

Identification of problems

A problem is always related to a dissatisfaction about a current situation. But frequently the most difficult task is to define its origin. It is important to take into account that problems are relative and depend on perspective. A patient journey can help identify the underlying problems and can support in viewing the problems from different perspectives. A well-formulated problem definition can be the first step towards a solution.

To formulate a problem, it is important to define the current situation and envision the desired situation. It can help to ask yourself what is the problem (friction points), how has this problem (human actors), what are relevant context factors (non-human actors), what are their goals, what are the side-effects what you would like to avoid and which action are required.

Answering this question properly will give you the foundation to achieve a structured description of the design problem, what will give direction for the idea generation. You can also formulate the problem as an opportunity or driver.

Idea finding

A good start for idea finding, or idea generation as it is also called, is to formulate as many “how to” questions. A question that invites you to think of a solutions, “how to solve this problem”. You can use your problem for your “how to” questions, but also the insight can be useful to for formulating the “how to” questions. To integrate all the actors you can define the “how to” questions from the perspective of the different actors and phase.

Good practice is to start with general “how to’s” and make it more specific along the way. For example, a general question could be: “how can you improve the communication between surgeon and patient?” A more specific “how to” question could be: “How to send the home monitored data to the surgeon?” Before you start thinking of solutions for the “how to” question you should evaluate which are the relevant how-to topics and use this selection for the start of your idea generation.

You can start generating as many solutions as possible for you “how to” question, before moving on to the next question. You can do this until you generated ideas for all your questions. You can evaluate your ideas and select the one or more ideas that you think are the most relevant. You can use the patient journey to evaluate which idea(s) are the best fitting within the whole journey for all the actors. You can develop these ideas further or make combinations of multiple ideas. Often this is the end of the idea generation phase. The next phase will be the concept development.

IDEATION IN THE CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING METHOD

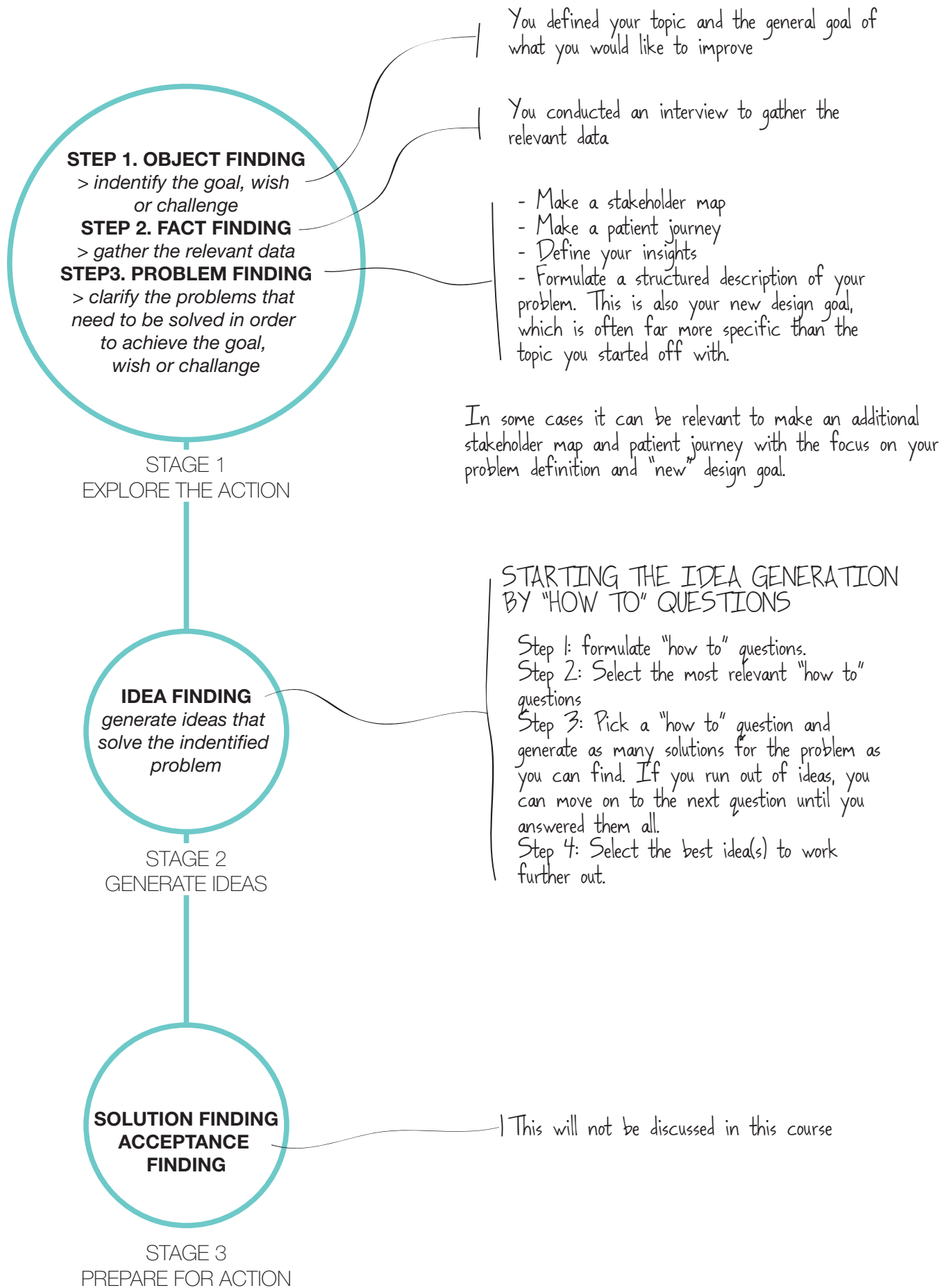


Image based on the creative problem solving method (van Boeijen, A. G. C., Daalhuizen, J.J., Zijlstra, J.J., van der Schoor, R. S.A. (2013) (Eds.). Delft Design Guide. Amsterdam: BIS Publishers, pp 24