

Pro-DEENLA

LEUPHANA
UNIVERSITY OF LÜNEBURG

Steinbeis Innovation Center
Logistics and Sustainability

“DESIGN THINKING” METHOD CARDS

“DIGITALISATION LEADS TO MORE SUSTAINABLE
BUSINESS PRACTICES!?” LEARNING MODULE



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“DESIGN THINKING” METHOD

What is this method all about?

“Design thinking” is a creative and systematic innovation method that can be used to solve complex problems. Various approaches towards finding and developing ideas are applied.

Mixed teams used a multi-phase process to reflect on current circumstances and on possible areas of potential for change. The main focus of “design thinking” is thus on encouraging the participants to help shape their own world (of work).

How long does it take?

- About two and a half to three hours including introduction and presentation.

What is needed?

- Flip chart, flip chart paper, and flip chart markers
- Various differently coloured pens
- Adhesive notes in different colours and sizes (e.g. Post-it® notes)
- Sticky dots
- Various arts and crafts materials (e.g. sticky tape, scissors, glue, coloured cardboard, parcel string, Lego® bricks, wooden blocks, Plasticine™, balloons ...) – you are free to use your imagination at this point
- A large room, in which the chairs and tables can be moved around to enable the team members to look at each other during the learning process

Who is involved?

- Facilitator (1 person)
- As many teams as you like (each consisting of 4–5 persons)

THE DESIGN THINKING PROCESS

The six phases of design thinking:

- 1 **Understanding:** The objective in this phase is to define a problem and to derive a matching task.
- 2 **Observing:** During this phase, the participants describe the impacts of the problem in more precise terms by placing themselves in the situation of users and observers.
- 3 **Defining:** In this phase, an ideal-typical and fictitious person is used to evaluate and interpret the thoughts generated thus far.
- 4 **Developing ideas:** In this phase, creativity techniques are deployed to develop as many ideas as possible that might assist with the resolution of the problem.
- 5 **Creating prototypes:** The ideas developed are set out in more specific terms with the help of a prototype and therefore rendered visible and perceptible. In other words, a method of presentation is found that will facilitate communication of the possible strengths and weaknesses of the potential solution.
- 6 **Testing:** The possible solutions specified in the previous phase are tested for their practicality with other participants.

Note:

The six phases describe the fundamental structure of the design thinking process. The phases outlined should be individualised depending on the application process. The following design thinking process represents one possible substantiation.



1 YOU ARE THE FACILITATOR

What is that?

- Your role as facilitator is to lead your team through the design thinking process.
- You should ensure compliance with the rules for discussion that have been set out. You encourage the open generation of ideas and are actively involved in the process.
- You keep an eye on the procedure and on time limits.
- Ensure that the individual process phases are documented.

What needs to be done beforehand?

- Read the method cards through to gain an understanding of how a design thinking process operates.
- Make sure that your team has sufficient materials.

Important!



- Adopt a participative leadership style! That means that you should permit and foster shared, open, and non-judgemental ways of thinking.

1 YOU ARE A TEAM MEMBER

What is that?

- In your role as a team member, you are responsible for an open, respectful, and creative process sequence.
- Use the findings you have gained from the previous tasks in the learning module (only those you wish to share).
- Involve yourself actively in the process.

What needs to be done beforehand?

- Read the cards through carefully to gain an understanding of how a design thinking process operates.



Design thinking rules:



- Generate plenty of ideas.
- Encourage unconventional ideas.
- Think in a user-centred way.
- Visualise your ideas.
- Build on the ideas of others.
- Stick to the topic.
- Hold back on criticism.
- Only one person speaks at a time.
- Have fun!!

2 DESIGN THINKING CHALLENGE

What needs to be done?

- Developing a “design thinking challenge” will help you to clarify which question will form the basis of the further approach adopted.
- Your “design thinking challenge” is:
“How can the opportunities offered by digitalisation be utilised in order to operate in a more sustainable way?”



Principles for the development of a “design thinking challenge”:



- Break down the “design thinking challenge” into its individual words.
- Undertake a more detailed consideration of the words which you believe to be relevant.
- Try to seek consensus! All participants should be able to present their perspectives.

3 TARGET GROUP EXPLORATION

What needs to be done?

- Interview your colleagues.
- The following questions may be useful to you in this:
Think back to the year 2006. How have your work processes changed since this time?
What do you associate with digitalisation?
Which of your work processes are digitalised?
At your workplace, where do you see areas of potential for doing business in a more sustainable way?
What do you associate with sustainability?
Where could digitalisation enable improvements at your workplace?
How could the resources released by digitalisation be used to do business more sustainably?
...

Tips for the exploration process:



- Interviews with colleagues are best conducted verbally. When carrying out the conversation, make sure you record responses from your discussion partner so that you can evaluate these in a targeted way later.
- It will be helpful if you prepare a catalogue of questions before conducting the interview. This will provide better structuring and comparability.

4 PERSONA

What needs to be done?

- Use the information you have gathered to develop an ideal-typical and fictitious person to represent the target group of your “design thinking challenge”.
Give the “persona” a name.
Give the “persona” a face – draw him or her.
Give the “persona” an age.
Give the “persona” a private life.
Give the “persona” a past.
Give the “persona” a typical daily routine.
- Determine further characteristics of your “persona” that seem to you to be of significance for the processing of the “design thinking challenge”.
- Sketch out your “persona” on flip chart paper.

Persona:



- A “persona” helps to shape innovations in a more user-oriented way.
- You are developing the “persona” specifically for the “design thinking challenge”.
- You will refer back to the “persona” and his/her daily routine during the further phases of the process.

5 FOCUS QUESTION

What needs to be done?

- Work together to develop a focus question.
- The purpose of the focus question is to help you specify your objective and therefore also the further approach to be pursued.
- Use both the “design thinking challenge” and the characteristics and daily routine of your “persona”.



Structure of a focus question:



“How can we enable [PERSONA] to satisfy their need for [NEED] without [OBSTACLE]?”

Example of a focus question:

“How can we enable [Rolf Schneider] to satisfy his need for [more transparent work processes] without [creating a greater degree of monitoring in the workplace]?”

6 FINDING AND GROUPING IDEAS

What needs to be done?

- Develop ideas to solve the problems addressed in the “design thinking challenge” and focus question.
- Use the brainstorming method (see right).
- Note your ideas in bullet point format on sticky notes and attach these to flip chart paper.
- Group all ideas thematically in order to obtain a better overview.



Brainstorming rules:



- State any idea you can think of to resolve the problem.
- Produce as many ideas as possible.
- Do not express any criticism during the phase in which ideas are being found.
- Take up the ideas of other participants.
- Do not be afraid of ideas that seem unconventional and impossible.
- Allow yourself sufficient time.

7 EVALUATION OF IDEAS

What needs to be done?

- Each participant receives three sticky dots.
- Mark the ideas you find best.
- Evaluate the three most frequently chosen ideas on the basis of the following criteria:
 - Added value
high <-----> low
 - Feasibility
high <-----> low
 - Transferability
high <-----> low

Evaluation of ideas:



- A differentiated evaluation of ideas is just as important as finding the ideas in the first place.
- A differentiated evaluation will make the strengths and weaknesses of your ideas apparent.



8 DEVELOPING A SOLUTION

What needs to be done?

- Use the design materials to continue development of the idea that received the best evaluation.
- Take guidance from the following questions:
 - What should this idea achieve and change?*
 - Which problem can be solved with the idea?*
 - How does the idea answer your focus question?*
- Referring to the daily routine of your “persona”, describe how implementing the idea would change the individual aspects of this routine.

Important!



- Use various design materials to make your idea visible and perceptible!
- The aim is to gain maximum transparency of the strengths and weaknesses of your idea, not to achieve perfection.

9 PRESENTATION

What needs to be done?

- Explain the problem that has been identified and the proposed solution you have drawn up.
- Describe the original daily routine of your “persona” and the problem that has been identified on the basis of this routine.
- Then describe the altered routine of your “persona” and show how your possible solution has changed the routine.



Important!



- Address the whole of the design thinking process in your presentation.
- State your “design thinking challenge”.
- Introduce your “persona”.
- State your focus question.
- Describe the process of finding and evaluating the idea.
- Explain the solution development process.

10 DOCUMENTATION

What needs to be done?

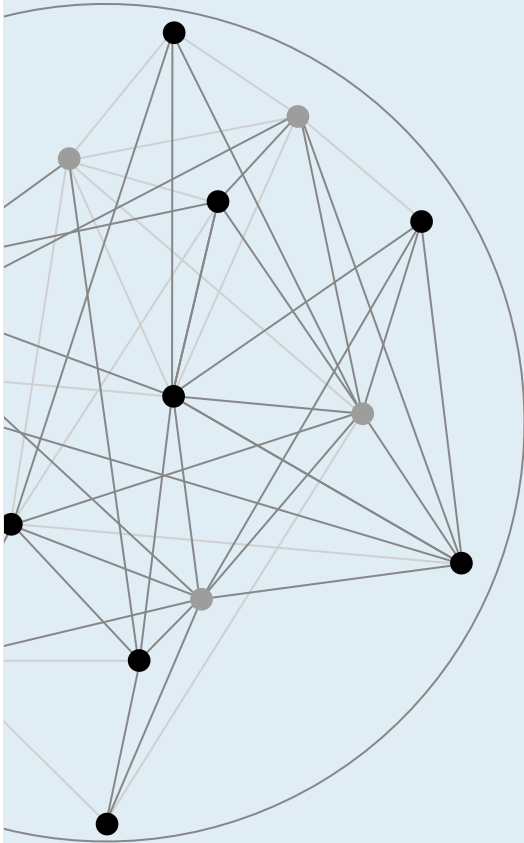
- Document the whole of the design thinking process as follows:
 - Note your “design thinking challenge”, the characteristics of your “persona”, and your focus question.
 - Document the processes for finding, grouping, and evaluating ideas and for the development of your proposed solution.

Notes:



- Photograph your elaborations.
- Record your results in a way that allows all participants to gain a good retrospective overview of the design thinking process.





IMPRINT

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