

# Personal Development Plan

Joca van der Horst  
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## Identity

**Name:** João Pedro "Joca" van der Horst  
**Date and place of birth:** 21/02/1995, near Arnhem  
**Origin:** Dutch-Brazilian  
**Personality:** ENFP, Extraverted iNtuitive Feeling Perceiving

**Loves:**  
Writing blogs and stories, taking (analog) photographs, creating posters and the works of Studio Roosegaarde and Momkai.



I am a disciplined worker and I love to learn new things all by myself. That's how I started with photography, writing and graphic design. I like to have a sense of freedom, being in control of my development. Within the educational model at the department of Industrial Design I am able to integrate these things in my studies.

*"Very conscious, analytical, interested... but maybe a little bit too cognitive (i.e., looking for the right insights and arguments)" - J.B.O.S. Martens, coach B1.1*

When I started at high school, I had the somewhat naïve ideal to be a 'uomo universal'. I still believe (a little) knowledge of a great variety of disciplines is the key to understanding other people better and seeing things in a broader perspective. Next to design I am really interested in journalism, especially in innovative initiatives in this field like *Blendle* and *De Correspondent*.

## Vision

I believe in design as a means of communication. Like an article or cartoon, a good design can make the user look at certain phenomena with another perspective. The communicative power of a design can be influenced positively by matching choices in material, technology and the user experience.

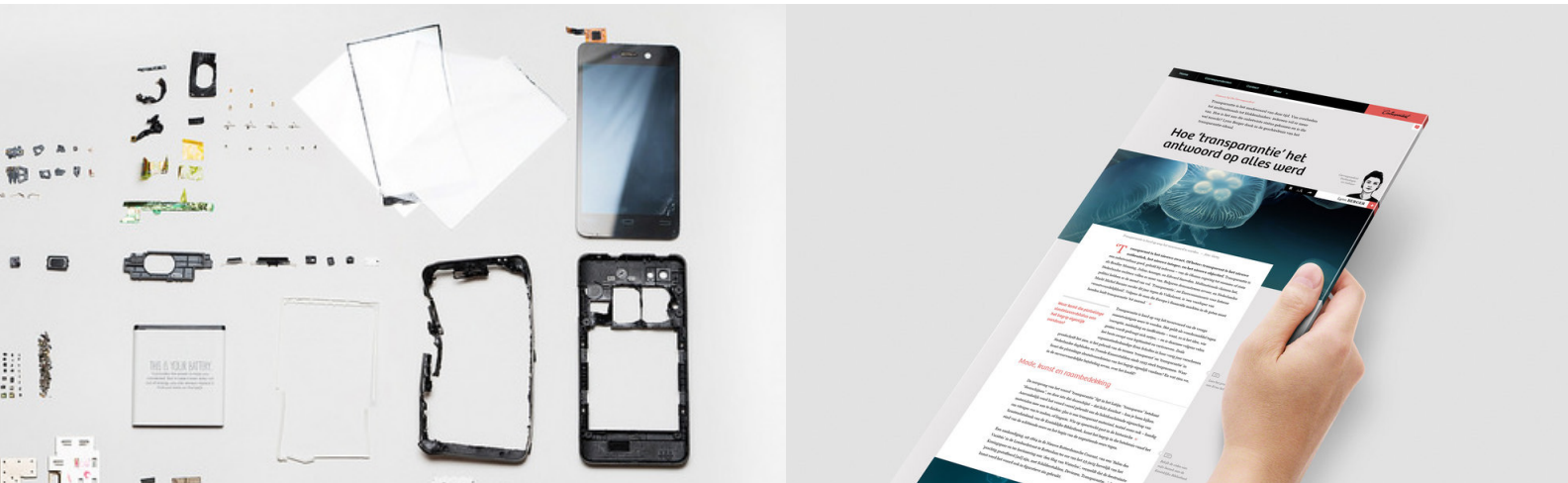
Following from this I think it is important to design products with a modest approach. A design should blend in my daily routine, improves it and feels like it has always been there, although it is a totally new type of product. Then it leaves room to the user to think about the product they are actually using.

What I want to communicate in my designs are the possibilities to make products more sustainable in an environmental or social way. Though difficult, I want to do that by optimizing the design and the production process.

## /Inspiration

Personally, I think the Fairphone is a good example of the kind of designs I'd like to create: the process of making this smartphone is used to improve the sustainability of the supply chain. They do that for example by participating in mining projects and improving the working conditions of the miners. The story of the product creates awareness for the social and environmental problems in the production chain of mobile phones

Another source of inspiration is the Correspondent: a news platform that rather introduces its readers to new topics, than just covering the latest news. The design of the website perfectly fits this approach by focusing on showing the expertise of the editors and a excellent readability of the articles on various platforms. For my B1.1 showcase I was inspired by the typography, structure and responsive design of this website.



*left: Expanded view of a Fairphone - © Fairphone  
right: The visual design of De Correspondent site - © 2013 Momkai*

## /Thoughts about my vision

I think that some aspects are right at its place now, like the focus on communication and leaving space to the user. I feel however that the message I want to communicate for example should be more concrete. Communication is rather abstract as well, how can I define that more specifically and personal?

Last semester I talked with lots of designers about their vision at the Dutch Design Week. This helped me a lot in developing my own vision. This semester I want to continue that by visiting several exhibitions and design agencies. In February I visited 'The Green Light district': an exhibition in Kortrijk (Belgium) that showed designs for a more sustainable world.

### **Goal**

In April I will join Lucid's studytrip to the Salone del Mobile in Milan. I will sign up at Lucid's Education Committee for a visit to two design agencies, Central Design and Namahn, to participate in a design case.

I will regularly discuss my vision with my coach using the vision I have now and the new thoughts I get from reflecting about the activities mentioned above. The result is a further developed vision that I will put in my showcase.

# Competency development

In this paragraph I give a brief overview of my current state of development for each competency and my goals for further growth in the next semester. The competencies are ordered on importance to develop this semester to get a balanced level of awareness of all competencies by the end of the academic year.

## **/Self-directed and continuous learning**

I feel that the educational system at the department works for me. SDCL stimulates me to have an active attitude, reflect about the things I did and as a whole work as a good instrument to get the best out of myself. Last semester I saw that I can improve in my use of the SDCL-weeks and my goals. I tend to do lots of activities which I find interesting, and forget a bit about the goals I set in my PDP. The result is that the connection with my goals and my actual activities is sometimes lost.

### **Goal**

I think that setting better goals helps to succeed in them and it will also help in selecting additional activities that link with the goals, or the directions in which I want to grow. To improve my goals I will give extra attention in my PDP for B1.2 to set SMART goals. I will ask my coach for feedback on the goals and improve them if needed. At the end of the semester I will reflect in my showcase on the effect of this on succeeding in my goals compared to the last semester.

## **/Social cultural awareness**

Last semester I read the book 'The History, Theory and Practice of Product Design', which taught me about the different design traditions over the world. It served as a way of inspiration in the assignment Basic Formgiving Skills. For this course I designed a powersocket with elements that are inspired by the work of the modernist architect Sier van Rhijn.

This contributed to my understanding that design isn't just an object, it works in a context where social cultural aspects play an important role during the design process and while using the finished product.

### **Goal**

In this semester I want to develop another aspect of this competence, the influence of cultures on design. During the third quartile I will do that by following the assignment Intercultural Awareness which is about Geert Hofstede's book Cultures and Organizations. In my showcase I will reflect on the assignment and show examples of designs that are influenced by culture.

## **/Designing Business Processes**

I got a brief introduction to this competence in DG000 and while visiting a talkshow about technology start-ups in Eindhoven. Both activities were 'passive', so for this semester I want to work actively to develop this competence.

### **Goal**

I will do that by doing the assignment Disruptive Business models in the fourth quartile. I'd like to apply the knowledge that I develop in this assignment in the project, by filling in the business model canvas together with the project group. If the project isn't suitable for this activity, then I will use the project of the previous semester for this activity. I will ask my assignor for help and feedback on this activity.

## **/Descriptive and mathematical modeling**

I passed the basic courses Calculus and Physics, which gave me a solid base for mathematical work insights on the use of modeling in a design project. To get full awareness of this competency I need to learn how to make a mathematical model myself.

### **Goal**

To have a solid base of mathematical modeling, I want to pass the basic course Modeling this academic year.

## **/Teamwork & Communication**

During the past semester I was sometimes annoyed of working in a team. I learned to deal better with these issues and my tendency of perfectionism. The result was that I contributed to a good workflow. I saw clearly that working with positive energy is way more effective.

### **Goal**

In my new project group I will try to not be annoyed by minor things and work with positive energy. During the project I will ask the teammates regularly about the collaboration in the project so far and I will reflect on the whole process in my showcase in Q4.

## **/Form & Senses**

I really liked doing the assignment Basic Formgiving Skills in the second quartile. In the new semester I want to use the skills and knowledge I learned with this course in the project for the design of the prototype. An aspect I want to develop in this semester is to learn about new creation techniques and materials.

### **Goal**

I will do this by following a workshop lasercutting basics at 'Broeiness Strijp-S' on Wednesday March 4. I will also ask my housemates who study at Design Academy Eindhoven for a tour at their workshop for my and interested people of the project team, to learn about their tools and especially their experts in materials. In return I will give my housemates a tour through the Vertigo workshop at TU/e. After doing this I can use this knowledge for producing a prototype for the project in the fourth quartile.

## **/User focus and perspective**

By doing an observation and a user test at a primary school, I learned how to involve the user in a design project and get quality results out of it by setting a goal and a strategy.

### **Goal**

I want to study more theory about user centered design, to analyze the results more structurally to get more information out of it. During the SDL week in April I will study the IDEO Human Centered Design Toolkit and reflect about it. In the fourth quartile I will use this knowledge for organizing a user test for the project.

## **/Integrating Technology**

The past months I learned how to program for Arduino, build simple electronic circuits and work with RFID sensors. Another important thing I learned was to properly document the process. To get a good basic set of skills and knowledge, I need to fill a gap: working with Processing and the connection between Arduino and Processing.

### ***Goal***

During the third quartile I will follow the Processing tutorials by José Sanchez on Youtube. In the fourth quartile I will build a system using an Arduino with several inputs, that connects with processing to create sound and image effects on the PC. If possible, this will be part of the technical prototype for the project.

### ***/Design and research processes***

In the first quartile the process of the project was mostly linear, while in the second quartile we worked more according to RTDP: working a linear on various aspects of the project and using the results of a usertest to influence the integrated technology and the other way around. Another aspect of this competency that I developed last semester is research. By following the workshop Information Brokering I learnt to use the databases with scientific articles at TU/e and evaluate these sources on quality and relevancy for the project.

### ***Goal***

In the project I will use the skills I learned with the workshop information brokering for doing research. In my showcase I will reflect on the results and its influence on the project.