

Q 1

Actors :

Elloit : E

Tyrell : T

Tyrell and Elliot are second year students working late in the library. Tyrell is building an app for a class project and thinks prototyping is obvious. Elliot has read The Innovators method.

T: I am skipping that chapter. A prototype is a prototype. I already started building ^{one}. It's just a smaller version of the app with fewer features.

E: That's exactly the problem the book talks about. ~~You're~~ You're treating the prototype like a mini product.

T: What else would it be? You build something early to see if ~~its~~ it works.

E: In this book, a prototype isn't about whether it works technically. It's about testing assumptions under uncertainty. Right now you're assuming

people even want the app.

T: But how do you test that without building it?

E: You don't always build the product. IBM tested speech-to-text by hiding a typist behind a curtain. No software. They just wanted to know if people liked talking to a computer.

T: That feels like cheating?!

E: It's learning. Same with Google Glass. The first prototype was a coat hanger and a sheet protector. They weren't proving they could build it. They were testing how it felt to wear.

T: So the prototype isn't really a product?

E: Yes, that's that's why the book

warns about Minimum Viable Product"
Engineers hear "product" and overbuild.
Early on, it should be a prototype
that tests one risky assumption.

F: I think I get it. I wasn't
prototyping. I was just starting
production early.

E: Yes, they're for learning and
not for finishing.