

## Skills Matrix 1.0

This matrix describes the skills and behaviours expected for each level of Meld designer. Let's use this information to have open and detailed conversations about your professional development.

Here's the process:

- 1. Self Assessment** - Start by reflecting on each skill and noting your level of competency (Intern, Designer, Senior Designer, Principal Designer). Highlight strengths and gaps. It is normal and expected that your overall competency profile will fall across two levels.
- 2. Colleague Assessment** - Ask people that you've recently worked with to plot their assessment of your skills.
- 3. Reflect and discuss** - Let's reflect on the overall assessment and chat about your strengths (things to teach others), gaps (learning goals), and what this means for your career progression and professional development budget.

Things to remember:

- \* You do not need to master all skills to perform particular role, we look at your overall skill profile.
- \* This is a prototype, we will learn and refine as we go.
- \* We should repeat this process several times a year.

Commercial in Confidence | April 2016

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP		INTERN	DESIGNER	SENIOR DESIGNER	PRINCIPAL DESIGNER
Talk about the design process	Describe the philosophy of Design and the value of using it as a problem solving tool. Describe the emotional journey of clients and designers throughout the design process.	Actively participate in a project that uses the philosophy and toolset of Design. Observe and reflect on the approach.	Learn how to articulate the design process. Learn about different techniques.	Describe the design process with enough confidence to guide a client and Meld team through it. Understand different techniques and know when to use them.	Describe all aspects of the design process with confidence. Provide specific examples of the value organisations can achieve by using a design approach. Talk about how to build design capability.
Have a point of view	Reflect, ponder and form an opinion on something that is interesting and meaningful to you. The topic should also be interesting to Meld, our clients, and broader design/business community. Share your point of view internally and externally.	Be curious and start exploring topics that interest you. Blog about your experience as a Meld intern.	Explore topics that interest you. Start to make connections and pose questions. What if? Share your ideas internally, on projects, and through blog posts.	Have a strong point of view on a certain topic. Be recognised internally as knowledgeable in this area. Share your ideas internally, on projects, through blog posts, and through conversations at public events.	Have a strong point of view on various topics. Generate new ideas and frameworks. Be recognised internally and externally as a thought leader. Share your ideas through various public forums, such as public workshops, conference presentations, publications, etc.
Have strategic conversations	Think strategically. Have relevant and meaningful conversations with people, especially clients. Make connections between the person/organisation's goals and observations you've made in other situations.	Observe and reflect on how others speak.	Observe and reflect on how others speak. Share ideas in internal situations and on projects.	Demonstrate an understanding of the challenges people face in their everyday lives. Tell stories about the projects we have done and could do to address these challenges. Share stories in internal situations and on projects.	Demonstrate an understanding of the challenges people face in their everyday lives. Tell stories about the projects we have done and could do to address these challenges. Inspire and motivate others, internally and externally.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT		INTERN	DESIGNER	SENIOR DESIGNER	PRINCIPAL DESIGNER
Build our profile	Be active in the design and business community.	Learn about the different events. Attend an event (e.g. our Open House) and chat to people about your journey as a Meld intern.	Actively participate in a public event. Share our philosophy, approach, and culture.	Actively participate in a public event. Demonstrate thought leadership skills. Share our philosophy, approach, and culture.	Actively participate in a range of public events. Demonstrate thought leadership skills. Share our philosophy, approach, and culture.
Build relationships	Proactively build relationships with people and organisations that we'd love to work with. Nurture relationships on and off projects.	Observe and reflect on what others do.	Observe and reflect on what others are doing. Connect with clients on LinkedIn.	Nurture a client relationship on and off projects. Draw on thought leadership skills to inspire ideas and generate leads.	Proactively nurture several client relationships on and off projects. Draw on thought leadership skills to inspire ideas and generate leads.
Propose and respond to opportunities	Have business acumen. Propose approach, activities, effort, and team structure. Defend the approach and negotiate terms. Factor in learnings from previous project successes and failures.	Ask about this if it is an area of interest for you.	Observe and reflect on what others are doing. Ask to be involved if this is an area of interest for you at Designer level.	Learn how to shape proposals with guidance from a Principal.	Draw on previous experiences to propose meaningful and pragmatic projects to clients. Deliver pitch presentations. Negotiate time and money to accommodate our desired way of working, and to ensure profitability.

LEADERSHIP		INTERN	DESIGNER	SENIOR DESIGNER	PRINCIPAL DESIGNER
Manage the project plan	Agree a detailed plan with the client and Meld team. Manage expectations around timing, effort, budget, and fidelity of project deliverables. Preempt and mitigate risks.	Ask about this if it is an area of interest for you.	Observe and reflect on what others are doing.	Learn how to create a detailed plan and manage expectations throughout the project. Repeat multiple times to build confidence.	Create and manage the plan with confidence. Teach others. Address challenges and pivot as needed.
Manage the client	Guide client stakeholders through the design process. Acknowledge and support their emotional journey.	Observe and reflect on what others do.	Observe and reflect on what others do. Have a direct and professional relationship. Work on having a voice.	Manage the client relationship day to day. Be seen as the go-to person. Be seen as reliable and demonstrate confidence that things are in control. Be the first to flag and approach the client when things do not feel right. Repeat multiple times to build confidence.	Manage the overall client relationship on several concurrent projects. Address challenges when escalated and pivot as needed.
Manage the project team	Guide the core project team - which may include client staff - through the design process. Acknowledge and support their emotional journey.	Observe and reflect on what others do.	Observe and reflect on what others do. Flag and address challenges with the team when things do not feel right.	Guide our team on a project. Be mindful of project profitability and quality. Flag and address challenges with the team when things do not feel right. Repeat multiple times to build confidence.	Direct teams on several concurrent projects. Ensure rigour and quality of approach and outcomes. Ensure profitability. Address challenges when escalated and provide direction on how to pivot.
Design and run workshops and presentations	Set context and expectations with the audience, create enthusiasm, maintain momentum, achieve objectives.	Observe and reflect on what others do.	Help design workshops and presentations. Seek opportunities to co-present. Observe and reflect on what others do.	Design workshops and presentations with varying levels of support from a Principal. Seek opportunities to present. Repeat multiple times to build confidence.	Design workshops and presentations. Present with confidence. Elaborate and defend ideas when questions are asked. Pivot as needed to ensure objectives are achieved.

UNDERSTAND		INTERN	DESIGNER	SENIOR DESIGNER	PRINCIPAL DESIGNER
Plan research	Understand different research methods - including one on one interviews, contextual inquiry, observational research, and group methods. Plan the activities needed to get a deep understanding of the people we are designing for. Set research objectives, choose appropriate methods, recruit appropriate participants, agree data collection methods, create a discussion guide, coordinate the research schedule, etc.	Actively participate, observe and reflect.	Learn about different methods and how to plan research.	Continue to learn about different methods. Plan research with limited support from a Principal. Guide the data collection approach to set A&S up for success.	Continue to learn about different methods. Teach others. Plan, lead, and conduct large scale research with confidence.
Conduct research	Conduct research with a client's customers, staff, and stakeholders. Know how to uncover the underlying reasons for someone's behaviour and mental model.	Actively participate, observe and reflect.	Actively participate in different types of research. Seek opportunities to lead sessions. Learn how to dig deeper based on cues from the participant.	Actively participate and guide the team in different types of research. Lead sessions. Practise digging deeper based on cues from the participant.	Lead a range of research methods with confidence. Refine your skills by teaching others. Know how to pivot the approach based on cues from participants.
Analysis and synthesis	Understand different techniques for analysing research findings. Use inductive and abductive methods to look for patterns and trends in data. Connect these patterns and trends with observed phenomena in the wider world to draw meaningful and significant conclusions (insights). Use these insights to reframe the problem and generate opportunities.	Actively participate, observe and reflect.	Actively participate in A&S sessions. Learn about different approaches. Be open to ambiguity and exploring tangents. Articulate the difference between a finding, insight, and opportunity.	Same as a Designer plus guide the team on approach.	Lead A&S sessions with confidence - internal and with clients. Draw on insights from past experiences to push the team's thinking. Pivot as needed to ensure rigour and quality of approach and outcomes.
Articulate findings	Describe research outcomes in a succinct way, and dig deeper depending on the context. Create stories that are meaningful and valuable for the client. Be able to tell a "3 second, 30 second, 3 minute, 30 minute, 3 hour" version of the story.	Actively participate, observe and reflect.	Observe and reflect on how others do this. Learn how to create stories that can be told at different lengths and in different contexts.	Be a good storyteller. Guide the team in creating meaningful stories.	Be a master storyteller. Build on previous experience to push the team's thinking. Ensure stories are meaningful and valuable to the client.

EXPLORE		INTERN	DESIGNER	SENIOR DESIGNER	PRINCIPAL DESIGNER
Generate ideas	Generate ideas for how to deliver against opportunities revealed during Analysis & Synthesis. Generate multiple, competing ideas that might subsequently be combined, pulled apart, and recombined in response to further thinking, customer input, or new insight.	Actively participate, observe and reflect.	Actively participate in ideation sessions. Learn about different techniques. Think laterally. Be open to ambiguity and exploring tangents.	Same as a Designer plus guide the team using a variety of techniques.	Lead ideation sessions with confidence - internal and with clients. Draw on insights from past experiences to push the team's thinking. Understand different techniques and know when to use them. Pivot as needed to ensure rigour and quality of approach and outcomes.
Create concepts	Review ideas, work through the component parts, intent, and underlying logic. Create something tangible to communicate an idea. Create variations to explore different aspects of an idea. Format could be hand-drawn sketches, paper prototypes of a mobile application, physical mock-ups of a service desk, print brochures drawn in pencil, etc.	Actively participate, observe and reflect.	Actively contribute ideas and collaborate with others to create concepts. Draw on whatever experience and creative skills you have to achieve a suitable format.	Same as a Designer plus guide the team on approach. Draw on the expertise of our Creative Director and visual designers as needed.	Draw on insights from past experiences to push the team's thinking. Recognise the need to split, simplify, combine, or expand concepts. Ensure format is fit for purpose.
Evaluate concepts	Plan and conduct activities needed to test concepts with those most impacted by the experience you are designing. Set objectives, recruit participants, create materials. Know how to uncover the underlying reasons for someone's reaction to an idea. Be open to ideas failing and needing to start over.	Actively participate, observe and reflect.	Learn about different techniques and how to recruit participants. Actively participate in creating test materials.	Actively participate and guide the team in creating test materials. Plan and conduct test sessions with limited support from a Principal. Recognise the need to adjust test materials based on cues from participants.	Plan, lead, and conduct testing with confidence. Know how to pivot the approach and materials based on cues from participants.
Refine concepts	Use feedback from a range of sources - including insights from concept testing - to refine concepts and potentially reframe the problem.	Actively participate, observe and reflect.	Learn how to contribute ideas and collaborate with others to refine concepts.	Contribute ideas and guide the team in creating better defined and directed concepts.	Draw on insights from past experiences to push the team's thinking. Be able to recognise the need to pivot, reframe the problem, and explore a different concept or a variation on a theme.

COMMUNICATE		INTERN	DESIGNER	SENIOR DESIGNER	PRINCIPAL DESIGNER
Communicate project outcomes	Understand client needs and determine the best way to communicate project outcomes. Think laterally and collaborate with others to explore options. The format may be an illustrated customer journey map, glossy magazine, newspaper, video presentation, report, physical prototype, experiential walk through, etc. Use key principles of information and visual design to simplify content and tell engaging stories.	Actively participate in the creation of deliverables. Learn how to use InDesign and the Meld Object Library. Share approaches and ideas from projects you've done before. Perhaps you can teach us something new.	Draw on whatever creative skills you have to help shape project deliverables. Understand how to use InDesign and the Meld Object Library. Understand how to create a customer journey map and other types of deliverables. Lean on others if visual design is not your forte (e.g. Creative Director and more experience designers).	Same as Designer plus if you're not the one creating the deliverables, know how to direct, constructively critique, and support others during the creation process.	Direct the creation of project deliverables. Draw on learnings from previous projects to ensure quality and usefulness to the client.
Present and respond	Stand up and present to an audience with and without preparation, in formal and informal moments. For example, client or conference presentations vs. spontaneous conversations with clients.	Observe and reflect on what others are doing. Speak up and share thoughts internally and with clients.	Present with confidence in internal situations. Speak up and share thoughts internally and externally.	Present with confidence in internal situations. Practice public speaking with clients and at external events.	Present with confidence in a range of internal and external situations, including client presentations and conferences. Confidently elaborate and defend ideas when questioned.
Write	Write clearly and succinctly. Think about tone of voice. Pay attention to spelling and grammar.	Observe and reflect on what others are doing.	Write project deliverables and blog posts. Capable of self-editing before sharing.	Write project deliverables, blog posts, and occasionally proposals. Describe conceptual models succinctly. Review the writing of others and provide constructive feedback while allowing for individual styles.	Write proposals and blog posts. Describe conceptual models succinctly. Publish content externally. Review the writing of others and provide constructive feedback while allowing for individual styles. Ensure quality of content representing the voice of Meld.
Basic visual communication	Use basic sketching to express ideas and tell stories.	Same for all. The level of sophistication will vary depending on your background and practice, but that's ok. Everyone can and should draw, or at least scribble.			

NURTURE		INTERN	DESIGNER	SENIOR DESIGNER	PRINCIPAL DESIGNER
Help yourself to grow	Reflect on your goals, skills, and gaps. Proactively invite feedback from a range of people including peers, managers, junior staff, clients, etc. Encourage candid conversations. Plan for areas of growth.	Same for all levels. Reflect often (at least quarterly) on: - What's working well? - What's niggling at you and could be better? - What would you like to see more of? Share your thoughts with a Principal and our GM so we can support your professional development and factor your needs into resourcing and mentoring decisions.			
Help others to grow	Understand the skills people are trying to develop and deliberately provide opportunities for them to practise. Encourage candid conversations. Provide constructive feedback, praise and encouragement. Inspire and motivate.	Observe and reflect on what others are doing.	Observe and reflect on how others teach, coach, and mentor. Buddy an Intern or staff member at any level.	Start to model core skills and values. Buddy an Intern or staff member at any level. Help others to learn a particular skill.	Model core skills and values. Coach a Senior. Support staff development on projects. Teach various skills.

**VALUES AND BEHAVIOURS**

Same for all levels, confidence will build with practice.

**CARE**

You have empathy. You are kind and thoughtful. You want to improve the lives of people and the world around them.

**CURIOSITY**

You are naturally curious. You're an explorer and proactively seek opportunities. You reflect on what, why and how we do what we do.

**TRUST**

You trust yourself, your colleagues, our company and clients. You have faith. You're brave. You trust in the design process.

**PARTERSHIP**

You are inclusive and collaborative - internally, with clients and partners.

**RIGOUR**

You focus on quality. You are thorough and diligent, but also know when something is good enough for the task at hand. You deliver to the best of your ability within the boundaries provided.

**INTEGRITY**

You act with a good conscience in all that you do. You act in the best interest of Meld, our clients, our partners, and each other.

**RESILIENCE**

You find ways to manage the emotional journey typical of design projects and studio environments (e.g. collaborating with others, pace, ambiguity, stress, conflicting priorities). You proactively seek feedback and are open to candid conversations.

**PLAYFUL**

You have a good sense of humour and don't take yourself too seriously. You are open to new experiences and novel approaches.