



# Creating a Customer Advisory Board

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# HOW TO DESIGN WITH YOUR CUSTOMERS

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## // 01

### RESEARCH & TESTING ARE ONGOING ACTIVITIES

For all aspects of your startup, iteration is the name of the game. Research & Testing is an ongoing process to solicit feedback from your different user types on a regular basis. When you start doing it constantly and regularly, you want the activities to be easy, quick and relevant to what you're working on right now.

- Testing your product should be a small thing.
- To make it small, do it like clock work.
- Always be recruiting people in your target market in advance.

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## // 02

### USER TESTING YOUR PRODUCT IS CRITICAL

User Testing (a.k.a. Usability Testing) is a research method where you let someone else use your product without you showing them how it works. It's not a demo of your product. You want to watch potential users struggle with your product so that you can identify critical issues and resolve them quickly.

- It's always ideal to test with 5+ people, but, at the very least, test with 3 people.
- It's always ideal to test with people that are your EXACT target customer. At the very least, look for people unfamiliar with the design.
- It's always ideal to write up a script first so you know what questions you're asking. The minimum you need to do is let someone else use your product without showing them how to use it.
- Always ask questions. Never answer them.

# Always know what to build

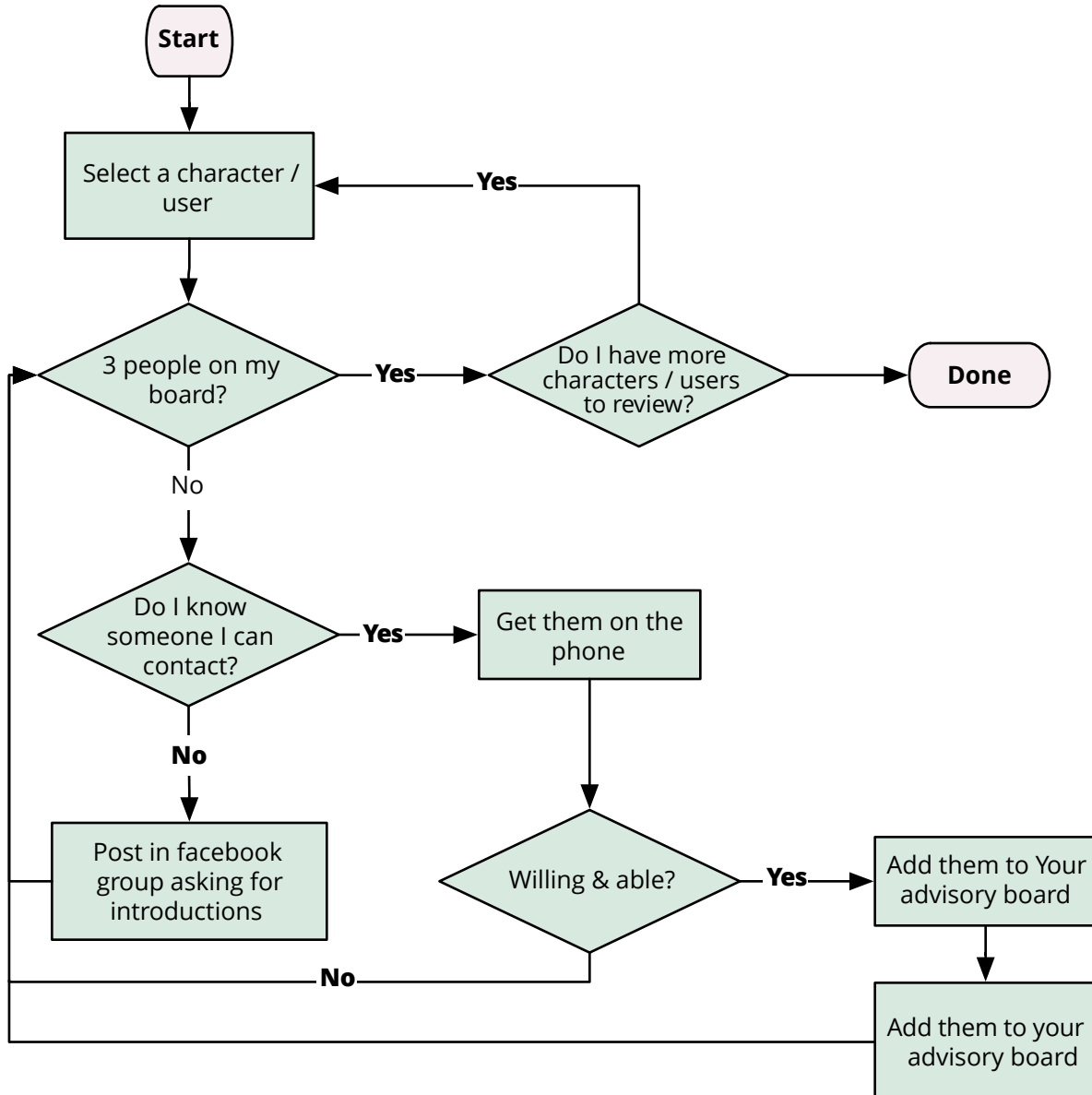


**A good product is one that is designed with the help of your users.  
Startups are less risky when you have customers involved in  
designing your product.**

**A successful design is one built on feedback from many customers,  
sprinkled with your strategic innovation in a few key places.**

# YOUR CUSTOMER ADVISORY BOARD

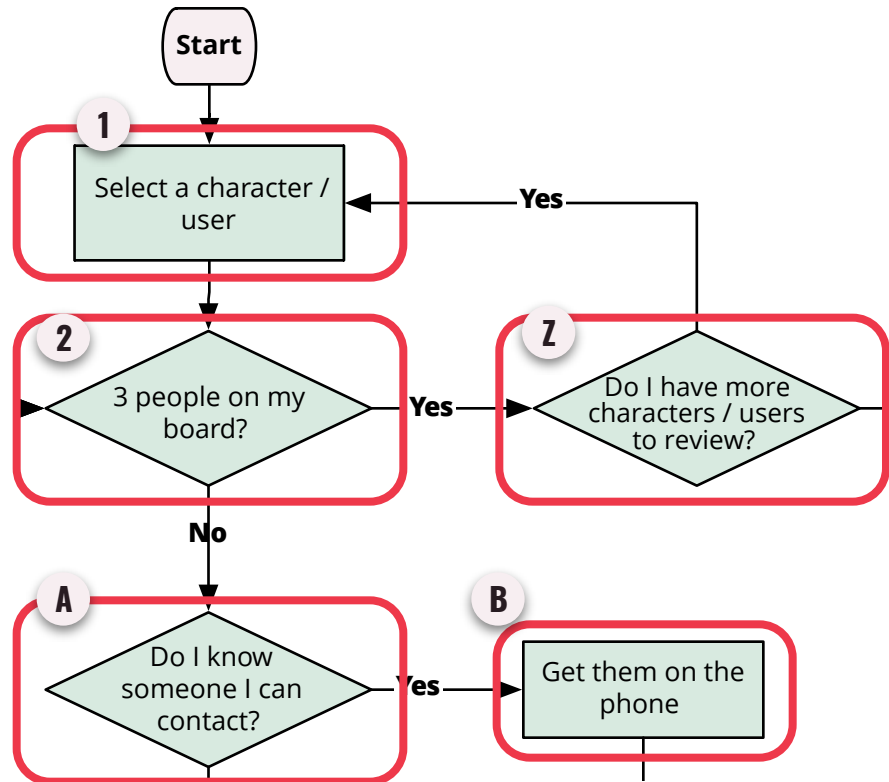
Last week, you started building up your Customer Advisory Board. In that workbook, I gave you directions verbally. This week, I'm going to communicate those directions to you differently. In the Activity Diagram below, I have drawn the instructions for developing your Customer Advisory Board. Read through the diagram until you feel confident you can explain its instructions.



In 3-4 sentences, describe the rules set forth in this diagram

# NOW, BREAK IT DOWN

Here, I'm using very specific language to describe this portion of the diagram. I'm doing this on purpose. The language is structured in a way that corresponds with how programmers think and write code. You don't need to know PHP or C# or Java syntax, but you do need to know how to communicate in this way.



**1** For this character:

**2** Do I have 3 people on my board to represent this character?

**A** If the answer is “no”, do I know someone I can contact?

**B** If I know someone, I must get them on the phone.

**Z** If the answer is “yes”, do I have more characters/users to review like this?

**Y** If the answer is “yes”, return to Step 1.

**X** If the answer is “no”, you're done.

# WHO'S ON YOUR CUSTOMER ADVISORY BOARD?

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*This is an ongoing activity for the rest of the program. Please update your list below with the people you have secured on your customer advisory board.*

For each key character, list out 3 people that you know and can contact.

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**Key Character 1**

**Key Character 2**

**Key Character 3**

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**Name 5 Ways in Which They Can Help You Right Now**

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Review your assumptions from the previous Chapter.

1

2

3

4

5