

UX Personas That Work

Guide to Creating User Personas
that Help Achieve Business Goals

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What are User Personas?

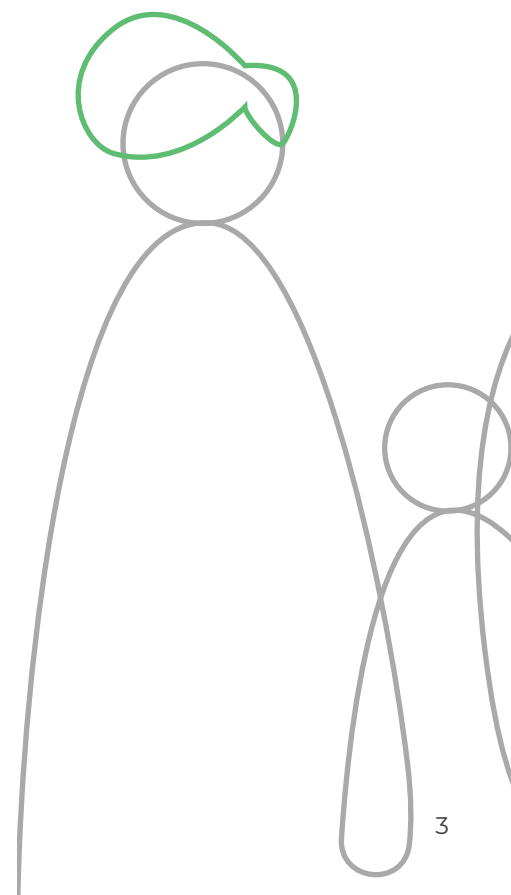
User personas are **fictional characters** used by designers to gain insights into the different types of users.

Personas are created by designers on the basis of user data to help reveal more about user characteristics, needs, goals, what delights them, or even what puts them off.

Designers create these fictional characters as user personas – each of these personas represent different user types, their perspectives, behavior, and what they do with products in relevant contexts.

These personas are useful while **defining user journeys**, and further in the design process, even test prototypes on.

However, before the personas are drafted, the real challenge lies in identifying the right user groups which will help in arriving at the right results.

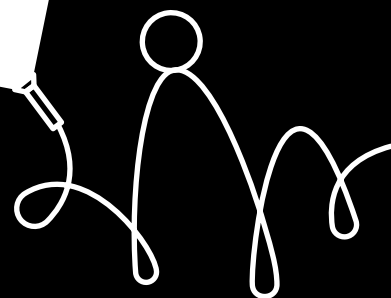


How are Personas Useful?

Personas are crucial in the process of **building empathy** with target users. They help in shedding light on the users' world and their interactions with other stakeholders in the system.

They help designers to make **design decisions** based on the persona's/user group's exact needs and gauge the efficacy of the designs through their eyes.

Using personas also lets the stakeholders avoid designing for themselves or stretching generic users to fit designs.



It is important to note that though personas are fictional, they are always derived from observing actual users, and not imaginary entities.

Name

AGE

QUOTE

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GENDER

DESIGNATION

Motivation

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QUALITIES

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Goal

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.....
.....

Frustrations

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Personality

Extrovert

Introvert

.....

Sensing

Intuition

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Thinking

Feeling

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Judging

Perceiving

.....

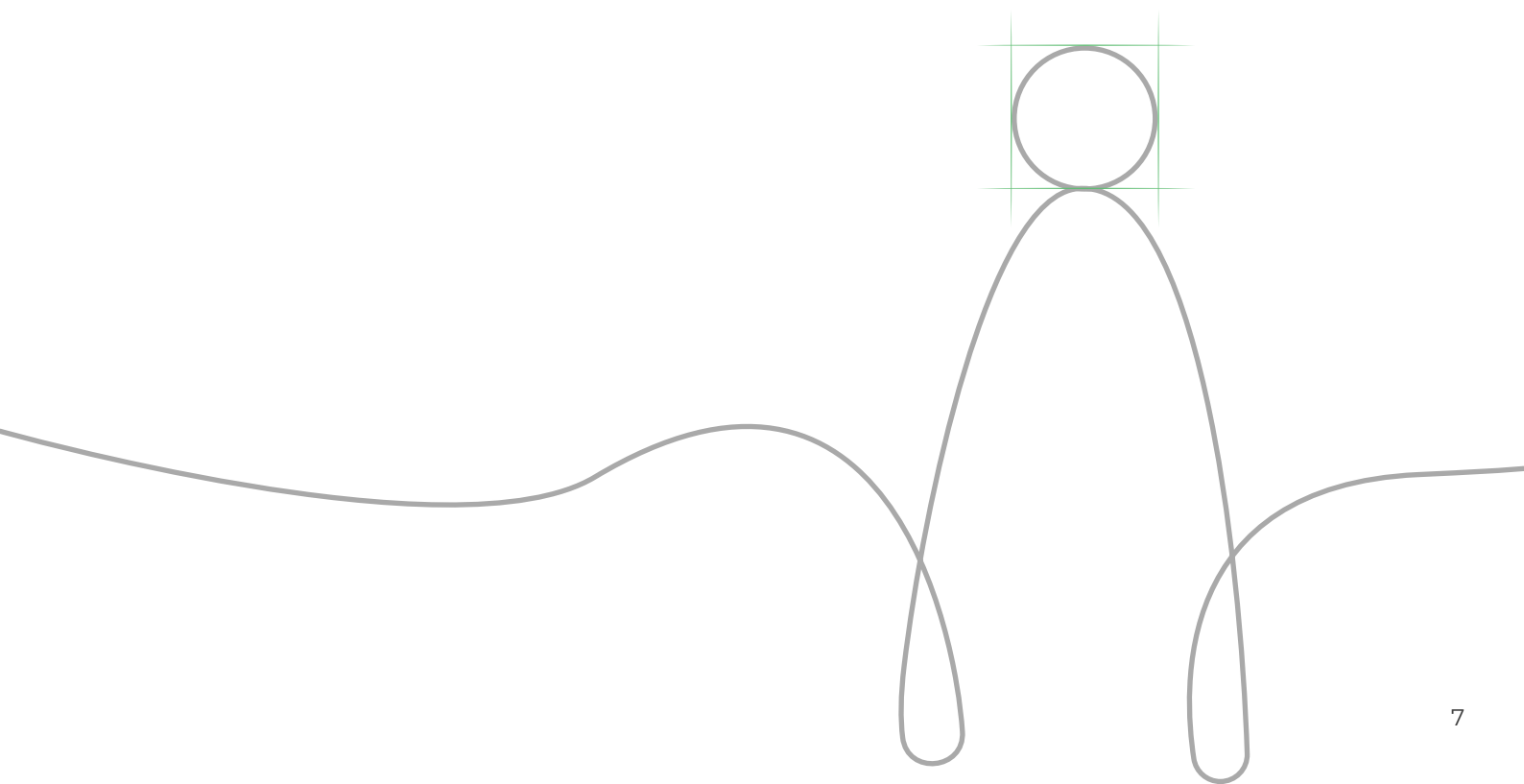
Background

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How to draft User Personas?

Developing personas is an iterative process – it undergoes several updates before it takes shape.

There are several aspects to be covered while drafting User Personas.

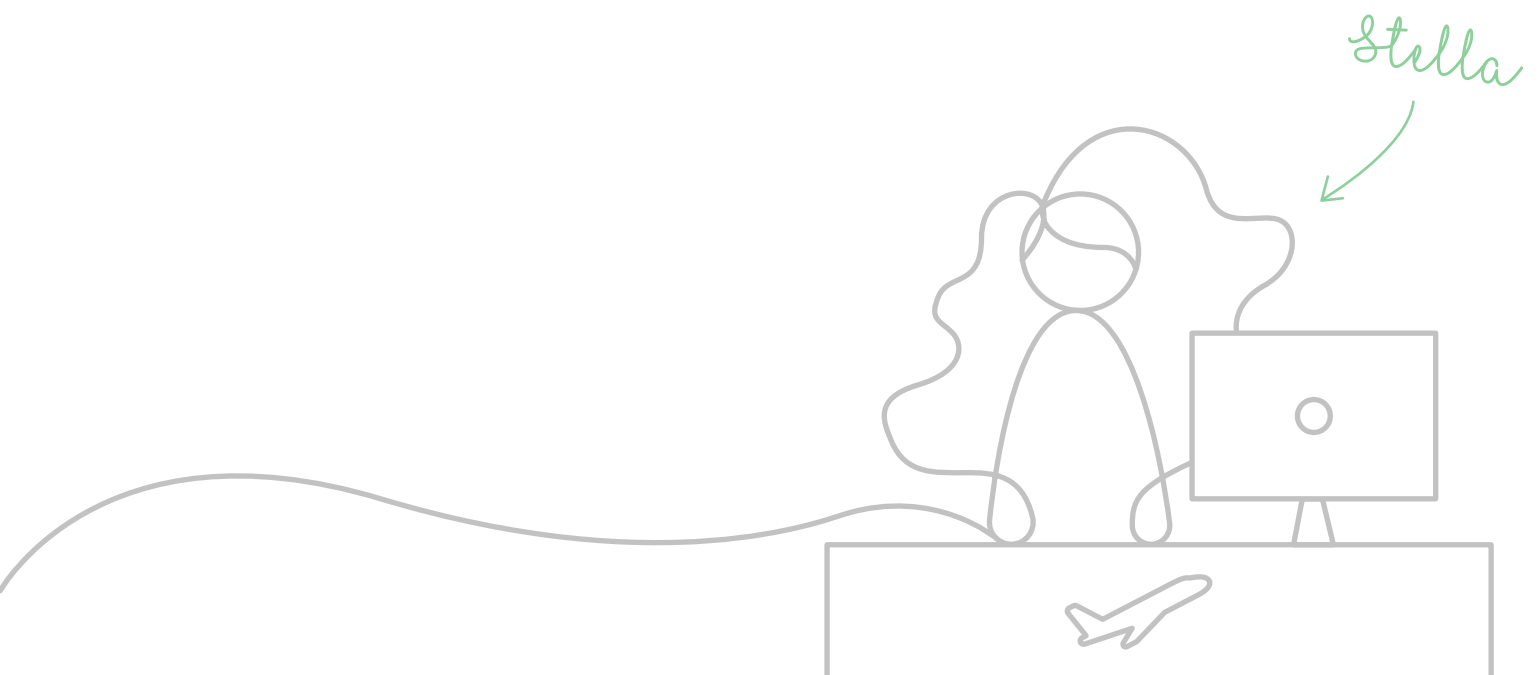




1

Think of the target user's actual behavior, attitudes, skillset, motivations, and goals from the perspective of the product/system.

"Stella is a junior ground staff with an airline. She works at the airline's boarding desk at the airport. She is attentive and sharp while on the job. She is comfortable using the airline's booking interface. She is meticulous about providing a hassle-free boarding experience to all passengers at her counter."



2

**Stay close to the context –
Think of specific points
about the user’s habits and
map their behavior with
regard to how they’re
currently using the
product/system.**

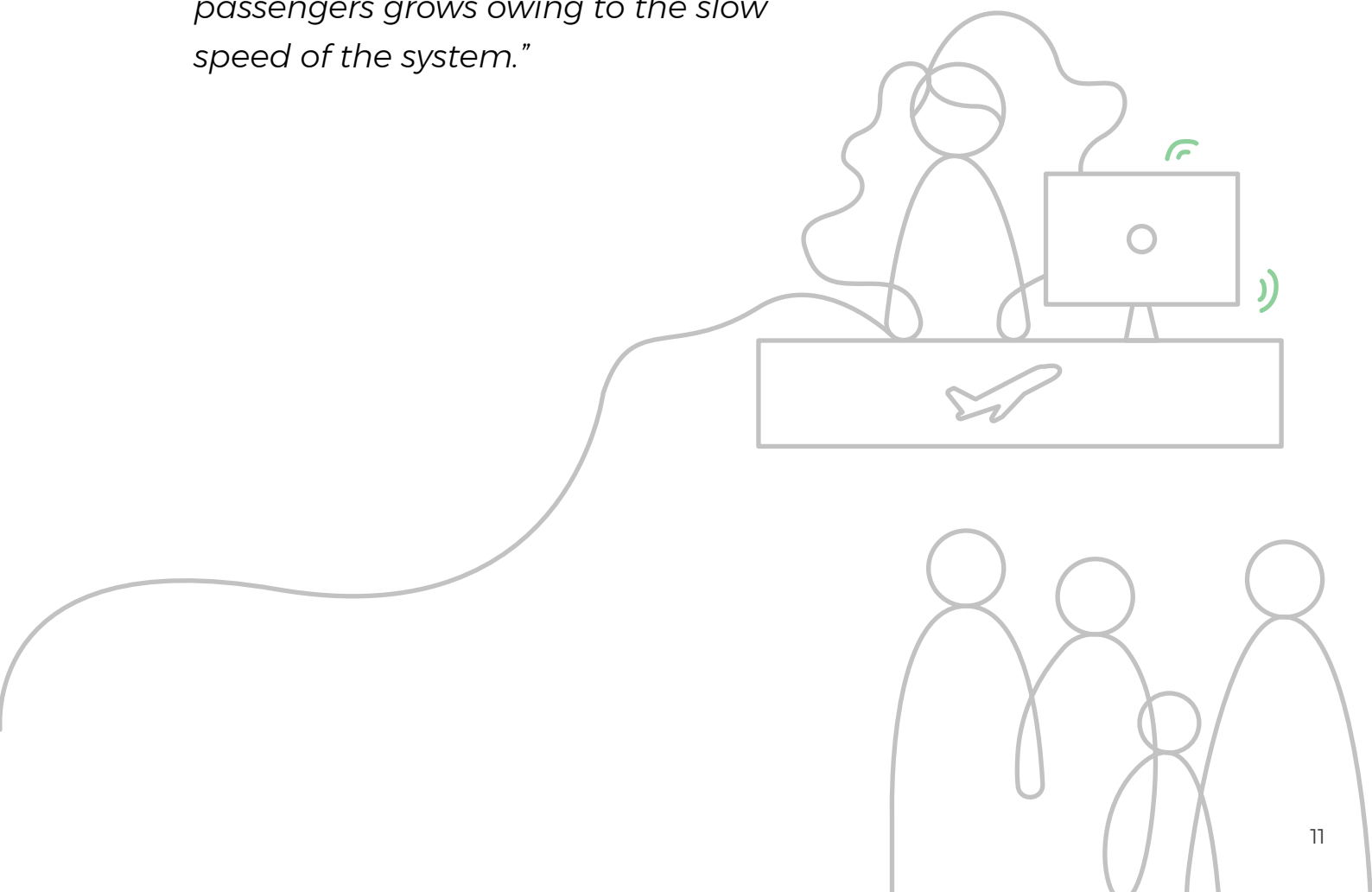
“Stella is comfortable enough while using the system. She faces frustration when the system hangs, and she has to ask the passenger to wait while the system reboots/refreshes.”



3

Identify the ultimate goal of the user. Then list the features which would help him/her achieve that goal in the best possible way.

“Stella hates it when her line of passengers grows owing to the slow speed of the system.”



4

Get into the shoes of the user and imagine how he/she would go about using the product to attain a particular goal with ease and pleasure.

“Occasionally, the system does not reflect the seats booked by passengers via online check-in. This would sometimes lead to friction - some pre-booked seats would be given to others. In an ideal world, Stella’s system would update the seats that have been checked-in by passengers online in real-time. Her system would never slow down, and all her passengers will get their boarding passes, perhaps with the seats of their choice, smoothly.”



5

Envision how the user would go about spending a regular day handling the product/system. Think of challenges that might crop up during the course of a regular or maybe an unusually busy day.

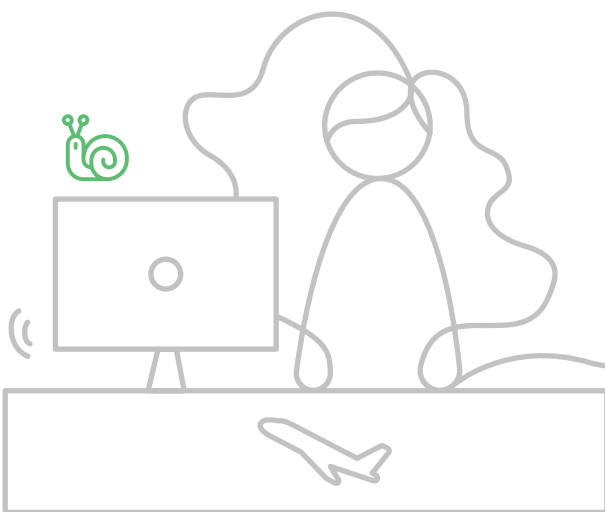
“Some passengers traveling on their birthday or anniversary expect or request a free upgrade – Stella’s system could be better-equipped to reflect whether those seats can be given, and help her make that correct decision in a spur of the moment.”



6

Make note of the user's pain points. Try to picture the toughest, most frustrating aspect of the product's functionality from their perspective.

"During peak seasons when the flights are packed and the queues are long, a system slowdown is extremely frustrating. This is the time when passengers expect the best service, but the system slowdown prevents it."

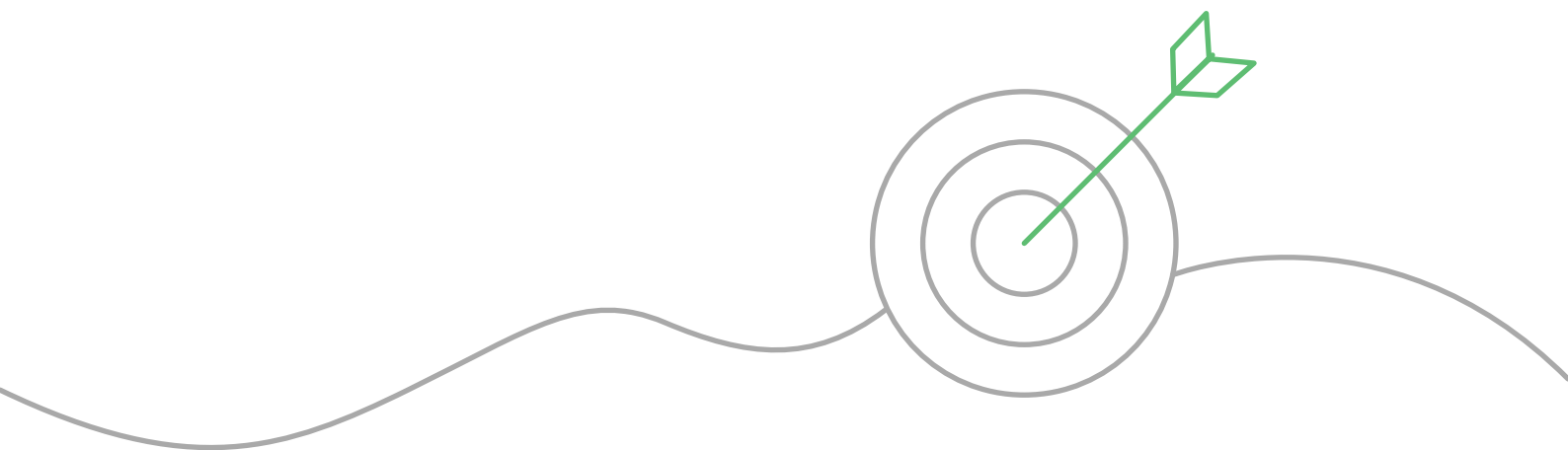


Why are Personas Necessary?

The most important reason to create user personas is to ensure that your **design fits the needs of actual users**, solves their problems, and becomes a delight for them to use.

By ensuring that your personas are close to the actual user, your design is sure to hit the bullseye in terms of **user satisfaction**.

The resulting product, in this case, functions seamlessly to the best advantage of the users, and ultimately **meets business goals**.



Stakeholders gain the chance to debate the features and aspects of the redesign.

Personas come in handy especially in projects with multiple stakeholders from different departments expressing varied ideas about what needs to be prioritized.

User personas help to **reveal common frustrations** and pain points to realistically list priorities, as against being driven by

Creating personas is a vital exercise for the design team.

Creating personas involves a lot of **interesting discussions** for the design team. They get involved in using their observation skills and supplement it with their analysis (believe us when we say it is a fun exercise).

These discussions help the team members to gain a better and **in-depth understanding of the users.**

Personas help drive realistic wireframes and site architecture.

As personas are based on real users, the team can make **optimal use** of them in decision making.

They can be used in scenarios and determining the perfect placement of content which **enhances usability** in the true sense.

Using personas while pre-launch testing can **help in saving time and resources**, as against testing it with real users after the project launch.

Personas are a vital factor in creating a sense of empathy.

Personas help designers and developers to avoid using their own mental models in the creation process. By using personas, they are saved from designing products which are a mismatch with user needs.

**“Personas consolidate
archetypical
descriptions of user
behavior patterns into
representative profiles,
to humanize design
focus, test scenarios,
and aid design
communication.”**

– Alan Cooper

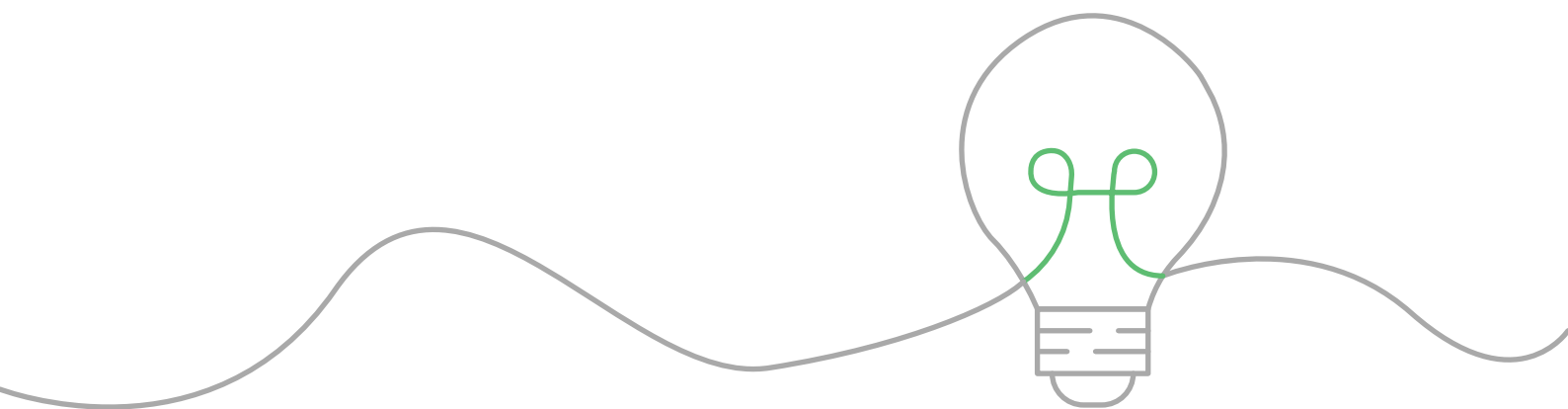
Conclusion

The key to designing a good product lies in developing empathy for the actual user. Designing a user-friendly product begins with **understanding the user.**

In developing personas, designers actually get inside the head of the real user and try to create an output that will not just satisfy, but even **surpasses their expectations.**

With people becoming actively involved in quality technology on a day-to-day basis, it is important to ensure they experience the same ease in all aspects of their lives.

Personas are a vital element of the user-centric design process. They help in defining user attitudes and motivations and their pain points – all of which are essential in creating a wholesome, user-friendly, and thereby a **successful product.**



About Koru

Koru is a specialized enterprise User Experience (UX) design agency. We partner with a range of companies from SaaS products to enterprise applications to help them increase the ROI from their products through our expertise in UX. Our team of passion-driven professionals has successfully designed and delivered over 350 projects across industries and geographies.

We believe that people deserve to love their jobs. The users of enterprise applications want flexible, intuitive, and easy-to-adopt software that helps them do their job better. However, many current applications do not offer that experience.

Enterprises have a mega impact on the world. Our underpinning for being an enterprise UX design company is infusing a user-centric approach to these systems to manifest the boons of the information age.

We are driven by the fact that our work stands to impact millions of lives across the world. A greater part of our job is to make their everyday lives easier. Today, our reach spans 3.5 million users across the USA with our solutions built for healthcare, finance, telecom, manufacturing, and travel.

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