

*Over the duration of quarters one and two, deliver \$1000 worth of design value to a local business, and receive \$1000 in compensation for your work.*

During this quarter and next, your teams will work with a local business to understand their customer-facing value proposition and their business operations and service. Identify places where the business can be improved, and frame those opportunities in a way that a business owner can appreciate and find valuable. Your goal is to deliver \$1000 worth of value to the local business. You will know that you've delivered this value if they pay you.

You may select any business you want to work with, within these criteria:

1. The business must have at least 2 locations, stores, factories, buildings, etc.
2. The business must have fewer than 20 locations, stores, factories, buildings, etc.
3. The business must employ at least 10 people.
4. The business must be in a "humanitarian" context. This does not mean they are a non-profit; it means that their core focus is on problem worth solving. This is a "we know it when we see it" criteria.

# Assignment 1 – Research Plan

In your group, produce a written research plan that describes the business you will work with and the ethnographic research you will perform. Then, create a presentation summarizing the plan, and present it in class.

## 1. Identify a business.

- Visit at least five local businesses that fit the criteria defined in class. Document your entire journey with photos (entry, sequence use, touch-points, environment, exit).
- Persuade a business owner, manager, or other leader to engage with your process over the course of the entire quarter.

## 2. Develop a research plan.

- Create a focus statement for your research.
- Using your focus statement as a starting point, describe the various participants you will talk to, observe, and engage with.
- Plan to conduct in-depth research (1-2 hour research sessions) with at least fifteen people. Include a breadth of types of participants to research.
- Focus the majority of your efforts on “back of the house operations” and not on the customer experience.
- Develop all of the pieces of the research plan, as shown in the example:
  - Goals
  - Methodology
  - Participants
  - Screener
  - Script
  - Materials
- Role-play the plan, and iterate.
- Accumulate this material in a document that stands on its own.

## 3. Present your plan in class.

- Present your plan to the class.
- Include no more than 5 slides.
- Assume your audience has no idea of who you are or what you are doing.

## 4. Deliver your plan on the blog.

- Post your research plan to the blog. Do not just post your file; describe your plan in the post itself.
- Make the post professional sounding and looking – consider that thousands of people read the blog, and have no idea who you are or what you are doing.

## Grading Criteria

Your points	Maximum Points	Description
<b>Business Selection</b>		
	5	Business matches criteria defined in class
	5	Clear rationalization for why the business was selected
	5	Business owner agreement
<b>Written Document</b>		
	10	Document is detailed: someone could use this document as a research plan, following your intent and conducting the research for you.
	10	Document is thorough: it contains all of the information listed above. This document should be approximately 5 pages.
	10	Document is thoughtful: provides evidence that you've thought through the complexities of getting into various contexts, talking to various participants, etc.
	5	Clear use of language, no spelling errors, etc
<b>In-Class Presentation</b>		
	5	Clear articulation of the problem, assuming no prior knowledge from the audience
	5	Unique terms or jargon are defined
	5	Professional delivery of materials (eye contact, posture, confidence)
	5	Concise but thorough
	5	Clear use of language, no spelling errors, etc
	5	Aesthetically appropriate (simple, no garish decoration, no Times Roman)
<b>Blog Post</b>		
	5	Material posted to the blog prior to class beginning
	5	Material stands alone: if someone arrives at the post via Google, it is clear what they are reading and why they are reading it
	5	Clear use of language, no spelling errors, etc
	5	Legible: text is formatted with headings, spacing, etc
<b>Xx</b>	<b>100</b>	

### Considerations:

- How will you explain the project to a business owner – what is the value for them?
- Is it appropriate to ask for \$1000 right away? If not, when?
- What are ways to quickly help them gain comfort with you and your project, and build trust between you?
- When you think about your research participants, play out how a potential interview might go (and role play it in your group).
- How can you make sure you watch behavior instead of just talking about behavior?
- What are some of the challenges you can anticipate in getting into context? Are there rules or policies that might prohibit you from going into various places? How will you deal with these rules?
- How will you help the business owner become comfortable having their business name on our blog, in our presentations, and so-on?
- What types of questions will you use to provoke action and dialogue?
- This is a lot to do. How will you best structure your team – what can be done together, and what can be divided and done in parallel?