Topics for individual projects

Exercise 1. Set up you 'Hill'

A Hill is a single statement of intent used to focus a product around the value that it delivers, written as a meaningful user outcome. Hills describe something a specific user is enabled to do, not a specific implementation (IBM, s/d).

The best example of a Hill is the following statement of intent, made by John F. Kennedy in 1961. Without saying how they were going to do it, Kennedy vowed that: "We should land a person on the Moon and return them safely back to Earth".

Instructions – following IBM's Hills framework:

1. Set up the activity

On your whiteboard, large sticky pad, or virtual whiteboard, draw three sections: Who, What, and Wow.
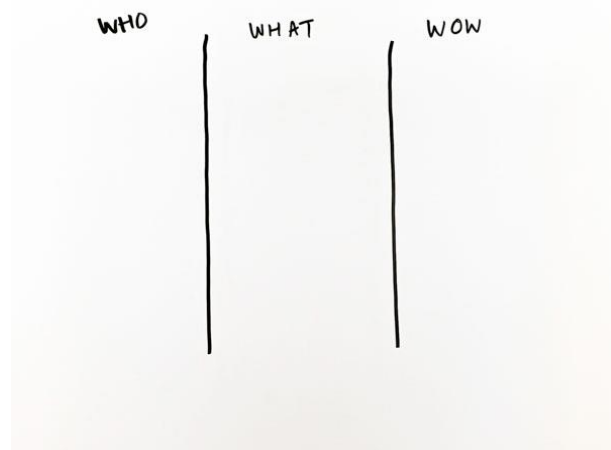

2. Brainstorm the building blocks

Diverge on many ideas for each section and quickly share them with your teammates. Build off of others' ideas but focus on quantity over quality and avoid drifting into features or talking about implementation details.

3. Put the pieces together

Build sentences using your ideas for Who, What, and Wow. Draft them quickly and begin to mix and match, until you've found a combination that seems to describe your intention for your user.
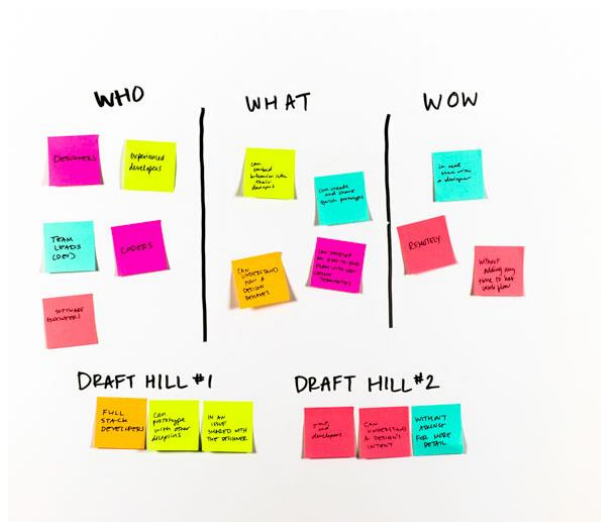
4. Edit, refine, and iterate

Get a fresh pair of eyes to read your drafted Hill and give feedback. Remember that your Hills will evolve based on your continued understanding of the problem and your users.

From: https://www.ibm.com/design/thinking/page/toolkit/activity/writing-hills
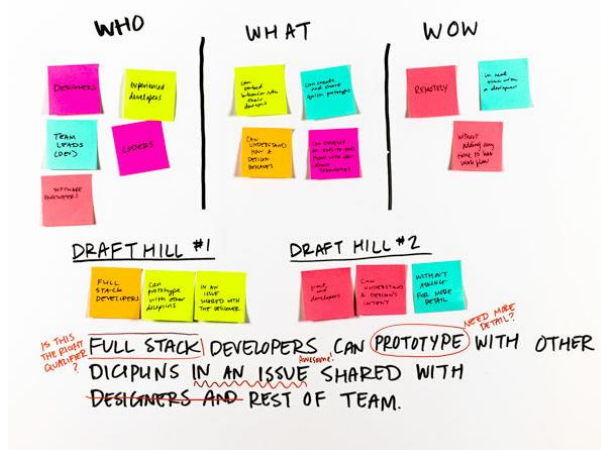
A Hill is not about *how* to get somewhere, but about *where* to go; therefor, do not focus on the solution but on framing a problem as an intended outcome for a given user. Every Hill needs a *who*, a *what* and a *wow*. Breaking down the above example: the *who* in this Hill is the astronaut; the *what* is landing them on the moon; the *wow* is returning them safely back to earth.

One should write Hills at the beginning of a project or initiative, after identifying the real needs of our users. Preferably, do it with a team, so bring your classmates into the brainstorm.

Additional suggestion: To help you identify the real needs of your users, consider creating a Persona and drawing an Empathy Map. Look it up!