

Action Centered Design

Tools follow actions just like form follows function

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A good tool is one that fades into the background to let the action take center-stage.

To do that they must be carefully designed to assist people in the actions they're performing to achieve their goals.

Action Centered Design is a framework that helps designers, design tools that help them perform those actions more easily.

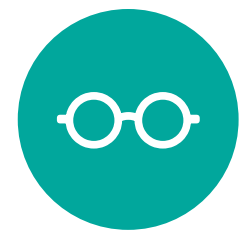
Tools help us perform actions



A good tool fades into the background, helping the **action** take center-stage.



When we're using scissors our attention is on cutting the paper, not the scissors



We look at the world through eye-glasses, not the eyeglasses.

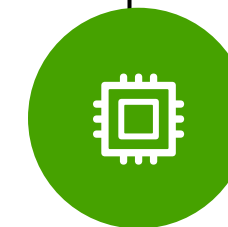
Designing tools with Action Centered Design



Define the **action** that will help people fulfill their goals



Specify the **information** (input data) needed to perform the action and display the results



Describe in detail, as to how the action will be performed incorporating input data. This is the **logic** of an action.



Design the **interface** that provides the output data and further actions for different technologies, and platforms

Looking Beyond the Screen

Each **interface** is a collection of actions and informations, presented through an output medium that engages our sense organs.

For example: A screen engages our visual sense. Speakers engage auditory senses.

When **tools follow action**, they're not bound by one output medium. They go beyond audio-visual experiences to fit the action they're assisting.

Action-Centered Design expands well-beyond a single platform. It's a versatile design framework that can be used to design everything from apps to systems to physical objects and interactive art projects.

By decoupling the output medium from the action, it helps designers expand from screens to other ambient media; Freeing them from systems that only reward engagement.

"Eyeglasses are a good tool—you look at the world, not the eyeglasses" - "World is not a desktop", Mark Weiser, Xerox PARC 1994

Selected Bibliography

[1] G. Bonsiepe, Interface: an approach to design. 1934

[2] M. Weiser, "The world is not a desktop," interactions, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 7–8, Jan. 1994, doi: 10.1145/174800.174801.

[3] J. Schuster and A. Kay, "A bicycle for the mind, redux." 1994