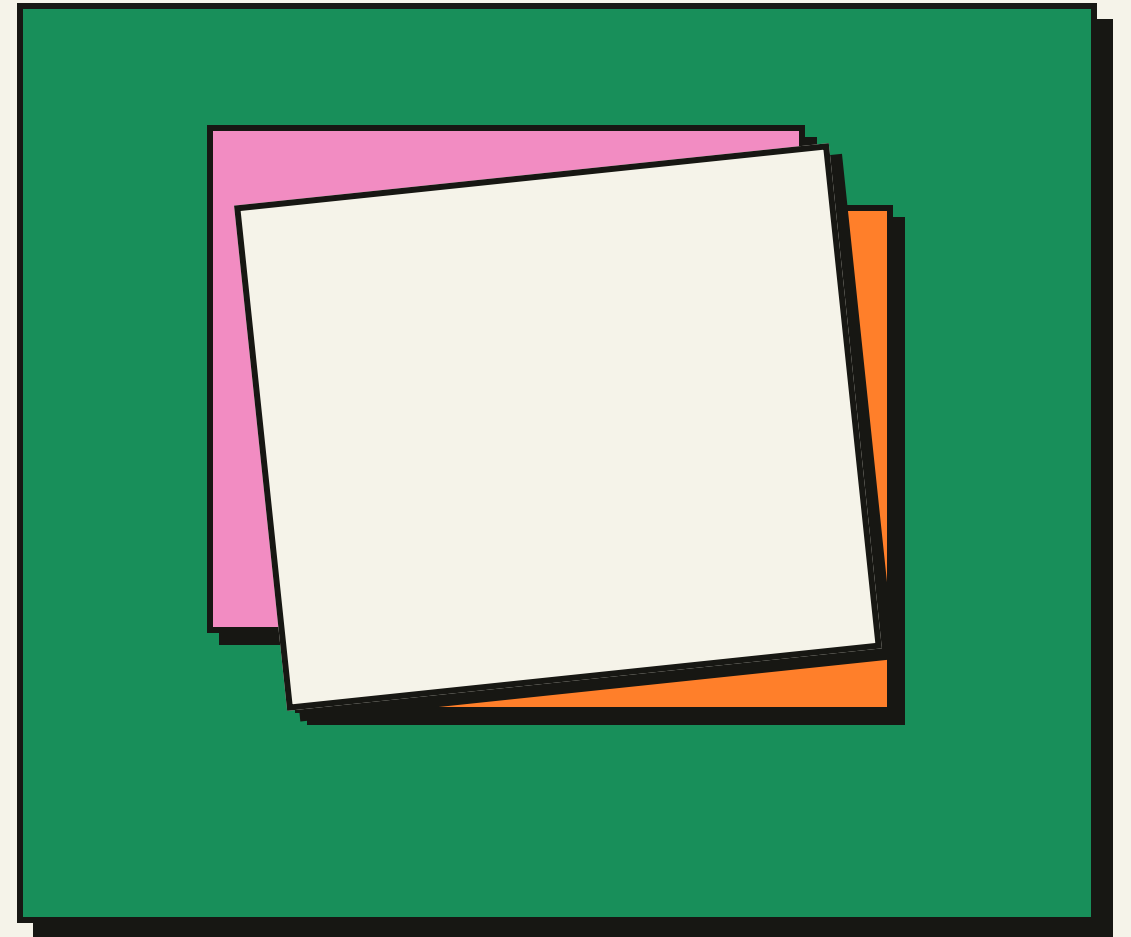


A SYSTEM WORTH EXPLAINING

# FROM A GOOD QUESTION TO A USEFUL SYSTEM.

A fictional service–design workflow: define the problem, make the handoffs visible, and keep the evidence close to the decision.



# FOUR STEPS. ONE CLEAR HANDOFF.

## 01

### DISCOVER

Collect the constraints and observe the actual work.

## 02

### DEFINE

Agree on one decision and the evidence it needs.

## 03

### DEVELOP

Prototype the smallest useful system.

## 04

### DELIVER

Review the handoff and document what changed.

# HOW THE PIECES FIT.

## 01 The experience

The interface people see and the actions they can take.

## 02 The coordination

The rules that connect a request to the next responsible person.

## 03 The service

The capabilities and source data behind each action.

## 04 The foundation

The operational constraints and safeguards that keep the system dependable.

04

PURPOSE AND BOUNDARIES

# MAKE THE DECISION CLEARER, NOT THE SYSTEM BIGGER.

A useful process has a defined outcome and a visible boundary. This illustrative service workflow starts with the decision a team needs to make.



Source / Fictional FIELDWORK process brief; illustrative operating guidance

05

INPUTS THAT MAKE THE WORK POSSIBLE

START WITH EVIDENCE THE NEXT PERSON CAN USE.

A short, reliable evidence pack beats a large collection without provenance. Each input carries context, a source and an owner.

|    |                       |                                                                                                                                                |                              |
|----|-----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 01 | OBSERVED WORK         | Describe a recent real request, the route it followed and where the next action became unclear.<br>Separate observations from interpretations. | Contributor / Research lead  |
| 02 | OPERATING CONSTRAINTS | Record access limits, required approvals, dependencies and known capacity constraints. Mark assumptions that remain unverified.                | Contributor / Operations     |
| 03 | DECISION BRIEF        | Name the decision, intended user, deadline and evidence that would change the current view. Keep the scope small enough to test.               | Contributor / Decision owner |

Source / Fictional FIELDWORK process brief; illustrative operating guidance

06

RESPONSIBILITY AT EVERY HANDOFF

ONE ACCOUNTABLE PERSON AT EVERY TRANSITION.

Responsibility describes the next observable action. It is not a list of everyone who might have an opinion.

|    |                              |                                                                                                                                 |                                |
|----|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 01 | DISCOVERY TO<br>DEFINITION   | The research lead packages observations and open questions. The service lead confirms which decision the evidence will support. | Accountable / Service<br>lead  |
| 02 | DEFINITION TO<br>DEVELOPMENT | The decision owner agrees on scope and success evidence. The maker turns that agreement into a small, reviewable prototype.     | Accountable / Product<br>lead  |
| 03 | DEVELOPMENT TO<br>DELIVERY   | The delivery owner checks the artifact, records remaining risks and names the person responsible for support after handoff.     | Accountable / Delivery<br>lead |

Source / Fictional FIELDWORK process brief; illustrative operating guidance

07

EVIDENCE BEFORE THE NEXT STAGE

# USE EVIDENCE TO OPEN THE NEXT DOOR.

Each checkpoint asks one distinct question. A stage is ready when its receiver can act, not when a meeting has taken place.

01

PROBLEM UNDERSTOOD

A concrete request and its context are documented. The team can distinguish the user need from a proposed solution.

Gate / Discovery review

02

DECISION FRAMED

Scope, constraints and the evidence required for a choice are explicit. Unresolved assumptions are named.

Gate / Scope agreement

03

SYSTEM TESTED

The smallest useful prototype is tried against the actual handoff. Observed failures and changes are recorded.

Gate / Working review

04

HANDOFF ACCEPTED

The receiver can locate the artifact, explain its limits and identify the next owner without another briefing.

Gate / Acceptance check

Source / Fictional FIELDWORK process brief; illustrative operating guidance

08

WHEN THE NORMAL PATH BREAKS

DESIGN THE RECOVERY PATH BEFORE YOU NEED IT.

An exception should lead to a clear action without hiding the original problem. Keep the evidence and the decision trail intact.

01

EVIDENCE IS MISSING

Pause the affected decision, record what is unknown and assign the smallest investigation that can resolve it. Do not convert a guess into a requirement.

Escalation / Decision owner

02

A HANDOFF IS REJECTED

Name the missing acceptance condition, return the artifact to its current owner and agree on a focused revision. Keep unrelated work moving.

Escalation / Delivery lead

Source / Fictional FIELDWORK process brief; illustrative operating guidance

09

WHAT THE TEAM ACTUALLY PRODUCES

LEAVE BEHIND THINGS PEOPLE CAN WORK WITH.

Every stage creates an artifact with a specific purpose. The examples here are deliberately lightweight and editable.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <div>01</div> <div>OBSERVATION NOTE</div> <div>A dated account of what happened, who observed it, the source material and the interpretation still to be tested.</div> <div>Used by / Service lead</div> | <div>02</div> <div>DECISION RECORD</div> <div>The options considered, the constraint that mattered, the current choice and the evidence that would justify revisiting it.</div> <div>Used by / Whole team</div> |
| <div>03</div> <div>HANDOFF PACKET</div> <div>The working artifact, instructions to inspect it, known limits and a named receiving owner.</div> <div>Used by / Delivery owner</div>                       | <div>04</div> <div>REVIEW LOG</div> <div>The original expectation, the observed result, the change made and the next follow-up date.</div> <div>Used by / Operations</div>                                      |

Source / Fictional FIELDWORK process brief; illustrative operating guidance

10

A USABLE HANDOFF CONTRACT

# THE HANDOFF IS A CONTRACT FOR THE NEXT ACTION.

Agree on what the receiving person needs to begin. A link alone is not enough if the context and limits stay in someone’s head.

|    |                          |                                                                                                                                 |                            |
|----|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 01 | ARTIFACT AND LOCATION    | Provide the exact working file or repository location and the version under review. Avoid ambiguous links to a changing folder. | Required / Producing owner |
| 02 | ACCEPTANCE EVIDENCE      | Record which conditions were checked, how they were checked and what remains outside the tested scope.                          | Required / Reviewer        |
| 03 | OPERATING RESPONSIBILITY | Name the receiving owner, first action, support route and condition for escalating back to the producing team.                  | Required / Receiving owner |

Source / Fictional FIELDWORK process brief; illustrative operating guidance

11

INTRODUCE THE SYSTEM DELIBERATELY

INTRODUCE THE SYSTEM IN A SMALL, HONEST SEQUENCE.

Use an explicit trial instead of assuming adoption. Each step should produce evidence that helps decide whether to continue.

01

CHOOSE ONE ROUTE

Pick a recurring request with a visible handoff and willing participants. Document its current behaviour.

Stage / Baseline

02

RUN THE NEW PATH

Use the proposed artifacts and ownership rules on a small number of real requests. Keep a record of friction.

Stage / Trial

03

REVIEW THE GAPS

Compare observations with the intended handoff. Fix unclear responsibilities before expanding the workflow.

Stage / Revision

04

EXPAND DELIBERATELY

Extend only after the receiving team can use the process. Assign maintenance and a review date.

Stage / Adoption

Source / Fictional FIELDWORK process brief; illustrative operating guidance

12

KEEP THE FEEDBACK LOOP OPEN

A PROCESS IMPROVES WHEN ITS ASSUMPTIONS STAY  
VISIBLE.

Keep the feedback loop small enough to maintain. The aim is a better next decision, not a report that no one revisits.

01

WHAT CHANGED?

Record one observable change in the handoff, including the source and the reporting window.

Review / Delivery owner

02

WHAT STILL FAILS?

Collect exceptions and workarounds. Look for repeated constraints rather than blaming individual behaviour.

Review / Operations

03

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Choose one bounded revision, assign an owner and state when the team will inspect the result.

Review / Service lead

Source / Fictional FIELDWORK process brief; illustrative operating guidance