ThinkLink

Ali Sojudi, Ben Lynett-Howes, Himani Singh, Rongda Yu

ThinkLink

THE PROBLEM:

The sheer volume of information on the internet is enough to overwhelm even the most curious of learners. Learners would benefit from more personalized, interactive instruction.

THE SOLUTION:

We are developing an app that will allow users to connect with expert level instructors that will be able to answer any questions that they might have.

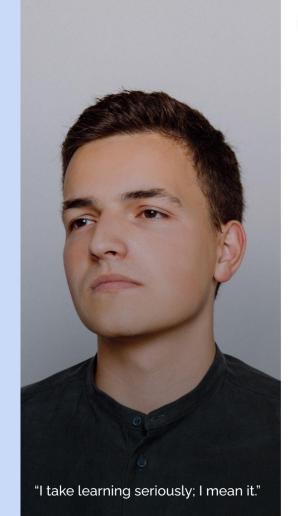
TOOLS: Miro, Figma, Google Office, Slack, Zoom



Research

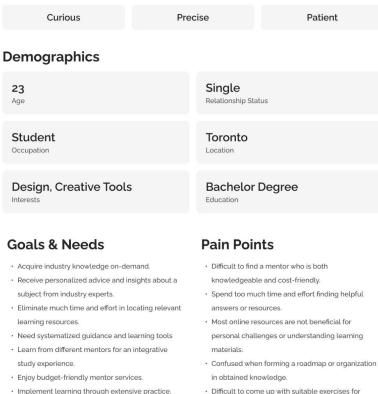
Rongda Yu

Proto Persona



Leslie Alexander

Personalities



 Difficult to come up with suitable exercises for applying learned knowledge.

Research Plan

Objectives

- 1. Discover the learning process and experience with learning tools and mentoring services from learners
- 2. Understand learners' expectations before, during, and after they connect with industry experts.
- 3. Understand the frustrations or things that prevent learners from efficiently learning or seeking help.

Research Questions

- How can we help learners efficiently seek affordable help?
- How do we help learners find suitable tutors/mentors?
- How can we solve the needs identified in learners' learning process?
- What patterns can we discover from learners' expectations when they connect with industry experts?
- What can we learn from or offer improvements on other learning tools and services?
- What are the difficulties that learners encounter when studying?



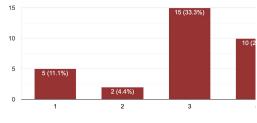
Interviews and Survey

45 responses

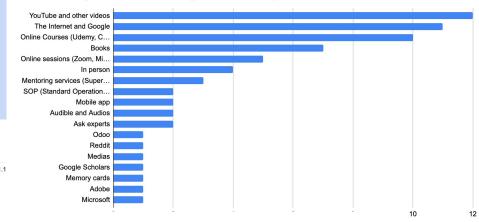
-32 (71.1 Visual Auditory -10 (22.2%) -21 (46.7%) Kinesthetic (learn by doing) Reading/Writing -24 (53.3%) Logical/analytical 16 (35.6%) Social/linguistic -13 (28.9%) Solitary (solo learners) -5 (11.1%) Nature -3 (6.7%) 10 20 30 0



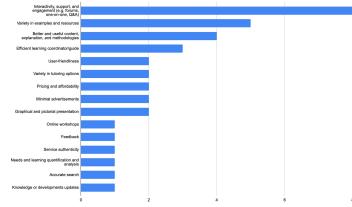
What type of learner are you? (select all that apply)





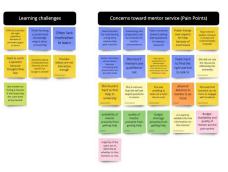


What things that you think the tools and services could do better?



Lack of interactivity in online courses.

- Not so personalized learning options.
- **Disorganized learning** resources.
- Lack of guidance.
- Trust issues with mentors





Think self- reflections are important learning contributors	Prefer detailed text paragraphs over interactive conversations for answers	Think good learning environment are helpful for learning, e.g. quiet upace	Clear outcomes or goals would help them learm
Prefer interactive conversation cver detailed text panagraphs for answers	think quantification helps identifying learning trends and areas for improvement	Course coordinator is height for administrative tasks and learning management	Encouragement and motivators are helpful for learning.
Deadlines and assignments are helpful for learn and practice	Think mentor sessions are good for personalized questions	She finds case by step instruction essential for math problems	likes interactive learning



Love to quantify learning and track successes	Think budger is not important in terms of the value you get from mentors.	Open to new note-taking methods or apps	Interested in seeing past learning achievement
Used to think note taking was important until it is proved to be inefficient	She attributes failing a cust in university to not having a tutor at the time	rather to get help from an expert than a friend	She may give up on a challenge if the can't find the appropriate researces
She likes group projects because they are interactive	make a connection/ social bond with mentor	willing to pay for solution	apps and mentors invast be easy to understand and easy to access

Knowledge Retention		
Think visual studies help retain knowledge	Think online courses help retain and reinforce knowledge	Think writing helps knowledge retention
Use memory deck to retain knowledge	Think reading is hard to retain knowledge	

Seek	help from p	eople
Always try to ask people for help with a challenge	Seek help from family if no one can answer an important question	The last resort is to turn questions to friends
Anapt task personalitiest armains front samesine when the specifier is	Der verställ offen kumme a professor or dassmalte für matamatiens in	needs someone to answer

		Learnir	ig Tools		
YouTube videos and online materials are helpful learning tools.	Learn from YouTube videos	Learn from social media apps (RED)	Always try to search a video for learning	Use Microsoft Word for essay writing and note taking	Use Adob Illustrato to practic design
Learn a discipline through dedicated learning apps	Learn from random articles and YouTube videos	Primarily use google to seek answers	Learn from online course platforms, e.g. Coursera, Skillshare	Find anowers through digital libraries if free resources are insufficient	She has most used free Youb videos or ratio on help from friendu/fumil
ask friends and family for answers	She identifies most closely with visual learning style	Nidentify most classify with the manipulariting torning style because this the most interactive	Learning tools: online courses e.g.: Linkdin	likes to read first then ask question from mentor/tutor	use goog to seek answers
YouTube as learning tool	Learning tools: google search	reading/writing to read and make notes	visual learner	Kinaesthetic learner	She uses Instagram an youtube for 0 projects arous the house
She has always taken thorough notes	Previous experience with butors were through school	prefer knowledge base to solution base	Learning tools: YouTube	She used tutors throughout her time as a student	Google. Friends an family are th topmost go preference
uses youtube for finding solutions	Google, friends and family, Instructors are the most preferred tools	yes/tube, Google, Udeny are the most used apps.	Users prefer googling majority of times for solutions	he finds consolidated platterin the udeny benefical for learning	

7

Definition

Ben Lynett-Howes

Problem Statement

The volume of resources and information available for free on the internet is not well suited to answer specific, complex questions that learners have.

User Insight

During our interviews, we found that learners would benefit from easy access to one-on-one, expert instruction in their learning.

The main value that we would be providing would be two-fold;

- 1) Learners are able to have their specific questions answered in a way that makes sense to them and ask any follow up questions that they have.
- 2) Thanks to ThinkLink's screening process for our experts, learners can be confident that the information that they are receiving is valid.

We anchored our ideation process by coming up with the following User Persona



Tim, 28 years old Junior Accountant

Behaviors

Spends 10 hours per day at work. Likes to watch sports and play music on his free time. He tries to devote 10 hours per week to studying for professional designations.

Needs/Goals

He is working towards achieving his CPA designation. Wants to make the most out of the time he spends studying. Wants to know that he is getting the best information possible. Wants his concerns to be addressed by experienced industry professionals. Does not have time to sign up for a full accounting course to supplement his learning.

Here is an example of how our app would provide value to a learner like Tim:



While studying for his CPA exam, Tim reaches a question that he cannot answer. finds that the answers are not adequate to



ThinkLink generates a list of validated finance and accounting experts that are qualified to help Tim out.



He googles the answer to his question, but address the specific problem he is having.



Tim is presented with several experts at various rates.



He tries a Youtube tutorial but finds that it is too long to watch in its entirety, and he is unsure if it will address the specific nature of his question.



He selects Susan, a certified professional accountant who charges \$50 per hour.



Tim decided to find a Tutor to help him with his problem. He installs ThinkLink and signs up.



Tim is able to book a session with Susan for later that night.



He proceeds to book a session by entering the subject matter in which he hopes to receive instruction into the search bar.



After his session is complete, Tim hangs up from the call and gives Susan a 5 star rating.



Ideation

Rongda Yu

l like				
I like the Package deals offered based on the type of course, like single, monthly, annually.	l wish l can leave reviews for my past mentors	l like that tutors are vetted	I like how online courses helps me retain and reinforce knowledge	
I like that you are certified for every course you finish and that is valued in the job market.	l like to choose between online and in- person services	I wish I could see the mentor's rating prior to selecting them	l like if first session would be free of charge	
l like to see response time	l like tutors have badges so I can choose best one	l like that I can add tutors to my favourite list	l like to search for my topic easily	

		l wish		
I wish the app have progress tracker or reminders that encourage me to Jearn	I wish the app offers goals and digital rewards that encourage me to learn	I wish there is an easily accessible place that can save all my questions for my upcoming mentor session	I wish there is a mentoring history so that I can follow-up with my favorite mentors	I wish I can credit my favorite mentors by offering digital rewars or promote their only recognition so that th are happy to stay in bouch with me.
Twelth I can learn more about a manter so that on total twee (e.g. predeve videos, student motes), parter reveaus, enducational background, professional experience, e(c)	l wish l can filter mentors by abilities and qualifications	l wish l can like or follow an awesome mentor	I wish I can learn more about the platform and its great mentor services	I wish there are various mentor price tiers and options
l wish l can filter mentors by price	I wish the app organizes and pushes great resources of a given topic	I wish there are experts who can suggest milestones or roadmaps for my learning	I wish I can address my needs and expectations before the mentor session (e.g. I hope to get recognition for my work)	I wish there is a long-term mento who can create learning path an guide me
I wish I can filter mentors by duration and frequency (long- term, short-term, one-time, etc.)	I wish the app recommends helpful learning tools and tips for a given topic	l wish I can write down self- reflection or what I Ve learned after each mentor session	I wish that mentors are connecting with me in a quiet space	l wish then are goal trackers
I wish the lectures between the mentor and students are recorded for reviewing it anytime.	I wish there were group sessions to reduce costs	I wish the app could recommend free resources as well as connecting users with experts	I wish a mentor could assess my skill/knowledge before recommending the best option	

What if			
What if there is an app that can generate a systemized knowledge map given a specific subject	What if no schedule is needed and I can talk to a mentor on-demand	What if there is an assistant that helps me phrase better questions when a discussion topic was chosen	What if there are mentors who volunteer to help me without charging any fees
What if a system can validate free online resources for me	What if I can foster a cute digital learning bot and raise its levels only by achieving learning goals so that I can stay motivated	What if I can see quantification of my past learning achievements to help identify trends and point of improvements	What if the app transcribes mentor's speech into notes or step-by-step instructions so that can review them later
What if the app sets up a plan based on the goals I want to achieve	What if the app offers various ways of learning (e.g. mentors, interactive videos and audios, text-based articles, etc.)	What if there are interactive guest lectures by industry experts of specific fields.	

I wish I could	I wish I can	I wish I can learn more about a mentor so that I
see the mentor's rating prior to selecting them	leave reviews for my past mentors	can studt Dimm (e.g. preview videos, studient reviews, performance metrics, curator reviews, educational baloground, professional experience, ef.c.)
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	Persona	lization	
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I wish that mentors are connecting with me in a quiet space	I like that you are certified for every course you finish and that is valued in the job market	I wish the students should be graded based on the course undertaken and Assignments	

Services			
What if no schedule is needed and I can talk to a mentor on-demand	What if the app offers various ways of learning (e.g. mentors, interactive videos and audios, text-based articles, e(c.)	I like to choose between online and in- person services	l like to search for my topic easily
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l wish I can learn more about the platform and its great mentor services	What if there is an app that can generate a systemized knowledge map given a specific subject	I wish there is an on demand mentoring 24X7	

Favorites/Collection		
l like that l can add tutors to my favourite list	l wish l can like or follow an awesome mentor	
I wish there is a mentoring history so that I can follow-up with my favorite mentors		

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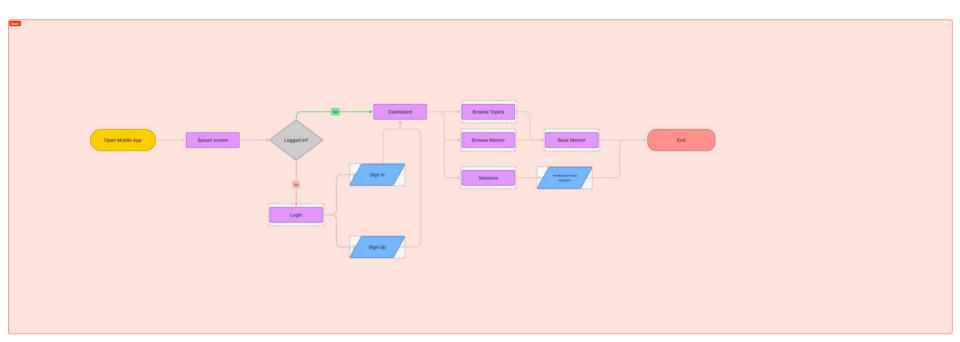
Promotions				
l like if there is a free Demo session before enrolment.	I like the Package deals offered based on the type of course, like single, monthly, annually.	I like if first session would be free of charge		
What if there are mentors who volunteer to help me without charging any fees	I wish there were group sessions to reduce costs			



COMPLEXITY

User Flow

All User Flows Link



Take a look behind the scenes

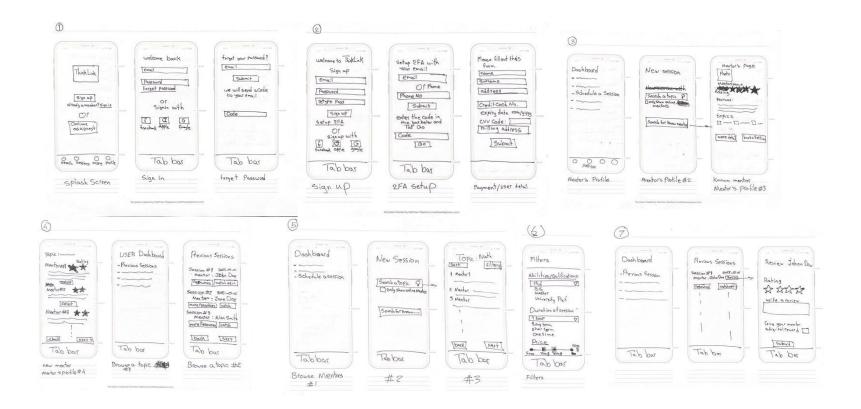
<u>Click here for a behind the scenes look at our</u> <u>ideation process.</u>



Prototyping

Ali Sojudi

Sketches



Digital Wireframes

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Low fidelity prototype link

Testing and Iterating Himani Singh

Guerilla Testing Plan & Notes

Product Under Test

ThinkLink is a learners app, that allows users to connect with expert mentors based on their knowledge levels.

Business Case

What are the benefits? We are asking people to try using our app that we are working on, so we can see whether it works as intended. Why are we doing this? We are doing this to help us improve our app with honest feedbacks from our users. What are the risks of not testing?

Testing helps us understand our flaws in an app from user perspectives. Based on them iterations are made.

Test Objectives

We are trying to determine how easy it is to sign-up for an app, book a mentor, access additional resources, and leave a review for a mentor.

Participants

We carried out our user testing on 5 participants. Our users were from different demographic backgrounds.

Tasks

- Is it easy for users to sign-up for the app?
- Can users easily book a session with a mentor?

•

- Can users access the additional resources offered after they complete a lesson?
- Can users easily leave a review for mentors?

Feedbacks

- 'Continue has a guest' feature does not lead to the right page
- Two factor authentication should be a mandatory pop-up after you click sign up
- Show up-coming sessions on the dashboard after they are booked
- Add functionality to the 'additional resources' feature
- dashboard button needs to be functional on the Mentor's Profile page
- more details button on mentor's profile leads back to sign in page.

0-10 mins Welcome/Introduction 5 min Signing the consent forms

5-10 mins Pre-Task interview

Procedure

20-25 mins Carry out Task

5-10 mins Conclusion

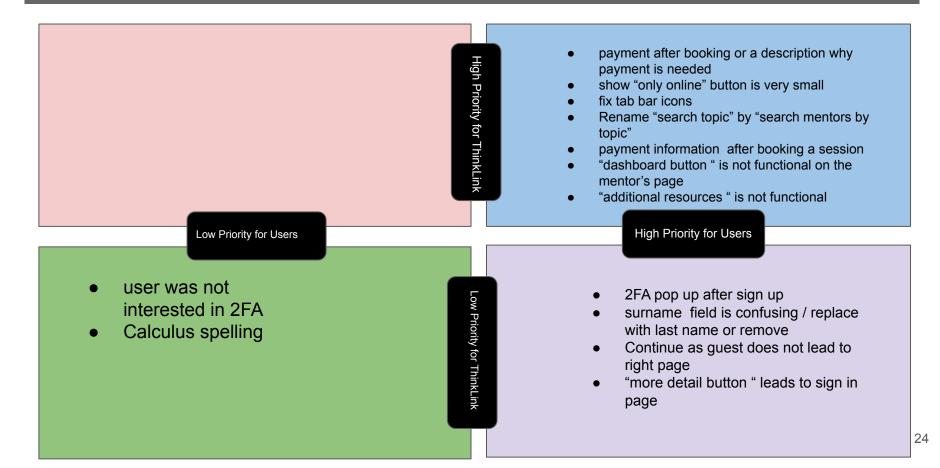
Key Learning from User Test

- Two factor authentication should be a mandatory pop-up after you click sign up
- Add functionality to the 'additional resources' feature
- User attempts to access additional resources through the dashboard, but failed to open them due to errors in our prototype..
- User expresses that she was confusing of why there is a back button in User Homepage (Dashboard), and this back button leads her to the last step in the sign-up process.
- User expresses that they expect to see a list of topics instead of mentors because the search bar says "Search a topic". It confuses user.
- Dashboard button needs to be functional on the Mentor's Profile page
- More details button on mentor's profile leads back to sign in page

Click here for User Testing Plan Link.

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1fMTdeBni_ToHGmhBas4MpsmzYRyIXoBQxDj0NF-spHg/edit#gid=872870965

Iterations Made Based on User Test

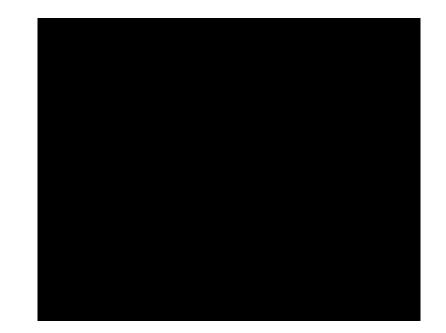


iOS Prototype

iOS Prototype







Final Thoughts / Conclusion

We believe that ThinkLink would provide tremendous value to all learners. It would be particularly valuable to those learners who desire to learn at their own pace and according to their own schedule, but still want the benefit of one-on-one instruction.

The next step for development on this app would be shorter 'micro-sessions', where users can have specific, complex questions answered by live mentors within minutes of making the request.