

DESIGN MATTERS TOKYO' 24 . ADILICE SANCHES

Design

by Default

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How can we design societies?

How can we design societies?

It's estimated that there are over 4 million design professionals in the world. That's a small portion considering there are 7 billion people in our planet.

It's probably not realistic to think that designers, architects and urban planners are the only people responsible for design

Who owns design?

The short answer is that
everyone owns design!


Design is a formula to solve a problem

Design is a formula to solve a problem

Individuals, groups and societies intentionally and unintentionally use design to solve their challenges and make their day to day easier.

This formula starts with a *need*

Which represents a driving painpoint or challenge that should be addressed



Then we have *function*

That illustrates the goal or task that should be achieved in order to address the need

Finally, we have *form*

Which is the format, color, material and shape defined in the making of the solution



Like any equation, we need to have the right amount of each of these elements

Identify a pain for customers that fits your business scope

Define the best solution you can create with the resources you have

Materialise the solution into a real experience

need

function

form

The purpose of the Design Formula is to maintain a balance

need

function

form

Why is this balance important?



When we have *function* and *form*, but we don't have *need*, we have something meaningless

function

form

When we have
need and *form*
without
function, we
have art

need

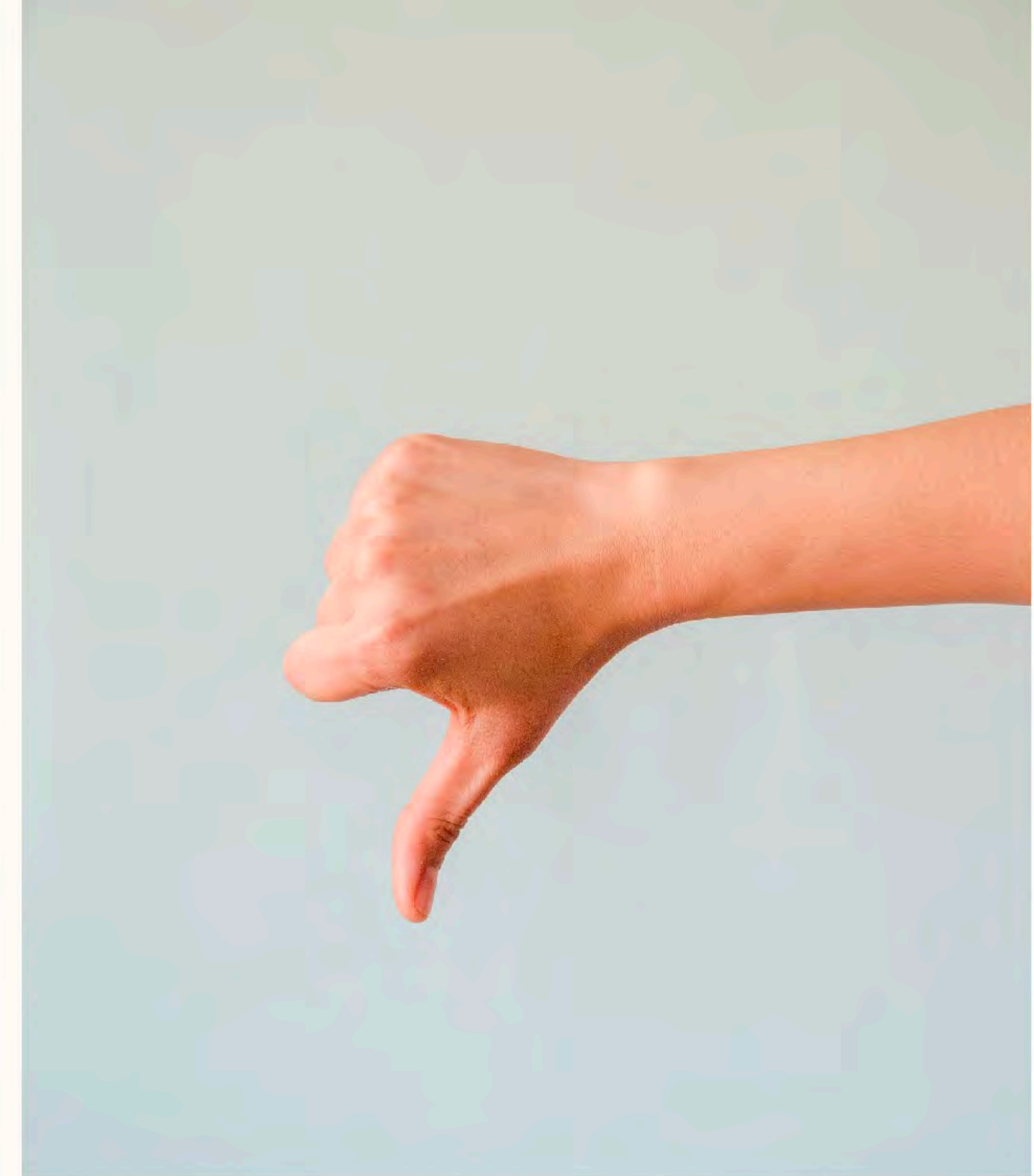


form

When we have
need and
function, but no
form, we have
low quality

need

function



It's important to know the formula to ensure we include each element in our solution

need

function

form

But great design should make the end result of these three elements, feel like one single seamless experience

need

function

form

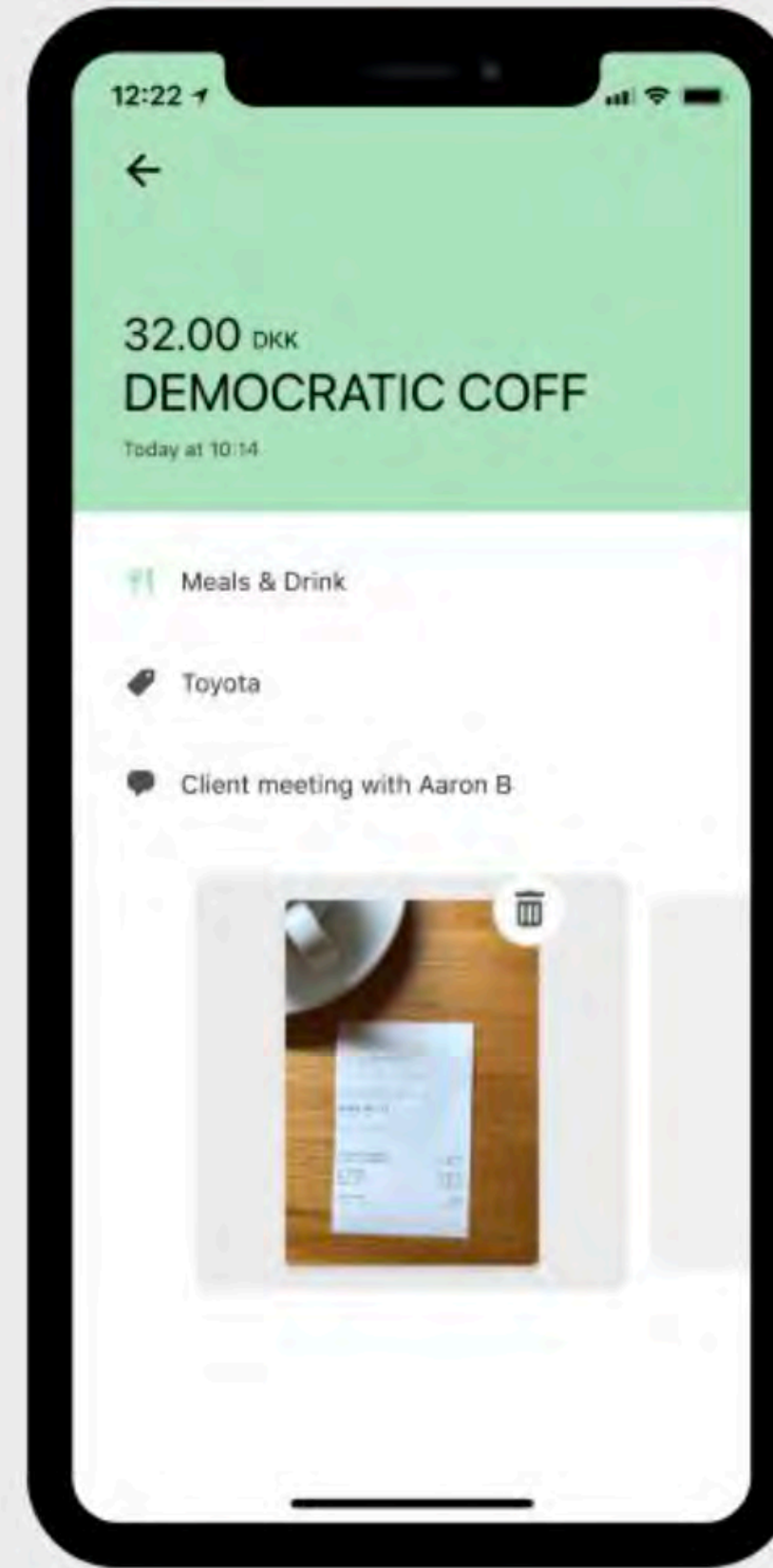
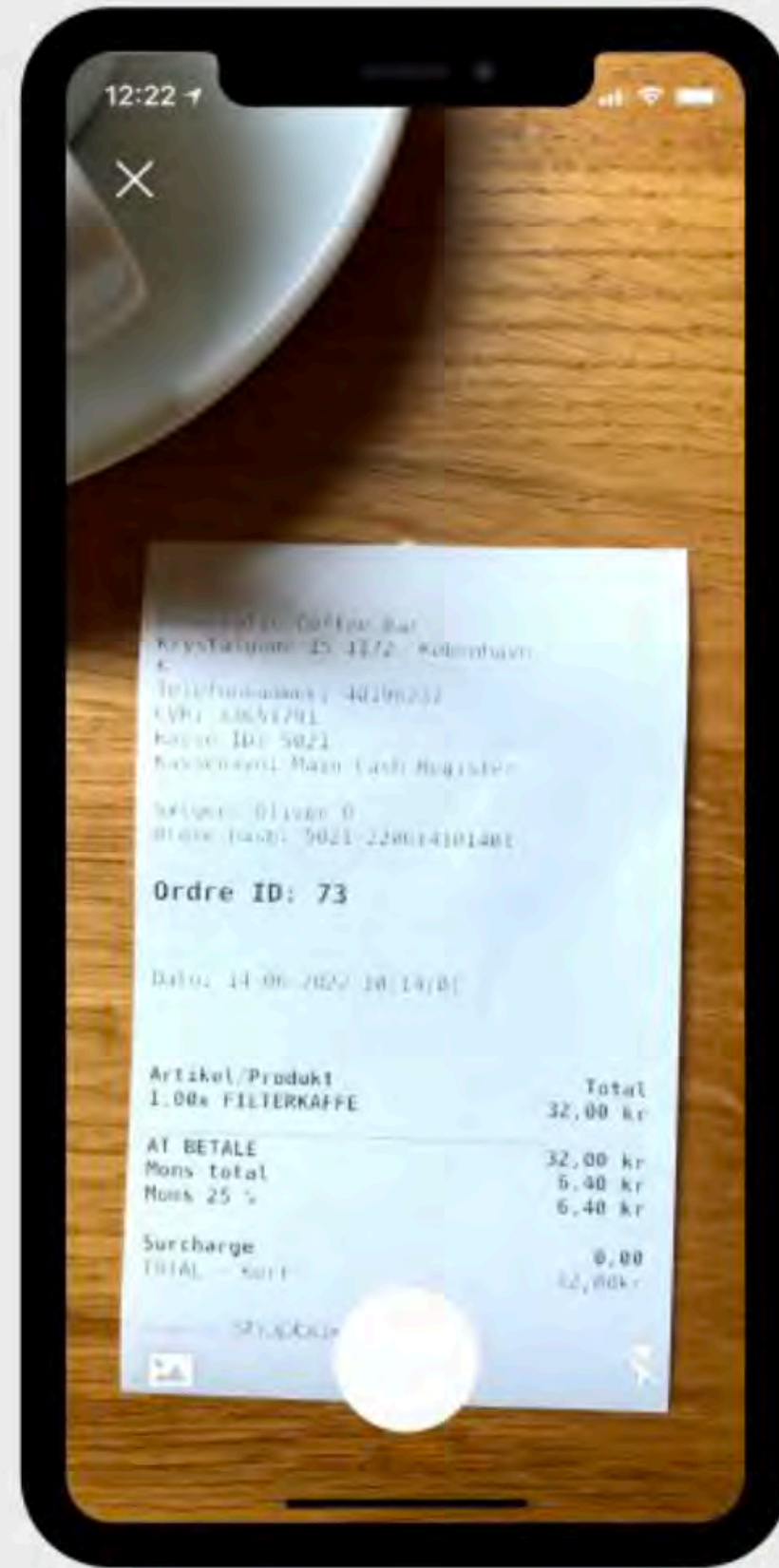
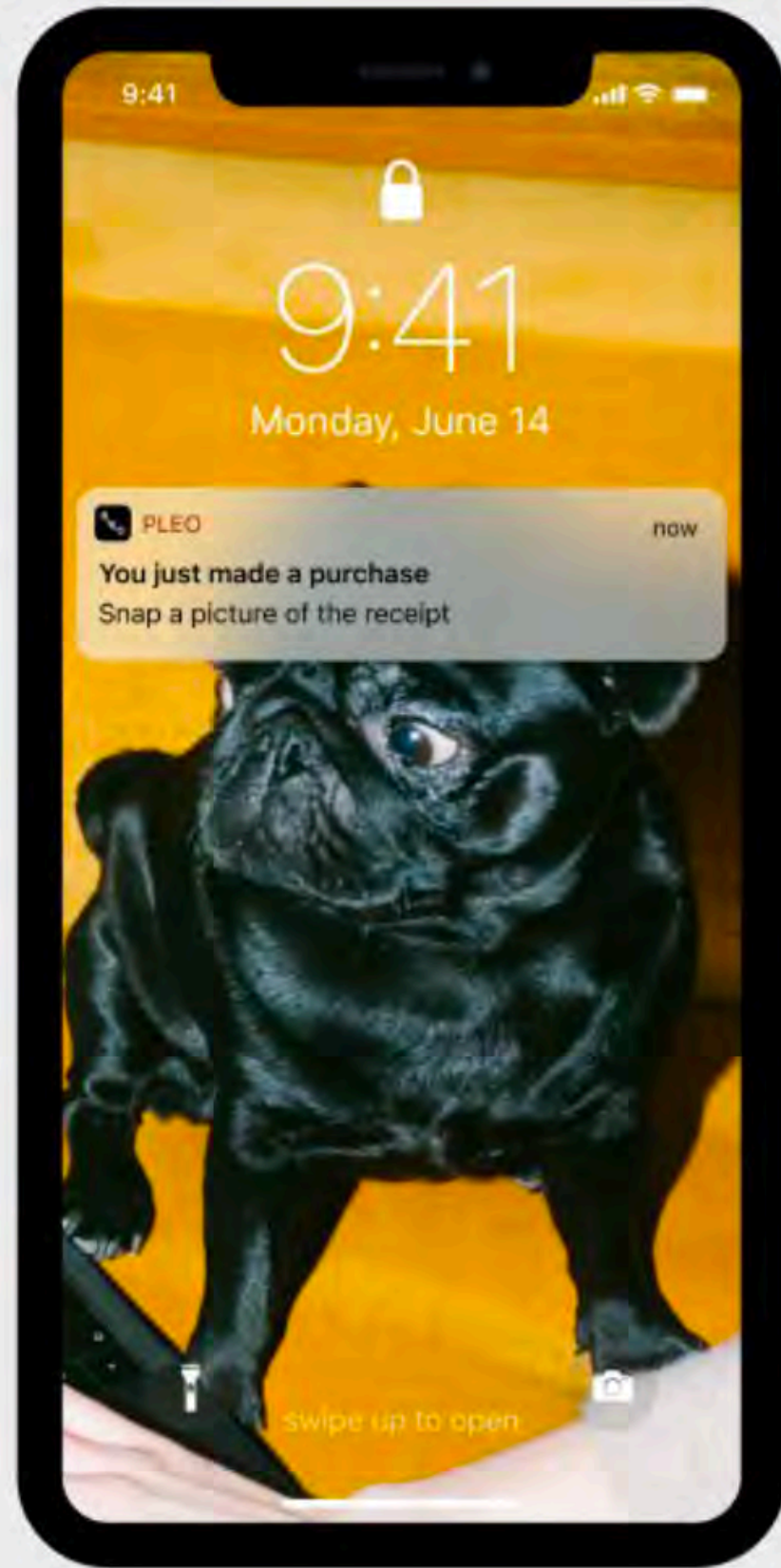
How can we use the design formula?

I work at **Pleo**, a Danish startup solving expense management for businesses



After using a Pleo card, you can easily take a picture of the receipt and submit the expense





Our product is known to look easy. But it takes a lot of work to make finance feel simple

In a lot of companies, the research team is responsible for uncovering the customer needs for a solution

When a company has **Researchers**, they are usually expected to help product teams identify customer pains. In those situations, **Product Designers** can focus on mastering the function and form elements of the design equation.



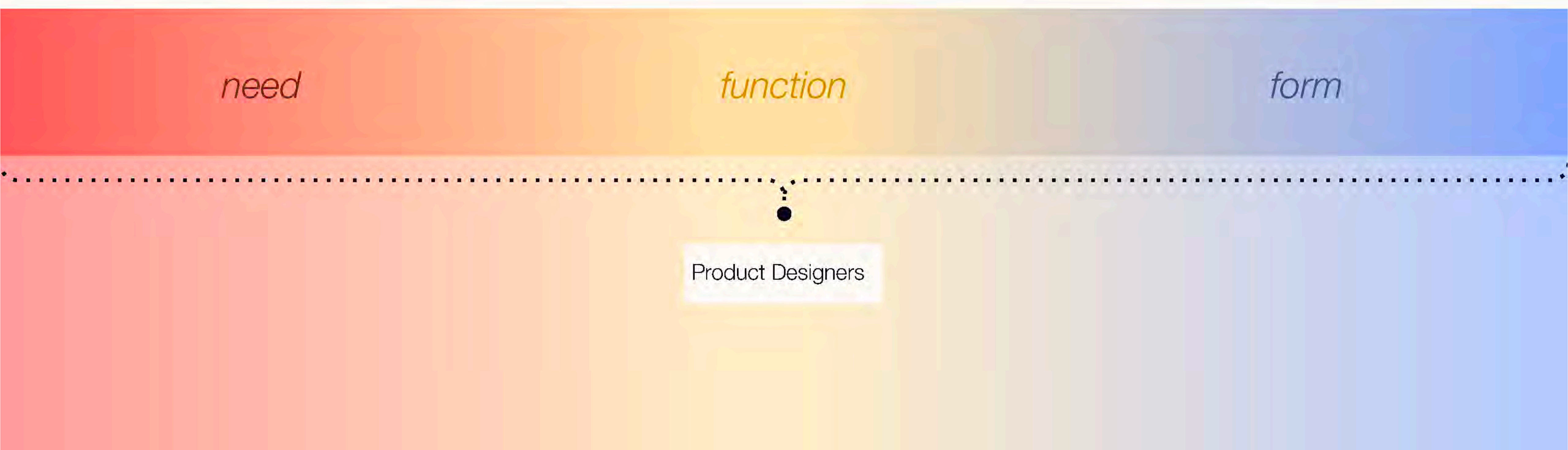
In our company, Product Designers are accountable for all variables of the Design Formula

Product Designers at Pleo, are responsible for identifying customer needs, defining a functional solution and creating a form that can merge all together in a beautiful way.

need

function

form

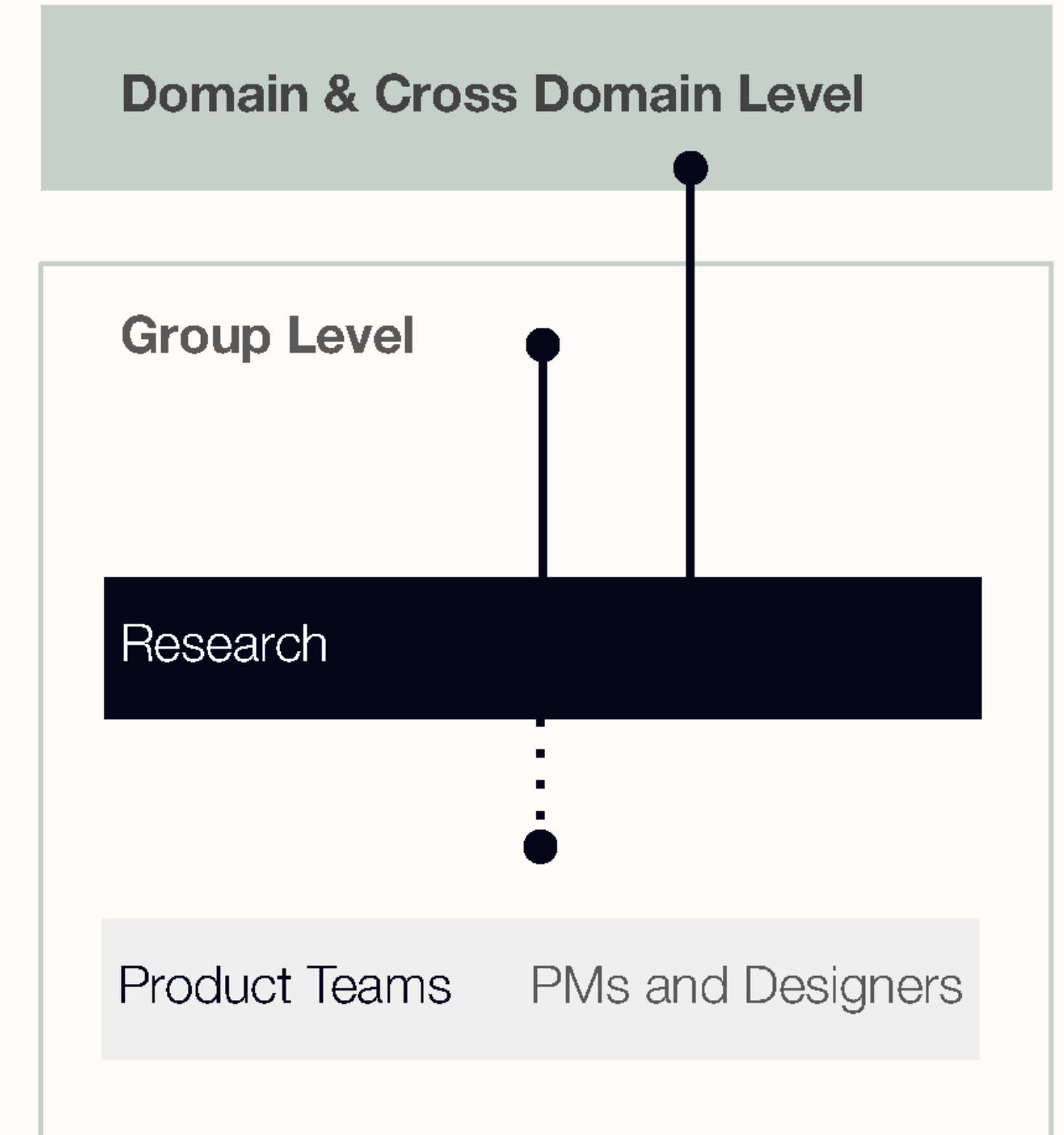


Product Designers

So what do researchers do?

Of course, Pleo's research team supports designers through training and sparring

But we also focus on driving strategic projects where we also use the Design Formula



Researchers designs business hypothesis, and Designers design holistic solutions

hypothesis design



Researchers

solution design



Product Designers

The formula of *need*, *function* and *form* is pattern that repeats itself throughout the product development cycle

hypothesis design

solution design

code design

iterations

Researchers

Product Designers

Developers

Product Teams

How is this applicable to non-designers?

Knowing the design formula is important because it allows us to understand the impact of intentional and unintentional design

need

function

form

Unintentional designers are not aware of the Design Formula, and are not trained to know how to maintain its balance

need

function

form



need

In a busy city, more people have cars so
it's harder to find parking spots

function

form



need

function

form

The municipality of that city decides to
make a new parking building



need

function

form

A simple concept made great when the architect can balance the design formula

Knowing that the design formula is a repetitive pattern that we all contribute to, allows us to see the complexities and dependencies in designing a society

history

culture

perception

action

How can we design societies?

How can we design a society?

We can't! Societies design themselves.

How can we design a society?

...but we can do what we believe is the right thing and create the change we want to see.

The role of design professionals is not to own design. Our role is to lead the way, on how to create a better balance.

need

function

form

Thank you