

The Use Case Process: From Understanding to Action

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A Use Case is a narrative used by teams to explore the process of reaching a goal and the detailed steps and potential obstacles at every stage. By discovering and articulating what *could* happen at each point, teams—especially those working within complex social systems—can anticipate and plan for challenges.

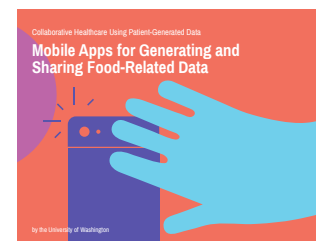
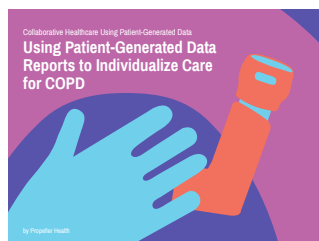
In 2000, author Alistair Cockburn published the book *Writing Effective Use Cases*, in which he introduced the concept of describing step-by-step how users might interact with a particular kind of software. This practice encouraged software creators to plan for not only the actions they wanted users to take, but also the roadblocks or alternative actions users *might* take.

Since the publication of Cockburn's book, the Use Case methodology has been applied in settings beyond software development. Because people make choices for complex reasons, the flexibility of this methodology makes Use Cases an ideal tool for addressing challenges within complex social systems.

What Is a Use Case?

In a social system, a **Use Case** is a story that breaks down the steps that a person or group of people—referred to as “actors”—might take to achieve a specific goal. Instead of thinking only of end outcomes, through Use Cases, you imagine—and plan for—conflicts that could occur at each step that might change the choices the actor makes.

Reos Partners facilitated the creation of Use Cases with several innovation teams as part of an initiative supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Teams investigated how patient-generated data could be used to make healthcare more collaborative. Use Cases illuminated the network of people involved, as well as the opportunities to synchronize their motivations and workflows. Additionally, Use Cases demonstrated where behavior or situations might deviate. Examples of obstacles included a lack of resources or an absence in motivation by the patient or healthcare provider. By naming these common obstacles and identifying contingency plans, teams were able to create more effective work plans and instill better confidence in their stakeholders. You can read the full breadth of these Use Cases by downloading the four documents about *Collaborative Healthcare Using Patient-Generated Data*, available at: www.reospartners.com/pgd



How Can a Use Case Be Helpful?

As they create Use Cases, project teams surface and combine the different kinds of knowledge their members have about the issue at hand. Based on this understanding, the group creates the Use Case as a roadmap to guide action and anticipate challenges. The narratives that make up a Use Case provide a written record of the decisions made regarding the project, capturing all actual and anticipated actions and whether or not they were successful. Teams can use completed Use Cases to scale solutions by encouraging other teams to consider how they might apply learnings from the outcomes to their own situations.

For example, in the previously mentioned initiative, a team at Northwestern University and Rush University Medical Center created recommendations for ways to integrate Fitbit devices into a mental health treatment program for veterans living with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). By thoroughly documenting the breadth of their thinking, their work process could be adjusted and applied for similar challenges that may have different contexts, such as focusing on a different type of patient or condition.

When Should I Use a Use Case?

The key to a successful Use Case is defining a specific problem. Thus, challenges that are most appropriate for this approach have clearly defined actors and contexts in which those actors are attempting to achieve a targeted goal.

✘ **An inappropriate challenge for Use Cases (too broad):**

How can we help people communicate their health problems?

✔ **An ideal challenge for Use Cases:**

How can we empower patients living with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease to shift the interaction with their healthcare providers?



The Use Case Ecosystem

Although you and your team can create a single Use Case as an independent and complete process, when you create multiple Use Cases at different levels of detail, you expand your understanding of the interconnections and relationships that surround the challenge you face.

Because there is no single path to solving a problem, collecting several Use Cases at different levels of detail—known as a **Use Case Suite**—can reveal the nested journeys that may need to occur to address the challenge. A Use Case Suite weaves together a holistic view for addressing a challenge, centered around different actors and their actions as they address a challenge.

You can define the scenarios within your Use Case Suite in three levels of detail. The first is the **Summary** level, where you focus on a goal that encompasses the entire system you are exploring. Zooming in to a specific step of the Summary goal brings you to the **Actor** level, where you pursue a goal *within* the system. Going even deeper to brings you to the **Function** level, where you explore the story of a specific action taken by an actor.

An example of demonstrating different Goal Levels can be seen by one of the teams featured in the *Collaborative Healthcare Using Patient-Generated Data* initiative. The team from RTI International and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill articulated a Summary Goal and two Actor Goals within their Use Case Suite which focused on defining a protocol to improve accuracy and credibility of research involving data collected from wearable devices.

Their Use Case Suite involved the following Goals:

Summary Goal:

Standardizing and evaluating consumer wearable device measurement

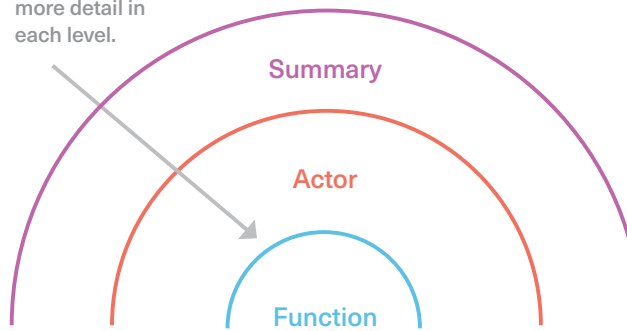
This is a Summary Goal because it is the highest level goal, with the broadest reach and most detail required.

Actor Goals:

1. *Collecting consumer wearable data*
2. *Analyzing consumer wearable data*

These are Actor Goals because they are nested inside the process of the Summary Goal. In order to successfully evaluate and standardize the measurement of wearable devices, the team had to first use devices to collect data. This was its own process with its own set of variables. Similarly, analyzing the collected data was another goal that had to be completed as part of the success of the Summary Goal.

Zooming into more detail in each level.



Assembling Your Team

The Use Case approach invites you to use your subjective experience to rapidly and intuitively construct a detailed view of a system. To do so, you must empathize not only with the parts of the system you know but also with the experience of others. To accurately imagine the range of actors' behaviors and needs, it is important to have teammates with diverse first-hand perspectives on the challenge. For this reason, in addition to the core working group, consider reaching out to a broader network of people who can validate or challenge any assumptions in your Use Case.

For example, the team at Propeller Health focused on a very specific audience: patients living with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Propeller conducted interviews with patients and healthcare providers to better understand their experience managing COPD. Propeller used this information to guide the development of a patient-generated data report and then conducted feedback sessions with these groups to test and validate their prototype. The patients and healthcare providers gave the team insights that only people with first-hand experiences managing or providing care for COPD would be able to share.

Writing a Use Case

The process of creating Use Cases can be valuable, no matter where you are in your project or initiative.

A Use Case can explore three **levels of detail** within a given system (pictured in the diagram on the previous page). These three levels correspond to the three chapters of this guide. With your team, work through these phases using this guide and corresponding worksheets and Visualization Tool.

Phase 1: Use Case Brief

Define the scope of your challenge. Determine who is an actor and what their goals are.

Phase 2: Casual Use Case

Expand the Use Case Brief to consider outside stakeholders and their interests.

Phase 3: Fully Dressed Use Case

Break down your Casual Use Case into distinct steps. Consider what obstacles might occur at each step and how they can be addressed.

Supplies

- flip-chart paper
- post-it notes (sizes 3x3" and 4x6", in a variety of colors)
- note paper
- tape
- pens and markers

In each chapter of this guide, you will use worksheets as tools for facilitating activities. Hold onto your post-it notes and write-ups as you go, as you will build upon your work in subsequent steps.



Worksheets

Worksheets are included to help guide conversations that will define the needed elements of your Use Case. The worksheets are presented in small format within this guide, which is ideal if you are completing this Use Case alone. However, working in a large format is encouraged when working in pairs or larger teams. To work at a larger format, consider either printing these worksheets in a larger scale (17x22" versions of all worksheets are available in the Appendix) or using the smaller format sheets as a template for drawing the boxes on a whiteboard or large sheets of paper. Working in larger format is ideal for this process because all ideas captured on post-it notes can be visible at once and are easily moveable.

Because the three phases of the Use Case build upon one another, keeping your written notes from each phase will eliminate the need to re-write previous work.

1 Use Case Brief

In this most basic form of a Use Case, you will define the basic scope of the challenge, including the actors and their goals. This two-to-six sentence description centers the challenge around the actors' motivations and needs.



Overview

Because Use Cases are meant to uncover numerous possibilities, you may find creating them unruly unless you first define the boundaries of the challenge, called the **Design Scope**. People or groups of people who interact within these boundaries are considered **actors**. The actors' motivations are defined as **goals**. While a system may have many actors with independent goals, each Use Case will be centered around the journey of one actor's pursuit of a specific goal. The actor at the center of the Use Case is called the **Primary Actor**.

You can find more details about these concepts in the Glossary.



1. Use Case Brief

Worksheets You'll Need

- Design Scope Worksheet
- Actors & Goals Worksheet
- Use Case Brief Worksheet



Facilitating a Use Case Brief takes approximately **60 minutes**.



Task 1: Define the Design Scope Design Scope Worksheet

Using post-it notes, teammates individually list areas of attention or concern related to the challenge at hand. After everyone has completed this task, have each person read their post-it notes aloud, grouping them together on the large format worksheet to surface common themes. Once all post-it notes have been read and grouped appropriately, decide as a team which topics should be in or out of scope by moving them to the appropriate area. Once you have done that, create a statement that captures the scope of what you are addressing in this Use Case.



Task 2: Identify Actors and Goals Actors & Goals Worksheet

On their own, each participant imagines all of the actors who operate within the scope of the challenge you've defined. Write these actors on post-it notes. As each teammate reads their list of actors aloud, group post-it notes together on the large format worksheet to remove redundancies. As a team, identify each actor's goal on a post-it note. Leave the box marked "Goal Level" blank for now; you will return to this later.



Task 3: Articulate the Use Case Brief Use Case Brief Worksheet

Have each team member pick an actor from the list and imagine how that actor could achieve their goal within the scope identified. Write the main points of this imagined scenario in note form and share these stories with the larger team to receive feedback. Discuss both the coherence of the individual story and how the actors' paths might connect or influence one another. With this feedback in mind, have each person re-work their story and share their revisions aloud. Rewrite your stories on a fresh sheet of paper for use in the next phase of work.



As your team moves forward to create a **Casual Use Case**, keep all the material you have created. This work will be instrumental in the following phases.

Design Scope Worksheet

1

Areas of Concern / Attention

Individually make a post-it note for each point of concern or attention associated with the challenge. Each person should read their notes aloud before placing them into this box. Group redundant or related posts together.

2

In Scope

As a group, determine whether a point or thematic group of points from box 1 is in or out of scope. Move that point to the “in scope” or “out of scope” area.

Out of Scope

3

Design Scope Description

As a group, create a short statement that describes the Design Scope for your project.

Actors & Goals Worksheet

1

Actors

Individually, make a post-it note for each actor who exists within the scope as defined in the **Design Scope Worksheet**.

An actor can be a person, group of people, organization, or community.

2

Goals

As a team, define goals that align with the actors in box 1. Write them on post-it notes and place them in this box in line with the related actor.

You will complete this box while creating a **Casual Use Case** in Phase 2.

3

Goal Level

Define whether each goal is a Summary Goal, an Actor Goal, or a Function Goal. As you work on the Use Case, revise any Goal Level as needed.

You will pick an actor and their goal to focus on in your **Use Case Brief Worksheet**.

Use Case Brief Worksheet

1

Primary Actor

→ Select from box 1 of the **Actors & Goals Worksheet**.

2

Primary Actor's Goal

→ Select from box 2 of the **Actors & Goals Worksheet**.

3

Design Scope

→ Pull this statement from box 3 of the **Design Scope Worksheet**. Abbreviate if necessary.

4

Primary Actor Story

This is a 2–6 sentence story that imagines how the Primary Actor would achieve this goal. This story should be probable, not simply possible. Read your stories aloud and revise them using feedback from your team.

2 Casual Use Case

Building off of your completed Use Case Brief, the Casual Use Case broadens the context to consider stakeholders and their interests.



Overview

Out of the list of actors, your team defined a Primary Actor and a corresponding goal that would be the focus of the Use Case Brief. The other actors your team has identified are important for understanding how the Primary Actor navigates within the Design Scope. Similarly, it is important to understand how these ancillary actors' goals fit into the process of how the Primary Actor reaches their goal. Because the goals of the Primary Actor and ancillary actors are necessarily nested within one another, the team assigns a **Goal Level** to each actor's goal to define where it fits within the Use Case Suite.

In the earlier phase, you listed actors who interact within the Design Scope. In this phase, you will define **stakeholders**—people or groups of people who are impacted by the Primary Actor's actions and the outcome of the Use Case. Unlike actors, stakeholders do not directly interact within the Design Scope.

You can find more details about these concepts in the Glossary.



2. Casual Use Case

Worksheets You'll Need

- Actors & Goals Worksheet (partially completed in the previous phase)
- Stakeholders & Interests Worksheet
- Casual Use Case Worksheet
- ✓ Completed Design Scope Worksheet
- ✓ Completed Use Case Brief Worksheet



Facilitating a Casual Use Case takes approximately **75 minutes**. If a break has occurred between the previous phase and this one, take time to review earlier materials and conversations (10 minutes). Post completed worksheets and notes on a wall so participants can see the visual accumulation of your thinking so far.



Task 1: Assign Goal Levels Actors & Goals Worksheet

Individually assess whether or not each actor's goal stretches across the entire scope identified (Summary Goal), a specific step within that journey (Actor Goal), or is reached as a step in the pursuit of a Function Goal. Discuss as a group and find consensus.



Task 2: Identify Stakeholders and their Interests Stakeholders & Interests Worksheet

In pairs or individually, list the stakeholders who are impacted by the actions of the Primary Actor as they pursue their goals. As a group, discuss what interests (stakes) the stakeholders have and what **guarantees** they would need to feel confident about the journey pursued by the Primary Actor in the Design Scope.



Task 3: Complete Casual Use Case Casual Use Case Worksheet

When writing your Use Case Brief, you imagined the easiest route for the Primary Actor to achieve their goal. Now, as you individually write the Casual Use Case, you introduce stakeholder interests, which create obstacles in the path that need to be addressed. Here you will revisit the Use Case Brief and detail, in a story format, how the Primary Actor can still successfully achieve their goal while building confidence with stakeholders. Individually share your stories aloud with your team and adjust them according to feedback.



As your team moves forward to create a **Fully Dressed Use Case**, keep all the materials you have created in both this phase and from your Use Case Brief.

Stakeholders & Interests Worksheet

1

Stakeholders

In pairs or individually, make a post-it note for each stakeholder who is impacted by the Use Case.

A Stakeholder is someone who is impacted by the Primary Actor's ability to successfully reach their goal, but who doesn't necessarily interact within the Design Scope as an actor would.

2

Interests

As a group, make post-it note for each stakeholder's interests.

3

Guarantees

As a group, list on post-it notes the conditions that must be true or agreements that should be in place for the stakeholder to feel confident about the Primary Actor's pursuit of their goals.

Casual Use Case Worksheet

Build off of the information collected in the **Use Case Brief Worksheet** by moving relevant post-it notes to this worksheet.

1

Primary Actor

→ Select from box 1 of the **Actors & Goals Worksheet**.

2

Primary Actor's Goal

→ Select from box 2 of the **Actors & Goals Worksheet**.

3

Goal Level

→ Select from box 3 of the **Actors & Goals Worksheet**.

4

Design Scope

→ Pull this statement from box 3 of the **Design Scope Worksheet**.
Abbreviate if necessary.

5

Revised Primary Actor Story

This is a 2–6 sentence story that imagines how the Primary Actor would achieve this goal. This story should be probable, not simply possible. Read your stories aloud and revise using feedback from your team.

- Use the work from box 4 of the **Use Case Brief Worksheet** as a starting point.

6

Stakeholders and Interests

- Pull these from boxes 1 and 2 of the **Stakeholders & Interests Worksheet**.

3 Fully Dressed Use Case

The Fully Dressed Use Case builds off of the previous phases and examines what can go wrong in the Primary Actor's pursuit of their goal.



Overview

So far, you have articulated the Use Case in story form. To best understand the decision points and vulnerabilities within the process, you must break down the story into a step-by-step narrative that we call the **Success Scenario**. At specific steps within the Success Scenario, your team will imagine factors that could be barriers for the Primary Actor in meeting their goal. These possible obstacles, and the ways your team anticipates they could be resolved, are captured in **"If...then..." statements**.

The Fully-Dressed Use Case not only considers the steps within the Success Scenario, but encompasses the full narrative arc of what must happen before the scenario begins and the outcomes after the scenario is over. **Triggers** are events or situations that would motivate the Primary Actor to start the Success Scenario while **pre-conditions** are factors that need to change or be in place to support the Primary Actor on their journey.

You can find more details about these concepts in the Glossary.



3. Fully Dressed Use Case

Worksheets You'll Need

- Fully Dressed Use Case Worksheet
- Use Case Visualization Tool
- ✓ Completed Design Scope Worksheet
- ✓ Completed Actors & Goals Worksheet
- ✓ Completed Use Case Brief Worksheet
- ✓ Completed Stakeholders & Interests Worksheet
- ✓ Completed Casual Use Case Worksheet



Facilitating a Fully Dressed Use Case takes approximately **90 minutes**. If a break has occurred between this phase and the previous one, take time to review earlier materials and conversations (10 minutes). Post completed worksheets and notes on the wall so that you can see the visual accumulation of your thinking so far.



Task 1: Before the Journey – Define Preconditions and Triggers

Fully Dressed Use Case Worksheet

Individually think through the reality surrounding the Primary Actor's pursuit of the goal, including triggers that might motivate them and pre-conditions need to change or be in place to set them up for success. List preconditions and triggers on post-it notes and place them in the appropriate boxes on the worksheet. Discuss your thoughts as a group and find consensus.



Task 2: During the Journey – Articulate the Success Scenario and "If...Then..." Statements

Fully Dressed Use Case Worksheet

Now that you have given the Use Case a complete story arc, break down the entire process into 3–9 distinct steps, based on your work from the Casual Use Case. Write each step on a separate post-it note. Place the notes on the worksheet in the appropriate boxes.

Once you have articulated the whole journey, consider each step as its own individual event and ask yourself, *What might happen at this step that could stop the Primary Actor from getting to the following step?* If you can imagine a realistic setback, think of a possible way to address that roadblock. Capture your solution in an "If...then..." statement on a post-it note in a different color than you used to define the steps.

If there is no way to resolve the obstacle, make note of that in the "If...then..." statement.



Task 3: After the Journey – Define Outcomes Fully Dressed Use Case Worksheet

Individually think through the positive outcomes from this process that can be guaranteed to both the Primary Actor and the stakeholders *even if the goal is not successfully reached*. List these outcomes on post-it notes and place them in the appropriate boxes on the worksheet. Discuss as a group and find consensus.

Next, think through the positive outcomes that will occur when the actor *successfully reaches their goal*. List outcomes on post-it notes and place them in the appropriate boxes on the worksheet. Discuss as a group and find consensus.



Task 4: Visualize the Fully Dressed Use Case Use Case Visualization Tool

As a complement to your completed Use Case worksheets, we have created a Visualization Tool designed to demonstrate the relationships of the information you have generated. Transfer the information from the Fully Dressed Use Case Worksheet to the Use Case Visualization Tool. This tool will help package your Use Case in a way that makes it easier to share the highlights with people outside of your team.

The Use Case Visualization Tool, like the other worksheets, is available in letter size (two 8.5x11" sheets) and large format (two 17x22" sheets). You can populate the fields in PDF form (8.5x11" size only) and share your work digitally. If you prefer to print the Visualization Tool at a larger scale and find it out by hand, it is also available in large format in the Appendix.

Fully Dressed Use Case Worksheet

Build off of the information collected in the **Casual Use Case Worksheet** by transferring relevant post-it notes to this worksheet.

1

Primary Actor

→ Select from box 1 of the **Actors & Goals Worksheet**.

2

Primary Actor's Goal

→ Select from box 2 of the **Actors & Goals Worksheet**.

3

Goal Level

→ Select from box 3 of the **Actors & Goals Worksheet**.

4

Design Scope

→ Pull this statement from box 3 of the **Design Scope Worksheet**.
Abbreviate if necessary.

5

Stakeholders and Interests

- Pull these from boxes 1 and 2 of the **Stakeholders & Interests Worksheet**.

Before

6

Preconditions

List the conditions that need to exist for this Use Case to be relevant or actionable.

7

Triggers

List events or actions that could start the Use Case.

Fully Dressed Use Case Worksheet

During – Use the story in [box 5](#) of the **Casual Use Case Worksheet** as a starting point for breaking down the steps of the Success Scenario.

8

Success Scenario

Write the sequence of events that leads from the preconditions and trigger to the completion of the goal by the Primary Actor. At each step of the scenario, imagine potential breakdowns and how those breakdowns could be handled. There may be steps with no breakdowns and some that have several possible breakdowns.

Step 1

Step 2

Step 3

"If...then..."

"If...then..."

"If...then..."

Step 4

Step 5

Step 6

"If...then..."

"If...then..."

"If...then..."

Fully Dressed Use Case Worksheet

Step 7

Step 8

Step 9

"If...then..."

"If...then..."

"If...then..."

After – Use items in [box 3](#) of the **Stakeholders & Interests Worksheet** as a starting point for this thinking.

9

Minimum Guarantees

List outcomes that will be achieved in the course of the Use Case no matter what.

10

Success Guarantees

List outcomes that will be achieved in the course of the Use Case if the Primary Actor successfully achieves their goal.

Use Case Visualization Tool

Use Case Title

What is the specific goal we are exploring through this process?

Goal Level

At which level of detail does this Use Case exist?

Summary

Actor

Function

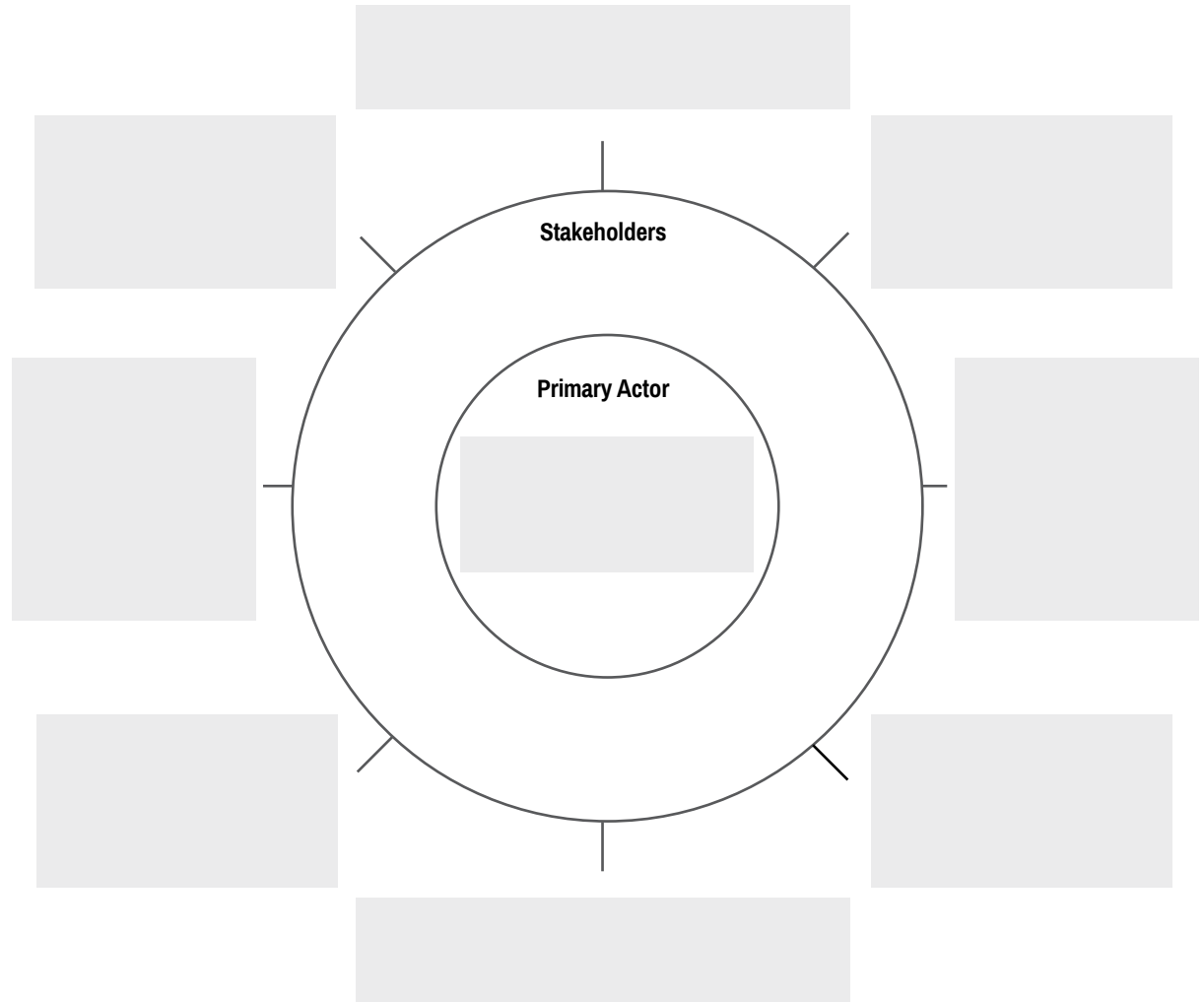


Design Scope

What are the context and boundaries of this challenge?

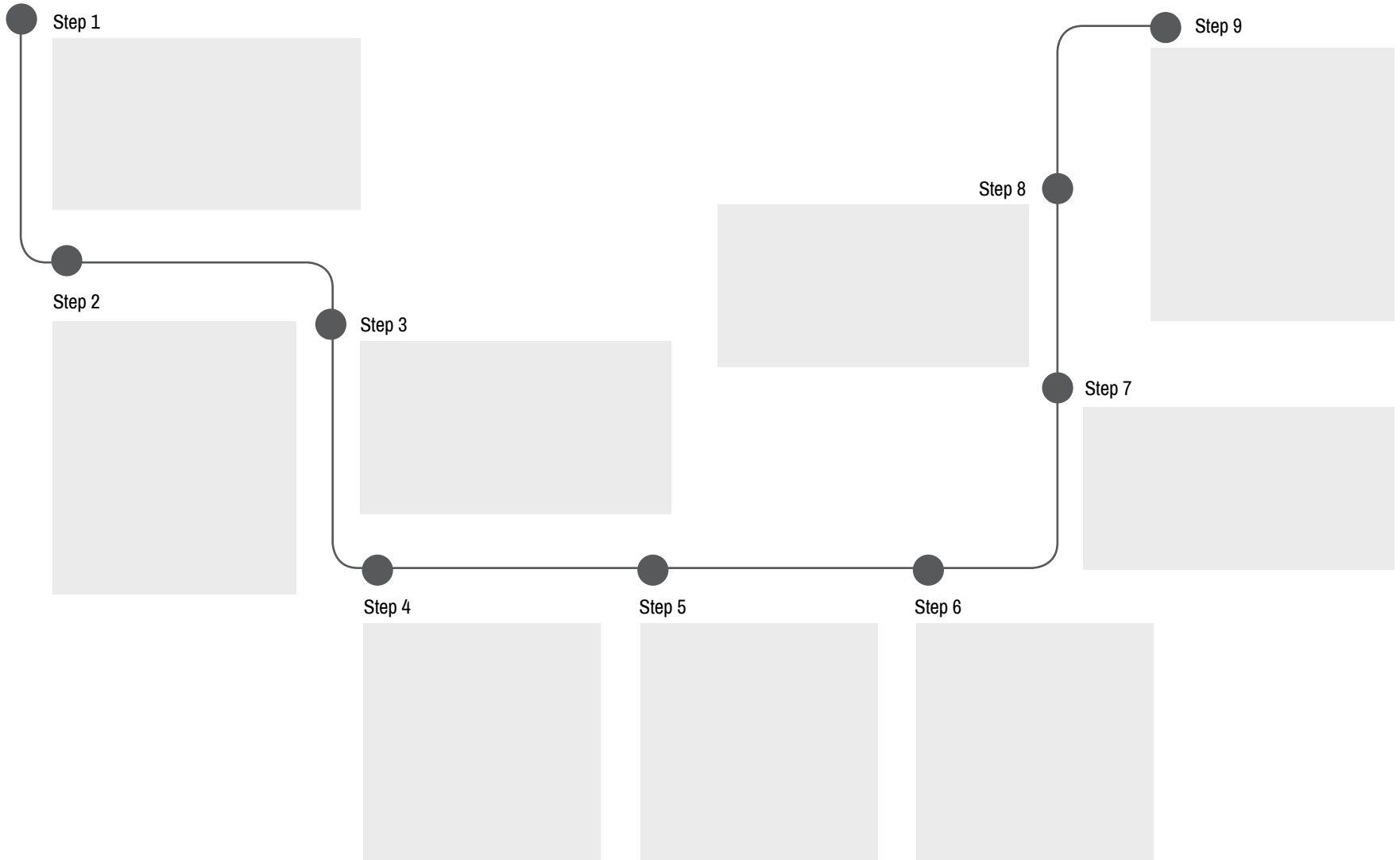
Primary Actor & Stakeholders

Whose journey are we focusing on? Who else has a vested interest in the Use Case?



Success Scenario

What steps must the Primary Actor take to successfully meet their goal? What obstacles might occur along the way that need to be addressed in order to move forward (*if...then...*)?



Now that your Use Case Suite is completed, your team has a roadmap for how to take action. Looking at your Actor-level goals, select a Use Case that will have the most impact in addressing the broader challenge (the Summary-level goal). Rely on the work you have done so far to guide your selection rather than conducting additional research to validate your decision.



With a Use Case selected, walk through the steps in the Success Scenario. At each step, determine if all of the elements required for the Primary Actor to move forward currently exist. If there are steps that may not be confidently achievable, use these missing steps as the foundation of a work plan. Think of new ways to link existing steps to one another and how progression can be improved using experimentation and prototyping.

As your team develops solutions for these missing steps, update your drafts of the Fully Dressed Use Case to capture your deeper understanding. Keep records of your previous work to capture the full breadth of your thinking. By doing so, you create an active record of your process to share with others who may face similar situations.

When the time comes to share your work, you can use your Use Cases to illuminate the details of your process in ways that a standard Case Study cannot. Use the Visualization Tool to structure your Use Case in an engaging way. We also encourage you to share this guide along with your finished Use Cases, providing other teams with the resources they need to follow the same process.

Actors

Anyone or anything within your Design Scope that has behavior is an actor. By **behavior**, we mean interaction within the Design Scope in pursuit of a goal. An actor can be a person, an organization, or a community.

Design Scope

The Design Scope identifies the boundaries of your challenge. It is the network of relationships and activities that surround the challenge you wish to address. Although these boundaries are artificial, it is necessary to articulate a scope as a starting point that can be revised and expanded in time.

Goals

Use Cases present the steps necessary for a Primary Actor to achieve their goal. While creating a Use Case, you will understand what actors are hoping to achieve and why it is important to them.

Guarantees

These are conditions that must be true or agreements that should be in place for the stakeholder to feel confident about investing in the Primary Actor's pursuit of their goal. A **minimum guarantee** is a positive outcome that will occur whether or not the Primary Actor reaches their goal. A **success guarantee** is a positive outcome that will occur if the Primary Actor successfully achieves their goal.

"If...Then..." Statements

These statements identify steps within the Success Scenario where the journey could break down and what could be done to address the obstacle (or whether or not it would be possible for the Primary Actor to move forward at all). Steps may have several "If...then..." statements or none at all.

Levels of Detail

Actors within the Use Case will have goals that may be nested within the Design Scope. There are three levels that we can explore using the Use Case process. The first is the **Summary** level that tells the story of the pursuit of a goal that encompasses the entire system you are exploring. The Summary level captures the broadest aspect of the challenge (as outlined in the *When Should I Use a Use Case?* section in the introduction to this guide). Within the Summary-level goal, there are typically several goals that occur at the individual level. These are considered **Actor**-level goals. One level deeper are **Function**-level goals, which focus on a specific action taken by an actor.

Outcomes

Outcomes are the results of the Primary Actor attempting to reach their goal. See **guarantees** as a way to understand two different types of outcomes (minimum guarantee and success guarantee).

Preconditions

Preconditions are elements that should be in place to set the stage for the Primary Actor's pursuit of the goal. Preconditions make the achievement of the goal probable once the Primary Actor has been triggered (see definition of "Triggers").

Primary Actor

This is the person, organization, or community who initiates an interaction within the Design Scope to achieve a goal. The Primary Actor's journey is the focus of the Use Case.

Stakeholders (and Interests)

A Stakeholder is a person, group of people, organization, or community with a vested interest in either the Design Scope or the Primary Actor who is pursuing a goal. The difference between an actor and a stakeholder is that a stakeholder does not act within the Design Scope but is impacted by the Primary Actor's pursuit of their goal. For example, a community may not collectively be involved within the Use Case Design Scope but is often affected by the outcome.

Success Scenario

The Success Scenario is the set of steps or actions the Primary Actor will take as they pursue their goal. These steps are developed from narratives that define the direct and probable path that a Primary Actor would take to achieve their goal. Breaking this story into discrete steps allows the team to consider what may go wrong at each step and what can be done to address it. If there appear to be obstacles to completing a necessary step, the team can experiment to find what they can do to help the Primary Actor move forward. It may be appropriate for a step within the Success Scenario to be the basis of a separate Use Case.

Triggers

Triggers are the motivations that the Primary Actor has that initiate their pursuit of the goal.

Use Case

A Use Case is a narrative used by teams to explore the process of achieving a goal and the detailed steps and potential obstacles at every stage. A **Use Case Suite** is a collection of several Use Cases at different levels of detail that help to reveal the nested journeys that may need to occur to address the challenge.

Acknowledgments



Reos Partners is an international social enterprise that helps people move forward together on their most important and intractable issues.

We design, facilitate, and guide processes that enable teams of stakeholders—even those who don't understand or agree with or trust one another—to make progress on their toughest challenges. Our approach is systemic, collaborative, and creative.

We partner with governments, corporations, and civil society organizations on challenges such as education, health, food, energy, environment, development, justice, security, and peace. Our work is pragmatic, professional, and tailored to the needs of the specific situation.

Our name comes from the Greek "rheos," which means "flow."

www.reospartners.com



Robert Wood Johnson
Foundation

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For more than 40 years the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has worked to improve health and health care. We are working with others to build a national Culture of Health enabling everyone in America to live longer, healthier lives.

www.rwjf.org

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All the materials produced are available at the Reos Partners website: www.reospartners.com/pgd

Please share with us what you have created and if you have other ideas for how to build on the Use Case process, let us know: prinsloo@reospartners.com

Acknowledgment

The Use Case methodology is adapted from *Writing Effective Use Cases* by Alistair Cockburn.

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Appendix: Large Format Worksheets & Visualization Tool

Design Scope Worksheet

1

Areas of Concern / Attention

Individually make a post-it note for each point of concern or attention associated with the challenge. Each person should read their notes aloud before placing them into this box. Group redundant or related posts together.

2

In Scope

As a group, determine whether a point or thematic group of points from box 1 is in or out of scope. Move that point to the “in scope” or “out of scope” area.

Out of Scope

3

Design Scope Description

As a group, create a short statement that describes the Design Scope for your project.

Actors & Goals Worksheet

1

Actors

Individually, make a post-it note for each actor who exists within the scope as defined in the **Design Scope Worksheet**.

An actor can be a person, group of people, organization, or community.

2

Goals

As a team, define goals that align with the actors in box 1. Write them on post-it notes and place them in this box in line with the related actor.

You will complete this box while creating a **Casual Use Case** in Phase 2.

3

Goal Level

Define whether each goal is a Summary Goal, an Actor Goal, or a Function Goal. As you work on the Use Case, revise any Goal Level as needed.

You will pick an actor and their goal to focus on in your **Use Case Brief Worksheet**.

Use Case Brief Worksheet

1

Primary Actor

→ Select from box 1 of the **Actors & Goals Worksheet**.

2

Primary Actor's Goal

→ Select from box 2 of the **Actors & Goals Worksheet**.

3

Design Scope

→ Pull this statement from box 3 of the **Design Scope Worksheet**. Abbreviate if necessary.

4

Primary Actor Story

This is a 2–6 sentence story that imagines how the Primary Actor would achieve this goal. This story should be probable, not simply possible. Read your stories aloud and revise them using feedback from your team.

Stakeholders & Interests Worksheet

1

Stakeholders

In pairs or individually, make a post-it note for each stakeholder who is impacted by the Use Case.

A Stakeholder is someone who is impacted by the Primary Actor's ability to successfully reach their goal, but who doesn't necessarily interact within the Design Scope as an actor would.

2

Interests

As a group, make post-it note for each stakeholder's interests.

3

Guarantees

As a group, list on post-it notes the conditions that must be true or agreements that should be in place for the stakeholder to feel confident about the Primary Actor's pursuit of their goals.

Casual Use Case Worksheet

Build off of the information collected in the **Use Case Brief Worksheet** by moving relevant post-it notes to this worksheet.

1
Primary Actor

→ Select from box 1 of the **Actors & Goals Worksheet**.

2
Primary Actor's Goal

→ Select from box 2 of the **Actors & Goals Worksheet**.

3
Goal Level

→ Select from box 3 of the **Actors & Goals Worksheet**.

4
Design Scope

→ Pull this statement from box 3 of the **Design Scope Worksheet**.
Abbreviate if necessary.

5

Revised Primary Actor Story

This is a 2–6 sentence story that imagines how the Primary Actor would achieve this goal. This story should be probable, not simply possible. Read your stories aloud and revise using feedback from your team.

→ Use the work from box 4 of the **Use Case Brief Worksheet** as a starting point.

6

Stakeholders and Interests

→ Pull these from boxes 1 and 2 of the **Stakeholders & Interests Worksheet**.

Fully Dressed Use Case Worksheet

Build off of the information collected in the **Casual Use Case Worksheet** by transferring relevant post-it notes to this worksheet.

1

Primary Actor

→ Select from box 1 of the **Actors & Goals Worksheet**.

2

Primary Actor's Goal

→ Select from box 2 of the **Actors & Goals Worksheet**.

3

Goal Level

→ Select from box 3 of the **Actors & Goals Worksheet**.

4

Design Scope

→ Pull this statement from box 3 of the **Design Scope Worksheet**.
Abbreviate if necessary.

5

Stakeholders and Interests

→ Pull these from boxes 1 and 2 of the **Stakeholders & Interests Worksheet**.

Before

6

Preconditions

List the conditions that need to exist for this Use Case to be relevant or actionable.

7

Triggers

List events or actions that could start the Use Case.

Fully Dressed Use Case Worksheet

During – Use the story in box 5 of the **Casual Use Case Worksheet** as a starting point for breaking down the steps of the Success Scenario.

8

Success Scenario

Write the sequence of events that leads from the preconditions and trigger to the completion of the goal by the Primary Actor. At each step of the scenario, imagine potential breakdowns and how those breakdowns could be handled. There may be steps with no breakdowns and some that have several possible breakdowns.

Step 1

Step 2

Step 3

“If...then...”

“If...then...”

“If...then...”

Step 4

Step 5

Step 6

“If...then...”

“If...then...”

“If...then...”

Fully Dressed Use Case Worksheet

Step 7

Step 8

Step 9

"If...then..."

"If...then..."

"If...then..."

After – Use items in [box 3](#) of the **Stakeholders & Interests Worksheet** as a starting point for this thinking.

9

Minimum Guarantees

List outcomes that will be achieved in the course of the Use Case no matter what.

10

Success Guarantees

List outcomes that will be achieved in the course of the Use Case if the Primary Actor successfully achieves their goal.

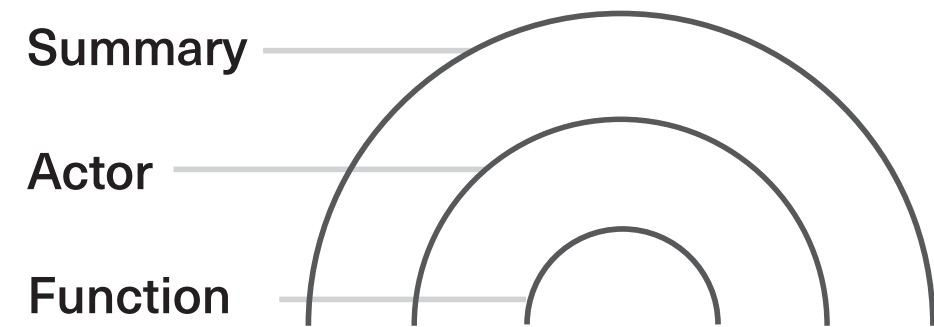
Use Case Visualization Tool

Use Case Title

What is the specific goal we are exploring through this process?

Goal Level

At which level of detail does this Use Case exist?

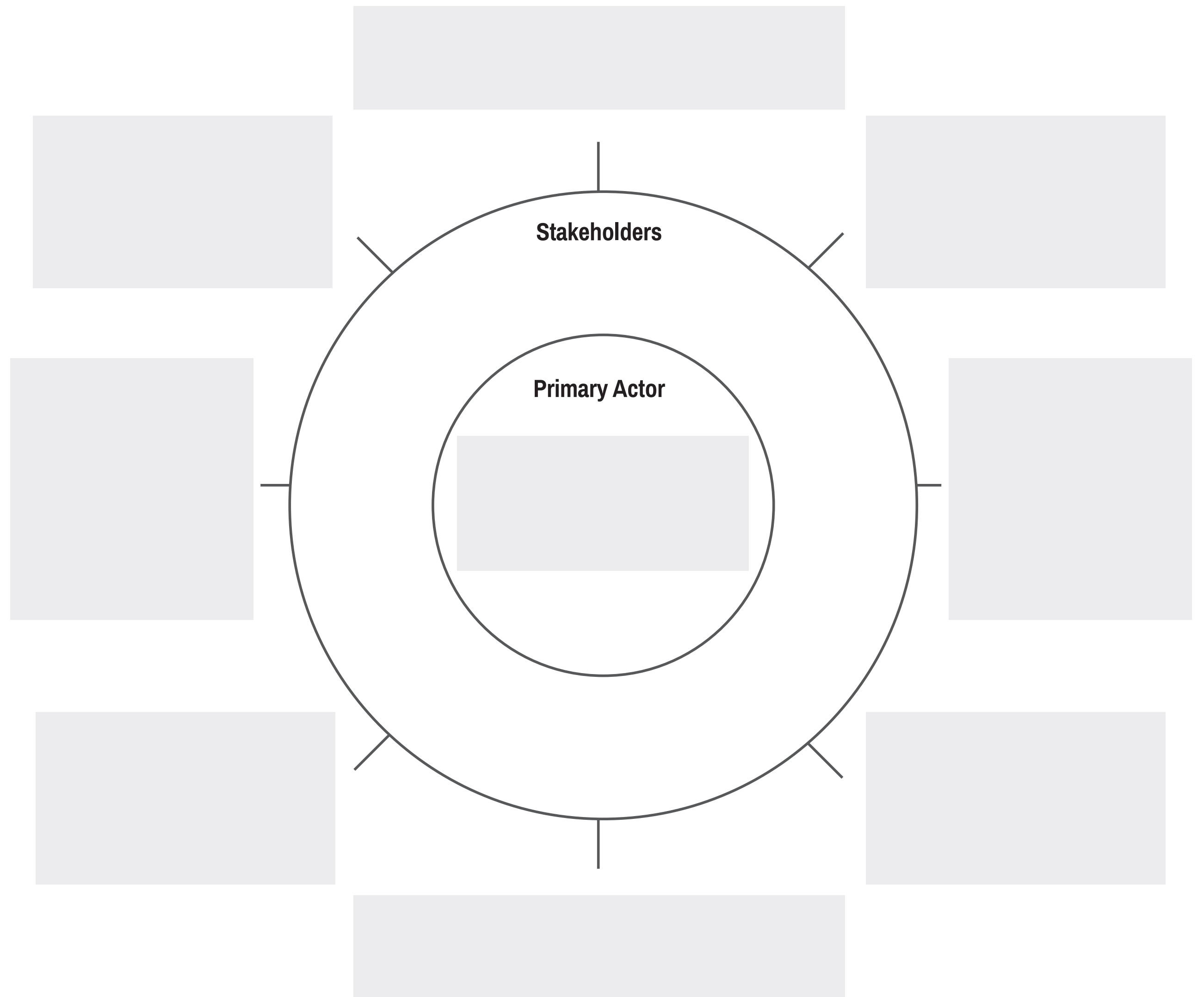


Design Scope

What are the context and boundaries of this challenge?

Primary Actor & Stakeholders

Whose journey are we focusing on? Who else has a vested interest in the Use Case?



Success Scenario

What steps must the Primary Actor take to successfully meet their goal? What obstacles might occur along the way that need to be addressed in order to move forward (*If...then...*)?

