Design decisions *you can defend.*

Four working tools for real product work: plan research, critique a flow, log the decision, and use AI without inventing evidence.

01 · The research starter 2

02 · The design critique checklist 4

03 · The product decision log 5

04 · The thoughtful AI prompt kit 6

Next steps 7

Use approved tools and anonymized, consented inputs. These worksheets support judgment—they are not a complete accessibility audit or a substitute for research with real people.

The research starter — *brief & plan*

1. Decision brief

Product / service

What we know (source and date)

Decision we need to make

What we assume

People affected

What would change our minds

2. Study plan

Research question

Participant criteria + access needs

Method, and why it fits

Consent and note handling

3. Neutral interview prompts

Tell me about the last time you [task]. · What triggered that? · Walk me through what you did. · What was difficult or unexpected? · What did you do next? · What have I missed?

The research starter — *evidence*

Source ID	Observation	Context	Interpretation	Contradiction	Next question

5. Decision

What we learned

What remains uncertain

Recommendation, next action, and owner

The design critique checklist

Purpose

- [ ] Name the person, goal, and context.
- [ ] Define successful completion.
- [ ] Confirm the evidence behind the problem.

Interaction

- [ ] A clear next action on each step.
- [ ] Feedback for important actions.
- [ ] No unnecessary effort.
- [ ] Empty, loading, error, success, long-content states.
- [ ] Understandable recovery that keeps useful work.

Accessibility review

- [ ] Keyboard operation and visible focus
- [ ] Reading order and programmatic labels
- [ ] Contrast; no color-only meaning
- [ ] Enlarged text and responsive layouts
- [ ] Evaluated with relevant assistive technologies and people

Evidence and action

Issue	Evidence	Impact	Confidence	Next action	Owner

The product decision log

Date _____ Decision owner _____ Contributors _____

Problem

User and task

Product goal / constraints

Evidence

Observation and source

Assumptions / open questions

Options — benefits / tradeoffs / unknowns

A

B

C

Decision

Selected approach and why

Risks accepted · what could change it

Validation

Baseline · success signal

Method · guardrails · review date

Follow-through

Next action and owner · what happened · what we learned

04 · COPY, FILL THE BRACKETS, REVIEW

The thoughtful AI prompt kit

Generated research is not user evidence. Every output needs human review.

Clarify a brief

User goal: [goal]. Verified evidence: [source IDs]. Constraints: [constraints]. Identify assumptions and missing information. Separate supplied facts from suggestions. Do not invent findings.

Explore options

Propose three distinct interaction approaches for [task]. Compare user effort, clarity, accessibility considerations, technical dependencies, and failure states. Identify a test for each.

Assist synthesis

Group these anonymized excerpts into candidate themes. Cite source IDs for each. Include contradictory evidence and open questions. Do not invent quotes or population percentages. I will verify every interpretation against the originals.

Critique a flow

Review this flow for [user goal]. Assess task completion, feedback, recovery, accessibility questions, content, and unsupported features. Distinguish observed issues from hypotheses. Prioritize by potential impact and explain what to test.

Review before use

☐ Accurate ☐ Traceable to sources ☐ Private ☐ No missing states ☐ Fits real user needs — record which output you used and why.

KEEP GOING

Your next useful step

Read the guides

Nine practical guides and three learning paths on research, interaction design, accessibility, and designing with AI: **uxdesigncoach.cc/learn/**

Work through a real project with Ashley

Bring a flow, a research plan, or a portfolio piece to a 1:1 session. See **uxdesigncoach.cc/work-with-ashley/** or book a free 15-minute call: **cal.com/waymakeragency/15min**

The principle behind every worksheet

Keep observations, interpretations, and decisions separate—and write down what would change your mind.