

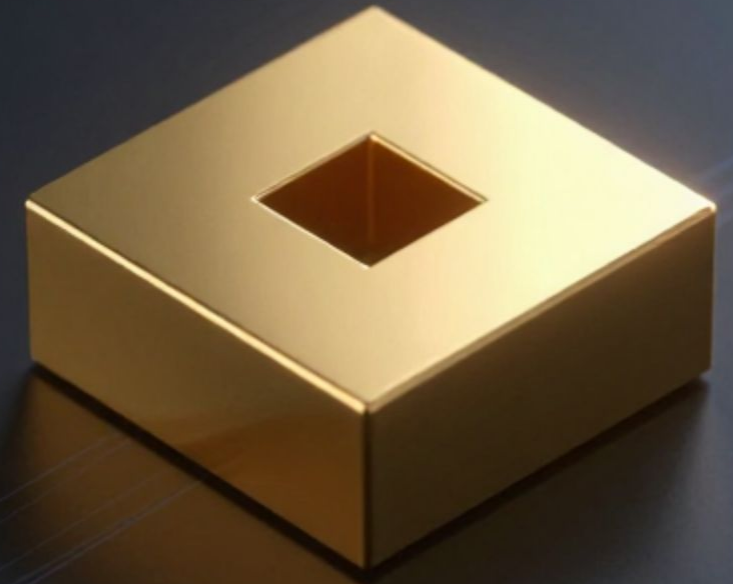
SESSION 05

MVP & Validation Experiments

Build the smallest product that helps you learn the most.

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PROBLEM DEFINED, MARKET UNDERSTOOD

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Now we must decide what to build first.

? Session 3 — Problem Statement

- **Context:** What is happening and who experiences it?
- **Root Cause:** What are the underlying triggers?
- **Impact:** What is the cost of the problem?
- **Alternatives:** How do they solve it today?

🔍 Session 4 — Market Research

- **Customer:** Who is the primary segment?
- **Competition:** Who else is in the space?
- **Market Gap:** Where is the unmet need?
- **Strategic Fit:** Where do we belong in the market?

1 Problem Defined



2 Market Understood



3 MVP Designed

FOUNDERS OFTEN BUILD TOO MUCH

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After understanding the problem, many teams start building the full platform immediately.

⚠ Typical Technical Approach

- 📁 Planning the from Day 1
- 📋 Building **every feature** before launch
- 👥 Defining **every user role** and permission
- 💻 Prioritizing infrastructure: Login, payment, dashboards

Mistake: Months of coding before ever testing value.



THE CORE SHIFT

**What is the smallest
product that can test
value?**

WHAT IS AN MVP?

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The smallest credible version of a solution that lets a real customer experience the main value and gives the team evidence about what to do next.



MINIMUM

Only what the test needs to be functional.



VIABLE

Useful and credible enough to provide value.



PRODUCT

Something a real customer can experience.

 **An MVP is a learning tool.**

Source: Adapted from I-Corps / Lean LaunchPad handbook.

AN MVP IS NOT A SMALL FINAL PRODUCT

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WHAT AN MVP IS

- ✓ **Learning Tool:** Designed around a specific question.
- ✓ **Smallest Credible:** Enough for a real experience.
- ♥ **Evidence Base:** Generates data on what to do next.

WHAT IT IS NOT

- ✗ Version 0.1 of every feature (lower quality)
- ✗ A broken product or a technical demo
- ✗ A full platform with fewer screens
- ✗ Built to impress investors or friends

The MVP is designed around a **learning question**, not a feature list.

WHAT DO WE NEED TO LEARN FIRST?

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Before building more, choose the question that matters most.

Focus your MVP on gathering evidence, not just shipping features.

PROBLEM VALIDATION



Do customers actually feel this problem?

ACQUISITION



Will they try the proposed solution?

ACTIVATION



Will they complete the main action?

TRUST



Will they trust the result or service?

RETENTION



Will they return to use it again?

MONETIZATION

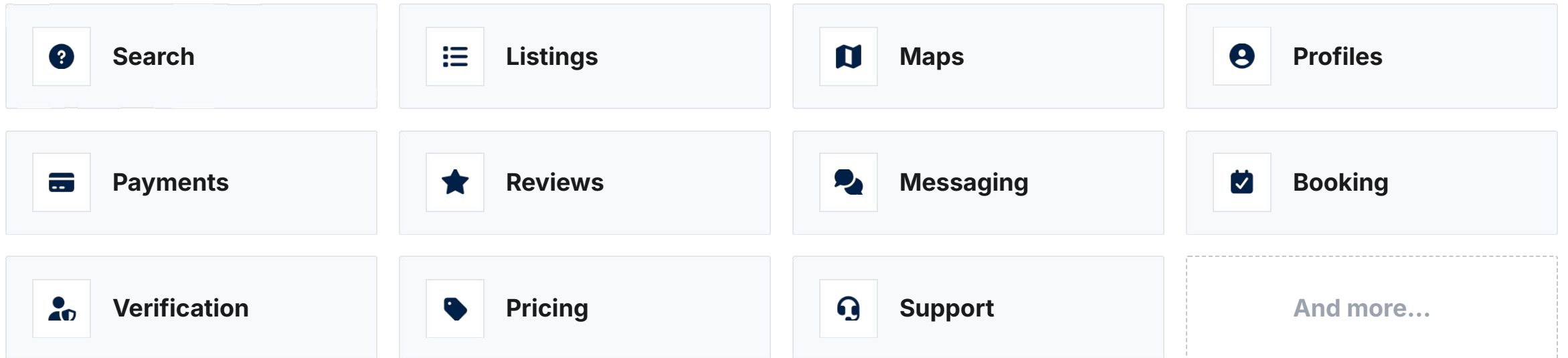


Will they actually pay for this?

AIRBNB TODAY IS A FULL PLATFORM

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MODERN PLATFORM EXPERIENCE



DISCUSSION QUESTION

If you were building Airbnb today, which feature would you start with?

AIRBNB BEGAN WITH ONE APARTMENT

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San Francisco, 2007

Founders Brian Chesky and Joe Gebbia lived in an apartment they could barely afford.

Accommodation Pressure

A large design conference in the city caused hotels to sell out completely.

The First Three Guests

They hosted Michael, Kat, and Amol on air mattresses in their Rausch Street home.

THE CENTRAL QUESTION

"Will visitors pay to stay in another person's home?"

The Result

- ✓ The guests stayed (Behavior)
- ✓ The guests paid (Transaction)

 Note: This was an early real-world test, not a formal "MVP" label at the time. It focused on behavior over infrastructure.

THE AIRBNB TEST

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TESTING VALUE BEFORE INFRASTRUCTURE

The central question was not about the website or the search engine, but about human behavior: "**Will visitors pay to stay in another person's home?**"

They tested the value before building the marketplace.

Source: Airbnb Newsroom (2007 Rausch Street host/guest verification)



CUSTOMER

Visitors needing accommodation



PROBLEM

Hotels unavailable or expensive



SMALLEST SOLUTION

Air mattress in founders' apartment



CUSTOMER ACTION

Guests stayed and paid



EVIDENCE

Real people completed a transaction

THEY AVOIDED THE FULL PLATFORM

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THEY DID NOT INITIALLY BUILD:

Mobile Application NOT YET	Global Search NOT YET	Host Dashboards NOT YET	Automated Pricing NOT YET
Reviews System NOT YET	Trust & Verification NOT YET	Multiple Payments NOT YET	Professional Tools NOT YET

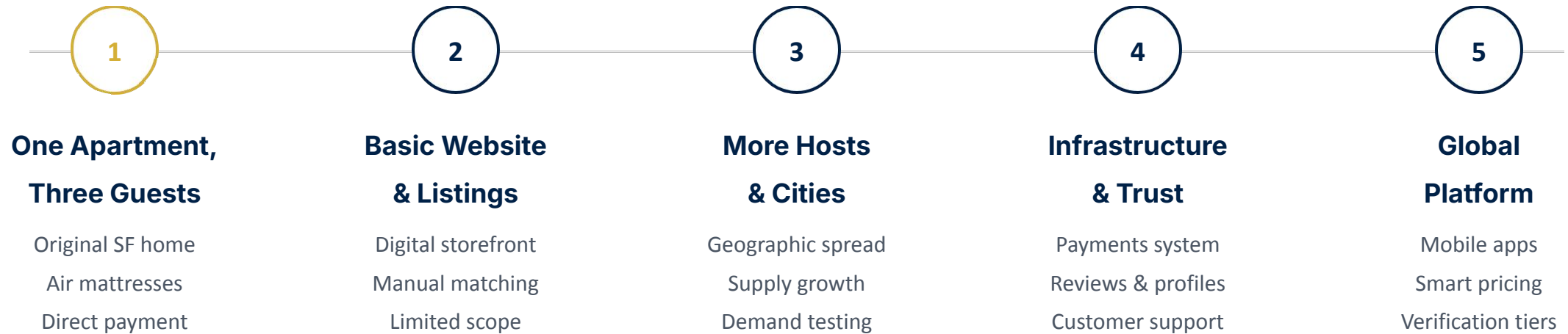
THE CENTRAL TEST QUESTION

“Will visitors pay to stay in another person’s home?”

💡 Main lesson: The first product only needed to test the .

FEATURES CAME AFTER LEARNING

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Each stage added features only after new questions were answered through real data.

Source: Conceptual product evolution based on Airbnb official Newsroom "About Us" founding statements.

START FROM YOUR PROBLEM STATEMENT

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Your MVP should test the part of the problem that matters first.

EXTRACT FROM SESSION 3

 Customer Segments

 Core Problem

 Root Cause Analysis

 Current Alternatives

 Desired Outcome



Which part must the MVP address first?

Don't start from a feature backlog. Start from the critical gap in the customer journey.

Focusing your MVP on the root cause ensures you are testing value, not just building infrastructure.

THE SOLUTION IS STILL AN ASSUMPTION

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PROBLEM

What the customer is struggling with.

✓ VALIDATED RESEARCH

SOLUTION

What we believe may help the customer.

UNPROVEN ASSUMPTION

PRACTICAL EXAMPLE

THE PROBLEM

Small businesses lose customer requests across fragmented channels.



THE SOLUTION IDEA

A unified inbox platform for all messaging streams.

The problem may be validated. The solution still needs evidence.

FIND THE ASSUMPTION THAT CAN BREAK THE IDEA

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DEFINITION

An assumption is something we believe is true but have not proven."



Customers care about the problem.



Customers want this type of solution.



Customers will change their behavior.



Customers will trust the product.



Customers will pay for the value.



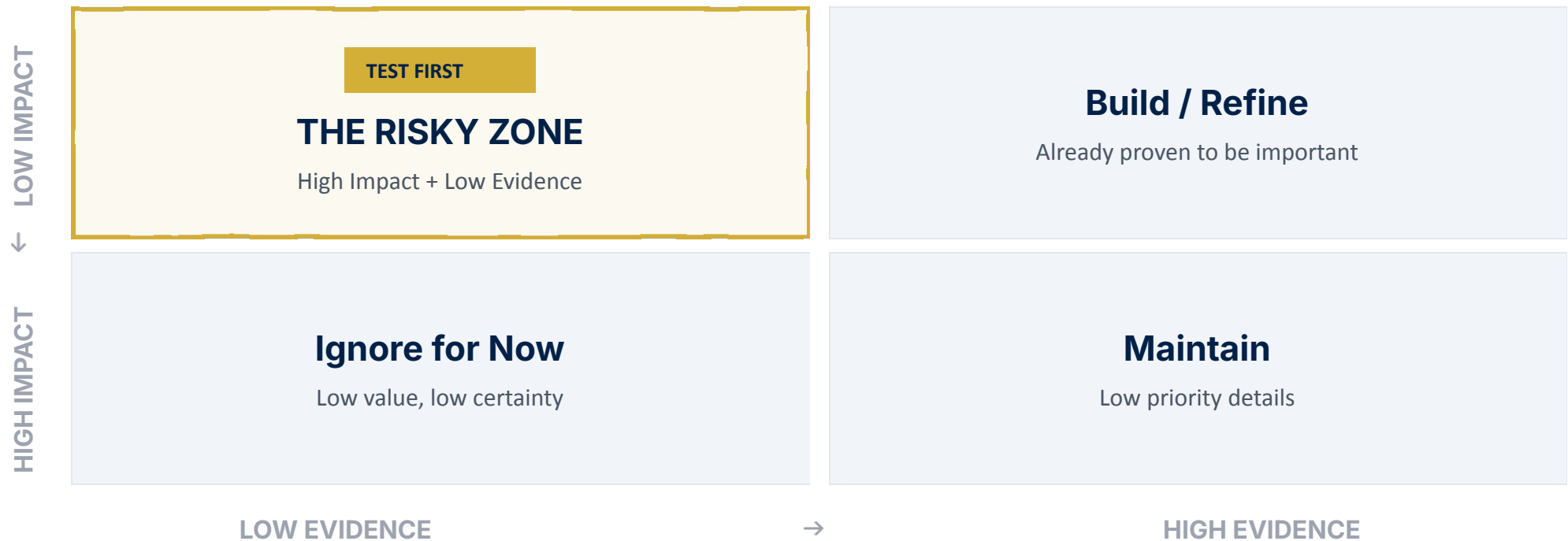
THE CRITICAL QUESTION

Which assumption could make the idea fail if it is wrong?

TEST THE RISKIEST ASSUMPTION

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Important + uncertain = test first



Test the assumption that is both **important** and **uncertain**.

FOUR PRACTICAL MVP TYPES

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Manual MVP

Deliver the service manually to learn how the logic works before automating.

Test the core value delivery

Learn customer behavior directly



Landing Page

Explain the unique offer and ask for a specific action to measure interest.

Measure conversion and demand

Test marketing messages



Clickable Prototype

Simulate the user journey using tools like Figma to test the experience.

Validate UI/UX and flow

Gather feedback on usability



One Working Feature

Build only the single most important function that solves the main problem.

Test technical feasibility

Verify value of core utility

An MVP does not always mean coding.

CHOOSE THE MVP BY THE QUESTION

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Need to test interest?



LANDING PAGE

EXAMPLES

"Join the waitlist" or "Request a demo" buttons.



Need to test user
experience?



PROTOTYPE

EXAMPLES

Figma click-through or simulated user journey.



Need to test delivered
value?



MANUAL MVP

EXAMPLES

WhatsApp orders and manual delivery coordination.



Need to test technical
usefulness?



**ONE WORKING
FEATURE**

EXAMPLES

Building only the central logic (e.g., a single quiz engine).

THE MVP FOLLOWS THE LEARNING QUESTION.

MVP + EXPERIMENT = LEARNING

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1. HYPOTHESIS

"We believe that [customer] has [problem]."



2. EXPERIMENT

"We will offer [small solution]."



3. EVIDENCE

"We will observe whether they [action]."

APPLIED CASE: AIRBNB

VERIFIED TEST

THE BELIEF

Visitors who cannot find suitable hotels will pay to stay in a local apartment.

THE SMALL SOLUTION

A simple place to sleep in the founders' apartment (air mattresses).

THE RESULTING EVIDENCE

Three guests stayed and paid. Real people completed a real transaction.

 The goal of this loop is not to "launch," but to turn vision into tested facts.

CUSTOMER ACTION BEATS OPINION

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Weak Evidence

- “ "That sounds like a good idea"
- “ "I like it / I would use it"
-  Social media likes
-  Friendly verbal feedback

Stronger Evidence

-  User registration / Sign-up
-  Uploads data or information
-  Completes core onboarding steps
-  Real payment or deposit

"A test without a success signal is only a demonstration."

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE

Test with 10 target users; success means 4 complete the main action; if fewer than 2 complete it, review the customer, problem, or MVP.

| ACTIVITY & ASSIGNMENT

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01

Complete Your MVP Test Card

Define your central assumption, choose an MVP experiment type (Manual, Landing Page, Prototype, or One Feature), and set a clear success signal.

02

Team Share & Peer Review

Present your test plan to the cohort. Focus on the "Action" you expect from your customer. Collect feedback on whether your evidence will be strong enough.

03

The Assignment: Test with 3 Users

Run your experiment with at least 3 target customers before the next session. Document exactly what they did, not just what they said.