

# UX design isn't just about making shiny stuff

It's about solving problems for people. And to solve problems for people, we need to understand where they're coming from, and where they're trying to go.

Where our design decisions impact real humans, it's critical we do research to understand our users deeply and that we consider the impact of our decisions on those humans. It doesn't always have to be a lot of research, often a little can go a long way.

In the context of this competition, you don't have time for an extensive research process. And that's okay. In the "real" world, you will rarely have the luxury of a "perfect" process either. **But you do have the time to ask questions today.**

*"Good research is about asking more and better questions, and thinking critically about the answers." - Erika Hall (Read Erika's book [Just Enough Research](#) if you're interested in learning more about research in a design and software context.)*

## Questions to ask as you embark on this journey:

- What is the problem we're trying to solve?
  - Why is this a problem? Is there a problem behind the problem? Why is the problem behind the problem a problem? aka the "[5 Whys](#)"
- What are the [top tasks](#) or [jobs to be done](#) through this experience?
- What current pain points are users experiencing?
- How might we make this experience more [accessible](#), [inclusive](#), and [human-centered](#)?
  - Am I designing for just me and my friends or am I considering all the users different from me? Am I accounting for: accessibility, age, economic situation, geographic location, language, race, intersectionality
- What is the social context of our users?
  - What kind of devices might they be using? What's their internet access? What dreams and fears might they have? What pressures might they be under? What does their home life look like?
- What voice & tone might resonate most with our users?
- What questions are missing from this list?
  - What questions can I ask that the person who wrote this may not have considered because of their own biases and blind spots?

And remember: Perfect is the enemy of good. You don't have to be perfect or perform to be loved. You showed up today. You're here. That's what matters most.

Happy building!

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St. Louis, MO on April 20, 2023