

Improving the onboarding process of Innoboost, A design approach.

Mapping and communicating the working methodes & tools.

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innoboost

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Summary

The challenge we set out to solve in this report is, how to capture and document operational knowledge within a company and transmit this to new partners.

We do this for a small consultancy collective that relies heavily on the personal knowledge and experience of individual members. These individuals employ different ways of working, making clear communication difficult, while confusing new employees as to what is being expected of them.

This project is aimed at capturing and structuring the operational knowledge, specifically the processes, tools and terminology, to improve the onboarding process of new employees and the integration of different ways of working.

An approach using design thinking and service design thinking was used to achieve this aim, along with methods such as co-creative sessions, interviews, organized group discussions and desk research.

Over the course of the project valuable discussions were started, resulting in a new approach to setting up client projects as well as the addition of two new expertises to the company offer, These have since been integrated into final product; a web based guide tool.

Evaluation proved that not only the new employees were helped by the documenting of the different processes, the accompanying discussions as well as the final product have resulted in an improved conversation and understanding between existing partners.

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Introduction

This report is the documentation of the process, underlying theory and choices for the design of a teaching and documentation tool meant for the onboarding (the mechanism through which new employees acquire the necessary knowledge, skills, and behaviors to become effective organizational members) of new partners of Innoboost; a micro SME consultancy firm. This company, being a relatively new cooperation based on the skill sets of individual members, had the need for gathering, clarification and communication their methods and tools to form a strong base for future growth and development.

The design challenge was not only to make a product that maps and documents the methods used but also to foster a sense of ownership and active dialogue about the processes used in the company. A design approach, heavy on co-creation, facilitation and active feedback was employed to best suit the very specific circumstances this tool would be used in.

This report first documents the given assignment and a brief company analysis to create a clear picture of what this project aims to solve. This is followed by the design approach to elaborate on the approach used to solve this challenge. In the design process the choices made, recourses used and the steps taken are discussed, after which the final product is explained. Closing an evaluation of both product and process is given.



Given assignment

Before starting with the theoretical and technical part of the design we start with looking at the given assignment and how this translates into a practical design brief.

Looking at the assignment description Innoboost has given me as starting point, there are 3 different topics running through the whole assignment:

- Mapping the processes being used at Innoboost
- Communicating the differences in expertise and processes
- Supporting the selection process of tools and experiments

When looking at how this could best be applied into a project, there are a few contextual points we'll have to take into account:

Innoboost is in the process of scaling up which means that over the coming 2 years around 12 new employees will start

The people at Innoboost (current and future) are supposed to be experienced and independent professionals.

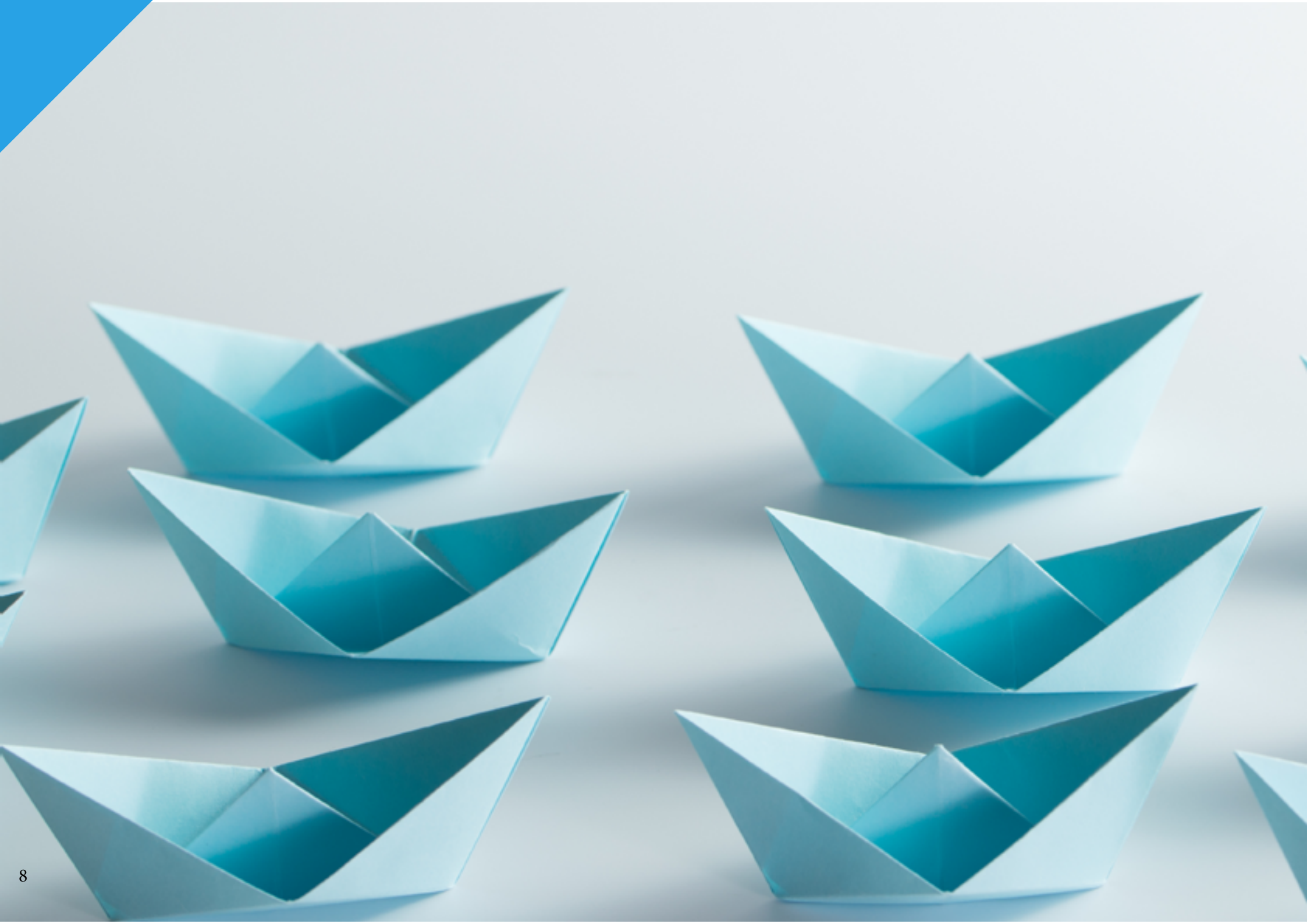
The work Innoboost does is tailored work that has different outcomes for every client.

Given these parameters the design goal I propose is:

To design a handbook for new Innoboost employees, focusing on bringing the organizational and process level into clear process steps.

This combined with the facilitation of an active dialogue on the topic of boundaries and definitions to clear up the existing language and definitions and to create a lasting awareness for the definitions used.







Company context

This project is completely set inside Innoboost, from data sources to final users. Before looking too closely at the specific design challenge and changes made, this chapter summarizes the company and thus the context in which this project takes place.





Innoboost

*This analysis is based on in company documentation and a large series of informal discussions with and observations of the Innoboost partners at the Innoboost office. For more context on the gathering of information see 'Mapping process' page 38

Innoboost is an innovation consultancy firm in Amsterdam that assists companies in figuring out how to successfully innovate. Their focus is on circular economy and practical testing. This focus on circular economy means that they have a lot of experience and interest in circular economy and want to get as many companies to implement it. Therefore, they are closely connected to a lot of the organizations that are exploring the boundaries of circular economy.

Innoboost is organized as a collaborative. This means that everybody who works at Innoboost is self employed and has their own specialty and clients, making them largely independent. Their practical inclination is best seen in the way they help their clients. Instead of producing a big report, they help the client test if the given advice will work and they think along with the client until the client is secure in what he is doing.

As a collaborative of currently 6 members working in the consulting industry, all members have their own clients and specialties but share a common understanding of wanting to leave the planet better than they found it, as well as a need to spread the stresses and costs of consulting work.

Innoboost is currently relying on experience and close cooperation for organizing their projects and services. This way of working is reinforced by the different specializations in the small team that result in the same people being in charge of the same topics and assignments. This means that a lot of operational knowledge is locked away in the heads of specific people in the company.

"I almost never work on projects related to customer journey's or campaigns, R and N do most of those. So If it a larger project related to those topics I usually just pass it along"

Innoboost partner 30/11/17, Innoboost office

Currently all partners still have to develop their own business while focusing on keeping track of their running projects. Because the skills of the different partners differ so much and every partner has their own way of working with their clients, it is difficult to pass work on projects to other partners. This means that the focus stays on getting and keeping projects that can be run based on their own power and expertise, rather than getting the most profitable or interesting projects for Innoboost as a company.

To counteract these limitations Innoboost aims to scale up to a collective of about 30 people in the coming few years. This should raise Innoboost's profile and enable the partners to take larger assignments which require a broader scope of expertise.

The main challenge I am involved in is the creation of a common understanding and way of working. At this moment, the group of partners is small enough that people can work together based on common understanding from experience.

With new partners coming in who all have different backgrounds and career paths, it is important that there is a clear explanation and message to the new partners, so they know what to do and what to expect from the start.

The main goal of this project is mapping the work processes used in Innoboost. This is done by facilitating a discussion and create a consensus on what the methods and theories are that should be the norm. The agreed-on methods are then to be documented and put in a format aimed at future partners to enable them to quickly start working along with the partners with the security for both parties that the new partners know what they supposed to do and deliver the quality that is expected of the Innoboost brand.

During this project, one Innoboost partner Was the direct contact who represents the company and its interests. This project did however involve all partners during the different product iterations and data gathering efforts such as discussion based mapping sessions where the partners are challenged to set stricter definitions and boundaries to the different processes and to actively discuss how projects and different types of expertise fit in the offer of Innoboost.



Micro SME

Innoboost with its current 6 partners/employees, is according European legislation [EU recommendation 2003 European commission] defined as a micro SME. Micro SME's are subgroup of SME's (Small Medium Enterprises) and the smallest type of company. That SME's are different than larger cooperations or multinationals is no news, but the difference between Micro SMEs and the small and medium-sized companies is more interesting.

Micro-firms are less entrepreneurial oriented than larger SME's and it is found that being overly proactive and risk-taking may be detrimental to the legitimacy of the company. [Pett & Wolff, 2011] When looking at growth-oriented SME's like Innoboost we find that Absorptive Capacity and Responsiveness are the key aspects [Liao, 2003], meaning that SME's are more likely to grow significantly if they have the capability to actively keep searching out knowledge and if they actively let surrounding developments influence their growth strategy.

When we look at learning and skill development in SME's we find that 'on the job training' is the most effective form of employee development

[Lange, Ottens, Taylor, 2000].

The possible downside of this, is an apparent dependence on the owners' or lead partner's awareness, knowledge level and attitude.

This is largely because, there are few levels of authority in small SME's, making the owner or a small group of partners automatically the authority on all company operations.

To circumvent the downsides of this dependence for Innoboost, taking into account a lack of formal training courses on the type of work and specialty at Innoboost, an increased level of discussion and reflection could be a likely approach.



The innoboost offer

The core offer that Innoboost provides their clients is thinking with the client, rather than providing an analysis or a report that leaves the client searching for what to do next, Innoboost thinks with the client and goes further than a basic 'one size fits all'- service. Effectively this means that Innoboost helps the client find the right solution and then makes sure it also gets implemented in the right way.

Currently Innoboost offers 9 'products' on their site: Innovation strategy, value proposition design, business modeling, branding, strengthen customer journey, create campaigns, road-mapping, develop and facilitate learning Programs and kickstart innovation.

Of these offers the first 3 are aimed at creating, a strong starting point for new companies or ventures. The second is aimed at creating valuable change within an existing offer while the last 3 are aimed at developing understanding within the company.

When looking at past and current Innoboost projects we see that these services are almost never offered as stand-alone products but are used in combination to provide a tailor-made service for the client. Example: a company wants a campaign to attract new customers. However, they have no clear idea who these customers should be or how to approach them. By combining: [Value proposition design], [bringing to live the customer journey], [Branding] [Create campaigns], Innoboost manages to develop a campaign that is significantly more Focused and effective.

One thing that stands out particularly is that experimenting is part of quite a few of the building block services that are offered and when looking at the practical examples we see that experimenting is always an important part of the complete service done for the client. This means that we should also consider experimenting as a separate building block.

We can also see that not all of the building block services are on the same level. While we can see that, Branding, Value proposition, Business modeling as well as Bringing to live the customer journey and Develop campaigns are more well defined products with clear outward impact, we see that Kickstart innovation, Road-mapping and Develop and facilitate learning programs have a longer trajectory and mostly impact the ways of working at the client company internally while innovation strategy seems not to have a definable process at all.



Figure 1, 'The wheel of expertise'
An overview of the Innoboost offer at the beginning of this project.

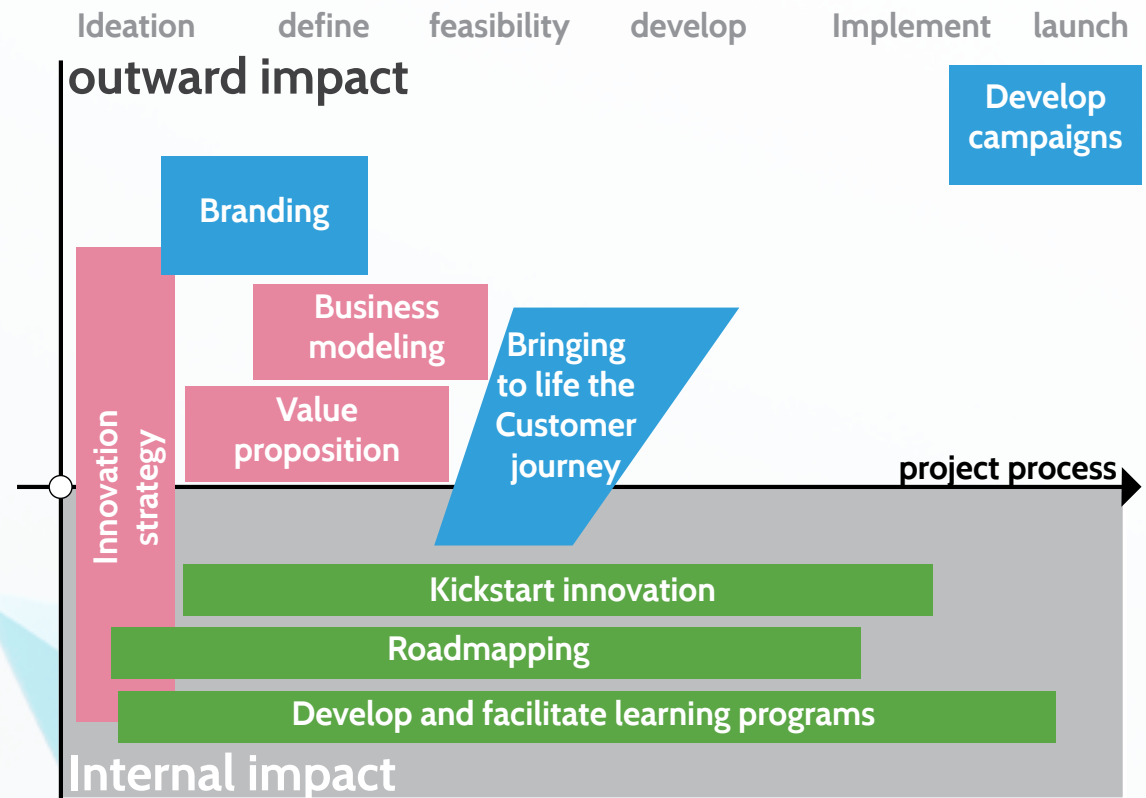


Figure 2,
The Innoboost offer mapped according to impact type and moment in the customers innovation process.



Stakeholders:

Figure 3
An overview of the main stakeholders involved in and impacted by this project.



The Longtime partner

Name: Christiaan
Function: Innoboost partner

Innoboost experience
Worked at Innoboost since the start, helped develop the company and the tools. Works on multiple projects, has his own expertise and uses tools and processes instinctively.

Needs
A complete overview of what is going on in the company. A quick way to explain what he is working on and what he needs help with



The new partner

Name: Sybrich
Function: Innoboost partner

Innoboost experience
Has been working at Innoboost for a few months, is working on one project as part of Innoboost while doing other work as an independent.

Need
A way to expand on her current projects and to understand where her previous knowledge might be applied. To better understand what other people are working on and how different projects are set up.



The aspiring partner

Name: Bas
Function: independent consultant

Innoboost experience

Worked in important functions with different large companies before starting for himself. Had an introduction conversation and started a collaboration project with an established partner.

Need

To understand the setup of an Innoboost process, how it is different from his own way of working. To make best use of his interactions with the Innoboost partners.



The Innoboost clients

Name: Frederique
Function: company owner or head of department

Innoboost experience

Did an earlier project with Innoboost and now she wants to expand on it. She likes the personal approach of Innoboost and how she was helped to get practical results

Need

Practical results, clear agreements, receive a constant high level of service and know what she is getting for her money.



Innoboost the brand

Name: Innoboost
Age: 4
Function: consulting company

Innoboost experience

The Innoboost brand is still small but growing and based on the network of its members.

Need

A consistent output of recognizable quality, effective use of its members to reach as many clients as possible

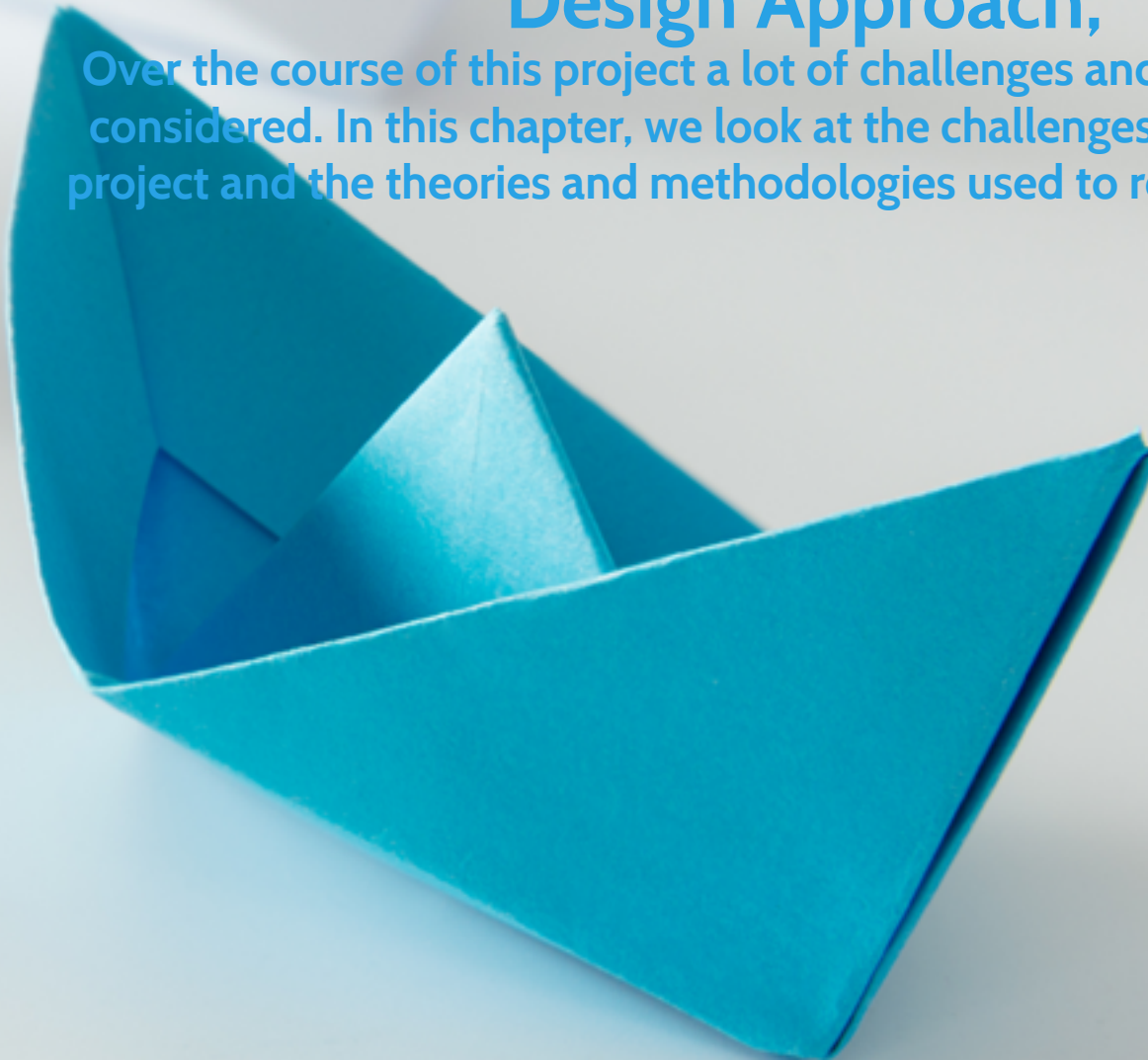






Design Approach,

Over the course of this project a lot of challenges and choices had to be considered. In this chapter, we look at the challenges at the core of this project and the theories and methodologies used to resolve these issues.





Design challenges

Before starting to design it is important to have a clear idea of what it is we want to achieve. In the design brief the basic requirements for this project have been laid out. But a successful design does not just fulfill the minimum requirements but actively solves a problem. For this reason, we will shortly look at the different challenges

Innoboost is currently dealing with a whole series of company challenges that this project can focus on.

At the same time there are multiple roles I as a designer can play in solving these problems.

To identify what design challenges should be focused on during this project a short overview of all major challenges and approaches is given before identifying the set of most critical design challenges.

Company challenges:

Current organization

Due to the lack of central oversight of all running projects there is an inability to make the most effective use of people and time.

Way of working

Currently Innoboost has a very organic way of working with the disposition to start every project largely from scratch.

Transferability

Currently some of the key knowledge and skills that make Innoboost what it is, are only mastered to a high enough extent by a single person in the company making a lot of people highly dependent on him or her.

Role distribution

With a larger growth of transferring work and a common way of working it will become more important to have a clear role distribution in teams.

Standardization

It is difficult for anybody else to step in halfway during the project because they lack the understanding of what has already been done and what the aim of any project is.

Designers approaches:

- Aligning different ways of working and build a common language.

All Innoboost partners have had a long career in different fields and companies. This means that every partner has his/her own ingrained way of working. The challenge lies in combining ways of working into a process that allow for adaptation by the individual while keeping the structure recognizable so other partners can easily understand what is being done and how much progress is made.

- Prepare for scaling up

Innoboost is in the process of scaling up. This means that priorities as well as the way of working and communicating will go through multiple changes within the coming years. This has 2 implications. Firstly the methods should be mapped in such a way that isn't tied too closely to any direct practice or style of production. The second implication of scaling up is that there will be new tools and expertises added to the set.

- Ease the onboarding process

Another approach is to make it easier to explain to new partners, how things are done and what is expected of them.

During this onboarding process the new partners receive a lot of context and information in a short time. This means that the product needs to be an integral part of the onboarding process that helps the new partners find their way quicker.



These company challenges and designer approaches lead to the following set of critical design challenges:

Discussion of current definitions

The current definitions and lexicon used at Innoboost are based on pooling together the knowledge and vocabulary of the existing members of Innoboost. This works well enough during daily operations due to the involved and contextual nature of the conversations that offer enough practical examples to avoid miscommunication. But when addressing the workings of the company it is important that we have a clear common understanding of the definitions we are using. For this reason, discussion needs to be facilitated to locate and address misunderstandings and differences of meaning.

Defining boundaries

Probably one of the largest critical points is the defining of clear boundaries. As addressed before the current way of working is highly organic and making it hard to capture and transfer the process. For this reason, it is important to separate the whole workload into a set of logical and easy to apply processes so the discussion and knowledge transfer can be aimed at a specific and limited set of information. These boundaries should help, not impede, the ease of working, nor require a significant change in the current way of working.

Communication of structure

Currently there is no standardization nor complete understanding of the processes outside the partners personal way of working and specialization. Even when working together closely, it is noted that there is no clear indication what the next steps will be and what time frame can be expected. This results in a high repetition of questions along the lines of 'how long until you have done,' or 'when can I expect.' By making the processes and order of steps clearer and quickly understandable it becomes easier for all involved to anticipate on process flow and planning. Making it in turn easier for people to step in and help out where and when needed, with a better understanding what they should be working toward.

Retaining Innoboost personality and quality

When working towards a goal it is easy to prioritize progress towards this aim over existing qualities. But seeing that Innoboost's brand identity lies in its tailored work and cooperative approach it is important not to lay down 'a one size fits all' structure or to force Innoboost into a mass production company.

Approach: Design according to Design thinking and Service design

Design thinking

When considering how to approach a problem like this, it is important to consider the starting point of the design process. The assignment given at the start of this project was rather broadly defined and open ended. There were a large number of variables, multiple goals, no clear criteria for success or failure and an audience with different sets of experiences. Based on these factors we can conclude that there are many directions and (partial) solutions possible. Given that there is no straight from A to B design process possible this assignment asks for a dynamic, iterative, feedback-rich strategy.

An approach based on design thinking was chosen because it:

- Prevents straight forward 'solution thinking'
 - Supports in exploring (diverging) and focus again (converging)
 - Asks for rapid alternations of different modes of activity
 - Makes thoughts and uncertainties explicit and discussable
 - Forces to use theory, experience, intuition and creativity next to each other
 - Leads to products that fit reality
- (N.Cross, 2011)

The two processes at the base of design thinking that played the largest role in this project are:

Diverging and converging

There are a lot of variations that describe the same basic process. For comparison two examples are given here: double diamond of the British Design Council that goes through the stages of discover, define, develop and deliver.



Figure 4, the double diamond according to the British design council

Or the process of Ideo that follows the steps of understand, create and deliver. Both these processes are based on diverging by getting new information and converging through the process of making choices. If you look at the visualized process in the next chapter, this pattern is clearly visible as part of the process.

Iterations

Iterative working design approach is to paraphrase N.F.M. Roozenburg and J.Eekels: "A Design process consisting of a chain of intuitive and deductive steps, of which the results are constantly compared". [Roozenburg en Eekels, 2003]

A good example of this is the following visual by the interaction design foundation that shows that every step in a design process is connected to both the previous steps and later steps.



Figure 5, design thinking process according to the interaction design foundation

No step in the process is completely independent and constant reflection and comparison is necessary. In this project, the iterations can be found in the shape of the product. Instead of a stage-gate approach where the product takes shape in clear steps we see that the product slowly takes shape through constant feedback.



Service design

Seeing that, the final product of this project will be part of a process aimed at onboarding new employees rather than just being an independent product, the used approach should also cover the integration with the larger process. To this aim service design thinking has been incorporated as part of the design approach.

'Service Design helps to innovate (create new) or improve (existing) services to make them more useful, usable, desirable for clients and efficient as well as effective for organizations. It is a new holistic, multi-disciplinary, integrative field'

Stefan Moritz, 2005

Service design is based on 5 principles:

(Stickdorn et.al, 2013)

1 User-centered

Services should be experienced through the customer's eyes.

2 Co-creative

All stakeholders should be included in the service design process.

3 Sequencing

The service should be visualized as a sequence of interrelated actions.

4 Evidencing

Intangible services should be visualized in terms

of physical artifacts.

5 Holistic

The entire environment of a service should be considered.

Co-creating

Although all principles of service design are used through-out the process, one is particularly prevalent in this project, namely co-creating.

The challenge using iterative co-creation during this project is to get and keep the attention of the Innoboost partners, due to the fact that for them it is the documentation of existing knowledge. These co-creators are at the same time the only available users and will be the products future representatives.

Practical physical or written feedback was hard to acquire largely due to the fact that most partners got distracted by something more important the minute they were not actively engaged by the topic.

The solution for this problem lies in the problem-solving nature of the Innoboost members. By providing a clear challenge and a set time frame, the Innoboost members became significantly more vested and collaborative. The provided challenge for the main body of co-creation sessions was to set clear and working boundaries between the different steps of the processes.

Innoboost is currently still a young company and the traces of the different personal brands of the partners are still very clear. This is very noticeable when comparing differences in terminology and phrasing as well as in how different projects are approached.

This means that before any methods can be mapped and documented, they first need to be created.

On a practical level this means that bringing together the methods and developing a commonly agreed upon terminology and way of working needs to be part of the design challenge and the product that results from it.

The development of this common understanding and agreement was done by providing a discussion platform through the means of facilitation and co-creation. By taking on the role of someone lacking even what was considered basic understanding, and asking overly easy questions, the Innoboost members were given a fresh starting point, that kept challenging points of miscommunication or vagueness.

[For a more elaboration on this topic please refer to the sub chapters: client management and mapping process]

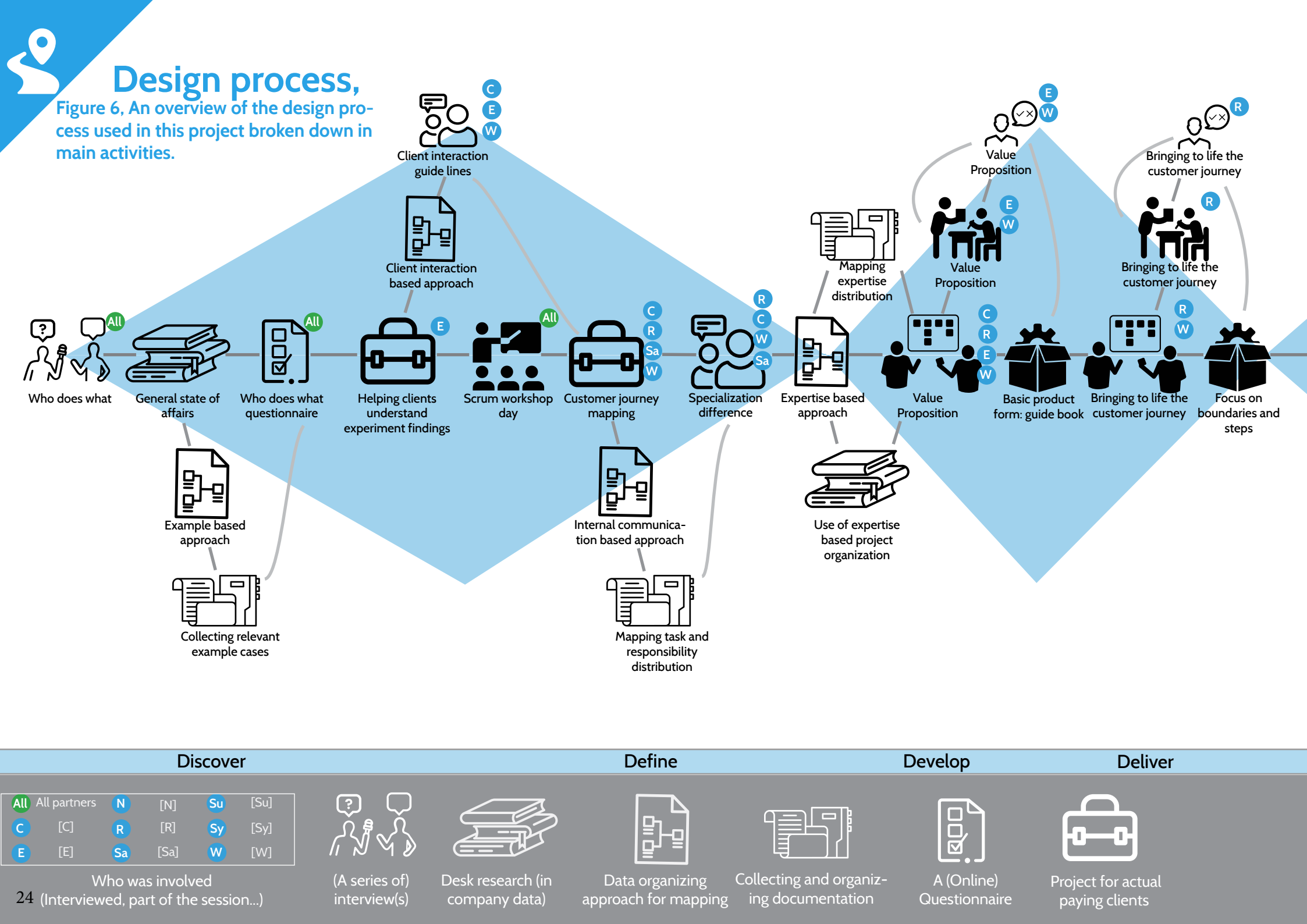




Design process

This chapter looks at the design process and the accompanying choices, considerations and context. First the process will be explained as a whole, after which topics are discussed in the order in which they impacted the design, following design iterations building up to the final design.





Design process,

Figure 6, An overview of the design process used in this project broken down in main activities.

Discover

Define

Develop

Deliver

All	All partners	N	[N]	Su	[Su]
C	[C]	R	[R]	Sy	[Sy]
E	[E]	Sa	[Sa]	W	[W]



(A series of) interview(s)



Desk research (in company data)



Data organizing approach for mapping



Collecting and organizing documentation



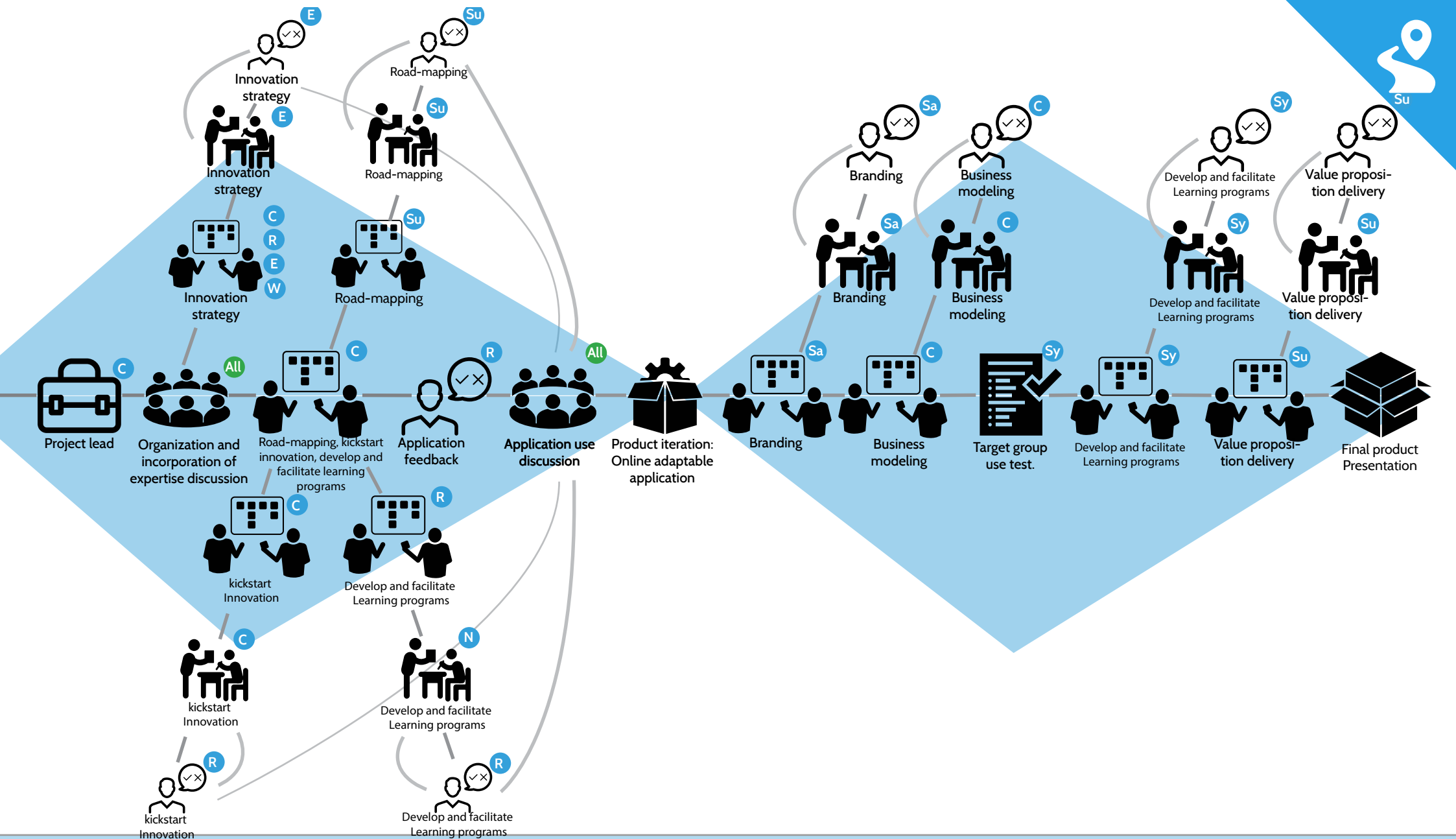
A (Online) Questionnaire



Project for actual paying clients

Who was involved

24 (Interviewed, part of the session...)



Develop

Deliver

Develop

Deliver



Informal conversations to share insight & explain standpoints



Organized mapping session



Feedback session



Feedback and conformation



Product iteration (Large step)



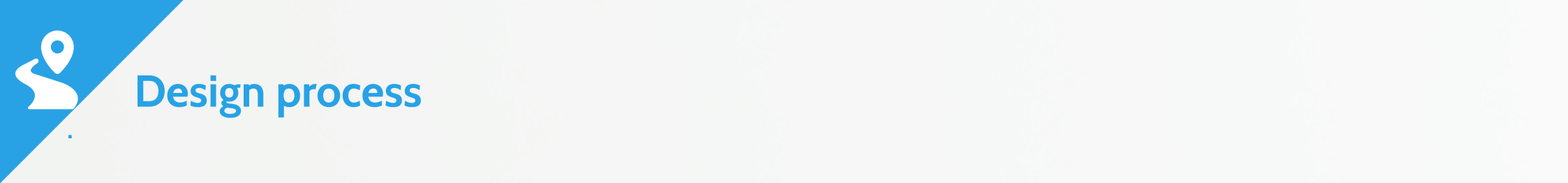
Organized group discussion



Testing session



Final product Presentation



Design process

The design process used consists of 4 iterations of diverging and converging: first a long phase of discovery and defining the challenge, followed by 3 rounds of development and delivery.

During the discovery and defining phase the main challenge, apart from developing a general understanding of the company and its people, was to find a method to break up the body of information into usable and communicable parts. This part of the process relied heavily on digging through and organizing company data and comparing that to the experiences and view of the current company partners. During this phase, I participated in two different customer cases to gather understanding and to discover what elements are missing in the existing company documentation. After trying out 4 different methods I concluded that the one based on different expertises was the most appropriate. (For a more extensive explanation of the methods please see the topic of Mapping methods later in this chapter.)

In the second phase of this project, a general shape of the project was being established. Once the method of dividing the information based on expertise was chosen, all company data was reexamined to both fill in as much of the data as possible and to establish what kind of information was most needed from the people at the company. After which two of the expertises were mapped and used to shape the product format.





In the third phase I started a third product case, where I was lead. This meant that I carried full responsibility for the whole process, providing the great opportunity of actively testing the product through practical use. At the same time the gathering of product content started in earnest in a by then to some extent standardized process, based on a mapping session focused on setting goals and boundaries followed by a feedback session on the resulting product and a additional verification loop that would only end when a designated company product owner/ specialist would sign of on the final product. The feedback on the different expertises was collected and discussed in an organized group discussion for a further improvement on the product format and use.

At the start of the fourth phase the product already resembled the final product quite a lot, although more content was gathered and several improvements were made. The most important of these improvements where based on the target group use test. This was a two-hour intensive product test with one new partner who had no prior experience with the product and who was actively part of the target group.

The final product can be seen in the product chapter page 53 and appendix 4 the visualization of this process can be seen on the previous two pages.*



**The steps in the visualization are to some extent in chronological order but the visual is simplified and does not show a time scale, in practice a lot of processes overlapped or where in parallel.*



Starting point

The structure and way of working at Innoboost is, quite typical for a micro SME.

For someone coming in with limited knowledge such a broad assignment can be disorienting.

Especially when considering the set-up of Innoboost as a cooperative where all members are their own boss with their own interests and priorities. This set up had two major effects on this project:

Limited documentation.

At Innoboost, every project is led by someone who is completely responsible for his own actions without having to report or document his work to any one apart from the results to the clients and the financial to his partners. This means that the only practical documentation consisted of:

- Presentations summarizing conclusions and referencing meetings,
- Limited amount of Innoboost promotion materials,
- Some scientific papers and a book on the potential of circular business.

Not only was the documentation limited but due to fact that most documentation on the drive was not meant for distribution but rather just for the use of the person who saved it, there was very limited structure in the way the file organization was set up.

This is something that kept being a challenge during the whole project, especially when specific tools and templates were referred to.

After a significant time of working through sparingly documented cases and drafts without references, the conclusion was made that **all most important information was locked in the heads of the partners.**

Six bosses with different understanding of this projects aim and implications

All graduation projects have some room for interpretation, that much is given. With Innoboost the challenge was to set a clear definition of what the final product should be.

The assignment was written out because there was a shared need from all partners to explain what they were doing, which was difficult, because all had their own expertises accompanied by their own set of terms and definitions.

This problem was not only a problem for their own way of working but just as much for this project. Although officially there was only one person managing this project on the Innoboost side, effectively, due to the small size of the company and the fact that everyone in the company had a vested interest and knowledge on the topic, this project was overseen by 6 bosses that related this work to what was happening in their own projects and expertises.

In the first month, most time and effort was spent on learning to understand the different languages being used. Over the course of the project it became apparent that one of the core needs of this project is the establishment of a common language.



Managing variables

At the start of the project the basic challenge was to document the working methods and tools whatever they might be and in whatever format they would work best. Although every designer appreciates having control over their final product, too many options create a situation of unmanageable variables.

Selecting a format

For this reason, selecting a format was prioritized. The selection was based on the characteristics of the users and the context in which they would be using it in, namely:

Users

- More than 10 years of experience in the corporate or consulting sector;
- Busy schedule / multiple appointments a day;
- Focus on practical on-the-job learning;
- A general understanding on the topic and a need for detailed information.

Context

- The product might be needed at the offices of clients;
- The product is likely to be used both as a reference and for general understanding.

Based on these characteristics a first set of requirements regarding format was determined:

- The format must look professional;
- The format must be something that the users are familiar with;
- The format must be quick and easy to use;
- The user should be able to find the relevant detail within 30 seconds.

The most practical solution based of these requirements that at the same time left most options for further design steps, is a guidebook.

Content boundaries

With a chosen format, it became possible to determine what the boundaries are of the information and topics that should or should not be in the guidebook. Here again the selection is based on a set of basic characteristics of the culture and environment in Innoboost:

- An informal working environment;
- Most work is done independently;
- Active growth expected of the company and the amount of people for the coming few years;
- A high level of knowledge in the company;
- Most discussions regarding the process take a long time;
- Most discussions regarding the process include topics far beyond the focus of the conversation;
- Most new partners will have their own way of

working.

Based on these characteristics a set of requirements regarding contents was determined:

- Information on how things work in the office are not required;
- Information on general consulting skills are not required;
- Content should focus on the features that differentiate Innoboost from competitors;
- Clear boundaries between different processes need to be established;
- Details regarding deliverables and the difference between phases need to be clear and easy to find;
- Explanation regarding the way of working and how things relate to each other is required.

Using these requirements as a starting point the practical research and design could be started.



Information and communication

Before going into the topic of the types and formats of information and communication it should be addressed that communication is a broadly established scientific study on which a lot has been written. This chapter is meant only to document the information found that was considered applicable for the betterment of this design project.

Firstly, the distinction between information and communication should be clarified. With information, we refer to “What is conveyed or represented by a particular arrangement or sequence of things”. And for communication we use: “The imparting or exchanging of information by speaking, writing, or using some other medium”. [definitions by the oxford dictionary]. To simplify this distinction; information is what we wish to impart while communication is the means or format that is used to impart the information.

Making sense of information

When starting to document the types of information, a large distinction is whether the information describes facts, relations or experience. The differentiation between these types of information can be found in what is given, what is known and what might change: if facts are given relations are both known and might change, when relations are given the facts are considered known and the experience might change and when the experience is given the relationships are given but the relevant facts might change.

When we try to document information, it is important to have a clear idea of what is already known or given and in what way we want to make sense of the information: Stories, Meanings, Mechanisms or Predictions, and what anchor points the information provides.

Ann Langley describes in ‘Strategies for Theorizing from process data’ (Langley, 1999) seven methods of sense making: Narrative strategy, Quantification strategy, Alternate templates strategy, Grounded theory strategy, Visual mapping strategy, Temporal bracketing strategy and Synthetic strategy. Based on the available anchor points time, events, outcomes, orderings and phases, as well as the available data, the strategies that are usable are: the narrative strategy, the visual mapping strategy and the temporal bracketing strategy.

Communication formats

In current communication, there are many types and variations in format and medium. The most commonly used groups of communication formats have not significantly changed. These are:

- Illustration,
- Photo,
- Video,
- Chart,
- Table,
- Text,
- Info-graphic
- Animation.



There are a lot of theories and distinctions for selecting what format to use. The most relevant and applicable set of selection criteria in regards to this design project is put forward by studio Lakmoes. [[Http://www.studiolakmoes.nl/](http://www.studiolakmoes.nl/)]

They put forward 6 criteria which are:

Intent:

Do you aim to inspire or do you wish to inform? To inspire clear pictures without too much distracting details are necessary while informing requires more elaborate information formats.*

Level of detail:

How many facts details and concrete information do you aim to communicate. Visuals are best to understand concepts and relations. Details and concrete data however are best communicated by table or text.*

Likeness to reality:

Do we wish to communicate a direct concurrence or something likely to happen in a specific way? Then photo or video is the best medium, these formats do however lose their relevance rather quickly if what we want to communicate becomes more abstract or non-specific.*

Size of the dataset:

How much data or example cases do we have access to? When dealing with a small dataset, graphics are the better visual because they better convey trends and relationships while not putting

too much emphasis on precise numbers or percentages.*

Level of narrative:

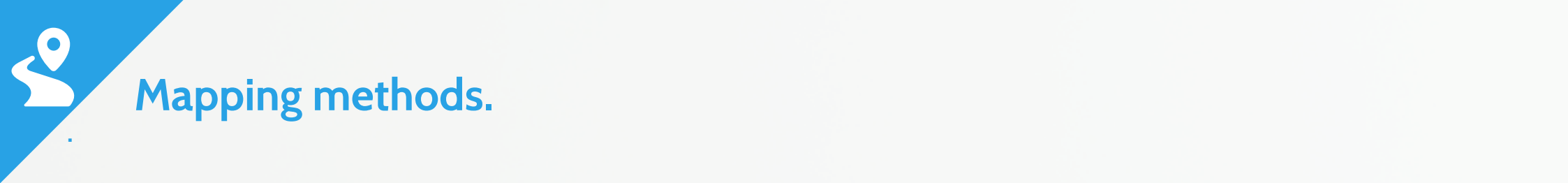
To what degree do we wish to control the order in which the information is consumed? If it is important to present certain viewpoints, for example when presenting certain people or choices, a level of controlled storytelling is needed. If not, more abstract data visualization can be used.*

Level of autonomy of the reader:

Do we aim to control the speed and level of detail that is perceived, maintaining some level authority, then formats like animation might be more suited. When communicating peer to peer, formats like info-graphics are more suited.*



*Explanations of the criteria are summaries of information found on www.studiolakmoes.nl



Mapping methods.

Over the course of this project, several methods have been tried, to create a structure in the body of knowledge that is the way of working at Innoboost.

To provide a complete understanding of the process it is important to have a good understanding of what the methods are that have been tried to split up the content of the tool being developed. These methods are based on practical considerations such as use and existing organizational structures within the company.

Argumentation for and against the different methods are based on application of these methods on the existing case documentation present between September and December on the innoboost drive.

All innoboost case documentation is confidential

Example method

The first approach tried, was to use previous cases as a body of reference showing the best practices.

The strong points of this approach where:

- It closely related to the current way of communicating
- It had the potential to show great nuance in the Innoboost brand
- Participation in ongoing cases was promising at the start.

This approach did however not work due to:

- Not everything that Innoboost offers, could be found a good example case
- To many projects where not documented to a useful degree.
- To many differences in way of working between partners.
- A high degree of intuitive working that could not properly be documented or explained.

Client interaction method

The second approach tried, was based on the interaction with the client. Considering that Innoboost differentiates themselves on their relationship with its clients and their way of thinking with the client instead of for the client, it could make a strong starting point. **Useful points where:**

- Partners had very clear ideas on client interactions
- Most existing documentation concerned client interaction

But when working it out the processes seemed to have holes in them due to:

- Steps were taken without the client resulting in direct to outcome documentation
- Methods were tailored to a specific client
- The client interaction for small projects where too similar regardless of the topic
- Large cases had too many processes in Parallel for useful documentation.



Internal communication method

At almost the same time as the client interaction approach was tried, an approach based on internal communication and planning was tried. **This approach was brought forth by:**

- An interest within Innoboost, to actively start using the scrum method
- The participation in a large case where most partners were actively involved with and internal communication was heavily debated.

The internal communication approach was however quickly shut down based on the fact that: **About 90% off all cases to date were handled by a single partner***

Expertise based method

The approach that worked out best was the method that broke up every project based on the different expertises used in the different projects.

This had some very **important benefits:**

- The size of a project has no significant impact on the complexity of how the project is set up
- The split between expertises creates check points within the project that guarantee that neither too little nor too much is being done.
- It enables clear boundaries to be set up between processes
- The workings of an expertise does not significantly change between different clients
- Within Innoboost there are clear experts per expertise who are trusted to know best

This approach did of course have certain downsides as well:

- Not every expertise can be standardized to the same degree
- Some partners found it difficult to think of projects as a connected set of expertises
- Explaining projects as a series of standardized expertises can feel rather abstract
- The required amount of detail is quite a lot.

The downsides of expertise based method however, could be mitigated by using elements of the other approaches:

Using examples to lessen the abstract feeling of the product.

Using client interaction and expectation to explain the goal of an expertise.

And using a scrum approach to organize the details.

*Percentage based on past cases documented on Innoboost company drive on December 14th



First product iteration

The first step in constructing the tool was to decide on a type and format. Secondly a method to split up the available information into manageable pieces was decided on and applied.

A digital guidebook was selected as the starting point for format and type of tool, a deciding factor in this decision was the practical need of mobility and moments of use;
“I spend half my time at office of the clients, I need to be able to take it everywhere and without looking unprofessional”

Innoboost partner, 9/10/17, Innoboost office

When discussing projects the explanations and amount of information provided was excessive, even explanations of smaller projects would take 30 minutes. A way of separating the available information into manageable pieces was necessary.

The method of splitting up the information by expertise was selected due to three important factors:

1 project size would no longer be a determining factor, a large project would become a series of manageable expertises.

2 There was clear documentation and consensus on what expertises were used during a project.

3 Within the company there were clear authorities on each expertise

“I mostly do it in this way but ask S, if it comes to branding she is the expert so she knows best”

Innoboost partner, 24/10/17, Innoboost office



The explanation of a project, the effect of separating a process by expertise.

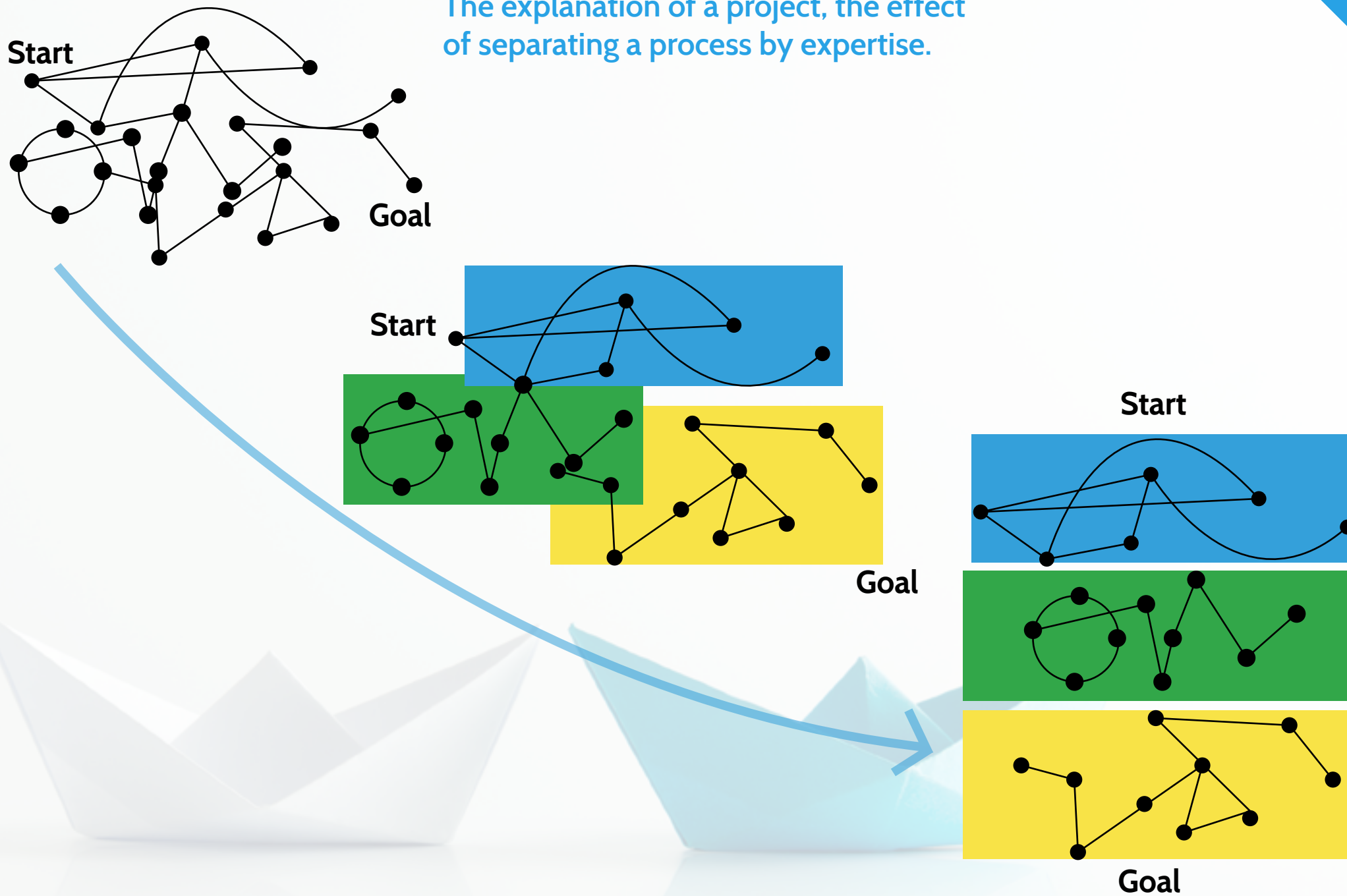
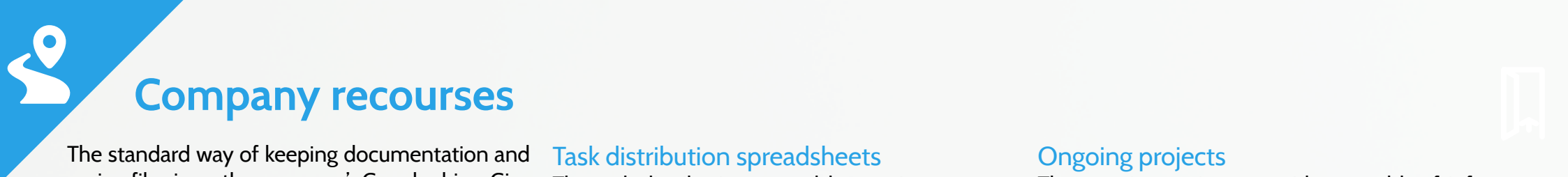


Figure 7, showing the effect of separating a complex process explanation into a series of expertises



Company recourses

The standard way of keeping documentation and saving files is on the company's Google drive. Given the current size of Innoboost there is no complex storage system, the organization of the drive is more akin to the average personal filing system. There is a general distinction on the drive between current clients, past clients, essentials and organizational files, but most individual files are found by name using the search function.

Innoboost is not a company focused on writing reports but rather on personal interaction; it keeps a limited amount of documentation. The main types of files on the drive and other documentation I've used during this thesis project consist of: client presentations; task distribution spreadsheets; templates; books, papers and learning materials, ongoing projects, project discussions and client interaction.

Client presentations

These presentations, summarizing projects and focusing on conclusions, give a good insight into the types and scopes of projects but provide limited information on the processes used and the steps taken.

Task distribution spreadsheets

The task distribution spreadsheets give an overview of what is happening within the company and how priorities are organized: listing tasks and duties within the company, ranging from small odd jobs at risk of being forgotten to large goals such as landing certain size assignments.

Templates

The templates for the different methods used by Innoboost provide the most direct insight into the work being done at the company, showing both filled in examples as well as empty examples and in some cases with use instructions.

Books, papers and learning materials

The experts at Innoboost keep learning and studying on their topics of expertise, and in some instances, they have written papers and books on the subjects.

Recent contributions are:

- C. Kraaijenhagen, C. Van Oppen and N.M.P Bocken (2016) *Circular business, collaborate and Circulate*.
- N.M.P. Bocken C.S.C.Schuit C.Kraaijenhagen (2018) *Experimenting with a circular business model: Lessons from eight cases*

These books and papers give great insight into the ways of thinking and theory that supports the work being done at Innoboost.

Ongoing projects

The ongoing projects provide a wealth of information through small increments. Clients visiting the office share their needs and wants. And at the same time, the client visits provide an insight into customer management by the Innoboost partners.

Ongoing projects also result in process steps mapped in post-it's or on whiteboard, this shows parts of processes in detail and elements of the day to day work being done.

Project discussions

Discussions on progress and idea generation ranging from official progress updates to partners thinking out loud, provided a lot of insight into the ways of thinking and type of information needed by the partners.

Client interaction

Over the course of this process the involvement and interest of the Innoboost partners grew quite quickly, mainly due to their personal stakes in the final results. This resulted in a series of unscheduled feedback, input and help, which provided a great source of information and strong way to try and choose between different incremental solutions.





Client management

A large part of the information gathering work was focused on working with the Innoboost partners to draw on their knowledge and establish common ways of working. Although most partners became quite interested in the project and its progress, it has never been their top priority and thus this project had to compete for every bit of time and effort. Thus, the success of this project was to a large extent dependent of the management of these partners.

Consultancy styles

Before discussing the practical elements of managing and coordinating the Innoboost partners in too much detail, it is interesting to look at and compare their own consultancy styles to the style used to consult for them. To do so, we use the different consulting styles put forth by Edgar H. Schein, in particular Process consulting (1991) and humble consulting (2016).

The consulting method used by Innoboost is on average best described as process consulting (E. H. Schein 1991, Process consultation revisited: Building the helping relationship). The consensus at Innoboost is that the client will always know more about the problem than the consultants. The Innoboost partners aim to guide their clients through the process of finding the necessary answers.

To help the Innoboost partners it would of course be difficult to use a completely different style of consulting, seeing that, that would make a lot of

activities needlessly complicated. At the same time, using their own methods on them would bring the risk of them thinking ahead rather than participating.

The style found best suited to managing these partners would be Humble consulting (Edgar H. Schein (2016) Humble consulting, How to provide real help faster. Oakland, Berrett-Koehler publishers, Inc.) In the practical sense this meant: representing the challenges and putting focus on building common understanding to completion. By showing the partners their own processes and words written down and placed in context they were able to reflect on their challenges and blind spots.

Working on their schedule

The first part of effectively utilizing the Innoboost partners has been the scheduling of mapping sessions and other interactions at moments and places that suited the partners' organization and planning. Practically this meant sessions in external locations, phone meetings, separate meetings on the same topic and many process steps overlapping. The payout of this was highly motivated participants that gave their full attention when they could.

Talking 20 years of experience

All partners at Innoboost have already established themselves over the course of a significant career before coming to Innoboost. This means that when discussing a topic, they carry an enormous

amount of context and meaning into every conversation. To combat misunderstandings due to experience based meanings they were asked to simplify or define everything to the level of someone without any prior understanding.

“What do you mean, what is a road-map? You should know what a road-map is”... “O no, I always do road-maps like this, I never used that other method”

Innoboost partner during the road-mapping mapping session, 22/11/17
Innoboost office

At the same time, all meetings were set up with an absolute minimum duration of 30 minutes and every meeting on a new topic was set at 2 hours. This was done to give the partners the opportunity to share their context and associations before having to give pointed answers. This allowed for the partners to give what they considered to be the whole picture before boundaries were placed on the topic.



Mapping process

The most determining source of information for the content of the tool was the process of mapping the different expertises. This took a considerable amount of time and effort and multiple verification checks.

Preparation

The starting point of mapping every expertise was a template based on example guidebooks and other types of instruction documents customized to the practical needs and ways of working in the company. (See appendix 5)

This template came in two varieties: one blank to fill in during the session and one with all known information from existing documentation filled in.

Mapping session

The first step of the mapping session was checking the known information and looking for errors. This step was not only used to verify the information from documents but also to put the participating Innoboost partners in a critical mindset.

The next step was building a clear framework by establishing the aim of every expertise and making it very clear what was and what was not part of that process, listing what is needed to start and finish every project.

With a framework established, the process itself has to be mapped. Through setting all activities and deliverables on a time-line, steps can be established and clarified. The partners were asked to explain the process until the mapped process and their explanation were the same.





At the end of the process any points of uncertainty were brought to the forefront and the participating Innoboost partners were encouraged to make choices to clarify their process both for the tool as well as in their way of working.

Feedback and verification

The first thing being done after a session was the visualization of the process, which was then given back to the participants within 3 days after the mapping session, making sure that the process was interpreted correctly.

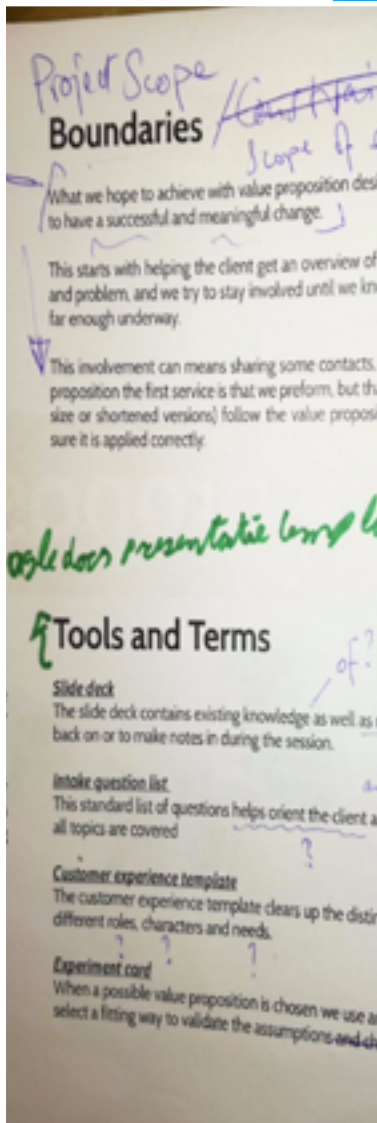
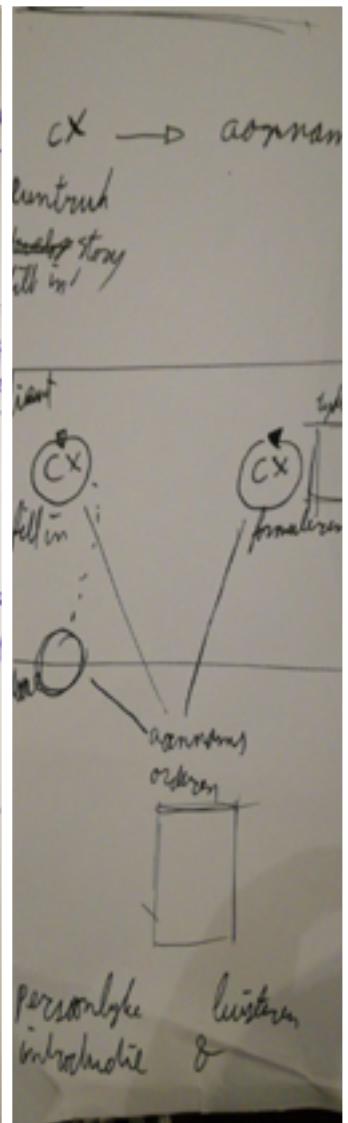
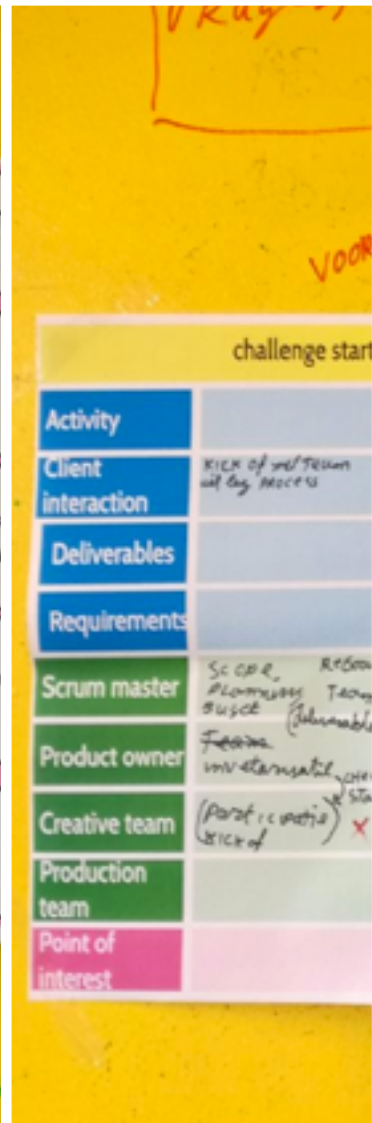
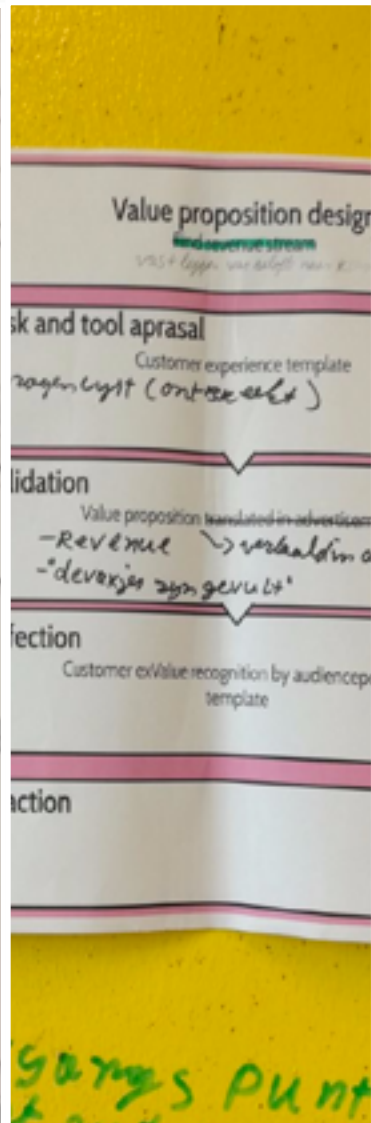
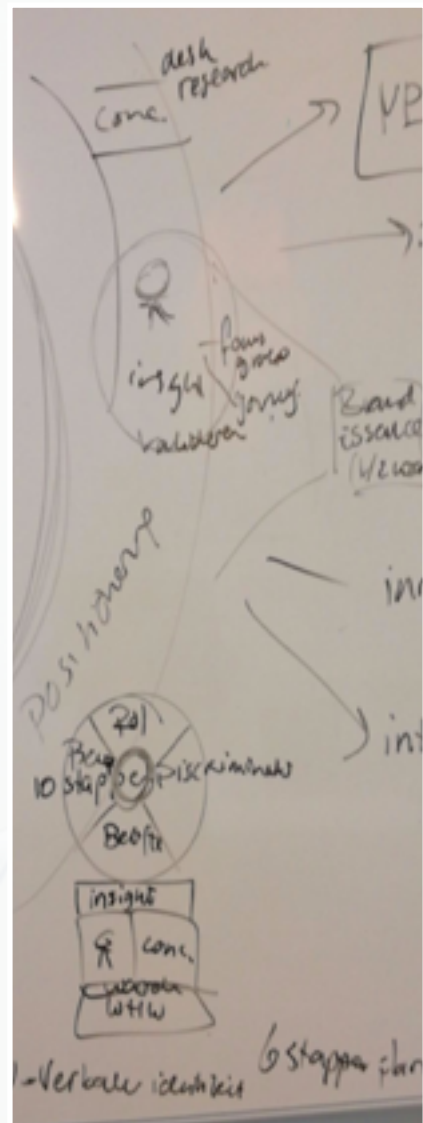
When the visual was checked, the first version of that expertise chapter was written. After this chapter was sent back to all participants, a feedback session with the lead expert on that expertise was set.

During the feedback session, Innoboost's lead expert on that expertise was asked to give detailed feedback. When that feedback was processed, a verification round was held in which the lead expert had to sign off on that chapter and a second partner had to sign off on readability and understandability.

Aim: 		
Requirements	Task and tool 	Deliverable
	Validation 	
	Refection 	
Client interaction		



Mapping process in practice



Discussing important concepts and context

Filling in the template

Putting activities and deliverables on a time-line

Establishing process steps

Assigning tasks and Deliverables to steps

Evaluating and verifying

Figure 9, a series of snapshots documenting different phases of the mapping session activities.



Second product iteration

The second step in developing the tool, was the organization of all obtained information. The main challenge in doing so lays in the established ways of working. Partners wanted to keep a high level of control over the execution of their projects.

“Part of our brand is our tailor-made advice, we don’t have any gimmicks so we can’t just fill in a standard process and call it a day”

Innoboost co-founder, 14/11/17, Innoboost office

Given the required experience of both current and future partners at Innoboost, it is not necessary to lead them through every interaction or to explain how to use a common tool. **More important is to establish clear boundaries and goals, to ensure that the right work is being done and a consistent result is produced.**

“They are only paying us for the short-term campaigns, we have given them a whole new brand identity.”

Innoboost partner during a product review, 04,12/17, Innoboost office

For this reason, the documentation looks separately at the execution of the process and the process of the expertise as a whole. At the same time the documentation tries to set clear deliverables to make sure that clients get consistently the same level of service.

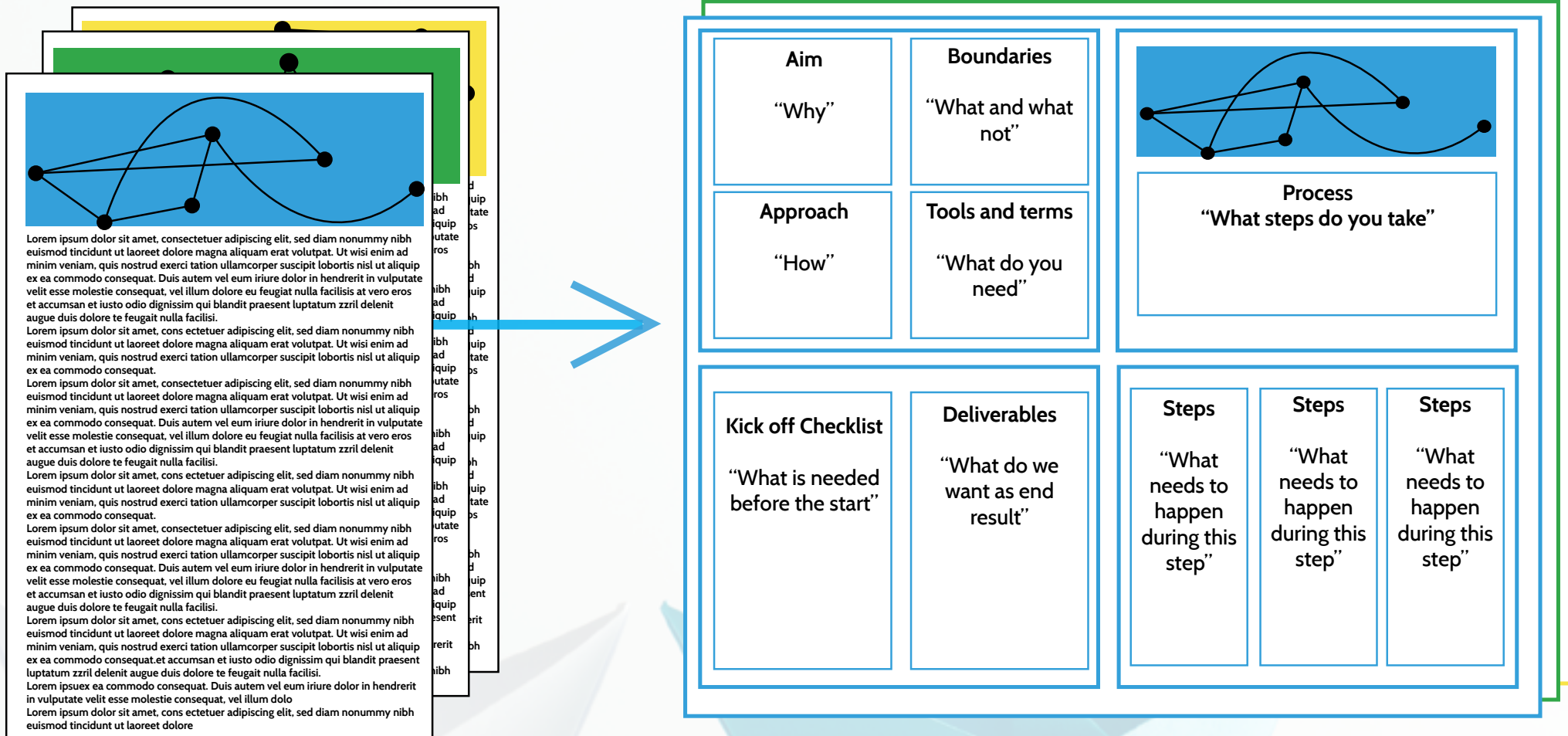


Figure 10 showing the differentiation of information process step



Onboarding

What is onboarding

The process of familiarizing new employees or coworkers with the way of working, both in the practical as well as the social sense, is called onboarding. Seeing that this project's aim is to be part of this process in the form of capturing and communicating the work methods and tools, we need to know how onboarding works and in which part of the process this project plays a part.

We start by looking at the whole process of onboarding and what it means. George B. Bradt & Mary Vonnegut describe it well in 'Onboarding: How to Get Your New Employees Up to Speed in Half the Time' (New Jersey 2009).

“Onboarding is the process of acquiring, accommodating, assimilating, and accelerating new team members, whether they come from outside or inside the organization. The prerequisite to successful onboarding is getting your organization aligned around the need and the role.”

The important terms here are: acquiring, accommodating, assimilating, and accelerating which represent the different steps of most onboarding processes:

Acquiring: finding the right person for both the function organization;

Accommodating: getting them settled in the offices and explaining who to ask what;

Assimilating: getting the new partner used to the companies' way of working, and

Accelerating: helping the new partner get better results faster.

In the onboarding process, we see both a social and a practical side, the communication of methods and tool is focused more on the practical of the later steps of the onboarding process. Specifically, the Assimilating and Accelerating steps of the onboarding are the focus of where this project can add value to the experience of the new Innoboost partners.

Why onboarding

Before getting too deep into the process of onboarding it is important why would we bother looking at the onboarding process, especially when the new employees are supposed to be experienced professionals. The simplest answer would be that new partners even with their experience still need to know how things work at this specific company. This would however be a large simplification; a better explanation would be that a good onboarding process increases employee satisfaction (A. Snel, 2006) and employee contribution (G.G. Harmon, 2012).

Two of the deciding factors for an effective onboarding for Innoboost would be (organizational) socialization and shaping expectations.

Shaping expectations

The process of shaping expectations though critical is rather simple in the case of a micro SME like Innoboost. The new partners are expected to be largely self-sufficient from the start. The practical challenge apart from communicating the way of working, lies in creating clear expectations regarding the product that is to be delivered to the customer and what quality and service is to be associated by these products.



(Organizational) socialization

Organizational socialization is, to put it simply, the social part of someone becoming an active part of an organization. Socialization has been found to have large effects on the work and experience of new employees, including higher job satisfaction, a stronger commitment to the team, a higher turnover rate and a better general performance.

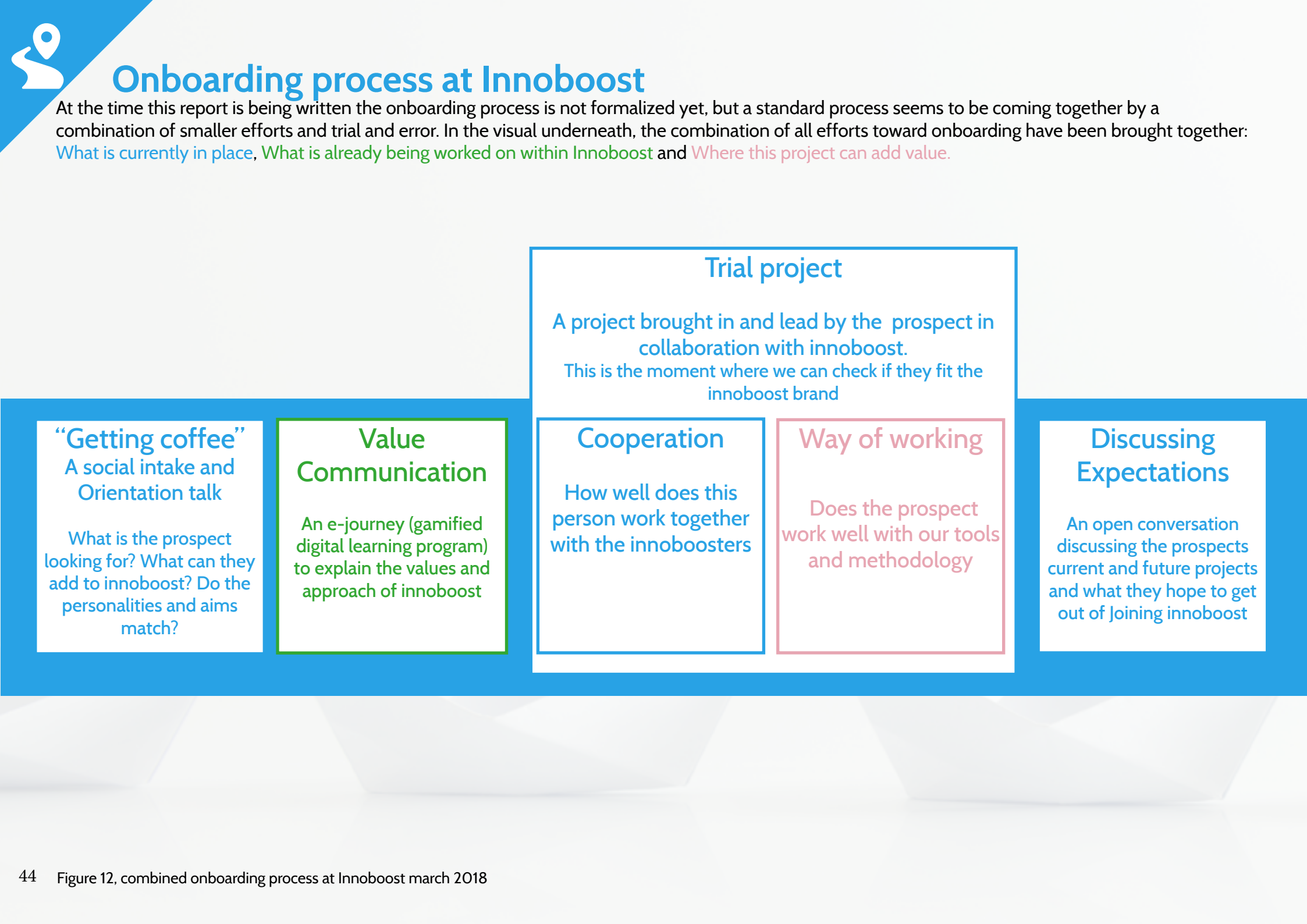
According to Bauer and Erdogan (2011), socialization requires 3 sets that need to match: the new employee characteristics, the new employee behaviors and organizational efforts. If these are fulfilled/match you have the right person for the right company.

After you have found the right person a period of adjustment occurs. Successful onboarding leads this period of adjustment into effective socialization. To make this period successful an organization needs to help provide the new hires/partners with 4 certainties: role clarity, self-efficacy, acceptance by organizational insiders and knowledge of organizational culture.

This has to be done in a range of different ways and especially in a small company like Innoboost it is very dependent on the persons and interactions. We can however make sure that the new partners have enough organizational context so that they know what is expected of them and how to do it. So in the context of Bauer and Erdogan's adjustment period of socialization we can design for role clarity and self-efficacy; all interaction can be focused on acceptance by organizational insiders and knowledge of organizational culture.



Figure 11, a summary process model of socialization (Bauer & Erdogan, 2011)





Internal project

A first project done under the innoboost brand,
Often similar to or a continuation of the outside project.
Being done under the innoboost name

Becoming a Member

The practical information and necessities for joining the innoboost team, including contracts, facilities and getting to know the support staff.

Self-reliance

Having become a member it is expected that you can work independently and find your own way of working.

Using the innoboost method

Being done under the innoboost name this project requires the new member to actively use the innoboost methods and tools and produce the same quality results

Exchanging Experience

With each member having their own expertise and projects it is important that all members share their experience to understand the whole scope of work at innoboost

Expanding the Innoboost offer

Having become a member it is expected that you can work independently and find your own way of working.



Use and priorities

Over the course of the project a lot of general and particular needs and ways of working have been found that have shaped the decision-making process and are determining factors in the success or failure of the product and its adaptation. In this chapter, we discuss the dominant moments of use for a prospect member during the process of onboarding and becoming a contributing member of the company.

Trial project:

At the start of the trial project the prospect member has little more knowledge of the Innoboost way of working than a basic understanding of Innoboost values and some personal context. During the trial project the prospect member has to take the lead on the project while at the same trying to combine his /her own way of working with that of their Innoboost counterparts. While trying to process this new information and deal with all the variables, it becomes easy to lose sight of the true goal of the project, namely getting to know the existing member(s) to confirm whether the cooperation would be a good fit.

The main need of the prospect partner at this time is to get a quick overview of the Innoboost way of working, to locate large differences in approach, and to make it easier to combine ways of working so the prospect can focus more on getting to know the Innoboost partners.

Because it is an external project there is no need to create a final product that fits the Innoboost product line. It should also be remembered that the prospect member has not yet made any major commitment so we don't wish to give away all of Innoboost's trade knowledge yet.

Product Requirements;

- To provide an overview of the processes and tools used by Innoboost and the main steps related to it;
- To provide reference of how similar projects are done at Innoboost;
- To be able to provide different amounts of information and context depending on the user.



First Innoboost project

The first project a new partner does, is arguably the most challenging part of the onboarding process: at this point he is expected to be independent while providing a service that fits with the Innoboost standard and expectations.

During this first project, he needs a lot more detailed information while not wanting to go and ask around for every detail. Something that currently makes asking for the right answer more difficult is the fact that not all Innoboost partners have the same level of experience with all expertises as well as the language barriers that have developed due to working in different companies with different terminologies.

Because new partners still have limited context they need not only an explanation of what to do but also a clear description of what that part of the service means.

Especially when it comes to very recognizable parts of the service such as the intake or the use of certain tools it is important that the new Innoboost partner knows directly how to apply these correctly.

Product requirements:

- The tool needs to be understandable and applicable with minimal help;
- The tool needs to give clear indication who is the most knowledgeable person to ask for every expertise;
- The intake and other Innoboost specific ways of working need to be documented in such a way that it becomes directly applicable.
- The tool needs to explain an element of the underlying principles of the service.

Exchanging expertise

At the end of the onboarding process and from that point forwards the partners need to incorporate their experience and new knowledge to improve the company as a whole.

To do this effectively they need to be able to have a clear way to communicate what is happening and what they are working on. This needs to happen in a way that makes it quickly understandable for new partners and comparable to other projects.

If this does not happen effectively no useful discussion on the general way of working can be held.

Product requirements:

- Clear boundary descriptions for different expertises or services;
- A clear base for a common terminology;
- A level of abstraction that makes it possible to compare projects of very different natures on a level of approach and process.





Third product iteration

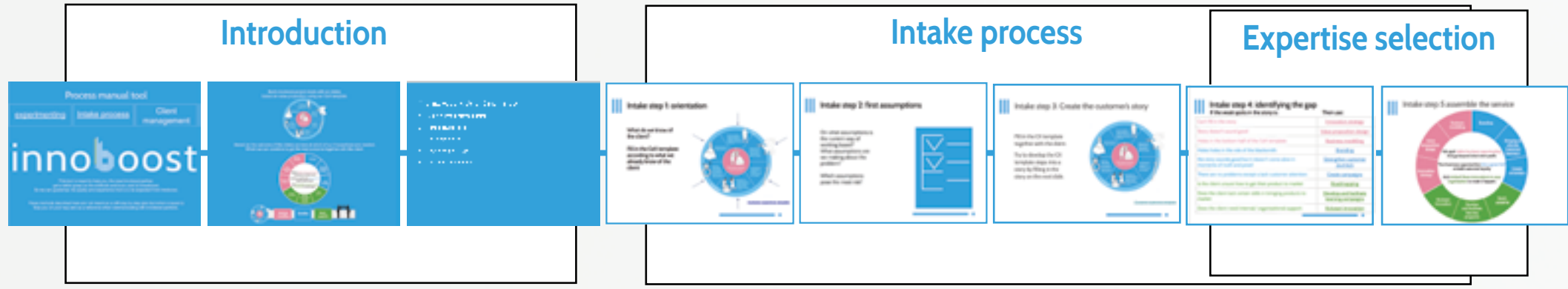
The third step in developing the tool is to make the description of how to use each expertise part of one narrative.

Important here is to realize who the target audience is.

In this case, it is both new (prospective) members figuring out what Innoboost is, as well as established members working with expertises they are less familiar with and even members with new insights or tools for an expertise.

To make it possible for the members to add new knowledge or even a new expertise, the familiar and commonly used slides program in Google drive was used as the starting point of the tool.

Using slides allows for linking to other documents on the drive making it possible to have a single point where all required tools and templates can be accessed from. This leads to the establishment of the expertise overview pages where established partners can quickly find or add all necessary information.



Uses:

Illustrative tool while “getting coffee”

Understanding the basic approach and methods used by innoboost



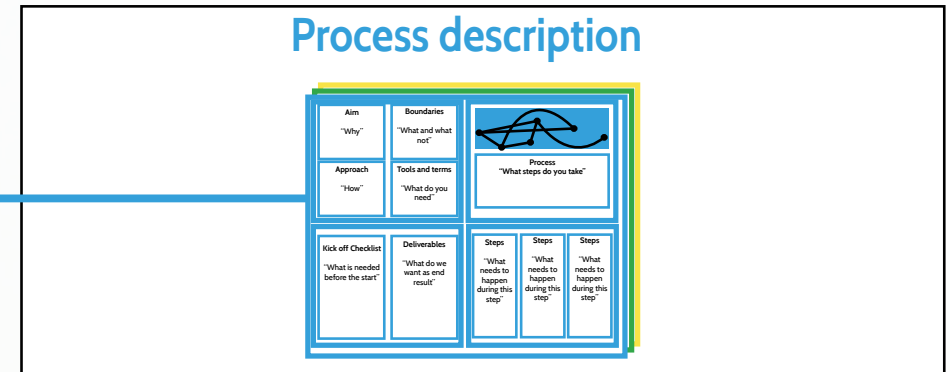
For the newer members who might not be sure which expertise they need, the intake process has been added, describing in 5 steps the use and meaning of the CX-template and how that translates to which expertise to use.

For people completely new to Innoboost or trying out the tool for the first time, an introduction has been added explaining the organization of the expertises as well as the use and aim of the tool.

These different elements have been linked together into one story that should make the use easy and understandable during any part of the onboarding process.

“The CX template is at the core of everything we do, if the CX is not clear then the project won't be effective either.”

Innoboost co-founder, 16,01,18 Innoboost office



Leading a new innoboost project

Joining/helping on an Innoboost project

Discussing, adding or revising knowlege and expertise



Testing and practical application

During the design process the product went through multiple moments of testing and trial, firstly by practical application in the form of projects as part of Innoboost and secondly by user testing. In this chapter, we discuss what we learned and how.

First case: value proposition and experimenting September - October 2017

At the time of the first customer case, there was little in the form of a testable tool, this case was however a strong indicator for what should be covered in the tool and how it should be used.

The first case was a smaller case for a startup company that requested a value proposition with experimenting.

During this project, I had the chance to observe customer management, the way experimenting was set up and done up as well as to which degree projects are done by a set way of working and how much was improvisation.

Apart from observation I was also tasked with documenting and explaining the result from the experiment, this allowed me to verify the acquired understanding of customer management and the deliverable requirements.

Conclusions

- Partners use a standardized order of client meetings, sessions and deliverables, but the execution of these is customized and to a certain degree improvised.

- Customer management is based on personal relations with each individual client.
- There are standard moments and content for deliverables but the format and presentation depend on the customer.

Second case: internal communication, branding and bringing to life the customer journey October 2017

The second case was one of the first large cooperation cases within Innoboost with all partners being involved. The case covered value proposition, branding, bringing to life customer journeys and creating campaigns. This case offered the possibility to observe role and task distribution as well as transition between expertises.

During the project, I observed how task descriptions differed in level of specificity ranging from general tasks as 'take responsibility for the next two customer sessions' to specific tasks as to correct certain word choices in a presentation.

Based on this observation I set out to test the correct level of detail in task descriptions by documenting and rewriting the whole backlog of tasks into one level of specificity and correcting until all partners understood and were able to execute all tasks without needing to verify or correct for miscommunication.

Conclusions

- Tasks are best communicated in a result orientated manner without dictating form.
- Most partners have a tendency to involve

themselves in all parts of a project and need some encouragement before following a division of tasks.

- Especially in large projects there is a need for clear borders between offers: what is and isn't part of the job.

Test: concept test using the expertises

When wanting to apply the division in processes based on expertise, it was necessary to test if this approach would fit and be adopted by its future users. To test this, an hour-long test session was held where current partners were shortly briefed about this approach and the underlying way of thinking, after which they were asked to write out offers and a general planning for imaginary or previous projects. These descriptions then were compared to pre-written descriptions following the intended approach.

Conclusions

- The approach works and fits with the way of working of the users.
- Partners need to be challenged to set defined deliverables.



Test: three step feedback

When gathering the content for the guide tool, a three-step verification method was used to ensure that all content was correct. First a mapping session was held where everybody skilled in using this expertise was involved (when necessary by means of multiple sessions). During these sessions interpretations of previous cases were compared to the experience of the participants, and input was compared and summarized back to them.

As the second step a lead expert was appointed for each expertise who in the future would be assigned the responsibility of maintaining the quality of the expertise and communicating it to future partners.

After a first draft of the expertise description was developed, it was given to the lead expert who reviewed the draft and gave feedback during an active feedback session.

As the third and final step the finished expertise description was given to two partners: one control partner who only has to step in when noticing any large discrepancies with his own experience, and the lead expert who had to give active conformation that he considered the whole description correct.

Conclusions

In some cases, large differences in the definition of expertises and services became apparent, some mediation and discussion was necessary.

Third case: intake, testing and client management November 2017- February 2018

The third case offered the opportunity to actively test the tool and the understanding gained, by taking lead on a case for a new client while nominally overseen by one Innoboost partner[C] to verify quality. In this case, I had the chance to test and verify the content of the intake, value proposition design, experimenting and innovation strategy. Next to these more specific elements, I also had the opportunity to test the approach to client management and value delivery, which are not separate chapters in the tool but serve as cornerstones to each expertise.

Conclusions

- This case allowed for the verification and improvement of some specific chapters and of the tool as a whole.
- This case verified and improved the tone and focus of the tool content, to make it best applicable to the style and quality of the Innoboost brand.

Test: new partner experience

A partner who recently joined Innoboost was purposefully not involved in the development of the tool until this test. During this test, she was first interviewed about her experience with the onboarding process to verify assumptions made during the design process. Then she was given

the whole tool to test and respond too. First, she was asked to explore the tool and describe out loud what she saw and how she experienced it, secondly, she was asked to find specific information, and lastly, she was asked how she would apply the tool when starting a new project according to a theoretical scenario.

Conclusions

- Explanations about the goal of the tool and the intended use were found to be needed and have since been added.
- Most assumptions made about the onboarding process were confirmed.
- Additional challenges were found in the social side of onboarding, recommendations for the improvement of the socialization and internal discussion have been given to the company.
- For effective navigation, the user required some time to orient herself, it is recommended to give the user the tool in advance to allow for familiarization
- The test subject was able to find all necessary information effectively and without large detours.
- The test subject was able to set up a single expertise assignment without any help.
- The test subject felt that the tool enabled her to cooperate better in larger projects.
- The test subject felt that she had a better starting point for asking for help and about other people's projects in general.
- The test subject said she would use the tool again.





Product

The final product resulting from this project is a digital instructional tool providing step by step instructions guiding new Innoboost employees and partners through setting up and executing projects according to the Innoboost standards. This chapter examines and elaborates on the aspects and functions of this tool.





Final product

The process manual tool is built around a presentation explaining the intake process that should be used at the start of every InnoBoost project, and links to detailed explanations the 9 expertises used within InnoBoost, as well as to all important tools and templates. The base document format used is a google drive slides presentation to make it easy for the partners to add materials, tools or new expertises when the company grows.

Start screen.

With a short explanation for whom and what this tool is, with direct links to the different topics of interest.

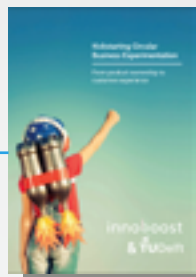


Introduction of intake.

An overview of how the intake process is set up and how it ties in with the larger projects.

Intake process step by step.

The intake process explained in steps simple enough to make it not much more than a fill in exercise. All tools mentioned are linked directly, and every expertise sends you directly to the page that summarizes all most important information to that page.



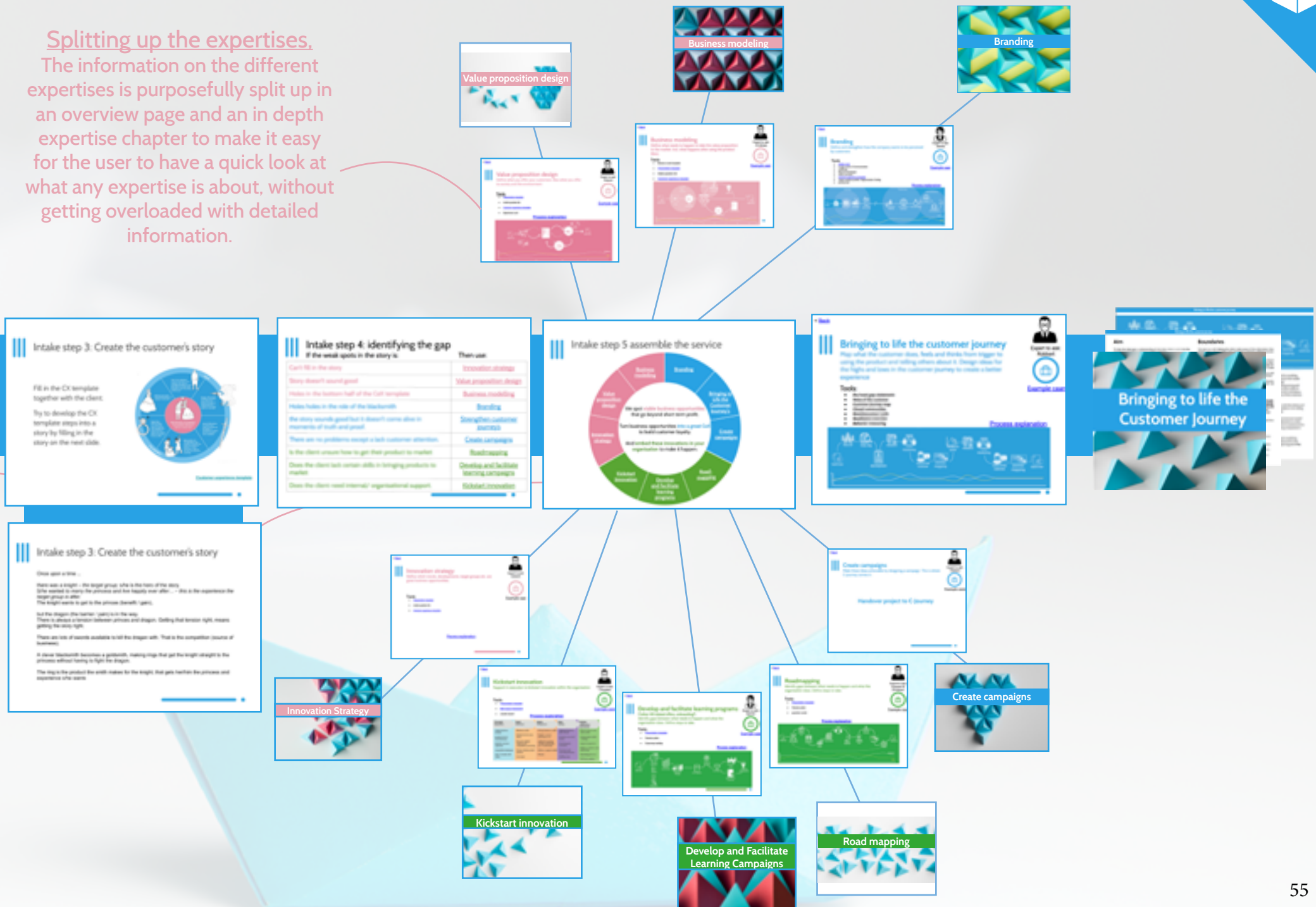
Experimenting page.

This page shortly explains the approach to experimenting and links to examples & other documentation on experimenting.



Splitting up the expertises.

The information on the different expertises is purposefully split up in an overview page and an in depth expertise chapter to make it easy for the user to have a quick look at what any expertise is about, without getting overloaded with detailed information.





Expertise cover page

Each of the expertises has a cover page that summarizes and links to the most important information regarding that specific expertise.*

*All practical information is confidential and thus made unreadable

Expertise description:

A short description of what the aim and main activity of the expertise is.

Tools.

A list of the tools and templates used in this expertise that link directly to their corresponding place on the drive.

Expert to ask

The 'expert to ask' is not only a last resort when completely stuck. It is actually encouraged to talk to the resident expert. Not only because practice never completely follows the theory but also because these experts like to talk about it.

Example cases.

Summaries of past successful cases are linked to the different expertises as example and discussion topic.

The screenshot shows a mobile app interface for an expertise titled "Bringing to life the customer journey". It includes a "Back" button, a description of the expertise, a list of tools, an "Expert to ask" section with a profile for Robbert, an "Example case" icon, and a "Process explanation" section with a process graphic and a line graph.

Bringing to life the customer journey
Map what the customer does, feels and thinks from trigger to using the product and telling others about it. Design ideas for the highs and lows in the customer journey to create a better experience

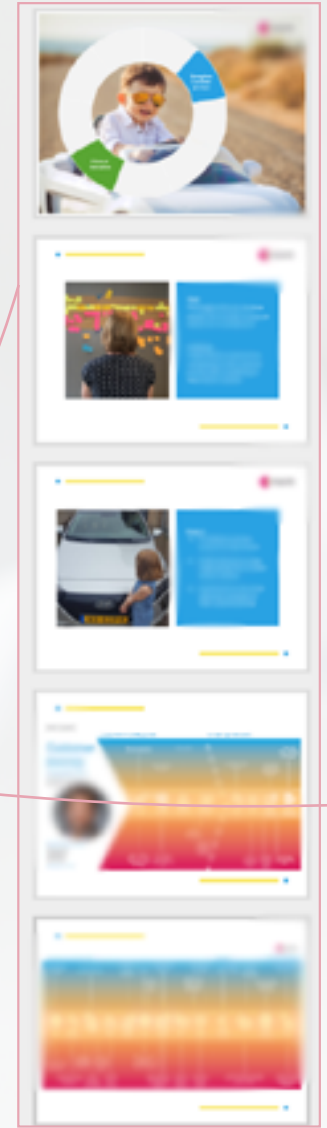
Tools:

- Do/need gap statements
- Maps of the customer
- Customer journey map
- Client communities
- Questionnaires/ cards
- Questionnaires
- Behavior measuring

Expert to ask: Robbert

Example case

Process explanation



Process graphic.

The process graphic is a visual representation of the steps that have to be taken to successfully apply the expertise.

The steps are accompanied by a graph showing the amount of effort each step takes for both the Innoboost team as well as for the clients.



Expertise chapters

Each of the expertises has been documented using the same format and layout as given here by the example of the **Bringing to life the Customer Journey** expertise.*

*All practical information is confidential and thus made unreadable.



Cover page.

This page is a conformation that you have the right expertise and makes it possible to carry around a printed version that is presentable and usable in the presence of clients and partners.



Expertise definition page

This page is meant to give a quick and clear overview and explanation of what this expertise is about.

Aim

The aim describes why the client might need this expertise and what is tried to be achieved. This might sound simple, but with Innoboost's tailored advice it is important to not only have a clear physical end result in mind but also a clear aim for what the experience and understanding should be.

Boundaries

What is and isn't included in this process and its resulting deliverables?

Driving to life the customer journey

<h4>Aim</h4> <p>To help the client gain a understanding of the their situation and the the... To help the client gain a understanding of the their situation and the the... To help the client gain a understanding of the their situation and the the...</p>	<h4>Boundaries</h4> <p>The aim is to help the client gain a understanding of the their situation and the the... The aim is to help the client gain a understanding of the their situation and the the... The aim is to help the client gain a understanding of the their situation and the the...</p>
<h4>Approach</h4> <p>The approach is to help the client gain a understanding of the their situation and the the... The approach is to help the client gain a understanding of the their situation and the the... The approach is to help the client gain a understanding of the their situation and the the...</p>	<h4>Tools and Terms</h4> <p>The tools and terms are to help the client gain a understanding of the their situation and the the... The tools and terms are to help the client gain a understanding of the their situation and the the... The tools and terms are to help the client gain a understanding of the their situation and the the...</p>

Approach,

How do we provide the Innoboost service and experience every step of the way? What are the most important activities and how do we approach and deal with our clients?

Tools and terms,

What templates, models and other tools are being used for this expertise? How and to what end are they used?

What terms, phrases and definitions are being used specifically in this expertise and what do they mean in this context?



Process explanation page

What are the steps to successfully apply this expertise both in a visual overview as well as in detailed text.



Process graphic.

The graphic is a visual representation of the steps that have to be taken to successfully apply the expertise.

The steps are accompanied by a graph showing the amount of effort each step takes for both the Innoboost team as well as for the clients.

Process explanation in text.

The process explanation provides you with a detailed explanation of the process you will go through when working through this expertise. The main goal of this text is to give a clear description of what can be expected and how different steps relate to each other.



Kick off and deliverables checklist.

These are the lists to check when starting or finishing a expertise, to make sure you didn't miss anything.

What is needed to start the project?

This checklist includes people, information, preparation, agreements or other expertises that have to be worked through before starting the project.

Bringing to life the customer journey	
Kick off checklist	Deliverables
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A clear understanding of the motivation and need of the client• Has the clients signed off on the way of working• Data dump (including)<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Customer knowledge- Existing customer journeys	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visualized customer journey• Validated customer journey• Advice on how to make use of the data• A best practice on next steps on how to activate the customer

What do we leave the client with?

The deliverables. Everything the client needs to implement our advice. Do they need a summary or something to explain everything to their colleagues?



Step by step explanation

The breakdown of every step of the process into all separate components necessary to deliver on the expertise without any problem.

Hand over

Every project begins and ends with a hand over. It is not necessarily a physical transfer or even a change of people on the team, but it is the start of a new part of the project, meaning that all prior deliverables need to be done and the necessary resources need to be gathered.

Goal

What is the goal of this step, why does it need to be done, and what should be the impact?

Driving to life the customer journey		
 Hand over	 Kick off	 Data Dig
Goal: a transfer step at the start of the challenge or a transfer challenge, including a challenge.	Goal: bring together all departments and develop a common goal and plan.	Goal: going through all available information to find the most relevant information for the department and the understanding of the client.
Definition of done: when all necessary information is gathered and all parties concerned know what they have to do.	Definition of done: when all relevant parties in company understand what the aim of the project is and what the importance of customer needs working is.	Definition of done: When we understand the client's experience as well as the customer group working is.
Tasks: Scrum master: define roles, keep track of the progress and milestones, allocate resources and manage to the team and manage the planning.	Tasks: Scrum master:	Tasks: Scrum master: organization of project team and setup work mapping, work.
Product owner: a point of contact with the product and the client, coordinating the kickoff with the team and client.	Product owner: a point of contact with the customer, get all stakeholders on the table and be in charge of the communication.	Product owner: become familiar with the problem, the product and the client.
Development team:	Development team:	Development team: find and process relevant information and bring it to the most important information, insights.
Tools: excel	Tools: excel	Tools:
Deliverables: kickoff	Deliverables:	Deliverables:

Tasks

The activities needed to be done by the members of the Innoboost team. The tasks are split up following a roll separation based on the scrum method. This to enable larger projects, where more people are working together or help out part of the way. The roles are:

Scrum master: focused on the effective running of the project.

Product owner: focused on the experience and needs of the client.

Development team: in charge of production and participates when needed in sessions.

On smaller projects one Innoboost partner might be responsible for most or all tasks.

Definition of done

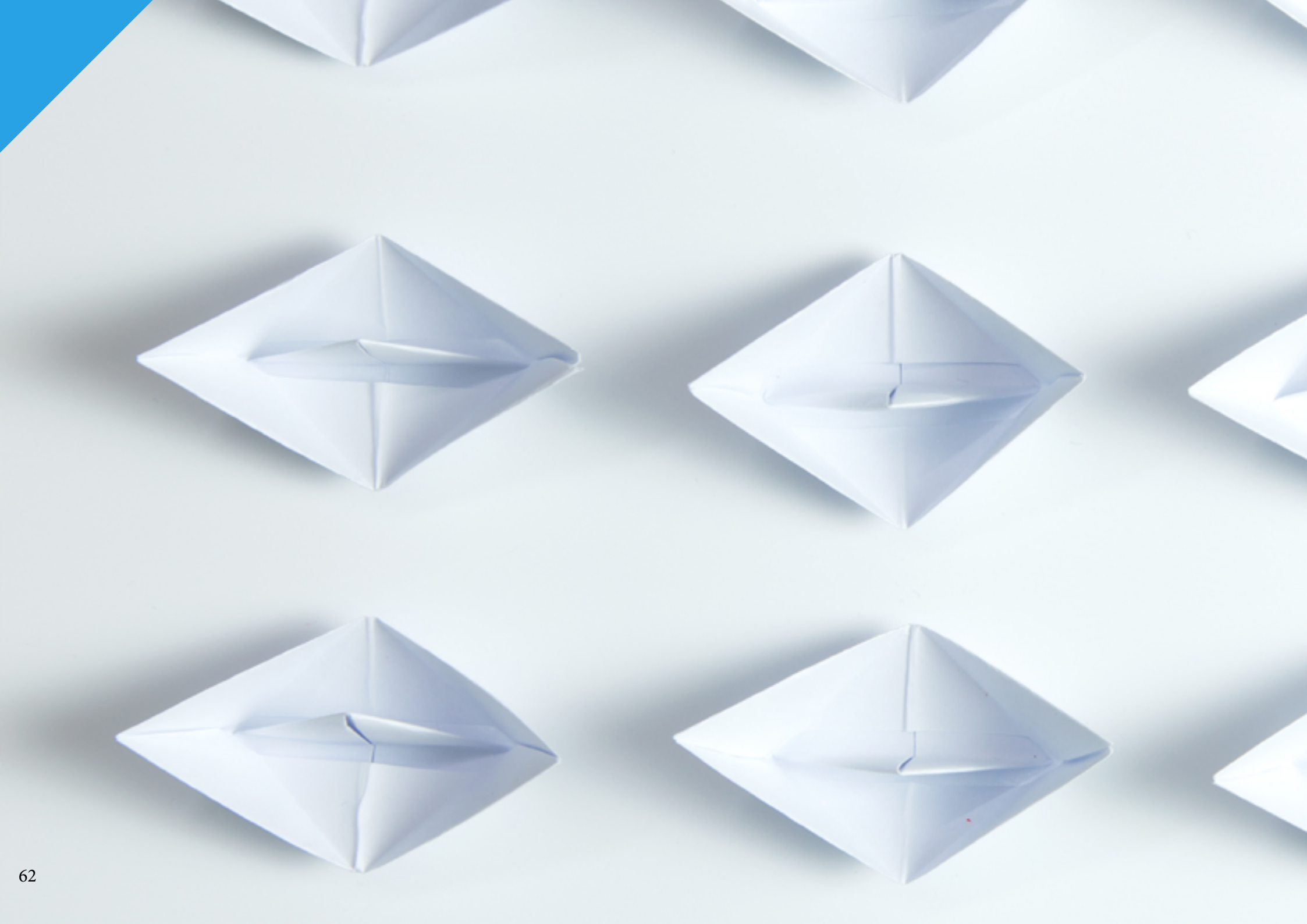
What are the practical requirements for this step that need to be met before moving on to the next?

Tools

What tools or templates are being used during this step?

Deliverables

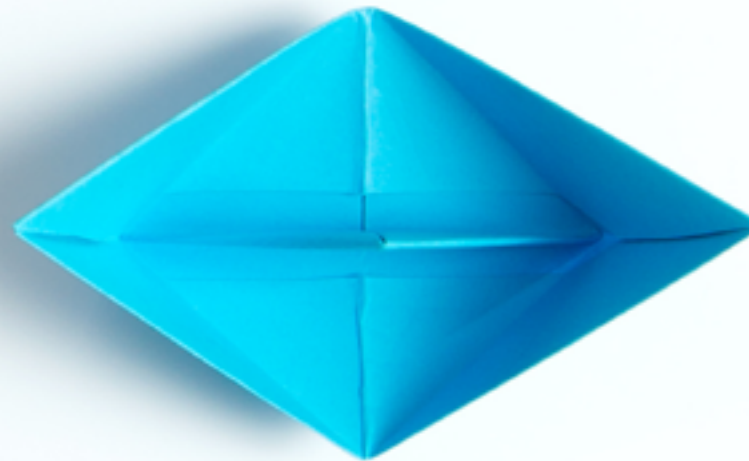
A deliverable is anything produced for or given to the client during this step, either as a preparation for next steps or as a way to close off part of the project





Evaluation

Over the course of the project, a lot of choices have been made. This chapter starts by reviewing the design brief that has been established at the start of the project (see appendix) after which this project and the resulting tool are placed in a broader context.





Product evaluation

Design goal

The design goal that we established at the beginning of this project was:

To map the processes and tools used at Innoboost using a facilitation and participation approach to develop a guidebook that makes it possible for an Innoboost consultant to pick up and carry out any of their services with relative ease and understanding.

As found when testing the product with a new partner;

The final product certainly does enable Innoboost consultants to understand and use the full range of processes and services thus fulfilling its intended goal.

The final result does not only do that, but also enables new partners to understand the process better and to apply it with a minimal amount of help.

Target audience:

Over the course of the design process we were able to verify and test with the originally defined target audience being:

New Innoboost employees and partners looking for guidance when starting projects in the Innoboost setting. This audience is expected to have a basic understanding of the type of consultancy work done at Innoboost.

On closer inspection of the current challenges within the company a secondary target audience has been added,

Namely the current partners that experience difficulties with effectively communicating about processes, especially when starting larger projects where multiple Innoboost partners are involved.

This secondary target group was added to help them during more complex discussions where they have trouble helping new partners due to differences in word choice and definitions.

“I think this is the correct setup but before you get too far, check the definitions of kick-start innovation and innovation strategy with C to make sure if we have the difference right”

Innoboost partner during a discussion on the distribution of processes 16/11/17. Innoboost office.

During the final product reveal on the 9th of April 2018 when asked if anybody had any points where they were unclear about, what the definition and aim of each of the expertises was or how they were supposed to apply them. The only answer after a few seconds of silence was *“No I think we got that pretty clear by now”*

Practical results:

At the start of the project the goal of 2 practical results was set:

1. A guidebook detailing the processes Innoboost uses and providing an overview of what tools are used when and by whom.
2. The addressing of existing misunderstandings and definition gray zones to foster a better understanding on a process level.

Both results have been met and exceeded.

Rather than just a guidebook, the final product developed is an interactive web based tool that links to all necessary elements of the project as well as providing a full and complete description of the process and the steps necessary to achieve it.

Existing misunderstandings have been addressed and areas of uncertainty have been not only been clarified, but also have been processed into two new expertises and a standard way for approaching large projects. Which are now part of the completed product.

“Do we then agree that using this method from now on, we don't only need value proposition design as an expertise but we also need to add value proposition delivery”

Innoboost partner during quarterly meeting 05/03/18, Innoboost office



Design limitations

The final product followed the boundaries of the project without being limited by it.

The product manages to avoid getting stuck in practical details and specific results, by combining the process level documentation with an increase in the ownership of skills. The product challenges the users (both new partners as well as established partners) to connect the theory with their own practical experiences. Practical examples can be found with the 'expert to ask' and 'example case' tabs on each of the expertise overview pages.

By providing the partners with a central location for linking together tools and templates the product still manages to effectively bring together all tools and templates without requiring significant time and effort spent on the processing and detailing of different tools.

Criteria of success/ failure

At the start of the project the following main criteria of success where established:

An understandable and comprehensive guidebook has been produced.

The final product still contains a guidebook but has been further developed into a practical Online tool for quicker and more direct use.

This guidebook covers all commonly used processes that new employees are expected to use.

This tool does cover all commonly used processes as well as some lesser-known and some alternatives.

The current employees feel they are better equipped to explain/communicate what they are working on and how that relates to other people and projects.

The current employees are actively improving on their common technical language, a large amount of existing misunderstandings and unclear areas have been cleared up and the current employees reported that they felt more confident that they knew what they were talking about.

Innoboost partner joking to Innoboost partner "maybe we should just start writing a complete dictionary" Turns to designer of this tool "No, but it does really help, and we are going to keep trying to use the same terms"

A new employee can pick up the guidebook and understand without added explanation what its use and benefit is.

Although some level of explanation is recommended, testing with a new partner did confirm that she could understand its use without any additional explanation.

The guidebook provides a helpful way of understanding the complexities of the processes used at Innoboost.

All current members of Innoboost expressed that they thought the product was helpful.

Some partners confessed to have learned about their own expertise and way of working during the development of the tool.

The tool has already been used to introduce potential new members to the Innoboost way of working.

"I showed your tool to [prospect member] she really liked it. She said that we have a better handle on what we are doing than most companies this size"

Innoboost partner during product presentation 09/04/18 Innoboost office

13/03/18, Innoboost office



Discussion

On a whole, the process of this project is a strong example of designing with and for, a very specific and small audience. Because the final product will only be used within Innoboost, all known future users were already involved in the commissioning and development of the tool.

This meant that no independent user research or testing could be done. The effects of this were increased by both the fact that this same group of people was also the source of most product content and the fact that almost all aspects of the product fell under company confidentiality.

This resulted in a project heavily based on small, frequent iterations and design choices based on a small set of very particular needs and priorities.

One large influence on the final effectiveness and quality of the final product, is the users' involvement with and ownership of, the product. Over the course of this project large efforts went into the creating of awareness and ownership of the product.

In a company as small and non-hierarchical as Innoboost, the effect of two people not supporting the product, would completely undermine the product.

To promote user involvement and ownership, compromises in format and development speed have been made. Compared to possibilities such as stand-alone computer programs or digital platforms this solution might appear simplistic, but the trade-in of users actually keeping the tool up to date makes it far more valuable.

This project can be of great value as inspiration and reference for other similar projects, but neither the process nor the final product can be successfully replicated or implemented in any other context due to the very specific context this project was developed in.



Product recommendations

The current final product, is meant to be added too and edited, to some extend throughout its use. These changes are however not supposed to alter the overall shape or function of the tool. It is recommended to keep the tool the same in shape and for at least the coming 2 to 4 years. (The current estimate of time in which the company will remain largely the same.*) After this period, a reassessment of user's and user needs would be necessary.

There are two areas of possible improvement that have been left out of the scope of this project, which when executed effectively would be highly valuable. These are:

The development of standardized of tools and templates.

The streamlining of communication and project organization.

The development of standardized of tools and templates.

Currently most tools used at Innoboost are those collected over the course of the respective partner's careers.

This makes that apart from the tools central to the Innoboost way of working, there is not much of a consistent look and feel nor a completely natural transition between different tools.

This means that the next big step in the development of Innoboost as a cohesive brand would be a complete overhaul and redesign of the content of their tool box. Including:

- Redesigning all tools in the style of Innoboost.
- Templates for the execution of whole an expertise instead of a series of separate tools.
- Standardization of presentations and deliverables

The streamlining of communication and project organization.

Currently most projects are still run by a single partner who directly communicates with and involves, other partners where and when needed. If Innoboost continues to grow, a point will be reached where this informal style of organization will not work anymore.

It is recommended to start introducing more structured communication methods as part of the onboarding. This should over time in combination with the in this project introduced way of splitting projects into expertises, grow with the company into a completely new way of organizing and communicating about projects.

*Estimate based on micro SME development trends, long term Innoboost planning and current rate of change within Innoboost



Company recommendations

Seeing that this project was so closely involved with the way of working an organization, I As a designer wish to leave some recommendations for the company and the people in it to ensure the full potential of this project is utilized.

First, I would like to pose the question to the current Innoboost partners as to in what extend they wish to become one single brand over being independent contractors.

Over the course of the project it became noticeable that some of the partners had broader expectations for building the Innoboost brand. All partners consider themselves still to some extend independent but this varies between partners, thus before getting too far down the line, it should be discussed what it will mean to be part of Innoboost.

Secondly, I would advise the Innoboost partners to challenge each other to consistently keep a constant level of specificity and clarity in the terminology used throughout the projects. With a constant increase in new members there will also be a constant increase in new terminology, risking to undo the efforts to establish a commonly understood set of definitions and terminology.

Consider a monthly update presentation, not discussing specific progress in parts of cases but an overall status update to make sure that all partners know what type of projects are being done. This can create opportunities for unexpected help and cooperation's within the company.

When discussing progress, make a distinction between general processes that apply to all, and specific examples. A common problem found when mapping the working methods was that example cases where used as reference for other projects with different starting points. Resulting in unexpected timeliness.

When starting larger projects write out the role description and process planning in advance according to the guide tool. Reflect at the end of the project on the differences to see if over time improvements can be found.



Conclusion

By using an iterative design thinking approach with a focus on short cycles of collaboration improvement and evaluation we managed to develop the first complete overview of methods and tools for this company.

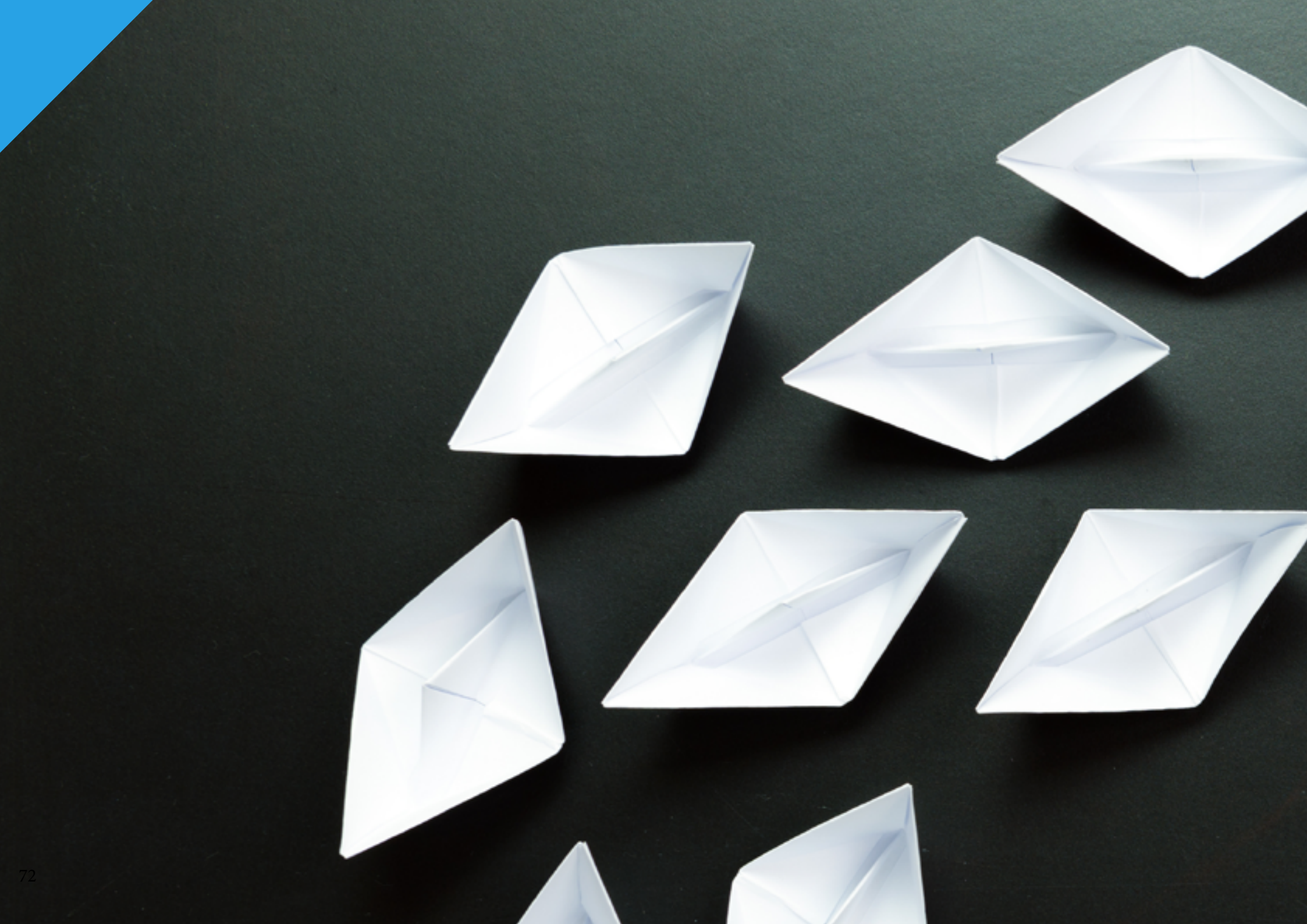
Although the project centered on the design of the final tool, the lasting impact is more dependent on the accompanying shift in way of working and way of communicating in the company. At the time of unveiling the final product, all employees at the company took ownership of the shared knowledge and approach, a healthy level of discussion was had and the partners were open and receptive to points of improvement.

The hope is that the people at the company keep both using, updating and adding to the product to ensure that it keeps representing the actual way of working.

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The image features four square paper boats on a dark grey background. One boat is a vibrant cyan color, while the other three are white. The boats are arranged in a loose cluster, with the cyan one being the largest and most prominent. The lighting creates soft shadows, highlighting the three-dimensional structure of the boats.

Appendix

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About Innoboost

At Innoboost we think big, but act small. To sprint towards a great customer experience, our innovation cooperative creates go, stop and pivot moments to effectively learn what to do next. We focus on the biggest risk and only test what needs to be tested, learn by testing actions of customers instead of believing their words and make our clients prepared to pivot.

Why we need you?

Our members all bring in different specialities from branding, to business modeling, to improving customer journeys to make customers talk about brands and their products. We have combined these expertises in six steps in which we think-do-learn through experiments. Now we are developing the projects and experiments for each case individually, but as we are growing we want to standardize this process. Moreover we see that doing experiments is difficult for some of our clients, because of their internal culture in which they are not familiar with doing experiments. Therefore we are looking for a Strategic Product Designer who loves to design processes. Some of the questions you can help us with:

- What standardized process do we go through in each step?
- Which experiment suits which moment through which channel?
- What are safe boundaries for our clients to experiment in?
- Which questions should our members ask to our clients to develop a good experiment?
- How can we build in checks on people, planet and profit which can be executed by our members?

Of course, you need to test the process you've developed with our clients. After all, the proof of the pudding is in the eating. The cherry on the pudding: a visualised scalable process that can be used by our members.

Who are we looking for?

You love to design and visualise processes. You are not afraid to test ideas and can work with different opinions. But most of all you always think from a customer perspective and have a drive to leave people and planet better than you found them. Preferably you can start in September.

Sounds great? Here's what we can offer you

Of course we will discuss travel expenses to our location at Amsterdam Noord and a fair compensational fee. We have a fun team of ten people with different backgrounds from which you can learn a lot.

Do you dare to experiment with us?

Call Robbert Cornelissen

+316 270 666 01

cornelissen@innoboost.nl

Assignment Brief

Design brief

Design goal:

To map the processes and tools used at Innoboost using a facilitation and participation approach to develop a guidebook that makes it possible for an innoboost consultant to pick up and carry out any of their services with relative ease and understanding.

Target audience:

New Innoboost employees and partners looking for guidance when starting projects in the innoboost setting. This audience is expected to have a basic understanding of the type of consultancy work done at Innoboost.

Practical results:

A guidebook detailing the processes innoboost and providing an overview of what tools are used when and who.

The addressing of existing misunderstandings and definition gray zones to further a better understanding on a process level

Boundaries

This project and its outcomes are focused on process level. Details concerning exact actions such as ,what to say, write or how the final 'product' should look, are not part of the final result. This in part because it could interfere with the readability and applicability of the guidebook, but for the larger part because the target audience consists of professionals that have the knowledge and experience to make their own considerations and decisions regarding the most effective project execution.

The mapping includes all common processes and services, all steps through these processes including the inventory and listing of deliverables and tools*. This does not include developing the tools or providing detailed application explanations. This due to the large number of tools in the arsenal of innoboost team as well as the flexible nature by which they are employed.

*(Tools refers to templates, models, visual aids, research aides and others)

Criteria of success/ failure

This project can be called a success when:

A understandable and comprehensive guidebook has been produced.

This guidebook covers all commonly used processes that new employees are expected to use.

The current employees feel they are better equipped to explain/communicate what they are working on and how that relates to other people and projects.

A new employee can pick up the guidebook and understand without added explanation what its use is and what benefit of it is.

The guidebook provides a helpful way of understanding the complexities of the processes used at innoboost.

Full list of design criteria

Design criteria

- **Format**
 - The format must look professional;
 - The format must be something that the users are familiar with;
 - The format must be quick and easy to use;
 - The user should be able to find the relevant detail within 30 seconds.
- **Content**
 - Information on how things work in the office is not required;
 - Information on general consulting skills is not required;
 - Content should focus on the features that differentiate Innoboost from competitors;
 - Clear boundaries between different processes need to be established;
- Details regarding deliverables and the difference between phases need to be clear and easy to find;
- Explanation regarding way of working and how things relate to each other is required.
- **Goal**
 - To provide an overview of the processes and tools used by Innoboost and the main steps related to it;
 - To provide reference of how similar projects are done in Innoboost;
 - To be able to provide different amounts of information and context depending on the use;
- **Use**
 - The tool needs to be understandable and applicable with minimal help;
 - The tool needs to give clear indication who the most knowledgeable person to ask is for every expertise;
- The intake and other Innoboost specific ways of working need to be documented in such a way that it becomes directly applicable;
- The tool needs to explain an element of the underlying principles of the service;
- The tool needs to have clear boundaries descriptions for different expertises or services;
- The tool should be a clear base for a common terminology.
- The tool should have a level of abstraction that makes it possible to compare projects of very different natures on a level of approach and process.

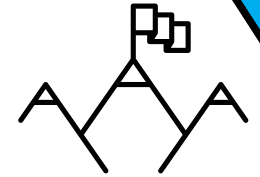
Complete final product

Redacted

For access to final product please contact the Innoboost office to request access to information

Aim:

Mapping session template



In:

Tool:

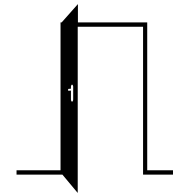


Out:

Test:



Go:



Experience:

Target group user test documentation

<p>User test outcome. Validation onboarding process assumptions and user test tool. 29/03/2018</p>	<p>Feedback interview 20 min Open-ended interview on the experience of starting with Innoboost</p>	<p>Still figuring out what Innoboost really is. Is still looking for what extra value she is getting out of being a part of Innoboost.</p>
<p>Duration 2 hours</p>	<p>What is your background? Background in Human resources and innovation. Been working as an independent contractor for the better part of 5 years. Has done a lot of recruitment and branding projects.</p>	<p>What do you think is expected of you at Innoboost? Expects to be used on her expertises and strong points. Has not worked closely anybody besides [R] Is not completely sure of the complete scope of the Innoboost projects.</p>
<p>Location Conference room 2 Innoboost office</p>	<p>Did designed large onboarding process for [large electronics brand multinational]</p>	<p>Has over the course of a couple of long conversations build a general understanding of what other partners do, what their strengths are. But has no idea of how that could practically be applied.</p>
<p>Set up [S] has been purposefully left out of this project and knows little more than the general goal of the project as a whole. 2 hours have been reserved in to [S] schedule for some weeks in advance, and conference room 2 has been booked. After having found that recording meetings makes several partners nonconvertible and too selective with their answers, the choice has been made to document this meeting only on paper.</p>	<p>How did you end up at Innoboost? Knew of [N] and [R] through mutual clients. Worked with C-journey while working an interim job at [P]. Shared interests and worked well together with [R]. At the end of collaboration on project for [P], [R] asked to help on another project. Got to know and get along with people from Innoboost. Was asked to join Innoboost. Major reasons for joining where facilities, network and social.</p>	<p>How much do you feel you have become a part of Innoboost? Is still doing one interim project so only at Innoboost 2 day's in the week. Is still in the process of discovering/getting to know the other Innoboost partners. Not yet completely sure on what arrangements and agreements are in place in the company and how to make use of that. Does not know what differentiates an Innoboost project other than experience. Knows of but is not familiar with CX template and other tools central to Innoboost way of working. Has limited insight into what other partners are working on.</p>
<p>Planning Explanation context and goal 10 min</p>	<p>What do you expect of Innoboost? Not completely sure. Major reasons for joining where facilities, network and social.</p>	
<p>Open-ended interview on the experience of starting with Innoboost 30 min Exploration of tool (thinking out loud)30 min Application of tool 30 min</p>		

Exploration of tool (thinking out loud)

Setup:

New partner [S] is given the tool* with the minimal possible explanation, and asked to think out loud and describe what she notices and what choices she is making.

*At the time of this test, the tool is in working condition, not all expertises are added yet, new details and explanation have been added after and due to this test. No major changes in navigation or setup have been made.

Given explanation at start:

This project is meant to capture and summarize the knowledge present in this company to make it easier for new members such as you to get up to speed.

New partners actions and reactions

Given the tool on interviewer's laptop.

Pays close attention to every detail of first page.

Tries going to the next slides,

Goes quickly through first couple of slides

Goes back to first slide.

"I like the clean look of it"

Clicks on the experimenting box

Reads the whole experimenting page in detail

Clicks on the linked articles.

Starts reading the articles carefully

After a couple of minutes the researcher interjects:

[R]: "so what do you think the function of this tool is?"

[S] "a sort of repository of information, something that you can use as a kind of reference book"

[R]: "yes that is one function, another is to explain how projects are set up by taking you through the intake process. For this test it would be handy if you would have a look at the intake process as well."

After a few seconds of looking for the right tap, [S] went back to the starting page and clicked on the intake process box.

Read through the whole intake process.

Went back to read the small text in step 3 (text has since been given it's own page).

Note add more explanation about the aim of the intake process (done)

Note: add a link to navigation on each of the intake screens (done)

When shown to the expertise wheel, she went for her own expertise, develop and facilitate learning campaigns, first.

Given that [S] was kept out of the project, she was not yet been asked for input on her expertise meaning that develop and facilitate learning campaigns was still in beta form.

Tried another expertise

Found link to example cases and complete explanation without trouble

Note: add a function that shows who to ask (done)

Read the aim, boundaries, approach and tools and terms

Studied the visual

Looked over the rest of the expertise chapter.

[S] took special note of the level of detail into which the process was worked out

Made a couple of positive remarks

Asked a few detailed questions on the process for that expertise

When [S] started to discuss the processes in too much detail, the next part of the test was started.

Application of tool

Setup:

The new partner, gets a series hypothetical scenarios where she has to find the right answer using the tool.

1 example of past project

If you would write a plan for the [P] case based on the tool how would you go at it?

[S]: "well we did already know the department but we still do a intake, so I would start with doing the intake. ... Then first bringing to life the customer journey, followed by road mapping closing and finish with develop and facilitate learning campaigns."

[R]: "do you need to finish the whole expertise before going to the next?"

[S] "I think in theory yes, in practice there will be some things shortened or skipped and with planning there will always be some things happening in parallel or in the wrong order, but in general this is a good plan to start out with.

2 theoretical new case

Researcher has developed a theoretical case (client needs value proposition, business modeling and branding) [S] has to interview the participant and use the intake process to establish the what needs to be done.

After some short confusion at the beginning of the project [S] got started. It was noticeable that she still had a tendency to fall back on old habits but was willing to try and apply the method. Although she still had some difficulty using the CX template.

She did find the right challenges, and selected the right expertises to match.

3 stepping in during a project under way.

[R]: “Lets say a partner just got really sick and asks you to step in for a project they where running because the meeting couldn’t be moved. They where working on business modeling and just finished mapping the recourses, what tools might you need and what do you have to produce?”

[S] goes directly to business modeling, first looks at the visual in the overview page, starts giving an answer but stops herself and goes into the chapter and looks at the step by step description.

[S]: “we are doing ideation we need the business model cards and at the end of it the deliverable is a set of proposed changes to the business model that create more value for the client and their stakeholders”

Feedback interview

1. Do you understand what to do with the tool?

Yes I would like a little bit more introduction and I will have to look at it in more detail but it does make sense.

2. Do you understand how to do an intake? The theory I understand now yes, I would like to see how it is done in practice too before I would have to do it myself.

3. Do you understand how to use a CX template and a value proposition after using the tool? Better, I am not completely there yet, I have of

course used other methods and ways of working for some time. I would like to know a little bit more about the thinking behind it, maybe I should ask [E]

4. Do you have sufficient context to use the tool?

I think everything I need is there but I would like some user context before I have to use it.

5. Are you comfortable in using the tool?

Yes, it looks professional enough, It is easy to use. I wouldn’t use it step by step next to a client, but for preparation yes definitely.

6. To who are you going for help, when you are stuck?

To [R] I know him best so that is easy.

7. What difference would this tool make if you had gotten it from the start?

I think I would know better what too ask and where to start looking for things.

8. What kind of interaction or support do you feel you need to fully become a member?

I am still figuring out how I best fit into this company, this tool is a good start but we do also need more discussion and conversation about who Is doing what in the company.

9. What do you think your role is in the company?

I assume that my role is based on my strengths so I hope that there will be enough projects aimed at my skill set.

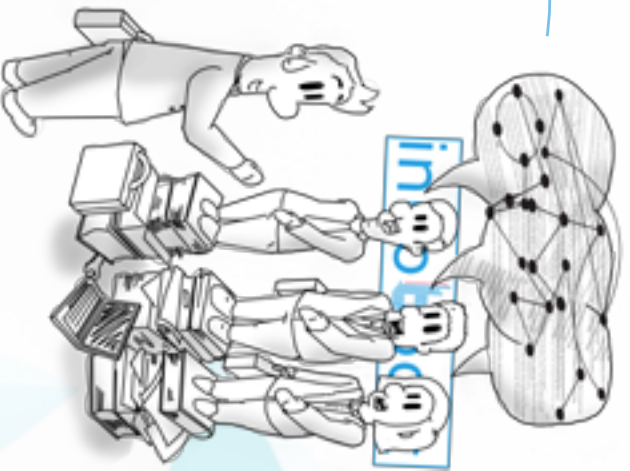
10. How do you approach a project?

Kind of dependent on each client and case, I don’t have a standard way of working. Up till now I have gotten a lot of projects with very specific requests, so then you just go with Wat they ask for.

11. Does the tool and the approach it proposes, make the customer need clearer?

Yes but again I feel like I would need to get more familiar to really get the full use out of it and it would depend on what kind of project it is, with my last project they just really knew what they wanted. But if you get a more general request, then I would definitely use it.

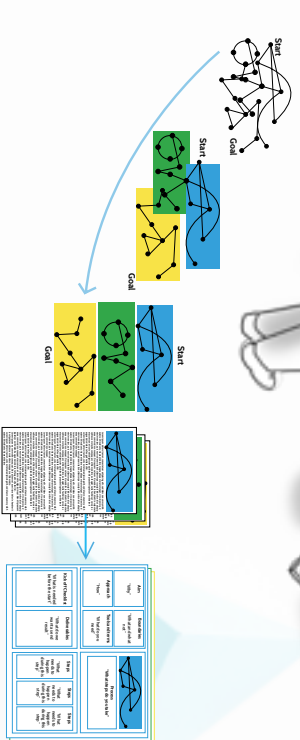
Improving the onboarding process of Innoboost, A design approach.



Innoboost is a small consultancy cooperation with four years experience in successfully helping other businesses innovate. In the next few years, Innoboost wants to grow from 6 to close to 30 people. Herein lies the challenge:
How does Innoboost communicate their way of working and experience to new team members?

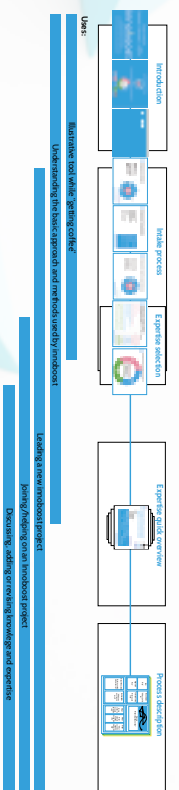
Every Innoboost member has about 20 years of experience in various companies. This does not only reflect in each member's way of working, but also in the language and tools they use. These small differences accumulate into a range of different ways of working.

Currently, most projects are run by a single person, and the shared experience makes up for miscommunication. But for the company to successfully grow, a common way of working needs to be established and communicated effectively to incoming members.



This project attempted to capture and structure the knowledge within the company. This is done by separating it into a series of expertises, such as branding and roadmapmapping.

By means of facilitation and co-creation, this knowledge is mapped and structured into step-by-step explanatory chapters. To help the incoming members using this knowledge effectively, it is put into a presentation format. This presentation explains how to use the intake process for selecting an expertise in a project.



The final product is an interactive tool that functions as a step-by-step guide while at the same time providing a quick overview of all processes and templates. The manner in which the tool is set up allows for interaction and changes by its users making it possible to grow along with the company.

A TU Delft graduation project by:

Reinier Bastiaanssen

Coach: dr. Rebecca Price

Chair: ir. Marc Tassoul

Company Coach: Christiaan Kraaijenhagen

Examples of mapping session*

Disclaimer, this is just a small sample of the complete effort of mapping and discussion done during the project and should only be used as indication of the daily activities during this project

Update on work in progress

Goal

3 approach directions and planning

- Poster with planning progression
- Considerations for shape and format

Second prototype introduction

Workshop concerning the combining and use of different expertises

January 31st 2018

Participants:

- [E]
- [S]
- [C]
- [R]

Aim:

Evaluating content of the product

Evaluating the use of the product

Understanding how projects are set up

Setup:

3 prepared example cases which require the combination of multiple expertises.

1 based on a known case ([O])

2 based on theoretical cases:

1 from a large corporate with a specific request

Time: 2,5 hours

Provided

- The guide book chapters
- Cover page for every chapter
- Cex templates,
- Expertise circle
- [O] case explanation

Phase 1 (1 hour)

Evaluation and explanation of how the [O] case has been handled:

- What was asked
- Where did they start
- In what order were the expertises applied
- How complete where the expertise used, what parts were skipped and what was
- Who did what
- What role distribution was used
- What was communicated to the client

Phase 2 (1 hour)

2 project requests are given by me the facilitator.
1)

Klein company 1 full-time employee 2 part-time workers.

Produce opvouwbare schalen van gerecycled hout.

Ask for more customers

Have een startup subsidie

Maken nog geen winst

- Weten hun toegevoegde waarde niet
- Hebben geen naamsbekendheid
- Distributie is ongeorganiseerd maar er is een kook outlet die geïnteresseerd is om het te gaan verkopen als de aantallen en prijzen goed zijn

- Het budget voor hulp schommelt en is per maand afhankelijk van andere kosten en uitgaven

2)

Groot multinational bedrijf waar we bekend mee zijn te werken

Wil een nieuwe venture opzetten. Ze hebben een aantal werknemers verzamelt uit verschillende afdelingen om het project te runnen.

Ze willen dat we helpen een roadmap op te zetten waarmee ze binnen 3 jaar succes hebben

- Skill level op gebied van branding en value proposition is wisselend en onvoldoende.
- Expensing en external help moeten in dit bedrijf ver van tevoren worden aangevraagd en goedgekeurd
- We hebben veel ervaring en contacten in dit bedrijf het is een belangrijke klant

Conclusions

Overall planning accepted

Evaluation of past case was more challenging than expected had to go into topic of approach and separation of tasks much more than expected before After a lot of discussion and trying of different methods the final agreed on method was the expertise based method using a step by step approach

mapping session of *kickstart innovation* planned on 17/11/17

Participants

[W]

[R]

[C] - absent

The standard preparation used in both previous sessions was used.

During the session both participants had trouble with defining the aim or even the basic activities of *kickstart innovation* when we took a step back to look at the different services Innoboost offers and what separates them there was no clear consensus on what kickstart innovation was and how it related especially to innovation strategy and develop and facilitate learning champagnes.

At this point 3 decisions were made:

1. We would for now abandon the effort of mapping *kickstart innovation* in favor of a session at a later date with [C] present
2. We would try to use a part of the time for this session to map the relation of the different services
3. We would formulate the assumptions made to about kickstart innovation to validate before the next session to make the difference in sessions clearer

When diving into the differences between services we first found that *innovation strategy* *kickstart innovation* and facilitate learning champagnes were significantly larger in duration than the

services and doing these 3 services might include doing a combination of the other 6 services as part of it.

After mapping the services on the axis of progression order we came to the conclusion that there was already a subconscious use of the other axis which was after discussion identified as the internal/ external impact axis. This also explained the difference between the named 3 services and the other 6 because the 3 were internally aimed rather than externally.

At the end of the session it was decided that i would process this information into a chapter of the guidebook including a finished visual of the ordering of the different services.

23/11/17 mapping session road-mapping, kickstart innovation and learning programs

Participants: [C]

Location: Café Dauphine Amsterdam amstel

Goal: the confirmation and addition to the workshop of 22/11/17 with [S] on the subject of road-mapping

Reparation: the material from the previous session.

On request of [C] was the meeting at café dauphine near station Amsterdam amstel, this to facilitate [C] quick transition between jobs. Effectively this meant that i had his undivided attention for the duration of our 2 hour meeting.

After shortly running through the results from the

22/11/17 session with [S]. I noted that [C] worked on a higher abstraction level than [S]. This didn't mean that they disagreed on the basic structure of working but [C] added steps in orientation and service as well as a focus in what Innoboost offers in comparison to competitors. [C] showed and linked some useful case examples that he was working on.

After we finished the road-mapping topic, we still had time and [S] stepped into the topic of *kickstart innovation* where i explained the problems that had come up in the kickstart innovation workshop 17/11/17, and the discussion on project distribution. After some initial confusion on what it is that we didn't understand, [C] quickly caught on when i showed him the diagram showing the different Innoboost services ordered by internal or external impact and point in innovation project that was developed resulting from the kickstart innovation workshop 17/11/17 session.

Kickstart innovation it turns out is supporting and focusing a venture style project. This is aimed at either startup's (in Innoboost's case exclusively circular startups) and larger companies that set up ventures in new markets. Which is done in a way ordered to an existing model. [C] ran me through an existing example and explained the need of the clients. However, when i pressed him on the taken steps i became clear that *kickstart innovation* was not a separate service that can be standardized but was instead more of a role Innoboost assumes the role of more experienced guide that helps focus and aim the project so that it makes the most use of the limited resources and funds.

