

MVP Definition

Idea/Introduction

A very important part of app development is user feedback. Thus, many app and product developers adopt a development strategy, called the Minimum Viable Product (MVP), in order to get the app into users hands as fast as possible. The core of the strategy is to build the most important, core features first before investing time and resources into designing and building lower-priority features.

Learning Outcome

Participants will be able to generate a list of features, put those features into priority order, and define which of them are must-haves for the first version of their app.

Time

30min

Definition

Minimum Viable Product (MVP): A development technique in which a new product or application is developed with sufficient features to satisfy initial users. It is the simplest and lowest-cost initial version that solves a big enough pain point that it can be put into use. The final, complete set of features are only designed and developed after considering feedback from the product's initial users.

Activity

Step 1.

Have participants transfer their problem from the “Brainstorming” Mad Lib to the top of their MVP handout. Have them take time to fill out the left-hand column of the sheet to consider the reasons someone needs the app they are building. Then have them fill out the right hand side of the sheet to specify what technical element will help participants fulfill the needs on the left. If participants are unsure about what to write on the right-hand side, have them take a look at the “App Lab Guide” and choose App Lab elements to fill in the column. The guide is based on elements available in App Lab.

Step 2.

Part two of this activity is interactive. Put participants in pairs to rate their partners features. Each participant will look at the 1-10 list of what an app should do, and on the backside of the MVP sheet, write their name along the line to indicate whether they think the idea “Totally Rules” or they don't think the idea is that important for the app. The emoji faces should help participants decide how they feel. The hope is that some of the

features will jump out to the app makers. When a participant gets their own app sheet back, they will be able to see the most important features of their app. This is an important process for development teams, allowing them to come together and make decisions about what an app should do.

Framing for slower-paced participants

Participants who are struggling do not need to think of ten features, reassure them that five good ideas will work just fine for the design process.

Framing for faster-paced participants

Challenge faster-paced participants by asking them to fill out the right-hand column with more than one App Lab component, i.e. instead of just writing “Button,” they will write “Button” and “Show Number.” They will begin stringing together App Lab pieces and begin thinking like a developer.