

Quick Design Critiques

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Inspired by Liz Lerman's "Critical Response Process"

Format

- 3 min **Present work in progress**
- 3 min **First impressions** (from the audience)
- 3 min **Audience questions** (posed, but not answered)
- 3 min **Presenter questions** (can invite suggestions)
- 3 min **Suggestions** (optional)

Step 1 Present work in progress

3 min

Designer shows their work in progress, with some context to frame the problem for the audience.

- Show something tangible like early sketches, a mid-fi flow, style tile(s), or hi-fi mockups
- The purpose of the session is to get feedback on your design, not to practice your presentation
- Give your audience just enough context by showing something like a problem statement, persona, or scenario
- This isn't a good moment or format to get feedback on your research findings

Step 2 First impressions

3 min

Each audience member gives a 1–2 sentence first impression based on what they’ve just seen.

- During this step, avoid cross-talk, questions, and suggestions
- Be specific
- Keep it focused on the work rather than the process
- It will probably be uncomfortable at first to avoid giving suggestions during this step

GOOD EXAMPLE

“It felt very professional and organized, but also a little playful. When you got to the checkout process I started getting confused.”

AVOID

“I like it”

“It seems like you’ve done a lot of work”

Step 3 Audience questions

3 min

Imagine you are designing this work in progress. What questions would you ask yourself?

Audience

- Ask open and neutral questions
- Avoid offering suggestions

GOOD QUESTION

“What happens if I want to bring my pet with me on the plane?”

SECRET SUGGESTION

“Have you considered adding a section to the form in case the traveller will bring a pet?”

Presenter

- Write down questions, without worrying about answering them
- Avoid defending your work

GOOD RESPONSE

[writes down the question to think about later]

DON'T EXPLAIN

“That’s low priority for MVP.”

Step 4 Presenter questions

3 min

Presenter asks remaining questions to the audience, including for ideas or suggestions.

- Ask questions which are easy to answer in a group setting
- Try holding quick votes
- Refer to your notes in case you have follow-up questions from before
- Avoid asking for opinions about what users may do—that's the purpose of your research

EXAMPLE QUESTIONS

“Which of these two options do you think is more friendly?”

“Does anyone have suggestions to make this wording more clear?”

Step 5 Suggestions

3 min

Presenter has the option to ask for open suggestions from the audience.

- Solutions are saved for the end, so that the audience can focus earlier on pointing out potential problems
- Keep suggestions practical and constructive
- One suggestion per person at a time, to give time for everyone to participate
- If time is limited, consider sharing additional questions or suggestions with the presenter after the session