

Beth Lester

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Summary

I am a self-motivated human-centered researcher and strategist, dedicated to changing people's lives through meaningful strategies and solutions.

Relevant Skills

Research and Strategy

- Contextual observation
- Contextual inquiry
- Remote research
- In-depth interviews
- Interactive activities
- Framework creation
- Synthesis of interviews
- Insight generation
- Storyboarding
- Service blueprint creation

Software

- Adobe Creative Suite
- Figma
- Miro

Language

- Semi-fluent Spanish

Education

Northwestern University

Chicago, IL | December 2018

- M.S. Engineering Design Innovation

Elon University

Elon, NC | May 2017

- B.A. Independent Major: Art and Engineering
- Magna Cum Laude
- Phi Beta Kappa

Other

Currently reading:

Coming-of-age memoirs; novels led by strong women

My next vacation:

Hiking with my mom in CA

Claim to fame:

Hiked over 1000 consecutive miles of the Appalachian Trail in 2018

Work Experience

Design Strategist

Relish Works | Chicago, IL | May 2021 - Present

- Conduct and synthesize primary and secondary research to understand current trends, assess future likelihoods, and address immediate needs of the core business
- Lead primary research efforts with user-stakeholders to inform and support research across the innovation team while simultaneously building a user quote-and-contact repository
- Establish compelling stories that speak to the needs and mentality of the core business while introducing innovative or future-forward concepts and strategies

UX Researcher

Bold Insight | Chicago, IL | November 2019 - May 2021

- Conducted over 75 hours of live research sessions and impacted tactics for over 25 projects
- Partnered with a wide range of clients on exploratory projects and usability studies
- Recommended brand, service, and product strategy decisions based on insights from qualitative and quantitative data

Freelance xResearcher and Strategist

Social Vulture Partners | Westport, CT | September - November 2019

- Established and conducted research with non-profit employees and volunteers to increase volunteer participation
- Delivered three tiers of strategies to meet the organization's need for labor and engagement while addressing the variability of desire to and ability to commit to long-term volunteer work.

Innovation Fellow

US Department of Health and Human Services | Washington, DC | June - September 2018

- Led our team and clients through portions of design research, ideation, and prototype testing
- Overcame systemic apprehension towards the use of human-centered design methodologies through cocreation sessions and compelling storytelling to communicate insights
- Provided clients with a strategic guide detailing key activities of a proposed office and recommended qualities of a prospective leadership team

Project Examples

Moving Toward the Future of Food Sales

Relish Works | Chicago, IL | Fall 2021

- Integrated primary research with conducted industry experts and restaurant operators with secondary research on best-practices and competitor strategies
- Explored the roles of the sales organization within the business and of the sales representative within the organization
- Outlined strategies needed to achieve a competitive sales team that meets consumer needs and optimizes for employee time capabilities to improve profit and reduce customer churn

Optimizing Airway Treatments in Pediatric Cystic Fibrosis Patients

Master's thesis | Northwestern University | Spring - Fall 2018

- Conducted primary research with patients, parents, and providers to understand the Cystic Fibrosis journey and relevant medical information
- Established desirability and medical and technical feasibility through prototype testing
- Conceptualized an experience connecting a smart nebulizer, a video-game plug-in, a phone app, and electronic health record data

Expanding Robot Vacuum Capabilities with iRobot

Design Strategy Studio | Northwestern University | Spring 2018

- Conducted contextual interviews and observations with robot vacuum users and users in analogous markets, including home-owners and users of other IoT devices
- Integrated insights concerning cleaning and home-care with knowledge of existing technologies
- Leveraged the mobility of robot vacuums as compared to other IoT devices as a strategic starting point to disrupt the market by expanding technological applications
- Developed a five-year, strategic plan to expand iRobot's presence in the IoT marketplace