# Business Operations Forum:
# The Agile Start-up for Intrapreneurs

How to quickly turn a great idea into an extraordinary product for the real world.

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ICMA
International Classifieds
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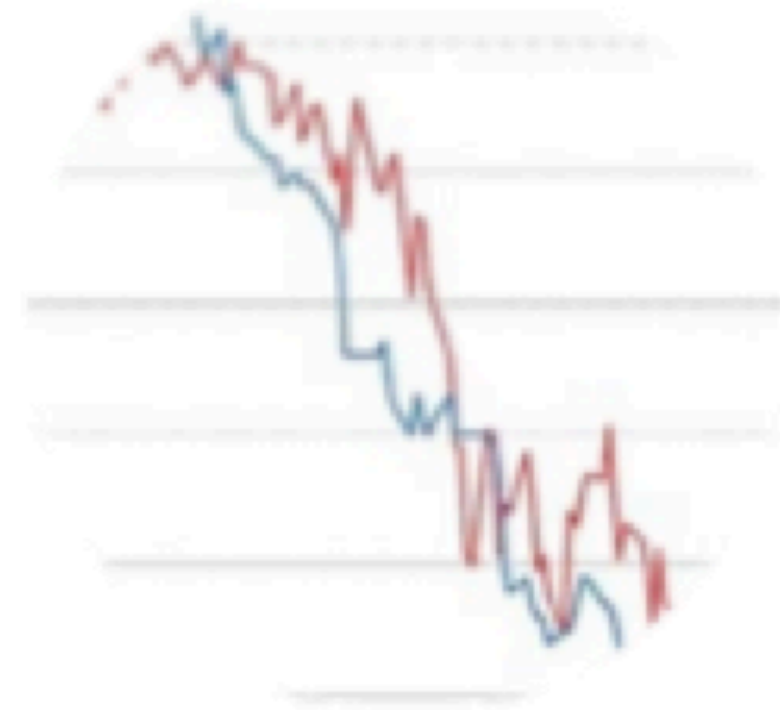
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1. Intro
2. Top Start-up Risks
3. Need Finding by Painstorming
4. Understanding and Representing Users
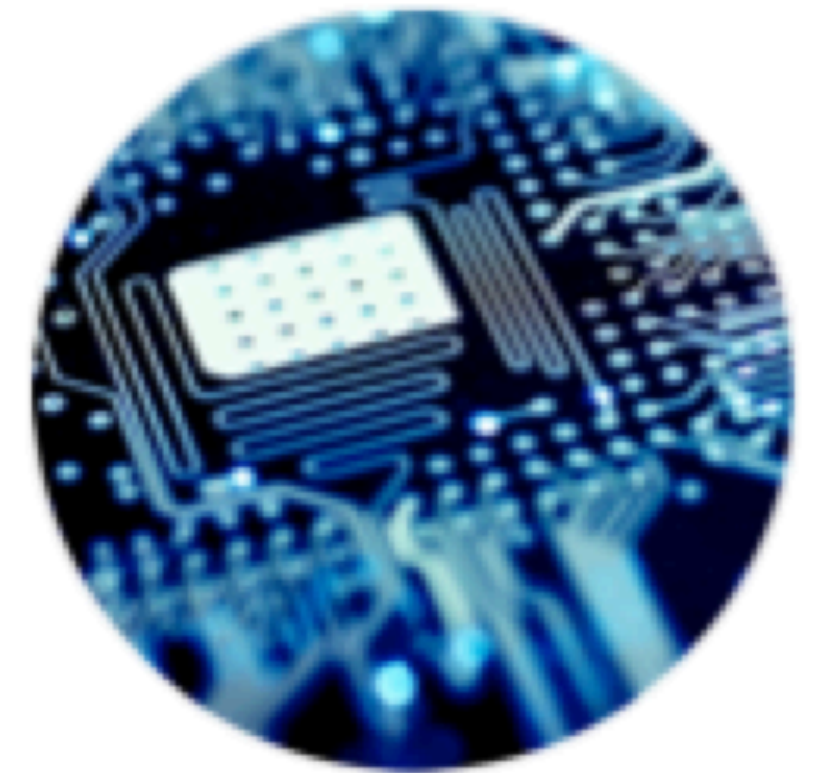5. Solution Exploration, Testing Mockups
6. Wrap-up

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# Your Biggest Risks:



**Financing**



**Market**



**Product**



**Technology**

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# A great product lives at the intersection of

**Users,**
**Market, &**
**Technology**

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# The people are the key:

**What are their problems?**

**Am I solving them?**

**Is my solution useful, usable, desirable?**

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# Need Finding by Painstorming

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# Painstorming is a 3-phase exercise:

① **Constituents**

② **Pain**

③ **Metrics**

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# ① Constituents

- Users

- Stakeholders

- Investors

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# ② Pain

- Identify 1-2 key pain points per constituent

- Highlight assumptions to validate via research

- Pick 2-3 most important pain points to focus on

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# ③ Metrics

- How will we measure that we're alleviating that pain?

- What is the baseline?

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# Key Points in Execution

- Stay focused on pain, not solutions

- Identify assumptions and future validation work

- Foundation for strategy & product decision making

- Metrics to track that your product is working

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# Understanding and Representing Users

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# We'll discuss three tools:

① **Observation & Ethnography**

② **Customer Development Interviewing**

③ **User Personas**

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# ① Observation & Ethnography

- The realm of true design research and deep insight

- Requires heavy work to synthesize captured data

- Always ideal, rarely feasible: especially in business

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# ② Customer Interviewing

- Best available method for direct, lightweight understanding of your users

- This is not about the solution you have in mind

- It's as simple as it looks; execution is in the details

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# Customer Interviewing

1. What's the hardest part about [problem context] ?

2. Can you tell me about the last time that happened?

3. Why was that hard?

4. What, if anything, have you done to solve that problem?

5. What don't you love about the solutions you've tried?

http://customerdevlabs.com/2013/11/05/how-i-interview-customers/

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# Key Points in Execution

- Root your work in past experience: generalizations won't give you what you need

- As the interviewer, you're the expert: maintain control

- It's not about the solution you have in mind; this is about the people you're learning from

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# Exercise - Customer Interviewing

1.  What's the hardest part about [problem context] ?

2.  Can you tell me about the last time that happened?

3.  Why was that hard?

4.  What, if anything, have you done to solve that problem?

5.  What don't you love about the solutions you've tried?

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# ③ Personas

- A stable representation of user needs & work (years)

- Broad range of possible depth: sketch to portrait

- Target of empathy for the team at large

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# Mockups and Solution Exploration

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# Mocking Up Your Product

① **Prototype as a Communication Tool**

② **De-risking Your Product**

③ **Qualitative, Evaluative Testing**

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# ① Prototype as Communication Tool

- Enact the vision before you build it

- Create shared understanding across teams

- Axure is good for heavy-duty prototyping, InvisionApp for lightweight prototyping

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# ② De-risking Your Product

- Nothing you've built can help you if nobody can use your product

- Open-source, standard stacks, the content of this course help you de-risk the technical side

- Prototyping testing will de-risk the experience side

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# ③ Qualitative, Evaluative Testing

- We recommend a task-based "Think Aloud" protocol for user feedback on your prototype

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# Evaluating a Prototype

1. Identify core tasks users must be able to accomplish

2. Recruit 4-6 representative users to test your app

3. Have users think aloud and use prototype to do task

4. Keep them talking out loud, ask Q's as necessary

5. Debrief, take immediate top-line notes after each session

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# Key Points in Execution

- As the moderator, you're the expert: maintain control

- Don't force users to continue failing—it's ok to stop

- Print your tasks on a card, and have users read them out loud before attempting so they understand, and can revisit

- Have a short debrief with users after the tasks

- Never, ever, ask "do you like it?" or "would you…"

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# Wrap Up, Questions

### Thank You!

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