



Make Your UX
Research Count:

Transforming User Insights into Actionable Product Decisions

A Three-Step Framework for
Product Teams to get the most
out of UX research

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The research is done. Now what?

So, you've conducted UX research and uncovered a wealth of insights about your customers.

Whether you've worked with your in-house team or turned to an external partner, you now have to take the next step to glean all the value out of that research. But, turning those insights into actionable steps can often feel overwhelming.

This guide will equip you with the knowledge and frameworks to:

- Dissect your UX research findings
- Prioritize valuable recommendations
- Translate them into tangible improvements for your product.

Let's bridge the gap between research and product decisions.

Why is this a critical step?

User research is the bridge between understanding your target audience and building a product that resonates with them.

By effectively interpreting the insights and prioritizing them appropriately, you ensure your product roadmap aligns with user needs, driving user satisfaction and business success.

A note for UX Researchers

This can be a useful guide for you too! Every UX Researcher wants their insights to be understood, talked about, remembered, and most importantly, acted on. As you write your research reports, you may be thinking, how can I most effectively communicate these findings? How can I ensure stakeholders listen to them? Will the team make changes based on my work?

The best products are built when UXRs and PMs to work together to hear and discuss insights, align on what actions need to be taken, and make decisions that will improve your UX.

Turning Insights into Product Decisions: A Three-Step Framework

You've just gotten a report back from your research team or your research partner, and this is what you have: a collection of UX research findings and their associated recommendations. You have a ton of great data and insights, but you're not sure what to do with them or how to prioritize your next product steps.



Step 1: Sort and Define Your Findings

When trying to make sense of a research report, you first need to categorize your findings and insights by type. With both foundational and evaluative research, we like to divide insights into three main types:

- Positive
- Common
- High-Impact

Of course, there are more than three "types" of insights or ways to look at this, but starting with these three categories is a great first step toward deciding what to act on.

Type 1: Positive Findings validate ideas or work

“All participants completed the checkout process because they found the steps easy to understand and act on from start to finish.”

“Most Segment 1 participants said they would click on the offer because it matched their typical shopping needs.”

While positive findings are the least actionable of the three categories, they still hold significance because they validate your ideas and show positive results.

You **thought** your customer was doing a certain behavior. Now you **know** they are.

You **hypothesized** that your prototype was usable. Now you **know** it is.

You **assumed** your customers fit into three distinct mindsets. Now you **know** they do.

While they probably won't help you make or prioritize hard decisions, they can be useful for influencing within your organization. Share them with designers and developers so they can see that their good work was successful, or with leadership to grow confidence in your product and the team's work. Don't forget to celebrate and make these successes visible within your team and organization.

Type 2: Common Findings represent themes

“Most participants failed to discover the self-service option in the app, because it was not located under the 'Help' menu where they expected to find it.”

“Half of the participants expected the purchase flow to be over after clicking the CTA, and they reported feeling both surprised and disappointed to discover another step.”

Common findings refer to trends observed or heard by the UX Researcher across multiple study participants. These trends are included in the report as themes, indicating that there was enough supporting data to show that changes to your concept or prototype may be required. In the case of foundational research, these trends may represent a particular mindset, go against a hypothesis, or showcase an important customer expectation.

Type 3: High-impact findings ensure inclusion

“Both participants aged 65+ described the content as unhelpful because they believed the long-term focus did not apply to their life stage.”

“One screen magnifier user stated that the next action was unclear because the “submit” button was outside the field of view.”

These findings may have only been mentioned by one or two participants but have a significant impact on a specific type of user, population, or marginalized group. They may be rare, but reveal a hidden opportunity or potentially severe misstep.

Typically, a finding you hear from only one participant doesn't make it into the report, but a good UX researcher can identify when a one-off comment is actually a showstopper with the potential to significantly impact your product experience.

After categorizing findings, your pile of findings may look more like this.

Now, remove the positive findings from your list.

While these are great for celebrating and sharing, they don't typically require hard decisions and action.



So, now you've narrowed your pool down to the ones that require action: Common Findings and High Impact Findings.



Step 2: Categorize Recommendations

Next up, categorize your recommendations by the ease of the solution.

Recommendations can be:



Within your control **with** a clear solution

"Update the button text to 'Start Application' to meet users' expectations for the next step."

If your team owns that button and can change the text, it's a clear recommendation with a clear solution.



Within your control **without** a clear solution

"Adjust the location of the CTA to make it easier for users to find."

This recommendation tells you users can't find the CTA in its current location, but there was no obvious place to move it.



Outside of your control

"Shorten the Terms and Conditions text so that users don't feel overwhelmed."

The pain point and solution are clear, but that text comes from Legal, and you can't change it.



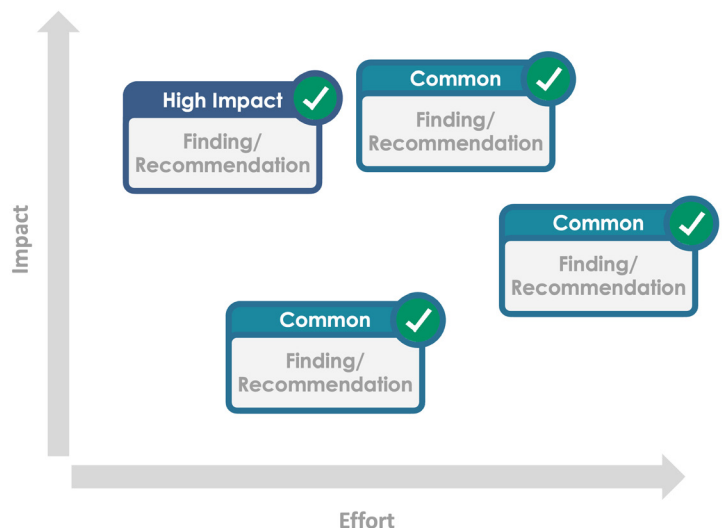
Step 3: Map Out Next Actions

So now that we have our recommendations sorted into categories, we can identify our next steps. Depending on the category, there are specific next actions.

Prioritize recommendations within your control with a clear solution

For recommendations within your control with a clear solution, the next action is to Prioritize. We recommend plotting these recommendations on an Impact vs. Effort matrix.

Get stakeholders together, review each recommendation, and rank it based on its impact on the user and the effort it will take to implement it. UX Researchers, having seen the findings firsthand, should take the lead in identifying the impact on the user. Plotting effort from low to high often means getting developers involved.



Solve for recommendations within your control without a clear solution

When you have no clear solution, we recommend putting them back into your UX pipeline. By doing more research on these issues, you can come up with a solution that might fix the problem, address expectations or mindsets, and ultimately, improve the experience.

Review these recommendations as a team and determine what needs an updated design or prototype for future testing.

Assign each task to different members of the team and create clear due dates and next steps. This step, solving for pain points that emerged from the research, is where you can iterate and test until you get either clear solutions you can prioritize and act on or positive findings, validation of your solutions that show you're ready to launch.

To Do:

- [Name] will update...
- [Name] will build...
- [Team] will move forward...
- [Team] will launch...

Share and disseminate the recommendations outside of your control

There are a lot of reasons that a recommendation can be out of your control. Perhaps the content or screens are owned by another team. Maybe your hands are tied by legal and compliance. Maybe it's a back-end limitation.

Regardless, sharing these findings internally can help you:

- Build your network within your organization
- Make connections to other teams and show you're a team player who wants to collaborate
- Influence others within the company and show the value of research

You never know when hearing something for the second, third, or 100th time could push another team to change or make the case for back-end updates. Data should be shared, so don't be shy.

The End Result

This three-step process helped you turn your pile of findings and recommendations into a roadmap for action, including:

- **Clear validation:** Positive signs that show your current work is having an impact
- **Prioritized Decisions:** A clear prioritized list of product improvements organized by the potential impact and the effort it will take to implement
- **Future Research Ideas:** A collection of new research topics to fuel your product development pipeline and get you more information, with assigned owners for any action items and prototype or concept refinement

About the author



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Molly launched her career in Product Management and soon transitioned to the world of UX research based on her passion for using data to drive product decisions. At AnswerLab, Molly helps our clients leverage user insights to guide the acceleration of their product development strategy.

Unlock Your Product's Full Potential Today

[AnswerLab](#) is a full service user experience research firm that enables product teams to navigate the unknown with confidence. We combine rigorous user research with deep industry understanding to help you uncover user needs, validate MVPs quickly and efficiently, and optimize product features for maximum engagement and impact. We help digital experience leaders scale their impact, influence, and make the right decisions for their end users and businesses.

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