SD UNDERSTANDING

→ Finding out and learning

DEFINITION

Researching the clients latent and conscious needs. Finding out about context, constraints and resources. Exploring possibilities.

DESCRIPTION

This is a broad area that underlies the Service Design process. SD Understanding is the connection between a project and its reality. SD Understanding generates insights that identify areas the company should be going for, according to what is right for the organisation. SD Understanding goes beyond things that people are already familiar with. Like, what are the things that people don't like? Exploring the client's wants, needs, motivations and contexts. Investigating business, technical and domain requirements and constraints. Taking into account the client's goals in a systematic way. What do people desire? What are the possibilities? What will sustain a business?

Requirements
Project objectives are needed.

Relevance to Service Design
SD Understanding is important for Service Design to make sure results are true to reality, relevant and appropriate.

Considerations
Quantitative market research and market segmentation is useful for selling products and services but falls short of providing critical information about how people actually use services – especially services with complex behaviors. Most traditional methods don not provide a means of translating research results into design solutions.

Most people are incapable of accurately assessing their own behaviours.

Self-referential design occurs when designers project their own goals, motivations, skills and mental models onto projects.

Always verify assumptions and interpretations (but do not forget to read between the lines!).

Examples of SD Understanding
To find out how clients should find their way to the parking facilities of an airport the client journey was tested and documented in the form of photo journals. To make the conference service of a hotel more flexible a circus was analysed. To investigate how people pay their bills interviews were conducted in peoples homes. To understand how a complex system works teams from different departments played all functions in a bodystorming session. To explore peoples mood in the morning, a series of wakeup-call interviews have been conducted. To understand how much people value a service that they usually take for granted, they were payed as much as needed to not use the service.

Tasks

1. Understanding clients

Exploring the following areas can help to better understand a client or clients:

- Goals
- Values
- Needs
- Behaviour
- Problems
- Group dynamics
- Interaction
- Demographic
- Psychographic

2. Understanding contexts

What considerations need to be made with regards to the following:

- Political
- Legislation
- Economic
- Social
- Technological
- Competition
- History
- Culture

3. Understanding providers

What factors are influencial to the project, person or organisation:

- Resources
  - Technology
  - Personal
  - Finance
  - Knowledge
  - Skills
- Politics
- Short- & long term goals
- Constraints
- Responsibility
- Processes & systems
- Language
- Key desicion makers / stake holders

4. Understanding relationships

Is there something to be gained from:

- Opportunities
- Other providers

Tools & methods

A non-exhaustive list of various tools and methods that could be used to generate SD Understanding*

Benchmarking
Client segmentation
Context analysis
Contextual interviews
Contextual enquiry
Critical incident technique
Ecology map
Ethnography
Experience test
Expert interviews
Focus groups
Gap Analysis
Historical analysis
Inconvenience Analysis
Interviews
Market segmentation
Mystery shoppers
Net Scouting
Observation
Probes
Reading
Service status
Shadowing
Thinking Aloud
Trend Scouting
User Surveys
5W's
Insight matrix
Tested and tried components
Inspirational specialists

SD THINKING

→ Giving strategic direction

DEFINITION

Identifying criteria, developing strategic frameworks, specifying and scoping out of details. Turning complex data into insights.

DESCRIPTION

SD Thinking includes all strategic considerations and the identification of direction and scope of a Service Design project. It sets the parameters for the other categories. SD Thinking often has a transitional role between other categories. For example after working in SD Understanding it is necessary to specify which elements should be used, and in what way in SD Generating. SD Thinking is the category that identifies the purpose of SD Understanding for the project. It can be important before SD Understanding or generally in the beginning of a Service Design project to review or set objectives and to make sure that all other categories work in line with the strategy. SD Thinking is the area that gives Service Design direction and guidelines.

Requirements

Information about context, client, service provider, constraints and market place.

Relevance to Service Design

To direct, control, structure and aligne.

Considerations

SD Thinking is always based on information. The strategy and direction is only as good as the facts they are based on. It links into several other categories in a Service Design project.

In a short or small project *SD Thinking* will most likely be done with natural common sense. But it is important to be aware that this category is crucial and needs to be taken seriously.

SD Thinking often requires buy-in on a senior level of an organisation. Only if the service strategy is relevant and true to the context and needs of the organisation will the project be successful.

Examples of SD Thinking

It was revealed that for mobile phone services only a very limited portfolio of scenarios can satisfy true client needs. It was recognised that professional expertise is crucial to trust a business support service and that ideas need to be generated how to enable access to high quality expert knowledge. It was recognised that for a community service a four stage strategy of Attention, Change Relationship, Create Community & Continuity needs to be employed. It was decided that for a project in a hospital the focus and emphasis of the service is going to be on the quality of care rather than to make the experience as pleasant as possible. It was decided in a project to involve clients and external experts to work together. It was identified that a service does not have to be re-invented and that its design would only have to be improved.

Tasks

1. Identifying
- Criteria
- Problems
- Focus
- Underlying motives

2. Setting
- Objectives
- Goals
- Vision

3. Planning & feasibility
- Requirements

4. Analysis
- Competition
- Content

5. Reviewing
- Insights
- Related components

6. Direction
- Time plan
- Design guidelines
- Team setup
- Specification

Tools & methods

A non-exhaustive list of various tools and methods that could be used in SD Thinking*

Affinity Diagrams
CATWOE
Brutethink
Fishbone diagram
Lateral thinking
LEGO Serious Play
Mindmap
Parallel thinking
Personality matrix
Priority matrix
Specification
System thinking
Think tank
Touchpoints
Total quality flow charting
Visual thinking

SD GENERATING

DEFINITION

Developing relevant, intelligent and innovative ideas. Creating role-, design- and concept-alternatives. Crafting details and consistency.

DESCRIPTION

SD Generating is about doing, creating and coming up with ideas and solutions. In a Service Design project relevant ideas need to be developed and combined into strong concepts. Solutions need to be found and processes set up. The service experience needs to be designed in every detail and objects, spaces and other elements need to be developed.

Requirements

SD Generating requires professional creativity. The work is always based on information and direction from the other categories. Even though it is possible to develop random ideas in general *SD Generating* is based on insights and in line with strategy.

Relevance to Service Design

To produce great service experiences different challenges need to be addressed with innovative and sensible ideas, concepts and solutions that are true to the needs of clients and organisations and in line with the developed strategy.

Considerations

For *SD Generating* it is important to find the right people for the team and to select the right environments to work in.

It is important that *SD Generating* is not a random idea session. It always needs to be based on insights and strategy. Still *SD Generating* should be free, innovative and visionary. It helps to use *SD Explaining* to make ideas as easy to understand, visual and tangible as possible.

Examples of SD Generating

To develop concepts for a new train service an actual train was used as the work environment. To explore different possibilities how to solve a problem in a water cleaning plant, *Bodystorming* was used to resemble all parts of the system. To develop great ideas *IDEO* has the five most important rules of *Brainstorming* written on the walls of their board rooms. To come up with new ideas for a service, different elements have been combined with a special software randomly. Kids have been invited into a *Brainshaping* session to build new ideas with simple tools in play-do.

Tasks

1. Developing
- Ideas
- Solutions
- Processes

2. Creating
- Concepts
- Scenarios

3. Finding
- Environments
- Inspiration
- Ways to work with clients

4. Implementing
- Corporate Design

5. Crafting
- Evidences
- Touchpoints
- Interface
- Experiences

Tools & methods

A non-exhaustive list of various tools and methods that could be used in SD Generating*

Bodystorming

Brainstorm

Brainwriting, -shaping, -racing, -station

Experience sketching

Feature tree

(Group) Sketching

Idea interview

Open space technology

Parallel design

Randomiser

Think Tank

Unfocus group

Service Design tools & methods

In the section that specified the framework of Service Design tasks several tools and methods have been put forward. The list of tools and methods available is endless. The main reason to add this element was to the overview as it makes it very clear what the six categories are about in practical reality.

In the following section of the appendix all the tools and methods that have been listed will be explained in a very short format. Some of the tools and methods are existing in some of the fields of related expertise, some have been adopted for Service Design and some have been developed new. The index in the bottom helps to identify this.

It needs to be noted that it was chosen to describe these tools and methods to support the overview. Some of them are very easy to understand and to use, whereas some others are more complex. To use any of the tools they can easily be found online. Some of the most useful sites have been listed here. It is recommended to get help from Service Design consultancies or expert companies from the respective backroundds to assist in using these tools and methods. These professionals will be able to help finding additional tools and methods as well as ensuring that they are adopted to the individual situation and project.

Sources for tools and methods online:

http://mycoted.com/creativity/techniques

http://nada.kth.se/cid/usor

http://www.dsr-group.com

http://goodgestreet.com

http://smart.uiah.fi/luotain

http://bmrc.berkeley.edu

http://www.interaction.rca.ac.uk

http://www.hcibook.com

http://hostserver150.com/usabilit/tools

http://en.wikipedia.org

http://thinking.net

http://ideo.com

Please see bibliography for further sources

E Existing tool or method

A Adopted tool or method

N New tool or method

Benchmarking

Looking at providers that offer a different service but with similar characteristics. Service Design can identify general principles and look for areas that address these principles already. It is helpful to look at the service that is developed from a different perspective as well as to learn from experience that other companies have in providing services with characteristics that are the same to the service that is developed.

For example an airport modified the software that is used in a hospital to allocate patients to beds to allocate planes to parking positions.

E

Client segmentation

For most services it helps to identify different client segment groups. It is the process of splitting existing clients, or potential clients, in a certain market into different groups, or segments, within which clients share a similar level of interest in the same or comparable set of needs satisfied by a distinct service proposition. Segmentation based on client needs and wants helps to understand the potential different types of services are needed.

For Service Design client segmentation helps to identify different types of clients, ages, incomes, attitudes, needs, frequency of use, etc.

For example economy class versus business class services are based on different client segments.

E

Context Analysis

Method to understand the overall context of the service. All variables are collected that can affect on the organisation, the client or the service.

E

Contextual interviews

Clients are interviewed in the relevant environment. The interviews take place as close to where the client is in contact with a service as possible. Data is generated whilst clients perform real tasks. The interview takes place based on the client using a service. The interviewer finds out why they are doing certain things or what their expectations are for example. The information is captured either in audio, video or note format.

It is important that the observer is familiar with the domain the service is operating in. The results need to be documented and interpreted.

This is a very good way to get qualitative data about the usage of services. In Service Design contextual interviews give rich insights into clients behaviour and environment and their interaction with a service.

E

Contextual Enquiry

A specific name for a style of user interview, conducted within the context of the customer's activities. This approach enables and combines the benefits of observational approaches and the standard face-to-face interview. It is intended to be an interactive exploration of the issues, hence the reason for being called enquiry rather than interview.

E

Critical Incident Technique

Analysing factors that could threaten a service or that could go wrong. By looking at the journey that a client goes through when a service works, all elements are identified and listed that are critical to the service but that would damage the service experience if they didn't work. For the design of services it is an opportunity for ultimate involvement to eliminate as many of these problems as possible or to develop solutions to better cope with such eventualities.

For example the loss of electricity could be very limiting or even eliminate parts of a service. Service Design could make sure that in this case alternative solutions are provided.

E

Ecology map

A service ecology is a mapped out system of actors within a service and the relationships between them.

Mapping service ecologies is a process that helps to establish a systemic view of the service and the context it will operate in. The Service Ecology maps actors affected by a service and the way they relate to each other in order to reveal new opportunities and inspire ideas. This helps to establish the overall service concept. This systemic view helps for example to create service ecologies that are sustainable, where the actors involved exchange value in ways that is mutually beneficial over time.

The ecology map gives everybody in the Service Design project a good overview of the stakeholders, clients and suppliers of a service system. The map is designed based on desk research and interviews and can be discussed with the different actors to establish a correct understanding.

E

Ethnography

The systematic and immersive study of human cultures (from Anthropology).

E

Experience test

To test how a service is experienced a test person is observed and interviewed afterwards. To find out what clients do, what they think and how they feel. The experience is tested in an environment that is as close to reality as possible. Sometimes this can be also reality.

E

Expert interviews

Talking to specialists and experts with experience from the field a Service Design project aims to improve can reveal insights and help in a very short time to understand essentials of a new environment. Designing a service often takes a team into new areas, and talking to experts helps to gain understanding and views on the subject.

The mix of outside perspective with the knowledge of experts can help to establish a new network of understanding. The experts need to be carefully selected and questions should be based on criteria as well as focused on one aspect of the service.

To interpret the market expert interviews is important as pitfalls, trends, problems, important constraints as well as possible solutions for the Service Design project can often be found within them.

E

Focus groups

A small group of people is selected to have a guided discussion about a selected idea or issue. This qualitative method is used to learn from clients sharing their thoughts, opinions, feelings, attitudes and misconceptions about an issue in an intimate setting. A facilitator or moderator is required. Focus groups deliver insights to peoples views and opinions and for Service Design it is an interesting method to identify what people really think about a service and get their opinions on new ideas, improvements, barriers etc.

Focus Groups have been used to talk to a group of clients about their experience with service hotlines to identify what is perceived as important service features. This method of investigation can be used to generate and filter ideas, too.

E

Gap analysis

The analytical process focuses on identifying gaps, inefficiencies, inconsistencies and variances, and other weaknesses in service delivery.

It is likely that the customers are realistic about some services and very demanding about others. Knowing this allows facilities to invest resources in the areas where expectations are the highest. Once expectations are known, the gap between the levels of service expected and the levels of service delivered can be measured.

Negative gaps need to be addressed by improving the service levels and/or influencing expectations by very effective communications about circumstances affecting service levels.

The Gap Index is the difference between the level of service that the customer expects to receive as versus the level of service that the customer evaluates as received. For example, if a customer evaluates a certain service at a 4 level “more than satisfactory” while they expect service to be delivered at a 3 “satisfactory” level, there is a positive gap. If their expectation is higher at the 5 “excellence” level, there is a negative gap.

E

Historical analysis

Looking at the historic development or background of a service, need or solution. By researching and analysing the roots and the progress a lot can be learned about different constraints, influences and drivers for change in an environment and / or context. Historical analysis needs to be focused on one question that is relevant for the Service Design development and always involves understanding the different tangents and historical contexts too. It delivers a broad understanding of the nature and context of the service as well as a different perspectives. In Service Design this view can for example help to solve old issues with new technologies.

E

Inconvenience Analysis

To discover gaps and opportunities in clients lives. By analysing a situation that clients perceive as inconvenient this method helps to understand potential service offering opportunities. The service opportunity lies in resolving the inconvenient situation. The journey of (potential) clients is analysed over time using other methods (e.g. Thinking Aloud, Focus Groups, Interviews, etc.). Issues which could cause inconvenience are identified and various possible causes determined. The driver of inconvenience is an insight that can help to offer a new service that resolves this inconvenience.

For clients it could be very inconvenient that their lawyer is not available immediately to finish an urgent contract. The insight that clients sometimes need unpredicted urgent help can lead to a new feature or a complete new service. This method helps to identify things and areas that clients may not think about or are not consciously aware of.

E

Interview

A face-to-face discussion with usually one person to collect information or opinions. Interviews can be recorded in video, audio or note format. They need to be analysed afterwards. Questions are prepared before the interview. It is a quick and very qualitative way of getting to know more. Sometimes it is valuable if the interviewer is able to read between the lines. Interviews are used in Service Design to get peoples opinion or to learn about their experience, expectations etc.

E

Market segmentation

Any market can be divided into different areas or segments. This can be based on geographic areas, amount of purchase or other factors. For Service Design the segmentation into different parts based on relevant criteria is important to address the different needs, opportunities and constraints of these different segments with the service concept.

E

Mystery shoppers

Actors or researchers act as though they were "normal clients". A service is consumed and then the person reports back on their experience. This can reveal problems, work as a quality check or test specific details of a service. Mystery shoppers are a very useful way of ensuring service quality and consistent service performance.

Mystery shoppers can be used also to test what services are being offered by competitive organisations.

This method has been used successfully to make sure that employees are encouraged to give their best and to control the client experience. Mystery shoppers reveal insights in the perception of the service on the front stage. These findings can then be used to identify possible improvements back stage.

E

Net scouting

To review sources on the internet is becoming increasingly important. The internet is a huge historic as well as and up-to-date resource. Given that Service Design projects often involve new variants and conditions Net Scouting is a good initial way of establishing an understanding of the market conditions and environment. It can also help to identify existing solutions in other areas, be a valuable tool to find out about statistics, market share and different development trends and identify new markets.

It is important that clear questions and parameters are used as the basis for this understanding method as the information available is vast. The findings need to be interpreted to establish the relevance for the project. Important is to check sources carefully and to take into consideration their quality as well as that every point has a counterpoint.

E

Observation

Clients and their behaviour is ovserved. This can happen either in a person watching them or in installing cameras. The advantage of filming the observation is that very rich material can be analysed afterwards. The observation technique can be used to identify how clients use a service. This can reveal for example that certain factors trigger longer waiting time. From observing how clients behave many different service improvements can be considered. It is important helpful if observation is based on objectives or specific questions.

Observation can be used also to identify and evaluate how service prototypes work. But mainly it is a rich source to learn about behaviour and the way service systems work.

E

Probes

Probe packs are used to gain qualitative data about peoples lives. They are collections of tasks designed to elicit information. Probes can include diaries, photo-cameras and other tools that are supplied to clients together with instructions. Clients are then asked to document a day in their life or while performing a certain task, to take photos of good services etc.

A probes-pack and instructions need careful preparation. The data that is produced can be very visual, real and can be used to communicate authentically about clients. The packs need to be analysed and interpreted.

For Service Design Probes represent a simple way to involve clients and to gain insights based on real client behaviour and views.

Probes were used by the Royal College of Art Interaction Design group to study the way people see their own homes. Volunteers were solicited through a newspaper advert and the results used to enable designers to get a 'feel' of the meaning of home for many people.

E

Reading

Even though this might be obvious, reading is an important source of knowledge, and for understanding specialist fields. Given that Service Design reading is crucial as every Service Design project involves new areas and the team needs to have an understanding of clients backgrounds and environments. Reading gives access to understanding the context of the service that is designed

For example to redesign a hospital unit a overall understanding of the illness that is treated there is crucial.

At times specific trade literature and specialised material can be very valuable to be read. It is important to keep in mind objectives, questions and not to lose the bigger picture.

E

Service status

This method identifies whether there is the need for a service to be improved or innovated. For the design process it makes a difference if an existing service offer needs to be improved, or if a new additional service needs to be created. Based on the same principal as Product Status this method identifies if the existing Service fulfils a need in an efficient way or what new potentials might be. If a new service potential is discovered it might be possible to create a new service if the old one is still valid to exist aside.

For a Service Design project that can influence the starting point and scope of the project. It is important to identify why a new service is needed to ensure that the service innovation project fits into the current offering.

E

Shadowing

Following clients around and observing their behaviour. Shadowing can be recorded by a video camera or captured in still images. Mostly shadowing is done by one researcher that observes clients in their natural environment performing tasks and consuming products or services in a natural way. Shadowing can be used with hidden cameras and for example micro cameras installed in clients glasses.

It is important that the shadowing activity is not intruding and does not influence the behaviour of clients. Shadowing is a qualitative method where the findings need to be interpreted post-research.

Shadowing can help to gain in-depth understanding of clients natural behaviours. In Service Design it is a good opportunity to learn about clients interaction with a service e.g. to understand how people work in a waterplant they are followed by a researcher with a camera for one full day.

E

Thinking aloud

Clients are asked to explain and talk about what they think whilst using a service. This helps to reveal their expectations, experience and problems of using the service. The client is prompted and encouraged to speak out aloud by the researcher. Questions such as “So, what is your reaction to this message?” help to promt clients think about how their perception works. It reveals problems and underlying reasons for difficulties.

Thinking Aloud is documenting every step that the client makes with their explanation either in video, audio or notes form. “I’m clicking on this button because I want to find out how I can contact them. I expect them to offer me a free phone number so I can give them a call.” could be a potential Thinking Aloud result. The material needs to be reviewed and interpreted into insights such as “a free phone number is expected”. In the project it could be an idea to put the free phone number directly on the home page to save clients clicks and time for example.

E

Trend scouting

Identifying overall trends through holistic lifestyle observations. By reading magazines, visiting fairs and researching online, trends can be identified. Opinion leaders, specialists and experts can be interviewed to get their views on the directions that culture, society, politics and technology are going. Trend scouting for Service Design helps identify key changes in social and cultural life that will affect perceptions.

Trends need to be translated into insights for Service Design projects so that they can be used to specify the offer, identify new markets, new possibilities and the way services are communicated e.g. the emergence of customisation can mean that people will come to expect more tailor-made services.

E

User surveys

Information is collected and analysed on characteristics of clients, purposes for using the services, reasons for satisfaction or dissatisfaction, details, patterns, needs and service priorities.

E

5 why's

This methods encourages clients to examine and express the underlying reasons for their behaviours and attitudes.

The inverviewer askes five times why. The client therefore is encouaged to explain the reasons behind the first answer.

It was used by IDEO to interview dieting women around the US to understand their attitudes and behaviours around weight loss.

E

Focus groups

A small group of people is selected to have a guided discussion about a selected idea or issue. This qualitative method is used to learn from clients sharing their thoughts, opinions, feelings, attitudes and misconceptions about an issue in an intimate setting. A facilitator or moderator is required. Focus groups deliver insights to peoples views and opinions and for Service Design it is an interesting method to identify what people really think about a service and get their opinions on new ideas, improvements, barriers etc.

Focus Groups have been used to talk to a group of clients about their experience with service hotlines to identify what is perceived as important service features. This method of investigation can be used to generate and filter ideas, too.

E

Insight matrix

This matrix helps to establish an overview of the insights available and needed for a Service Design project. It assesses the insight status of a Service Design project (what is known, needs to be found out, can be assumed and can be left open). The matrix can then be used to decide whether to conduct more research or to generate ideas based on existing insights and assumptions. This matrix is always used in relation to a specific project, specification or brief. Everything that can be specified or decided (clear facts that nobody will question or disagree with) is filled in the field Assumptions.

Everything that is less relevant (has no influence on the Service Design) is filled in the field Open. Issues that still need to be researched (not known but will possibly influence the Service Design) is filled in the field Research. This establishes an overview of the status of research and relevant knowledge for the Service Design project. It helps to highlight areas of research that still need to be covered and then becomes a summary of the insights and facts that are the basis for the service idea and / or concept development.

N

Tested & tried components

Components that are already used, tried and tested can be identified to be used in the development of a Service Design concept. If an interactive screen works well already for clients to purchase tickets it can be used to book a treatment in a hospital.

N

Inspirational specialists

If a certain quality is identified for a service concept the analysis of a very different area can help to provide insights about this quality. For example, if it is crucial for a service to be flexible look for other fields in which flexibility is key e.g. a circus could be chosen as specialist in flexibility. Understanding different principles that are used by a circus to be flexible will help from a very different perspective to translate some of the principles into the service concept.

If security is key for the service a special vault of a bank can be visited and the learnings will inspire the service design and offer solutions that can be integrated in the project. Brainstorming can help to identify other fields of inspirational specialists.

N

Affinity diagram

An Affinity Diagram is a creative process to gather and organise insights, ideas and opinions. It helps adding structure to a large or complicated issue, breaking down a complicated issue into broad categories or gaining agreement on an issue or situation.

It starts with a clear statement of the problem or goal and provide a time limit for the session. Each participant should think of ideas and write them individually (for example on index cards). The cards are then arranged into related groups. For each grouping a title or heading is created that describes the theme of each group.

E

CATWOE

A simple checklist that can be used to stimulate thinking about problems and solutions. The title CATWOE is made up of the first letters of the elements of the checklist:

C = Clients: those who receive gain or loss from what the system does.

A = Actors: those who can act in the system.

T = Transformation: what the system does to change inputs into outputs.

W = World view: wider context of the system, or the values, ethics behind the system

O = Owners: those with power over the system, that can even make it stop if they wish

E = Environment: constraints and limitations for output of the system.

System can equal service.

Out of the CATWOE elements a rich problem definition can be formulated, which can be reformulated or shortened afterwards.

E

Brutethink

To develop strategic ideas and solutions is a difficult process in which a team can get stuck. To open up this situation and the thinking process Brutethink helps to create a new perspective with random stimuli. For example a random word can be brought into a problem (from a dictionary, magazine or book). The team brainstorms things that are associated with the randomly picked word. Then the team tries to think about connections between the random word and the challenge and between the associated things and the challenge. All the ideas and solutions are listed and evaluated.

E

Fishbone diagram

A graphic technique for identifying cause-and-effect relationships among factors in a given situation or problem. Also called Ishikawa Diagramming.

Helps if a problem needs to be studies or the couse determined. In Service Design it can be used for example to identify areas for data collection an to investigate why a process is not performing properly.

The diagram, like other problem solving techniques, is a heuristic tool. As such, it helps to organise thoughts and structure the quality improvement process.

E

Lateral thinking

Lateral thinking is concerned with the perception part of thinking. It has been established by Edward de Bono. He defines it as a technique of problem solving by approaching problems indirectly at diverse angles instead of concentrating on one approach at length. Techniques that apply Lateral thinking to problems are characterised by the shifting of thinking patterns away from entrenched or predictable thinking to new or unexpected ideas.

E

LEGO serious play

LEGO Serious Play can be used to explore relationships and connections between people and their worlds in new and enlightening ways. During the process it is possible to observe both internal and external dynamics, explore various scenarios and quickly gain an awareness of a variety of possibilities.

Serious Play uses three-dimensional thinking by creating and constructing metaphors to describe real situations an organisation faces. Building landscape models with LEGO bricks, giving them meaning through storytelling and playing-out various possible scenarios deepens understanding, sharpens insight and creates strong bonds among the group of participants. The team communicates more effectively, engages their imaginations more readily and approach their work with increased confidence, commitment and insight. This allows for taking dialogues to deeper levels.

In Service Design projects it an ideal way for all team members to take an active part in the proces. It is a completely new platform for thinking and communicating.

E

Mind map

Mind-mapping is a special way of documenting thoughts and their connections. Mind Maps radiate from one problem or idea at the centre and use lines, symbols, words and images to write down a system of connected insights, ideas and solutions. Mind Maps work in line with your brain's natural way of thinking. They can be used to draw an overview of a large complex subject or area. For Service Design this is important think about services from a big picture and see the different systemic connections.

E

Parallel thinking

With the traditional argument or adversarial thinking each side takes a different position and then seeks to attack the other side. Each side seeks to prove that the other side is wrong. Adversarial thinking completely lacks a constructive, creative or design element. It was intended only to discover the 'truth' not to build anything.

is a technique of problem solving by approaching problems indirectly at diverse angles instead of concentrating on one approach at length. This is especially helpful for a team as it ensures that everybody looks at a problem from the same angle. What happens is that a team does not discuss about a problem from all different angles at the same time which often can be confusing and unproductive. Every angle is discussed together so that the reference system is the same.

E

Personality matrix

A method that is based on the four different areas of human personalities. This method has been developed in psychology (C. G. Jung) and is used in branding to identify the personality of a brand and to ensure that all communication is inline with this positioning. All Touchpoints of a service are designed to be inline with the same service personality.

E

Specification

A written document that specifies the scope of a Service Design project or of a specific service. The specification can be a growing document that evolves based on new insights but is always in line shared and agreed with the team and based on the Service Strategy. It represents a detailed goal description and contains criteria for success. The specification document is especially important for long term and big scale projects. It helps the project team to have a shared focus point and to make sure that the project stays on track.

E

System thinking

Systems thinking involves the use of various techniques to study systems of many kinds. It includes studying things in a holistic way, rather than purely reductionist techniques. It focuses on the interactions in a system. It aims to gain insights into the whole by understanding the linkages, interactions and processes between the elements that comprise the whole "system". Systems thinking can help in Service Design to understand complex problems that involve multiple actors and a great number of interactions.

E

Think tank

An open discussion between experts. Based on questions, problems or ideas a Think Tank involves specialists to develop solutions and share their expertise. A Think Tank can be used involving senior staff of the organisation to develop or evolve the service strategy. This is essential to set objectives, criteria and direction for the Service Design project.

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Touchpoints

Individual tangibles or interactions that make up the total experience of a service.

Touchpoints can take various forms, from advertising to personal cards, web- mobile phone- and PC interfaces, bills, retail shops, call centres and customer representatives.

In Service Design, all Touchpoints needs to be concidered in totality and crafted in order to create a clear, consistent and unified client experience.

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Total quality flow charting

Is a visual thinking method. Elements in a business process are laid out in a linear fashion (left to right) using key words and symbols, with process flows mapped out using lines and arrows. This powerful visual diagramming method has been used widely to simplify business processes, by eliminating steps that don't add value.

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Priority matrix

Helps to sort tasks by their priority. Draw two lines in shape of a letter L where the importance in one direction and urgency in the other direction. Map out where tasks sit. Tasks that are important and urgent need to be dealt with right away. Tasks that are important but not urgent can wait. Tasks that are urgent but not important can be delegated. Tasks that are not important and not urgent can be either delegated or as well denied.

To design services is a complex team project over time. To manage priorities is crucial for the success of these kind of projects.

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Visual thinking

Picture Thinking or Visual Thinking is the phenomenon of thinking through visual processing, what most people would think with linguistic or verbal processing. It is non linear and often has the nature of a computer simulation. Where in lots of data is put through a process to yield insight into complex systems, which would otherwise be almost impossible through language.

To share thoughts with a team, organisation and / or clients, visualising concepts, strategies and thoughts can help to create an united vision. Words can be a limited tool and misunderstandings can be bigger when restricting thinking to only be based on language. Many elements of Service Design are difficult to explain with words. Visual thinking can be supported by drawing, selecting and combining images or other materials.

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Body-storming

The people in a group assemble systems and try and act out different ideas and possible solutions. The check-in process in an airport can be played by a group of people. Every one person represents one process, function or touch-point. Different scenarios can be played through to develop new ways of combining existing systems and how to adopt and add on to them. It is a very helpful way of achieving transparency of complex interactive systems. It needs to be facilitated and can be documented either by filming or taking photos.

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Brainstorming

Developing a large number of ideas with a group of people. It is a meeting in which everybody is encouraged to have wild ideas and where no criticism should take place. The goal is to generate a great number of ideas – and all ideas are written down. Usually a brainstorm is targeted towards one issue which is then bombarded with ideas. Ideally the ideas build on each other. The brainstorm can invite people with an expert or outside perspective to inspire the group with surprising ideas.

A brainstorm needs to be facilitated to ensure the rules are applied, to make sure all ideas are written down and to manage timing. A brainstorm ideally takes place in an inspiring and positive environment. Depending on the subject the environment can be themed. Various prompts and objects can help to inspire ideas. At several stages of a Service Design project problems need to be solved and ideas need to be generated. A brainstorm is a very cheap, fast and effective way to generate a big number of ideas.

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Brain-writing, -shaping, etc.

Brain-writing, -shaping, -racing, -station, -charting

Variations of brainstorms (see brainstorm) that are adopted to specific needs of certain projects. Somebody in the team can write down five ideas. The next person selects one of these ideas and develops five ideas based on that idea. Different materials can be used in a brainstorm to shape and build ideas and talk about them. Drawing can be used in a similar way. Given that Service Design projects can have different needs and are often about experiences and complex interactions these other techniques can be very helpful.

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Experience sketching

This is a special form of group sketching that focuses on the experience that clients have in using and performing a service. It helps the team to project themselves in the perspective of the client and to imagine and plan how they feel, what they expect and experience. Again sketching is helpful for the team to share the same platform.

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Group sketching

Sketching is a very quick and cheap way of developing ideas and their explanations at the same time. It is easier to remember the ideas and to talk about them. A service idea can be sketched in a comic format if it is about a series of events over time. Given that people from different backgrounds talk about service ideas, sketching helps to share and discuss. Designers might have trained sketching as part of their education. It is important for them to forget about rendering and to encourage other team members to draw simple stickmen. Everyone can draw and sketch to explain ideas in a symbolic way. For example the game *Pictionary* highlights how people visualise hings diferently. See also *Visual thinkning*

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Idea interview

After an idea or a concept has been developed it can be discussed with either experts or clients. This helps to gain additional understanding and to develop the idea further. This interview can be based on a very simple idea statement or as well on an elaborate prototype or mock-up.

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Open space technology

To generate ideas in a big group of people this method is used to run several sessions of brainstorms simultaneously. Different issues or problems that somebody is passionate about can be posted. The person that posted a session will be in one area of a room equipped mostly with a flip-chart. Everybody that is interested in a session can go there and participate. Everyone works only on topics they are interesting and that they feel passionate about. They can leave a session at any time to visit another one. Sessions last between half an hour to one day. There can be three or more sessions at the same time, depending on the amount of people available. As a rough guideline there should be about at least three and maximal fifteen people in one session. After the time of the first session is over another set of sessions can be run so that everybody has the opportunity to host sessions and visit sessions. There can be as many sets of sessions as time allows and there are topics, insights and problems to generate ideas from. Every host writes up a session report that includes all the ideas that have been developed. It is a very good possibility to work together with different people including experts, clients and to generate a huge amount of ideas.

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Parallel design

Two or more groups are working on the same design brief at the same time. They brainstorm, sketch or prototype ideas and solutions for the same problem. The results can be compared and build upon. It is possible to swop teams after a period of time to take the work that another group has done further. Not only to have fresh and different views on the same subject this is helpful. As well to make sure that the best Service Design can be identified. The outcome can be several valid solutions for the same problem. Sometimes different elements can be combined for one strong concept that addresses several perspectives.

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Randomiser

To create concepts and complex solutions different ideas can be combined. Randomiser combines different elements or ideas randomly. The easiest way is to put ideas in card format and take one random card from each stack. It can be realised with a software as well. It helps to develop concepts and generate more ideas. If a service addresses several issues or problems than the ideas and solutions for these individual problems can be combined randomly to develop these combinations further.

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Unfocus group

Interviewing a very diverse group of people that are related to the subject in special ways. Subject experts and people that don't know anything about the subject are brainstorming or discussing about ideas and solutions. Given that the group is mixed and has very different experience with the subject the results and ideas are often open, unique and have a fresh perspective. In Service Design this helps to come up with innovative ideas for new services or how to improve existing services.

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Feature tree

A tree diagram is drawn that shows different features (needs, functions or elements of a service). For each of the branches it captures different ideas to achieve that. Different concepts can be created in combining each one of the idea branches of all the feature branches. For example a service could have a waiting area and complaint function. The different ideas how the waiting are could look like and how the complaint system could work can be combined to generate concepts and new ideas. In Service Design this helps to create combinations that can incorporate more than one feature.

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