Ideation Techniques

Elyse Duffy

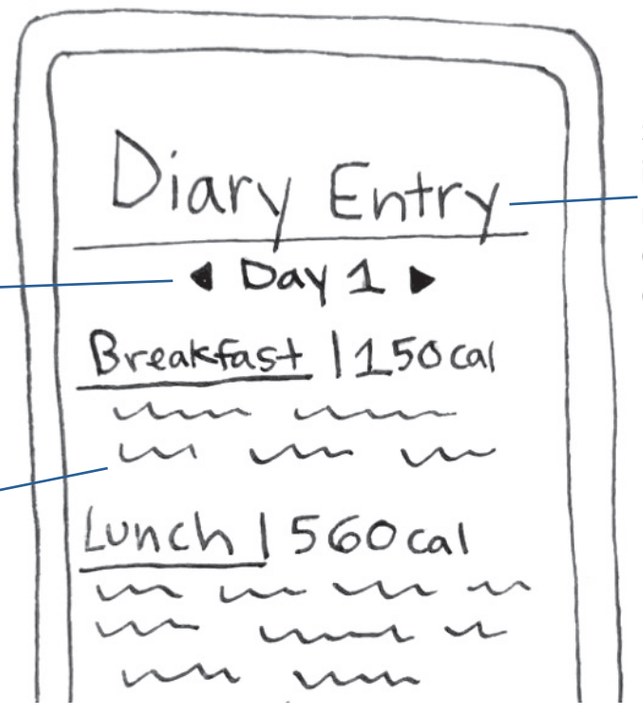
MyFitnessPal

POV Statement #1

Users who are tracking their food intake **need** the calendar feature to display the right dates **because** otherwise their notes are not in order, creating confusion.

Ideation Methods:

Sketch

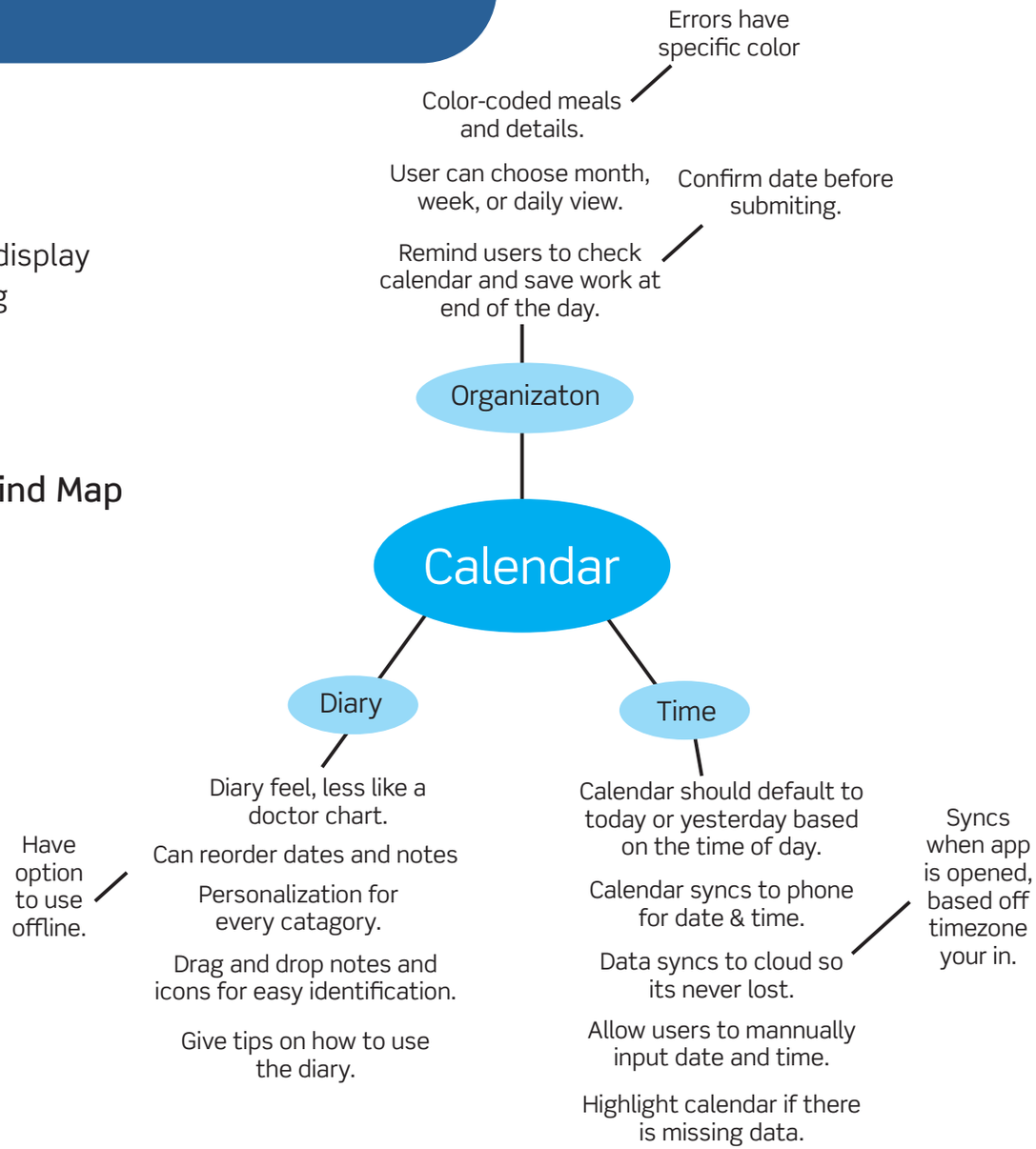


Tracks your entries. Doesn't use day & time.

Shows information as more of a diary entry, less chart like.

User puts entries in order, and can edit at any time.

Mind Map



MyFitnessPal

Methodology & Final Solutions

Sketch: Since so many people struggled to understand the calendar in the app and getting it to sync correctly, my first thought was to create the app to be more diary like. Take away the charts and the fancy calorie counter and leave room for the user to write. I wanted to avoid the app needing to sync up every time. So instead, the user can enter the time they ate in the description. The app will track by counting the entries, for example, day 1, day 2, etc. By submitting a diary entry instead of “tracking” food, also feels more inviting to someone who has never dieted before.

Mind Map: This mind map helped me figure out certain parts that I wanted to see in the app. When thinking about this new calendar feature, I knew I wanted to stay with the diary theme but also knew that having color-coded views or meals would be helpful for users when looking back at their entries. It was also important that users get notified to confirm correct information before submitting for the day. They would confirm the correct date and then eliminate some of the errors from before. Another idea I found via mind mapping was to have the calendar default to today or yesterday based off the time of day. This way the app would use the day and time info from the user’s phone to sync up and avoid confusion. If for some reason the user missed a day, then the calendar would send them a notification of missing data. With all of these pieces working together, it should prevent the calendar from showing the wrong dates.

MyFitnessPal

POV Statement #2

Users who want to plan meals on the app **need** to know that this feature cost extra up front **because** they are spending too much time tailoring it, just to find out it's behind a paywall.

Ideation Methods:

Storyboard

1.

User opens the app to create a meal plan.

2.

The meal plan screen is greyed out...

3.

Then a pop up appears, asking the user to pay before starting the plan.

4.

If the user decides not to pay, they can use a limited feature, free version.

Brain Dump

Advertise Differently:

- Users cannot see the meal plan feature at all on the app, unless they sign up for a subscription when creating an account.
- Only a preview of what is in this section can be viewed.

Features:

- The meal plan feature will appear in the bottom navigation but won't work. When clicked on, a pop up appears.
- The plan has different tiers, with different prices. The lowest tier will have minimal features but be the most affordable.

App Pricing:

- Raise the price of the app so that all features are available up front.
- Have the users pick features they want to use, then the app calculates the correct monthly price for them.

MyFitnessPal

Methodology & Final Solutions

Storyboard: This storyboard shows a solution to how users should find out about the meal planning feature. The one I drew shows a typical user browsing through the app when she finds the meal planning button. When she clicks on it, she sees all the buttons greyed out but can sort of make out the layout and features that are within it. However shortly after a pop up appears, and she is asked to pay for a meal plan before continuing. From here the user has two options- that is to either pay or exit. When our user exits, she is greeted with more information about how she can use a free, limited version. This gives users more than one option and lets them know up front that it's a subscription.

Brain Dump: I organized my thoughts into three main categories I thought would help me find a solution: advertising, features, and pricing. For starters, I knew the app would have to change how they showed this feature. Users would no longer be able to input information before paying. They would only be able to use this feature if they chose it at sign up. Another idea I thought would work and was innovative allowed users to choose features they wanted to use. Then the app would calculate how much their individual monthly charge should be, based on what they chose. To me this was the winner, because you're only paying for what you need.

Strava

POV Statement #1

Users who track their runs **need** the option to edit their final stats **because** sometimes inaccurate data gets recorded.

Ideation Methods:

SCAMPER

Substitute automatic tracking with editable fields and change the final confirmation screen to a review screen where information can be edited.

Combine GPS data with user's input and notes. Allow users to adjust all information. Document what GPS tracked and what users changed. They each get put into separate tabs that can later be compared.

Modify the final data screen to be more user friendly and make it obvious that its editable. Think buttons next to the final time, or sliders next to the distance.

Eliminate constant tracking if users forgets to turn it off after a workout. Instead, the app should ask the user if they are done. Reminders can also go off if speed suddenly changes or its been tracking for longer than usual.

Analogies

Analogies similar to editing your final workout

Analogies	Why its Similar
Editing a Photo	Individuals want to capture a specific moment in time.
Filling out a Form	Reviewing the information is important before submitting it.
A Chef Creating a Recipe	Each chef will tailor a recipe to their needs and taste.
Spell-Checking an Essay	The first go around isn't always accurate and it needs a second pair of eyes to look it over.

Strava

Methodology & Final Solutions

Scamper: This method was one of my favorites because it allowed me to think in a more well-rounded way. Starting with the substitute category, I knew simply that the fields would need to be editable instead of just showing final data. Then I I wanted a place where GPS data and user data could live together. I think there is a benefit to keeping both and allowing the user to look at the one they prefer. I also wanted to modify the final screen after a workout to be more user friendly. New buttons and sliders would help users correct the errors. Then I would have the app always ask the user if they are still working out, to avoid any recording that not an actual workout. Allowing users to edit the final data this way gives them more control of what gets recorded and can be beneficial if users stop and start a workout.

Analogies: For this exercise I thought about things that were similar to editing workout stats. I think my best idea came from the first analogy: editing a photo. Because this scenario focuses on capturing a particular moment in time, it got me thinking about how the Strava app could also do that. Instead of showing one full workout, my new idea was to have the app record in snippets, one mile at a time or maybe longer, depending on the user's workout plan. Then when the user looks back at the workout recorded, they can see how they did, mile for mile. This would also help them spot errors and possibly remember what caused the app to miscalculate. Avoiding future errors while also giving the user more accurate data.

Strava

POV Statement #2

Users who track their bike rides **need** a better feature to track their speed **because** the current speedometer lags and isn't user friendly.

Ideation Methods:

Provocation Method

Problem: Speedometer lags and doesn't provide real-time data. It is also hard to read the speedometer.

Provocative Statements:

1) What if this feature only displayed after a workout finished?
2) What if speed was calculated by feelings and exertion?
3) What if the speedometer acted like Siri?

Insights From Statements:

1) Tracking average speed rather than constant speed may give the app more time to calculate more accurate data.
2) Knowing how fast you're going without looking at your phone is desired.
3) A voice activated speedometer to chat with will keep your hands free for steering while also giving you real time information. Can be used for more than just the speedometer.

Worst Possible Idea

- Have users only ride under a certain speed so it doesn't mess up the speedometer.
- Require users to stop riding so it can calculate.
- Hide this feature at the bottom of the page so no one sees it.
- Show speed with pictures instead of numbers. For example, a turtle for slow speeds, a cheetah for fast speeds.
- Speedometer records the speed in a metric not used in the user's country.
- The app makes you wait until the next day before showing you your speed.

Strava

Methodology & Final Solutions

Provocation Method: This was a fun method that helped me solve a difficult problem. To me, the feature itself would be hard to fix, so I focused on making it better. Instead of having to scroll through your phone to find your speed I think the best idea was to make this feature hands free. Being able to speak to the app like we do with Siri, is something bikers would appreciate. You don't have to stop to go through the app and can get real time updates as you ride. I also think having it give you average speed rather than current speed will be more accurate. Allowing the app a chance to calculate and catch up.

Worst Possible Idea: This method had me thinking up some wild ideas but got me to a great solution! I first thought about all the worst ways one could check their speed. Most of them required users to stop what they're doing and go out of their way to find this information. But showing speed in pictures, instead of numbers was actually the start of a good idea. At first, showing a turtle for a slower speed seemed ridiculous but then I thought about showing this data in a visual graph or chart. The graph would show speed in increments of 10mph, so the app wouldn't have to be exact, but it would give an overall broader view of the user's stats. Seeing the data this way could be more helpful than showing the user a number. I thought this was a great solution based off the crazy ideas I wrote down.

Asics Runkeeper

POV Statement #1

Users who updated the app **need** a better workout comparison feature **because** the new interface is hard to read and even harder to compare workouts.

Ideation Methods:

SCAMPER

Substitute the new comparison feature for the old one, which worked much better. This includes all previous features, related to data comparison.

Adapt the app to compare one's workout against a previous one, or compare a week's worth, or a month worth. This feature should also be updated to a nicer UI but still have the same familiar layout users already know.

Modify the graphics to be larger and able to zoom in, so all users can see the data clearer on their phones. Have the ability to overlay different charts on top of one another.

Eliminate the data users don't look at often. Since each will have a preference, there should be an option in the settings to toggle on/off specific data.

Challenge Assumptions

List of Assumptions:

1) The new interface is not confusing or hard to compare workouts, it's just new and users aren't use to it yet.

2) The more data that is shown, the more users like the app and find it useful.

3) All users compare workouts similarly and value the same features when tracking workouts.

Challenge the Assumptions:

1) What if they have tried to use it daily and still struggle?

Solution: There should be an option to go back to the old interface if the user wants. They can explore the new features but with the option to go back to what they know.

2) What if showing more is not helpful and actually confusing?

Solution: Let users choose how their data is displayed on the page and let them choose what information they see first. This way the most important is shown up front.

3) What if each user has a unique way of doing things?

Solution: Allow users to compare workouts with a variety of stats. They should have options to customize them.

Asics Runkeeper

Methodology & Final Solutions

Scamper: This was hard to solve for because I was unsure what the new screen actually looked like. But I knew the solution would start with bringing the old feature back. I again focused on keeping what worked in the old version of the app but then wanted to improve upon it. We could do this by allowing users to compare one workout against each other or compare a month's workout against each other. Something that would also solve this issue would be allowing users to edit what gets tracked. All features should remain available, just let them pick and choose what they want to see. Rather than having the developers decided what's important to keep and what can be trashed. This solves the problem and keeps all users happy.

Challenge Assumptions: Creating a list of assumptions was helpful for solving this statement. While I was able to come up with three solutions to the three assumptions I wrote down, I do feel they relate to one another. The final idea would be to keep the old interface as an option for users to go back to. I have seen this in other apps before and always get a sense of comfort knowing I can go back to an interface I know my way around. This also led me to the second solution of letting users move information around, letting them choose how data is displayed. For some they may need bigger font or graphics. But ultimatley, letting users customize their data in a way that makes sense to them, will help this app continue to get high ratings.

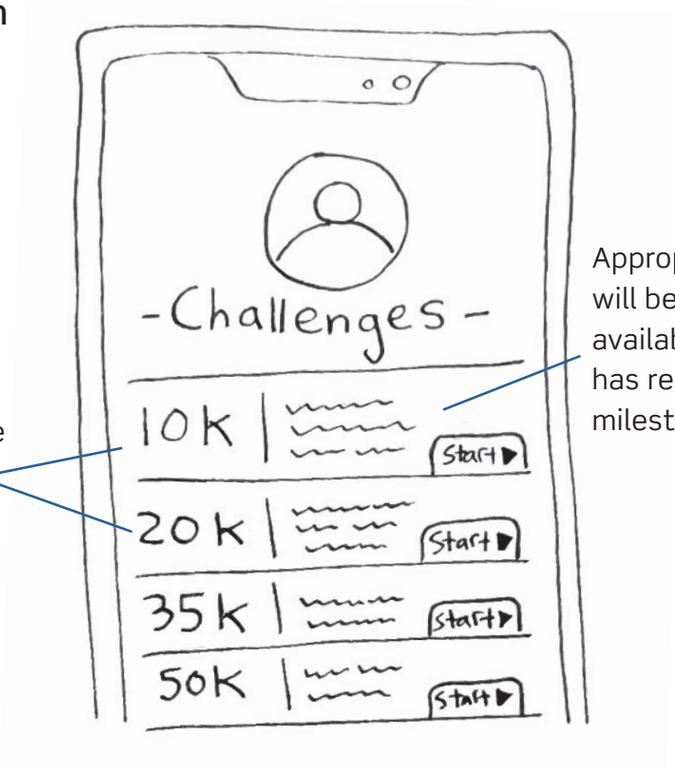
Asics Runkeeper

POV Statement #2

Users who are looking for personal goals to set **need** challenges under 50k **because** the current challenges are too high in mileage, discouraging some runners.

Ideation Methods:

Sketch



Analogies

Analogies similar to setting small, personal goals

Analogies	Why its Similar
Video Game Levels	Games get harder slowly. You must complete the first level to get to the second level.
Learning a Language	This focuses on consistency and small wins. Do not assume the user has prior knowledge.
Checking off a to-do list	Small actions need to be complete before feeling accomplishment. Users still get rewarded.
Building a brick wall	Focuses on one brick at a time, which feels more manageable.

Asics Runkeeper

Methodology & Final Solutions

Sketch: Solving this issue means including runners that are not necessary running very far. But there are still goals to be met. To solve this problem, we needed shorter running challenges but still give users a reason to track these short runs. My idea is to not only make short run challenges available but to also have them appear only when a user has tracked enough runs consistently. This gives new users a reason to use the app as much as possible. Most people think tracking your running means you must be running at least a half marathon, but the only way to work your way up to something like that would be to track your smaller runs, and this solution can help beginners do this. Making it more inclusive for every type of runner.

Analogies: The best analogy that helped me arrive at a solution was checking off a to do list. This helped me realize that completing small acts still give you a dopamine hit. But it also gets you closer to your bigger goal. Running is very similar to this but doesn't always have a reward. My solution is to have the app encourage users to run farther each time they start a run. This could be through a pop-up notification or interrupt their music, asking them if they want to add another mile or two to their workout. A virtual coach could help the user get more miles in and reward them with prizes for doing well.

Ideation Recap

My most useful technique was using the analogies method. I had never heard or used this method before, so it was all new to me. However, the ease of thinking of something similar but also different from the problem, helped me think more broadly and creatively. It took me out of my comfort zone and got me to think about how issues relate to one another and why certain solutions worked for that analogy. With that, I could suggest something similar to solve the app problem. The analogy solution from Strava's first POV statement felt groundbreaking because it came up with a way to show the same data but in a different and smaller format. It also gave users a chance to correct any errors on their end to avoid wrong information being stored. This method helped me arrive at a solution in a short amount of time while also thinking about user needs. It also felt easy going from identifying the problem to coming up with a solution.

The ideas I want to pursue are ones I think can benefit a large group of users. For MyFitnessPal, the very first sketch for the first POV statement is the most unique. This sketch is a completely new idea that gets rid of the calendar and replaces it with a diary log. After reading about this problem so much, it does seem like this is the only solution that would be 100% error free.

For Strava, after doing the Worst Possible Idea method, my solution of showing the data in a graph seemed reasonable. Like most graphs, using increments of 10 or larger is common and it will give the user enough information to continue tracking while also giving the app some leeway when calculating.

I also found my idea from RunKeeper's second POV statement inventive. My initial thought was to just provide the user with challenges that are low mileage. But when I really thought about it, I added the part about it appearing only after a certain number of runs. This way users can push themselves only after enough training. To me, these three ideas are the most tangible and can actually make a difference in user experience.