NBS Design and Product Challenge

What we want to see:

Create a presentation that discusses your results from the challenge below and include any artifacts that may have been created. Boundaries for the presentation are included in the RFQ instructions.

Among other things, we want to know: how did you attempt to solve the problem? What methodologies did you choose and why? With limited time and resources, what was most important to you? Which is to say, showing your thought process matters more than the final product. Show us that you understand both human centered design as well as product management and know how to apply these concepts.

### Scenario

Jane’s Hardware has grown exponentially over the last few years to 64 locations across the country. As they’ve grown, their manual, paper-based job application and hiring process has become increasingly difficult to manage. As of today, it takes an average of four (4) months from the time an applicant fills out an application to the time they are hired.

Your team has been contracted to develop and execute a research plan aimed at understanding the pain points in the current process, as well as to create a low-fidelity prototype that demonstrates an initial concept for streamlining applications and hiring.

Your team should not spend any longer than 2.5 business days on the entire project, and the challenge will be divided into the following stages:

**Discovery and planning** (Spend no more than 4 hours on this stage)

* Outline the current state of the application and hiring process
* Outline the key issue(s) the team is interested in exploring
* What audience(s) will the team seek out?

**Research** (Spend no more than 4 hours on this stage)

* Conduct research based on plans from the discovery and planning stage
* Collected data can be stored in any format

**Prototyping** (Spend no more than 8 hours on this stage. Note that this aspect is likely a cross-discipline effort)

* Create user stories that describe the user’s needs and can inform the prototype. It’s ok for those to be brief and rough, but please include a couple of well crafted ones to show what that would look like at this stage.
* Create a low-fidelity prototype based on where the research led the team
* Any format is acceptable. Jane’s Hardware is primarily interested in the team’s thought process.

**Product Planning** (spend no more than 4 hours on this stage)

* Create a backlog, roadmap, or another artifact that would show your thoughts on how to go from prototype to MVP. We’re looking for an example of a living process that an agile team would use rather than a formal plan.

### Background on Jane’s Hardware hiring process

Today, prospective employees have to fill out a standardized paper application form. The application must be mailed or faxed to a centralized address where an HR person reviews it and looks for relevant job experience and compares skills to a standardized list of competencies. If the applicant passes this stage, the HR person schedules an interview between a local store manager and the candidate. During the interview, the store manager takes notes to answer the interview questions. At the end of the interview, the store manager makes a determination on whether or not to hire this candidate, and provides a write-up with their decision and their rationale to HR. Finally, HR will reach out to the candidate with news of the decision. If the candidate passes the interview, Jane’s Hardware will extend an offer. Should the candidate accept the offer, their information is faxed to corporate headquarters to begin the formal onboarding.

### Constraints:

Commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) options on the market today are not viable solutions to this problem.

This is a fictional scenario and constrained by time. Do your best to replicate the steps you would take.