Designing a quality assurance solution for learning and development training

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Prowareness
Unleashing Potential

Designing a quality assurance solution for learning and development training

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Abstract

This thesis explores the development of a quality assurance solution specifically tailored for training programs. Prowareness is a consultancy firm specialised in agile transformations. A big part of their value proposition is training. Prowareness is growing and has a reputation for offering training to high end clients. However, in order to ensure a consistent client experience, they are in need of a quality assurance model.

The author uses a double diamond approach. First, relevant literature is studied to gain more insights on the topic of quality, intrinsic motivation, and agile. The data analysis in the discovery phase is done using the Straussian approach of the Grounded Theory Methodology and a questionnaire. The main insight from the analysis was that currently employees each have their own definition and approach to quality assurance of training. Also, the employees have the need for a standardised quality assurance model.

From the data analysis the author formulates a product goal that says: "The product goal is to provide a comprehensive description of the process to be followed before, during, and after conducting a training, along with its implementation. The aim is to ensure that every trainer follows the same process, creating a shared understanding and a standardised approach for quality assurance."

The content of the solution is developed with input gathered in several co-creation sessions with Prowareness employees. The author considers the employees as the experts of the content. Also, including the employees in the creation of the product, increases the chances of adoption and boosts intrinsic motivation. Based on the input and design criteria, the form of the final product is then chosen by the author.

The result is a live Handbook that employees can read to know exactly the steps that need to be taken before, during, and after a training. Since it is a live document, it can easily be updated in real time by the responsible person. The author also provides an implementation strategy that is needed for the roll-out of the Handbook within the company.
The author ends with recommendations for Prowareness regarding quality assurance.

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Introduction

In this chapter I familiarise the reader with my assignment. First, I will give some information about Prowareness. I mention their vision, value propositions, and clients. Then I present the assignment that I received from them. Here I explain the perceived problem, the scope that I want to focus on, and my role in this project. Also, I show my approach to taking on this assignment. Lastly, I explain the structure of the rest of the report.

Prowareness

The client of this project is Prowareness, a consulting firm specialised in agile transformations located in Delft. Their vision reads:

"Founded to make the Netherlands aware of a faster, more effective way of working and new working methods."

Next to Prowareness, DevOn and The Agile Cockpit are all subsidiaries of a parent company called Waada the Movement. Their purpose is to help companies grow with a vision that reads:

"Our vision is to make this world a better place, one step at a time. We believe that the world will be a better place if you realise your mission. It is our service to get you there."

These subsidiaries all share the same core values that in turn determine the company culture. First, they are customer centric. They regularly meet up with their customers and plan several customer events. Waada also stimulates innovation within its organisation. The best ones are presented on the quarterly Innovation Day. Further, regular reflections and check-ins make sure that they keep improving and stay on the top of their game. Next to that, another one is transparency. All announcements are publicly shared with all employees. Also teamwork is very important, with focus on respect and appreciation towards each other. Celebration is also very valued with regular champagne poppings. Another important value is personal growth. Self-development has the priority, with each employee a plan to keep track of their growth. Each employee is also provided with personal attention. This happens mostly in the form of bilateral meetings with their boss to discuss its well-being and performance. Feedback is another value. Once a quarter each employee gets reviewed using the 360-degree feedback method. Lastly, Waada gives attention to the environment. An example of this is the Waada Billion Acts of Goodness initiative, with the goal to accomplish 1 billion good deeds (Waada the Movement, 2022).

Below you can see an organisational structure of Waada (figure 1).

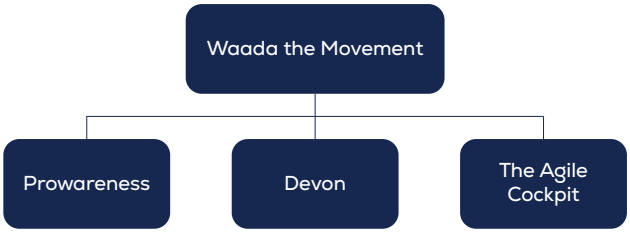

Figure 1: Structure of Waada

Each daughter company has their own focus and expertise. As mentioned above Prowareness is focussed on consultancy and training. DevOn is specialised in improving software development within companies. They use a radical approach in order to significantly improve software development (DevOn, 2023).
The smallest daughter company is Agile Cockpit, which is specialised in tooling. They offer clear, fast and powerful solutions for working in an Agile working environment. Their tooling offers organisations the opportunity to improve their organisation and increase the impact of their organisation (Agile Cockpit, 2022).

For this project, I will only be working with Prowareness. To this day they have one goal: to make organisations agile. Not just as a development method, but as a smarter modus operandi for organisations as a whole. They use the specific needs of their customers as a starting point to develop the best approach (Prowareness, 2022). Their view can be explained with this quote: *"Catch a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach him how to fish and you feed him for a lifetime".*

To achieve this goal they have a few main value propositions (figure 2). Implementation Consulting: these consultants coach the teams within other organisations into successfully implementing an agile way of working. Management Consultancy: these consultants coach the top level management of organisations on how to successfully transform into an agile organisation. Academy: this department

focuses on education, learning, and development. Talent Program: transforming young professionals into implementation consultants. Next to these, Prowareness offers many different expertise in the agile industry.

Their clients are mainly large organisations that aspire to have an agile way of operating. They can either be at the beginning or in the middle of the transformations. Prowareness offers their expertise to make this transformation happen the best as possible. Most assignments have a running period of 6-12 months. When the contract of a consultant that is placed at a client terminates, it can either be extended or the consultant has to be placed at another client.

As mentioned above, company culture weighs very heavily at Prowareness. Since the consultants work primarily at their client or from home, they barely see each other.

In order to maintain a healthy company culture, there are certain agreements set in place. Each consultant is placed in a sub-team with other consultants from the same region. The team meets multiple times a week and the goal of this team is to focus on personal growth. Also, every other Friday each department meets up. During these meetups the departments are given relevant updates, colleagues exchange knowledge, and when needed the teams think of ways to improve things that need to be improved. Next to these examples, there are more practices that contribute to a better relationship between colleagues.

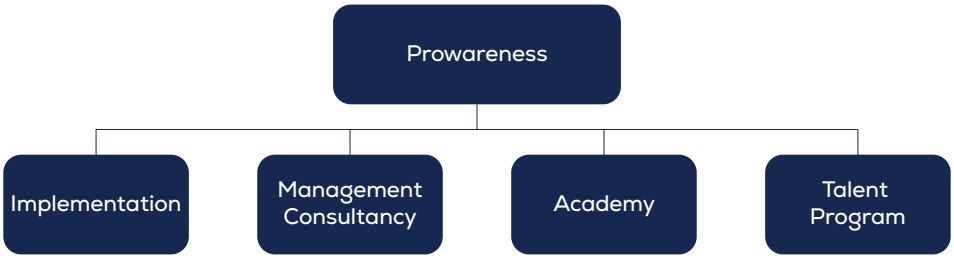

Figure 2: Value proposition

Assignment

The assignment came to me from the Business Excellence department. My job is to help the training reach and maintain a certain standard of quality. I will be working within the Academy department, since training is primarily given by this department. This department offers certified and uncertified training, e-learning, and workshops to clients. They sell training to both other organisations as direct to consumers. For some of the certified training, the client has to pass an exam afterwards to get a certification. As mentioned above, their clients are usually companies that are transitioning into an agile way of working or people who are taking on a new profession within an agile organisation. There is a broad range of training about different topics within the agile mindset.

It was mentioned to me that implementing new ways of working can be a challenge in itself within the organisation. To find the root of the problem, my plan is to discover what the current situation actually is, and to find the right way to implement a solution. The solution will, in one way or the other, help to assure the quality of the training. Quality assurance is about creating and maintaining quality of the product, in this case a training, that they sell to their clients.

The price positioning of Prowareness lies more on the high end of the market. High prices come with high expectations. The objective is to make sure that these expectations are always met. There are two scenarios that I can research. The first is in-house training that is given mostly by consultants to their clients, and the other is certified training given by trainers from the Academy department. After considering these two options I chose to focus more on the Academy department (see figure 3), since the trainers are more involved with the training and their contents, especially certified training. Also, I have better access to the stakeholders of the Academy department.

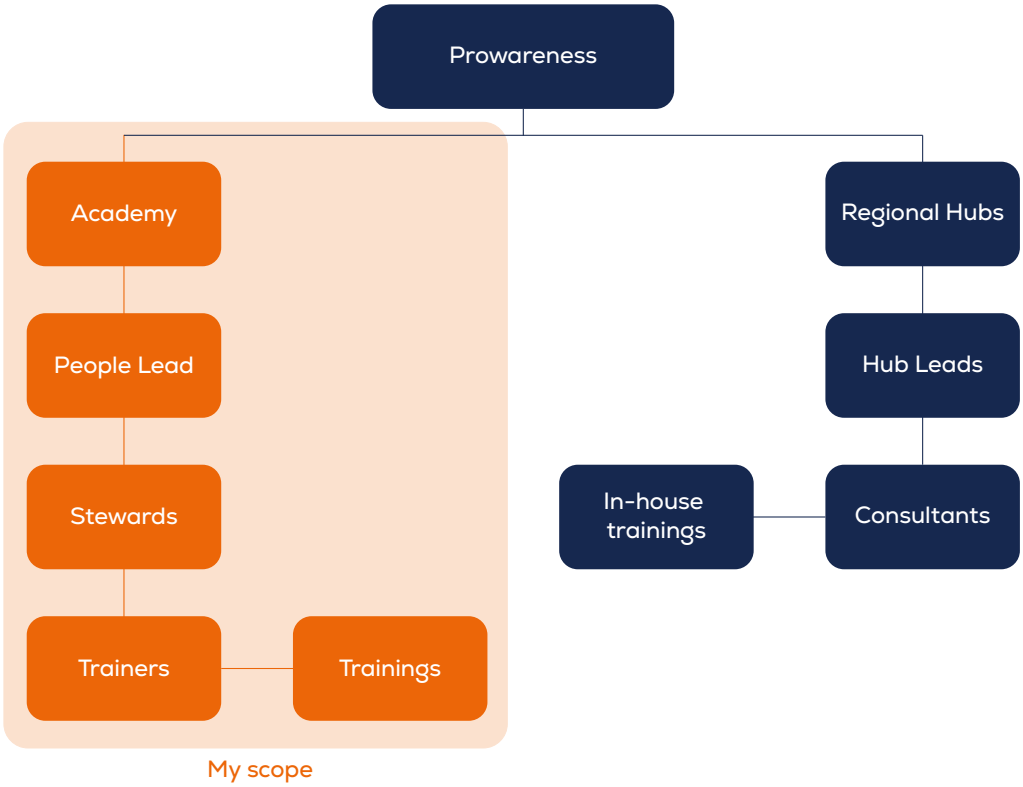

Figure 3: Scope of the assignment

Approach

In figure 4 you can see the structure of my approach. My approach is based on the double diamond approach (Design Council, 2005). A process of divergent thinking followed by convergent thinking is represented by two diamond shapes, which allow for an exploration of an issue in both a broader and deeper sense before narrowing down to focused action. The first diamond is about exploring the current situation (Discover) and then narrowing down to the actual problem (Define). After the problem is well defined, I can formulate a new project brief containing a problem definition and design criteria. The second diamond is all about the solution. As mentioned, this diamond also goes through the divergent and convergent thinking to explore all options (Develop) before making decisions and narrowing down (Deliver).

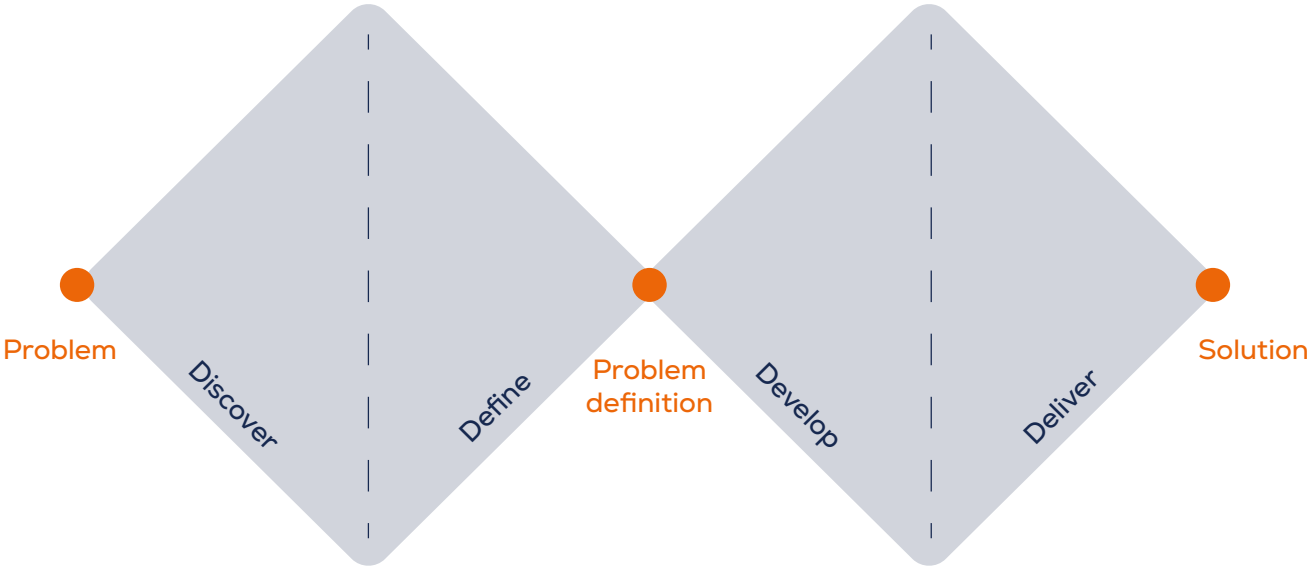

Figure 4: Double diamond approach

Report structure

To make everything coherent, I chose to name the chapters after the phases displayed in the double diamond approach. The first chapter is titled 'Discover'. This chapter is all about exploring the research problem. The second chapter is called 'Define'. Throughout this second chapter I define the problem statement and product goal. The title of chapter 3 is 'Develop'. The focus of this chapter is about generating ideas, and choosing a solution. The fourth chapter is titled 'Deliver'. In this chapter I present the end product.

After this chapter follows the discussions. In the discussions I take a critical look at the end product. I finalise my research with a conclusion. Based on my conclusion I then make recommendations about further steps that Prowareness can take to better their client experience and to make this more consistent. Furthermore, I share my personal reflection on the journey of writing my thesis. Lastly, I end the report with my full reference list and the appendix.

1 Discover

The goal of this chapter is to discover the problem. I will first explain my approach to find out more about the problem and explain each step of this approach. The last step is sharing and explaining the insights and theories that I found. Finally, I will close the chapter by mentioning the key takeaways that I carry to the next chapter.

Research design

In figure 5 you can see a visualisation of my research design. I divided my research into 4 steps: Empathise, Data collection, Data processing, and Data analysis. I consider my goal reached when at the end of the data analysis I gain new insights regarding the problem that were not mentioned when I first got the assignment from Prowareness. It was said that there is a need to check and improve the quality of training. Questions that I have and want answered at the end of the chapter are:

1. What is the perspective on the current quality control of the training?
2. What are things that need to be considered when checking the quality of a training?

For this research I used a combination of semi-structured interviews and a questionnaire. The questionnaire was more towards the first question, while the interviews were more focussed on the second question. In the following paragraphs I will go through each step.

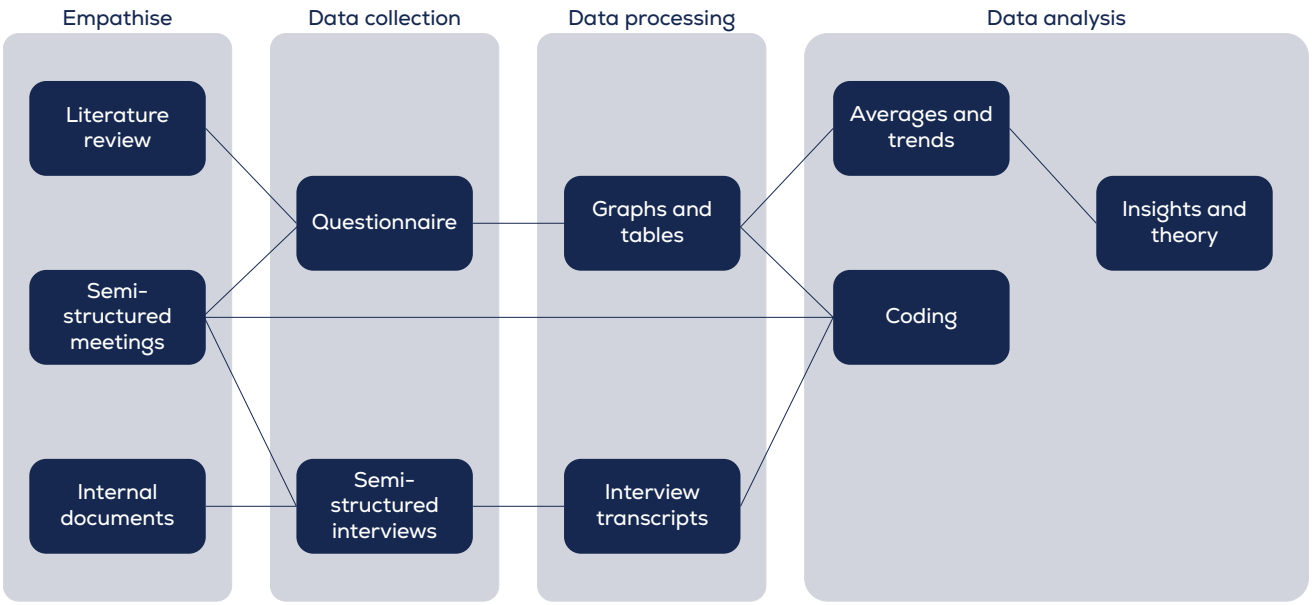

Figure 5: Research design

Empathise

The goal of this step is to familiarise myself more with the topic and context. I started off with semi-structured meetings with key stakeholders from the Academy department. Since they are the ones that provide the highest quality of training that Prowareness offers, it's wise to get their perspective on the matter. The main goal of these meetings was to understand what these stakeholders define as quality training, and see what they think can be done differently when giving training. These stakeholders include the former Hub Lead, the Partner Manager, and the People Lead of the Academy. The former Hub Lead knows all the ins and outs about the department and is also a trainer himself. The Partner Manager has a more commercial role. He does contract management among many other things, and he doesn't get involved with the trainers and training. The People Lead is responsible for the structure of how things are done, the strategy and product portfolio of this department, the personal growth of the consultants and trainers within the Academy, other administrative tasks, and is also a trainer.

It was interesting to see that both the former Hub Lead and Partner Manager mentioned that the problem is that currently there is no standardised process or guidelines for developing a new training or checking the quality of an existing training. This was not the case only for training offered by the Academy, but also in-house training. That immediately triggered me to look further into it.

In this phase I also browsed internal documents to see what already exists and which softwares they use. I came across an online learning journey platform, named aNewSpring, that is for participants of training offered by the Academy. Here the participants can find all information about the training they are going to follow, communicate with the trainer and other participants, and also give feedback at the end of the training. Another important software that I came across was SessionLab, which is a platform where the trainer can create the whole structure of a training. This platform is relatively new in the company and only a couple of trainings have a fully worked out layout of what needs to be in the training. Next to the softwares, it became clear to me that there are two different types of training: certified and uncertified training. Certified training is the one that has an external party tied to it. Examples of these external organisations are scrum.org, LeSS, and Scaled Agile. These trainings have specific curriculums and guidelines that a trainer should follow. Also, after following the training, the participants get a chance to earn their certification by passing an exam. Uncertified training is fully developed and offered by Prowareness. There are no external parties tied to these trainings, and there are no certifications either. Both types of training are given in-house by consultants, and both are also given by the Academy. The difference lies in the ratios. The majority of training given by the Academy are certified, while most in-house training is uncertified.

Lastly, I was also looking at what the literature has to say about quality, quality assurance, motivation, and agile. The following part will dive deeper into the literature.

Literature

In this chapter I will dive into the literature of three different topics: Quality, Motivation, and Agile. These topics were carefully chosen while considering my initial assignment and talking to stakeholders. It was a challenge to narrow down to only these topics, since the problem is complex and can be seen very broadly. I chose quality because the whole project is about the quality of training. It is important to understand the definitions of quality and how to secure it. Motivation is another topic that I chose. The reason that I chose motivation, is that tackling this problem means that employees will have to change their current way of working. To increase the chances to get them on board, I need to keep the core values of motivation in mind. Lastly, I also chose to look into the Agile way of working. Prowareness has an agile environment, and this needs to be considered when designing. The product needs to be able to successfully function in an agile environment. At the end of the chapter I conclude by mentioning the key takeaways that I will take with me to the next steps of the project.

Quality

Quality and quality assurance are topics that have been talked about for a long time. Quality assurance is used in many different industries. One of the industries where it is mentioned a lot is in the field of Higher Education. Since I am focussed on the quality assurance of training, I chose to dive into the literature within this field. Giving training and workshops are also a form of transferring information and educating others. The topics are close enough that I can translate the literature into my context.

Many authors have attempted to give a definition to the word, but it has proven to be a difficult task. Quality is difficult to limit to one definition because quality is a relative concept and is used in various contexts (Vroeijenstijn, 1991; Elassy, 2015). Green states in an article that there are different approaches when it comes to defining quality (Green, 1994). The chosen approach to defining quality significantly impacts the methods employed to ensure or improve it. One common way to describe quality is by asking the question, “Is it good?” Each of the different approaches represents a different variation of this question.

The first approach that is described is quality as the conformance of standards. In this approach, one asks the question, “Is it good enough?”. Standards are focussed on outcomes and this approach is commonly used in manufacturing plants. Quality is seen as a static concept that does not need to be reconsidered once a specification is set. It is assumed that quality is measurable and quantifiable. This approach works best for simple products. It can be used for complex products as long as these products are only subject to change that can be controlled. It may be more difficult in a complex environment that is constantly changing with little control. More complex environments are constantly changing and shifting. Offering a service such as giving training to clients is complex. The situation is slightly different each time. In such a context, quality can not be treated as a static concept. In such an environment, it is crucial to have clarity on what is being measured and, more importantly, to reevaluate when adjustments are necessary.There is a significant difference in whether the achievement of the client, or the training itself is being measured. Also, when setting the standards, if the minimum required criteria for your product to be good enough is set, the result is a minimum viable product. The drive to achieve more and go beyond these standards is not naturally there.

The second approach described is quality as fitness for purpose. In this approach, quality is defined relatively with respect to the purpose that the product or service should fulfil. It is developmental and recognises that the purpose can change over time. The definition of the purpose can change the definition, perception, or assessment of the quality. Therefore, there is a constant need for re-evaluation of the specifications. It is also essential that the purpose is clear and transparent to everyone involved. The question that is asked in this scenario is “Are we doing the right things?”.

The third approach is quality as effectiveness in achieving institutional goals. If we translate this to the context of this report, it can be translated to quality as effectiveness in achieving organisational goals. In this approach, the focus shifts to the broader perspective and the overall context. For example, each training can have their own purpose and specifications, but in order to ensure quality over all training, the organisation has to define a communal quality assurance system to assess the training as a whole. The upside of this approach is that it broadens your view to see other relevant issues regarding quality

The fourth approach is quality as meeting customers’ stated needs. This approach is all about knowing your customers’ needs and knowing how to satisfy them. The degree of satisfaction that a client feels towards the quality of a service is related to the expectations that it has towards the service at the time of purchase (Green, 1994). This relates to the concept of fitness

for purpose, but with respect to the client, as it is contingent on the purpose with which the service was bought. The tricky part of this approach is that the client does not always know what its needs are. It is up to the organisation to ensure that they and the client are on the same wavelength at time of purchase.

The fifth and last approach is the traditional concept of quality. In this scenario, a product of quality grants the owner a special status. Quality is seen as excellence. Asking yourself the question "Is it better than others?". The pitfall of perceiving quality as excellence is the transition from a substantive notion to a relational one (Elassy, 2015). In other words, rather than defining quality standards independently, its definition is based on how it compares to others. But if the quality is better than someone else's, that doesn't automatically mean that it is good.

Quality assurance

The definition of quality assurance according to the Oxford English Dictionary is:
"The maintenance of a desired level of quality in a service or product, especially by means of attention to every stage of the process of delivery or production."

The terms that stand out to me in this definition are "desired level" and "every stage". This implies that the quality should be defined beforehand. And looking at every stage of the process ensures that every aspect of the product matches the desired level of quality.

Cheng divides quality assurance into three waves, namely Internal, Interface, and Future quality assurance (Cheng, 2003). These waves are based on different theories of quality within the world of education. Since this project is outside the scope of Higher Education, I will only use the core of these definitions and translate them to my context. The first wave, Internal quality assurance, is all about improving the internal environment and processes to ensure the achievement of planned goals. The internal process itself can be considered as Internal quality assurance. The second wave, Interface quality assurance, is ensuring that the provided services satisfy the needs of the stakeholders. The third and final wave, Future quality assurance, is defined by Cheng as the wave that *"stresses ensuring the relevance of aims, content, practice and outcomes of education to the future of new generations"* (Cheng, 2003). If I translate this wave to my context, I would define it as ensuring the relevance of training with respect to the future of the industry and the organisation.

Cheng connected these three waves with the five approaches to quality defined by Green that I mentioned before. See figure 6 for a complete overview of the approaches to quality and quality assurance waves.

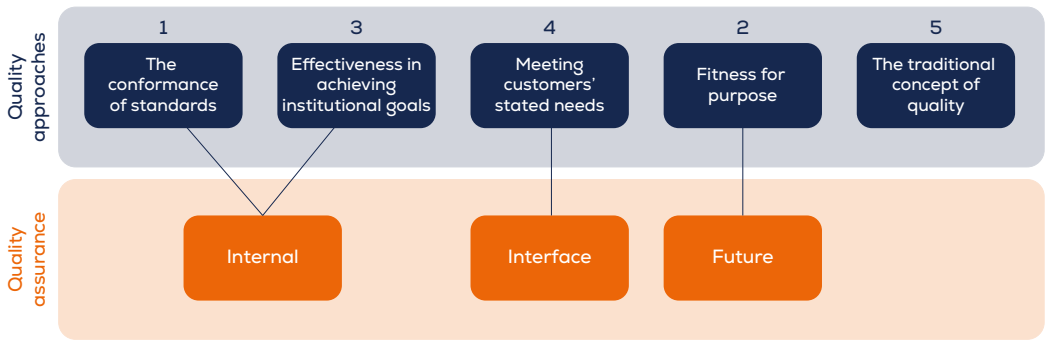

Figure 6: Connection between the quality approaches and quality assurance waves

The Internal quality assurance wave is connected to the first and third approach to quality. These approaches are quality as the conformance of standards and quality as effectiveness in achieving institutional goals. Both of these definitions and Internal quality assurance are focussed on effectiveness of processes, and achieving a specific list of goals that has been set. The Interface quality assurance wave is connected to the fourth definition of quality: quality as meeting customers' stated needs. This connection is made because both see quality as satisfaction of the needs of stakeholders. For the last wave, Future quality assurance, the author didn't make any connection to the definitions of quality, because its contents are not discussed in the previously defined approaches to quality. However, the second approach to quality could fit well within this wave. This approach is concerned with defining and fulfilling a purpose. I believe that the purpose of a product is directly related to the vision and future of a company. This means that the fifth approach, the traditional concept of quality, is the only approach that does not fit within one of these waves.

Biggs divides quality assurance into retrospective and prospective quality assurance (Biggs, 2001). Retrospective quality assurance aims more on accountability and measuring what has been done. Looking back and reflecting on the current situation and thinking of what could be done better. Prospective quality assurance is more focussed on improvement and matching the future purpose of the organisation. If we plot the three waves of quality assurance defined by Cheng, the Internal and Interface waves can fit within the both categories. Both the Internal and Interface waves can be reviewed and improved. The Future quality assurance wave however, solely focuses on looking forward. Thus, this wave only resides within the Prospective category which is also focused on the future. In figure 7 you can see the relation between the quality approaches, quality assurance waves, and categories.

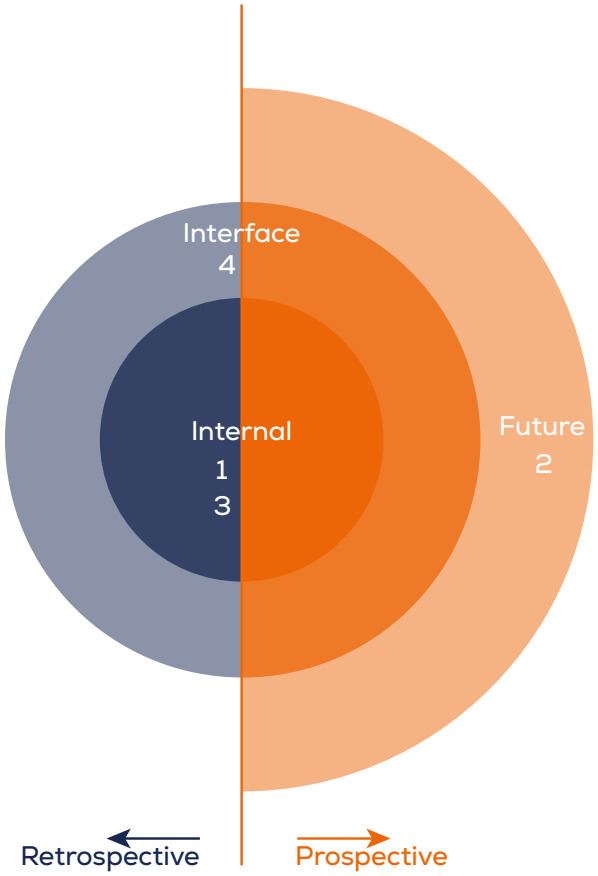

Figure 7: Quality assurance foundation

Quality can't be treated like a unitary concept, it must be defined in terms of good or bad qualities in relation to something else. Thus, it is very unlikely that one of these concepts of quality is satisfactory for all stakeholders involved (Green, 1994). To make the quality assurance solution as complete and round as possible, I will use the model shown in Figure 7 that combines multiple of these different approaches to quality and quality assurance. The left side represents the Retrospective side of quality assurance, which includes the Internal and Interface waves of quality assurance. The right side of the model represents the Prospective side, consisting of all the quality assurance waves. To get the best results, I have to cover all of these areas. This model will be used as a foundation for my quality assurance solution. All three layers are connected and affect each other. Internal processes can have an effect on the customer experience and vice versa. By analysing what has been done in the past and the present, individuals can decide

what needs to be improved for the future. After taking time to define the future of the product, one can use this information to adjust the Internal and Interface waves.

In my research I also took a look at the Extension School of Continuing Education. Just like my client, they offer training/ courses to external parties. They already have a quality assurance system in place. Their model consists of 4 parts: Plan, Do, Check, and Act (figure 8). They use this cycle on three different levels: Institutional, Portofolio, and Course level. If we take the course level as an example, the Plan phase includes making sure the course matches their pedagogical model, making sure that the staff are well-trained, and have the necessary guidance to meet quality standards throughout the creation process. The Do phase includes utilising all the gathered data during the course from surveys, feedback log, and complaints log. During the Check phase, course evaluations, feedback forms, and evaluation meetings are utilised.The data analysed in the Do phase is also used to give more information about the course evaluation. In the final phase, Act, a course improvement plan is developed.

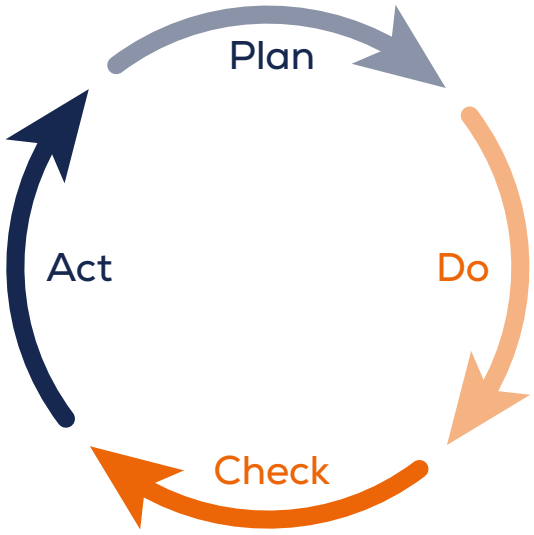

Figure 8: Plan, Do, Check, Act model

If we compare this model to my model, it is more elaborately defined. Each step includes clear descriptions of what needs to happen. This is a great model to have when there already is a structure in place that can support this model. This model can then be used to create and improve the content of the structure. In my case, there is no structure in place yet. This is definitely something to consider when developing a solution. A structure needs to be created first, and afterwards it can be filled in with content. In my case it's not just about a good looking quality assurance model, but also making sure that there is an environment that can support such a model. Another difference is the flexibility of the models. The Plan Do Check Act model is a circular model with linear steps. What this means is that the steps need to happen in a particular order for it to work. That makes the model less flexible compared to my model. There are three waves and one can move between all of them without being fully dependent on the previous steps. For a complex environment, it is better for a model to be more flexible. A complex environment refers to an uncertain and unpredictable situation according to the Stacey Matrix. Decision-making requires flexibility, experimentation, and adaptation rather than following predefined plans (Gordon, 2022). I consider Prowareness a complex environment for two reasons. First of all, the objective of each training type is different, and can also differ per client. That makes it difficult to predict a linear cause and effect flow. Also, the stakeholders involved are not always aligned enough to find common ground.

There are also similarities between the models. Both of them look at the past, present, and future. Also, both of them close the loop with a feedback system. In my model, the feedback loop is evident when going from the retrospective side, to the prospective side (figure 9). There are two separate loops. One of the loops is for the Internal quality assurance, and the other for the Interface quality assurance. For example, reflecting on what was done in the Internal wave on the Retrospective

side and gathering feedback. After that go through the feedback and look at it with a prospective view. Then assess if this fits with the future and purpose of the company in the Future wave. Lastly, going back to the Retrospective side, make the adjustments and go through the same process again. The same counts for the Interface wave. The fact that these loops are independent of each other, makes the model more agile.

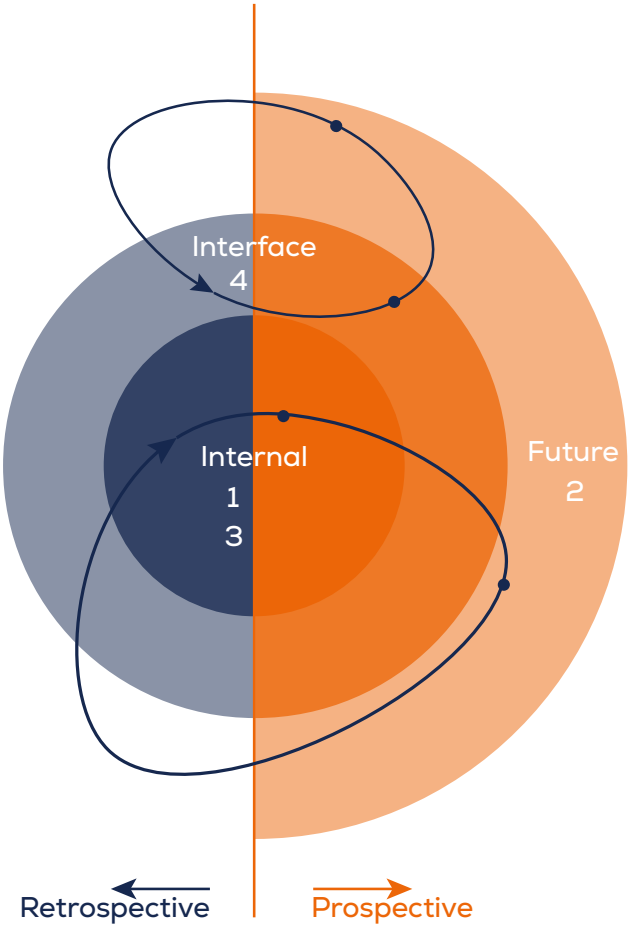

Figure 9: Quality assurance foundation feedback loops

Key Takeaways

- **A combination of different quality assurance approaches guarantees the best results and reduces risks, since all of them have their pros and cons.**
- **A flexible quality assurance model is more suited for Prowareness, compared to a strict linear model.**

Motivation is what drives someone to do something. Implementing a quality assurance solution requires coworkers to change their current way of doing things. External incentives aren't always enough to keep people motivated in the long run, the ultimate goal is for employees to make it their own and be self-determined to the new way of working. According to Ryan and Deci, the self-determination theory is defined as a way of looking at what motivates and shapes people's personalities and emphasises the role of people's natural abilities and instincts in how they develop their personalities and control their behaviour (Ryan & Deci, 2017). By nature people are endowed with intrinsic motivational tendencies. Intrinsic motivation means doing an activity for the satisfaction of the activity itself, and not for external products. If we can reach that point with this project, the solution is guaranteed to be used and further developed. However, to reach the point where intrinsic motivation is maintained and enhanced, requires supportive conditions.

According to Deci and Ryan people have three basic psychological needs: Competence, relatedness, and autonomy. Competence involves having confidence in one's ability to successfully perform a task. Relatedness is about feeling accepted and appreciated by your coworkers. Also, feeling connected to your fellow coworkers and project goals is part of relatedness. Autonomy is about having a certain amount of independence and making your own choices (Wessels, 2019). These three pillars and the feeling that your choices are self-determined, are key components that create, maintain, and enhance intrinsic motivation.

Translating this to my context, in order to get that intrinsic motivation from the coworkers and them making the solution their own, I need to make sure that the solution supports that motivation by:

- Not questioning their skills and abilities.
- Make sure that the solution does not disconnect them as coworkers, but encourages teamwork.
- Allowing them sufficient freedom and independence to make their own choices.

For intrinsic motivation to be evident, one can't solve the problem by simply using positive or negative incentives. Deci conducted studies that found that external rewards, such as receiving money or praise, can actually reduce a person's natural motivation to engage in an activity. This happens because the person begins to perceive the cause of their behaviour as being external to themselves rather than something they intrinsically desire to do. Other factors that can reduce intrinsic motivation include threats, deadlines, directives, evaluations, and imposed goals. On the other hand, offering choices, acknowledging feelings, and providing opportunities for self-direction can enhance intrinsic motivation because they give people a greater sense of control and autonomy (Deci & Ryan, 1985). People whose motivation are self-endorsed, and not externally controlled, have a higher level of interest, excitement, and confidence, which leads to enhanced performance, persistence, and creativity (Ryan & Deci, 1991).

Ryan and Deci plotted the different types of motivations with their corresponding regulatory styles in a self-determination continuum (figure 10). When someone tries to encourage certain behaviours in others, the motivation of those individuals can vary from the absence of motivation, to simply complying without much personal interest, to actively embracing the behaviour as their own choice. On the left there is Amotivation. In this state, there is a lack of intention to act. All the way to the right, there is intrinsic motivation. This is where the act of performing an activity itself fulfils the person. Between these two extremes resides extrinsic motivation. Unlike the other two motivation types, extrinsic motivation can be seen as a continuum that connects the two ends. The extrinsic motivation continuum consists of different self-regulatory styles. Self-regulation refers to the process by which individuals

internalise external factors such as rewards and gradually incorporate them into their personal values and motivations. Self-regulation is thus the way that people process these external factors and make them their own.

The first style is External Regulation. Behaviours in this category are carried out purely to fulfil an external requirement or incentive system. People experience this regulatory style as controlled and alienated.

Then there is Introjected regulation. Introjection is a type of behaviour where a person adopts a regulation, but doesn't completely make it their own. It's a fairly restrained form of regulation where actions are done to prevent feeling guilty or anxious, or to boost the ego in order to feel proud.

The next style is Identified Regulation. Identification is when a person recognizes the value of a specific behaviour or goal and accepts it as something personally meaningful. As a result, the person takes ownership of the behaviour or goal and is more likely to engage in it willingly.

The last style, and closest to intrinsic motivation, is Integrated Regulation. Integration refers to fully integrating identified regulations into one's own identity by evaluating and aligning them with personal values and needs. Actions that stem from integrated motivation share similarities with intrinsic motivation, but are still considered extrinsic because they are driven by external goals rather than solely the enjoyment of the activity itself (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

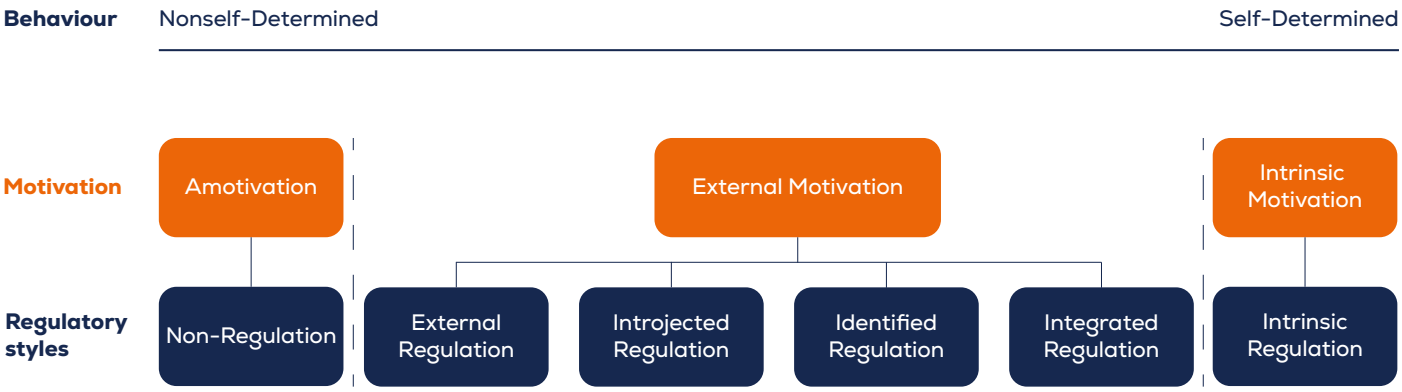

Figure 10: Self -Determination continuum

Motivation is personal and can differ per person. It is my assumption that while working on this project I will run into employees who find themselves on different part of the continuum. My goal is not to convert all of them to have intrinsic motivation, that would be an impossible task, because everyone has different values. I would need only a couple of employees that are self-determined to be a driving force and carry the vision. The rest can be anywhere on the extrinsic motivation spectrum as long as the job gets done. The style of management also plays a role in the environment that is created. McGregor defines two type of managers, type X and type Y.

Type X managers perceive their workers as lazy, untrustworthy, and don't take responsibility. These managers tend to be more domineering and inflexible (McGregor, 1960). Type Y managers perceive their employees in a more positive way. He sees them as trustworthy and have the ability to take responsibility. According to Robinson, these employees tend to be highly self-motivated in such an environment (Robinson, 2010). These managers have a more participative and democratic approach which motivates employees to become more involved (McGregor, 1960; Hussain, Haque, Baloch, 2019)

Looking at Prowareness, it is apparent that a certain level of commitment is expected from its employees. They are also granted the freedom to operate, have an opinion, and start new initiatives. One of the core values of Prowareness is entrepreneurship. Employees are encouraged to take initiative, whether that's good for personal growth or beneficial for the company. One clear example that substantiates this is the Saraswati Awards. It's a virtual event where the best innovation of the quarter gets an award. This stimulates the employees to push their boundaries. Also, one of the first things that a new employee is taught is setting priorities. It is not wise to take on every opportunity that presents itself. Employees are taught to put themselves first, then the company, and lastly the client.

Thus, this shows that the Prowareness management style falls within the type Y of management. That is why I suspect that most employees are already more on the right side of the continuum.

Key Takeaways

- **Three factors that need to be considered for a pleasant environment for intrinsic motivation are: Competence, Relatedness, and Autonomy.**
- **The management style within Prowareness corresponds to the type Y theory defined by McGregor which has a positive effect on the motivation of employees.**

Agile

Prowareness is a company that specialises in the agile way of working. It is logical that their own way of working is also according to the agile values and principles. There are 12 principles and 4 main values, which are all stated in the Agile Manifesto created by a group of authors (Fowler & Highsmith, 2001). For this project, the values are interesting to consider since they are more concerned with the way of working. The principles are more directly related to running a business that is not relevant for the scope of this project. The values are displayed in two columns (figure 11).

They value the items on the right side, but they value the items on the left even more. This way of displaying the values makes immediately clear where the priority lies. These values can be used to assess whether the choices made are according to the agile way of working. The first one, "Interaction and interactions over processes and tools", means that interactions between skilled individuals are of more importance than processes and tools. In other words, if a tool negatively affects interactions between employees, the tool should be reconsidered. This then means that whatever I design can't hamper healthy interactions between the employees. "Working software over comprehensive documentations" means that the focus lies on having a working final product. What I take from this value is that not every detail of the solution needs to be worked out in order for it to work. Providing something that Prowareness can use and keep developing in the long run, also adds value to the company. "Customer collaboration over contract negotiation" emphasises the importance of customer collaboration. However, this value is not relevant for this project because it falls outside of the scope of the research. Lastly, "Responding to change over following a plan" means that having a plan is important, but if the context changes along the way, it is important to be agile and adaptable in order to respond effectively. It is important that a plan for quality assurance is made, and that it is modular and adaptable to the environment. If the design is too rigid, it won't be sustainable in the long run.

Individuals and interactions	**OVER**	processes and tools
Working software	**OVER**	comprehensive documentation
Customer collaboration	**OVER**	contract negotiation
Responding to change	**OVER**	following a plan

Figure 11: Agile Manifesto

Definition of Done is a practice within the Scrum framework and is used at Prowareness. According to the Scrum Guide *"the Definition of Done is a formal description of the state of the Increment when it meets the quality measures required for the product" (Schwaber & Sutherland, 2011).*

An increment is an addition or improvement to a product. Most of the time a Definition of Done comes in the form of a checklist. The points listed on this list define all the quality points that a product should comply with before it can be considered ready for release. In our case, a Definition of Done for a training, would be a list of all the requirements that a training should meet before it can be given. So, it would not be a surprise if my solution will be seen as a sort of Definition of Done.

Key Takeaways

- **The solution should not get in the way of employees interacting and collaborating with each other.**
- **The solution has more value if it's agile and adaptable.**
- **The main focus should be to have a working product.**
- **The solution could be seen as a type of Definition of Done.**

Conclusion

I've reached the conclusion of my literary research. At the end of each section I listed some key takeaways. In this section I will elaborate more on the importance of each key takeaway and how each of them contribute to my project.

1. **A combination of different quality assurance approaches guarantees the best results and reduces risks, since all of them have their advantages and disadvantages.** While studying the literature it was clear that there is not one best approach to quality and quality assurance. Using a combination of them is the better option. The model that I created covers multiple of these approaches and will be used when doing further research and designing the solution. It will not be a criteria that the solution should cover all the levels of the model, but that is the aim.
2. **A flexible quality assurance model is more suited for Prowareness, compared to a strict linear model.** The context of my project is complex and very dynamic. In such environments, an agile and adaptable model is more desirable. Having a linear structure where the next step is dependent on the previous step is not efficient if the environment is constantly changing. Having to change a whole model costs more time and resources, than only adapting one part of it.
3. **Three factors that need to be considered for a pleasant environment for intrinsic motivation are: Competence, Relatedness, and Autonomy.** A pleasant environment is needed to cultivate intrinsic motivation. If employees are intrinsically motivated, they are more self-determined. This takeaway will also not be used as a criteria, because it is difficult to validate such an abstract concept. However, it is good to see how the employees feel about these factors at the start of the project to get a better image of what I am dealing with.
4. **The management style within Prowareness corresponds to the Y theory defined by McGregor which has a positive effect on the motivation of employees.** It is apparent that Prowareness employees lie more on the right side of the motivation spectrum. This is only beneficial for my project. In order for the solution to work in the long term, some employees need to step up and take ownership.
5. **The solution should not get in the way of employees interacting and collaborating with each other.** Working together as a team is an important aspect of working agile. It is also a big part of the culture at Prowareness. A structure or system should not get in the way of that. This takeaway will be used as a criteria for the solution. It is something that is important and can be validated.
6. **The solution has more value if it's agile and adaptable.** Prowareness is an agile and dynamic environment. Things are constantly changing and the solution must be able to keep up with the changes. For this reason the solution must be agile itself and able to adapt to the environment. This takeaway will also be part of the solution criteria.
7. **The main focus should be to have a working product.** This takeaway is related to one of the values of the agile manifesto. The reason I qualify it as a key takeaway is to keep my focus. The problem is very complex and the solution can be even more complex. Thus, it is not wise to work everything out to the detail and not be able to have a functioning solution. The goal should be to first have a working solution, a minimal viable product, and subsequently iterate and add improvements.
8. **The solution could be seen as a type of Definition of Done.** As mentioned before the Definition of Done is a document that is used to validate the quality of a product or improvement. It is a term that is used in the scrum framework and is used a lot at Prowareness. My solution is also a product that can be used to validate the quality of their product. Thus, my quality assurance solution is comparable to a Definition of Done. I found this important to take with me

to the next chapter because I can use this term to explain to the employees what I am working on. By speaking their language, they will have a better understanding of what they are working with.

After doing these three things in this phase, I got a better idea of what I am actually dealing with. The problem seems to only get bigger and bigger. The challenge for me is to determine what falls within the scope of my project, and what doesn't.

Data collection

In this step I collected data that I can later use to answer my two main questions. As I mentioned above, I made use of semi-structured interviews and a questionnaire to collect data. First, I sent out the questionnaire to every trainer or consultant that gives in-house training to clients. The objective of this questionnaire was to validate what was said by the former Hub Lead and Partner Manager of the Academy that the problem is that there is no standardised process or guidelines for developing a new training or checking the quality of an existing training. The first questions in the questionnaire were to know if the trainers think the same way. The next set of questions were to get a better impression of the willingness to use such a solution. This is also an important aspect to know, so I can make better choices when designing and implementing the solution. Lastly, I also added some questions regarding the three main pillars of intrinsic motivation that I discovered in my literature review. I wanted to know if they perceive the solution as a threat to their competence, relatedness, and autonomy. In Appendix A you can find an overview of all the questions asked in the questionnaire. The questionnaire was filled in by a total of 31 employees. I discuss the results in the data analysis paragraph.

After the questionnaire I set up an interview guide and conducted several interviews. The main question that needs to be answered by the interviews is: What are things that need to be considered when checking the quality of a training?. The interview guides and interview transcripts can be found in Appendix B. In table 1 you can see a complete overview of the interviews I conducted. First I conducted interviews with all the Hub Leads. This includes, the Hub Leads of each region (South-West, Middle-North, and East), the Hub Lead of Hospitality, and the People Lead of Academy since they don't have a Hub Lead anymore. The reason that I also included the Hospitality Lead, is because they are part of the Academy department that are responsible for the logistics around a training. With logistics I mean the venue, catering, precare, feedback forms, and aftercare. The aim for these interviews was to understand what they think of the matter and what their perspectives are on the current quality of the training in their region or department and also what they think are things that need to be considered that have an effect on the quality of a training. After I interviewed them, I proceeded to interview 8 trainers. From them also I wanted to know what they think should be considered when looking at the quality of a training. Additionally, I wanted to know if there were other pain points that trainers have to deal with that can indirectly affect the quality of a training. The interviewees that I chose differ in training, Hub, and training experience. Since each employee has their own view on quality assurance, each will answer the question differently. Thus, the problem is not that the employees do not think about quality, but that there is no collective vision of it.

Data processing

Because I collected two different types of data, I had to treat them differently. For the questionnaire I used Microsoft Forms. The data came in the shape of averages, graphs, charts, and some open answered questions. The averages, graphs, and charts were already automatically processed for me by Microsoft Forms. The few open answered questions were also in text form ready to be analysed. The other set of data were interview (audio) recordings. In order to analyse these, I first had to transcribe them into text and organise them per question.

Name	Role	Hub	Training experience at PW (years)
People Lead	People Lead Academy	AC	5
Hub Lead #1	Lead Hospitality	AC	-
Hub Lead #2	Hub Lead East	E	-
Hub Lead #3	Hub Lead Middle-North	MN	-
Hub Lead #4	Hub Lead South-West	SW	-
Trainer #1	Trainer	AC	10
Trainer #2	Consultant	SW	2
Trainer #3	Consultant	MN	1
Trainer #4	Consultant	MN	2
Trainer #5	Consultant	MN	3
Trainer #6	Consultant	SW	1,5
Trainer #7	Consultant	SW	2
Trainer #8	Consultant	MN	1

Table 1: Overview interviewees

Data analysis

In this final step I actually go through the collected data and find meaningful insights. As I mentioned before in the previous steps, I conducted interviews and sent out a questionnaire.

The goal of the questionnaire was to get a better feel of the situation before diving into interviews. This way I could adjust the questions of my interview guide based on the data that I receive from the questionnaire. The main question that I wanted an answer for was: *What is the perspective on the current quality control of the training?*. The questionnaire was filled in by a total of 31 employees who give training. In theory there are a total of about 100 employees that can give training. I say this in theory, because not all of them actually give training. These are both full-time trainers, as consultants who can give training too. That means that more than 30% of the target audience responded to the questionnaire. A complete overview of the results can be found in Appendix C.

I asked them to rate the following statements on a scale of 1 to 5. With 1 being to strongly disagree, and 5 to strongly agree with the statement.

The first statement was: "There is no formal/documented procedure for when a new training is created or being developed." The average was 3.84 and you can see the chart in figure 12. This shows that a majority of the employees that filled in the questionnaire agree with the statement.

The explanation that was mentioned the most is that they are unaware of something like that existing. Here are some quotes from the results:

(Rating: 5)"I just designed a training and we have not been given any guidelines for this." - Respondent #2

(Rating: 5)"Everyone does it according to their own best judgement. There is no guidance." - Respondent #4

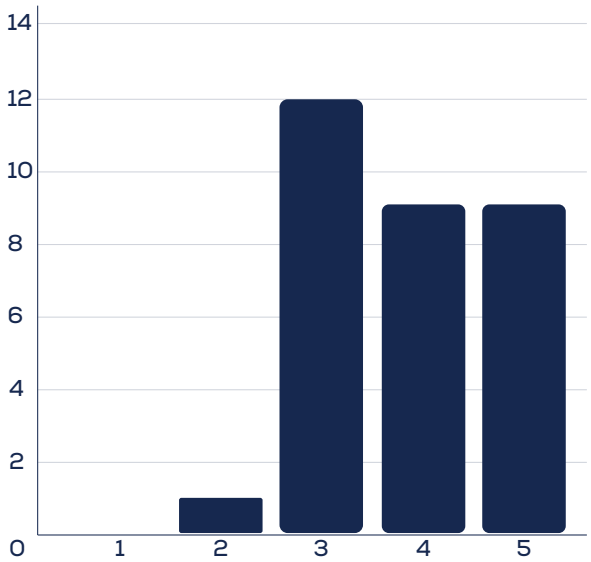

Figure 12: Chart with 3,84 average

(Rating: 4)"As far as I know, there is no documented procedure. Is not necessarily a bad thing, but it would help to have some guidelines for developing and especially marketing a new training course." - Respondent #17

The next statement that I asked them to rate was: "For existing training there is currently no way to check the quality." The average for this question was a 2.90. See figure 13 for the chart.

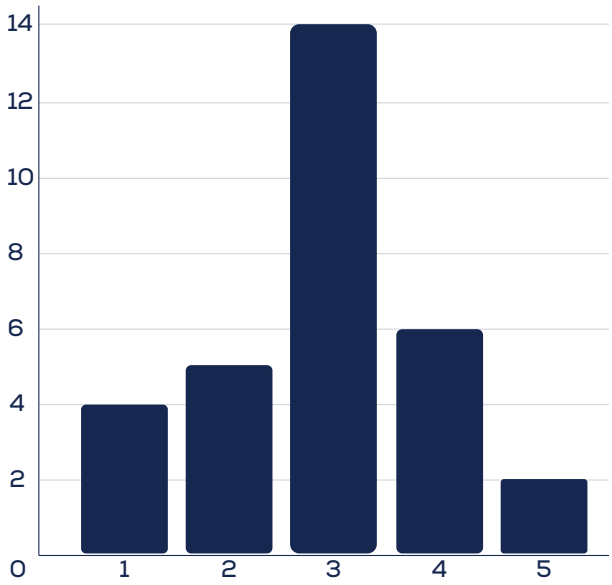

Figure 13: Chart with 2,90 average

The answers on this question are more equally distributed. There are also a lot of 3's. From the explanations it seems that some actions are done to check the quality, but quality is not defined, and the actions are not enough. These are some quotes from the respondents:

(Rating: 1) "We use feedback forms and we have internal stewards. With that said, it is difficult to gain insight into the in-house training." - Respondent #18

(Rating: 4) "Every training should end with the completion of the digital feedback form, but not everyone does or knows that." - Respondent #3

(Rating: 3) "We ask for feedback from participants of what they thought of the training. At the same time, what we mean by 'quality ' is nowhere defined." - Respondent #7

Most of the arguments on both sides were regarding the evaluation forms. The one side argues that that is the method to check the quality, and on the other hand they argue that the evaluation forms are not good enough or not used by everyone. I think that this depends on how quality is defined. The point is that there needs to be a universal understanding among the employees on what is good enough. The next statement they had to rate was: "I wish that such a quality document/checklist for the training existed." The result was an average of 3.55. See figure 14 for the chart.

The average is on the high side, which implies an overall strong agreement with the statement. Most of the reasoning behind some of the answers was for the assurance of quality. The few ones that rated with a low number, mentioned the freedom of a trainer. That is a tradeoff that is difficult to avoid when it comes to creating a quality assurance solution.

(Rating: 5) "I think this contributes enormously to the quality of the content of the training." - Respondent #15

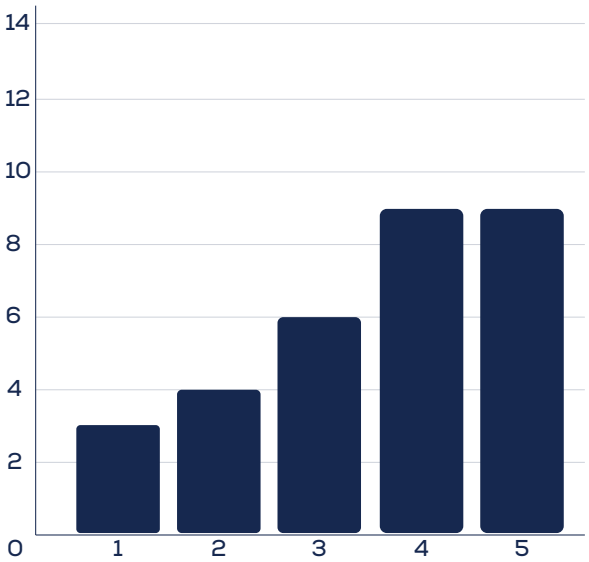

Figure 14: Chart with 3,55 average

(Rating:1) "Freedom is more important to me, ownership and responsibility." - Respondent #2

Then I asked them if they would make use of such a quality assurance solution. The results were that about two thirds of the respondents would use it. Afterwards, I asked them to rate statements regarding the three factors of intrinsic motivation. Each statement mentioned a negative effect that the solution could have on each factor, for example the reduction of autonomy. The results show low averages for each factor: Autonomy (avg. 2.35), Competence (avg. 1.65), and Relatedness (avg. 1.45). I was glad to see that the averages were all low. This means that, at first glance, the solution would not have a negative effect on the workplace environment and intrinsic motivation.

The research question that I wanted answered with this questionnaire was: "*What is the perspective on the current quality control of the training?*". From the answers, it is clear that most of the respondents do not know the current quality control of training. The trainers do see the need for a quality assurance solution, and are open to using one. In other words, a quality assurance solution is desired. In the interviews that follow I went deeper into what needs to be considered when talking about quality assurance.

Interviews

For the interviews I made use of inductive coding using the grounded theory methodology. This entails building a theory that is based on the data itself. One of the benefits of the grounded theory method is that rather than assuming, it takes a neutral stance on human actions in social situations (Temple University, 2023). The method was first written by Glacer and Strauss with each their own approach to the method back in 1967. Howard-Payne describes six different contentions that exist between the Straussian and Glaserian schools of grounded theory (Howard-Payne, 2016). In table 2 you can see an overview of the contentions.

The first contention is differences in ontological and epistemological positions. The main difference here is that the Glaserian grounded theory approach believes in critical realism, which means that reality can be discovered by looking at the data, rather than just relying on people's opinions or consensus. This is different from the Straussian approach, which believes in pragmatic relativism. This means that facts are only what people in a certain time period agree on, and that there are different ways of looking at the same phenomenon. If I look at my own research approach, I lean more towards the Straussian way of thinking. I see the data as reliable, but in my case, the data also consists of opinions of my participants. I believe that the opinions enhance the weight of the data.

The second contention is differences in the role of the researcher. Glacer believes that the researcher should keep its distance from the research and observe from a distance in order to keep a neutral stance. Strauss directs the researcher to personally engage in the research by taking part in the interrogation of the data while it's being gathered and analysed. In my research I was engaged and part of the research. The main reason for this choice was that I am a sole researcher, and couldn't delegate the interrogation and analysing tasks. Also, by being engaged in the interviews and data analysis, I can interpret the data more accurately knowing in what context something was said.

The third contention is differences as to when the literature should be reviewed. Glaser stated that the literature should only be reviewed post data analysis, while Strauss says that the literature can also be reviewed before conducting the research. The pitfall of the Straussian approach is the risk of reproducing existing theories. Just

Glaserian	Straussian
Critical realism	Pragmatic relativism
Distant	Engaged
Post-analysis literature review	Pre-analysis literature review
No pre-set research questions	Predetermined research questions
Initial coding	Open and axial
Objective truth	Compared to other perspectives

Table 2: Glaserian vs Straussian

like Strauss I also did my literature review before conducting my research.

The fourth contention is differences in formulating research questions. Glaser prohibits the researcher from entering the research with any preliminary thought out research questions. On the contrary Strauss advocates that the researcher should initiate the research with a predetermined research question in mind. This contention is related to the previous one. In this contention as well I used the Straussian approach and had predetermined research questions set.

The fifth contention is differences in the data coding and analysis process. When it comes to initial coding, Glaser suggests comparing different occurrences to identify common patterns and trends, which will eventually become categories in the analysis. In contrast, Strauss adopts an open coding approach, which involves analysing each individual occurrence or instance separately, seeking to understand its unique characteristics and significance within the larger context of the study. Another difference is the inclusion of axial coding by Strauss. Axial coding is a method used in grounded theory where the data is rearranged to show how different categories are connected. It helps to uncover the relationships between concepts and categories within the grounded theory. By doing this, it provides a better understanding of how different elements relate to each other (Scott & Medaugh, 2017). Glaser argues that under such circumstances the conceptualisation is obtained in an artificial way that is influenced by a predetermined bias. I made use of axial coding in my research and I see the value that it added. Axial coding connects the data in a certain way that makes it one comprehensive story.

The sixth and final contention is theory verification. Glaser says that to verify the emerging grounded theory, one should use quantitative analyses that aim to establish objective truths or factual evidence (Glacer, 1999). The focus is on obtaining empirical evidence that can be measured and quantified, providing a sense of objectivity and generalizability to the theory. This approach is rejected by Struass who believes that to verify the theory, we need to constantly compare and consider multiple perspectives within a specific historical and cultural context. Since I am using the Straussian approach in the other contentions, it is only logical to stay consistent and use his approach to verify my theory.

Coding

In this section I will go through the steps that I took while coding my data. Like I mentioned above, I started with Open coding, then I proceeded with axial coding, and lastly a round of selective coding. At the end I present the data in a visual that is inspired by Gioia. I chose this form of visualisation because Gioia also conducted interviews, and this is a clear way to present my data. The terminology will not be the same, but it's comparable. When presenting his data in his paper Gioia refers to the results of open coding as first order concepts. I call these first order concepts open code. The results of the axial coding he refers to as second order names. I refer to them as categories. Lastly, the themes that arise from the selective coding are referred to as aggregate dimensions by Gioia (Gioia, Corley & Hamilton, 2013). In my project I will refer to these as core categories. See Appendix D for a complete overview of the whole coding process.

Open coding

Open coding is commonly the first step in the data analysis of the grounded theory method. In this step the transcripts are chopped into small components of data and each piece is coded with a descriptive label (Delve, Ho & Limpaecher, 2022). In my case I highlighted quotes from my interview transcripts and coded these. See table 3 for a few examples.

What is important is that the code label is descriptive enough to take to the next step. Also, stick to the data. What I mean by this is that as much as possible I try to use the words of the interviewees in my code. The open coding was done in Dutch, so I don't lose valuable content when translating. For the sake of consistency I translated the codes mentioned in this report to English. This is a way to protect myself from including my own biases at the beginning of the process. From the interview transcripts I had a total of 236 quotes that I coded. From that number 98 were from Hub Leads and 138 from trainers. After coding all these quotes, I proceeded with axial coding.

Name interviewee	Quote	Open code
People Lead	"That clients get a better experience, even if it's an inexperienced trainer."	Better experience despite inexperienced trainer
Hub Lead #3	"Here I am also ultimately responsible and it is not happening well enough now, so also from leadership we are not taking enough ownership"	Too little ownership from leadership
Trainer #3	"I think it is important that it was not looked at by 1 person, but by several. The 4 eyes principle."	4 eyes principle
Trainer #5	"And besides that, I also think it narrows the gap between the trainers who only train and the trainers who train occasionally."	Closing gap between trainers

Table 3: Open coding examples

Axial coding

Axial coding is the second step in the grounded theory method, following open coding. In this step I go over my open codes and group them into categories (Delve, Ho & Limpaecher, 2022). First, I find connections and relationships between the codes, and afterwards I determine the label for the broader category. See figure 15 for an example of a category with its corresponding codes. From the 236 open codes, I created 49 categories. It is my opinion that axial coding is crucial for the grounded theory process. The categories that are created in this step have a significant impact on the direction that your theory is going towards. Each time that new data was acquired, I needed to re-evaluate whether the created categories are still correct. It is a iterative process, and it took me a couple of tries to get these results. The next step that follows is selective coding.

Selective coding

Selective coding is the final step of the process. This is where the categories are connected to create core categories. These core categories can emerge from one category, or from a combination of multiple categories (Delve, Ho & Limpaecher, 2022). I had 49 categories from which I created 6 core categories. Below in figure 16 you can see an example of one of the core categories. For each of these core categories I will form a theory in the form of insights that I can further use for defining my project. These insights will form the foundation of my problem statement, design criteria, and final solution. These core categories are the answer to the research question: *What are things that need to be considered when checking the quality of a training?*. Thus, for a complete and round quality assurance, each core category needs to be considered when checking the quality of a training. In the next section I will go more thoroughly through the creation of each of the core categories.

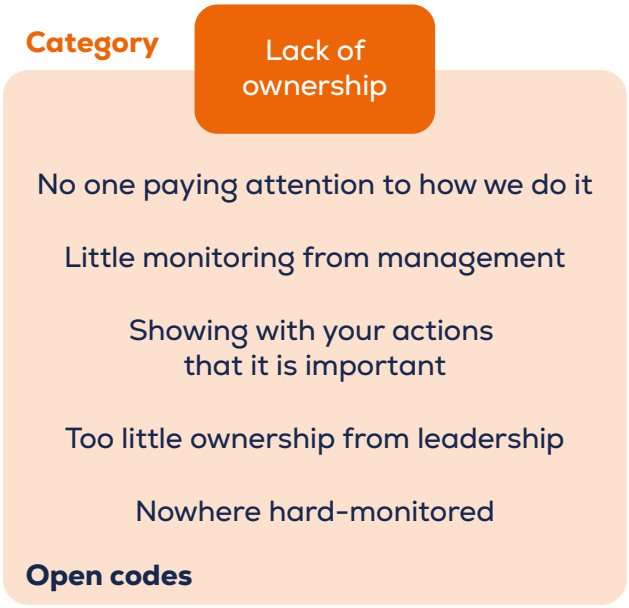

Figure 15: Axial coding examples

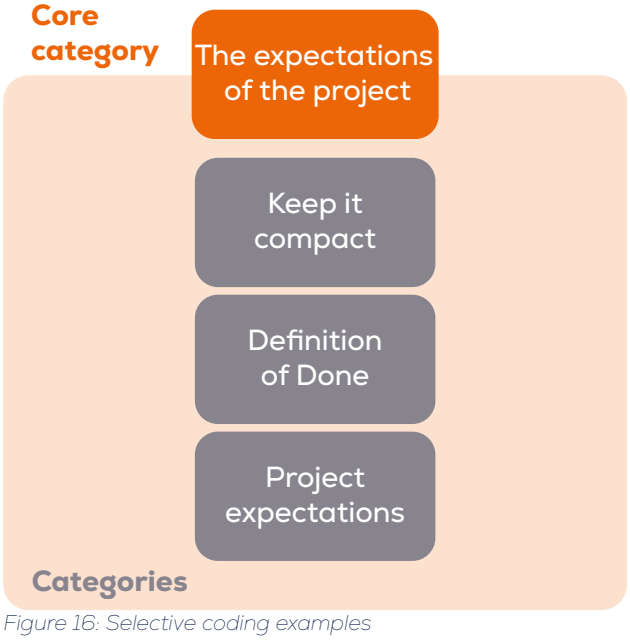

Figure 16: Selective coding examples

Insights

In this section I will go through each of the core categories created by selective coding. First, I will explain the theory created in a few sentences, and afterwards I will go through the creation of it.

It's time for change

This core category highlights the need and want for change within the company when it comes to certain aspects regarding quality assurance. Employees have the opinion that solving this problem should be a priority, but for it to be solved, certain changes need to take place. In figure 17 you can see the categories that this core category consists of. The category It's about time emphasises that this project should have been done a long time ago. Here is a quote from this category that backs my statement:

"But I think these are important components that we should have started with years earlier." - Trainer #7

Another category that I want to shine light on is Adoption. It was mentioned that in order to increase the chances that my solution will be accepted and used, I need to include the trainers in the creation of it and I need backing from management. Two quotes from this category that I found interesting were:

"Yes, but I think it's important that solutions are co-created with the people who use them." - Trainer #5

"People start things and then something is created somewhere and then it sits on a shelf in the closet somewhere and people forget it's there. So assurance is an important component I think." - Trainer #7

These quotes emphasise the importance of co-creation in this company. Initiatives have been started, but making sure that it's actually being used and implemented is a more difficult task.

Figure 17: Core category 1

The expectations of a trainer

This core category contains data that is related to the skills, motivation, and experience of a trainer. You can see in figure 18 that I did an extra clustering round to make the data more clear. I will call these extra clusters: Fields. In this case, the fields are: Co-train, Skills, Experience, and Motivation. The question that arises from the data in this core category is: What does a trainer need in order to qualify as a quality trainer?. The four fields that this core category consists of can be seen as areas topics for the qualification criteria that a trainer needs to comply with. The Co-train field has a category called Together we are better. Some quotes from this category are:

"If you ask me how we can improve the quality of training? Well, very simple, by always giving a training together." - Trainer #2

"That's what it's all about in the end, that the customer experience is optimal. And what I see with that is, for example, cleverly combining an experienced trainer and a starting trainer, in the same training." - Trainer #2

"Having that four-eye principle once a year at those trainings." - Trainer #4

Thus, according to the trainers, giving a training together increases the quality while simultaneously reducing the margin of error. The next field in this core category is Skills. This field contains categories that cover the knowledge, didactic skills, and people skills that a trainer should have. Here are some examples:

"The most important thing, of course, is to be subject-matter expert." - Trainer #4

"I would define quality based on your knowledge first of all, obviously of the subject you are conveying, sensing the group and being able to respond to that." - Trainer #8

"Also, just a piece of didactic skills where you really know how to teach people things." - Trainer #7

The next field in this core category is Experience. In this field, the interviewees mentioned many aspects that have to do with the experience a trainer should have. Not only experience as a trainer, but more importantly experience in the field. They mentioned that experience is key when it comes to being able to answer the clients' practical questions and to not stick only to the theory. Here follow a few examples:

"And that's also where it comes with the experience and the content, that you can respond to the question. Because often people, even if it's not standard training material, sometimes still want to elaborate on a particular case of their situation." - Trainer #4

"Therefore, I am also critical of the experience of such a trainer. So I would not want to teach a training in something that I have not experienced myself in practice." - Trainer #2

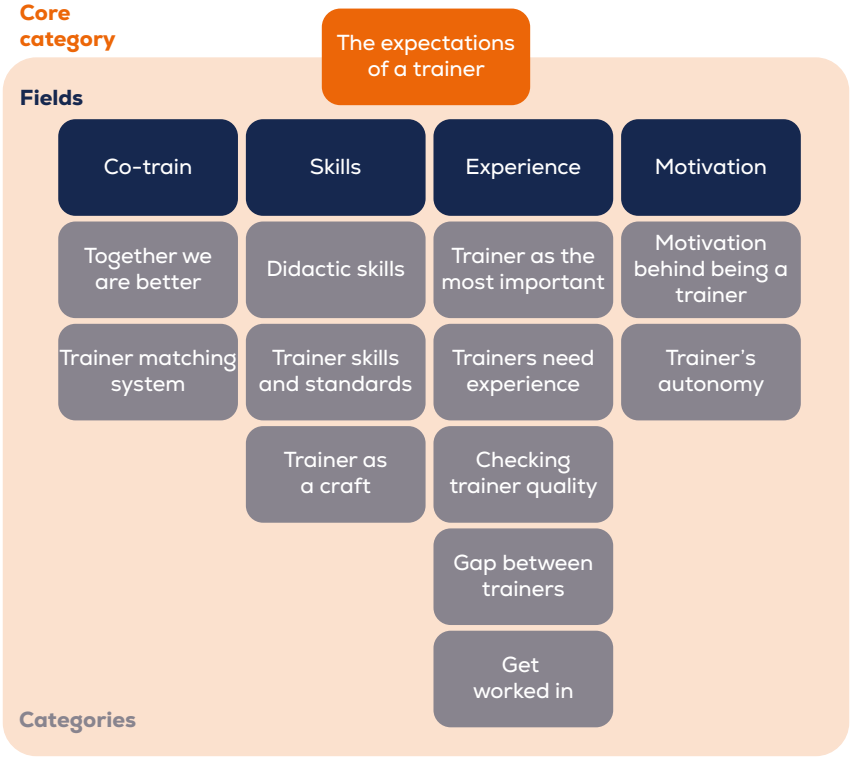

Figure 18: Core category 2

The last field of this core category is Motivation. This part is about what drives a trainer to be a trainer. What I discovered is that some trainers only give trainings in order to reach their monthly margin as mentioned by Trainer #3.

"What I think especially at the moment is that people are training to boost their margin." - Trainer #3

This is a clear example of extrinsic motivation. The risk of this is that these trainers invest less time and effort compared to self-determined trainers. Another point is that trainers like to have some freedom to work their magic. Allowing a controlled amount of freedom is healthy for the motivation of trainers.

"So this is how you should do it because I think that a trainer's freedom is good." - Trainer #3

"The way you explain it or if you want to do simulations, that may be different , but what people should have learned at the end of the day should be consistent with 90% as far as I am concerned." - Hub Lead #2

Lack of a clear structure

This core category is about the main problem that I discovered. Like I have mentioned before in this report, there is no structure in place that is needed for a quality assurance solution. Just like the previous one, this core category also consists of four fields (figure 19). The amount of fields shows that the problem is complex, and there are different factors that contribute. The first field is called Who is responsible?. A major finding when analysing the data was that employees are not well informed about their responsibilities, especially concerning internal processes. And those who are aware of their responsibilities do not always take ownership. Here are some examples from the interviewees:

"Here I am also ultimately responsible and it is not happening well enough now, so also from leadership we are not taking enough ownership." - Hub Lead #3

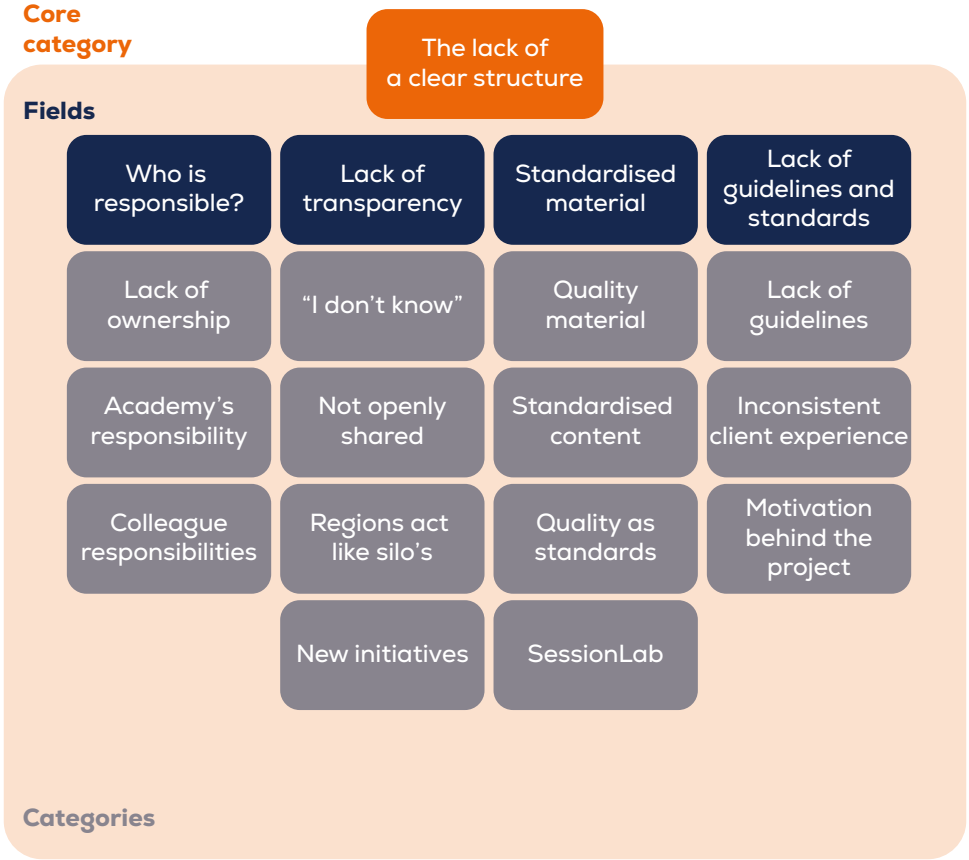

Figure 19: Core category 3

"I officially think it should come from Academy. That's their main focus, they have head trainers." - Hub Lead #2

The next field is named Lack of transparency. This field also contributes to the problem. Many employees do not know about certain documents or agreements, especially newcomers. The reason for this is because these are not well documented, or shared properly. What does not help either is that the different hubs act like silo's. Each hub has their own way of doing things. Here follow some examples:

"But if you're new, you're really lost." - Trainer #4

"So I don't know how exactly they do that at East." - Trainer #7

Another field is called Standardised material. With standardised material I mean things that are set as a standard and can be reused. Standardising is a big part of quality assurance, assuring that the same product is being offered consistently. We can connect this field to the previous one, because standardised materials need to be openly shared with everyone.

"My opinion is that it should be so with all training regardless of whether x or y gives it, the content is the same." - Hub Lead #2

" Standardised content, there should just be one content for one training. And the fact that you draw the flip differently than your colleague is irrelevant." - Trainer #7

The last field of this core category is Lack of guidelines and standards. A consequence of not having a set of guidelines is that the outcome is different each time. This would mean that the client gets a different experience each time. If we are talking about quality assurance, this is not something that is desirable.

"We have to offer people handles." - People Lead

"And if next time someone else gives it, they will probably get a completely different training." - Trainer #6

Each mentioned field contributes negatively to the problem. All these side issues need to be addressed to have a well functioning structure.

The expected customer journey

When we look at the experience of the client, we need to look at the whole customer journey, and not just the training itself. The journey starts as soon as the client books the training or has an intake meeting, and finishes after the last moment of contact takes place, for example an impact meeting where the return on investment is discussed with the client. Therefore it is important that the precare and aftercare are also considered when talking about quality. This core category consists of two fields (figure 20).

Figure 20: Core category 4

The first one is Customer experience. Some quotes from this field are:

"For us, very much on the experience. About the whole picture, the journey, before training, at the training and after."
- Hub Lead #1

"The biggest benefit they can get out of the region is that bit of pre- and aftercare."
- Hub Lead #1

These quotes show that some employees do believe that these aspects improve the quality and experience of a training and that there is room for improvement. The other field is Reputation. The customer experience has a direct link to the reputation of the company. A good reputation with a client increases the chances of them returning for another training. On the other hand, a bad reputation is bad for business.

"I think we are then more likely to be called back for other assignments." - People Lead

"Reference is also quality for me."
- Hub Lead #2

"Image is hard to gain and easy to lose. So to give just one shitty training session and that resonates with the market, takes a very long time to rebuild." - Trainer #4

These show the importance of maintaining a good reputation with the client. And by considering the whole customer journey, one maximises the chances of offering a pleasant experience.

The collection of feedback

Feedback is what makes the whole picture complete. Collecting feedback closes the loop, and connects the company with the client. By collecting feedback on certain topics, it becomes clear which changes need to be made to improve the client experience. This core category has two fields (figure 21). One of them is Means. In other words, how are they collecting feedback? Here I found that there are two main occurrences in which feedback is collected. First, feedback is collected live during the training after each daypart mainly by letting the participants put post-its with feedback written on them on a scale that's been drawn on a flipchart. Here is a quote said by some trainer:

"I think I do speak for every trainer when I say that every half day we put the thermometer in so that before they go to lunch or before they walk out the door we do a return of time invested. Are we still on track? How positive are you? And they give a tip and a top." - Trainer #4

The feedback that gets collected here is mostly aimed at the training or trainer itself. The trainer can adjust immediately according to the feedback he receives. The other instance is that feedback is collected sometimes at the end of the last training day. Here each trainer does this differently. Academy makes use of the learning platform aNewSpring. Some use an online evaluation form, others use flip charts and post-its again, and some don't collect feedback at the end at all. Here follow some quotes:

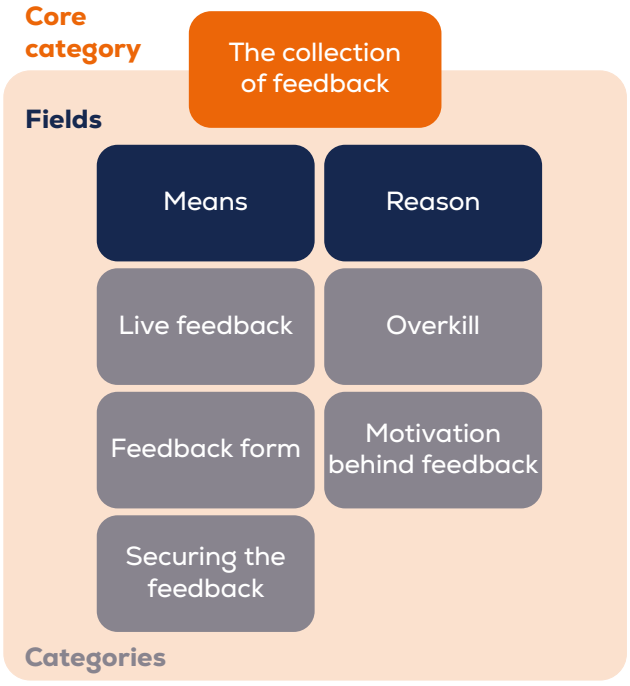

Figure 21: Core category 5

"What you often hear is "we get very few evaluations back". Then I would say okay, do we do it through the system like Academy does?" - Hub Lead #1

"[Forms] I can choose to do that myself. Frankly, I don't." - Trainer #2

"A feedback form is one way you can check your quality, but that's also fairly person-specific." - Trainer #8

Another field in this core category is Reason. This is about the content of the feedback, and what the trainers want as feedback. It is apparent from the data that trainers personally prefer live feedback, because those are mostly directed at them. Feedback that is collected via the evaluation forms are mainly about the training and service, and not the trainer. See the quotes below:

"I always do it because I want to know for myself, I want to know if people are satisfied." - Trainer #2

"So I actually still get the most out of those intermediate measurements and the retrieval at the end than the actual real measurements." - Trainer #5

"A majority does almost always involve the location and the training itself." - Trainer #5

Another factor that trainers mentioned that hinder them from collecting feedback via forms, is that it takes a long time before the feedback gets back to them. They prefer feedback with which they can immediately act on. Here is a quote about that:

"So those feedback forms that are only available from some people after a month or so sometimes. Yeah and by then I totally stopped thinking about my January training." - Trainer #4

"But of course that's quite a late feedback loop, so you can't change anything about your training then, just the training for next time." - Trainer #4

Thus, enough feedback is collected during the training, which is beneficial for the trainers personally. However, feedback that is valuable for Prowareness at the end of a training is not collected enough.

The expectations of the project

This last core category is a collection of the expectations that the employees have of the outcome of this project (figure 22). The idea behind analysing this information is to hear the needs and wants of the interviewees, which will be helpful for formulating a product goal later. It's interesting to see that most of the quotes related to the product goal come from Leads and not trainers. I suspect that the Leads are more concerned with the whole process, while trainers are more focussed on what they contribute. And as I expected, multiple trainers mentioned the term Definition of Done, which is a tangible document which they can use.

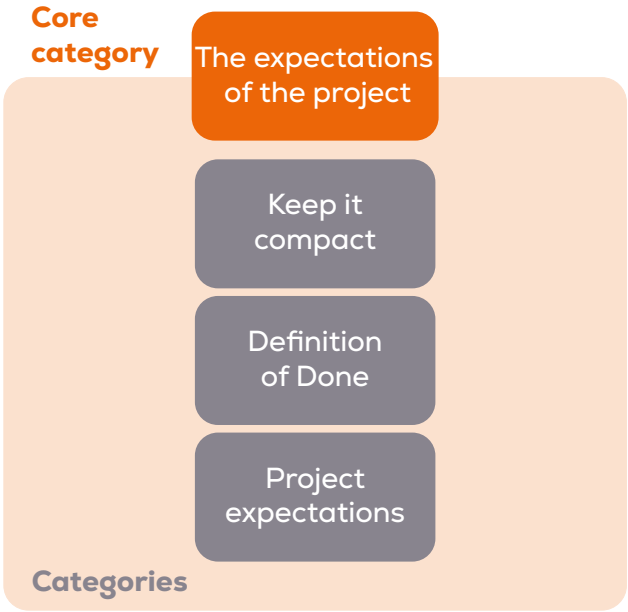

Figure 22: Core category 6

Here are some quotes:

"Description of the process to follow before, during and after you give training and its rollout." - People Lead

"That every trainer does the same thing, and that everyone knows this is the process. This is the way we assure quality." - Hub Lead #3

"You with an opinion, with or without recommendations, with or without an action plan or things we can do." - Hub Lead #4

"So some sort of Definition of Done per training would be very good for me." - Trainer #6

The expectations expressed by the Leads all go in the same direction. They expect a recommendation, clear structure, and an action plan to carry out the solution. In addition, some trainers also mentioned to keep the solution as compact as possible. Keeping it compact makes it more accessible and user friendly. Here is a quote that mentions this wish:

"It's just as nice. I do think, the smaller, the more compact you can keep it, the nicer." - Trainer #4

Conclusion

That concludes the grounded theory method. From each of the six core categories, a theory was formed. In this paragraph I cover the insights that I got from these core categories and how I will take them with me to the remainder of this project.

1. **Including the users in my process increases the chances of the solution being adopted and used.** From the beginning of my project I knew adoption could be a challenge at this company. After my analysis I got a better idea of what this means exactly. To increase the chances of carrying out the solution successfully, I need backing from management, and I need to include the users in the creation of the solution. Thus, to create the solution, I will organise some brainstorm sessions to co-create with the trainers. I will set as a criteria for the product that it needs to be created with input from the trainers. The backing from management is something that I already started doing, by including the Hub Leads in my analysis. This way I know that they are on board and well informed about my project. Later on in the developing phase I will go through the input I gathered from the trainers, and start forming a solution. Afterwards, I can present this to the Managing Director and get his input and opinion on the idea.
2. **The trainer's criteria should cover the skills, experience, and motivation of a trainer.** Many trainers mentioned that one of the most important factors when looking at the quality of a training is the trainer. The trainer has direct influence on experience of the training. The trainer needs to both transfer the correct information, and entertain the clients. From the data it appears that not everyone is satisfied with the appointing of trainers. In order to ensure that a trainer is qualified to give training, he needs to comply with certain criteria. From the data I discovered three fields which the criteria should cover: skills, experience, and motivation. I will use this insight as a requirement for the solution. In practice, validating the motivation of a trainer is difficult and very subjective. That's why I will adjust the requirement by removing the motivation aspect from the trainers' criteria.
3. **All training is lacking a clear structure and guidelines, not only training offered by Academy.** In the original project brief I mentioned that my focus would be on training offered by the Academy department. These are mostly certified training which are connected to a set of guidelines regarding the content provided by a third party. My plan was to improve the whole process around these training sessions. However, from

the data it is apparent that all training is lacking these guidelines. The same counts for the ones given by consultants in-house at a client. My solution will add more value to Prowareness if I include these training sessions too. Thus, I will expand the scope of my project and tackle both the in-house training as training given by Academy.

4. **To maximise the quality of the client experience, the whole customer journey has to be considered.** The training itself is just one aspect of the customer journey. What happens before and after a training also needs to be defined. The data shows that especially the in-house training does not have these in place. Each consultant does it the way that they see fit. Because Academy makes more use of the online learning platform aNewSpring, the precare and aftercare is more consistent. If we want to ensure the quality of the experience, some standards need to be set for the journey of all the training.
5. **Feedback is not collected regularly, consistently, nor correctly. The collection of feedback is an important aspect of quality assurance.** The feedback closes the loop and connects everything with each other. Right now the trainers collect feedback that is beneficial for their own personal growth. However, feedback that is relevant for Prowareness is not being collected enough. And it's not only about the amount of feedback that is collected. Also the content of the feedback can be improved to be more of value for the company.
6. **The expectations for the outcome of my project are advice, a structure, and an action plan.** Especially the Leads expressed to me that they do not only expect advice and a structure, but also a plan on how to implement the solution successfully. My aim will be to create something that will serve as the start of a quality assurance structure. One aspect of this start is making clear who is responsible and accountable for each step of the journey.

I will make this a requirement for the solution, otherwise the solution will not be successful in the long run.

These were the most important insights that I gained after applying the grounded method theory. Most of these points will be used in the next chapter.

2 Define

In this chapter I will define the problem statement, product goal, and design criteria and requirements based on the knowledge that I acquired in the previous chapter.

Design brief

Despite having an initial project brief at the beginning of the project, after doing my own research, I formulated a new problem statement that comes closer to the reality. The problem statement reads:

The absence of clear quality standards and a compliance process is a significant problem within Prowareness. This problem has implications for both Trainers and customers. The lack of clear quality standards not only results in an inconsistent experience for customers but also creates confusion for Trainers, who may struggle to meet client expectations without a clear, objective measure of quality.

The goal of the solution would then be to solve this problem. As the statement reads, the problem has implications for both the customer as the Trainer. The implication for the Trainer can be well backed by this quote from Trainer #4:

"I don't know. The very first time I went, how could I know what to do." - Trainer #4

To give more context to the quote, this Trainer was mentioning an instance where he had to give training at a particular client for the first time. He went there, gave the training like he usually does, and left. After the event, he heard that he was supposed to hand out a certain feedback form that was a requirement of that client. Of course, since he wasn't aware of this, he didn't do this. As a result, this expectation of the client wasn't met. These are the types of situations that must be avoided. For the solution I formulated the following product goal:

The product goal is to provide a comprehensive description of the process to be followed before, during, and after conducting a training, along with its implementation. The aim is to ensure that every Trainer follows the same process, creating a shared understanding and a standardised approach for quality assurance.

In the previous chapter there were six core categories. Four of these could be seen as parts or the final product. The parts that I am referring to are the training content, the criteria a Trainer should comply with, the customer journey, and the feedback system. These four parts will have to work together to become a final product. All parts are needed to ensure that all layers from my quality assurance foundation model are covered. How they fit exactly is explained in the next chapter. From the data analysis I got enough understanding of these parts to make a list of criteria and requirements for the whole product. That follows in the next section.

Design criteria and requirements

Based on the data I gathered and analysed from literature, the questionnaire, and the conducted interviews, I formulated a list of criteria and requirements that the product should comply with. A requirement refers to an obligatory condition, while a criterion serves as a standard used for comparing and judging things (WikiDiff, n.d.). In other words, a requirement can be checked with a simple yes or no, while a criteria can be rated on a scale. I made a distinction between these terms, because for the product as a whole, I have a list of criteria with which choices can be made along the way, while each part of the product has some requirements it needs to comply with.

Criteria

1. **The product should be easy to use and readily accessible to every relevant party.** In order for the solution to work at its best, everyone should make use of it. Making it easy to use will lower the effort that needs to go into its use, and increases the chance of everyone using it properly. This criteria was inspired by the lack of transparency and awareness in the current situation, and the difficulties that this brings.
2. **The product must be adaptable and be able to function in an agile environment.** Prowareness is a company who's way of working is agile. In chapter 1 I established that the solution should be flexible and adaptable to function well in an agile environment.
3. **The product must be created with the input from Trainers.** This criteria has to do with maximising the chances of a proper adoption of the solution by the Trainers. This was made clear from the data analysed in chapter 1. In the development phase I will make sure to gather more input from the Trainers.
4. **The product must use softwares and platforms used at Prowareness as much as possible.** The softwares that Prowareness uses right now that are relevant to my project are: aNewSpring, SessionLab, and SharePoint. aNewSring is used as an online learning platform for the participants following a Trainer. On this software the participants have access to all the information and documents that they need for the training and exam. The participants can also contact each other and the Trainer via this platform. SessionLab is a platform that they are using to make a clear overview of the content of a training. Lastly, SharePoint is where they store all other documents on the cloud, which can be made accessible to every employee. If the solution requires other softwares to work, then there would be costs involved. From a business perspective, minimising the costs is a wiser choice.
5. **The solution should not get in the way of employees interacting and collaborating with each other.** As was explained in chapter 1, working together is an important aspect of the company culture, and the agile way of working. The less the product gets in the way of this, the better.
6. **The product must contain a structure that ensures its functionality.** The idea behind this criteria is the durability of the solution. The goal should be to create something that can be used as the kickoff quality assurance. With time the details can be worked out and added to the product. Having a structure set around the product, will ensure that it works, and can be maintained.

Requirements

Training content

- **The structure of the training content needs to be in SessionLab.** This is a requirement that was handed to me by management. SessionLab is the platform that they want to keep using.
- **A person must be appointed as accountable for the detailed content of a training.** As established in the data analysis, there is a lack of ownership within Prowareness. Being accountable entails taking ownership of the

outcomes of a task, which means being responsible for dealing with the resulting consequences (Indeed Editorial Team, 2023).

Trainer criteria

- **The Trainer's criteria should cover the skills and experience of a Trainer.** The data analysis in chapter 1 showed that both the skills as experience of a Trainer is important to the quality of a training. Covering both of these fields in the product guarantees a more complete solution.
- **The Trainer's criteria must be clear for everyone who aspires to become a Trainer.** At the moment if an employee wants to start giving training, he wouldn't know where to start. By making the criteria clear and accessible, a new Trainer would know which steps to follow.
- **An accountable person must be appointed for the content of the Trainer's criteria.** Again, appointing someone as accountable makes sure that someone is maintaining and updating the content.

Customer journey

- **The precare and aftercare needs to be incorporated in the learning journey platform aNewSpring.** aNewSpring is the platform that the participants get access to. This is the platform that Prowareness is using, and wants to keep using. To keep the journey consistent, the precare and aftercare need to be incorporated in this platform.
- **The steps needed to be taken through the whole journey must be clear to the Trainer.** This part of the product must make clear which are the steps that need to be taken. This guarantees that each Trainer follows a similar process, and delivers a consistent customer experience.
- **A responsible person must be appointed for each step of the journey.** Currently, not everyone is aware of what is expected from them. A responsible person is a person that is put in charge of a specific task (Indeed Editorial Team, 2023). The product must make clear who is responsible for what, to avoid confusion.
- **An accountable person must be appointed for the content of the customer journey.** Once again, appointing someone as accountable will guarantee the maintenance and renewal of the content of the journey as a whole.

Feedback

- **The feedback must be documented and secured.** One of the current challenges is that the collected feedback is not well documented and secured. Documentation is crucial when wanting to review feedback to identify opportunities for improvement. Also, this will contribute to the transparency that is needed in this solution.
- **The product must improve the quality of collected feedback.** The content of the feedback that is collected is not always insightful. This part of the product must make sure that the collected feedback gives a clear picture of how satisfied the client is.
- **The content of the feedback must include information that is beneficial for the service, the Trainer, and the training.** These are the three pillars that cover all of the parts mentioned above. Feedback on the service is related to the customer journey, thus precare and aftercare. The Trainer feedback covers the part of the Trainer. And lastly, the feedback on the training itself targets the content of the training. Acquiring feedback on all these parts closes the loop for the whole product.
- **An accountable person must be appointed for the feedback process.** Similar to the other parts, someone needs to be made accountable for the collection and processing of the feedback.

3 Develop

Now we move from the problem phase, to the solution phase. In this chapter I start developing the solution to the problem that I defined in the previous chapter. First, I will show the connection between the product and my literature findings. Then, I go through the method that I used for this phase and the results. Lastly, I close the chapter with a conclusion.

Foundation

In the previous chapter we established four parts of which the product will consist of: the training content, the criteria a Trainer should comply with, the customer journey, and the feedback system. In chapter 1 I created a model based on the literature that will serve as the foundation of my final product. The four parts of the product that were discovered in the data analysis of chapter 1, fit perfectly in this model. The connection between the model and the parts can be seen in figure 23. The training content, criteria for the Trainers, and customer journey are part of the Internal wave. These parts are about improving the internal processes to achieve a certain goal, which is a consistent client experience. The Internal feedback loop that I mentioned before is about collecting feedback and improving these three internal processes. The Interface quality assurance feedback loop is about ensuring that the provided services satisfy the needs of the stakeholders. The future wave is about ensuring the relevance of training with respect to the future of the industry and the organisation. The feedback process itself is thus part of the Interface quality assurance. The feedback plays a role in both loops, it is the part that completes the picture. It connects the first two waves with the Future wave. As I have explained before, the feedback loops are essential for making the quality assurance model complete and valuable. Hence, all the parts are needed to make the product round. Covering all the waves of my quality assurance model with the product parts is a confirmation for me that the data collection and analysis was done right.

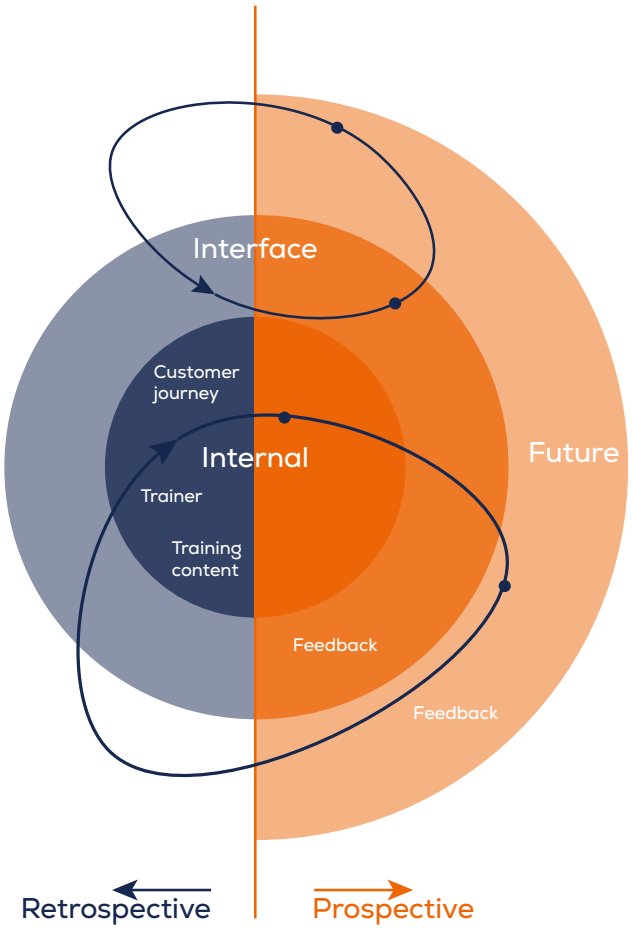

Figure 23: Foundation model with plotted solution parts

Method

One of the criteria for the product is to develop it with the input from the Trainers. Hence, my method is to co-create with them in the form of brainstorm sessions. The product consists of different parts with varying content and complexity. For each part, I chose a couple of employees to co-create with me. As it was difficult to get everyone together physically, I organised online brainstorm sessions via Microsoft Teams and Mural. I aimed to use different participants for each session, but I did not object if someone wanted to be part of multiple sessions. To get the input I was looking for, I created a canvas in the mural that guided the participants through the process. The topics that I wanted to discuss in the sessions were the four parts, and the product as a whole. The initial plan was to have three different sessions where I discuss three topics each. This way I could go over each topic (except one) twice. However, for the last session I could not get enough Trainers to participate, so I cancelled it. Reducing to two sessions meant that I could go over each topic only once (one of them twice). In both of the sessions I had 5 participants. In these sessions I wanted the Trainers to generate ideas, and rank them. Thus, it's like developing and delivering in one event. This is illustrated in figure 24 showing the solution diamond from our double diamond approach. The mini diamonds represent the sessions.

The canvas that I created for the sessions originally consisted of 5 steps. In the first step, the Trainers could read the problem statement, and some questions. The questions were there as a trigger for the next step. For example, for the criteria of the Trainer, the questions were: *"What requirements must a Trainer meet to give a training?"* and *"How and where is this recorded and secured?"*. Each question got a different colour post-it, so the results could be processed accurately. The next step was a brainstorm round, where the Trainers had to think of as many ideas as possible that answer these two questions. In the third step the Trainers had to group these ideas into clusters. The next step is where they had to start converging by ranking the ideas. They had to plot these ideas or clusters into a matrix (figure 25). The x-axis was "Importance", as in 'How important is it that this idea is part of the product?'. And the y-axis was "Impact", as in *'How much influence does this idea have on the quality of a training?'*. The section about the end product was the only one with different labels on the axes. The x-axis was "*ease of use*", and the y-axis was "*durability*", as in '*Would this idea be able to be used in the long term?*' Lastly, in the final step they had the opportunity to throw ideas in the trash can. These would be ideas that should not even be considered.

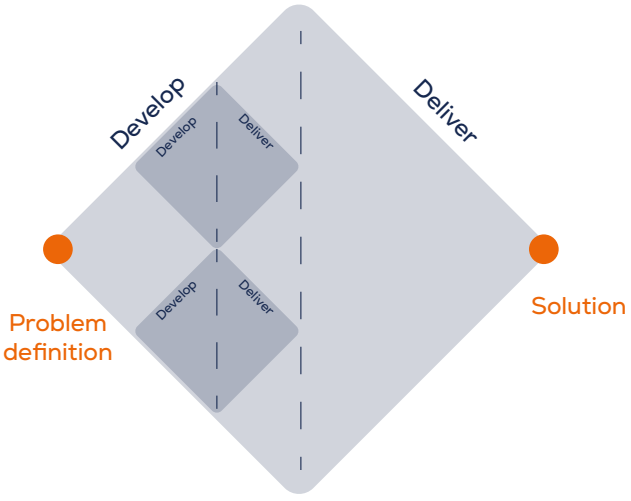

Figure 24: Modified solution diamond

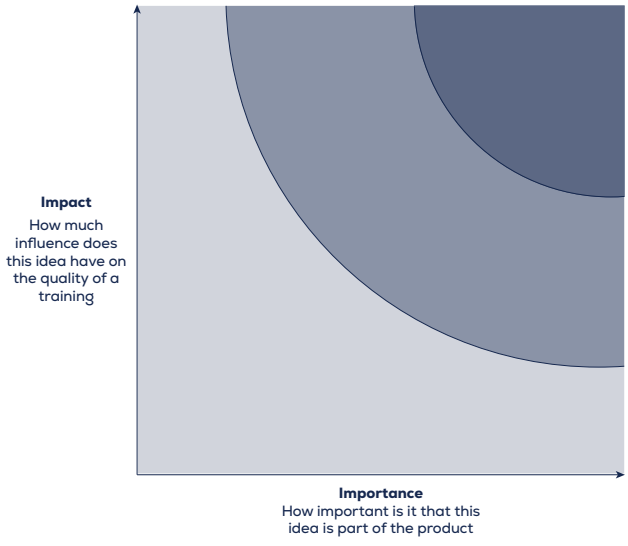

Figure 24: Co-creation matrix

Results

In this section I will go through the results of each topic separately. The filled out canvasses can be found in Appendix E. It is important to mention that the four parts of which the product consists of are going to be created primarily from their input. I do give my opinion on why I agree or disagree with their ideas. The exact content should be filled in by the people responsible. Right now, the point is that an overview with guidelines is given to them to get the ball rolling. The final product that connects everything together is where I am able to use more of my own expertise and creativity. In the previous chapter it was made clear that these parts only have requirements, and not design criteria. For that reason, it may seem that the four parts don't undergo a choosing process. On the other hand, the final product does have design criteria, and the choosing process will be more apparent.

Training content

The first trigger question for this part was: "*What should the overview of a training course all include?*". The ideas that got mentioned the most and/or ranked the highest were:

- **Learning objectives**
  Learning objectives was the idea that was mentioned the most. I am of the opinion that the learning goals should be the starting point of the training content. Each Trainer of a particular training should follow the same set of learning goals. This ensures consistency regarding the knowledge that is transferred to the client.
- **Agenda and timeboxes**
  This point was also one of the most mentioned ones. Prowareness has a particular way of giving training, where they balance the act of teaching, doing, and reflecting very well throughout their training. To maintain the right balance, the agenda should be standardised with set timeboxes.
- **Scope**
  What is meant by the scope, is the range of topics that must be covered in the training. This one goes hand in hand with the previous point. Determining the time to spend per topic guarantees consistent training. During the training the Trainer must be able to sense the group and be able to adapt according to their needs.
- **Practical tips**
  In my opinion this point does not need to be determined up front. The Trainer should sense this for themselves during the training. The participants of a training session are different each time. Depending on their needs and practical experience, the Trainer should choose what to share.

The next question I asked was: "*How and where is this recorded and secured?*". Most of them mentioned SessionLab. This was perfect, because that was one of the requirements of this part. Additionally, all of the points mentioned above are possible to do in SessionLab. On this platform you work in a live document, which makes it very agile.

Trainer criteria

The question that was asked for this part was: "*What requirements must a Trainer meet to give a training?*". These are the most prominent answers:

- **Hands-on experience**
  This was the most mentioned point. As I also mentioned in my requirements, hands-on experience is essential to be a qualified Trainer. Something that I heard a lot in my interviews is that this is crucial when answering practical questions coming from the participants. According to Hult International Business School many students have an inclination towards inductive learning, where they grasp concepts better through the use of examples and cases rather than through logical development (Hult International Business School, 2015). An experienced Trainer can make better use of real life examples to reinforce the theory.

- **Didactic skills**
  Trainer skills were also mentioned a couple of times. A Trainer can have all the knowledge and experience, but still not be able to transfer knowledge correctly. This point is also a requirement I already had for the Trainer criteria. One way that this point could be checked is by doing peer reviews. Each training has a head Trainer. In order to qualify, a Trainer should get the green light by the head Trainer.
- **Certification**
  The last thing that a Trainer needs is the right knowledge. The Trainer should understand the theory thoroughly. A way to prove that someone knows the theory is by getting certified on a certain topic.

Then again I asked: "*How and where is this recorded and secured?*". The best answer that I see here is a live excel sheet on SharePoint. A live document can be updated easily and is also accessible to everyone. An excel sheet is the most practical choice for a couple of reasons. First, there already is a document with an overview of all the Trainers and which training they (can) give, and it works. By keeping the same format, the employees can keep using a document they are already familiar with. The difference is that there will be different criteria before a Trainer is considered qualified.

Customer journey

For this part I asked the Trainers three questions. The first two are: "*What should all be included in pre-care?*" and "*What should all be included in aftercare?*". These are the outcomes:

- **Intake interview**
  In-house training undergoes a slightly different procedure than Academy training. For Academy training clients can just sign up via the website. In-house training is coordinated via the consultant or account manager. An intake interview is then held between the client and the consultant that will give the training. The intake interview is the opportunity to discuss the client's expectations.
- **Learning objective**
  Sharing the learning objectives with the client prior to the training serves as a valuable means to ensure alignment and manage expectations effectively. Another benefit is that learning objectives direct the participants' attention to the key information to look out for during a training (InnerDrive, 2022).
- **Practical information**
  Practical information needs to be shared before and after the training. Prior to the training the client must know about the venue, parking, lunch, and amenities. This helps to manage the clients' expectations. Further, the participants should know what is expected from them as well. After the training, practical information could consist of contact information and information about the exam.
- **Extra material**
  Commonly, during the training the Trainer promises to send extra documents, and material to the participants after the training is over. If this is the case, the Trainer should keep his promise and do this.

The other question that they had to answer was: *How and where is this recorded and secured?"*. A Trainer mentioned aNewSpring, which matches the requirement that was set for this part. Using aNewSpring for the whole customer journey can guarantee better consistency between different trainings and Trainers.

Feedback

For this part I asked the following question: "*What aspects should feedback be received on?*". Here are the results:

- **Trainer**
  They referred to the Trainer's knowledge, skills, and overall quality. These are all aspects that correspond with the points that have been mentioned in the Trainer

criteria part. As I argued in chapter 1, the Trainer has a huge influence on the quality of the training. Firstly, collecting feedback about the Trainer will help the Trainer get a better idea of what can be improved. Also, this feedback is a valuable tool to check if the current Trainer criteria is good enough.

- **Content**
  The content of the training was also mentioned. They mentioned the overall quality of the content, and also the learning objectives. Have the established learning objectives been reached? In the Customer journey part I mentioned that the learning objectives are tied to the expectations of the client. In other words, 'What was the return on investment of the client?'. The feedback about the learning objectives helps to evaluate whether the construction of the content fits with the set of learning objectives.
- **Overall experience**
  The overall experience covers the whole customer journey and not just the hours in the classroom. Consider the points mentioned about the practical information in the Customer journey part. By gathering feedback on the overall experience, valuable insights can be gained to identify what can be improved to make the experience more pleasant for the client. The overall experience is important, because that determines the feeling that the client goes home with.

The participants also had to answer the following question: "*How and where is this recorded and secured?".* I got mixed answers here, but none of them was really specific. Trainers mentioned "*In a clear tool online", "a QR code", "Not separately via the email"*, and "*Feedback goes directly to the Trainer"*. These are more like wishes of characteristics that the solution should have. Something interesting that was mentioned was "*After completing the survey, you will receive the additional materials"*. I checked this with Academy, and it appears that they make use of this method. Since they started doing this, the response rate of the evaluation forms has increased. Since the precare and aftercare is done via aNewSpring, the only way to apply this method is via this platform. After the participants fill in the form, the additional material unlocks automatically. A higher response rate is one of the requirements for the Feedback part. Another benefit of aNewSpring is that the results can be easily exported in a joint excel sheet where it can be analysed. Thus, choosing to use aNewSpring for the feedback completes the whole customer journey. The participants then have access to everything they need on one platform. This is the part that I prototype in the next chapter. The choices that I made when making the content of the whole feedback form will be discussed there. The last thing that I want to mention about these points, is that the content, Trainer, and overall experience cover all the other parts of the final product. This is a confirmation for me, that the part of the product that came from the interviews, are correct.

Final product

- Lastly, I discussed the form of the final product, the one that brings everything together. The co-creation sessions delivered many different ideas. As I mentioned before, the four parts will be created from the input I got from the Trainers. And only the final product needs to undergo a choosing process. In order to make the right choice using my product criteria, I'm using a Harris Profile to judge the concepts. A Harris Profile is a useful tool for comparing the strengths and weaknesses of design concepts in a visual way (TU Delft, n.d.). For the Harris Profile I used the criteria listed in chapter 2. The Harris Profile is next to each concept in figures 25-28.

The trigger questions that were asked here are: "*What form should the final product take?*" and "*How and where is this recorded and secured?*". These four concepts came out of the answers:

Poka Yoke

In essence, a poka-yoke acts as a protective measure that ensures a process cannot proceed to the next step unless the necessary conditions are met (Daniel, 2021). This is a very interesting suggestion and will definitely be included in the end product. An example is the idea behind the Trainer criteria part. A Trainer can only qualify to give a training when he complies with the necessary criteria. Ideally I would implement such a concept for all parts, however since nothing is in place yet, that would mean that no training can be given until the parts are finished and functioning. This concept could be a characteristic of the end product, but not be the product on its own. Further, if each part is so dependent on each other, the product would be less easily adaptable.

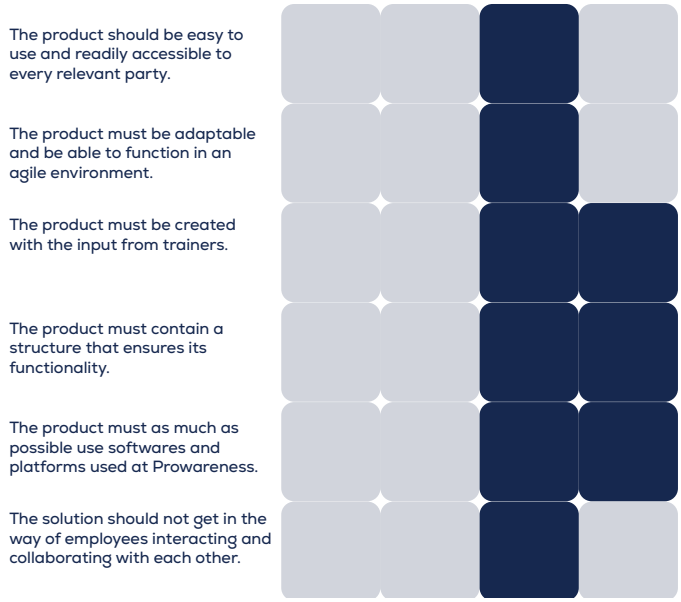

Figure 25: Harris Profile Poka Yoke

Live checklist

A checklist comes close to a Definition of Done. The goal of the product is to act as a checklist to ensure quality. The live aspect of it is important, so it can be updated in real time. Adaptability is crucial for the solution, which is also a criteria. Thus, this concept of a live checklist fits well within the product goal. A live document can be a document in either Word, Powerpoint or Excel. All these tools are on SharePoint. SharePoint is the platform that is most accessible to all employees. Other platforms like aNewSpring and SessionLab are mostly used by Trainers. Imagine if a non-Trainer wants to familiarise himself with the process of becoming a Trainer. SharePoint would then be the most accessible place.

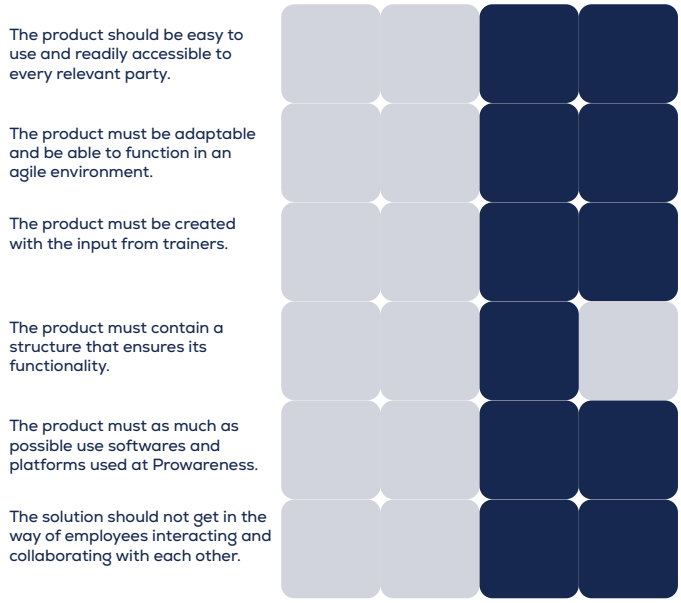

Figure 26: Harris Profile Live checklist

Standardised flip charts (flips)

Flips are a must have at a Prowareness training. First of all, a standardised flip is not the easiest thing to adapt. Each time changes need to be made to it, a new version needs to be physically created. Next to that, Trainers often prepare the flip beforehand and add additional drawings or post-its during the training. Currently, each Trainer is free to design the flip to their liking. That is a part of the craft of being a Trainer that I don't want to take away. By standardising the flips, part of the freedom that Trainers currently have are taken away. The content of a training should be standardised, but the way that the Trainer wants to present it to the participants should be up to them. Being a Trainer should still be seen as a craft. I see this as having confidence in the competence of your employees. Thus, I don't think that this is a strong idea.

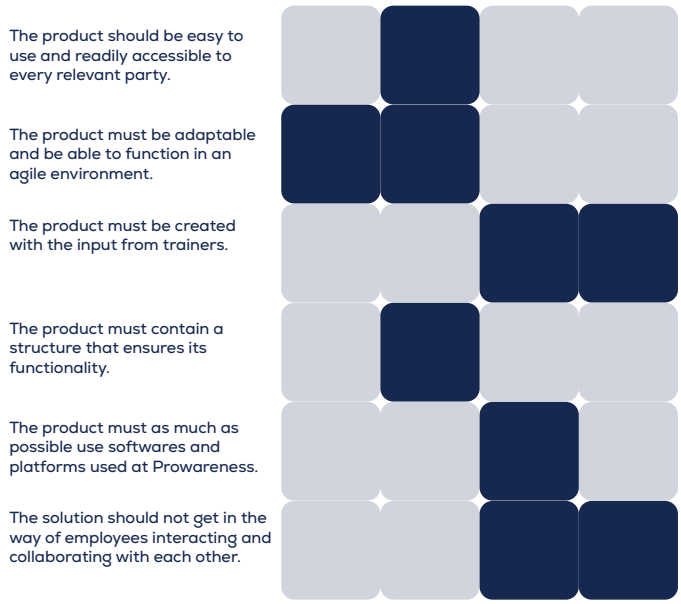

Figure 27: Harris Profile Standardised flip charts

Mini training

Another idea that they mentioned was giving the Trainers a mini training where all the guidelines are explained. One Trainer mentioned that this could be made part of the onboarding program. The onboarding program is the first couple of days during which new employees are taught the culture and way of working of Prowareness. Going through the product in the onboarding program is a good plan, but the product should still be documented and regularly updated in a way. This way it can be accessible to all parties at all times. By only going through it during the onboarding process, it is not guaranteed that the employees will remember everything that was mentioned. This concept, just like the Poke-Yoke, could be added to the end product, but should still consist of a tangible and accessible element.

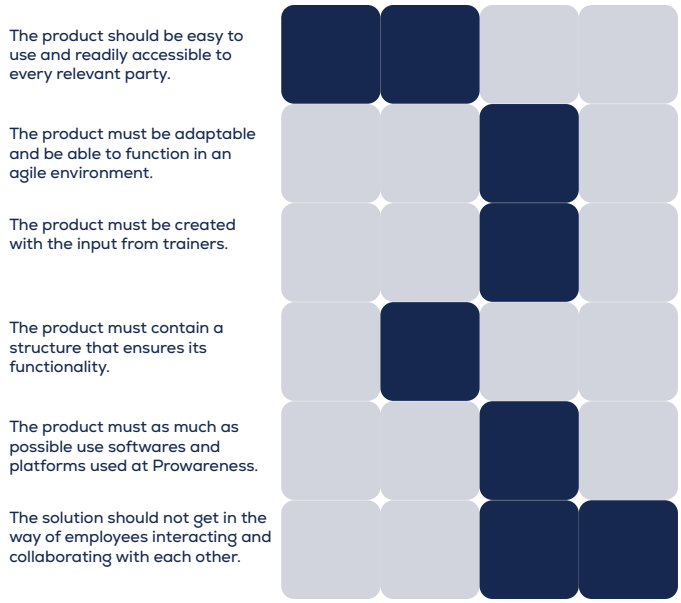

Figure 28: Harris Profile Mini training

Conclusion

From the criteria and Harris Profiles, it shows that a live checklist is the best way to document a quality assurance product. The area where this concept was stronger than all the other ones, was its accessibility and adaptability. These are two criteria that are crucial for the goal of this product. That is why I choose to continue my project with this concept. In the next chapter I go deeper in the details of the end product.

4 Deliver

In this chapter, first I go into the details of the end product. Explain its purpose, outline and form. Then, I go through the prototype that is going to get tested. The prototype represents just one part of the whole product. Afterwards I go through the results, and end the chapter with a conclusion.

Solution

As stated in chapter 2, the product goal reads:
"The product goal is to provide a comprehensive description of the process to be followed before, during, and after conducting a training, along with its implementation. The aim is to ensure that every Trainer follows the same process, creating a shared understanding and a standardised approach for quality assurance."

The concept that was chosen was a live checklist. This checklist will consist of all the information that is needed to assure the quality of the training. This document will contain information about each part, and will refer to other tools when needed. From now on I will refer to this document as the 'Handbook'. The Handbook will be made accessible to all employees. However, the Handbook is targeted to employees that have a connection to the customer journey of a training. Who exactly these are, are made clear in the Handbook. The Handbook will be made accessible on SharePoint on the page with training and Trainer resources called Trainer Tundra. SharePoint is a platform that is used as hub transcendent, and is therefore perfect for sharing documents that are needed company wide.

The Handbook is made in colours and design that fit the Prowareness brand. Each section consists of visuals accompanied by explanatory text. With the visual, the reader can immediately understand the process and see which roles are involved. If the reader is interested in more details, he can read the text.

On the first page of the Handbook the reader can find the purpose of the document. According to Hailey, a good way to capture the reader's attention, is to explain to them why they should care (Hailey, n.d.). I did this by starting the document off with a more elaborate version of the product goal, thus giving it a primary role by making it the first thing that the reader sees when opening up the Handbook. The Dutch version is as follows:

"Het doel van dit document is om een uitgebreide beschrijving te bieden van het proces dat gevolgd moet worden vóór, tijdens en na de uitvoering van een training. Het streven is om ervoor te zorgen dat elke Trainer hetzelfde proces volgt, waardoor er een gedeeld begrip ontstaat en een gestandaardiseerde aanpak voor kwaliteitsborging van trainingen. Het document biedt een overzicht van de stappen en verantwoordelijke rollen, en fungeert als een leidraad. De specifieke inhoud per stap moet echter worden ontwikkeld door de Trainers, Stewards en Customer Relationship Managers in de aangewezen platformen."

These are the chapters that the Handbook consists off:

- Roles
- Overview customer journey
- Trainer criteria
- Precare
- Training content
- Feedback
- Aftercare

Roles

The roles make clear who is involved in the process. In figure 29 you can see the Handbook page. Each role gets a specific icon with the purpose to distinguish the tasks immediately without having to read the text fully. The first one, of course, is the Trainer. The Trainer is the one that gives the training, and needs to make sure that he complies with the required criteria to give the training. Further, the Trainer needs to do the intake with the client to set the right learning objectives. For the aftercare the Trainer needs to send the promised documents.
Then there is the Customer Relationship Managers. This is a new role that doesn't exist yet within the company. It's a combination of an account manager, and back-office hospitality employee. The front-office only takes care of the office and makes sure that it looks good for the employees and clients. The front-office is thus not part of the combination and will keep existing separately. The reason that I advise combining the roles of the account manager and the back-office, is because there is some overlap between these roles in the current journey. This leads to a lot of transfer of information. Each transfer comes with a risk of error, and also costs time. Right now, the account managers do a part of the precare and aftercare. The back-office hospitality does part of the precare, feedback, and part of the aftercare. In my solution the Customer Relationship Managers will be the ones to take care of the precare, feedback, aftercare, and overall service of a training.
However, in the end the Hub Leads are still the ones that are accountable. They are not directly involved in the process, but are ultimately responsible if something goes wrong.
Lastly, there are the Stewards. They are appointed per training or group of training. They are responsible for the quality of the content of the training, and for setting the criteria that is needed to give the training. In the past, Prowareness had appointed Stewards in an attempt to bring more structure to the training, but due to the lack of a clear way of working nothing came out of it. With this new structure in place, the Stewards will now know exactly what is expected of them.

Figure 29: Roles page from the Handbook

Overview customer journey

The overview of the customer journey (figure 30) is there to give the reader a view of the whole process before diving into each separate part. Making it visual also helps the reader to get a better understanding of the relations between the individual parts. This page acts like a summary or blueprint, so that the user always knows where in the process he finds himself.

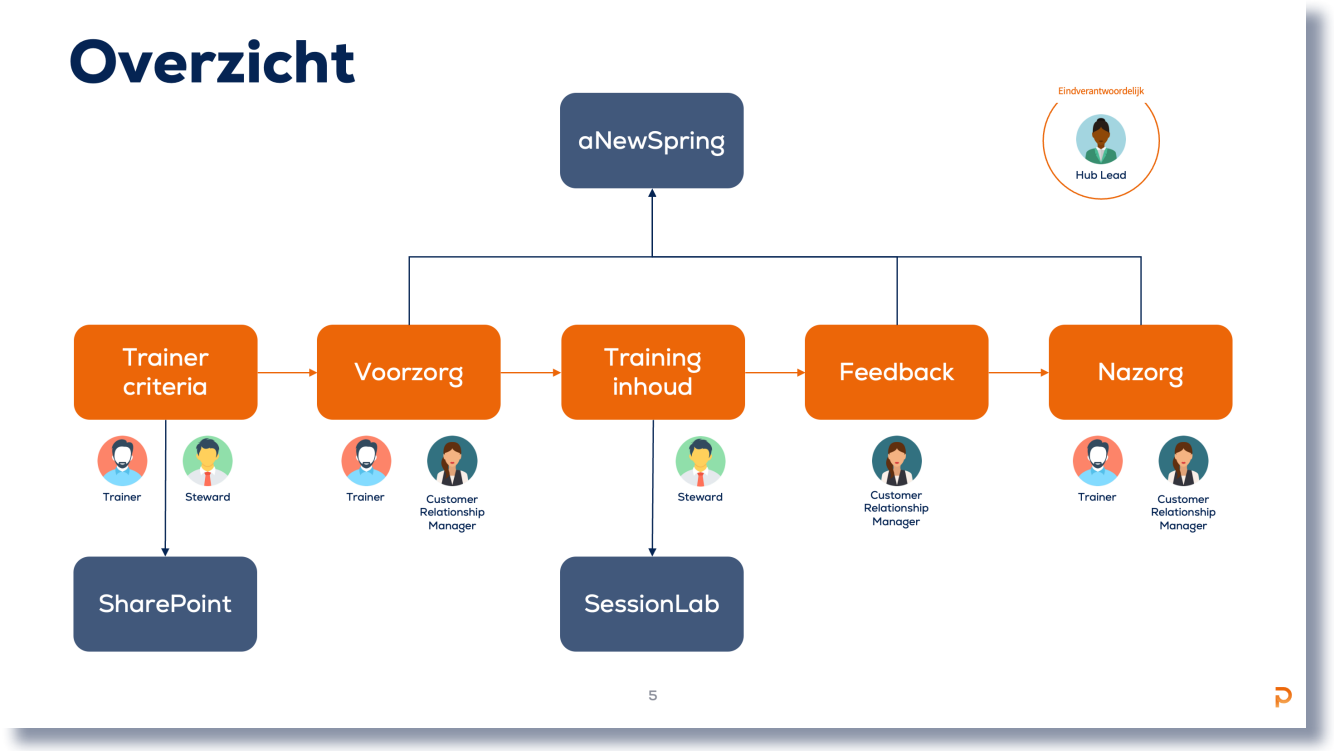

Figure 30: Overview customer journey page from the Handbook

Trainer criteria

The Trainer criteria will differ per training. In the Handbook, only the topics will be covered (figure 31). The detailed content needs to be developed by the Steward of that training. The topics are: Experience, Didactic Skills and Knowledge. Experience will be based on the number of times the Trainer has co-trained the training with an experienced Trainer. The exact amount of times should be determined by the Steward. Knowledge will be based on relevant certifications that need to be earned, and also on the amount of field experience that the Trainer has with the topic. Also didactic skills should be checked by peer review. Furthermore, the Trainer needs to get a green light from the Steward before he can give a training. The Trainer and the Steward will together be responsible for the compliance to these criteria. The Hub Lead will be the one who's accountable if a Trainer doesn't follow the process correctly.

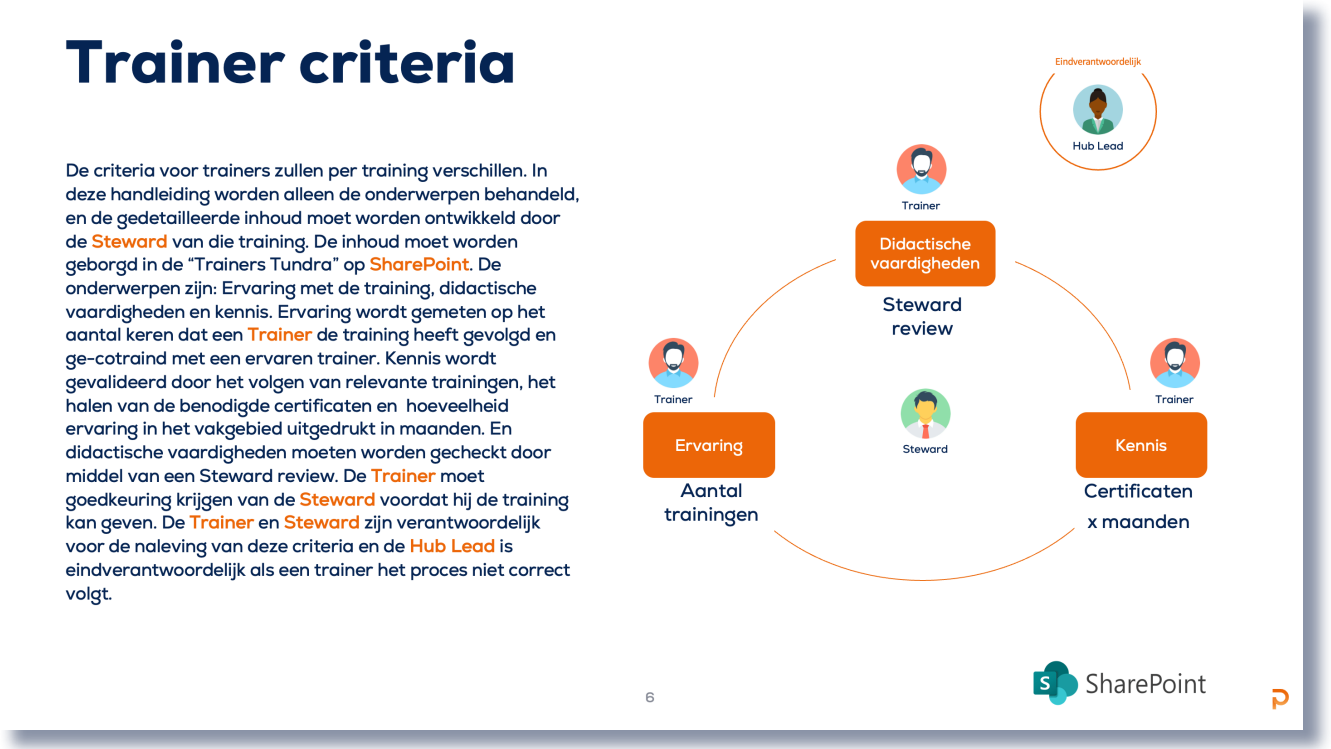

Figure 31: Trainer criteria page from the Handbook

Precare

The Trainer and Customer Relationship Manager will both be involved in the precare. See figure 32 for the Handbook page. The Customer Relationship Manager will be the one that is responsible for setting up the intake interview, and sharing all the necessary practical information that the client needs. Practical information can vary from price, participants, venue, catering, parking, dates, etc.. The Trainer is the one that needs to do the intake interview to make sure that the client is on the same page as him. Furthermore, the Customer Relationship Manager will need to set up the aNewSpring classroom with all the participants. This platform should contain all the information regarding the training that the participants need beforehand.

Figure 32: Precare page from the Handbook

Training content

The training content is the only part that will be documented and kept in SessionLab. In this platform the Steward is responsible for setting up a clear agenda for the training containing learning objectives, timeboxes, and topics that will be treated in the training (figure 33). The Steward will work together with other Trainers to set up the training. Employees are already used to setting up a team to work on specific projects, thus the exact set up of such a meeting does not need to be established in detail. The Steward will need to make sure to keep updating the training content based on the feedback that is received from the clients.

Figure 33: Training content page from the Handbook

Feedback

The collection of feedback will happen via aNewSpring. See figure 34 for the Handbook page. The Trainer will be responsible for encouraging the participants to fill in the feedback form at the end of every training. The Customer Relationship Managers will be responsible for going through the feedback, and sharing alarming information with the relevant parties. Feedback regarding the Trainer will have to be shared with the Trainer and the Steward. Feedback regarding the training content will need to be shared with the Steward. And lastly, feedback about the service and overall experience will be for the Customer Relationship Managers. Each role can decide separately if changes need to be made.

Figure 34: Feedback page from the Handbook

Aftercare

Just like the precare, the Trainer and Customer Relationship Manager will be responsible for the aftercare (figure 35). The Trainer will need to make sure that all relevant information for the participants is on aNewSpring. For the participants to receive additional documents at the end of the training, they first need to fill in the feedback form. The Trainer will also need to make sure that any additional material gets unlocked to the participants that fill in the feedback form. Then an impact meeting is planned between the client and the Trainer. This is a meeting where the client shares his experience with the trainer and discusses whether the learning objectives have been achieved. In the end the Customer Relationship Manager is the one that commercially follows up with the client, and possibly tries to upsell more training.

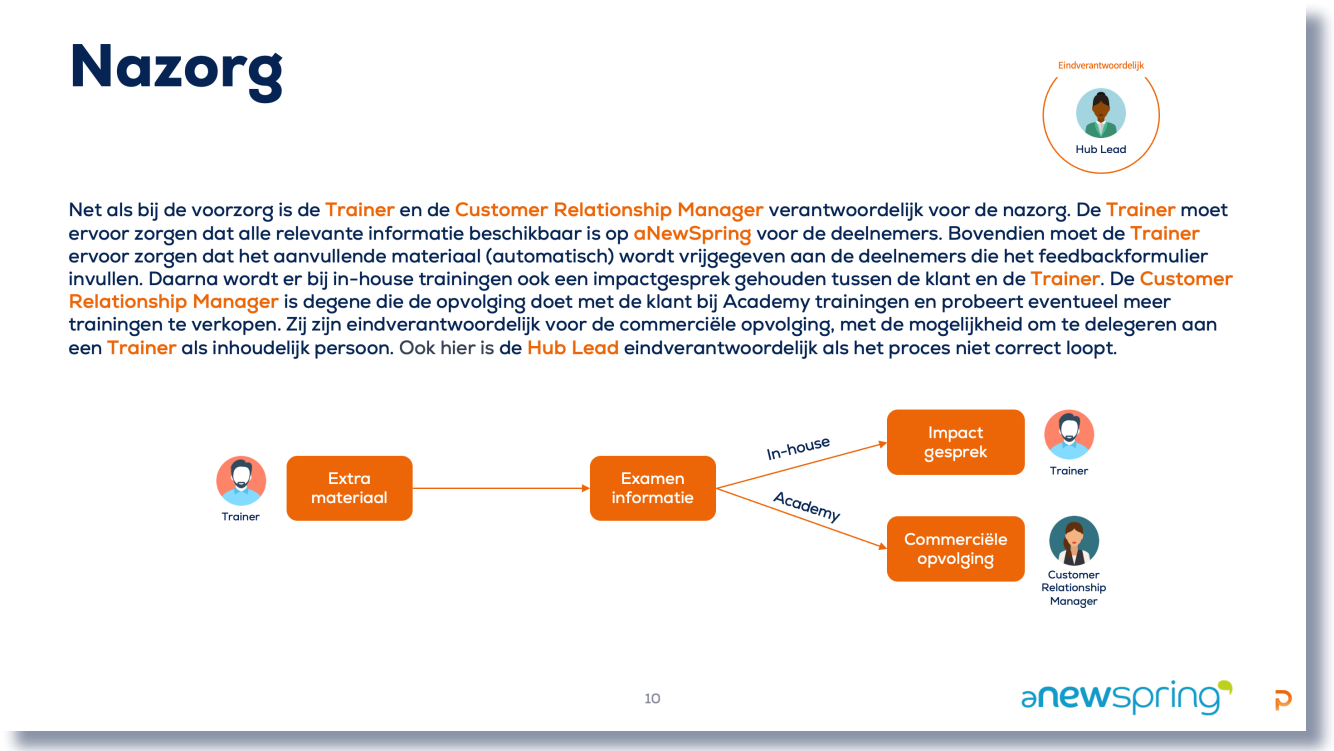

Figure 35: Aftercare page from the Handbook

Implementation

Before the Handbook can be used, there are some preparations that need to take place. Therefore, I created an implementation strategy for Prowareness, so that they know what the next logical steps are. The implementation strategy is in the form of a roadmap with three horizons (figure 36). The roadmap is divided in rows where the tasks of each role are shown across the horizons. The roles similar to the ones in the Handbook. The only role that is added is the People Lead of Academy. He is the one that has agreed to be the responsible one for the rollout and execution of the Handbook. His contact info is also displayed on the last page of the Handbook so that employees know that he is the go-to person when it comes to questions about the Handbook or the process.
The first horizon is called Preparation. In this horizon the roles prepare others involved by explaining the purpose of the Handbook. Think of onboarding, hiring new employees, and appointing Stewards. Some tasks appear multiple times, for example "Onboarding Stewards". That is because the Academy People Lead onboards the current Stewards, while these Stewards can help onboard newer Stewards that get appointed in the future. The second horizon is where the roles start creating all the material that is needed for the execution of the Handbook. For example, the Stewards create the Trainer criteria and the content of the training in SessionLab. The third and final horizon is where the process can actually be executed and officially rolled out. What is important to be aware of, is that this roadmap is an iterative one. That's why there are no timestamps. Each time that a new employee is hired, he needs to be onboarded. The content of the training will have to be kept updated by the Stewards. The collected feedback will keep getting shared by the Customer Relationship Managers with the other roles. The Handbook itself will also need to be kept updated by the Academy People Lead.

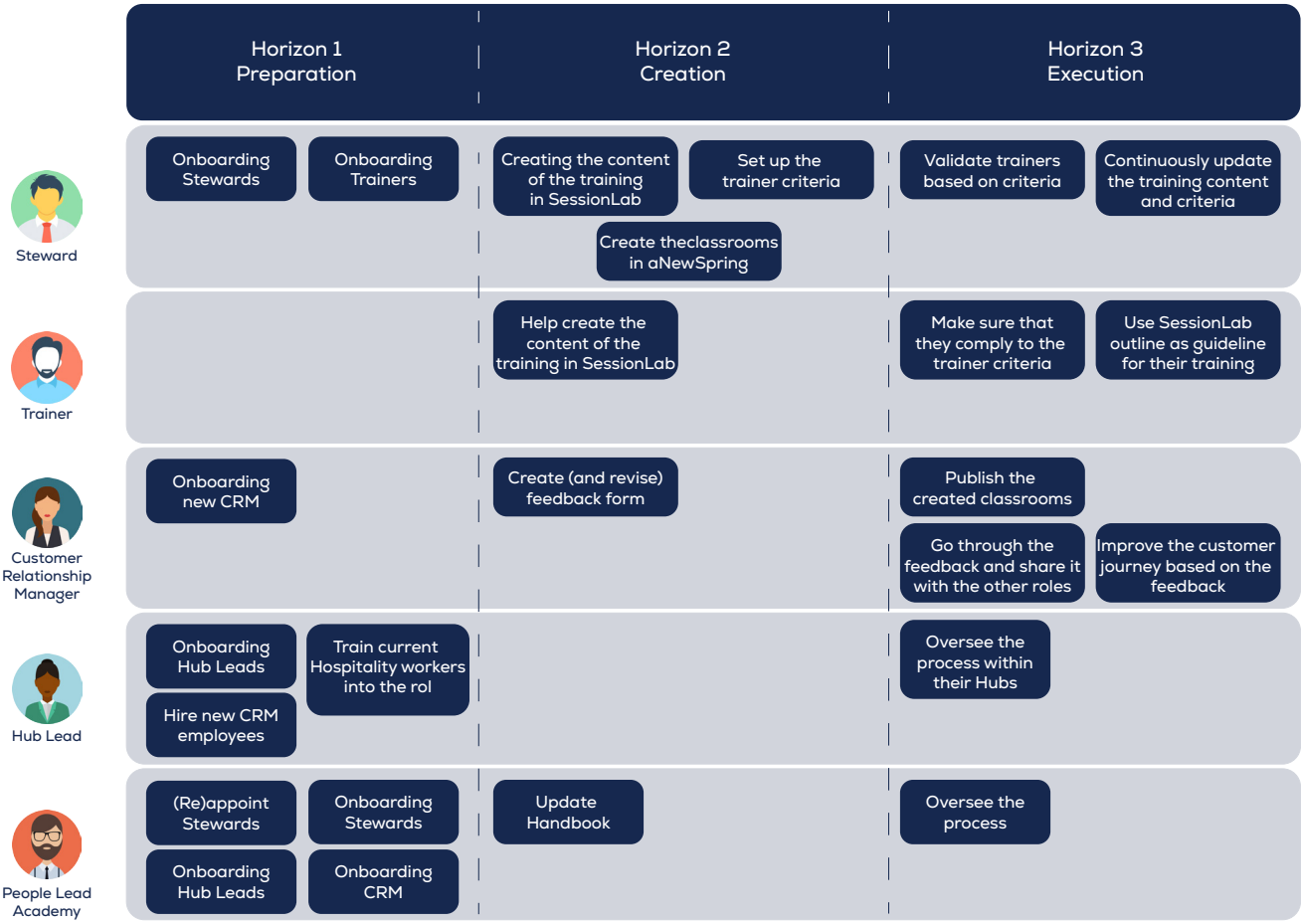

Figure 36: Implementation roadmap

Thus, it is a never ending improvement process.

That covers the Handbook. The format of the Handbook will be a PowerPoint file. The reason that I chose a PowerPoint file over a Word document, is because of Powerpoint's ability to visualise better and to present. This way the Handbook can also be added to the onboarding program in the future if that is desired. Also, Powerpoint slides are commonly used at Prowareness. Thus, keeping a familiar format will contribute to the ease of use of the product.

Prototype

The feedback part is the only part of the product that I have prototyped and tested. There are a couple of reasons for this choice. Firstly, the information for all the other parts (precare, aftercare, training content, and Trainer criteria) does not exist yet. The content for these parts need to be fully developed by the responsible parties and that takes time. So much time that it falls outside of my scope. Also, the feedback form is the only part where I can get results to analyse in time. With regards to the other parts the difference will only be seen over a longer period of time. For those reasons, I chose to make a new feedback form that can be immediately implemented and tested. Since, Academy is the only department that has an active setup for aNewSpring, I used a couple of their training sessions to test the new feedback form. The criteria's that I wanted to test were:

- The product must improve the quality of collected feedback.
- The content of the feedback must include information that is beneficial for the organisation, the Trainer, and the training.

The old feedback form consisted of 11 questions. I tried to keep the same amount of questions, to not make the form too long. I did change a couple of questions, the order, and the layout with the aim to get better responses. In this paragraph I will only cover the changes that I made. If you want to see the old and new form completely, check Appendix F and G.
The first thing that I changed was adding space for explanation when giving a rating for the Trainer, co-Trainer, training, and service (figure 37). I did this to stimulate the participant to give feedback specific to the topic in question. The current version asks feedback for all the topics in one single open question. I think that this is the reason that the current feedback is very generic. For the service, I also added some extra information below the question to trigger more feedback than just about the food.

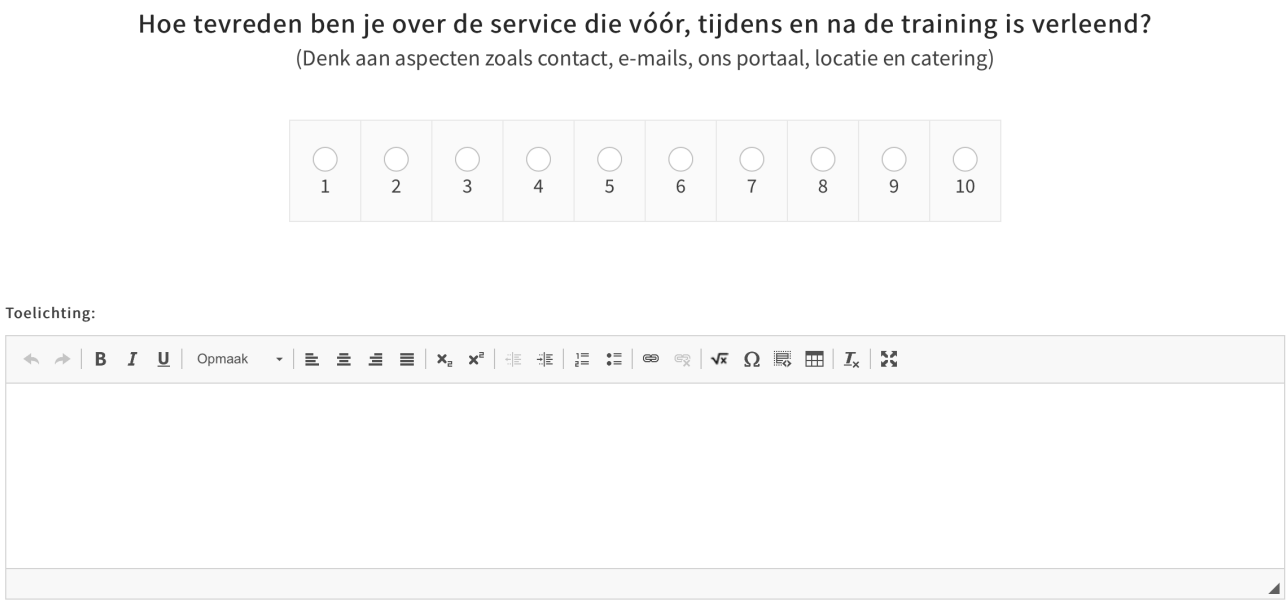

Figure 37: Feedback form: service

The next change I made was adding a new question (figure 38).

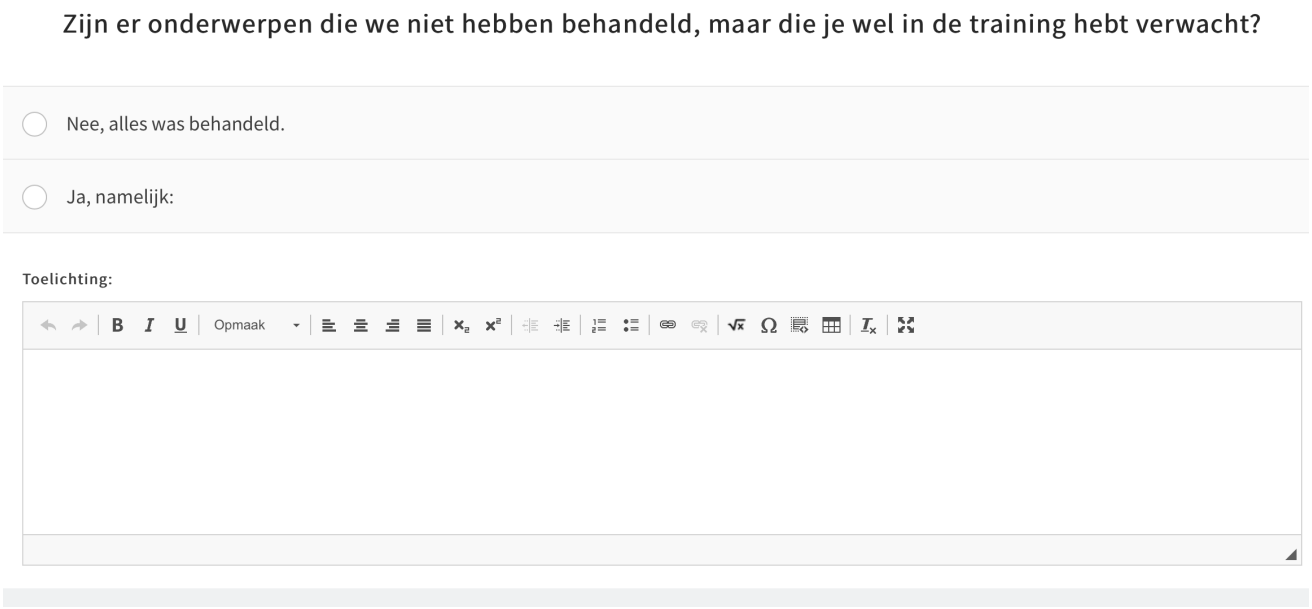

Figure 38: Feedback form: learning objectives

This question has two functions. First, it helps Prowareness to see if the training matches the learning objectives and expectations of the participants. The content or setup of the training can later be adjusted based on this feedback. Secondly, by finding out what other topics there are that the participants are interested in, the customer relationship managers can try to upsell another training to them based on their desires. This could then increase the number of resales and returning customers.

Another question that I added was (figure 39):

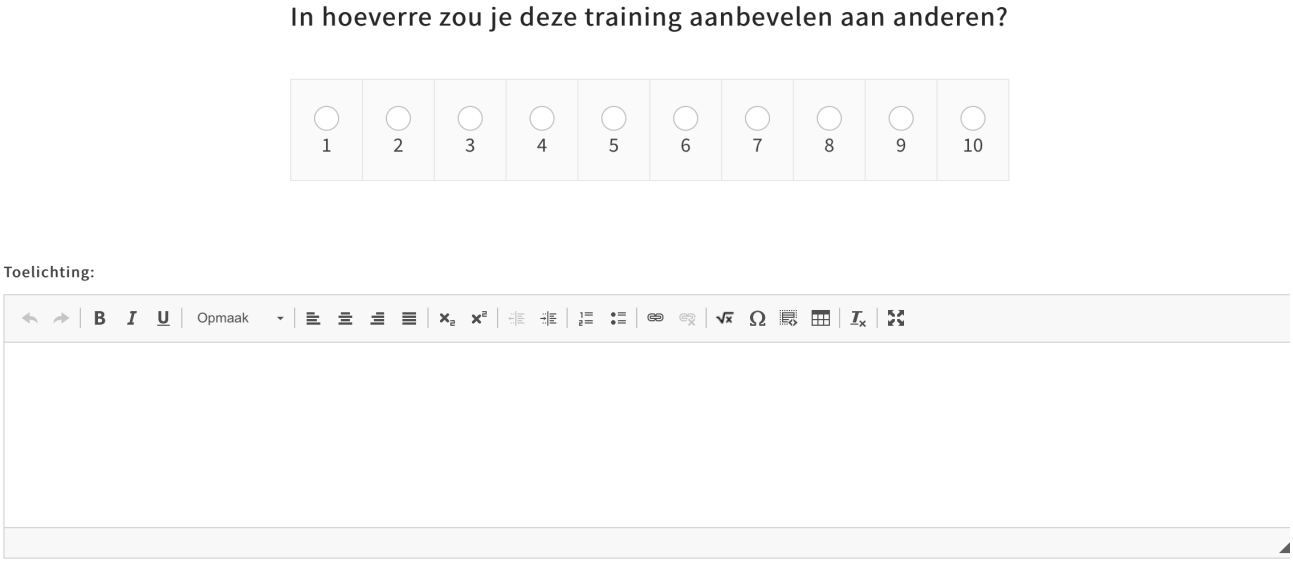

Figure 39: Feedback form: recommend to others

The purpose of this question is to find out the overall feeling that the participant is going home with. By asking them if they would recommend it to others, it adds weight to the question, because it's their reputation on the line. In most cases they would be more honest and critical when answering this question. Also, it's another chance for them to give additional information about other topics that are not in the previous questions.

Lastly, I made a small adjustment on the question about the newsletter (figure 40). By asking them which topics exactly they want to know more about is another opportunity to find out the interests of the participants, which makes it easy to follow up with.

This updated version of the feedback form was tested in 3 different trainings. The expectation was to get more insightful and useful feedback. The results of this test are discussed in the next section.

Results

The results of the test are not what I initially expected. The goal that I wanted to achieve was to improve the quality of the feedback content, mainly by receiving insightful feedback about the Trainer, training, and organisation. The main improvement of my prototype was the ability for the participants to give feedback about each of these three topics separately. The new questions that were added, also depended on the participant to fill in the explanation box. From the results, it appeared that not a single participant made use of the box to explain the ratings they gave. I suspect two reasons. The first one, is that something went wrong when publishing the new feedback form on aNewSpring, and the participants didn't get to see the area to give extra explanation. The second reason that I suspect is that since the participants are not required to fill in these boxes, they only gave the ratings. If this is the case, then the feedback form should be re-evaluated and redesigned so that feedback will be a required step.

Figure 40: Feedback form: newsletter

Conclusion

Despite the disappointing results, I conducted a short post-test interview with the Hospitality employee that normally goes through the feedback to get her opinion on the new form and results. In this interview, she shared that she does prefer the new form above the old one for two reasons. Firstly, even though the concept didn't get the expected results, she does like the fact that each topic gets a separate question on the form, instead of combining them in one question. One way of increasing the chance of getting an explanation of each rating, is to make each explanation an extra question. The downside to this alternative is that the form will be longer, and participants might not take the time to give an honest answer. Another aspect of my form that was preferred, was the new question that was added, especially the one that said: "Are there any topics we didn't cover that you expected to be covered in the training?". This question could gather useful information that can be used for commercial follow-up. And ultimately, the goal is to get returning clients to follow the training.

5 Discussion

The discussion section of my thesis provides an opportunity to delve deeper into the findings and implications of the research conducted, shedding light on key insights. The points that I want to discuss are the viability, external input, and company fit.

Viability

Especially in the beginning the viability of the end product is highly dependent on one person, which is the Academy People Lead within the organisation. As was shown in the implementation roadmap, different preparations are needed before the end product can get rolled out. In the preparation phase the Academy People Lead is crucial for the success of the product. Then, after the product is rolled out, the Academy People Lead is the one that needs to keep updating and improving the process. The downside of such an important person, is that if he removes himself from the equation, the product is not guaranteed to survive. Especially not when the product has not become part of the culture yet. In that sense, the viability of the product can be improved, by not linking the responsibility to the person, but to the role. In this case, whoever is the Academy People Lead is responsible for this product. The current Academy People Lead has agreed to continue with my product, but it is then up to him to pass the torch when it's time for someone else to succeed him in that role.

External input

During my research process, I gathered a lot of data from within the company by doing interviews and sending out a questionnaire to employees. Later in my development phase I gathered input from employees again in co-creation sessions. Thus, the majority of the data that I used to create the final product comes from within the company. The main external insights that I used was from the literature from which I created my foundation model. One can argue that using more than just the literature as an external source can lead to more innovative and radical solutions. I do agree with the argument that by including more internal input could have gained different perspectives on the problem.

Company fit

The third and final point I wanted to discuss was the company fit of the product. One of the requirements of the product was that it should be adaptable and fit within an agile environment. I can say with 100% certainty that the final product is modular, adaptable, and flexible. The product is a live document that can be easily updated. Also, the concept exists of different parts that can be adjusted separately without having to change the whole product. My plan was to create a product that acts as a foundation. It is then up to Prowareness to keep developing and improving it. I consider my product only as the first version to a much greater product. I went this direction because the best that Prowareness could use at this stage is a starting point. There is no point in developing a more detailed and elaborate product with the absence of a solid base. Furthermore, the Academy People Lead was pleased to see the end product. The content, format, and design was "exactly what we need", he said. I have full confidence that my product will help assure the quality of training at Prowareness. Thus, despite not using much external input, the end product is a desired outcome and will definitely be rolled out within Prowareness.

Conclusion

The primary objective of this project was to create a quality assurance solution for training offered by Prowareness. The first thing that I noticed was that each time I talked to another stakeholder, I heard different problems and needs. This showed me that there is a strong overall need for structure, guidelines, and better communication. After sending out a questionnaire and conducting several interviews, I gained more insights regarding this matter.
From the questionnaire I observed that each employee has a different opinion when it comes to the current quality assurance situation. This was interesting to see, because from the answers I could conclude that everyone does their own miniature version of quality assurance. The presence of company wide guidelines was lacking.
Next to creating a quality assurance solution, the data that was gathered allows us to get into the minds of the employees. One of the major insights was that a majority of the employees sees the need for such a quality assurance model. Some of them even expressed slight frustration towards the current situation and the confusion that it sometimes causes.
The problem statement thus summarises the major insights that were found:

The absence of clear quality standards and a compliance process is a significant problem within Prowareness. This problem has implications for both Trainers and customers. The lack of clear quality standards not only results in an inconsistent experience for customers but also creates confusion for Trainers, who may struggle to meet client expectations without a clear, objective measure of quality.

Besides that, I got to see what the employees understand under quality of training and how to assure this. Based on this the following product goal was created:

The product goal is to provide a comprehensive description of the process to be followed before, during, and after conducting a training, along with its implementation. The aim is to ensure that every Trainer follows the same process, creating a shared understanding and a standardised approach for quality assurance.

The final product is a live Handbook that describes the exact process that needs to be followed before, during, and after a training. The Handbook also describes the four roles who are involved in this process. The expectations of each role throughout the whole process is described.

Lastly, the Handbook is just the beginning to the quality assurance journey of Prowareness. I also created an implementation strategy so that Prowareness is aware of the next steps that need to be taken. With the knowledge gained from this study, it is crucial that Prowareness takes proactive steps to address the current challenges regarding clear guidelines and ownership regarding quality assurance of training. By implementing the Handbook and fostering collaboration, Prowareness can make good steps towards more quality consistent training.

Recommendations

After a comprehensive analysis and evaluation of the findings presented in the previous chapters, this chapter provides a set of actionable recommendations aimed at improving the effectiveness and success of the training programs.

My first recommendation is to include the Handbook in the onboarding program of new employees. The onboarding is the ideal moment to share standardised processes and internal ways of working. Doing this will also act as a catalyst for the Handbook to become part of the Prowareness culture. New employees are then more inclined to follow the Handbook, in comparison to hearing it later on from another employee.

Previously I already described the implementation strategy for the Handbook. I recommend Prowareness to follow the steps for a guaranteed successful roll-out. The first horizon is the most important step. The preparations lay the groundwork for what is created afterwards. Part of the preparations is getting every involved role onboard. The new way of working will have an impact on the everydays tasks of some employees. Therefore, it is best to communicate this beforehand.

Late in the process I found out that Prowareness needs to pay a fee for each client that gets added to aNewSpring. This would mean that the new way of working would cost Prowareness more money than previously. The fee is only a couple of euros per person, but can easily add up. I see this as an investment for Prowareness to improve the experience of their clients. Increasing the price of the training is always an option to cover these added costs, but for now let us assume that that's not an option. Then I suspect that because the solution will lead to a better customer experience, and to gathering valuable feedback from clients, Prowareness will increase their retention rate.

Lastly, this quality assurance solution is only targeting the training. Prowareness should start quality assurance initiatives across other Hubs too. There are other processes that need to be standardised to improve consistency, effectiveness, and professionalism. Especially actions that repeat themselves across multiple clients, for example impact interviews and engagement forms, and transformation approaches. Consistency brings clarity not only to Prowareness, but also to clients. The clearer the value proposition, the better clients can see the value that you can add to their business.

In conclusion, the implementation of these recommendations is expected to yield significant improvements in the quality, efficiency, and overall impact of the training programs and paving the way for continued organisational growth.

Reflection

During my thesis journey, I experienced several positive aspects that contributed to its success. Notably, the data gathering and analysis phase was conducted meticulously, ensuring the collection of relevant and reliable data, and enabling me to derive meaningful insights. I am also pleased with the desired end product of my thesis, which was mentioned to be "*exactly what we need"* by some key stakeholders.

However, I acknowledge areas that could have been improved. Specifically, better planning, including allocating ample time for writing, would have enhanced the overall workflow and polished the final report. Additionally, the test conducted did not unfold as expected. So much time was spent on data gathering and developing, that there was no time to do an extra round of tests. Being dependent on the training agenda of the company, also made it difficult to easily run a new test.

Throughout this journey, I have gained invaluable insights and experiences that will profoundly shape my future career trajectory. One crucial lesson I have learned is the paramount importance of meticulous planning and organisation. Reflecting on my thesis experience, I now realise the significance of setting clear goals, establishing a well-structured timeline, and allocating sufficient time for each task.

On the other hand, adaptability has bec ome a key skill that I honed during my thesis journey. I encountered unexpected hurdles and unforeseen challenges along the way, which required me to swiftly adjust my approach and embrace alternative strategies. This taught me the valuable lesson of being flexible and resilient in the face of adversity, enabling me to navigate complex situations with confidence and grace. I am now equipped with the ability to effectively manage changing circumstances, embrace uncertainty, and pivot when necessary to ensure the success of my future endeavours.

In conclusion, my thesis experience has not only equipped me with essential research skills but has also instilled in me a deep sense of purpose and a commitment to lifelong learning and innovation. Armed with these invaluable lessons, I am eagerly anticipating the opportunities that lie ahead, confident in my ability to navigate future challenges and make a meaningful impact in my chosen field.

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Appendix

Questions of the questionnaire

Quality Assurance Trainings

Hey guys! For my graduation project I am conducting a research regarding the trainings that we offer. The goal of my project is to design a solution can be used for quality assurance for our trainings. What exactly the solution is, is not clear, but your input will help me get there. This questionnaire is only the first step. In the near future I would like to organise a co-creation session where I shall gather more input. This questionnaire will only take 10 minutes of your time. You can answer in English or Dutch. Thank you in advance! :)

Hi, Jesuël. When you submit this form, the owner will see your name and email address.

* Required

1. What is the title of your role?

   Wat is jouw rol of functie? *

   Enter your answer

2. "There is no formal/documented procedure for when a new training is created or being developed."
   On a scale from 1 to 5, how strongly do you agree with this statement?

   "Er is geen formele/gedocumenteerde procedure voor het maken of ontwikkelen van een nieuwe training."
   Op een schaal van 1 tot 5, hoe eens bent u met deze stelling?
   *

1	2	3	4	5

3. Please explain your previous answer.

   Licht je antwoord toe. *

   Enter your answer

4. "For existing trainings there is currently no way to check the quality."
   On a scale from 1 to 5, how strongly do you agree with this statement?

   "Voor bestaande trainingen is er momenteel geen manier om de kwaliteit te controleren."
   Op een schaal van 1 tot 5, hoe eens bent u met deze stelling?
   *

1	2	3	4	5

5. Please explain your answer.

   Licht je antwoord toe. *

   Enter your answer

6. "I wish that such a quality document/checklist for the trainings existed."
On a scale from 1 to 5, how strongly do you agree with this statement?

"Ik zou willen dat er zo'n kwaliteitsdocument/checklist voor de trainingen bestaat."
Op een schaal van 1 tot 5, hoe eens bent u met deze stelling? *

1	2	3	4	5

7. Please explain your answer.

Licht je antwoord toe. *

Enter your answer

8. Would you make use of such a solution/document? (Even if it means more work for you)

Zou je gebruik maken van zo'n oplossing/document? (Ook als het meer werk voor jou betekent) *

- ◯ Yes/Ja
- ◯ No/Nee
- ◯ Other

9. "I feel like a solution like this reduces my autonomy as an employee."
On a scale from 1 to 5, how strongly do you agree with this statement?

"Ik heb het gevoel dat zo'n oplossing mijn autonomie als werknemer vermindert."
Op een schaal van 1 tot 5, hoe eens bent u met deze stelling?
*

1	2	3	4	5

10. "I feel like a solution like this questions my competence as an employee."
On a scale from 1 to 5, how strongly do you agree with this statement?

"Ik heb het gevoel dat zo'n oplossing mijn competentie als werknemer in twijfel trekt."
Op een schaal van 1 tot 5, hoe eens bent u met deze stelling?
*

1	2	3	4	5

11. "I feel like a solution like this diminishes the relatedness that I feel towards my fellow colleagues."
On a scale from 1 to 5, how strongly do you agree with this statement?

"Ik heb het gevoel dat zo'n oplossing de verbondenheid die ik voel met mijn collega's vermindert."
Op een schaal van 1 tot 5, hoe eens bent u met deze stelling?
*

1	2	3	4	5

12. "I would like to contribute to the implementation of such a quality standard"
Do you agree with this statement?

"Ik zou willen bijdragen aan het implementeren van zo een kwaliteitsstandaard"
Ben je eens met deze stelling? *

- ◯ Yes/Ja
- ◯ No/Nee
- ◯ Other

13.

I would like to be responsible for the quality of one or more training courses”
Do you agree with this statement?

Ik zou verantwoordelijkheid willen dragen voor de kwaliteit van één of meer trainingen”
Ben je eens met deze stelling?
*

- ◯ Yes/Ja
- ◯ No/Nee

Submit

B Appendix

Interview guide and transcripts

These go up to 60 pages, therefore I made a separate file that can be accessed via this link:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ldrswLXI3PjDpJs49Zla_mYEWXb1mxbc/view?usp=sharing

C Appendix

Results questionnaire

Again due to the size of the file, it can be accessed via this link:
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/
1NQgvtKax7A7inFBedPCv90I8OCFVDTbr/
edit?usp=sharing&ouid=112668852099355611822&rtpof=true&sd=true

D Appendix

Grounded Theory Method coding overview

Quotes and initial coding

People Lead Academy

Hub Lead #1

Hub Lead #2

Hub Lead #3

Hub Lead #4

Trainer #1

Trainer #2

Trainer #3

Trainer #4

Trainer #5

Trainer #6

Trainer #7

Trainer #8

2nd order names (clusters)

Catch the attention

Quality as standard

Risks

Pigeons act like stick

It's about time

Lack of ownership

Gap between trainers

Size of the group

Definition of done

Motivation behind the project

Lack of guidelines

Quality material

Get worked in

(Post) good impression

Adoption

Relationship with the client

Trainers autonomy

Practice what you preach

Trainer skills and standards

New initiatives

Standardised content

Price comes with expectations

Motivation behind feedback

Keep it compact

Returning clients

Inconsistent client experience

"I don't know"

Overkill

Feedback form

Didactic skills

Trainer as a craft

Status and reputation

Practices of the past

Live feedback

Securing the feedback

Management support

Trainers need experience

Not openly shared

SessionLab

Customer journey

Project expectations

Academy's responsibility

Colleague responsibilities

Trainer matching system

Trainer as the most important

Motivation behind being a trainer

Together we are better

Checking trainer quality

Outcasts

Aggregate dimensions

It's time for change

The expectations of a trainer

The lack of a clear structure

The expected customer journey

The collection of feedback

The expectations for the project

E Appendix

Co-creation canvas results

Sessie 25-04-2023

Brainstorm kwaliteitsborging trainingsaanbod

Voor- en nazorg

10 minuten

1 Problem statement

Hieronder vind je de problem statement en de bijbehorende thema van dit gedeelte.

1 minuut

"The absence of clear quality standards and a compliance process is a significant problem within Prowareness. This problem has implications for both trainers and customers. The lack of clear quality standards not only results in an inconsistent experience for customers but also creates confusion for trainers, who may struggle to meet client expectations without a clear, objective measure of quality."

Wat moet allemaal bij de voorzorg horen?

Wat moet allemaal bij de nazorg horen?

Hoe en waar wordt dit vastgelegd en geborgd?

2 Brainstorm

Bedenk zoveel ideeën mogelijk die bij de benoemde thema horen. Je kan ook op iemands anders idee aanvullen.

3 minuten

3 Cluster ideas

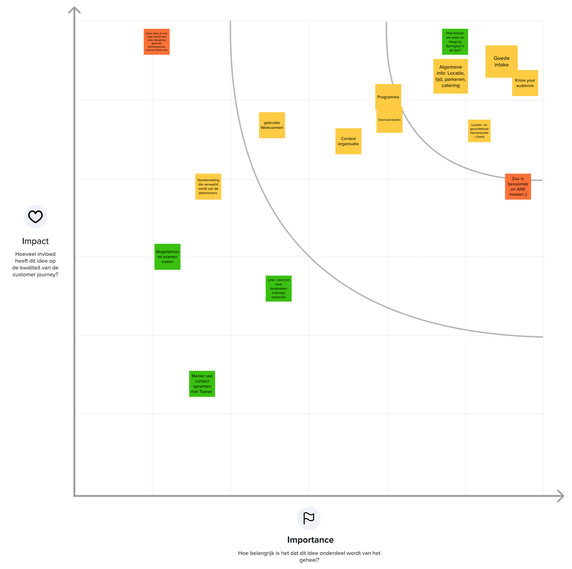
Groepeer de bedachte ideeën in clusters.

2 minuten

4 Prioritize

Plot de ideeën of ideegroepen in deze matrix.

3 minutes



5 Trash

Wat zijn ideeën dat je vind die helemaal niet kunnen?

1 minuut

Brainstorm kwaliteitsborging trainingsaanbod

Trainingsinhoud

10 minuten

1 Problem statement

Hieronder vind je de problem statement en de bijbehorende thema van dit gedeelte.

1 minuut

"The absence of clear quality standards and a compliance process is a significant problem within Prowareness. This problem has implications for both trainers and customers. The lack of clear quality standards not only results in an inconsistent experience for customers but also creates confusion for trainers, who may struggle to meet client expectations without a clear, objective measure of quality."

Wat moet de overzicht van een training allemaal bevatten?

Hoe en waar wordt dit vastgelegd en geborgd?

2 Brainstorm

Bedenk zoveel ideeën mogelijk die bij de benoemde thema horen. Je kan ook op iemands anders idee aanvullen.

3 minuten

3 Cluster ideas

Groepeer de bedachte ideeën in clusters.

2 minuten

4 Prioritize

Plot de ideeën of ideegroepen in deze matrix.

3 minutes

5 Trash

Wat zijn ideeën dat je vind die helemaal niet kunnen?

1 minuut

Brainstorm kwaliteitsborging trainingsaanbod

Trainer

10 minuten

1 Problem statement

Hieronder vind je de problem statement en de bijbehorende thema van dit gedeelte.

1 minuut

"The absence of clear quality standards and a compliance process is a significant problem within Prowareness. This problem has implications for both trainers and customers. The lack of clear quality standards not only results in an inconsistent experience for customers but also creates confusion for trainers, who may struggle to meet client expectations without a clear, objective measure of quality."

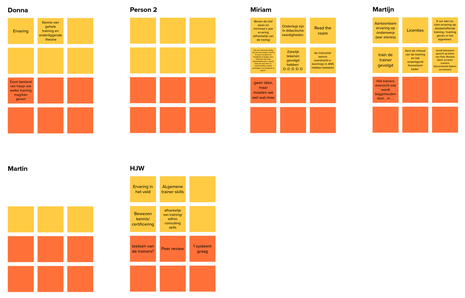
Waar moet een trainer aan voldoen om een training te kunnen geven?

Hoe en waar wordt dit vastgelegd en geborgd?

2 Brainstorm

Bedenk zoveel ideeën mogelijk die bij de benoemde thema horen. Je kan ook op iemands anders idee aanvullen.

3 minuten



3 Cluster ideas

Groepeer de bedachte ideeën in clusters.

2 minuten

4 Prioritize

Plot de ideeën of ideegroepen in deze matrix.

3 minutes

5 Trash

Wat zijn ideeën dat je vind die helemaal niet kunnen?

1 minuut

Sessie 02-05-2023

Brainstorm kwaliteitsborging trainingsaanbod

Trainingsinhoud

10 minuten

1

Problem statement

Hieronder vind je de problem statement en de bijbehorende thema van dit gedeelte.

1 minuut

"The absence of clear quality standards and a compliance process is a significant problem within Prowareness. This problem has implications for both trainers and customers. The lack of clear quality standards not only results in an inconsistent experience for customers but also creates confusion for trainers, who may struggle to meet client expectations without a clear, objective measure of quality."

Wat moet het overzicht van een training allemaal bevatten?

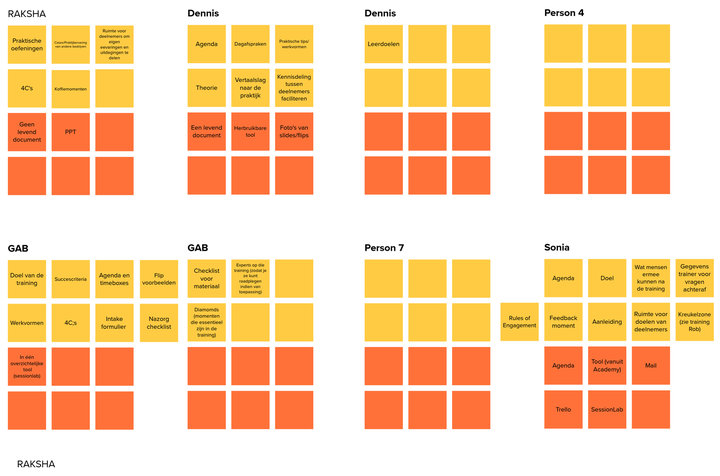
Hoe en waar wordt dit vastgelegd?

2

Brainstorm

Bedenk zoveel ideeën mogelijk die bij het benoemde thema horen. Je kan ook op iemands anders idee aanvullen.

5 minuten



RAKSHA

3

Prioritize

Plot de ideeën of ideegroepen in deze matrix.

4 minutes

Brainstorm kwaliteitsborging trainingsaanbod

Feedback

10 minuten

1

Problem statement

Hieronder vind je de problem statement en de bijbehorende thema van dit gedeelte.

1 minuut

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Op welke aspecten moet feedback ontvangen worden?

Hoe en waar wordt dit opgehaald en geborgd?

2

Brainstorm

Bedenk zoveel ideeën mogelijk die bij de benoemde thema horen. Je kan ook op iemands anders idee aanvullen.

5 minuten

3

Prioritize

Plot de ideeën of ideegroepen in deze matrix.

4 minutes

Brainstorm kwaliteitsborging trainingsaanbod

Eindproduct

10 minuten

1

Problem statement

Hieronder vind je de problem statement en de bijbehorende thema van dit gedeelte.

1 minuut

"The absence of clear quality standards and a compliance process is a significant problem within Prowareness. This problem has implications for both trainers and customers. The lack of clear quality standards not only results in an inconsistent experience for customers but also creates confusion for trainers, who may struggle to meet client expectations without a clear, objective measure of quality."

Wat voor vorm moet het eindproduct hebben?

Hoe en waar wordt het vastgelegd en geborgd?

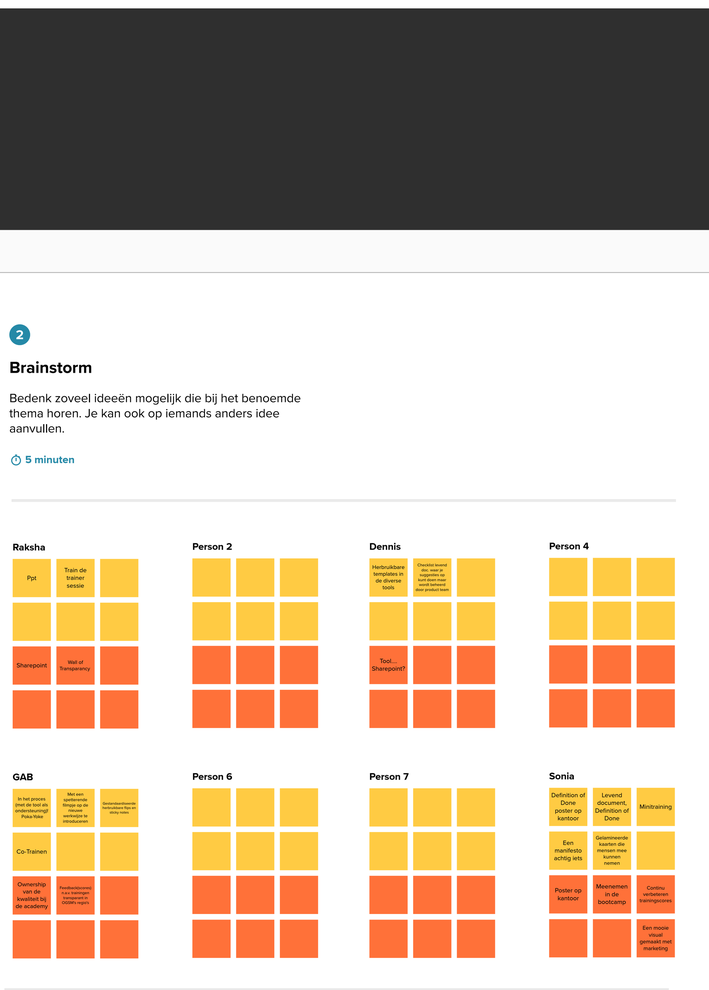
Het eindproduct is een verzameling van de richtlijnen en structuur die nodig zijn voor het borgen van de kwaliteit van deze topics

2

Brainstorm

Bedenk zoveel ideeën mogelijk die bij het benoemde thema horen. Je kan ook op iemands anders idee aanvullen.

5 minuten



3

Prioritize

Plot de ideeën of ideegroepen in deze matrix.

4 minutes

Appendix

Old feedback form

Bij welke organisatie werk je?

Opmaak

Welke functie heb je binnen jouw organisatie?

Opmaak

Wie was jouw hoofdtrainer?

Opmaak

Wat voor cijfer geef je de hoofdtrainer?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Wie was de cotrainer? (Overslaan wanneer niet van toepassing)

Opmaak

Wat voor cijfer geef je co-trainer?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Niet van Toepassing
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Wat voor cijfer geef je de training zelf?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Wat voor cijfer geef je de service die vóór, tijdens en na de training is verleend?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Waar kunnen wij je in de toekomst nog verder mee helpen?

Opmaak

Wil je op de hoogte gehouden worden via onze nieuwsbrief?

Ja	Nee
○	○

Wat wil je voor feedback kwijt over de training, trainer en service?

Opmaak

Appendix

New feedback form

Welke functie heb je binnen jouw organisatie?

Opmaak

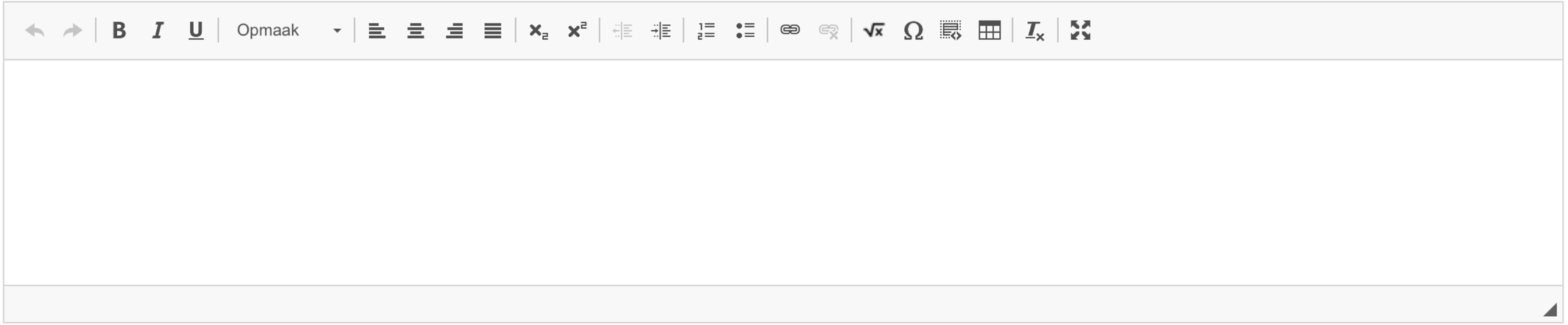
Wie was jouw hoofdtrainer?

Opmaak

Wat voor cijfer geef je de hoofdtrainer?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Toelichting:



Wie was de co-trainer?

(Overslaan wanneer niet van toepassing)

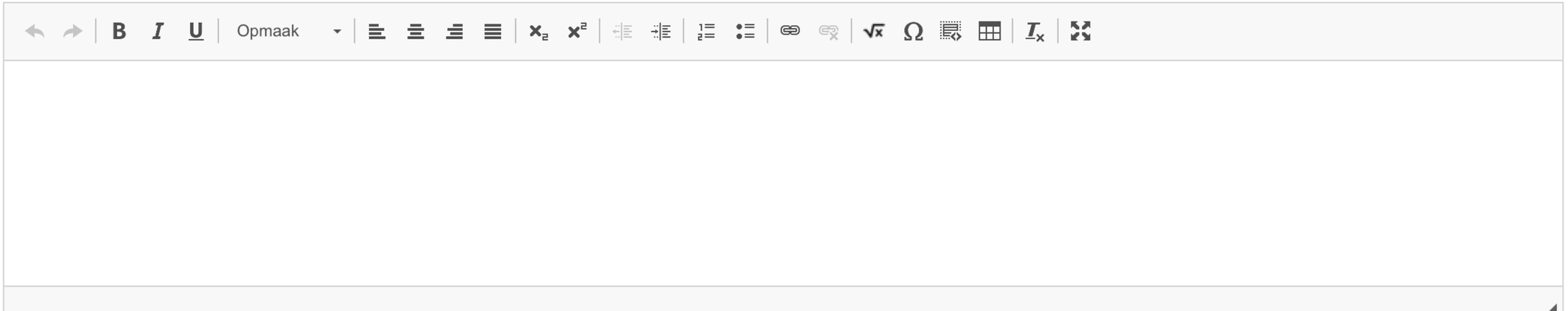
Opmaak

Wat voor cijfer geef je de co-trainer?

(Overslaan wanneer niet van toepassing)

1	2	3	4	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Toelichting:

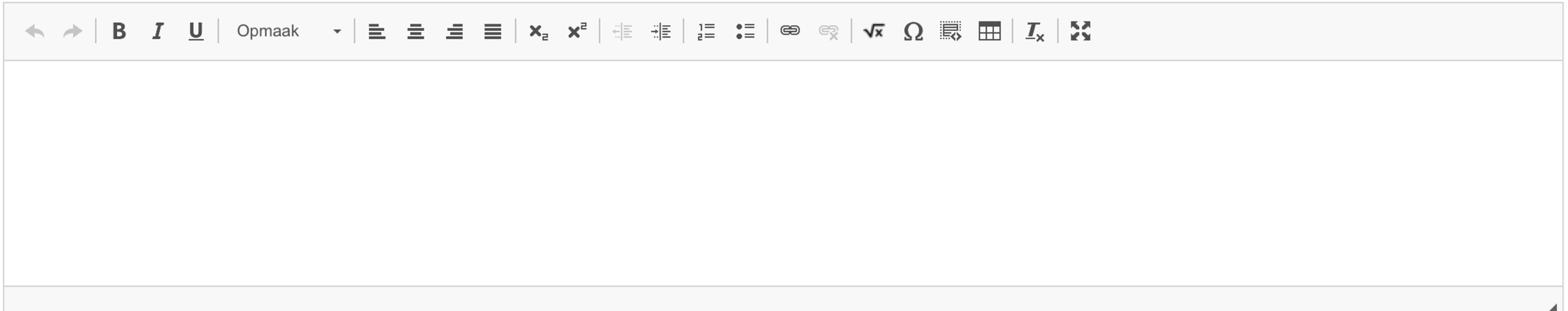


Hoe tevreden ben je over de service die vóór, tijdens en na de training is verleend?

(Denk aan aspecten zoals contact, e-mails, ons portaal, locatie en catering)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

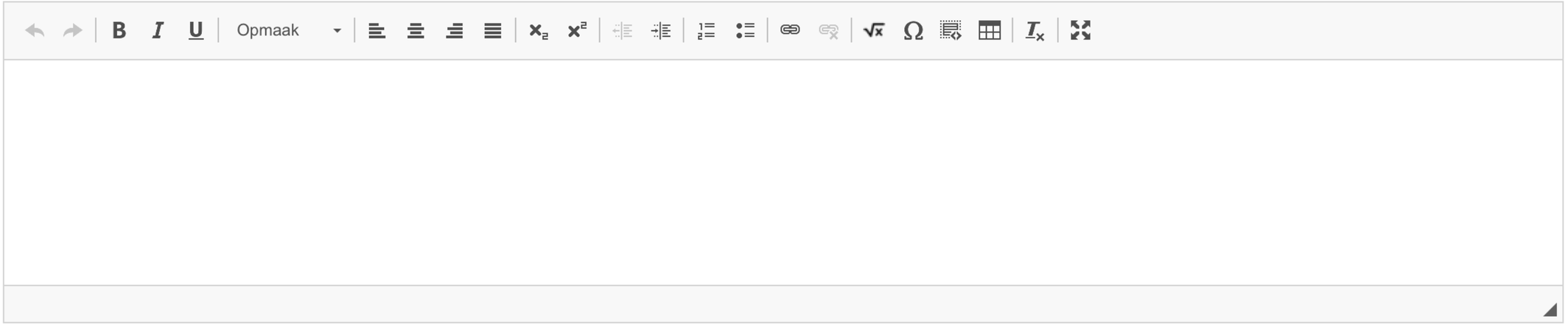
Toelichting:



Wat voor cijfer geef je de training zelf?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

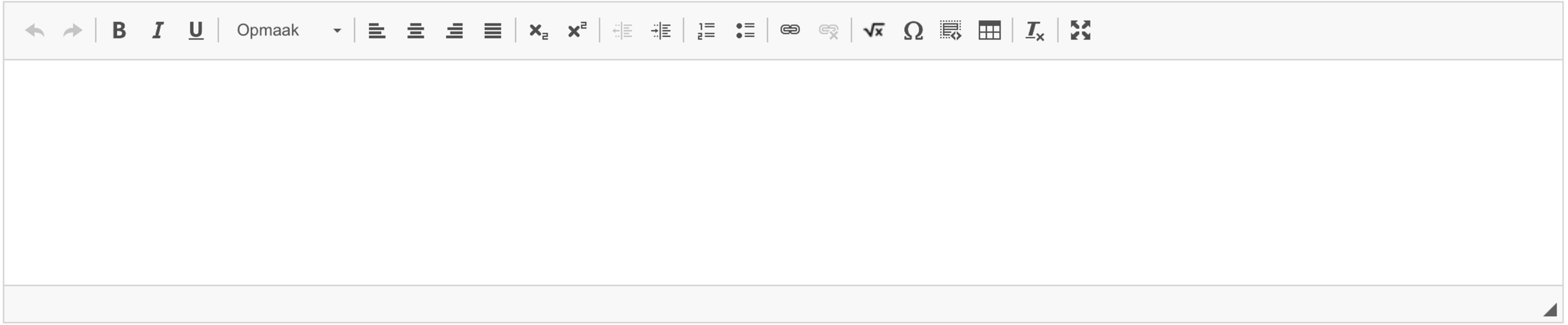
Toelichting:



Zijn er onderwerpen die we niet hebben behandeld, maar die je wel in de training hebt verwacht?

- ◯ Nee, alles was behandeld.
- ◯ Ja, namelijk:

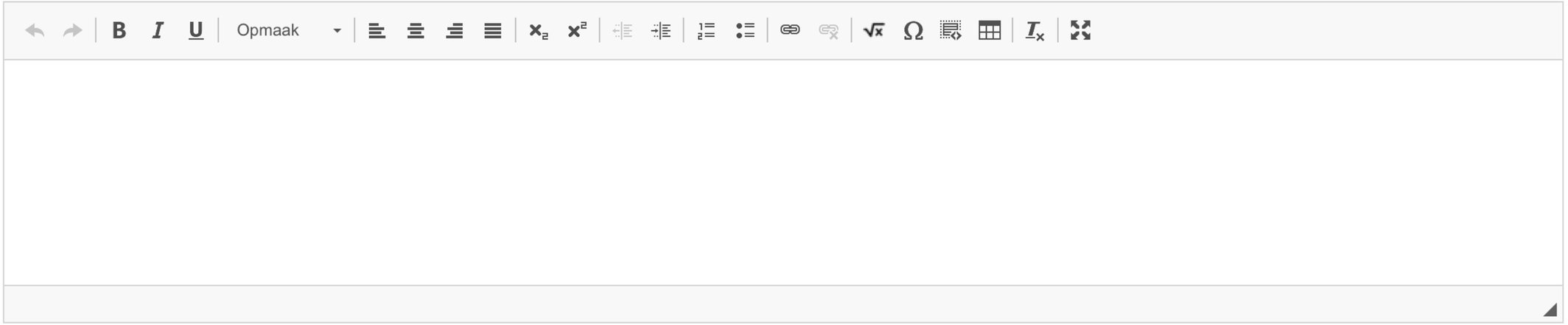
Toelichting:



In hoeverre zou je deze training aanbevelen aan anderen?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Toelichting:



Wil je op de hoogte gehouden worden via onze nieuwsbrief?

- ◯ Ja, ik wil graag op de hoogte blijven! (Geef aan welke eventuele onderwerpen in de toelichting)
- ◯ Nee, bedankt.

Toelichting:

Opmaak

TU Delft

Prowareness
Unleashing Potential