

Flikshop

Capstone Portfolio

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The Client

The Client

Flikshop

Following release from prison in 2004, the Founder and CEO, **Marcus Bullock**, started **Flikshop** with an intention to **help the incarcerated** people stay connected to their families, and get educated to **enhance their post-release life**.



Marcus Bullock

Founder & CEO, Flikshop

The Client

The Long Term Goal

Create a seamless in-platform **learning, messaging, and album experience** for the residents to make them feel connected to their loved ones. Additionally, focus on enhancing the Learning Management System (LMS) by gamifying the Flikshop bucks and badges to promote solid learning outcomes and reduce **recidivism**.

The Client

Project Overview

Flikshop Me is an application designed for residents* which they will be operating using a **7-inch android tablet**. We have been provided with a basic set of LMS screens, and are working towards incorporating new features to make the experience more holistic for the users. **Flikshop Home**, an application for residents' personal **mobile phones** post-release is also a part of this project.

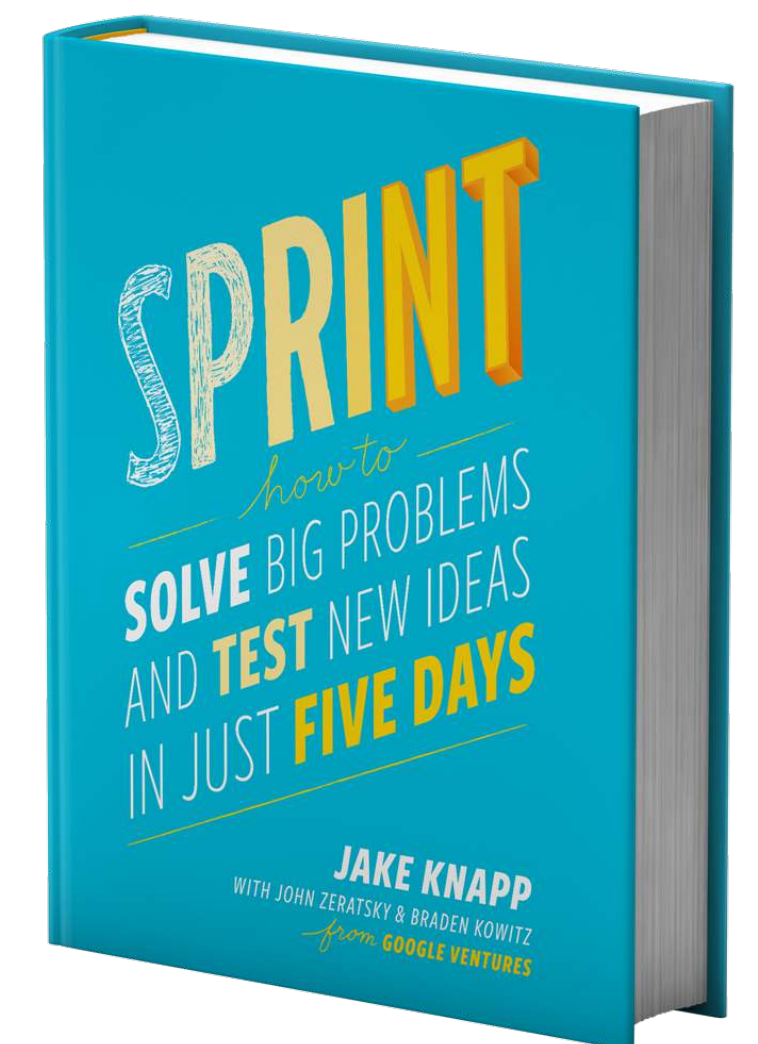
The primary challenge is to design for all residents, some who would have been incarcerated long enough to have no experience at all with any sort of mobile or other technological devices.

Capstone

Capstone Guidelines

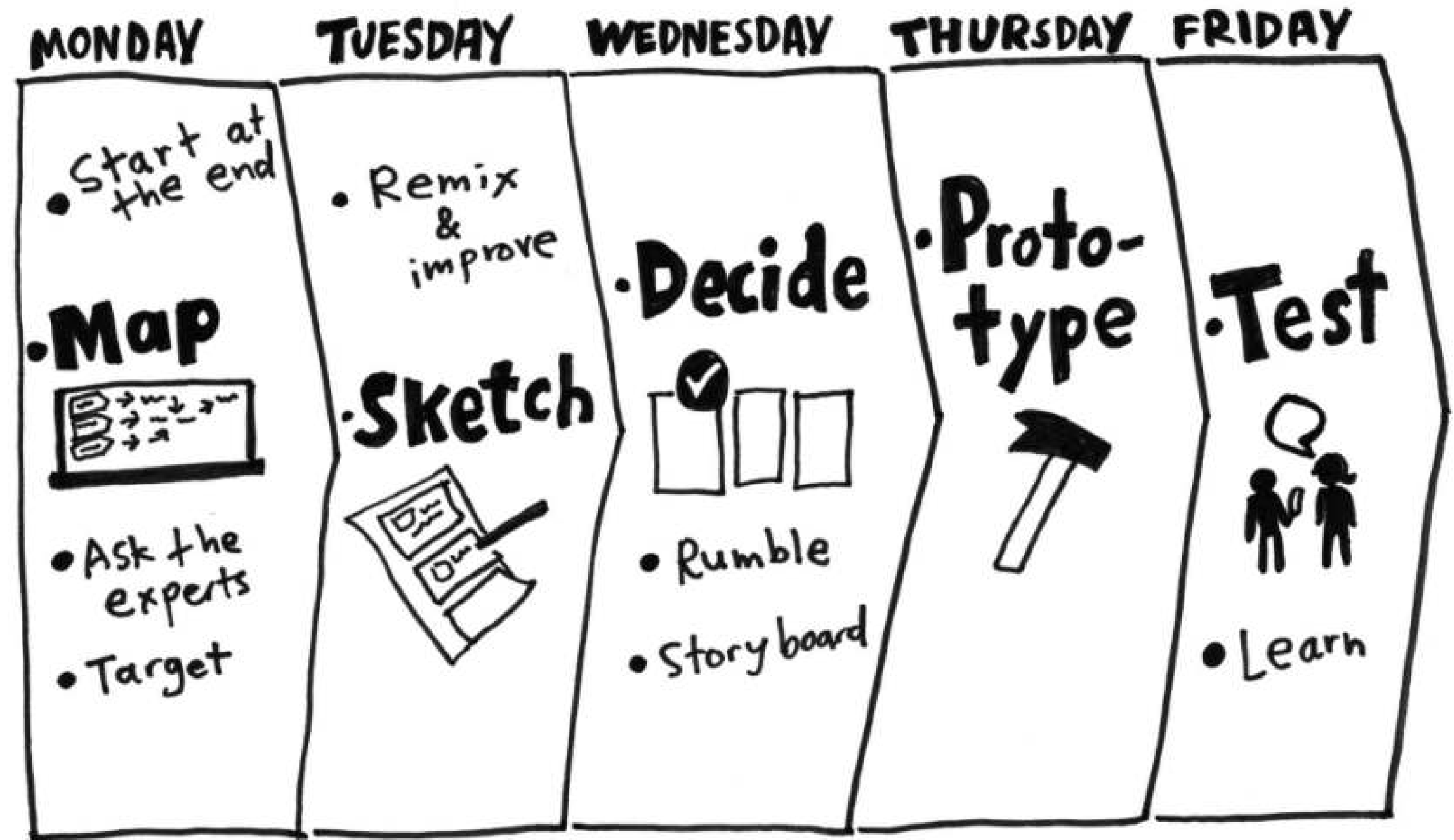
Our professor, Dr. Bill Kules, has been the project manager and guide for the project. We had regular check-ins by Dr. Kules, and we handled our internal team dynamics using Process Checks that included points on what is working well, what is not, and suggestions on how we can make things better.

We have been introduced to Jake Knapp's Sprint Book, and this book has been our point of reference throughout the sprints.



Capstone

Design Sprints



The typical **5-day sprint is expanded to a 5-week format** owing to our class timings and client's availabilities. This helped us look at each stage in detail, and with 5 members in each team, the detailing and communications played a key role

Capstone

Pros & Challenges

Pros

- Multidisciplinary approaches all around, as there are 5 minds in a team looking at each of 5 stages
- Sprint system helped design solutions more efficiently
- With each stage of sprint going on for a week, we have sufficient time to iterate and refine our processes

Challenges

- Each sprint does not require all 5 stages to be executed. Hence, careful planning ahead of sprints can save time.
- The Sprint book is designed for a 5-day process. Hence, expanding it to 5 weeks gives us a lot of time with each stage might defeat the purpose of quick actions format if spent too much time at one point.

The Team

The Team

Team Members



Bill Kules
Project Manager



Sashank M
Team Member



Urja T
Team Member



Jackie H
Team Member



Sanchita C
Team Member



Haritha M
Team Member

The Team

Roles & Responsibilities

	Sprint 1	Sprint 2	Sprint 3	Sprint 4	Sprint 5
Sashank	Facilitator	Communicator	Organizer	Research Lead	Design Lead
Jackie	Research Lead	Facilitator	Design Lead	Organizer	Communicator
Sanchita	Design Lead	Research Lead	Facilitator	Communicator	Organizer
Urja	Organizer	Design Lead	Communicator	Facilitator	Research Lead
Haritha	Communicator	Organizer	Research Lead	Design Lead	Facilitator

Despite our strengths and preferences of work, we divided roles to make sure we contribute to all sides of the project. Facilitator and Communicator were the designated roles for each sprint, and the others were created by us to manage our team better internally.

The Team

Software used



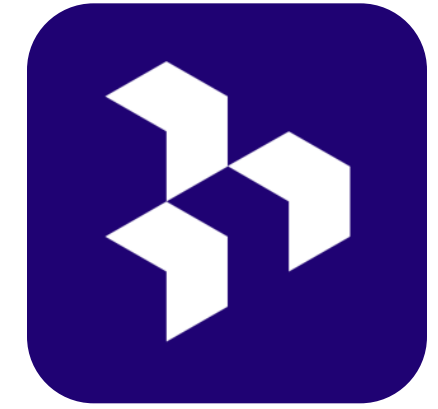
Figma



Miro



Zoom



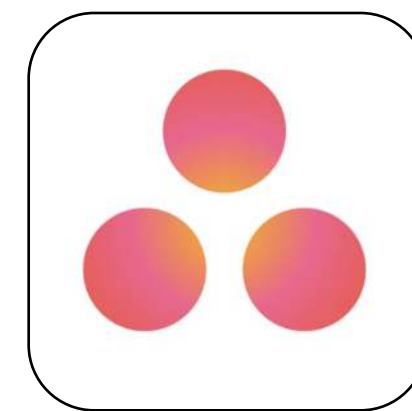
Dovetail

Design & Brainstorming

Meetings & Recordings



Notion



Asana



Drive



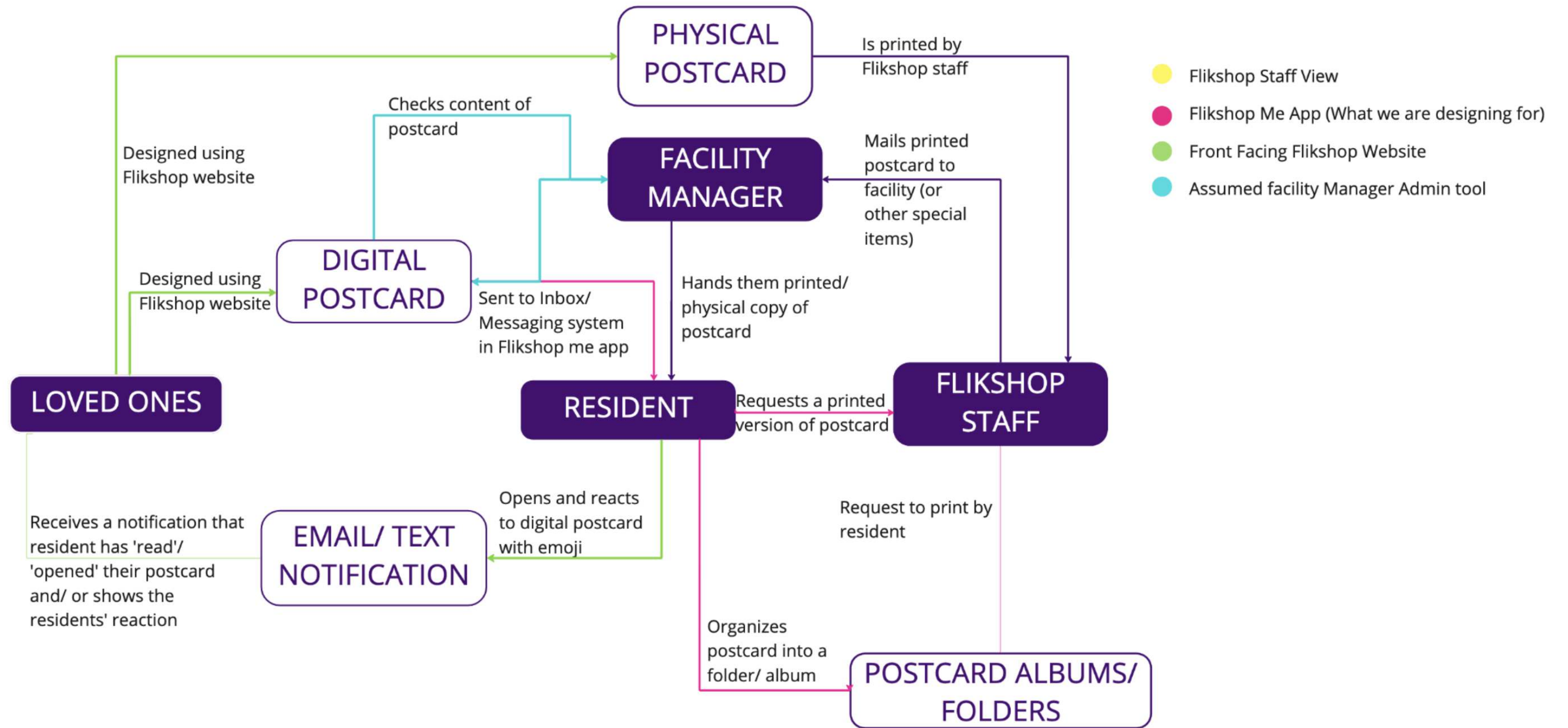
Calendar

Management & Organization

The Research

The Research

Understanding Flikshop



Flikshop was originally an idea to connect residents to their loved ones using digital postcards. Hence, we started by figuring out logistics around receiving, saving, and responding to the digital postcards residents receive, owing to regulations of the facilities.

The Research

Market & Competitors



Offerings in addition to Photos and Letters

- 2-way messaging (secure) communication
- Video & Audio calls
- Money Transfers
- Legal Team connections
- Visiting Hours Scheduling

INFERENCES

- Residents' loved ones might feel incomplete after sending out the photo/letter. A confirmation or a reaction-based response might help.
- Animations or effects along with the messages might make the resident feel more warm and homely.
- Nudges around rules and regulations are a must to make sure most of the letters do not go rejected as per guidelines

We researched on the ongoing competition in the market who provide similar services to understand how they are similar, different, and what Flikshop needs to be prepared for as a competition from others.

The Research
Interviews

User Interviews	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Ex-resident for 22 years; Male; 42 yrs old2. Ex-resident for 8 years; Male; 38 yrs old3. Educator, Flikshop LMS; Female; 36 yrs old
Expert Interviews	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Professor, Research Papers on Decarceration in the US2. PhD candidate, paper on housing situation for ex-residents3. Professor, teaches Public Policy at UIC4. Professor, Research on post-prison life: re-entry into society5. In-charge of Flikshop Education (LMS)

Owing to the security regulations, we could not interview direct users (current residents), which was a limitation. However, our client's team provided sufficient insights on what we might be overlooking, and even helped connecting with a couple of ex-residents.

The Research

Inferences & Limitations

Limitations

- Each facility has different guidelines and security regulations, which is not ideal for our research or design narrative
- Interaction with current residents would have added value to research, but we faced constraints in that aspect
- During interviews, as students, we struggled to understand where the line is between wanting to know more from residents and causing discomfort with a triggering question

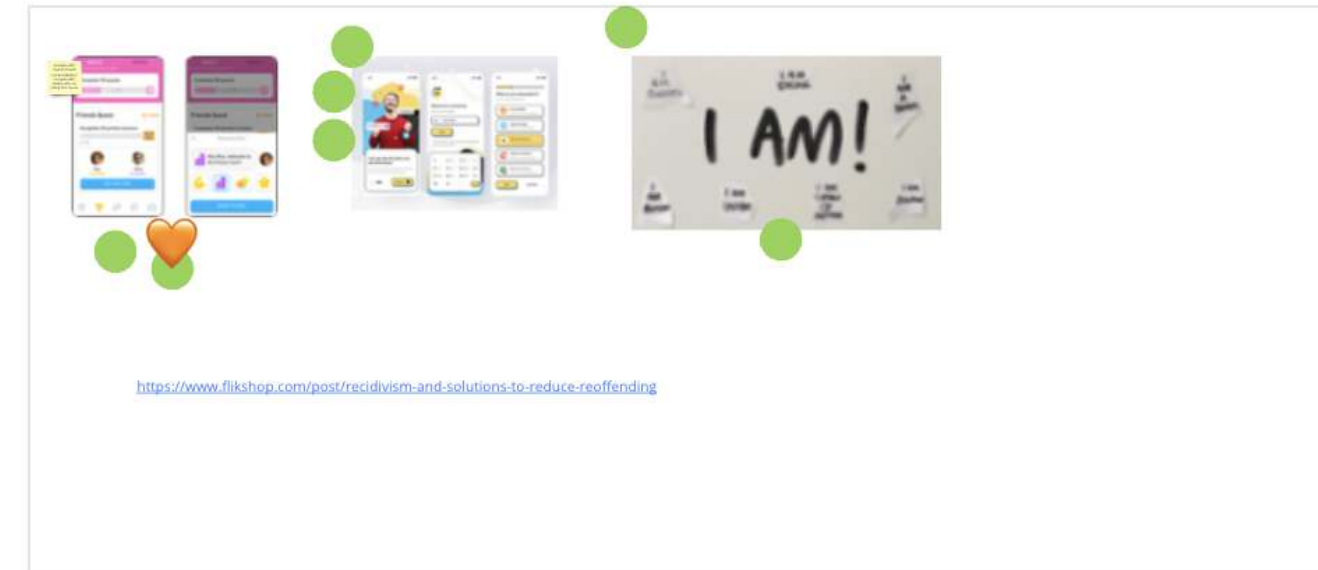
Inferences

- Expert interviews have helped in understanding issues which we probably could not have discussed with a current or previously incarcerated.
- As we cannot design for each facilities or a one-for-all solution, we shall be catering to affordances in our designs.

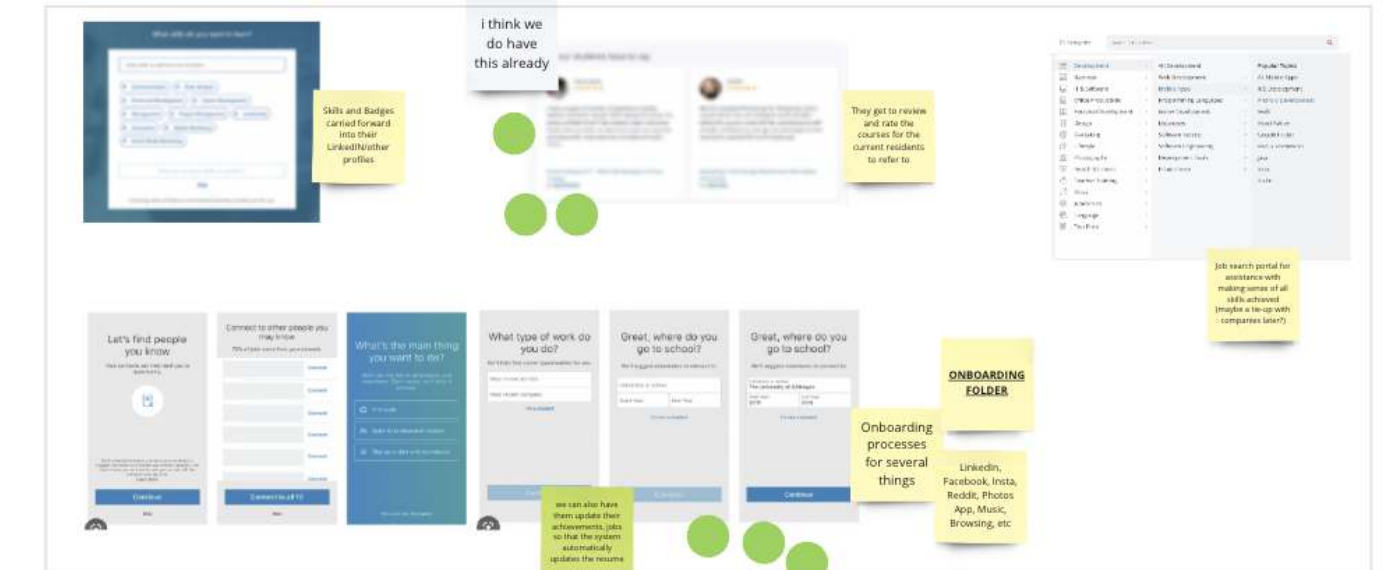
The Design

Design & Test
Ideation

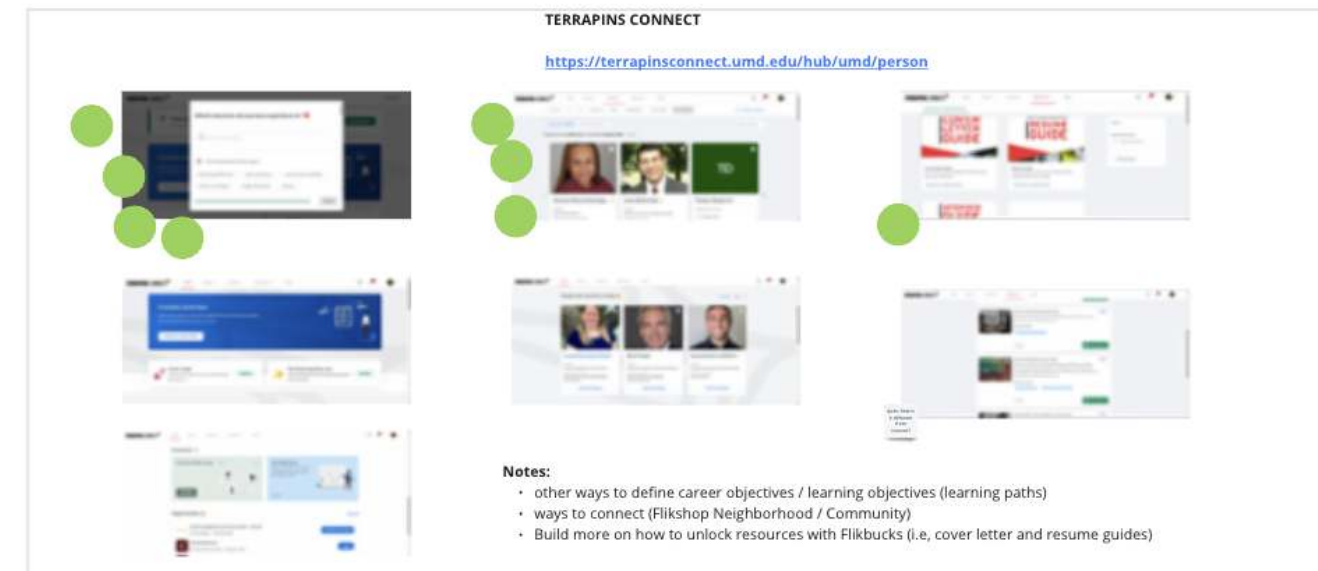
Urja



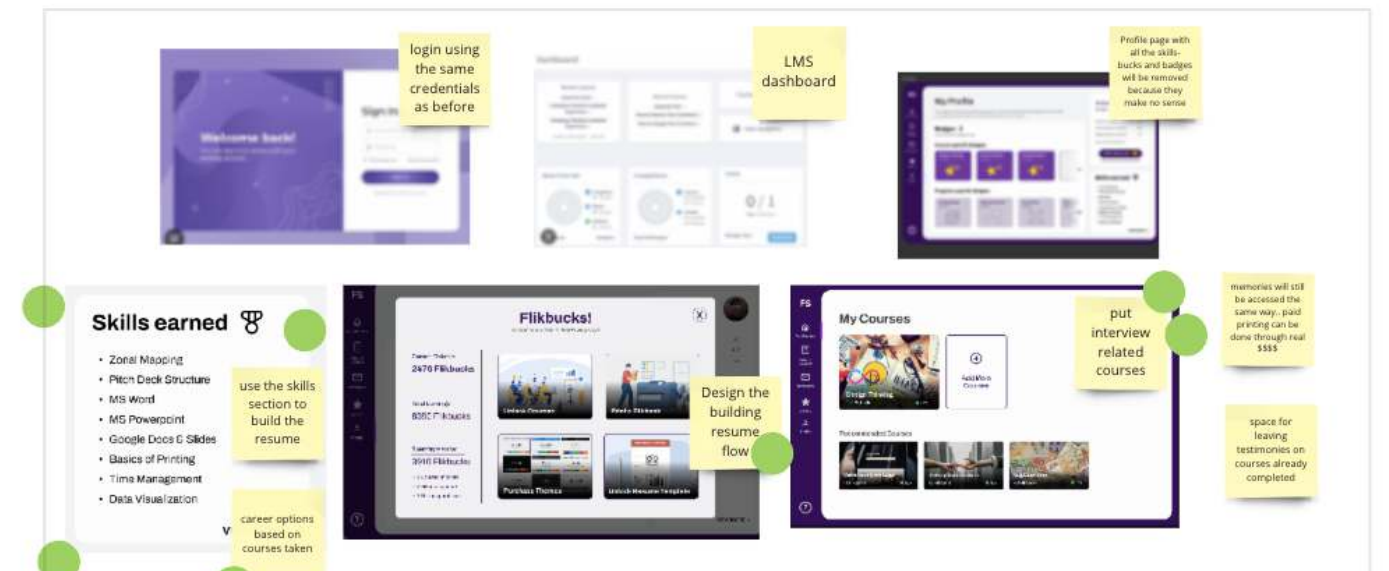
Sashank



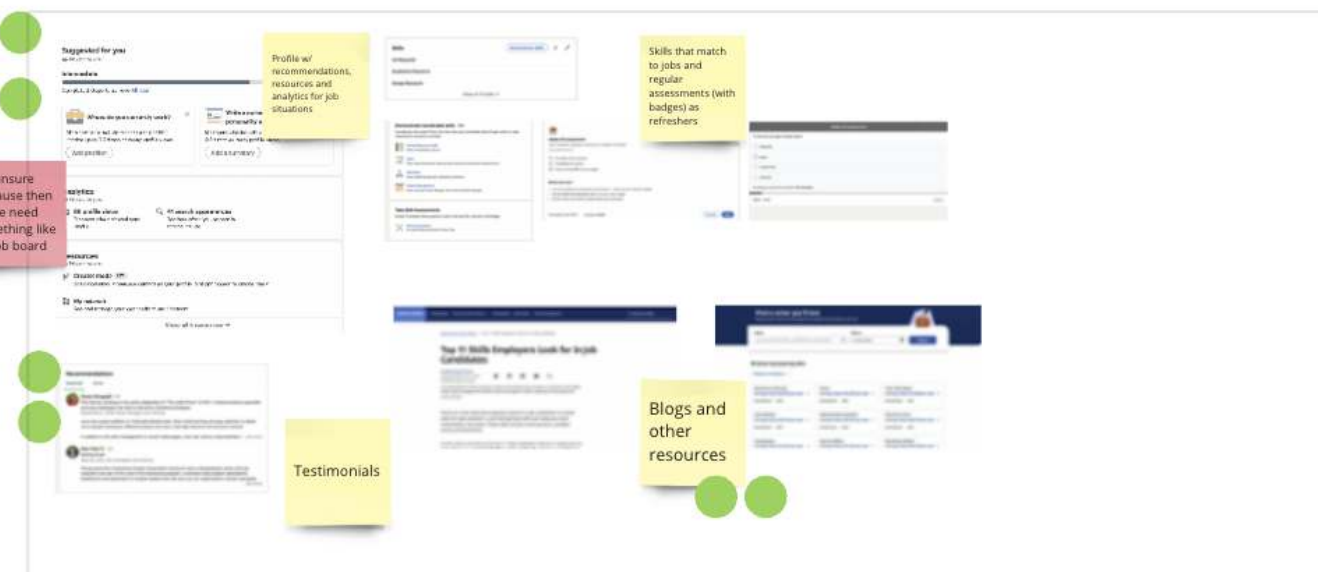
Jackie



Sanchita



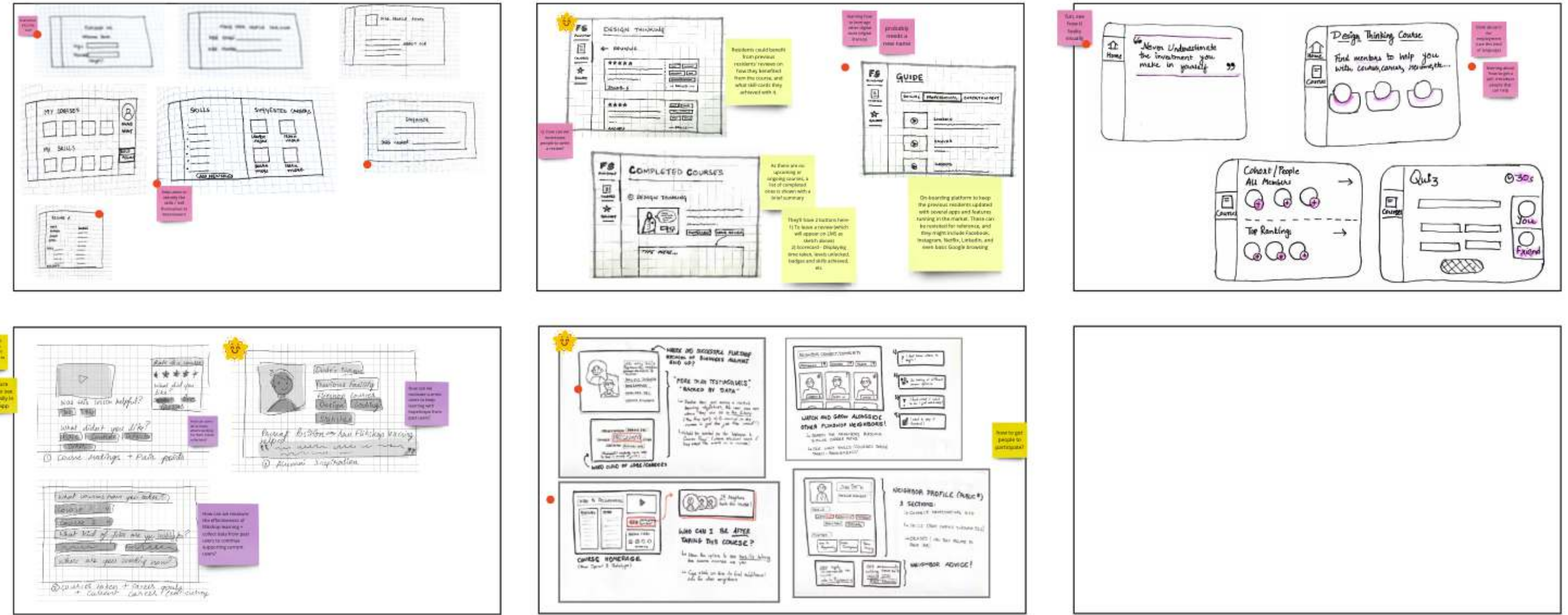
Haritha



We started all our design processes with Lightning Demos, where we put in our ideas generated from inspirations and what we understood from our kickoff meeting with the client to have a diverse pool of ideas we can move forward from.

The Design

Sketching Solutions



Following our lightning demos, we came up with 3 phases of sketching- Crazy 8s (where we sketch out imperfect but spontaneous solutions that come to our minds), Screen Sketches (1-2 ideas from Crazy 8s further explored with details added), and the sketch of how we envision the Final Screen would look like.

The Design

Features & Screens

Postcards (Flikshops) were sent from outside which would be received on Residents' devices. We made the experience of receiving warmer and designed a way in which they can react without overstepping regulations

Postcards & Messages

We proposed galleries for them to save their favorite ones and categorize them accordingly. These folders would be used by Flikshop Team to reward them by printing or compiling a few, and also as a gift on their birthdays.

Gallery (Photo Folders)

Rewarding was done in 2 ways- Bucks when they perform good in any aspect, and Badges for reaching new milestones in LMS. We designed the system how they know about, receive, and use these bucks & badges.

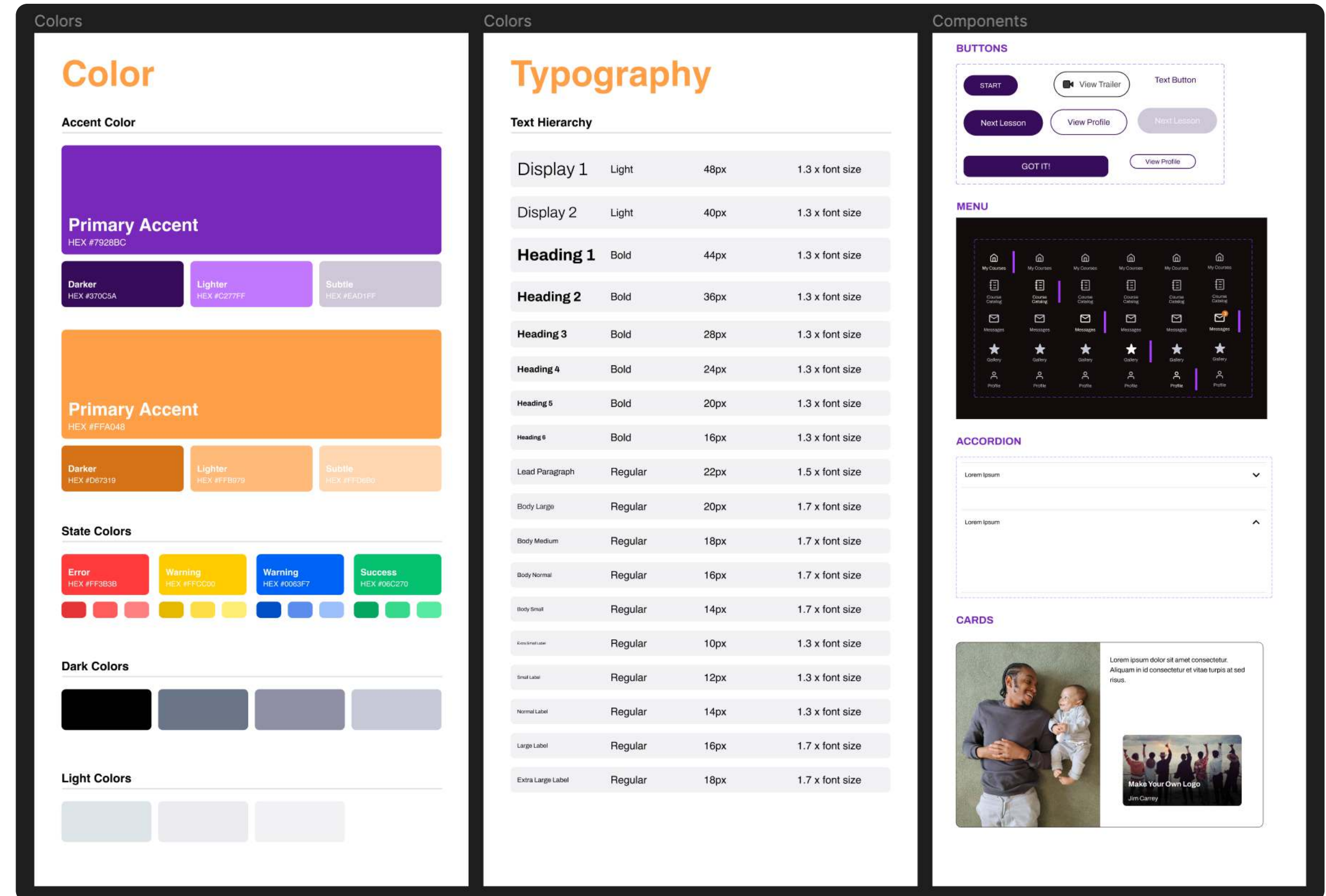
Bucks & Badges

We proposed a new application that could be used post-release. Flikshop was happy with this as many people struggle to find housing, jobs, familiarity with tech, social connections, etc upon release from facilities.

Phone Application

The Design

Design System



This design system was created for an android-based 7" screen tablet which would be used for both FlikshopMe and FlikshopHome applications, by adjusting the sizes accordingly.

The Design

Challenges

Challenges

- Our Clients were supportive and encouraging throughout the project, however, the facilities' security regulations made each design element take a step back and have lesser features to make sure they do not have to customize it every time a facility raises a concern.
- Having the user segment ranging widely in terms of age, time in prison, and familiarity with technology was very challenging to design for. This resulted in the designs being uninformed at many stages, which needed further modifications.

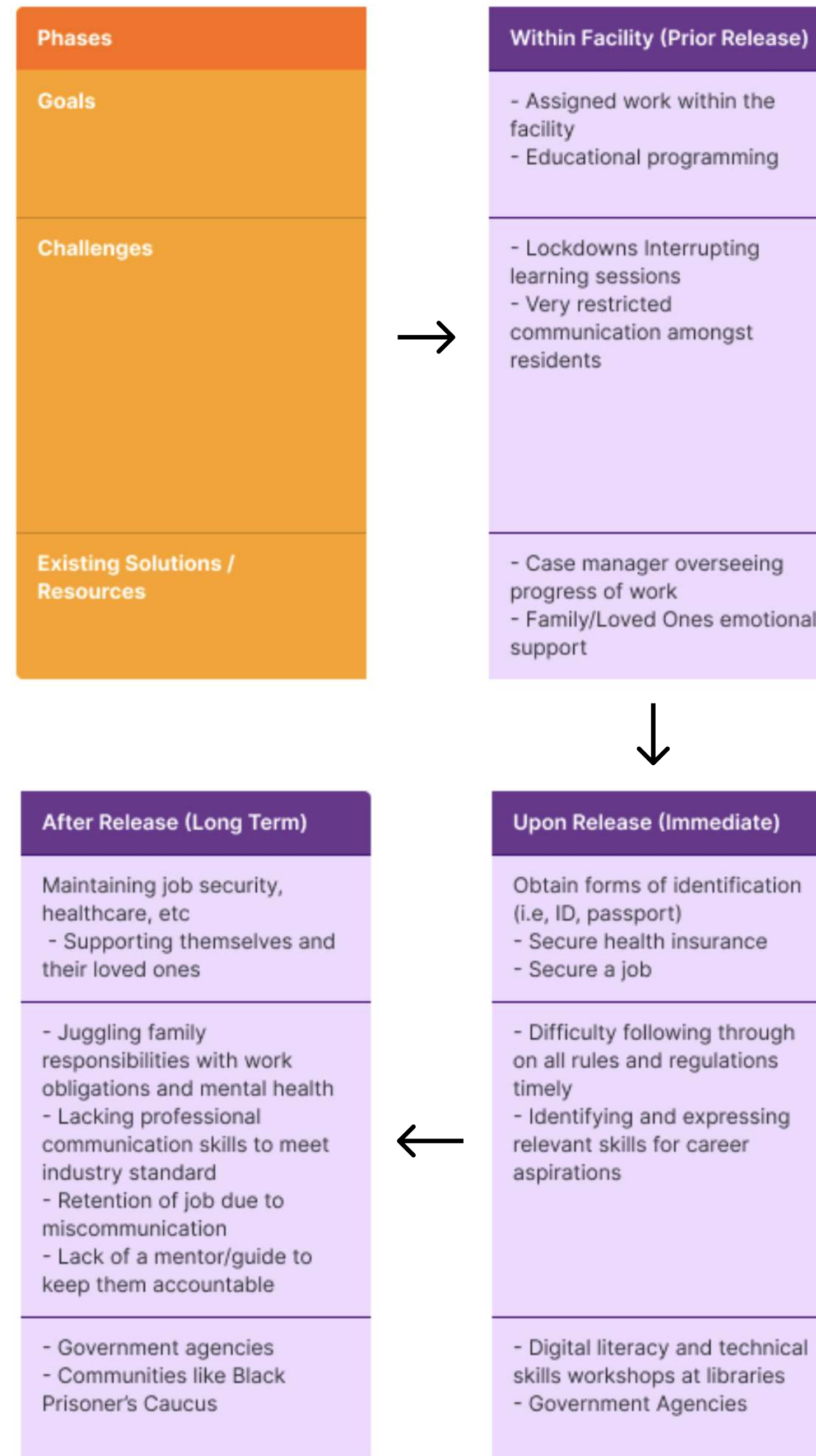
Inference

- Keeping in touch with an ex-resident (for interviews, usability testing, and even for opinions) who had been incarcerated for over 2 decades and faced challenges in understanding technology and systems of current generation has helped us enormously in assessing our design decisions.

Handoff

Handoff

Deliverables



One major handoff is the research conducted in understanding the transition from resident life to post-release one, which we conducted with the support of several expert interviews, user inputs, online studies, and observing stories posted by previously incarcerated people across many states and under different conditions.

Other research handoffs include competitor analysis, relevant market study, how each user has reacted to the features designed by us and our previous team.

Handoff

Deliverables

1. Postcards (Flikshops): [prototype-postcards](#)
2. Albums Prototype: [prototype-gallery](#)
3. Bucks and Badges: [prototype-bucks+badges](#)
4. Flikshop Home App: [prototype-flikshophome](#)

At the end of each sprint, we have handed over a figma prototype link to the client, along with a presentation on how the research was conducted and what the outcomes were from each usability testing

Handoff

What's next?

- Team Flikshop is currently focusing on developing and deploying the FlikshopMe application with basic features such as LMS, Digital Postcards, Gallery, and Bucks & Badges. Parallel to this, they are working on Flikshop Neighborhood app that helps residents' loved ones to arrange for their re-entry and make purchases on their behalf, and also connect with others in a similar situation.
- After Sprint 5, Team Flikshop is also working on FlikshopHome app for mobile interfaces, and their points of focus are shortlisted to the following services-

Discover career options for you	Access various resources	Learn from the community	Gain skills through courses
Build Your Resume	Prepare for interviews	Success Stories	Access helpful guidebooks

- A team of students will be continuing the work we started on the mobile applications, and we are volunteering to mentor them and help build a meaningful app we all envisioned.

 The End

Thank you!

Venkata Sai Sashank Mullapudi