

Design Thinking: Ideation Design Workshops

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What is a Design Workshop?

“Being creative and exploring design ideas in a team.”

- Design in a team with inspiring material
- Professions: different, like designer, technology people
- Application areas: for idea generation, for product design

Design Workshop is a practical creative meeting to produce and/or detail design ideas in a heterogenous small group cooperatively.

What are the goals?

- To create new ideas together
- To detail existing ideas together



Inspiration

“Brief intensive brainstorming workshops can be enormously productive what people of mixed backgrounds, grouped together for the first time, with clear challenges, find. They can focus their minds and tap hidden reservoirs of creativity.”

Design Workshop creates ...

- an environment in which stakeholders with different skills can work as one team to deliver a design solution that will help make their product successful
- a formal context in which stakeholders must do their homework to provide the necessary inputs to the design workshop – including doing competitive analysis and collecting call-center data, product issues, and user feedback, to name a few.

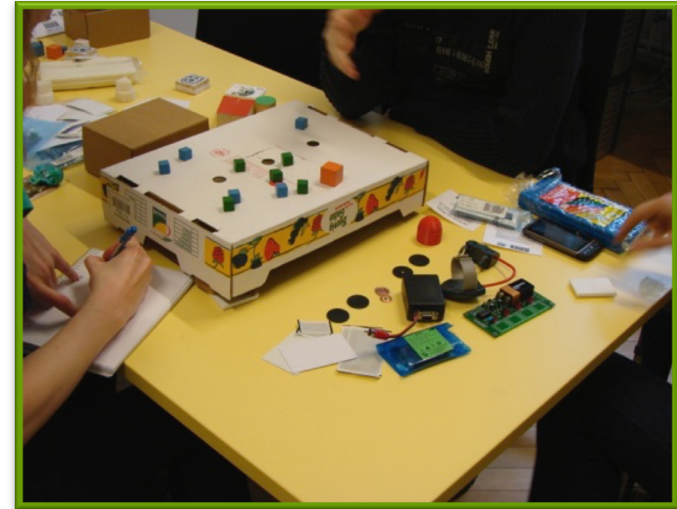
How does a Design Workshop look like?

- A group sits around a table or a flexible model and works on the design idea.
- Different groups can be involved to deal with different or the same aspects of a common idea.
- 4-6 is the right group size.
- Everyone in the group develops own and common ideas by modifying the common model or by creating a new model representing the idea-in-attention.



What are the roles in a Design Workshop?

- Facilitator – has experiences in Design Workshops, moderates the process, is active as moderator but also as a designer, wraps up the main results at the end of the workshop.
- Note-taker – documents the session, takes care of note taking of the discussed and decided ideas.
- Designer – brings new ideas into the group, questions other ideas, tries to contribute to the design generation in a constructive manner.



Facilitator

- empowers the team to take their design forward
- helps the team to understand how this effort fits with the large strategy
- uses questions to help drive conversation or move the team towards a joint understanding of the design
- does not always have to provide all of the design solution

Facilitator should know ...

- when to provide expert design direction and when to allow the team to come up with solutions themselves
- how to help the team craft a design solution that makes sense and is better than a single individual's design solution would have been
- how to merge and translate the team's design thinking into an overall strategy

Facilitator should have ...

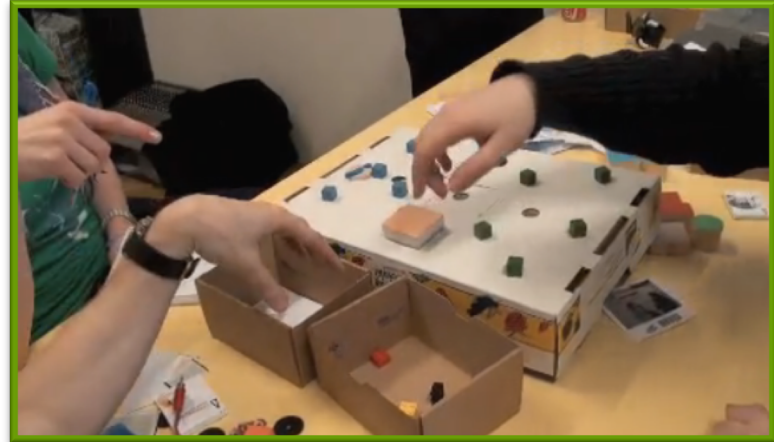
- some design-walkthrough questions ready to help guide design discussions, e.g.
 - What is working well?
 - What do you want users to do first?
 - What are the business goals?
 - What issues are we facing?
 - How could a design solution translate into large design principles?

How to prepare a Design Workshop?

- Briefing – set up the goal of the workshop
- Select the participants and define/assign the roles
- Set up a date, a place, and the process
- Prepare the needed material like models, plans, creative material like plasticine, Lego, wooden bricks, pens, pencils, scissors, glues, etc.
- Prepare the documentation media like video camera, photo camera, audio recorder, ...

What happens during a Design Workshop?

- Introduction of the people and the process
- Brainstorming about the problem and the subject to deal with
- Cooperative development of a common idea or several common ideas, normally based on single/individual results or suggestions
- Detailing of existing ideas
- Get people going:
“no idea is too big,
no idea too small”



A typical workshop format (communityplanning.net)

- Arrangements – 5 mins – choose workshop group and sit on round tables with plan or model
- Introductions – 10 mins – people briefly introduce themselves (if they do not know each other)
- Getting started – 15 mins – facilitator asks people to write ideas on mini post-it notes or cards; place them on the plan; respond questions such as:
 - Where are the problems?
 - Where are the opportunities?
 - Where do you want things to happen?
- Design ideas – 50 mins – use colored pens to sketch ideas, discussing things as they do so; different options can be drawn on separate sheets of tracing papers
- Prepare summary – 10 mins – summary drawings prepared of main suggestions

Our workshop format in the course

- Arrangements – 5 mins – choose model
- Introductions – 10 mins – people (each other)

Plasticine, Lego, wooden bricks, several electronic material, textile material, paperboard, synthetic material, pens, glues, scissors, ...

- Getting started – **10 mins** – facilitator asks people to write ideas on mini post-it notes or cards; place them on the plan; respond questions such as:
 - Where are the problems?
 - Where are the opportunities?
 - Where do you want things to happen?
- Design ideas – **45 mins** – use colored pens to sketch; do so; different options can be drawn on separate
- Prepare summary – **5 mins** – summary drawings prepared of main suggestions

We will summ up things for you.

Example

One plays with one part ...



... the boxes are upside-down again ...



Example

Good ideas and alternatives are put onto the table ...



... at the end the feedback from us.



Important questions during the workshop

- What is the goal for the new design?
- What do you want people to do beyond this point in the design process?
- Is there anything distracting the team from their goal?
- How does this new design improve on what they currently have?
- How does this new design solve the problems that are characteristic of the current design?
- Are there any positives we could take from the new design, adding them to the overall design principles?
- Are there any implementation issues we need to address now?
- What questions would we likely face from other stakeholders and have we addressed them?
- Is there anything we could do better – positioning, language, simplification?

Revisiting these questions periodically helps refining and sharpening the design until repeating answers

What happens after a Design Workshop?

- Documentation of the most important results
 - Describe the main results of the workshop
 - Visualise the results with photos
 - Add questions to the results if needed
- Reflection to the results and further work based on the results
 - Detail, prioritisation, question, dismiss some of the results achieved in the design workshop
 - Work further on (parts of) results achieved
 - Make decisions about the idea(s) and visualise these in forms of artefacts or images or texts ...

HA8 – Design Workshop

Prepare, carry out, and document a design workshop in your group.

1. Prepare the workshop (the material, the room, the cameras, ...)
2. Carry out the workshop (if needed, we will act as facilitators and moderate or support the discussion)
3. Document the results achieved in the workshop and reflect to the process as a whole (you will get the raw material that we captured for you; you are in charge in using this material for your project and document that you will deliver for the workshop) – 5 pages without the cover page (1 document per group)
 - Summary – the status quo before the design workshop, discussion during the workshop (which ideas have been discussed, dismissed, or concretized)
 - Reflection – what was different in the workshop than the normal group meetings, did team members act differently, did they contribute differently, were available materials useful for the process, how have been materials used during the workshop, what do you think as a group about the design workshops, are they useful, can they be arranged in another way to make more use of them, ...
 - Screenshots – 2-3 interesting screenshots from the video taken with a short description to it, it can be also about a certain artefact that you have created during the workshop that you want to present explicitly in the document.