Success Looks Like to Mark
•One clear point of contact
•A step-by-step understanding of the process
•Confidence he's making the right decision
•Feeling supported — not managed

What Would Make Him Walk Away
•Confusing or conflicting information
•Perception that the process is harder than neighboring states
•Feeling like his time isn't valued
•Early interactions that feel bureaucratic rather than helpful

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Put a single touchpoint per post-it note.

Step Two: Identifying Customer TouchPoints

Customer Journey Map

Applicant signs in at front desk.

The applicant is given a clipboard of documents to complete.

The career coach is called to the front area to take the applicant into an office.

The applicant has initial meeting with Career Coach

Program Staff/ Back Office

Enter into client MIS system.

15

EXPANDING TOUCHPOINTS

16

The applicant has initial meeting with Career Coach

The applicant has initial meeting with Career Coach.	
What happens first?	Introduction of staff/provide overview of what meeting is designed to accomplish
And then what happens?	Provide an overview of all the services offered through the center/program and partners.
And then what happens?	Gather background information: demographics, education, work
And then what happens?	Outline challenges faced and talk about the participant's goals that could be achieved in the program
And then what happens?	Get referrals as needed
And then what happens?	Prepare participant for eligibility appointment

16

Put a single touchpoint per post-it note.

Identifying Customer TouchPoints

Customer Journey Map

- Mark searches online for "expand business to Illinois".
- Mark submits an inquiry form.
- Mark has an initial conversation with a state representative.
- Mark explains his business and expansion plans and timeline.
- The agency outlines available supports and next steps.
- Mark receives follow-up materials: checklists, links, applications and referrals.
- He begins to understand permitting, workforce requirements, taxes, and incentives.
- Mark evaluates whether Illinois feels navigable and worth the investment.

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Step Three: What is the customer thinking?

Customer Journey Map

- Applicant signs in at front desk.
- The applicant is given a clipboard of documents to complete.
- The career coach takes the applicant into an office.
- The applicant has initial meeting with Career Coach

How many people are ahead of me? How long will this take?

Why are they asking me all this? I just wanted to know if they could get me a job.

She seems nice.

Glad we have privacy.

18

Staff explains program requirements: "This sounds like a lot. I'm not sure I can actually do all of this."

When paperwork is introduced: "I didn't expect there to be this many forms. I hope I don't mess something up."

When staff talk about timelines or expectations: "That feels far away. I need help now — not weeks from now."

Clients feel overwhelmed by program requirements

Paperwork can be intimidating for participants.

Our clients want immediate gratification of their needs not long term help.

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20

Think like your persona

Customer Journey Map

Mark searches online for "expand business to Illinois".

Mark submits an inquiry form.

Mark has an initial conversation with a state representative.

Mark explains his business and expansion plans and timeline.

Is this information relevant to my situation? Who do I even talk to about this?

Mark receives follow-up materials: checklists, links, applications and referrals.

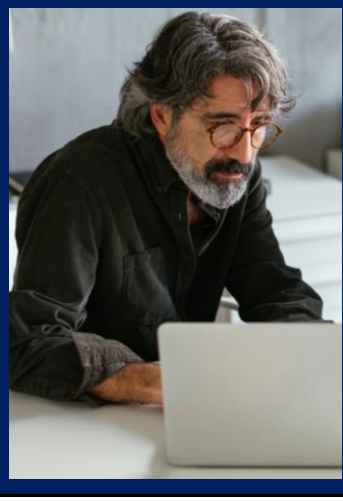
This person understands business — that's a good sign. ""Why am I being transferred again?"" Are they actually listening to what I need, or just going through a script?

"This feels manageable — I think we can make this work." "This is taking more time than I expected." "Another state seems easier."

Put a single touchpoint per post-it note. Use a different color for thoughts.

20

Businesses are impatient and want faster responses



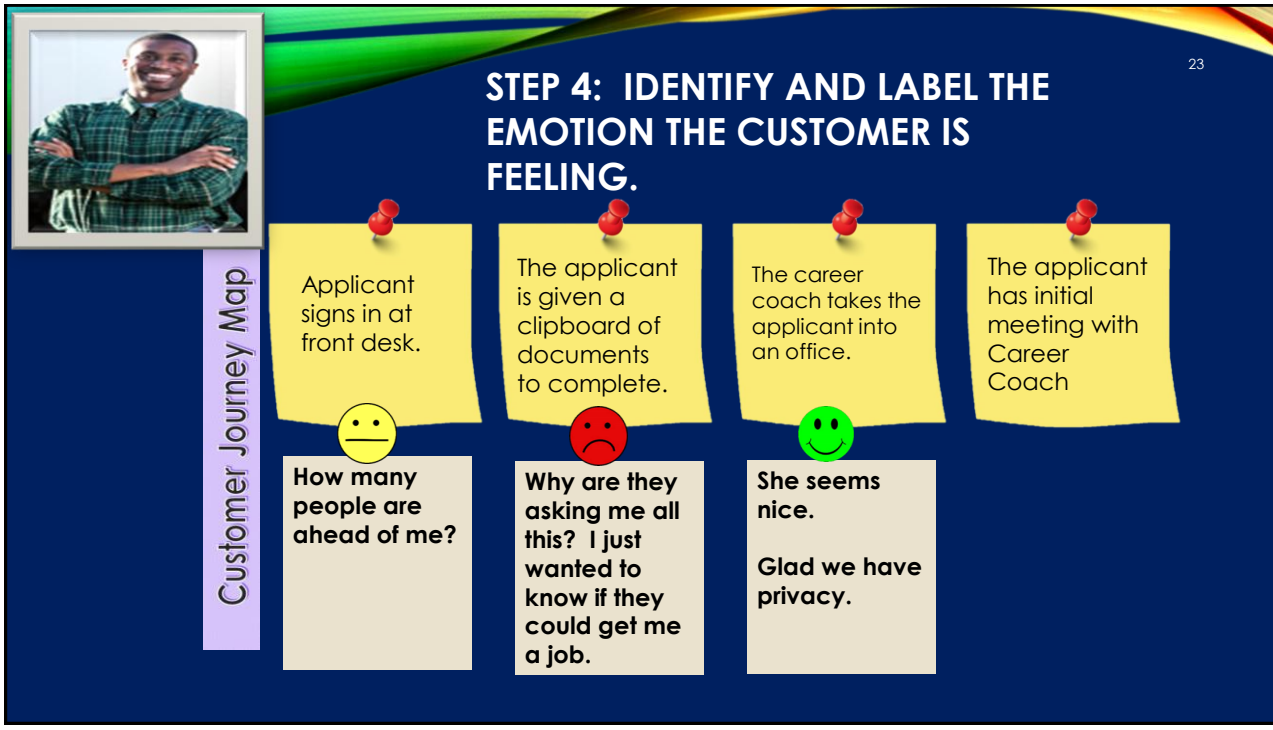
I don't know who this request is going to, how long this will take or whether it's worth following up.

21

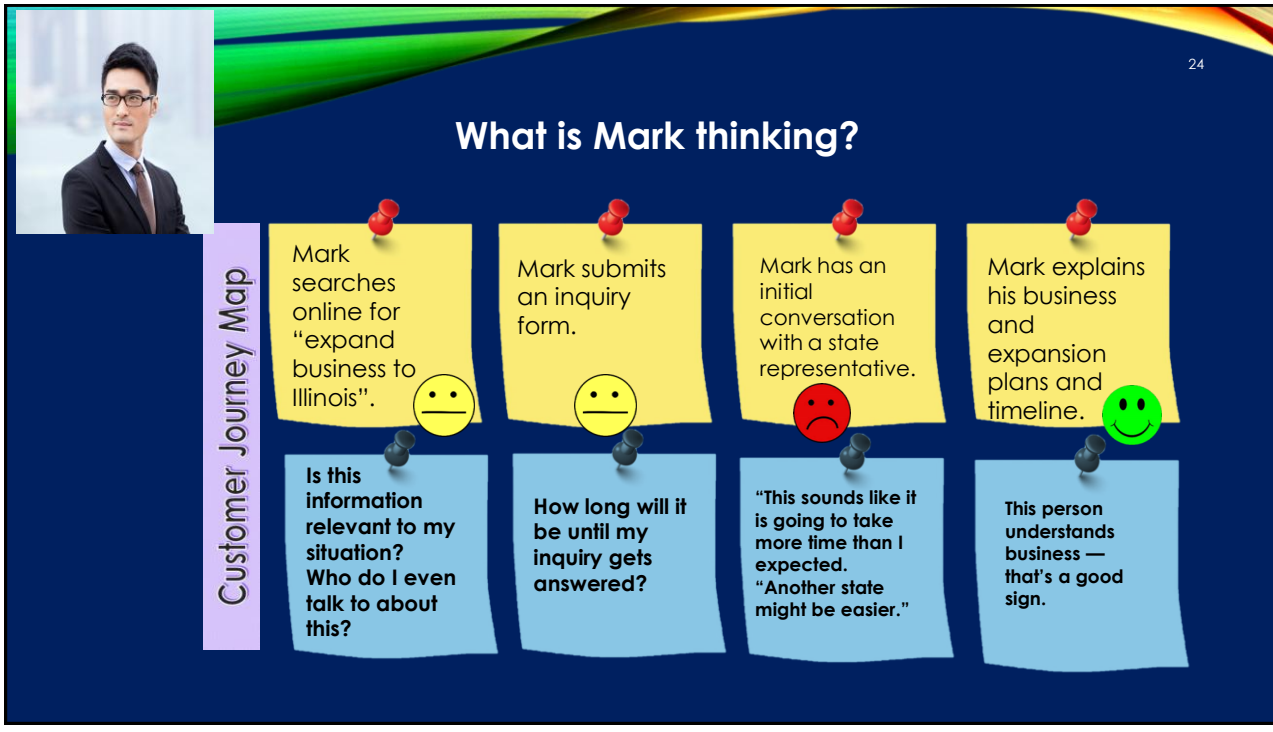
Step Four: Identifying How the Customer Is Feeling

SIMPLIFIED =

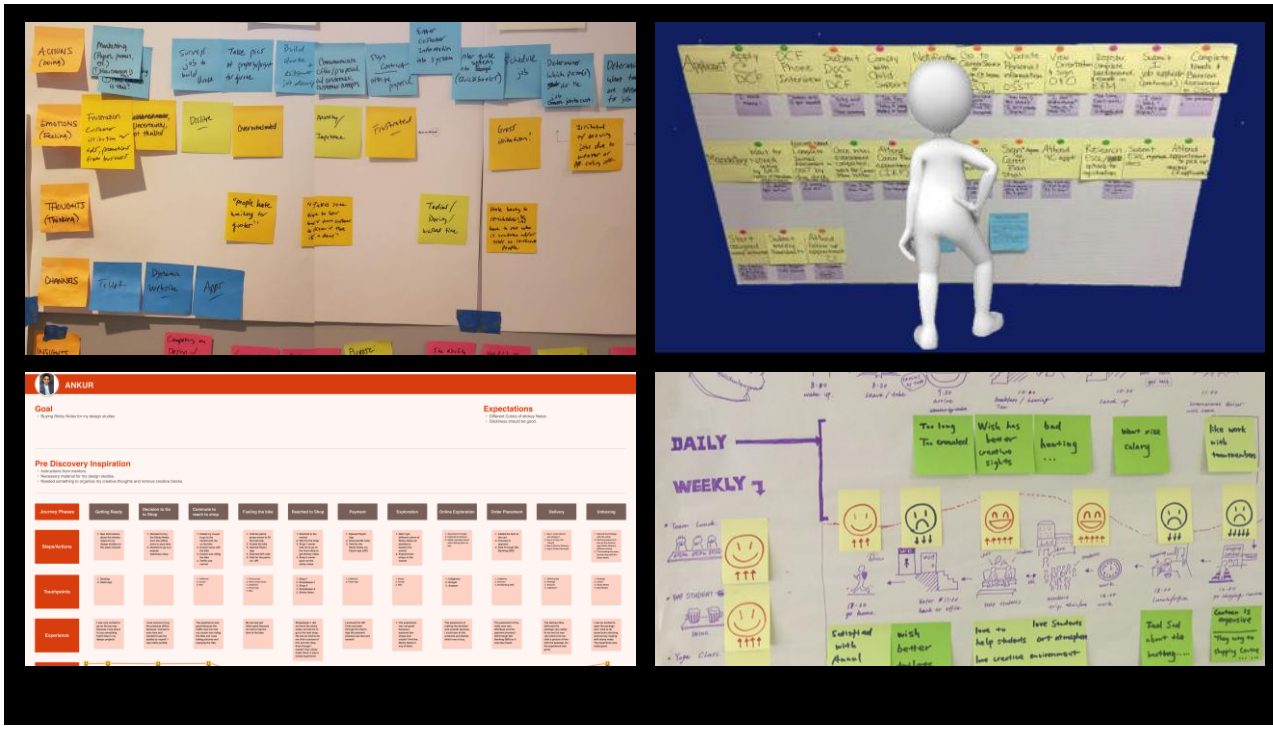
22


23
STEP 4: IDENTIFY AND LABEL THE EMOTION THE CUSTOMER IS FEELING.
Customer Journey Map
Applicant signs in at front desk.
How many people are ahead of me?
The applicant is given a clipboard of documents to complete.
Why are they asking me all this? I just wanted to know if they could get me a job.
The career coach takes the applicant into an office.
She seems nice.
Glad we have privacy.
The applicant has initial meeting with Career Coach

23


24
What is Mark thinking?
Customer Journey Map
Mark searches online for "expand business to Illinois".
Is this information relevant to my situation? Who do I even talk to about this?
Mark submits an inquiry form.
How long will it be until my inquiry gets answered?
Mark has an initial conversation with a state representative.
"This sounds like it is going to take more time than I expected. "Another state might be easier."
Mark explains his business and expansion plans and timeline.
This person understands business — that's a good sign.

24



25

Step 5: Identify and Prioritize Pain Points

Pain points — moments where the experience creates confusion, frustration, or hesitation

The applicant is given a clipboard of documents to complete.

Mark has an initial conversation with a state Representative and learns the process takes a year.

26

27

ANNOYANCES OR MOMENTS OF TRUTH

Moments of truth are critical moments in a customer's journey through your program; they are emotionally charged interactions that either make or break your relationship.

27

28

EXPAND EMPATHY BEFORE FIXING

- ❑ Pick one pain point
- ❑ Expand the thoughts
- ❑ Write in the customer's voice
- ❑ Look for patterns

Makes initial appointment (but no shows)

Customer Thoughts
• "I didn't write down when my first meeting was. Now I forget what they said."
• "I don't know if I want to go there. I am not sure that it will work for me."
• "Now I am not sure what can they do for me that I can't do for myself."
• "Didn't hear anything that interested me. Didn't seem like it would meet my needs."

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QUICK CHECK: ARE WE READY FOR SOLUTIONS?

Do we have a clear picture of what we want customers to think and feel?

Have we expanded the customer's thoughts around the pain point — not just captured one?

Do we understand the impact of that pain point on engagement or follow-through?

Have we clearly named the underlying problem?

And have we decided which pain point to focus on first?

29

Step 6: From Understanding to Ideas Brainstorm Solutions

Go wide before you go deep.
This is about ideas — not decisions.

Leaders must create an inclusive environment where every team member feels valued and heard.

30

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From Pain Point to Possible Solutions

32

Makes initial appointment (but no shows)

The Problem:

Our customers are well known for missing appointments, not writing down appointments, and not having organizational skills. We need to help them remember and follow through.

During the initial phone call, we have not been focused on the value and benefits of our program. We have treated the phone call as a simple transaction to set up an appointment. We don't provide enough motivation to our customers to make coming to the appointment a priority.

- Send reminder postcards.
- Text them the information.
- Email them the information.
- Ask them to get a pen and paper before giving details.
- Call them the day before the meeting as a reminder.
- Invite them in right away so there is no time to forget.
- Eliminate appointments and encourage walk-ins. Keep track of the number of people who call and make appointments versus the number of inquirers who show up.
- To improve the customer journey, write customer-focused scripts that engage potential recruits.
- Avoid talking about everything the agency needs.

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CHOOSING WHAT TO TRY FIRST

High Feasibility

Consider doing third

Do first

Low Value

High Value

Do last or not at all

Do second

Low Feasibility

33

34

CHOOSING WHAT TO TRY FIRST

High Feasibility

Consider doing third

Do first

Low Value

High Value

Do last or not at all

Do second

Important — but not immediately actionable

Low Feasibility

34

35

CHOOSING WHAT TO TRY FIRST

High Feasibility

Consider doing third

Do first

Low Value

High Value

Do last or not at all

Do second

Low Feasibility

35

From Ideas to Hypotheses

Prediction	Belief	Hypothesis Statement
Be explicit about what you think will change.	**We believe that… Will likely result in… We'll know this when…**	***We believe that sending a clear reminder with next steps before the first appointment will reduce no-shows. We'll know this is working if show rates increase over the next three months.***

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Design for People. Get Results.

When we design programs that make sense to the people using them, engagement stops being a mystery — and starts being a result.

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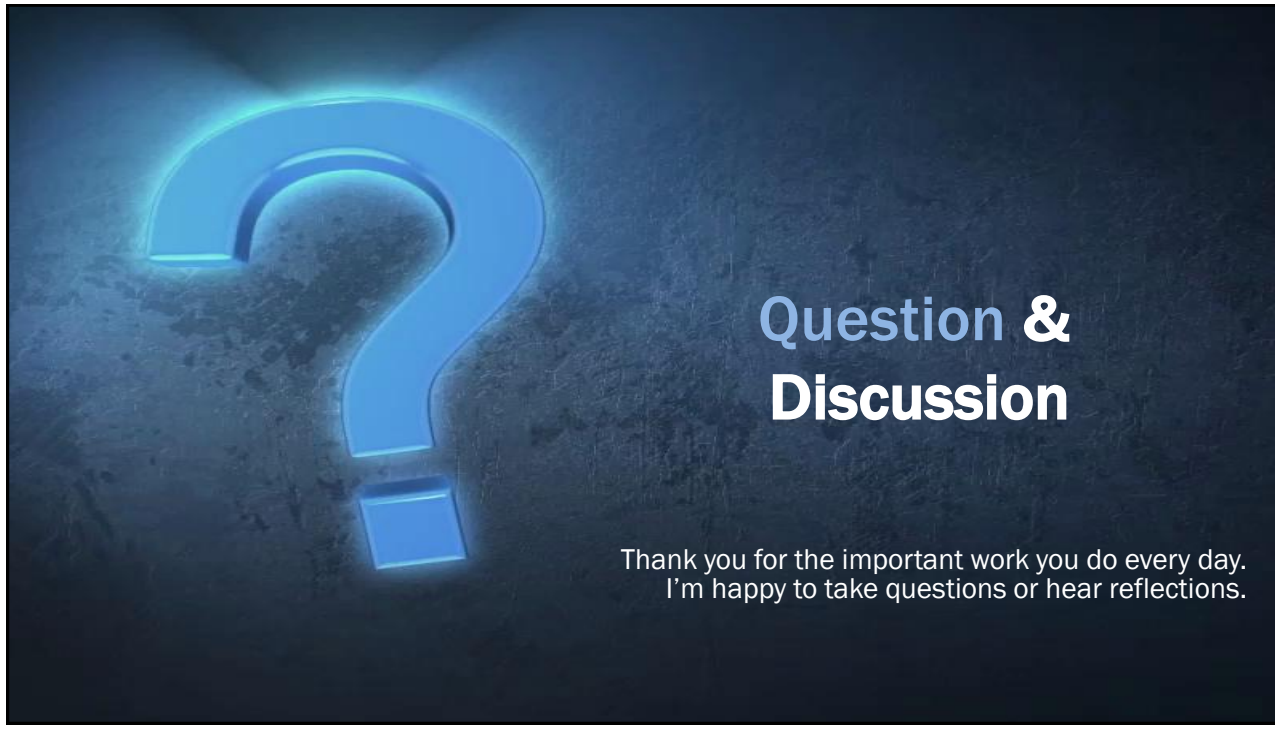
Question &
Discussion
Thank you for the important work you do every day.
I'm happy to take questions or hear reflections.

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