# Develop a new product idea: the full report

Example: a coffee roaster in Nairobi, Kenya, looking for its first product for people who drink coffee at home. All six stages, from the guided tour.

## The playbook at a glance

1. Who, exactly, are we designing for?
   Design for **the morning rusher**: 6 of 14 interviews, and the others could live with it
2. What is the persona's real problem?
   A problem to solve, found where what **the morning rusher** says and does disagree
3. What are all the ways we could solve it?
   72 ideas in 9 themes, written before talking
4. What happens if we change what we already make?
   23 ideas from all seven prompts, 6 of them from Eliminate and Reverse
5. Which idea goes forward?
   **Drip bags** goes forward, scoring 392
6. How would the idea make money?
   Each **box of 10** nets KES 137.50, paying back after about 17,500 sold; the weak link is a single supplier

STAGE 1 OF 6

# Who, exactly, are we designing for?

Stage 1 diagnosis

## Design for **the morning rusher**: 6 of 14 interviews, and the others could live with it

The research: **14 interviews, grouped into 3 behavior patterns.**

The primary persona: **The morning rusher, from 6 of the 14 interviews.**

The others: **The office drinker could use a product built for the morning rusher, though it is not made for them; the rest it would suit too.**

### What this may mean

One primary persona, drawn from real interviews and grouped by what people do. A product built for **the morning rusher** would also serve the others well enough.

### Investigate next

In stage 2, map what **the morning rusher** says, does, thinks and feels, and find where words and actions disagree: that is usually where the real problem is.

Alan Cooper's rule: design for one primary persona. A product that fully serves them, while the others can live with it, beats one that half-satisfies everyone.

12 interviews recorded people's own words. Keep them: the next stage sets what people say against what they do.

## The primary persona

DESIGNING FOR

the morning rusher, from 6 of 14 interviews

Primary persona

### The morning rusher

Goal

**A cup that tastes like the cafe's, made at home in the five minutes before leaving for work**

| | |
|---|---|
| Behavior | Drinks instant coffee at home on weekdays; buys cafe coffee two or three times a week at about KES 300 a cup |
| Frustrations | Ground coffee needs a press or a machine, and washing up; instant tastes flat |
| Skill level | Can boil a kettle; has never brewed coffee any other way |
| Based on | 6 of the 14 interviews |

## The interviews, grouped by behavior

| BEHAVIOR PATTERN | INTERVIEWS | WHAT THEY DO NOW |
|---|---|---|
| **The morning rusher** · primary | 6 | Drinks instant coffee at home on weekdays; buys cafe coffee two or three times a week at about KES 300 a cup |
| **The weekend brewer** | 5 | Owns a French press, but brews only on slow weekend mornings |
| **The office drinker** | 3 | Drinks whatever the office machine makes |

The highlighted row is the primary persona.

## Could the others live with it?

| | |
|---|---|
| ✓ **The weekend brewer** | Yes: a product built for the morning rusher would suit them too. |
| ~ **The office drinker** | Partly: they could use it, though it is not made for them. |

## The checks

| | |
|---|---|
| ✓ **Built from research** | 14 interviews: enough to see patterns. |

| | |
|---|---|
| ✓ **Grouped by what people do** | Every group is named for a behavior. |
| ✓ **Four answers each** | Behavior, goal, frustrations and skill level written for every group. |
| ✓ **A pattern, not a person** | Each persona is named as a pattern. |
| ✓ **One primary** | The morning rusher, and the others could live with a product built for it. |

DECISION POINT

### Take the morning rusher to stage 2

The morning rusher rests on 6 interviews, and the others could live with a product built for it. Next, find the real problem: what they say, do, think and feel.

STAGE 2 OF 6

# What is the persona's real problem?

Stage 2 diagnosis

## A problem to solve, found where what **the morning rusher** says and does disagree

The map: **3 things said, 4 actions, 2 beliefs and 2 feelings for the morning rusher.**

How the actions are known: **All 4 actions came from watching people or a diary.**

Words against actions: **1 place where what the morning rusher says and what they do disagree. That gap is usually where the real problem is.**

### What this may mean

The question comes from where what **the morning rusher** says and does disagree, and it asks for ideas without naming one.

### Investigate next

In stage 3, answer the question with as many ideas as you can: everyone writes alone first, then the group builds on them.

Says and Does are observed: heard or watched. Thinks and Feels are inferred: deduced from those, so each should note what it rests on. Fill the observed ones first.

The most repeated saying came up in 5 of the 6 interviews behind **the morning rusher**.

# The empathy map

THE MAP FOR

the morning rusher, from 6 interviews

| | Observed: heard or watched | Inferred: deduced from those |
|---|---|---|
| Words and beliefs | **Says**<br><br>"I just don't have time for proper coffee in the morning."<br>5 of the 6 said it<br><br>"Instant tastes flat, but it's quick."<br>4 of the 6 said it<br><br>"I'd be embarrassed to serve visitors instant."<br>2 of the 6 said it | **Thinks**<br><br>Proper coffee needs equipment and a skill she doesn't have<br>Rests on: From what she said, and from never having bought ground coffee<br><br>A cafe cup is a treat she has earned<br>Rests on: How she talked about her Friday cafe visit |
| Actions and emotions | **Does**<br><br>Queues up to 10 minutes at a cafe on the way to work, two or three times a week<br>Diary or data<br><br>Makes instant at home on weekdays, in under two minutes<br>Diary or data<br><br>Boils a kettle every morning, for tea or instant<br>Watched them<br><br>Offers visitors tea rather than coffee<br>Watched them | **Feels**<br><br>Guilty about what the cafe costs<br>Rests on: How she talked about money: "I know, I know, it adds up"<br><br>A little embarrassed to serve visitors instant<br>Rests on: Two said so; a third apologized for the instant she offered us |

The highlighted lines are where what they say and what they do disagree. Says and Does are observed; Thinks and Feels are inferred, so each notes what it rests on.

## Where words and actions disagree

| | |
|---|---|
| They say | "I just don't have time for proper coffee in the morning." |
| Yet they | queues up to 10 minutes at a cafe on the way to work, two or three times a week |

## The problem to solve

How might we give the morning rusher cafe-tasting coffee at home, with no equipment and nothing to wash up?

## The checks

| | |
|---|---|
| ✓ **Watched, not only asked** | All 4 actions came from watching or a diary. |
| ✓ **Words set against actions** | 1 place where what they say and what they do disagree. |
| ✓ **Inferences sourced** | Every belief and feeling notes what it rests on. |
| ✓ **A question, not a solution** | The question asks for ideas without naming one. |
| ✓ **Says who it is for** | The question names who it is for. |

DECISION POINT

### Take the question to stage 3

The question comes from what they do, not only what they say, and it names no solution. Next, find many ways to answer it.

STAGE 3 OF 6

# What are all the ways we could solve it?

Stage 3 diagnosis

## 72 ideas in 9 themes, written before talking

The session: **72 ideas in 9 themes, from 6 people.**

Writing before talking: **58 of the 72 ideas came from writing alone, in silence; 14 from building on the cards on the wall.**

The quieter people: **The two who wrote least wrote 17 of the 58 silent ideas. In a meeting where people talk in turn, most of those are never said.**

The themes: **No theme holds more than 15% of the cards: the ideas went in many directions.**

### What this may mean

A long list, from people writing alone before talking, grouped into themes with nothing ruled out yet.

### Investigate next

In stage 4, take one product you already sell and change it seven ways with SCAMPER. No product yet? Go straight to stage 5.

Osborn's four rules: defer judgment, welcome wild ideas, go for quantity, build on others' ideas. Since 1958, studies have found that people writing alone, then pooling, beat the same people talking in turn.

## The session, round by round

ANSWERING

How might we give the morning rusher cafe-tasting coffee at home, with no equipment and nothing to wash up?

| ROUND | FORMAT | IDEAS |
|---|---|---|
| **1. Silent writing** | 6 people alone, in silence, 10 minutes, one idea per card | 58 |
| **2. Read and build** | Cards on the wall; people add to each other's | 14 |
| **3. Group** | Cards sorted into themes | 9 themes |

The highlighted row is where most ideas came from.

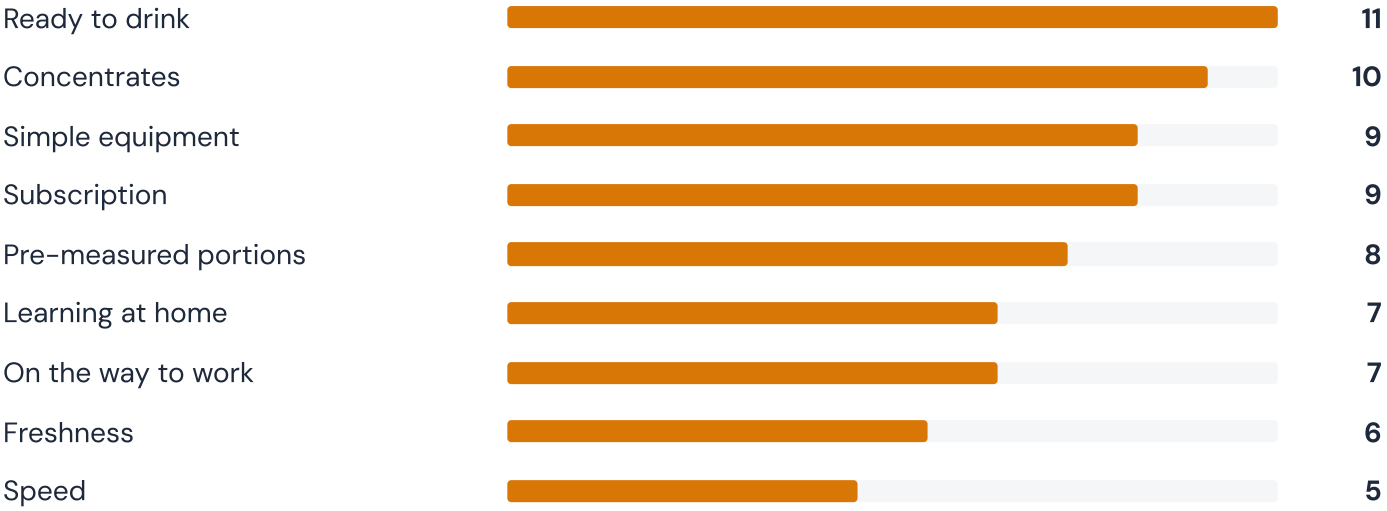
## Who wrote what in silence






The two who wrote least wrote 17 of the 58 silent ideas: in a meeting where people talk in turn, most of those would not have been said.

## The themes




▼ Ready to drink: 11 cards

- Cold brew in bottles, sold chilled in supermarkets
- Canned iced latte for the morning commute
- Ready-to-drink coffee in small cartons
- Bottled cold brew with milk, ready to drink
- Iced coffee in cans at petrol stations
- Chilled bottled coffee for the office fridge
- Ready-to-drink cold brew in a one-litre bottle
- Canned cold brew with a little sugar
- Cold brew sold by the glass at kiosks
- Iced coffee pouches to keep in the fridge
- Cold brew in a carton with a tap

▼ Concentrates: 10 cards

- Coffee concentrate sachets: add hot water
- Liquid coffee concentrate in a squeeze bottle
- Frozen coffee cubes that melt into hot milk
- Coffee concentrate in single-cup pods of liquid
- A syrup-thick coffee concentrate for one week of cups

- Concentrate sachets with milk powder already in
- Coffee concentrate sold next to milk in supermarkets
- Freeze-dried coffee crystals from our own beans
- Coffee concentrate in a ten-cup bottle for the fridge
- Concentrate sticks that dissolve in hot water

▼ Simple equipment: 9 cards

- A cheap plastic press with our first bag
- A starter kit: small press, mug and a bag of coffee
- A press that cleans itself with one rinse
- A travel mug with a press built in
- Lend customers a press for a month
- A pour-over cone that sits on any mug
- A stovetop pot sold with a guide
- A press with a grounds filter so nothing to wash
- A cup-top filter that rinses clean in seconds

▼ Subscription: 9 cards

- Monthly bean subscription with free delivery
- Subscription box with a new farm every month
- Pay monthly, coffee arrives before you run out
- Office subscription for a team's coffee
- Gift subscription for three months
- Subscription with a free press after six months
- Pause-any-time coffee subscription by SMS
- Subscription priced below three cafe cups a month
- A subscription that adjusts to how fast you drink

▼ Pre-measured portions: 8 cards

- Pre-measured portions of ground coffee in paper sachets
- One-cup portions in a resealable tin
- Portion packs for a French press: one pack, one cup
- Pre-measured scoop sachets in a box of 30
- Portion sachets sold one at a time at kiosks
- Pre-measured portions for a two-cup pot
- Ground coffee portions sized for a mug
- Daily portion packs labelled by weekday

▼ Learning at home: 7 cards

- Two-minute brewing videos on WhatsApp
- Barista lessons at the roastery on Saturdays
- A printed card: cafe taste in five steps
- Brewing guide QR code on every bag
- Free tasting at supermarkets with a barista
- A short video on grind size for beginners
- A brewing guide in Swahili and English

▼ On the way to work: 7 cards

- A coffee cart at the busiest matatu stage
- Office lobby kiosks selling our coffee
- Pre-order coffee by SMS, collect at the bus stop
- A coffee cart outside the business park gates
- Kiosk coffee at petrol stations on the commute
- Morning coffee bikes in Westlands and Upper Hill
- A cart at the train station selling cups and bags

▼ Freshness: 6 cards

- Smaller 100-gram bags that stay fresh
- Resealable bags with a one-way valve
- Nitrogen-flushed packs that keep coffee fresh for months
- Roast date printed large on every bag
- Vacuum tins that keep ground coffee fresh
- Fresh-ground coffee at the kiosk, while you wait

▼ Speed: 5 cards

- Coffee in under two minutes from a kettle
- A one-minute brew method printed on the bag
- Coffee ready while the kettle boils
- A finer grind that brews faster in a press
- Quick-brew coffee that needs no stirring

## The checks

| | |
|---|---|
| ✓ **Wrote before talking** | The session opened with silent writing: 58 ideas. |
| ✓ **Went for quantity** | 72 ideas: enough to find the less obvious ones. |

| | |
|---|---|
| ✓ **Built on each other's** | 14 ideas came from building on the cards on the wall. |
| ✓ **Everyone wrote** | Everyone in the room wrote in silence. |
| ✓ **Grouped into themes** | 9 themes, none with more than half the cards. |

DECISION POINT

## Take the ideas to stage 4

72 ideas in 9 themes, written before talking, with nothing ruled out yet. Next, change something you already make, seven ways.

STAGE 4 OF 6

# What happens if we change what we already make?

Stage 4 diagnosis

## 23 ideas from all seven prompts, 6 of them from Eliminate and Reverse

The ideas: **23 ideas from changing our 250-gram bag of ground coffee, all 7 prompts answered.**

Where they came from: **Most from Substitute and Modify (4 each); 3 from Eliminate and 3 from Reverse. Substitute and Combine gave 30%.**

New to the list: **1 idea was already on stage 3's list; the other 22 are new.**

### What this may mean

Every prompt was worked, including the two that take something away or turn it round, where the less obvious ideas usually come from.

### Investigate next

In stage 5, shortlist four to six ideas from stages 3 and 4, name the outcome they should move, and score them.

SCAMPER is Bob Eberle's 1971 arrangement of Alex Osborn's idea-spurring questions: Substitute, Combine, Adapt, Modify, Put to another use, Eliminate, Reverse.

## Ideas from each prompt

CHANGING

our 250-gram bag of ground coffee



## What came out

| PROMPT | THE QUESTION | WHAT CAME OUT |
|---|---|---|
| S **Substitute** | What could be swapped out? | • A reusable tin in place of the bag<br>• Paper packaging that can go in the compost<br>• Beans from a single farm in place of the house blend<br>• A coarser grind made for a cheap press |
| C **Combine** | What could be merged with this? | • Coffee, milk powder and sugar in one sachet, much like instant<br>• The bag sold with a small press as a starter kit (already on stage 3's list)<br>• A bag of coffee and a bag of tea leaves in one gift box |
| A **Adapt** | What works elsewhere that we could borrow? | • The tea bag: coffee steeped in the cup<br>• Cafe loyalty cards: a free bag after nine<br>• Wine labels: tasting notes and the farm on the bag |
| M **Modify** | What could be bigger, smaller or a different shape? | • A 100-gram bag for first-time buyers<br>• A 1-kilo bag for offices<br>• A stronger roast for milky coffee<br>• A bag shaped to stand on a shelf |
| P **Put to another use** | Who else could use this, or where else? | • Offices, buying by the kilo<br>• Hotels, for coffee in the rooms<br>• Used grounds sold to gardeners as compost |
| E **Eliminate** | What could be removed entirely? | • The brewing equipment: a paper filter of coffee that hangs on the cup, filled with hot water<br>• The grinding: whole beans dropped<br>• The shop: sold straight from the roastery website |
| R **Reverse** | What if the order or roles ran the other way? | • Coffee delivered to homes weekly, instead of bought in shops<br>• Customers choose the blend, we roast it for them<br>• Sold in the evening for the next morning, ready-ground |

## The checks

| | |
|---|---|
| ✓ **A real product** | Our 250-gram bag of ground coffee, which you sell today. |
| ✓ **Every prompt answered** | All seven prompts gave at least one idea. |
| ✓ **Eliminate and Reverse** | 3 ideas from Eliminate, 3 ideas from Reverse. |

| | |
|---|---|
| ✓ **Balanced** | 30% of the ideas came from Substitute and Combine. |
| ✓ **New to the list** | 1 idea already on stage 3's list. |

DECISION POINT

## Take the ideas to stage 5

23 ideas from all seven prompts, each tied to the prompt that produced it. Next, shortlist from stages 3 and 4, and score them.

STAGE 5 OF 6

# Which idea goes forward?

Stage 5 diagnosis

## **Drip bags** goes forward, scoring 392

The top idea: **Drip bags, scoring 392 (Impact 7, Confidence 7 after a test, Ease 8).**

Next: **Steeped coffee bags, scoring 240: 39% behind.**

Tested: **Drip bags: Confidence 6 before the test, 7 after.**

### What this may mean

The top idea leads on the scores of everyone who scored, with no untested disagreement about its evidence.

### Investigate next

In stage 6, put **Drip bags** on a Business Model Canvas and check it can make money.

ICE (Impact, Confidence, Ease) was popularised by Sean Ellis for ranking growth experiments; Confidence is the factor that keeps a score honest.

## The ranking

SCORED AGAINST

Sales to home drinkers, by 4 people

| IDEA | IMPACT | CONFIDENCE | EASE | ICE SCORE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Drip bags**<br>SCAMPER: Eliminate | 7 | ~~6~~ 7<br>after a test | 8 | **392**<br>336 before |
| **Steeped coffee bags**<br>SCAMPER: Adapt | 6 | 5<br>4 to 6 | 8 | **240** |
| **Weekly home delivery**<br>SCAMPER: Reverse | 5 | 5<br>4 to 6 | 6 | **150** |
| **Coffee concentrate sachets**<br>Brainstorm: Concentrates | 7 | 3<br>2 to 4 | 5 | **105** |
| **Cold brew in bottles**<br>Brainstorm: Ready to drink | 8 | 4<br>3 to 5 | 3 | **96** |

Each factor is averaged across the people who scored; the ICE score multiplies the three. The highlighted row goes forward.



| | |
|---|---|
| Coffee concentrate sachets | 105 |
| Cold brew in bottles | 96 |

## What goes forward

Going forward

### Drip bags

ICE score, on Sales to home drinkers

**392 = Impact 7 × Confidence 7 × Ease 8**

| | |
|---|---|
| What it rests on | 200 hand-filled bags in two office kiosks for one week: Sold out in four days. Confidence 6 before, 7 after. |
| Set aside for now | Steeped coffee bags; Weekly home delivery; Coffee concentrate sachets; Cold brew in bottles |

## The checks

| | |
|---|---|
| ✓ **The outcome named first** | Impact was scored against Sales to home drinkers. |
| ✓ **Scored alone** | 4 people scored alone; the factors are their averages. |
| ✓ **Disagreements tested** | 1 idea tested where people disagreed. |
| ✓ **A clear lead** | The top idea leads by 39%. |
| ✓ **A shortlist of four to six** | 5 ideas on the shortlist. |

DECISION POINT

### Take Drip bags to stage 6

Drip bags leads with 392, its Confidence settled by a test. Next, check it can make money: put it on a Business Model Canvas.

STAGE 6 OF 6

# How would the idea make money?

Stage 6 diagnosis

## Each **box of 10** nets KES 137.50, paying back after about 17,500 sold; the weak link is a single supplier

The canvas: **All 9 blocks filled.**

The lines: **Every revenue stream traces back to a customer segment, and every segment is offered something.**

Each **box of 10**: **Nets KES 137.50 after the reseller's 25% and the cost of KES 350.**

Payback: **The upfront spend of KES 2,400,000 pays back after 17,455 (about 17,500) units sold.**

The weak link: **1 partner with no second source. If it fails, the business stops.**

### What this may mean

The model works on paper, but rests on one partner nothing else could replace.

### Investigate next

Line up a second source before spending on anything hard to undo. Then test the riskiest assumption.

Alexander Osterwalder's nine blocks: the customer on the right, what the business needs on the left, money along the bottom.

# The canvas

THE IDEA

Drip bags, from stage 5

### Key Partnerships

- One importer of the paper filters, the only one in Kenya
  No second source

### Key Activities

- Roasting, grinding, filling and sealing the bags

### Key Resources

- The roastery
- A bag-filling machine, KES 2.4 million

### Value Propositions

- A cafe-tasting cup in three minutes, with only a kettle and a cup

### Customer Relationships

- Self-service; a code on the box links to a 30-second how-to

### Channels

- The two supermarket chains it already sells to
- Office kiosks
- Its website

### Customer Segments

- Morning rushers: office workers in Nairobi who drink instant at home

### Cost Structure

- Coffee, KES 18 a bag
- Filter, KES 12 a bag
- Packing, KES 5 a bag
- Supermarkets keep 25% of the shelf price
- The bag-filling machine, KES 2.4 million

### Revenue Streams

- Boxes of 10 at KES 650, against KES 300 for one cafe cup

The outlined block is the weak link. What the business needs on the left, the customer on the right, money along the bottom.

# The numbers, for one unit

| | |
|---|---|
| Price of one box of 10 | KES 650 |
| Less the reseller's 25% | -KES 162.50 |
| Less the cost of making it | -KES 350 |
| **Each box of 10 nets** | **KES 137.50** |
| Upfront spend | KES 2,400,000 |
| **Pays back after** | **17,455 sold (about 17,500)** |

## The assumption to test first

## Morning rushers will buy a second box

## The checks

| | |
|---|---|
| ✓ **Customer side filled** | Who it is for, what it offers them and what they pay are all on the page. |
| ✓ **Every revenue stream traced to a segment** | Each revenue stream has a segment that pays it. |
| ✓ **Every segment offered something** | Each segment has a value proposition. |
| ✓ **The left side costed** | Each cost traces to what causes it, and the unit is costed. |
| ✓ **Each unit makes money** | Each box of 10 nets KES 137.50. |
| ! **No single point of failure** | One importer of the paper filters, the only one in Kenya: no second source. |

DECISION POINT

### Line up a second source

One importer of the paper filters, the only one in Kenya: if it fails, the business stops. Find a second source before spending on anything hard to undo, then test the assumption.

Made with the free Business Model Canvas Tool at whichframework.org/tools/business-model-canvas.html. Figures are from your data; the diagnosis describes what such patterns often point to, not proven causes.