2016

2017

2018

2019

# PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Veerle van Wijlen - B3.2 - Final Bachelor
Project - Industrial Design
University of Technology Eindhoven

# PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY

I can be described as a user-centered designer passionate about creating and researching user experiences in an iterative process characterized by conceptualization and high user involvement. My strength is in translating the user needs into valuable concepts and prototypes. This by using various user research techniques (with a focus on in-the-field research) to get to know the user and target group; turning all my insights into design opportunities and then translating them into a variety of experiential prototypes to later on turn them into a complete design. In this process I like to switch between intuitivity and in-depth research. Within projects I focus on designing for special needs groups as seniors with dementia; visually impaired and children since I love to add value to their lives. Furthermore I like to create complex designs that are complete in a sense that they feel intuitive to use for the user, in which all components work together through action-reaction, material choice, colors, graphics and formgiving style in order to create a whole experience. Because I focus on creating user experiences I also like to take the business aspect of my designs as financial budgets, value proposition and total customer experience into account to make sure the product can be effortlessly implemented in the market.

# VISION

Nowadays, western society is performance-oriented and characterized by individualism. People are focused on their own successes, gaining status and therefore feel the pressure to perform well and fit in the high societal standards in all kinds of contexts as work and relationships. In parallel to this it can be seen that digital technologies are developing fast and enter more and more markets. Those technologies are often used by society to express their status and to fulfill their needs of self-esteem (Maslow,..). However, the pressure in current society to keep up with all the high societal standards can cause lots of stress, outside pressure and can make people feel uncomfortable and vulnerable in daily life. Therefore the uniqueness of every person needs to be embraced. I believe it is important to create a safe society in which every individual feels empowered, can be its utmost self and on the other hand is able to fulfill their needs of social belonging and can add value to others in society on daily basis. However, not every individual has the same capabilities and opportunities to achieve this and to fulfill their specific needs, like special need groups as older adults, seniors with dementia, visually impaired and children. This can be through physical disabilities, mental disabilities, social disabilities or environmental issues.

That is why I want to create a daily life experience for special need groups that enhances their feeling of empowerment and fulfills their needs of social belonging which allows them to add value to others in society on a daily basis.

This through researching the effect of solely tangible design or tangible-digital design made with a strong focus on the user. I am convinced that design research processes need focus on the creation of personal intuitive experiences. In order to create these experiences in everyday-life I believe designs need to be logical, intuitive, interactive but aesthetically pleasing. Moreover, in design the digital world we live in needs to be embraced however physicality needs to gain priority but together function as one.

# FINAL BACHELOR PROJECT

The topic of my FBP research project is how personal design for an older adult can enrich hobbies, talents and/or daily life interests they're passionate about through storytelling to make them engage more in society. In this project the focus is on high user involvement by making use of co-design in many stages of the process. This topic fits my professional identity since I can be described as a user-centered designer passionate about creating and researching user experiences in an iterative process characterized by conceptualization and high user involvement. Furthermore it fits my vision since I believe it is important to create a safe society in which every individual feels empowered, can be its utmost self and on the other hand is able to fulfill their needs of social belonging and can add value to others in society on daily basis. This through researching the effect of solely tangible design or tangible-digital design made with a strong focus on the user.

# GOALS

For this semester my most important learning goals are in the areas of user & society, math data & computing, technology & realization and business & entrepreneurship. Furthermore within professional skills I will focus on planning & organization since that was one of my main struggles during my internship last semester.

## USER & SOCIETY

I want to deepen my user research skills by gaining experience with various user evaluation methods. I want to gain experience with different types of user evaluation as co-design and getting comfortable with preparing user studies (which questions to ask to get the most valuable results) and back-up plans to become a more flexible design researcher. Furthermore I want to get comfortable in my communication with special needs groups which is related to my vision. This in order to excel as a designer in the user & society area of expertise, in a professional manner. Furthermore to be able to achieve my vision of creating a daily life experience for special need groups that enhances their feeling of empowerment and fulfills their needs of social belonging which allows them to add value to others in society on a daily basis. I will achieve these goals when I have prepared the co-design sessions for my Final Bachelor Project tailored to the older adults; when they have understood the protocol; when I have gained interesting results from the user studies to answer my research question and when I have been able to deal with unexpected user evaluation situations during my process. This all in a period of one semester during my Final Bachelor Project.

## MATH, DATA & COMPUTING

I want to get acquainted with various data analyzation methods for qualitative and quantitative user research data so I can validate my user study results. Especially because I only used the method written by Brown & Clarke in previous projects to analyze my qualitative data. Furthermore, I want improve my data visualization skill in order to effectively communicate qualitative and quantitative user research results to coaches and user participants for transparency in a professional manner and for reflection. This will increase my ability to get valuable opportunities for further research or design out of it. I will achieve these goals when I have analyzed and visualized the user study data from the various studies within my Final Bachelor project and can successfully communicate the results.
All this within a period of one semester.

## TECHNOLOGY & REALIZATION

I would like to improve my technical prototyping skills involving electronic circuits and hardware programming in order to be able to achieve my vision to provide the user with logical, intuitive but aesthetical interaction.
I have achieved this goal when I have made several prototypes of my concepts for personal designs for older adults with which the interaction provides the intended experience (which can be analyzed out of the in-home studies with the older adults and their personal designs).
All this in a period of one semester during my Final Bachelor Project.

## BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Last semester I have already gained some very important new skills within the field of business and entrepreneurship during my internship. These skills involved the exploration of product implementation in the market, getting to know the business model canvas and making a business plan for the production of the product for which I made a proof of concept. However, I would like to gain experience and knowledge with how to find opportunities within a market, finding customer needs, doing ideation and then testing the opportunities found in the market to finally have a viable business plan. This to make me a more realistic and professional designer and so I have the knowledge to put my designs in the market as a future designer. I have achieved this goal when I have created a viable business plan for a chosen design opportunity within a market that fits the client's existing product. This when I have passed the course Design Innovation Methods. All this in quartile 3.

## PROFESSIONAL SKILLS - PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION

During my internship last semester I have learned to gain control over my design process, switching from detailed work (first perspective) to getting a process overview (third perspective). However during my Final Bachelor Project I want to find out whether design research will be my career track during my masters. Therefore I want to gain control over my design research processes as well. I will achieve this goal by often reflecting on my overall process, on my approach to the co-design workshops and the activities to do to achieve my design research goal. All this in a period of one semester during my Final Bachelor Project.

*2016*

# TIME TO
# GROW

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