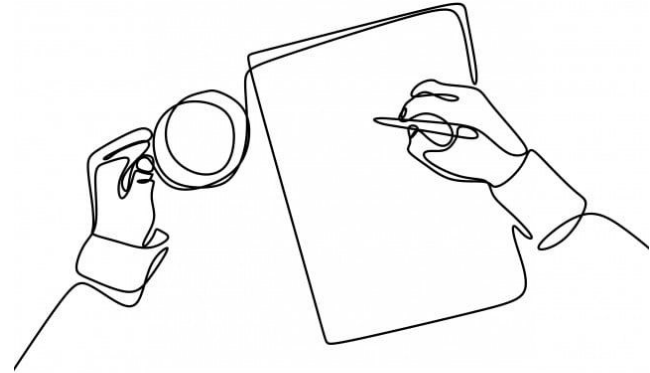


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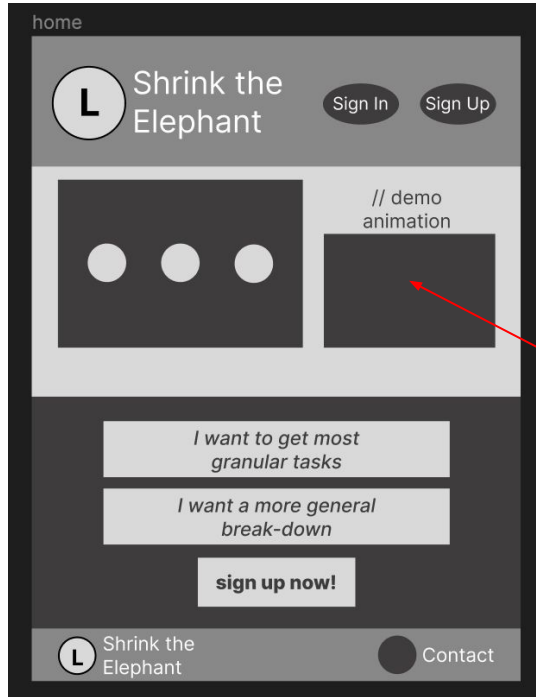
Elephant

User Research

Task Descriptions



Task 1: Tutorial



“As a new user of the task decomposition website, I am looking for a clear and user-friendly tutorial that can assist me in effectively breaking down tasks. This is crucial because I want to ensure that I can swiftly and accurately accomplish my objectives using this platform.”

Type of user: New users

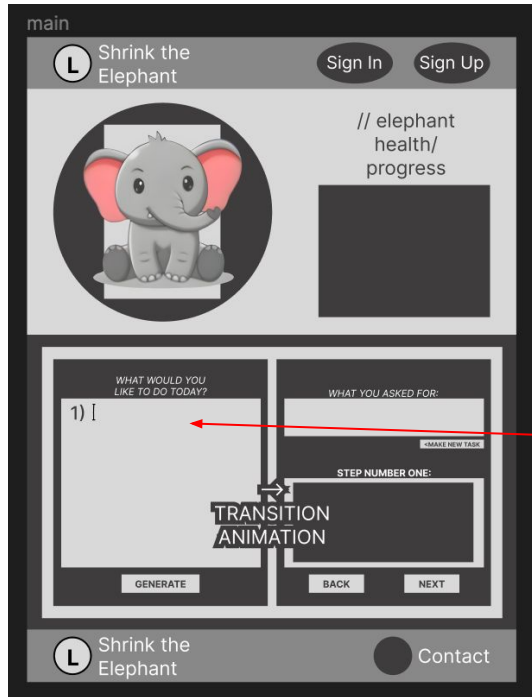
An Action: Tutorial

Benefit/Value: Be able to use the app

UI Solution: A demo animation

A tutorial prompt pops up when a new user opens the app for the first time, as a clear start allows users to quickly familiarize themselves with how to break down tasks without adding extra stress to using the app.

Task 2: Task Breakdown



“As a user who experiences stress and overwhelm when tackling large projects, I want a solution that breaks down these projects into manageable steps, so that enable me to work on smaller, achievable goals one step at a time, and conquer my feelings of being overwhelmed.”

Type of user: Overwhelmed by project

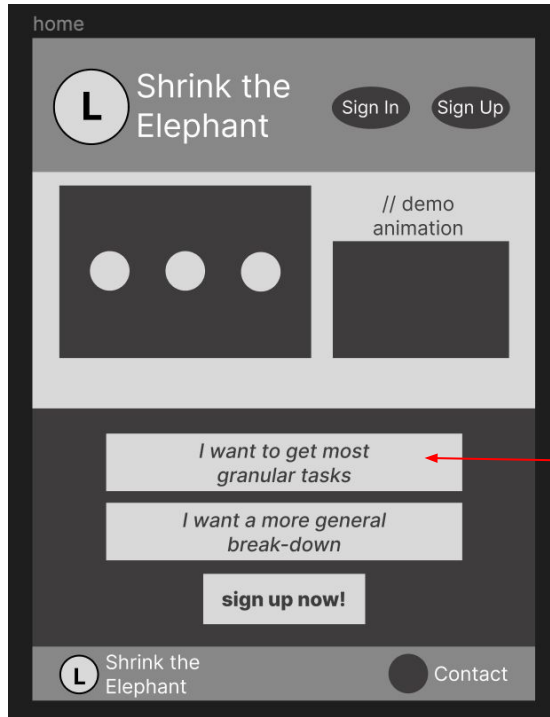
An Action: Break down the tasks

Benefit/Value: Plan and unstressed

UI Solution: Typing & Results

A user enters the main page of the app, enters a large project description in the typing box, and then clicks the generate button. The decomposition results will be listed in the result display box. Due to the simple operation and the suggestions given, the user will reduce stress to a certain extent.

Task 3: Subtask Granularity



“As a project manager facing significant challenges in managing my teammate’s workload, I need the ability to adjust the granularity of subtasks. This will enable me to create a more structured and detailed schedule, facilitating better project management.”

Type of user: Project manager

An Action: Adjust subtask granularity

Benefit/Value: more detailed schedule

UI Solution: Granularity option

A user got the result but was not satisfied with the details, then returns to the homepage and clicks the "I want to get the most granular tasks" button, meticulous results will be generated and the user can have more options to choose from.

Interviews & Observations



Interview & Observations: **Methods**

- Number Conducted: **6 Interviews & 5 Observations**
- Length: **~25 - 40 minutes**
- Demographics
 - Ages: **19 - 34**
 - Gender: **M/F**
 - Occupation: **Students & Professionals**
- Modalities
 - **In-Person**
 - **Zoom**
 - **Over Phone**
- Observed: **Use of BreakItDownForMe**



Interview & Observations: Focus

1. How do they **use** BreakItDownForMe?
2. What **works**?
3. What's **missing**?

Interview Questions: *Before BreakItDownForMe*

- How do you usually handle large or multi-step projects?
- What strategies have you used to identify the steps of a project and complete them and how effective have these strategies been?
- What are some tools you've used to implement your strategies?
- Do you use any planning or productivity tools now? What aspects of these do you like and what do you wish you could change?

Interview Questions: *After BreakItDownForMe*

- What are your thoughts after using this application?
- Do you think this might be useful when you're feeling stressed about a large project?
- What do you think might make this more useful to you?
- How would you feel about a game component to this application? For example, it gave you points or coins every time you complete a task?

Interview & Observation 1: *19F, Psychology*

- **Approach for Projects** –
 - Sticky notes to write down / separate different steps
 - One day for each step to double check
- **Strategies & Effectiveness** –
 - Identifies the steps by herself based on the project
 - Effectiveness depends: sometimes she needs to stay up late to finish it, or she'll need to use the extra day originally for double checking to finish
- **Tools + Pros/Cons** –
 - Apple Reminders app and the Outlook app's calendar
 - Likes that Outlook calendars can sync with emails / add events easily
 - Reminders is not detailed enough – doesn't show concrete steps

Interview & Observation 1: *19F, Psychology*

- **Thoughts after using BreakItDownForMe –**
 - Helpful for people with mental health issues
 - Can definitely improve productivity
- **Improvements to Current UI –**
 - A warmer color palette
 - Users may interpret having the option to choose receiving granular tasks as admitting mental health issues – they might be reluctant to do this
- **Thoughts on a Gamification –**
 - Concrete awards after finishing one task, like points or coins
 - Likes the idea of a “pet” component such as the elephant that shrinks upon task completion

Interview & Observation 2: *19M, CS+Advertising*

- **Approach for Projects –**
 - Major procrastinator
 - ⇒ waits until the minimum amount of time left for the project and then do it
- **Strategies & Effectiveness –**
 - Follows instructions given by the instructor
 - Prefers not to split things up and does the project in one sitting
 - Effective because the time pressure motivates him
- **Tools + Pros/Cons –**
 - Apple Reminders/Calendar apps to set notifications for deadlines
 - likes that it's integrated ⇒ for example, Apple Calendar can import .ics files
 - would prefer the UI for both apps to be cleaner

Interview & Observation 2: *19M, CS+Advertising*

- **Thoughts after using BreakItDownForMe –**
 - Helpful to be able to have all the tasks laid out before starting a project
 - complete the project faster instead of trying to figure out most optimal way to finish under time constraint
- **Improvements to Current UI –**
 - needs better UI
 - ⇒ dynamically scaled to the aspect ratio of browser, no “google doc” for the resulting task breakdown
- **Thoughts on Gamification –**
 - Gamification would be a hassle or distracting while trying to complete a project quickly
 - Prefer for the user to have the option to use the gamification feature

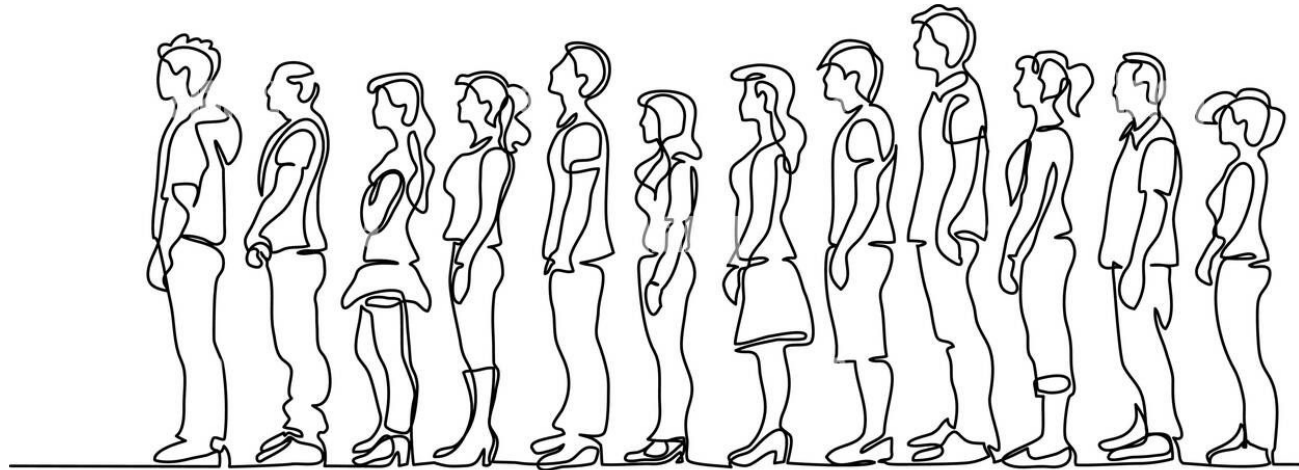
Interview & Observation 3: *21M, CS*

- **Approach for Projects –**
 - Motivated by deadlines
 - Breaks down large projects & completes them in one shot
- **Strategies & Effectiveness –**
 - Allocates more time to complex and time-consuming steps → helps him greatly
- **Tools + Pros/Cons –**
 - Apple Clock app ⇒ specifically the ability to set timers
 - Apple Reminders app
 - Highly customizable, can set reminders and display completion status
 - Setup takes a lot of time

Interview & Observation 3: *21M, CS*

- **Thoughts after using BreakItDownForMe –**
 - Interesting to break down tasks into basic steps, for example for a database project
 - Useful and applicable to class/personal projects
- **Improvements to Current UI –**
 - Better UI and a more detailed task breakdown
- **Thoughts on Gamification –**
 - Fun to compete with friends, but unhelpful and disruptive to use alone

User Personas



Persona 1: Nico Robin (Prepared Planner)

Demographics

- Age: **19**
- Occupation: **Student (Psychology)**
- Gender: **Female**

Robin is a college student who **prefers to plan** her projects ahead of time and **write down and visualize each step**. She currently uses multiple tools to sync her assignments and set reminders, but **wants a more efficient way** to organize her deadlines. She would like an **interactive micro-productivity application** to be able to do this and plan the steps of her projects for her.

Persona 2: Tony Stark (Procrastinating Planner)

Demographics

- Age: **19**
- Occupation: **Student (CS+Advertising)**
- Gender: **Male**

Tony is a full-time college student with **a tendency to procrastinate on big projects**. He needs a micro-productivity app that can **help him plan his assignments** so that he can complete them quickly in the most optimized way. He prefers **an effective, yet simple, user-friendly interface** and would appreciate the **ability to customize task breakdowns and visualize** them cleanly.

Persona 3: Barney Stinson (Deadline Driven)

Demographics

- Age: **21**
- Occupation: **Student (CS)**
- Gender: **Male**

Barney is a college student who prefers to set aside time to **complete a project in one sitting**, as the **pressure of the project deadline motivates** him to do so. He has used tools to organize his projects, but he would want **a simple micro-productivity application** to be able to have a **specific, detailed breakdown of steps** to do for assignments.