

An abstract graphic on the left side of the cover, consisting of numerous thin, white, wavy lines that overlap and create a sense of movement and depth against the solid blue background.

Exploring the Barriers to Collaboration Between the Domains Branding, Communications and Technology at Total Design

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Preface

This report presents the process and outcomes of my graduation project conducted in collaboration with Total Design (TD). This report is also part of the last step to obtaining my masters degree of Strategic Product Design. I would like to express my gratitude to a number of people who helped me throughout the project.

First, I would like to thank Martijn, who provided guidance from Total Design. Thank you for always making time for me and showing such interest and commitment to my project. You helped me to shape the project, but always gave me the freedom to go my own way.

A second thank you goes to all the people at TD who always made me feel welcome in the office and a special thank you goes to all those who attended the meetings or helped me in other ways.

I would like to thank Erik Jan and Fernando for their academic supervision. Thank you for guiding me through this project. Thank you, Fernando, for your ideas on the methods used and your critical and elaborate feedback on my writing style.

And thank you, Erik Jan, for your directness and personal guidance. Thank you for always keeping me grounded and reminding me to have fun in (and out of) the project.

I would also like to thank my sister and my friends for reading my report, listening to my problems and giving me advice.

I hope you enjoy reading this report. For comments, questions or further discussion, I welcome you to contact me. You can find me on LinkedIn.

Summary

This report describes the graduation project in collaboration with Total Design (TD), a creative agency specialised in Branding, Communications and Technology. The primary objective of this thesis is to enhance the internal collaboration between these three domains. To achieve this goal, the study explores the barriers to collaboration, using co-creation sessions with TD employees as a key method to gather insights. The process follows a general approach consisting of four phases, Exploring the Current Context, Reframing the Problem, Creating Opportunities to Improve Collaboration and Catalyse Synergy Creation at TD, each described in its dedicated chapter.

Leveraging co-creation sessions and interviews with employees of TD, the study shows that the internal team’s focus is seen as the main barrier to multidisciplinary collaboration within TD. This focus stems from team-specific targets, that discourage collaborative efforts between teams and cause each team to prioritise their own proposition to clients. As a result, clients are unaware of other services offered by TD and employees under-utilise the expertise of their colleagues. This internal team focus comes from TD’s existing organisational structure. Therefore, a new organisational structure is proposed as the final solution for TD. The proposed organisational structure introduces dynamic, project-based teams

that replace traditional, static teams, facilitating fluid cross-domain collaboration and enabling a more agile response to client needs. The expected positive impact of the final design for clients is a broader service offering and improved client satisfaction, and enhanced learning and innovation for employees of TD.

The report concludes with recommendations for the adoption of the new structure and recommendations for future work. The first aim to mitigate the reorganisation’s potential challenges, like coordination & communication and a loss of team identity and include involving employees for successful implementation. The latter suggested areas for further research, including broadening the focus group, incorporating diverse research methodologies and conducting follow-up studies to assess the impact of the changes implemented.

The findings provide valuable insights into employees’ perception of the current situation, the barriers to collaboration and the desire for engaging employees in decision making. To align with employee demands and enhance multidisciplinary collaboration, TD is recommended to transition towards the proposed organisational structure that facilitates dynamic project team configurations.

Key Terminology

The glossary can be used to look up abbreviations or difficult terms. Words are placed in alphabetical order below.

CM	Client Manager
Cross-selling	Encouraging clients to leverage additional services offered by Total Design
HoT	Head of Teams
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
LoB	Line of Business, also known as a team
Qmeeting	Quarterly meeting
Synergy	The collective outcome of collaboration that surpasses what individuals could have achieved independently
TD	Total Design
Yuma	A group of companies focused on digital transformation, that TD has recently joined
ZL	Zuiderlicht, the location of Total Design in Maastricht

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1. Context setting

This report describes the process on discovering and overcoming barriers to collaboration within Total Design (TD). The project is carried out during a graduation internship conducted at Total Design, guided by Martijn Arts, Partner and Strategy Director of Total Design. Activities in this project are in collaboration with Total Design employees and fellow peers from SPD and academic oversight is provided by Erik-Jan Hultink (TU) and Fernando Secomandi (TU).

This first chapter offers a short introduction on Total Design and introduces the problem definition, assignment and scope of this project. The chapter is concluded with a section including key takeaways.

1.1 Introduction to Total Design

Total Design is a creative agency, founded 60 years ago by Wim Crouwel, Friso Kramer, Paul Schwarz, Dick Schwarz and Benno Wissing. Currently the highest-ranked Dutch Agency in the International Design Awards (Total Design, 2024), TD's legacy includes iconic projects like Schiphol Airport's signage during the 1960s (Sturt, 2017), the redesign of the Dutch passport (Total Design, n.d.b) and the recent new brand identity of Hema (Total Design, n.d.c.). TD is known for their holistic design and has evolved over the years to accommodate in-demand skills. TD's expansive skill set is organised into fixed, multidisciplinary teams. Each team specialises in different areas such as house styles, web development or campaigns.

1.1.1 The Three Pillars Branding, Communications and Technology

For effective communication of their skills, Total Design grouped its capabilities into three pillars: Branding, Communications and Technology. The teams are roughly organised into these three categories, also referred to as 'domains'. The three domains have been used in TD's communications for the past two years to break away from Total Design's exclusive association with 'design' implied by its name. This report therefore refers to Total Design as TD, in line with their preferred style of communication.

1.2 Project Brief

1.2.1 Problem Definition

Total Design states in their external communications that they strive to ‘perfect the synergy between the domains Branding, Communications and Technology’ (TD, n.d.). This served as the starting point for the project. The primary objective was to delve into how Total Design facilitates collaboration between the three domains and to capture this ‘TD method’. During the formulation of the project brief, informal discussions revealed pre-existing challenges: the absence of a consistent strategy for collaboration makes it hard to illustrate a working method typical for TD. Additionally, there seemed to be a lack of support for the envisioned synergy creation by domains, as employees state that the collaboration between the domains does not reach its full potential. In conclusion, there are barriers in place that prevent synergy creation within TD that need to be identified and overcome.

1.2.2 Assignment

Total Design is a creative agency that brings together different areas of expertise to best serve the client, but as the previous paragraph illustrates, the collaboration between the three domains can be optimised. This research aims to improve the cross-disciplinary collaboration at Total Design to foster synergy. The revised objective of the project is ‘To explore the current barriers to synergy creation at TD and improve the collaboration between the domains Branding, Communications and Technology’.

This project will investigate the underlying issues and propose recommendations for improvement. The initial assignment, as agreed upon in the project brief (which can be found in Appendix A1) is as follows: “Investigate the structure, culture & processes within TD to understand and overcome the barriers to synergy and finally write an advisory report and/or design an intervention to stimulate integration of the domains. This intervention can be a tool, method, framework or strategy meant to improve the collaboration between domains”.

1.2.3 Scope

Since its acquisition in 2023, Total Design operates under the larger umbrella of the Yuma digital transformation group. Yuma encompasses companies with expertise in IT consulting, IT architecture and in cloud & data architecture. The main goal of the Yuma group is to create end-to-end solutions by improving collaboration between its different companies (Yuma, n.d.). This is similar to the goal behind Total Design’s structure, which is home to the three domains. Figure 1 illustrates TD within a larger bubble to indicate the scope of this research. The research focuses on improving collaboration within Total Design, with the premise that improvements within TD could potentially be replicated in the other companies within the Yuma group.

Total Design operates from two locations in the Netherlands: Amsterdam, being the main office, and Maastricht. The Maastricht office, known as Zuiderlicht, became part of Total Design after its acquisition in 2022. Zuiderlicht’s expertise lies in creating ideas to enhance an organisation or brand’s performance, like TD but with a distinct focus on their geographic region. Cascade, now a team within TD but formerly an independent company acquired in 2021, is also located in Amsterdam. Their expertise lies in shaping annual reports.

Figure 1 shows that Total Design consists of three entities: Zuiderlicht, Cascade and Total Design. The research focuses (as Figure 1 highlights) on TD in Amsterdam, initially Zuiderlicht due to its similar proposition, functioning as a distinct entity in another region. Cascade is excluded in the final design as well, as it is not represented in the voluntary co-creation activities, from the second co-creation session onwards. Therefore, the final design centers on the input of the TD Amsterdam employees.

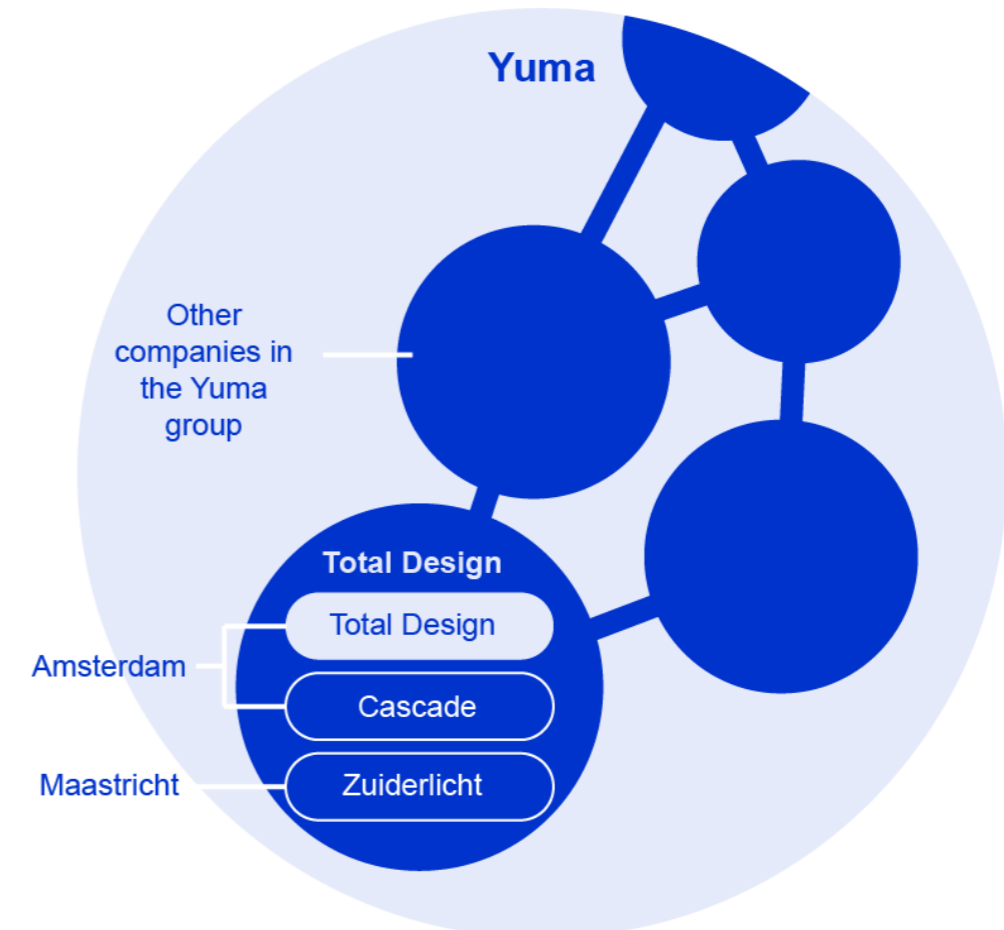


Figure 1: The scope of the project.

Key Takeaways of Chapter 1

Introduction TD

This chapter introduces Total Design, a creative agency known for their holistic service offering. TD has grouped its capabilities into three domains: Branding, Communications and Technology. Client projects are performed in fixed, multidisciplinary teams, which can be roughly categorised into these three domains. Each team specialises in different areas such as house styles, web development or campaigns.

Problem Definition

The problem is that there is no coherent strategy for collaboration and a lack of support for the intended synergy between the domains. Employees state that collaboration between the domains is not reaching its full potential. In conclusion, there are barriers that need to be identified and overcome for optimal collaboration and possible synergy creation.

Project Assignment

The initial assignment is as follows: “Investigate the structure, culture & processes within TD to understand and overcome the barriers to synergy and finally write an advisory report and/or design an intervention to stimulate integration of the domains. This intervention can be a tool, method, framework or strategy meant to improve the collaboration between domains.”

Scope

The scope of the project is focused on TD Amsterdam, as the research and design efforts are mainly in collaboration with members of the TD Amsterdam teams, excluding Cascade and Zuiderlicht.

2. Approach and Methods

This chapter provides an overview of the research project's general approach and presents the four distinct phases that lead to the final outcomes. The first section, Section 2.1, outlines these four phases along with their associated activities. Section 2.2 delves into a detailed description of the co-creation methods employed in this study.

2.1 General approach: Double Diamond

The process is structured based on the Double Diamond methodology (Design Council, 2023). This is a systemic design framework developed by the UK government's advisor on design, the Design Council, which outlines ways of working for the different parts in a design process. The Double Diamond describes four phases: Explore, Reframe, Create and Catalyse. Each phase has a dedicated chapter in this report. In Figure 2, the four phases are depicted including the title of the dedicated chapter. The four phases form two diamonds which shows the diverging and converging characteristics of the phases: the left half of each

diamond is a diverging phase and the right part is a converging phase. For the exploring and creating phase, diverging means zooming out and seeking opportunities. Contrastingly, the reframing and catalysing phases are converging stages in which the focus is narrowed.

It is important to note that the process was not followed strictly linearly, but involved iterative movements back and forth across stages, as indicated with arrows in Figure 2. However, for presentation purposes within this report, the process is presented in a linear order.

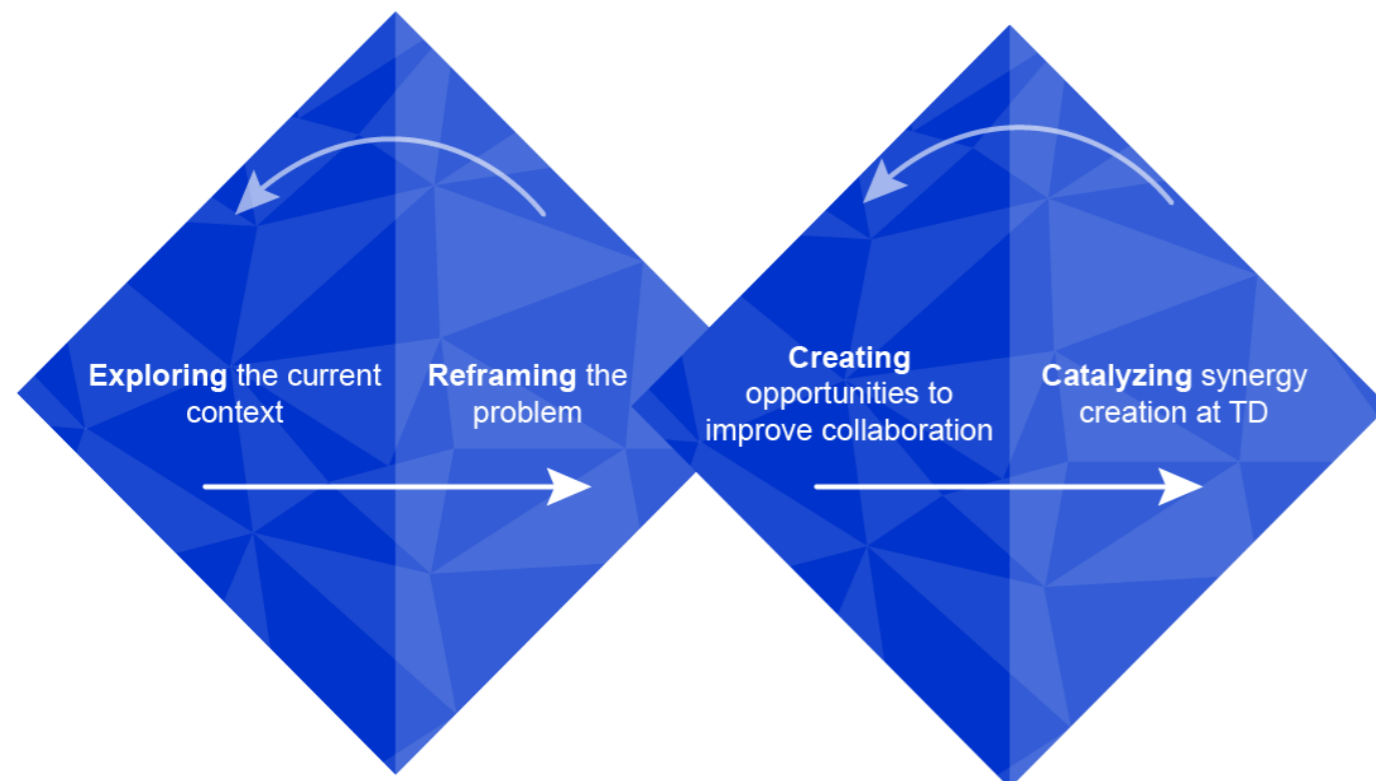


Figure 2: The Double Diamond method.

In Figure 3, the different activities of each phase are depicted in a chronological order. All four phases involve individual efforts and collaborative efforts involving interviews and co-creation (Co-C) sessions. Paragraph 2.2.2: 'Three types of Co-creation' will delve deeper into types of joint efforts.

Figure 3 also illustrates the output of each phase. The following paragraphs will describe the objective of each phase into more detail.

2.1.1 Explore

In the first phase, the aim was to understand what is happening within TD related to internal collaboration and to retrieve a more in-depth perception of the problem. As said before, the Explore phase shows divergence: it entailed collecting different perspectives and investigating how things are connected. The following research methods were used: a literature review, desk research and co-creation (joint efforts). The following page elaborates on these research methods in detail.

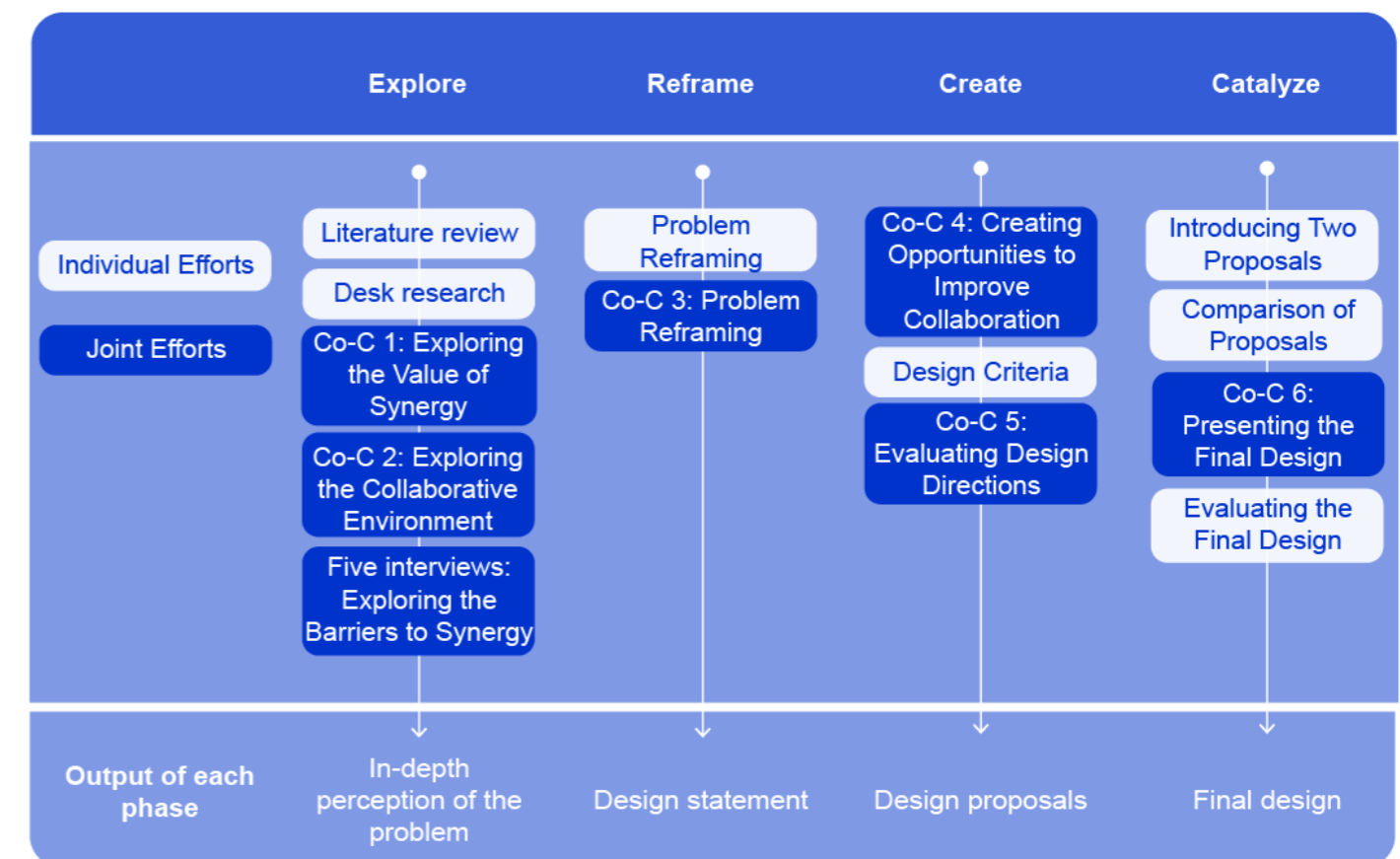


Figure 3: The four phases of the Double Diamond including their activities.

Literature Review

The literature review concerns different topics: co-creation methodologies, qualitative data analysis, synergy creation and organisational structures for creative agencies.

Co-creation methodologies are explored, including creative sessions and interviews. Section 2.2 describes the benefits of co-creation and different methods.

Qualitative data analysis is performed to process the collected qualitative data, derived through co-creation. A literature review is performed on how to analyse the data. This is discussed in Paragraph 2.2.5.

Synergy creation and its key factors are explored to define the term 'synergy' and to gain understanding in important factors for synergy creation. The findings are discussed in Paragraph 3.1.1.

Organisational structures for creative agencies are explored to create understanding in TD's structure and possible alternatives. The findings are discussed in Paragraph 3.1.2.

Desk Research

The primary objective of the desk research was to understand the organisational framework of TD and to review the external communications concerning their interdisciplinary collaboration. This phase of the research consisted of reviewing various slide decks (presentation slides), relating to different topics, including employee satisfaction, TD's vision, structural aspects and TD's business model. Slide decks are TD's preferred form of transferring information to employees.

Co-creation

The facilitation and activities of creative sessions are inspired by the book Road Map for Creative Problem Solving Techniques (Heijne & van der Meer, 2019). In the phase, Explore, co-creation is used to understand the context. Section 2.2 further describes the used co-creation methods and the outcomes are presented in the dedicated sections.

2.1.2 Reframe

In the second phase, Reframe, the greater understanding of the problem established in the previous phase was reframed in order to come up with new opportunities. As Illustrated in Figure 2, this phase embodied a process of convergence, to redefine the focus of the project. This refinement process involved individual problem reframing and collaborative problem reframing, which lead to a design statement.

2.1.3 Create

The third phase, Create, focused on creating different solutions to address the reframed problem statement and design statement. In a co-creation session, participants thought of a future vision and of different ways to facilitate the design statement. Design criteria were set up for the evaluation of ideas. Three design directions were evaluated, leading to two design proposals.

2.1.4 Catalyse

The conclusive phase of the diamond, Catalyse, focused on narrowing down to one design proposal that addresses the problem statement. With use of the design criteria, one of the design proposals is selected to refine. The ultimate design is presented to TD. In a final co-creation session, the potential positive impact and challenges are discussed the chapter concludes with recommendations and a final evaluation.

2.2 Co-Creation Methods

This project creates employee involvement through planned co-creation activities and informal discussion with employees. Paragraph 2.2.1 describes the benefits of co-creation. Paragraph 2.2.2 describes the three types of joint efforts: informal discussion with employees, creative sessions and interviews. Paragraph 2.2.3 outlines activities used in the creative sessions and Paragraph 2.2.4 discusses the processing of interview output by elaborating on qualitative data analysis.

2.2.1 Benefits of Co-creation

There are different reasons to include co-creation in this assignment. First, involving employees in co-creation processes encourages employee participation (Mogstad et al., 2018). Co-creation can foster commitment and therefore increase the acceptance of outcomes (Sha et al., 2022). Moreover, co-creation involves different perspectives and the knowledge of employees can lead to solutions better suited to TD (Eckhardt et al., 2021). In addition, working in groups offers the opportunity to inspire each other. Finally, creating in groups allows for simultaneous in-depth critical evaluation of plans (Sillak et al., 2021).

2.2.2 Three Types of Co-creation

Three types of joint efforts are used in this project: talking to employees on an informal basis and co-creation, including creative sessions and interviews. Figure 4 illustrates the different reasons of choice for each type.

Informal Discussion

As the figure shows, initiating conversations with employees on an informal basis is easy, requiring little effort or planning. These conversations take place in their natural environment, providing ‘naturalistic’ data that is true to day-to-day life (Swain & King, 2022). They serve as a low-key method for knowledge creation, making them a valuable way to discuss findings and ask questions regularly. Moreover, conversations motivate open communication and can build trust between the researcher and employees (Thomas et al., 2009). However, it’s essential to note that informal conversations may reflect personal or group interests, potentially offering highly subjective opinions from employees (Iosim et al., 2010).

Creative Session

The creative sessions require more preparation, but facilitate to gather insights in a more targeted and efficient manner. A creative session with a group encourages participants to discuss their answers, resulting in more substantiated insights than from an individual participant (Sillak et al., 2021). In addition, the output of a group session is less subjective than the output of one individual. In Section 2.2.3, different activities used in the creative sessions are illustrated.

Interviews

The third type of employee engagement takes the form of one-on-one interviews. In this project, semi structured interviews are the preferred format. This flexible format motivates in-depth conversation and allows the researcher to follow up on ideas and react to (non-)verbal cues during the interview (Kakilla, 2021). Interviews provide an opportunity to explore employees’ opinions on specific topics in greater depth, as they allow for follow-up questions and ensure privacy (Indhira & Shani, 2014). While interviews offer a more targeted approach to data collection, they demand careful planning and the

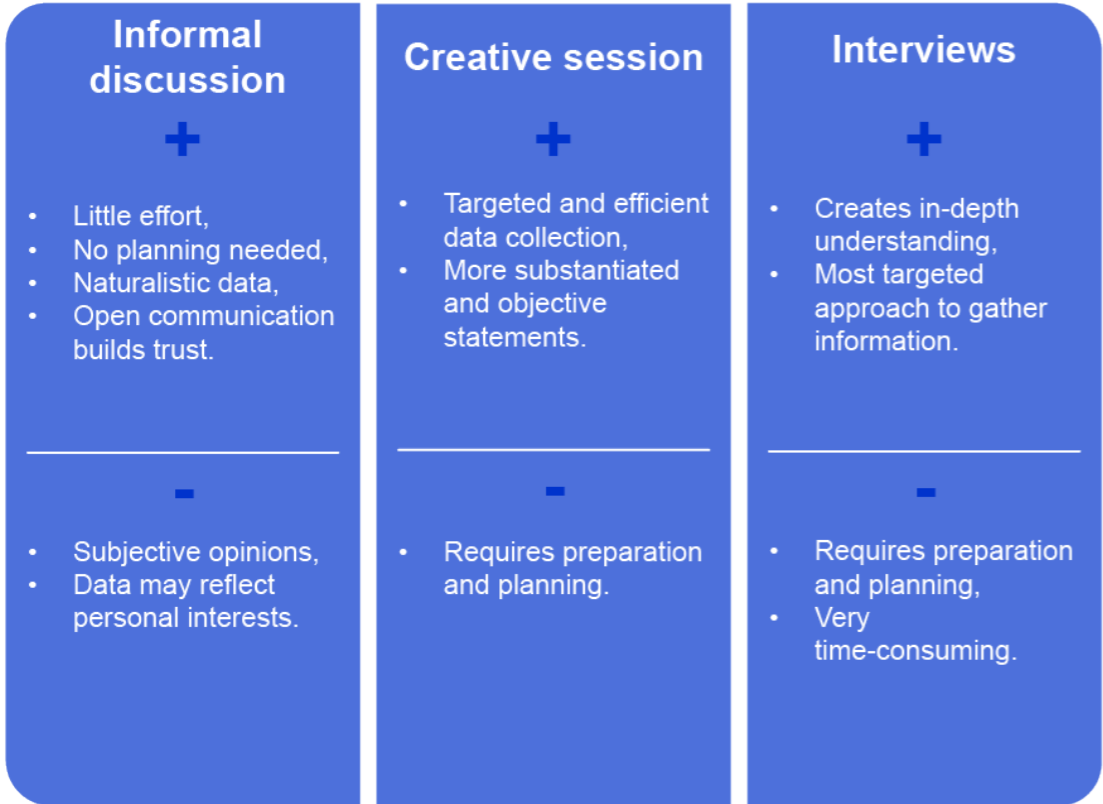


Figure 4: Advantages and disadvantages of each type of joint effort.

transcription and data processing can be time-consuming.

As informal discussions were mostly spontaneous and thus not recorded, this report concentrates on insights derived from creative sessions and interviews. Henceforth, the term “co-creation” will specifically refer to these creative sessions and interviews.

2.2.3 Creative Session Facilitation

The creative sessions are hosted in collaboration with employees in different phases of the project. Figure 5 provides detailed instructions for frequently used activities. As previously stated, activities are inspired by the book Road Map for Creative Problem Solving Techniques (Heijne & van der Meer, 2019). The report will delve into the procedure of each creative session in later paragraphs, providing detailed descriptions and outcomes of the activities.

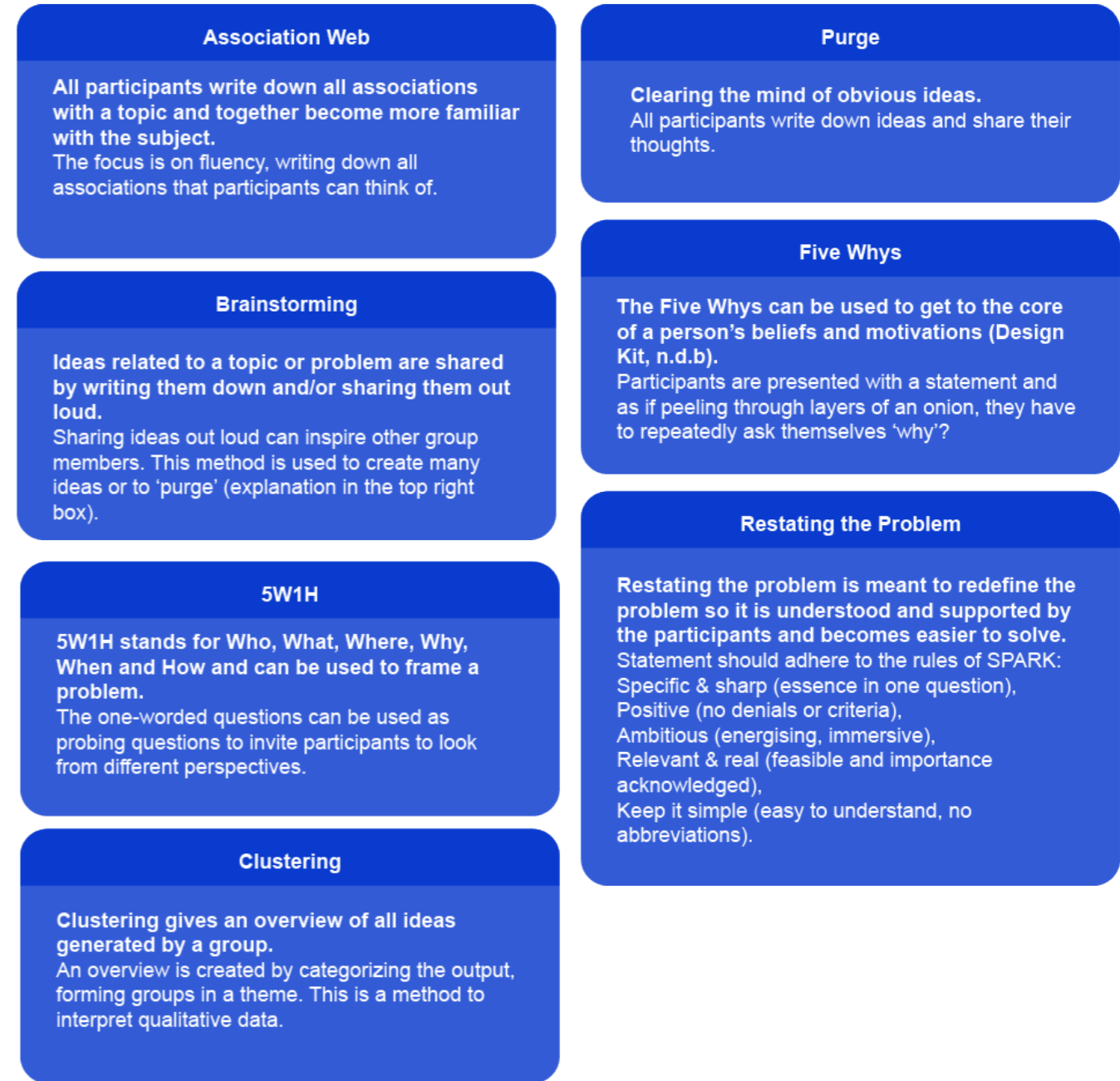


Figure 5: Instructions of activities utilised in the creative sessions.

2.2.4 Qualitative Data Analysis

This section describes the processing of the data, collected through semi-structured interviews. The interviews are recorded and transcribed. For privacy reasons, they are not included in this report. After collecting the data, it is analysed, based on a set of analytical stages, as described by Ritchie & Spencer (1994): familiarization with the data, identifying a thematic framework and finally mapping and interpretation.

Familiarization

The data from the interviews was created by taking notes during the interview, listening to the recordings and making transcripts. The familiarization with the data already started during the interviews, as the researcher takes the interviews, transcribes them and analyses the data.

Identifying a Thematic Framework

The number of interviews was small and all transcripts were thoroughly reviewed. This immersion in the data allowed for faster identification of recurrent themes. In reviewing the transcripts, interesting quotes were highlighted and compiled per speaker.

Mapping and interpretation

The data was mapped by categorising quotes from speakers and determining inclusion of quotes based on their relevance to the research. During these data processing stages, categories and connections from previous research were incorporated, as insights from the interviews were expected to align with those from the co-creation sessions.

2.2.5 Co-creation Confidentiality Disclosure

The findings of the co-creation sessions and interviews are reported using quotes. The quotes utilised in the report have been carefully translated to accurately capture the context and to reflect the intentions of the employees. Finally, they have been approved to use in this report by the speaker. As statements may contain sensitive information, they have not been linked to the group formations or individual speakers.

Key Takeaways of Chapter 2

This chapter presents the general approach and methods used in the project.

General Approach

The project follows the approach of the Double Diamond methodology, consisting of four consecutive phases: Explore, Reframe, Create and Catalyse. Each phase has a dedicated chapter in this report, and the activities conducted during these phases are presented in chronological order, thereby shaping the report’s overall structure. Activities comprise individual efforts and co-creation, which involve creative sessions and interviews.

Benefits of Co-creation

This chapter presents various types of co-creation and their benefits. Co-creation processes encourage employee participation and commitment, which can lead to better acceptance of the outcomes. Furthermore, co-creation involves diverse perspectives and includes inside knowledge from employees, resulting in better-suited solutions. Finally, working in groups enables simultaneous in-depth critical evaluation of plans.

Co-creation Activities

This research project frequently employs various co-creation activities, which are outlined in Paragraph 2.2.3. Other activities are explained in the dedicated sections of the creative session.

3. Exploring the Current System

This chapter presents the outcomes of the first phase of the Double Diamond methodology: Explore. The objective of this phase is to understand the current situation within TD and this is done through several activities. Figure 6 lists the activities of this phase in chronological order. Collaborative activities are presented including their aim and the session plan in short.

Section 3.1 presents the findings of the literature review and desk research. The subsequent three sections explore how employees perceive the organisational structure and identify potential barriers to synergy creation. This is achieved through two co-creation sessions and employee interviews. The chapter concludes with an assessment of the team structure in Section 3.5.

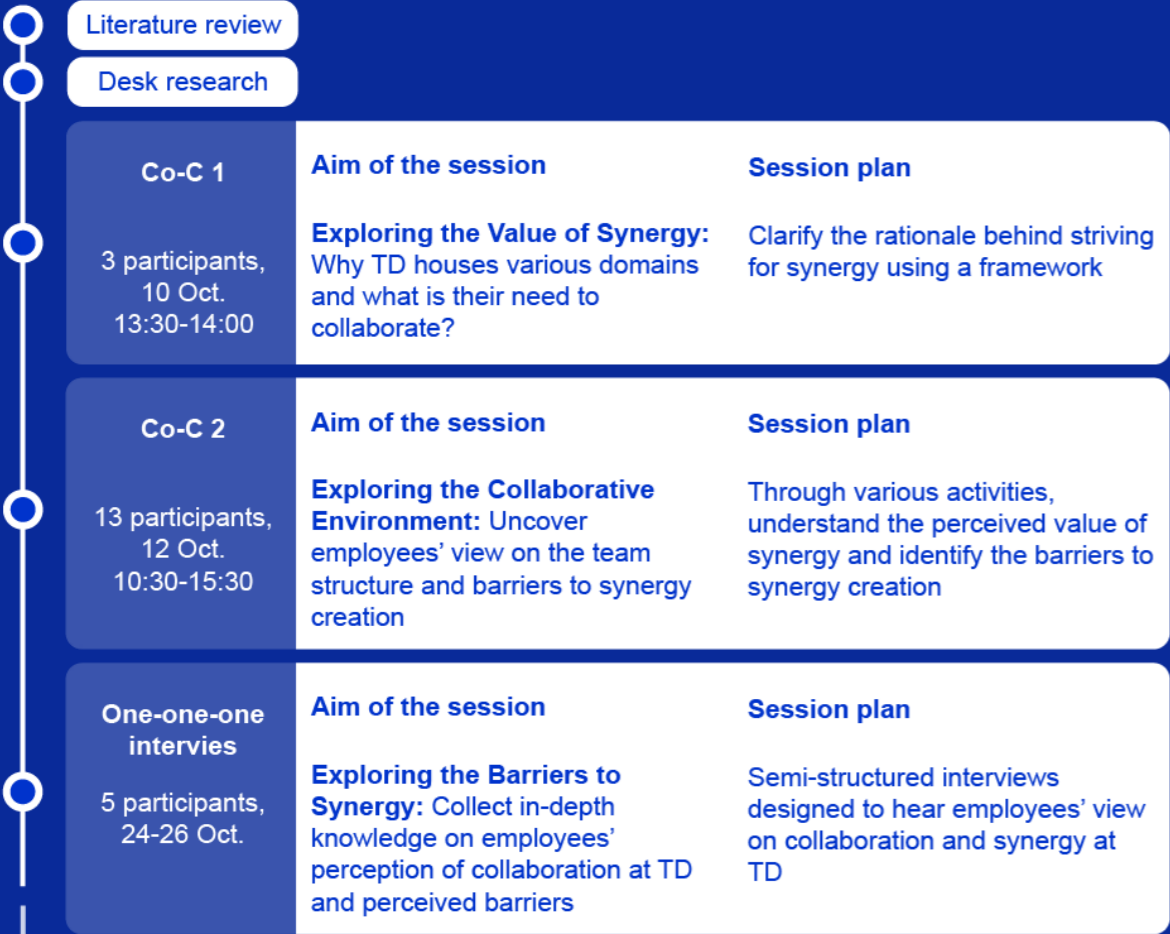


Figure 6: The activities in the exploration phase.

3.1 Literature Review and Desk Research

This section presents the findings of the literature review and the desk research. In Paragraph 3.1.1, the definition of synergy is presented and factors important for collaboration. Subsequently, in Paragraph 3.1.2, the teams of TD are discussed, outlining the roles and responsibilities. In Paragraph 3.1.3 five organisational structures for creative agencies are presented. Finally, Paragraph 3.1.4 elaborates further onto TD's structure, discussing its characteristics, advantages and disadvantages.

3.1.1 Synergy Creation

TD is dedicated to achieving optimal synergy across its three key domains: Branding, Communications and Technology. As the current level of collaboration does not support this, this thesis aims to improve the collaboration among these domains. This paragraph first defines synergy to better grasp TD's objectives.

Synergy is "the combined power of a group of things when they are working together that is greater than the total power achieved by each working separately" (Cambridge Dictionary, sd). In the context of this thesis, synergy then relates to the outcomes of the collaboration between the three domains, that are greater than what the domains achieve separately. The definition shows that collaboration is a requirement for synergy creation. Factors important for collaboration are further explored and described in the following paragraph.

Collaboration

In the research of Patel et al. (2012), various factors related to the collaborative context are presented, which include culture, environment, business climate and organisational structure. The authors also suggest that collaboration can be enhanced through adequate support and a team composition aligned with the tasks to be performed.

Csikszentmihalyi (1996), one of the leading researchers on creativity, states that creativity is a collaborative process. Therefore, it does not happen solely inside people's heads but rather in the interaction between a person's thoughts and a sociocultural context (as cited in Climer, 2016). Particularly diverse teams, such as multidisciplinary teams, can enhance creative performance (Miura & Hida, 2004). Leveraging different perspectives is expected to improve decision-making quality and problem-solving innovativeness (Chasanidou et al., 2015). Moreover, teams can combine multiple areas of expertise to develop integrated solutions, which suggests the possibility of improved collaboration not only enhancing creativity but also resulting in more comprehensive and holistic work outcomes. Therefore, effective collaboration can be significant within creative agencies as it serves as a fundamental tool for generating creative outcomes.

This paragraph stresses the importance of collaboration in creative agencies and highlights that working in diverse or multidisciplinary teams leads to improved creative performance, better decision-making and more innovative problem-solving. The following paragraphs describe how TD and other creative agencies are structured to facilitate collaborative processes.

3.1.2 Teams and Roles within TD

TD works in multidisciplinary teams. Figure 7 depicts the current teams of TD, including the three teams of Zuiderlicht (ZL), from TD's location in Maastricht. The teams each offer a unique proposition to clients. This team centric structure dates back to 2017. Before that time, the teams were small companies within the holding Total Design. As small companies, they had to send invoices to each other when they wanted to work together. Removing the operational action of sending internal invoices and transforming the companies into teams of one company aimed to stimulate collaboration between the teams.

All TD teams have their own targets to reach and undergo performance evaluations based on profit & loss (P&L). Each team represents a line of business (LoB), collectively contributing to an extensive service offering for clients. A HoT leads a team and is responsible for the acquisitions. This is meant to stimulate an entrepreneurial spirit throughout the whole company. The HoT is ultimately responsible for establishing and reaching the team targets and monitors the teams financial performance.

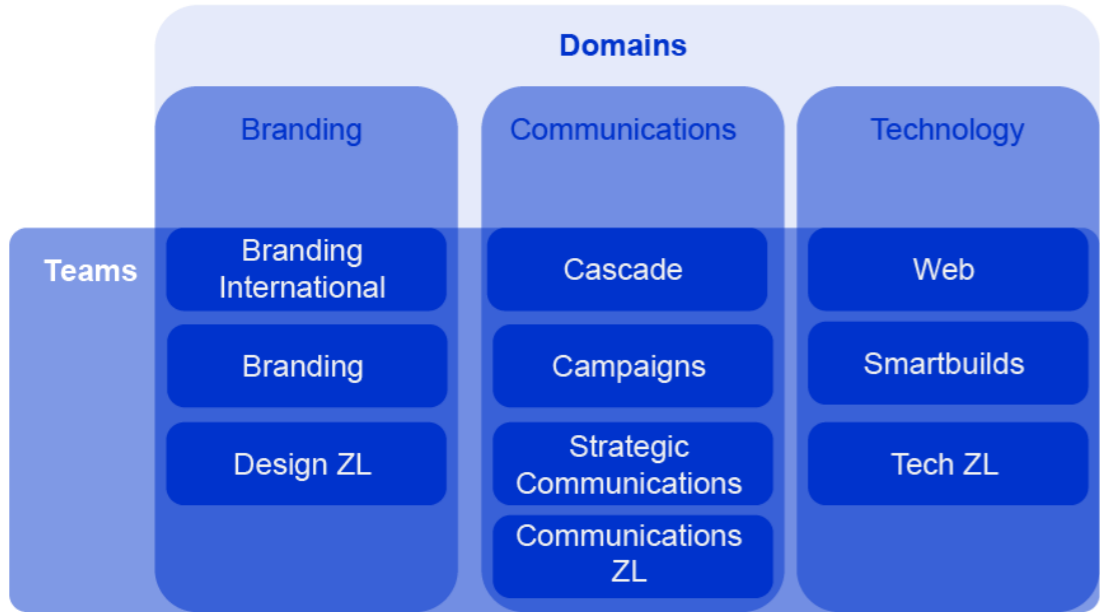


Figure 7: The three domains and creative teams at TD.

Roles and Responsibilities within a Team

In Figure 8, the different roles and responsibilities within a team are shown. Ideally, a team has one HoT, one or more client managers and one creative director and strategy director. However, not all teams have a creative director or strategy director. There are three creative directors and two strategy directors, each assigned to a specific team. These also offer support to other teams when needed. By creating these autonomous cells, clients have immediate access to all specialists, according Partner & Strategy Director at TD (Arts, personal conversation, 16 January, 2024).

Team roles	Role description
Client manager	Responsible for communicating with the client, maintaining the relations and managing projects. This includes developing the project, monitoring its progress, budgets and timelines.
Head of team	Responsible for the sales, proposition and the team. Should also promote collaboration with other teams, analyse teams' staffing needs and ultimately responsible for the team towards the client.
Creative director	Overall responsible for the creative quality that teams deliver. Their role focuses on client offerings that align with the client's strategy.
Strategy director	Main tasks are to provide direction in strategic matters.
Creative	Creates client value in various forms. Creatives can be developers, copywriters, producers and more.

Figure 8: The different roles within a team.

3.1.3 Organisational Structures for Creative Agencies

The organisational structure of a creative agency can have different forms. Five common organisational structures and their characteristics are found in literature that will be further discussed. Creative agencies often work in variations of these structures, sometimes derived through trial and error. This paragraph is followed by elaborating upon the organisational structure of TD and its underlying rationale.

Different Organisational Structures

Creative agencies work in various organisational structures, each with its own characteristics. Five common structures are described below.

[1] Traditional/Functional model: This model is characterised by centralised authority and is divided into departments with specialised services. It works in silos and does not stimulate cross-departmental collaboration (Waal et al., 2019).

[2] Matrix Model: The matrix model groups employees of similar skills and works with additional layers of management and/or communication. It promotes cross-departmental collaboration and uses a double reporting system, where team members report to both the team lead and department head (Gillard, 2005).

[3] Hub/Pod-Model: This model organises teams per client type or sector, instead of a specialty. Pods have little to no dependency on each other (Sinclair-Brooks, 2023).

[4] Holacracy: In this model, there are no clear assigned roles and employees are free to take on tasks and move around teams. The structure gives employees empowerment, but potential unclarity of roles can lead to a lack of accountability and inefficiency (Bernstein et al., 2016).

[5] Flat structure: This structure is often found in small creative agencies and has little or no hierarchical layer between management and employees. Instead of a top-down approach, decisions are often made collectively (Sinclair-Brooks, 2023).

Advantages and Disadvantages

Each organisational structure has distinct advantages and disadvantages. For instance, the traditional model promotes specialization and streamlined communication, but often fosters silos, structures that divide employees into discrete groups (Indeed, 2022) and hinder collaboration across departments (Waal et al., 2019). In contrast, the matrix-model is often a response to silos in corporations, promoting collaboration across departments (Vantrappen & Wirtz, 2016), but it can be confusing due to its dual reporting system (Gillard, 2005). A model with more streamlined communication is the pod-system. It functions in autonomous pods, promoting efficiency (Sinclair-Brooks, 2023).

An organisational structure should be carefully considered based on the size of the business, the number of employees and the company's values to determine the most suitable model for the organisation.

3.1.4 TD's Organisational Structure

TD's organisational structure is a blend of the matrix model and the pod model. The teams are autonomous, like independent pods, but the structure is meant to facilitate cross-disciplinary collaboration, like the matrix model. Figure 9 depicts the organisational structure. The teams are supported by the board and overhead roles, such as finance and administration officers.

Essentially, the teams are small agencies within the framework of Total Design. Specialists (individuals or teams) can be acquired or detached accordingly, to meet client demands and consistently create the right value. This entails that the teams depicted in Figure 9 can interchange team members to address the needs of clients.

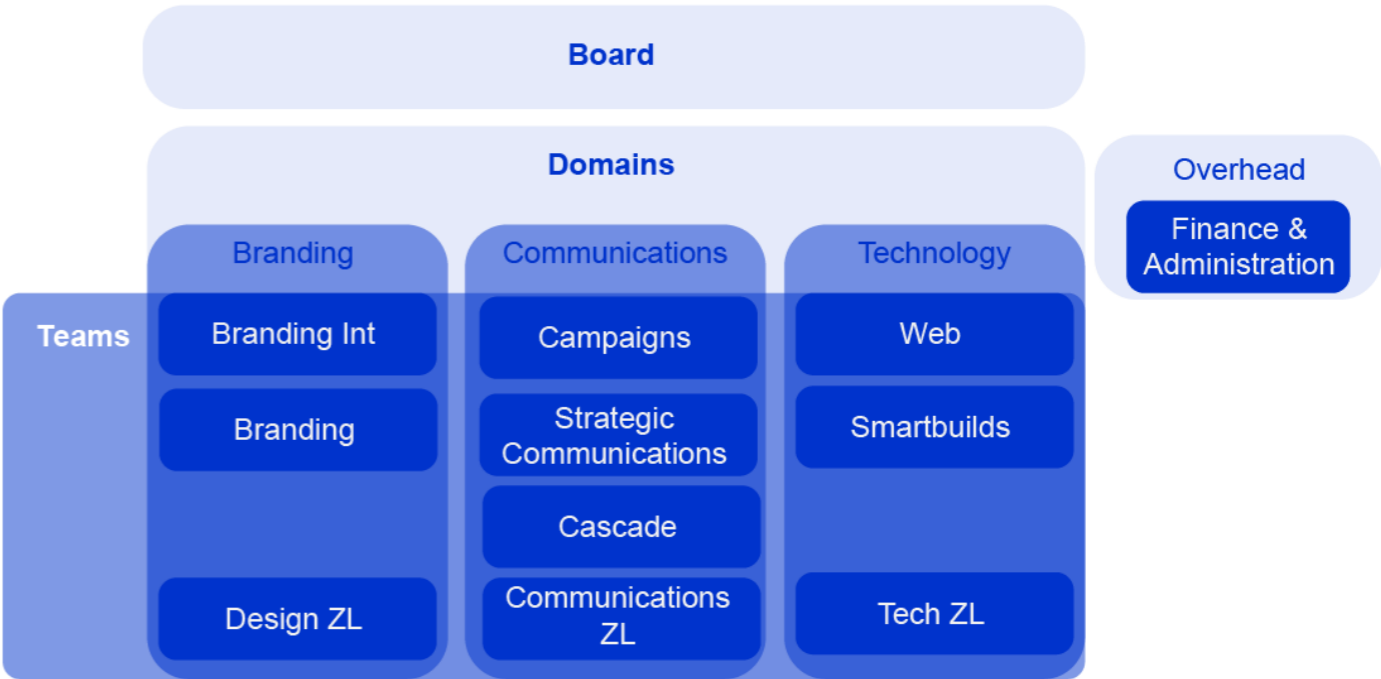


Figure 9: TD's current organisational structure.

Characteristics of TD’s structure

Below, the organisational structure of TD is further explained describing five main characteristics.

Small dedicated teams: Each team is accustomed to working together and has their own working methods and rituals, fostering a sense of comfort and close collaboration. The teams can undergo dynamic changes, such as fluctuations in team size, mergers, splits, and expansions of their proposition.

Entrepreneurial spirit: Each team develops and promotes its unique proposition to offer clients, reflecting an entrepreneurial spirit. The teams are multidisciplinary in order to independently execute their assignments.

Financial performance: To enhance financial team performance, each team is assigned Profit and Loss (P&L) targets. The Head of Teams (HoT) is in charge of determining and steering these targets.

Inter-team collaboration: Teams are encouraged to collaborate with other teams or experts from TD when necessary, allowing non-team members to contribute billable hours to specific projects. This flexible approach enables non-team members to collaborate with a team temporarily or on a more extended basis.

Client management: Client relationships are managed through dedicated client managers within TD. Each client manager oversees projects for their assigned clients. When a different team takes on a client assignment, it becomes the responsibility of the teams’ client managers to ensure a thorough transfer of client knowledge, facilitating seamless client transitions.

Potential Benefits and Possible Downsides

A slide deck relating to the team structure lists intended benefits and possible downsides, as proposed by the board. Table 1 provides an overview of them in English and the original slides can be found (in Dutch) in Appendix B1. The potential downsides to the existing team structure are explained in more detail below, as these could potentially contribute to barriers to collaboration.

Teams go for themselves and/or compete: The teams tend to pursue their own targets, potentially leading to a scenario where a team prioritises its own objectives over helping another team in need.

Colleagues are scattered across teams: The independent operation of teams may result in some individuals never collaborating because they belong to different teams, even when they have similar roles within TD.

Fragmented offering instead of Total: Because each team knows their own proposition best and wants to reach their targets, teams may provide clients with only a selection of services rather than all of TD’s services.

“Best team on the job” doesn’t always work: The current proposition teams may not be best suited to all client assignments. In such a case, the team composition for certain projects may need to be altered to align with the assignment, considering budget constraints and availability.

Client can experience the mentioned downsides: Client dissatisfaction can have negative consequences for TD as an organisation.

Low Adaptation of Top-Down Impositions

As Table 1 describes, the structure is flat (stated in benefit [3]). However, there is a certain hierarchy at TD, roughly separating the board from the teams and their members. New initiatives from the board are presented to employees. This has lead to disagreement, for example in response to the recent mandate for TD employees to work at the office at least three days a week. This decision was presented as a potential solution to ussues relating to remote working. However, employees perceived this directive as a top-down imposition and it was met with resistance. Perhaps the resistance stems

from lack of ownership of the solutions, lack of understanding or disagreement from employees. Overall, there seems to be low adaptation of initiatives presented by the board. This is outside of the scope of this research and further research would be needed to prove this. However, this adds reason to the use of co-creation in this project. To stimulate acceptance of a new initiative supporting cross-disciplinary collaboration, employees of TD will be involved in the decision making process through co-creation.

Table 1: Benefits and downsides to the team structure, as proposed by the board.

<div><div><div>+</div><div>Benefits</div></div><div><div>-</div><div>Downsides</div></div></div>	
Strength from both a large agency and small dedicated teams	Teams go for themselves and/or compete
Entrepreneurial spirit throughout the organization	Colleagues are scattered across teams
Flat structure closely engaged with clients	Fragmented offering instead of Total
Independent teams with professional employees	"Best team on the job" doesn't always work
Agility and resilience, providing flexibility and stability	Client can experience the mentioned downsides
Ease of growth, scaling and downsizing	
Personal development, vertical and horizontal in rotations and classes.	

3.1.5 Summary and Implications

This section stresses the importance of collaboration to fostering synergy. In this report, synergy relates to the outcomes of the collaboration between the three domains, that are greater than what the domains achieve separately. Consequently, collaboration is seen as a requirement for synergy creation.

Effective collaboration primarily depends on the context, like the culture, environment, business climate and organisational structure. Collaboration can be enhanced with the right support and team for the task. This is particularly relevant for creative agencies, where collaboration can contribute to creative performance. Working in multidisciplinary groups brings together different expertise and holds the potential to elevate creative performance.

TD embodies multidisciplinary collaboration in teams, that each have a unique proposition to clients, such as branding, web development or campaigns. They are lead by a HoT and can operate independently. To stimulate collaboration between teams, the board members removed the operational action of having to send invoices when a team requires assistance of someone from another team.

As previously stated, an organisational structure that supports collaboration is crucial to fostering synergy. Thus, different organisational structures are explored that creative agencies can adopt to facilitate collaboration. TD’s structure resembles a mix of the matrix-model and pod-model, as the teams operate autonomously, but can collaborate across teams as well. The various intended advantages and potential drawbacks of TD’s existing structure are described.

The section concludes by adding reason to leveraging co-creation in this report, as it is expected to lead to employee involvement and a higher potential acceptance of solutions.

In the following section, co-creation will be employed to gain insights into how employees perceive the organisational structure and to identify other possible barriers to synergy creation.

3.2 Exploring the Value of Synergy: Co-creation Session 1

This section aims to uncover the motivation of Total Design for striving for synergy creation and describes a co-creation session, hosted to identify the rationale behind housing the different domains and instigating the teams’ structure for multidisciplinary collaboration. The deeper understanding of why TD strives for synergy can help to redefine the problem statement and discover current challenges.

3.2.1 Procedure

Figure 10 presents the procedure of the session: after a brief association web, functioning as a purge, the main activity is performed which clarifies the rationale behind housing the three domains and striving for synergy.

3.2.2 Participants

The CEO, a Creative Director and Strategy Director & Partner participated in this session. Besides the main objective of the session to discuss the motivation for synergy creation, this session was also meant to create support and understanding from the board members by involving them early on in the project.

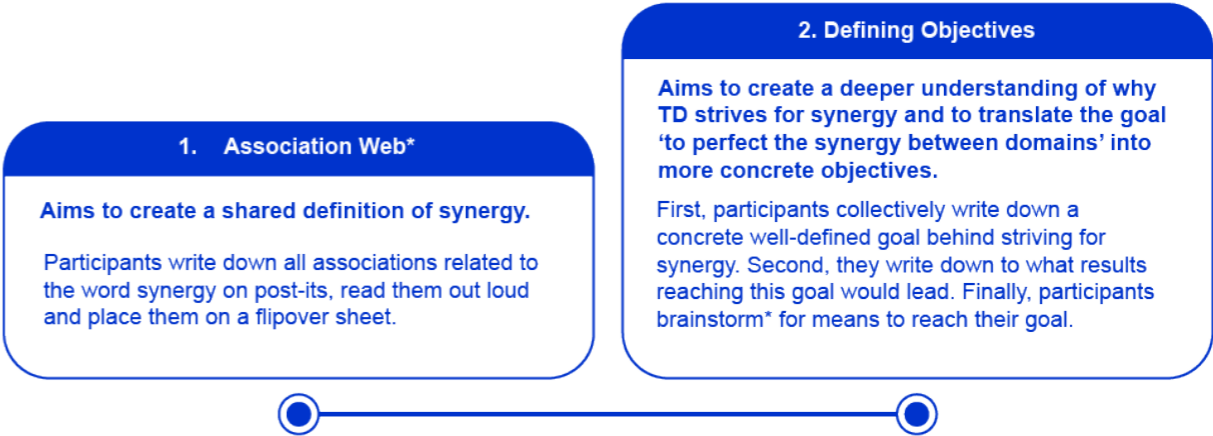


Figure 10: Procedure of co-creation session 1.
*Association Web and brainstorming are described in Paragraph 2.2.3 Co-Creation Methods

3.2.3 Findings

The outcomes of the session show how members of the board define synergy and what they consider to be synergy’s value. Their shared definition, as comprised in the first activity, is that synergy means “to deliver better brands & strategies and a better culture & collaboration at TD”. In Figure 11, an overview is shown of what participants think the value of synergy can be for clients and for TD. The figure shows the underlying reasons for striving for synergy, as seen in column Goals, separated between the clients and TD. The second column, Results, shows what achieving these goals would lead to. The last row, Means, shows examples of how the board thinks TD can work towards these goals. The figure shows that the value of synergy between the domains is a broad perspective, which can lead to more strategic and better solutions for clients and improved client relations. For TD, the value of synergy is the better collaboration between the different in-house skills, leading to a culture of collaboration and sharing clients.

Downsides to the Team Structure

During the session, the board members acknowledged that the current structure involves challenges to synergy creation and attribute these to the team structure. The existing team structure is meant to promote collaboration between teams. Team changes and collaboration with individuals from other teams are done frequently, they say. However, teams can be hesitant to do so, to minimise the costs. To foster a culture that encourages collaboration, different means can be initiated (as seen in Figure 11). For instance, a centralised payment for all teams, fluid team structure and making decisions unrelated to profit. Furthermore, the board states that clients often remain within one team, hindering the desired culture of sharing clients and cross-selling (encouraging the client to leverage additional services of TD). This is not done enough and the board attributes this to the P&L targets, as the targets may foster a sense of competition within teams.

	Goals	Results	Means
Value to the client	The broad perspective that the different domains gives, holds the potential for more strategic solutions	Better solutions and client relations	A central intake for clients or to discuss the client assignments with all domains present
Value to TD	The in-house skills work together better by sharing clients and working cross-disciplinary	A culture that encourages collaboration in general and sharing clients	Altering the current team structure, for instance by creating fluid teams or motivating the teams to make decisions unrelated to profit

Figure 11: The value of synergy to TD and its clients.

3.2.4 Summary and Implications

The sessions objective was to uncover the motivation of TD for striving for synergy creation. The findings show that the value of synergy for TD is better collaboration between the different in-house skills. The value of synergy for clients is that different perspectives of the three domains can lead to better solutions for client and improved client relations. The session concludes that the current situation, including the teams structure, does not fully support the interdisciplinary collaboration. The board members state that the team targets may create hesitance relating to inter-team collaboration and sharing clients. Despite this, they affirm that the team structure will remain unchanged. The following co-creation session will seek to identify barriers to synergy creation and will seek to hear the employees perspective on the environment for collaboration within TD.

3.3 Exploring the Collaborative Environment: Co-creation Session 2

The previous co-creation session primarily aimed to uncover the board's aspirations to strive for synergy. This following session shifts the focus to how the current situation is experienced by employees. The co-creation session seeks to identify factors that hinder and facilitate synergy creation, commonly referred to as barriers and enablers.

3.3.1 Procedure

This more extensive session was hosted during the quarterly meeting (Qmeeting) of TD. The participants' view on synergy creation between the three domains Branding, Communications and Technology is explored through various activities, outlined in Figure 12.

The output of this particular session is translated into a report to offer to TD. The report is provided the repository, in an accompanying file, 'Report on co-creation session 2'. It includes a more thorough description of all activities and contains the participants input and notes taken during discussions and presentation moments.

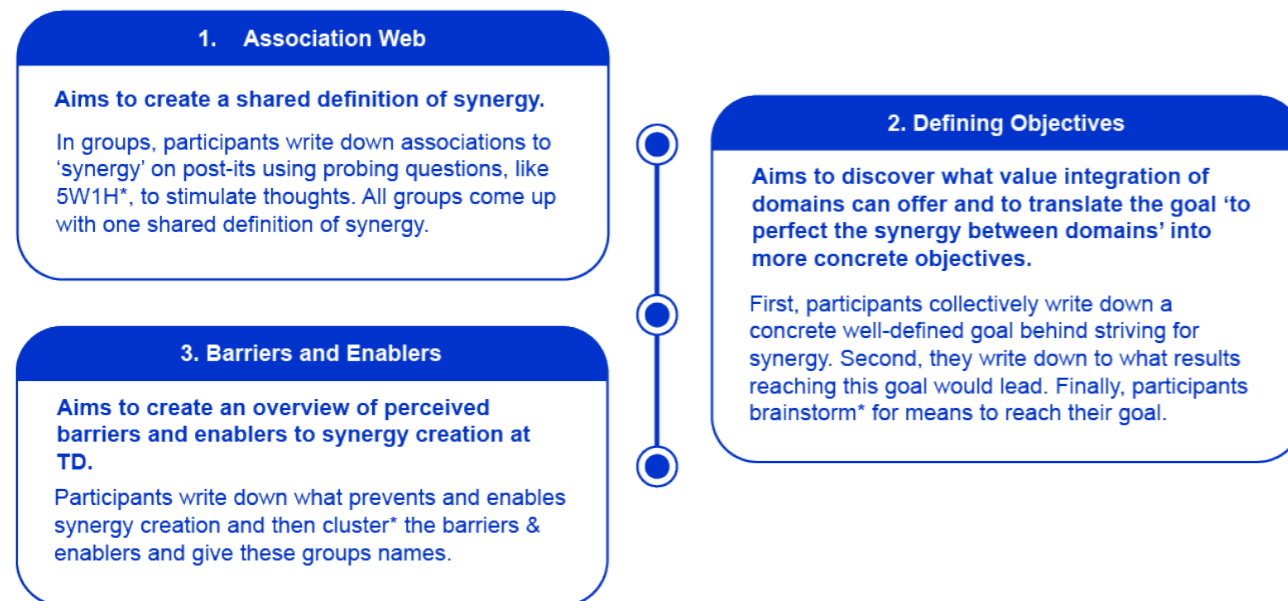


Figure 12: Procedure of co-creation session 2.
*5W1H and Clustering are described in Paragraph 2.2.3 Co-Creation Methods

3.3.2 Participants

Participants attending the Qmeeting session included the CEO, Partner & Strategy Director and the Commercial Director of TD, as well as all the HoTs¹. A list of the participants can be seen in Figure 13. The HoTs are good representatives of the multidisciplinary teams at TD, as they are in close contact to their team members. Especially the thoughts around the team structure at TD are interesting to note, as this structure is more directly experienced by the HoTs. This meeting was attended by all HoTs. It is worth noting that even though they do not hold a HoT title, this report consistently refers to all participants as HoT, including the CEO and other functions.

¹ At the time of the session, there was not yet a third team of Zuiderlicht.

Participants	
1 CEO	
2 Strategy Director & Partner	
3 Commercial Director	
Head of Teams	
4 Team Campaigns	9 Team Branding International
5 Team Branding	10 Team Cascade
6 Team Smartbuilds	11 Team Design ZL
7 Team Web	12 Team Tech ZL
8 Team Strategic Communication	

Figure 13: Participants of co-creation session 2.

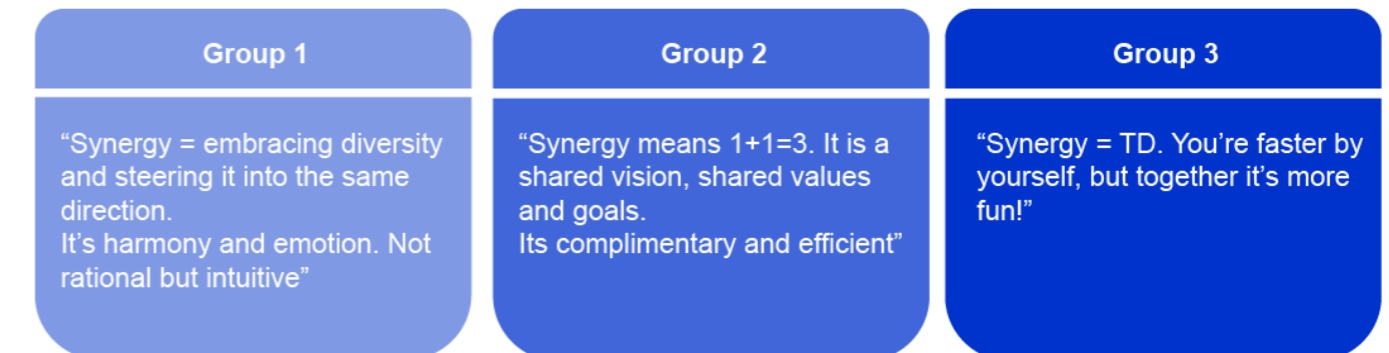


Figure 14: The definition of synergy, as presented by the three groups.

3.3.3 Findings

The first activity of the session aims to uncover the shared definition of synergy. The participants were randomly separated into three groups, each with the assignment to formulate a definition. The definitions from the three groups can be seen in Figure 14. The three definitions show that the HoTs have a broader definition of synergy creation than the aforementioned definition, 'outcomes that surpass the collective outcome'. According to the HoTs, synergy is more than optimal collaboration. As stated in their shared definition, synergy is 'not rational, but intuitive', and defies logic: '1+1=3'.

Barriers to Synergy Creation

The activities reveal many perceived barriers to creating synergy. All the perceived barriers are grouped into themes. The themes result from combining the input from the different groups, all of which presented different clusters of barriers. The eight themes are shown in Figure 15.

Not all of the perceived barriers are explicitly related to collaboration. For instance, a lack of HR and diversity are also mentioned. To stay within the scope of the project, focus lies with perceived barriers to synergy creation, related to collaboration. The table in Appendix B2.1 presents the themes related to collaboration (themes [1]-[5]), accompanied by a quote for illustrative purposes. All barriers not explicitly related to collaboration ([6]-[8]), can be found in Appendix B2.2.

During the session, participants also describe the objectives behind striving for synergy. The figure in Appendix B3 includes the findings of the activity Defining Objectives. The findings show that for TD, synergy means ‘working together in a collective direction’. The participants state that to

foster synergy, TD needs ‘structures that support collaboration’. However, the described barriers, as seen in Appendix B2.1 and B2.2, show that the existing structure based on teams receives criticism from the HoTs. For instance, they state that teams frequently prioritise themselves rather than collaborating or seeking a more suitable team to undertake an assignment. The barriers related to collaboration appear most crucial to synergy creation and their effect should be further explored.

Enablers to Synergy Creation

The session also presents enablers to synergy creation. The findings are summarised into four themes and can be seen Appendix B4. These four themes are considered important factors to enable synergy and are described below. First, the people of TD and its culture are important for fostering synergy. Second, the skills and operations within TD. Third, a supporting structure for synergy creation and lastly, a common strategy.

3.3.4 Summary and Implications

This section describes the second creative session, participated in by all HoTs and three other team-overarching roles. The sessions objective was to identify factors that hinder and facilitate synergy creation and to hear their view on the current organisational structure. The participants’ shared definition shows that synergy is more than optimal collaboration and not all mentioned barriers to synergy creation explicitly relate to collaboration.

The activities presented many barriers standing in the way of synergy creation, which have been categorised into eight themes, as seen in Figure 15. The mentioned barriers show that HoTs criticise the current structure and that the structure does not fully support synergy creation. Of the 8 barriers, barriers [1] to [5] are explicitly

related to multidisciplinary collaboration. These are most crucial to be addressed to improve the collaboration and their effect should be further explored.

The session offered an extensive output from different perspectives, leading to a broad overview of perceived barriers to synergy creation. However, it is unclear how pressing the barriers are considered to be. Working with three different groups made it challenging to follow all discussions simultaneously or to ask follow-up-questions. In the subsequent activity, the focus shifts from exploring which barriers are present in the current context, to delve deeper into their effect on synergy creation. This will be done in form of one-on-one interviews.

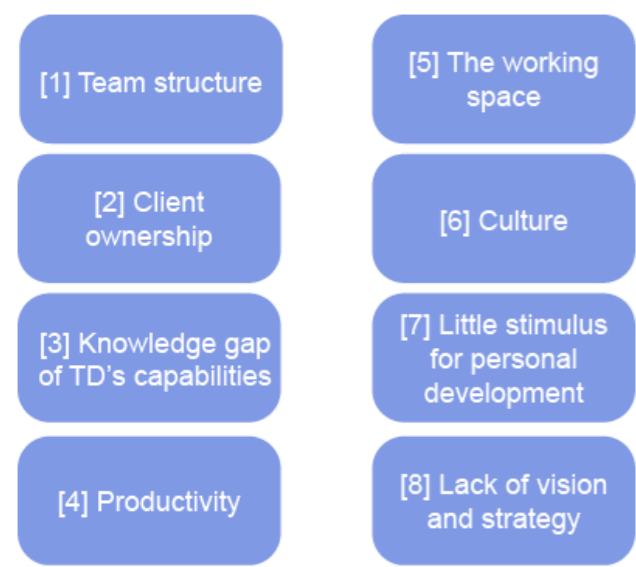


Figure 15: Eight barriers to synergy creation derived from co-creation session 2.

3.4 Exploring the Barriers to Synergy: Interviews

This section describes the procedure and outcomes of the one-on-one interviews. The interviews primary goal is to uncover employees' perception of what facilitates and stands in the way of synergy creation. More specifically, this activity aims to create increased understanding of what stands in the way of *multidisciplinary collaboration*. This section will discuss the identified barriers in detail and how they are related.

3.4.1 Procedure

To identify the barriers to multidisciplinary collaboration at TD, interviews were held with different employees of TD. The interviews are performed at the TD office, in a one-on-one setting to offer privacy and room for in-depth questioning. The full set of questions from the can be found in Appendix B5. Figure 16 describes the main topics of the interview.

3.4.2 Participants

Five employees participated in the interviews. The interviewees have various roles within TD and hold a different perspective from the board members and the HoTs. All participants described their role within TD, duration of employment at TD, language(s) spoken at the office and age. Figure 17 illustrates the diverse group of interviewees, without names.

Participation of the interviews is on a voluntary basis, thus the participant selection is predominantly comprised of individuals who were either not overly occupied during that particular week or held a personal interest in the research project.

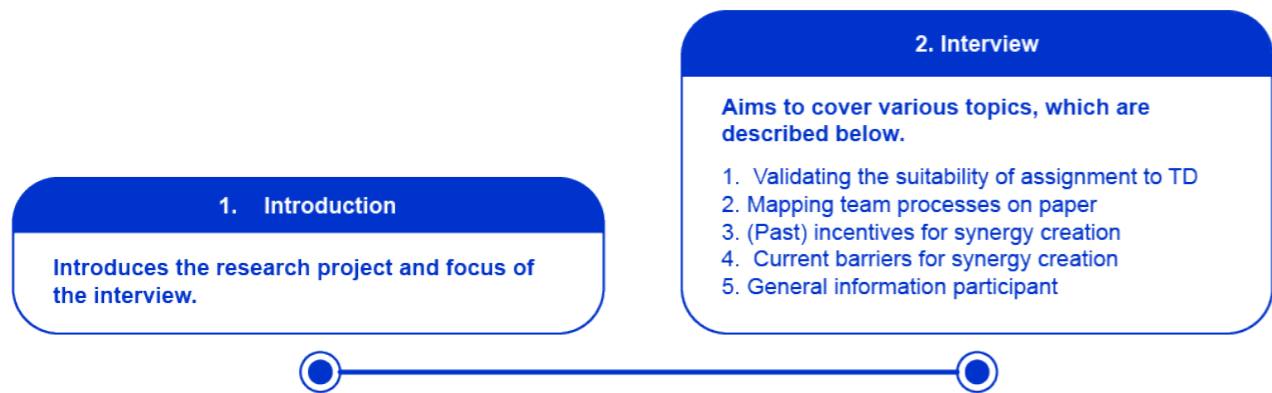


Figure 16: Procedure of the interviews.

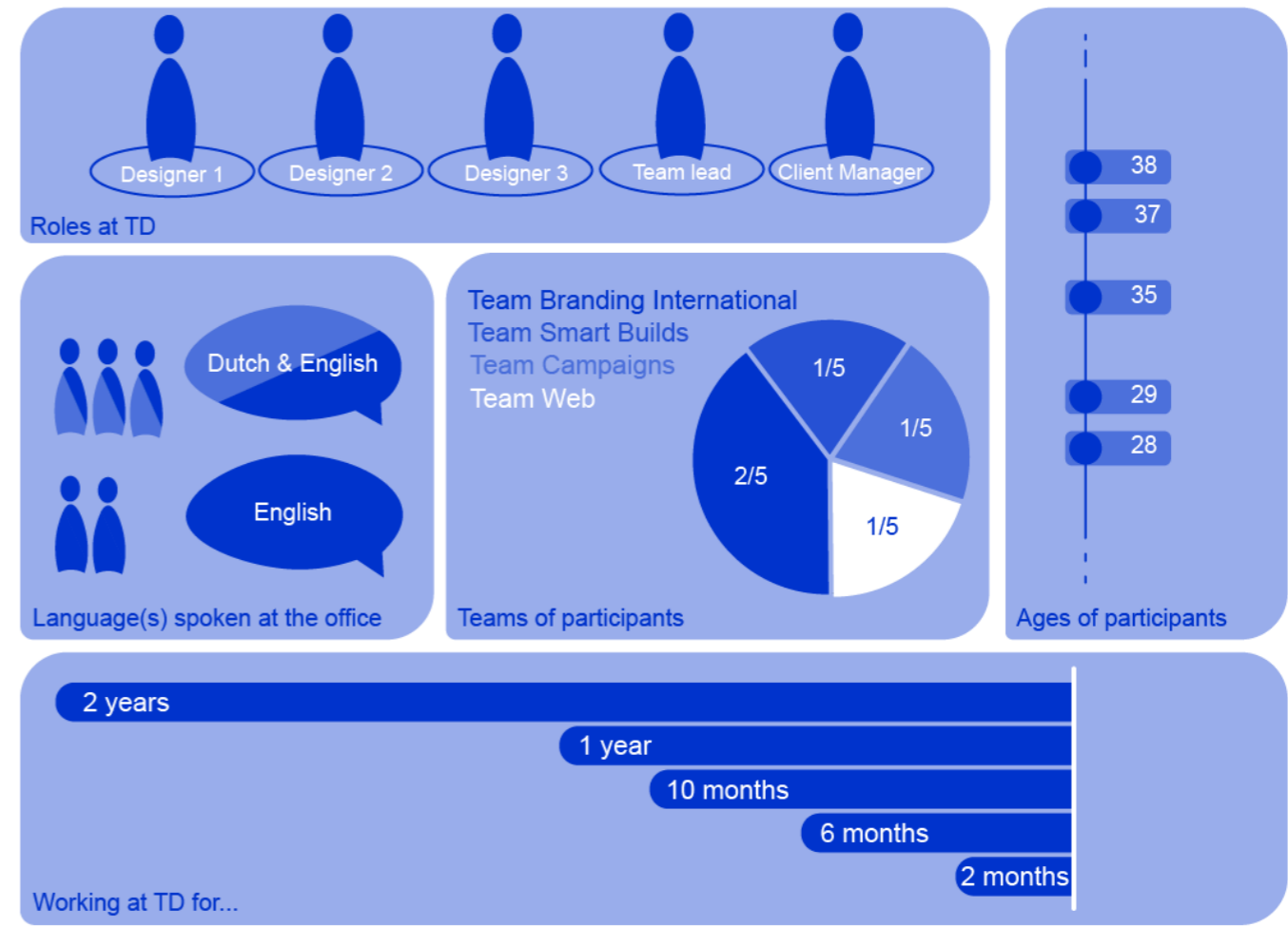


Figure 17: Information on interviewees.

3.4.3 Findings

The interviews show that participants see the multidisciplinary collaboration within TD as an ‘added value’ to clients. Additionally, a respondent states that as assignments are becoming more complex, a cross-disciplinary approach in which different expertise work together is needed, affirming the relevance of this research.

Eleven Barriers to Synergy Creation

The interviewees offered insights into what they perceive to be barriers to synergy. These insights are categorised into eleven themes which are summarised below.

[1] Too little use of shared knowledge

The available knowledge from different domains at TD is not utilised to increase the collective shared knowledge. Learning from others by working together or giving feedback is considered valuable. Currently, there is little interaction or opportunities that invite input on projects. Using shared knowledge of the different domains can lead to more novel and better solutions.

[2] Attaching experts for multi-disciplinary collaboration not done (early) enough

The three domains are currently working separately from each other. Involving someone of another expertise can be valuable as they offer a different perspective. Additionally, they can come up with certain solutions faster and deliver them with higher quality. Finally, to uncover the clients’ underlying needs, it is advantageous to look from a broad perspective to see what TD can do for the client.

[3] Strong internal team focus

Teams are very focused on themselves and their own service offering. When teams meet with clients, they often only pitch their own capabilities, instead of showing them the full TD service offering. Because teams want to reach their targets, there is a hesitancy to collaborate or hire expertise from other TD teams as this has associated costs.

[4] Clients’ unawareness of the broad service offering

Assignments ask for integrated solutions, but there are no Total projects collaborating (only) with different Total teams (there are always other parties involved). Clients are not always aware of TD’s broad service offering or they are not interested due to limitations on time or money. Unfortunately, clients often approach TD with specific needs in mind and already have partners for their other needs, being unaware of TD’s full capabilities.

[5] Unawareness of skills at TD

Employees are unaware of the skills that others at TD have. One of the respondents states that not knowing the portfolio, drive or ambition is the biggest bottleneck to synergy creation.

[6] Productivity over creativity

There is a pressure on being productive, which takes away the time to be creative. Writing hours puts pressure on creativity, as creativity needs time and zooming out. It is risky to take time to be creative because this costs money and success is not guaranteed. It is only possible with clients that are “willing to put more time into it, and more money and if they agree that not everything works in one go”, as a respondent states.

[7] & [8] Obstacles of working remote ([7]) and at the office ([8])

Both working remote and working at the office are said to not support collaboration. The office does not facilitate creative working well, however working remote has issues too, like being unaware of when you can reach others, or simply being unable to. Contrasting statements pose that working remote can be more effective in terms of concentration.

[9] Lack of passion for creativity

There is a lack of passion for creativity around the office. A respondent states that the lack of passion to be creative is a number one barrier to synergy creation. Another respondent states that in a creative design agency, one works better if they are super driven and that it is a designer’s responsibility to be ahead of trends.

[10] Lack of personal development

There is demand for an employee growth budget and more workshops on skill development. A respondent states that TD should encourage more employee growth. Currently, there are not enough creative workshops hosted to teach you skills. TD’ers could be more encouraged to learn from each other.

[11] Working atmosphere

There is no human resources management at TD and one of the respondents exclaims to be unsure if there is a culture that supports being creative. People should feel good at the office, hence this respondent suggests that there should be an instance to guard or create a comfortable atmosphere.

Five Barriers to Multidisciplinary Collaboration

Like in the previous session, not all mentioned barriers are explicitly related to collaboration. The relation of the first five themes to multidisciplinary collaboration has been made clear through the interviews. These barriers and their value to synergy creation are described in more detail in the Table B6.1 in Appendix B6, using quotes as illustrative examples. In order to provide a comprehensive understanding, the barriers that are not directly related to collaboration are described in Table B6.2. This inclusion ensures a holistic view of employees’ perceived barriers to synergy. The tables include a description of the barrier, the participant agreement, which indicates how many of the five participants addressed the theme and were in agreement with each other. The barriers are accompanied by a quote serving as an illustrative example of the barrier and a second quote, illustrating the potential value of addressing the barrier.

Relations between Themes

The five themes explicitly related to multidisciplinary collaboration can be divided into two groups, illustrated in Figure 18. The themes [1] and [2] describe a lack of multidisciplinary collaboration. Themes [3], [4] and [5] are barriers to multidisciplinary collaboration and have an effect on themes [1] and [2]. As previously said, the relation of the other themes ([6] Productivity over creativity, [7] Obstacles of working at the office, [8] Obstacles of working remote and [9] Lack of passion for creativity, [10] Lack of personal development and [11] Working atmosphere) to multidisciplinary collaboration was not explicitly described in the interviews. This relation remains unclear, thus these themes appear to fall out of the scope. The relation between themes [1] to [5] as described in the interviews is depicted in Figure 18 and described in more detail below. The [3] Strong internal team focus results in teams offering their own proposition to clients and therefore leads to [4] Clients’ unawareness of the broad service offering. Secondly, the team focus results in little inter-team collaboration, which results in an [5] Unawareness of skills at TD amongst employees. This general lack of awareness of skills results in a lack of multidisciplinary collaboration in two forms: [1] Too little use of shared knowledge and [2] Attaching experts for multidisciplinary collaboration is not done (early) enough. In short, the strong internal focus has an effect on the general awareness and therefore on the utilization of other teams’ expertise. Overall, it seems to have the greatest effect on the cross-disciplinary collaboration and should thus be the area of focus.

3.4.4 Summary and Implications

The interviews show that participants see the multidisciplinary collaboration within TD as an ‘added value’ to clients and state that as assignments are becoming more complex, a cross-disciplinary approach in which different expertise work together is needed. Unfortunately, the respondents propose many factors that stand in the way of cross-disciplinary collaboration, many of which related to the current team structure. The insights drawn from the interviews are categorised into eleven themes that are perceived to be barriers to synergy.

Barriers mentioned in the interviews can be seen in Figure 18. The relation of the first five themes to multidisciplinary collaboration has been made explicit through the interviews. The strong internal team focus is considered to have a large effect on the multidisciplinary collaboration, as indicated in Figure 18. Thus, the strong internal team focus, resulting from the team structure, will be the focus of the research.

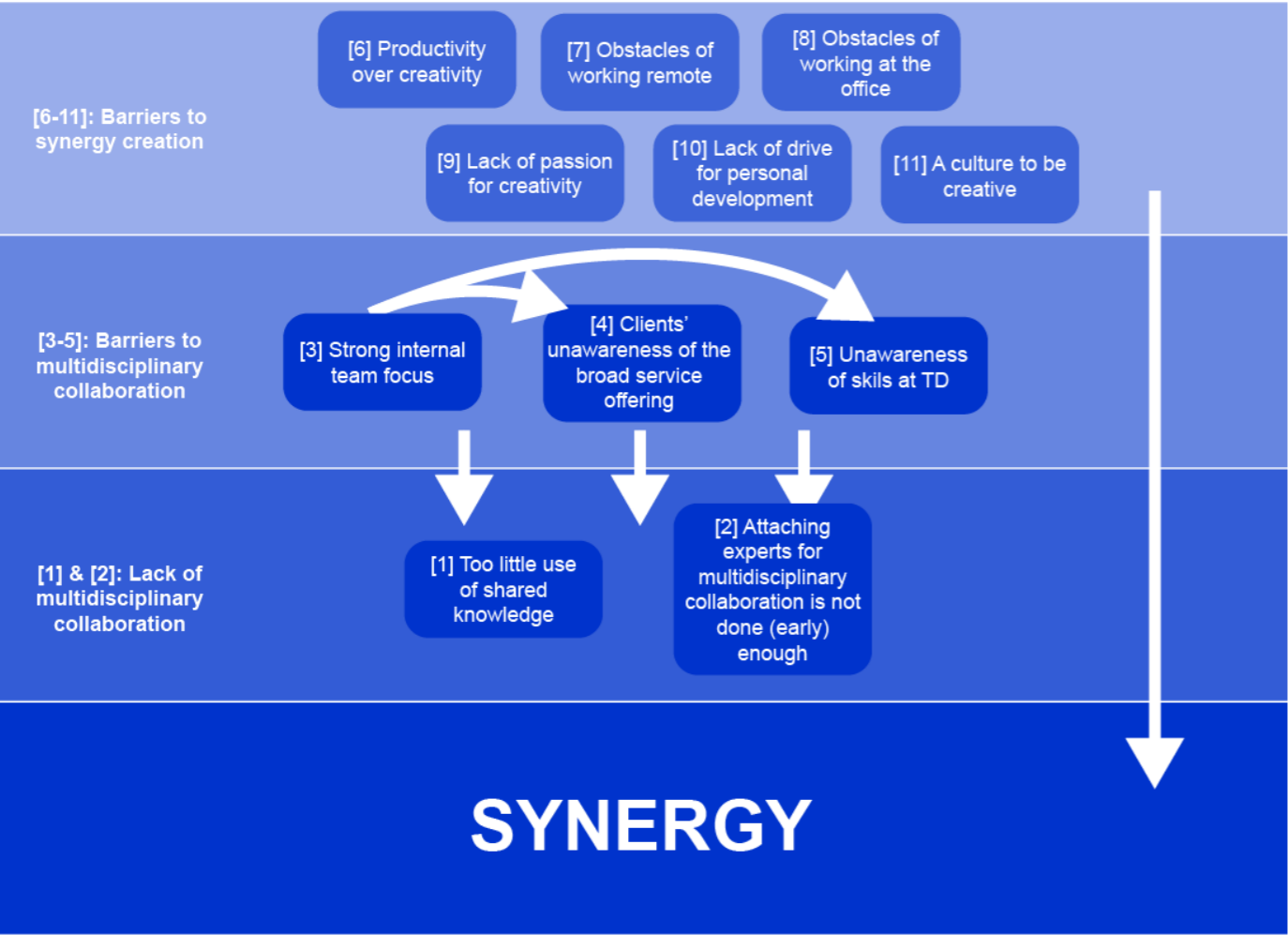


Figure 18: Schematic overview of the relation between themes.

3.5 Assessment of Team Structure: Employee Perspectives

Co-creation session 2 and the five one-on-one interviews illuminate the perspective of the employees regarding the team structure, revealing several issues. Figure 19 lists the barriers mentioned in co-creation session 2 (light blue) and connects these to the similar barriers, mentioned in the interviews (dark blue). The barriers show significant overlap, all but ‘Lack of vision and strategy’, a barrier not prominently present in the interviews. This section will present a comparison of the intended benefits and potential downsides of the team structure to the experience of employees.



Figure 19: Barriers to synergy creation derived from co-creation session 2 and interviews.

3.5.1 Participants Affirm Potential Downsides

The outcomes of co-creation session 2 and the interviews are compared to the intended benefits and potential downsides of the team structure, as proposed by the board. This comparative analysis is detailed in Table 2 and Table 3, seen on the next pages. The tables offer a general description of participants' experience and include employees' quotes for illustrative purposes.

Table 2 shows alignment between the findings from the two activities and the potential downsides, indicating that all potential drawbacks are in fact experienced. Additionally, Table 3 shows statements of the two activities in contrast to the intended benefits, suggesting that employees do not experience these benefits. Overall, the team structure receives mostly negative criticism in the two activities.

3.5.2 Underrepresentation of the Structure's Perceived Benefits

The findings from the activities do not affirm that the intended benefits are experienced, as certain statements contradict the advantages the structure is meant to provide. During the activities, the participants primarily highlighted barriers to synergy, emphasising the downsides of the current team structure. The tables show that the two activities have trouble addressing the benefits.

Emphasis on Barriers over Benefits

The structure's benefits came forward less prominently during the co-creation session. This is possibly due to the orientation of the co-creation session. This session's format may have had an emphasis on stating barriers over benefits, thus leading to an underrepresentation of the structure's perceived benefits.

Difficulty in Citing Positive Examples

As the session format of the co-creation session was possibly not suited to extract the team structure's benefits, interviewees were explicitly asked to give examples of (past) incentives that have stimulated synergy creation. However, they struggled to provide examples. Overall, the activities provided limited insights into aspects of collaboration that are currently going well. Consequently, comparison of the interview findings with the intended benefits only shows contrasting statements and suggests the current structure has no benefits. It is important to note that this interpretation may not be reflective of the actual situation, as there likely are benefits within the existing structure.

Table 2: Comparison of potential downsides to employee experiences

Downsides	As experienced by participant	Quote for illustration purposes	Quote in original language
Teams go for themselves and/or compete	There's a tendency for teams to promote their own services rather than the entire range offered by TD	"Teams are very proposition focused. They should promote TD with clients, but often only promote their team-specific-offering"	"Teams zijn heel erg aanbod gestuurd, maar eigenlijk moeten ze juist TD promoten & verkopen (in plaats van het aanbod van het team zelf)"
Colleagues are scattered across teams	Employees of TD are unaware of their colleagues' skills and capabilities	"I don't know what my colleagues do or can do. It's not because I'm not interested, but because I don't have the time to go find out. It's one of the biggest bottlenecks. You don't know their portfolio, their drive or ambition"	"Ik weet niet wat andere mensen/collega's kunnen (...). Dat is niet omdat het me niet interesseert, maar omdat ik niet genoeg tijd heb om daar achter te komen. (...) Dat is een van de grootste bottlenecks. (...) Je weet gewoon niet wat in hun portfolio zit, wat ze hebben gedaan, wat hun drive is, ambitie"
Fragmented offering instead of Total	TD is said to experience fragmentation on a broader level	<p>"I feel the absence of a centralized sales department. Each team primarily concentrates on its own goals, leveraging personal networks for projects suited to their expertise. Cross-team projects are considered a bonus rather than a focus"</p> <p>"There's a fragmented proposition, client base and markets and we need to define the end-to-end brand-essence. What we offer clients, we should do for ourselves. We should be our own best client"</p>	<p>EN</p> <p>"Er is een gefragmenteerde propositie, client base en markt. We moeten de end-to-end brand essence herdefinieren: wat doen we en wat bieden we klanten? We moeten onze eigen beste klant worden"</p>
"Best team on the job" doesn't always work	At times, less appropriate teams manage clients, whereas emphasis should be placed on transferring clients to the most suitable teams.	"It happens that you pick up a project brief for a client when another team might be more suited. To reach your own targets, however, you want to do the project yourself, sometimes resulting in lower quality"	"Komt voor dat je een brief maar oppakt om aan je P&L te komen, maar dan is een ander team misschien geschikter en mis je de professionaliteit die zij hadden kunnen bieden"
Client can experience these downsides	A client has (or clients have) left TD for the different working method of teams and poor client transfers	"Clients feel as if they work with a different company when they initiate work with a different TD team. It has happened that a client has left, also due to the poor client transfer"	EN

Table 3 [1/2]: Comparison of intended benefits to employee experiences

Benefits	As experienced by the participant	Quote for illustration purposes	Quote in original language
Strength from both a large agency and small dedicated teams	The strength of teams all being part of TD is not optimally used	"Does that happen a lot? That you receive input on your project from a different discipline or from another team? To inspire each other" "No, not much at the moment. Currently, only the involved parties take a look. I haven't experienced a company-wide approach to a project yet"	"Gebeurt dat nu veel? Dat je vanuit een andere discipline of vanuit een ander team ofzo input krijgt over je project? Dat je elkaar kan inspireren" "Nee. Op dit moment niet zoveel. Nu kijken echt alleen de betrokken partijen ernaar. Company wide naar een opdracht kijken heb ik nog niet meegemaakt"
Entrepreneurial spirit throughout the organization	Thusfar, teams attach clients to their team, but too little is done to make them TD-clients	"For synergy creation, entrepreneurship and responsibility is essential. Someone has to act as director and integrate the disciplines in the client relation"	"Je moet willen ondernemen en verantwoordelijkheid nemen voor synergy maken. Iemand moet regisseur zijn en zorgen dat de klant in het bedrijf geïntegreerd wordt"
Flat structure closely engaged with clients	A respondent questions the flat structure in terms of hierarchy. Participants state the teams do not transfer clients with enough care and a respondent is unsure if the structure does in fact support close engagement with clients.	"There's a flat hierarchy, but will a jr developer 'talk back to' a sr?" "The client 'transfers' can be improved. When a new team works with a client, they should have sufficient knowledge on the client. Clients should never be actually transferred, (they should keep the same client owner)" "The creative is often not present at the brief creation. Sometimes we use input from the creative, but not always. This depends on how much information we already have from the client and on how complex the brief is: if im doing a project on illustrations, then I may need help of a creative but if its just to design a trophy, then no"	"Hierarchie is plat, maar durft een Jr developer wel tegen een Sr in te gaan?" "De klantoverdracht kan beter. Dit komt door klant-kennis-gebrek bij het nieuwe team. Eigenlijk moet je klanten nooit overdragen" EN
Independent teams with professional employees	<i>Not mentioned by interviewees</i>		
Agility and resilience, providing flexibility and stability	<i>Not mentioned by interviewees</i>		

Table 3 [2/2]: Comparison of intended benefits to employee experiences

Benefits	As experienced by the participant	Quote for illustration purposes	Quote in original language
Ease of growth, scaling, and downsizing	A respondent highlights the manageability of the structure but criticizes its impact on inter-team collaboration	"I believe the team structure is primarily designed for financial efficiency: it simplifies management and allows for the disbanding of teams if they become unnecessary. This contrasts with my previous experience in a unified company that operated with a communal budget, which facilitated seamless collaboration across diverse areas of expertise"	EN
Personal development, vertical and horizontal in rotations and classes.	A respondent criticizes the amount of stimuli for personal development	"I would love to learn from different expertise's and grow an integrated skillset. It would be helpful if there were more exposure to other teams and to get more integrated assignments"	EN

3.5.3 Summary and Implications

The findings from co-creation session 2 and interviews reveal that participants experience challenges to multidisciplinary collaboration, due to the team structure. The board members have proposed potential downsides and intended benefits of the structure. The findings confirm that the potential downsides are experienced by participants and show an underrepresentation of the structure's perceived benefits. This underscores the need to address the challenges associated with the team structure.

Key Takeaways of Chapter 3

Value of Synergy

The literature review emphasises the importance of collaboration in creative agencies and highlights that working in diverse teams leads to improved creative performance, better decision-making and more innovative problem-solving. In a first co-creation session, TD’s board members state that the value of synergy for TD lies in a better culture for collaboration. The session emphasises that creating synergy requires in-house collaboration by sharing clients and working across domains.

TD’s Organisational Structure

TD has adopted a team structure to facilitate collaboration across teams. This existing organisational structure offers several advantages, but holds potential downsides, too. Leveraging co-creation, the employees’ perspective on the structure is explored and what they perceive to be barriers to collaboration.

Barriers to multidisciplinary collaboration

Co-creation session 2 and the interviews result in various perceived barriers to synergy creation, some not explicitly related to collaboration. To remain inside the scope of this project, focus lies with the barriers related to multidisciplinary collaboration. The internal team focus is seen as the most important barrier to multidisciplinary collaboration. This focus stems from the team-specific targets and leads to each team prioritising their own proposition to clients. This prevents clients from being aware of other services offered by TD and does not motivate collaborative efforts between teams. Clients and employees may not be fully aware of TD’s skill set, which can limit the effective use of expertise from other teams and hinder multidisciplinary collaboration.

Experienced Drawbacks of the Team Structure

The comparison between the findings of co-creation session 2 and the interviews with the intended benefits and potential drawbacks of the organisational structure indicates a negative experience with the structure. This confirms the need to address the challenges associated with the team structure. The study will prioritise addressing the issue of employees’ expressed concerns about the internal team focus, as identified in the co-creation session and interviews.

4. Reframing the Problem

This chapter presents the outcomes from the second phase of the Double Diamond: Reframe. The objective of this phase is to redefine the problem to lead to new opportunities. Figure 20 presents the activities of this phase. This phase consists of less activities, but is equally important as it translates the research findings into a design statement and will thus form the basis of the final design.

Section 4.1 presents an individual problem reframing activity, followed by a collaborative reframing session with TD employees outlined in Section 4.2. The chapter concludes with a design statement.



Figure 20: The activities of the reframing phase.

4.1 Individual Problem Reframing

With the gathered insights of the exploration phase, an individual problem reframing activity can create a deeper understanding of why the problem exists. The initial assignment was to explore the barriers to synergy creation. This exploration has uncovered multiple barriers, of which the biggest one is related to the current structure. This section describes the first step of reframing the problem to lead to new opportunities.

4.1.1 Procedure

The input for the exercise is a new problem statement based on the findings of the exploration phase: “The current structure does not support the integration between the domains”. The Five Whys exercise is performed by the project’s researcher to think of a deeper understanding why the problem exists.

The exercise starts with the initial problem statement and repeatedly shifts to a deeper layer by asking ‘why?’, as depicted in Figure 21. The researcher is familiar with all data involved and the Five Whys helps to categorise the collected insights.

4.1.2 Findings

The Five Whys exercise concludes that the teams at TD work as separate entities and should collaborate more. Teams working as separate entities within TD is supposed to be the strength of the structure, but seems to be the barrier to integration of the domains which has lead to a fragmented TD. In short: “the teams work as separate entities within TD and do not collaborate”. This new reframed statement will be the starting point to create opportunities.

4.1.3 Summary and Implications

In this section, the greater understanding of the problem established in the research thusfar, is utilised to reframe the problem statement into: “The teams at TD work as separate entities and should collaborate more.”

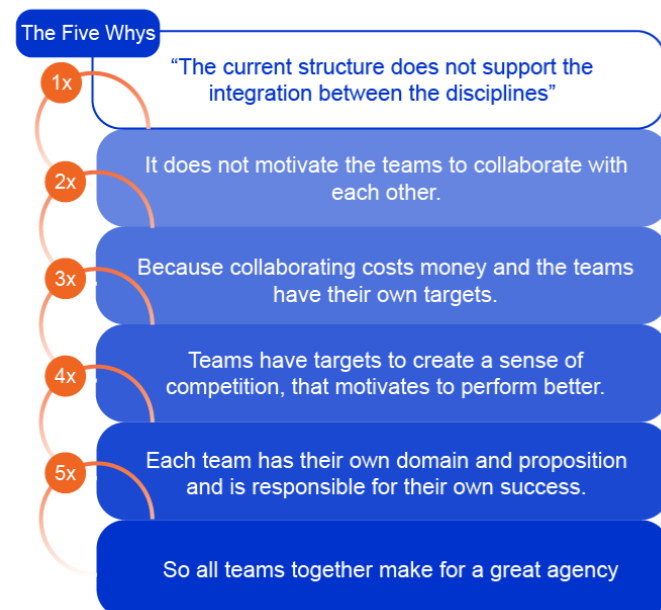


Figure 21: Outcomes of the Five Why's exercise.

4.2 Collective Problem Reframing: Co-creation Session 3

This section describes a co-creation session which aims to collectively rewrite the problem into a design statement. This design statement is meant to capture what the participants would like to see in the future.

4.2.1 Procedure

With three exercises, seen in Figure 22, the participants co-create a design statement. The starting point of the session is an open statement, derived from the Five Whys in the individual problem framing phase. The participants perform a purge and perform the Five Why's exercise based on the statement: “Teams work as separate entities”. This shortened version of the problem excludes the negative tone in “and should collaborate more”, to encourage an open interpretation of the statement. The activities of the session are further described in Figure 22.

4.2.2 Participants

The session was open to all through a voluntary participation call. Ten employees of TD Amsterdam joined in this session.

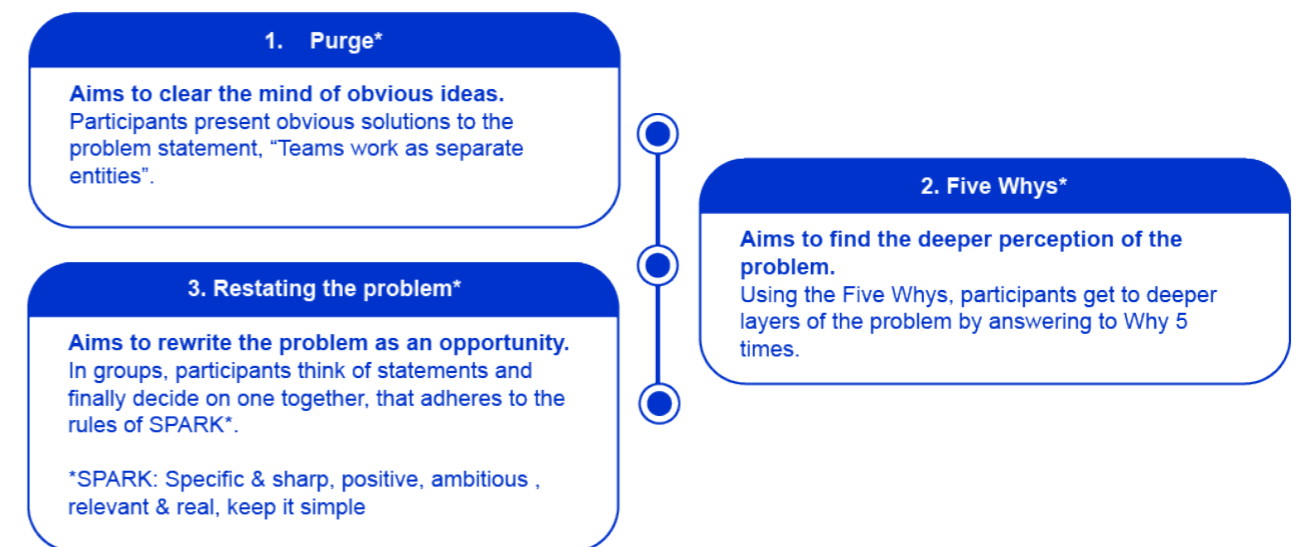


Figure 22: Procedure of co-creation session 3.

*Purge, the Five Whys and Restate the Problem are described in Paragraph 2.2.3 Co-Creation Methods

4.2.3 Findings

The outcomes of the Five Whys mainly offered different perspectives of why the team structure exists. Besides aforementioned disadvantages, participants now offer practical benefits of the structure as well. Notably, it confirms that the comparison of gathered employee perspectives to the intended benefits of the structure (Section 3.5) was not reflective of the actual situation. Figure 23 shows the outcomes of one of the participants, which shows that the team structure helps TD to stay together. The Five Whys made by other participants can be found in Appendix C1. The advantages of the team structure extracted from their Five Whys are listed per topic below:

Performance: Teams give grip on revenue and costs. It allows insights over costs and steering with P&L. The performance of a team is stimulated by financial bonuses for HoTs, when their team performs well. If a team does not perform well, the financial insights make this easy to pinpoint.

Client relations: Teams know their client best, due to long-term collaboration. In addition, grouping expertise in teams frames TD's service offering and allows the teams to excel, by learning from each other and specialising.

Collaboration: Employees prefer to work in small teams, as employees can become attuned to each others way of working. Employees state that they appreciate the deliberate grouping of 'like-minded people' within teams.

Autonomy: The autonomous teams are easy to manage and allow for a clear division of tasks. The entrepreneurship stimulated in each team is meant to resonate throughout whole TD.

These proposed benefits of the existing structure lead to the decision to explore the possibilities of both retaining and discarding the existing team structure in the ideation phase.

Restating the Problem

The Five Whys is followed up by restating the new problem statement (Heijne & van der Meer, 2019). The activity 'Spark the statement', described in Paragraph 2.2.3, helps to rewrite the problem into a design statement. The participants co-create the design statement 'How can we make all teams work as one team for our client?', which will guide the ideation process.

4.2.4 Summary and Implications

The session started with the problem statement: 'teams work as separate entities' and introduced the Five Whys to hear the participants in-depth understanding of this problem. During Five Whys activity, participants highlighted various advantages of the current team structure. The session makes clear that the employees recognise and value certain aspects of the existing teams structure, thus it is decided that the ideation phase will explore possibilities of both retaining and discarding the existing team structure. The ideation phase will be guided by the design statement: 'How can be make all teams work as one for our client?'.



Figure 23: Outcomes of the Five Whys, performed by a TD'er in session 3.

Key Takeaways of Chapter 4

This chapter reframes the initial problem statement into a design statement.

Reframing the Problem

The original problem statement related to suboptimal collaboration between domains. After exploring the current context in Chapter 3, an individual problem reframing session was conducted to translate the retrieved insights into a new problem statement: teams work as separate entities within TD.

Design Statement

The reframed problem statement is proposed to employees of TD and in a co-creation session, rewritten into the following design statement: "How can we make all teams work as one for our client?".

Recognition of the Structure's Benefits

In contrast to Chapter 3, where employees expressed dissatisfaction with the existing TD structure, the reframing co-creation session highlights participants' recognition of its advantages. For instance, long-term client collaborations enhance client understanding, entrepreneurship is motivated by the teams' financial insights and working in teams has led to alignment in work approaches.

The design statement presented in this chapter forms the foundation for the next phase, Creating Opportunities to Improve Collaboration. The design statement can serve as guideline for the ideation process, in which the possibilities of both retaining and discarding the existing team structure will be explored.

5. Creating Opportunities to Improve Collaboration

This chapter presents the outcomes of the third phase of the Double Diamond: Create. The objective of this phase is to move from the design statement towards multiple design solutions. Figure 24 outlines the activities of this phase.

Section 5.1 presents a co-creation session that aims to determine the future impact that the design solution should facilitate. Following this session, design criteria are established and presented in Section 5.2. These criteria form the basis for the initial ideation round. In the following co-creation session, outlined in Section 5.3, participants will assess three potential design directions. This feedback will be used to create two design proposals, which will then undergo an evaluation process. The final proposal will be selected during the last phase of the Double Diamond.



Figure 24: The activities of the creating phase.

5.1 Creating Opportunities: Co-creation Session 4

This section describes a co-creation session which further defines employees' future vision. The session builds onto the design statement generated in the previous session. The design statement and the future vision of employees create guidance to the ideation process.

5.1.1 Procedure

The co-creation session consists of four activities, which are outlined in Figure 25. Using the design statement as prompt for this session, participants decide on a short-term and long-term impact goal and they brainstorm for opportunities.

5.1.2 Participants

Through email, we reached out to all TD employees to participate, like in the previous session. Three participants were able to join the session. Participants originated from the TD Amsterdam teams.

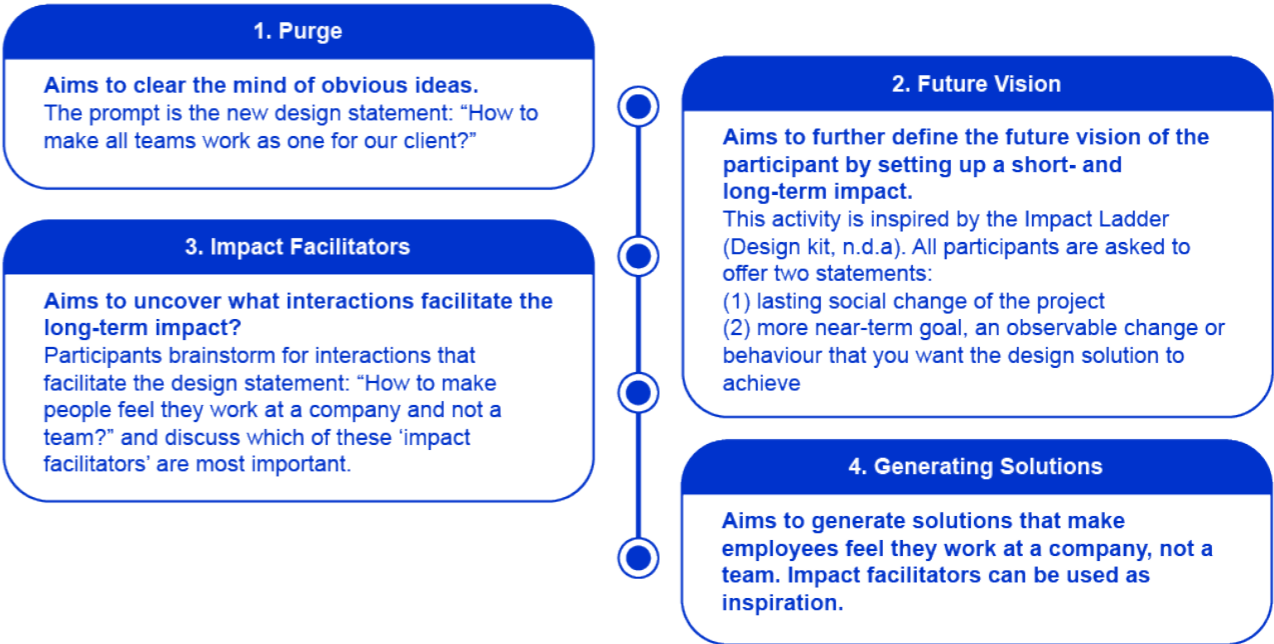


Figure 25: Procedure of co-creation session 4.

5.1.3 Findings

Future Vision

In this session, the participants align their future vision by setting up a short- and long-term goal. The outcomes of the group are as follows. The lasting social change of this project they wish to see (also referred to as long-term impact goal) is ‘People feel they work at a company and not a team’. The more near-term goal (short-term impact goal) is ‘Creating dynamic project teams without any financial (administrative) burden’. This entails that teams do not make decisions based on financial considerations which create hesitance to collaborate or share clients.

Impact Facilitators

After aligning the future vision, the participants come up with different interactions to facilitate the design statement. A few of the generated ideas are listed below.

- A collective vision that makes everyone work towards the same goal.
- Removing the individually awarded bonuses related to good team performance, in order to mitigate self-interest.
- Knowing what everyone can do and does.
- A uniform working method, so everyone can work together.

The final activity of the session was for the participants to come up with solutions that align with their future vision. Figure C2.1 in Appendix C2 shows several of these ideas that affirm the desire of participants to see change regarding the team structure. The impact facilitators and solutions derived in this session serve as a source of inspiration for ideation.

5.1.4 Summary and Implications

This session aimed to determine what future impact the design solution should facilitate. The participants decided on a short- and a long-term observable change that they wish to see. The short-term change being to ‘Create dynamic project teams without any financial (administrative) burden’. The desired long-term change is ‘People feel they work at a company and not a team’. During the session, the participants expressed their desire for change regarding the team structure. The short-term impact statement shows that the participants of the session want, above all, to see the financial burden of teams removed and the ideas generated in the session affirm the desire for change regarding the team structure. The following sections will describe the process to creating solutions, based on the design statement and the participants’ future vision.

5.2 Design Criteria

This section presents fourteen design criteria that can be used to sharpen the focus of the ideation phase and evaluate generated ideas. The following paragraph explains how these were devised.

5.2.1 Rationale

The fourteen design criteria (seen in Figure 26) are deducted from a comprehensive analysis of the team structure’s advantages and disadvantages gathered throughout the study. These were systematically categorised into thematic groups. Within each category, both the benefits and the downsides were analysed and reinterpreted as specific design criteria. In Appendix C3, the overview of all downsides, benefits and according emergent design criteria can be found. For instance, a benefit of the teams structure, concerning working methods, is that each team is used to working with their team-specific approach. A downside is the difficulty in inter-team collaboration due to the differing approaches of teams. A following design criterion is deducted: TD should establish uniform working methods. This implies either standardising working processes

across all teams or ensuring a comprehensive understanding of each team’s working methods across the company. This method of deriving design criteria ensures a balanced approach, addressing both the strengths and limitations of the current team structure.

5.2.2 Summary and Implications

Fourteen design criteria are formulated, stemming from the insights of this research, to sharpen the focus of the ideation process. The design criteria can be used to inspire for and to evaluate possible design solutions. In the following section, the design criteria are evaluated by employees of TD to determine which criteria they find most important.

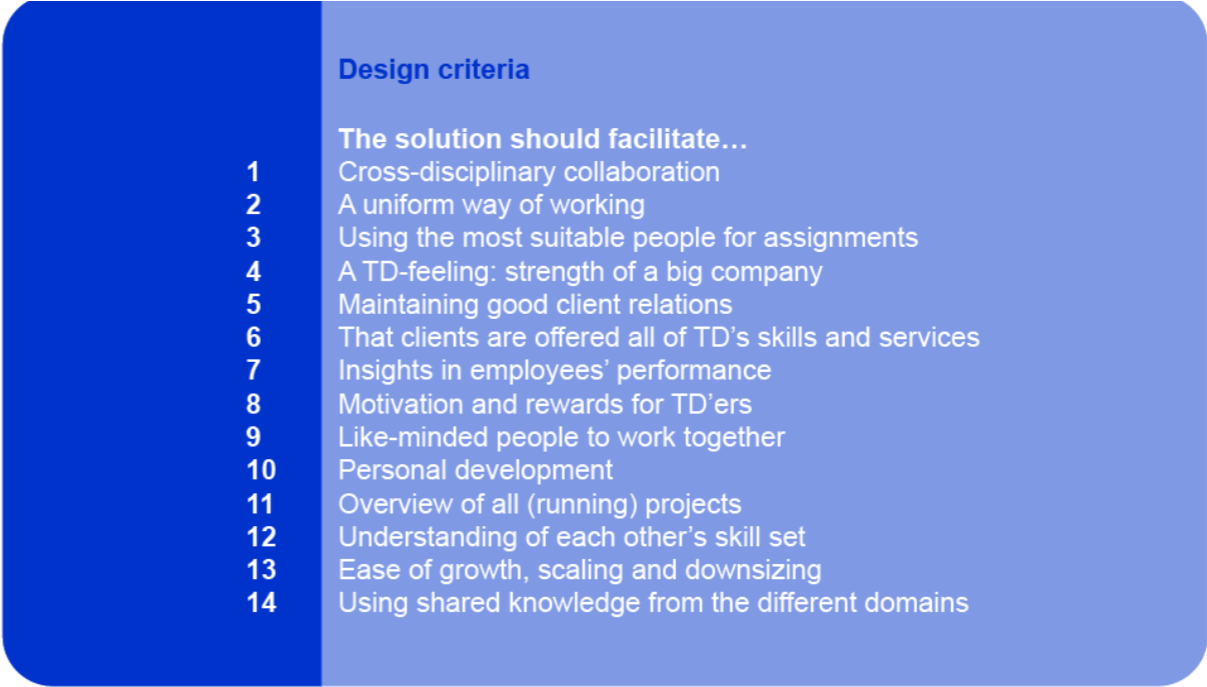


Figure 26: Fourteen design criteria.

5.3 Evaluating Design Directions: Co-creation Session 5

In this section, three design directions that align with the design statement are presented. In a co-creation session, employees rank the design criteria based on perceived importance and subsequently, evaluate the three design directions. The session results in a list of prioritised design criteria and the employees' insights on different design directions.

5.3.1 Three Design Directions

A phase of individual brainstorming and brainstorming with fellow SPD students resulted in several ideas. Some ideas were selected and improved according to the design criteria. A selection of three ideas is further developed to be presented to TD employees. Figures 27, 28 and 29 describe the three design directions presented to the participants in co-creation session 5. The figures describe the general idea, what the outcome would be and the challenges involved. Design direction 1 concerns a new organisational structure, direction 2 concerns stimulating more interaction between areas around the current structure and direction 3 would involve creating a new future vision.

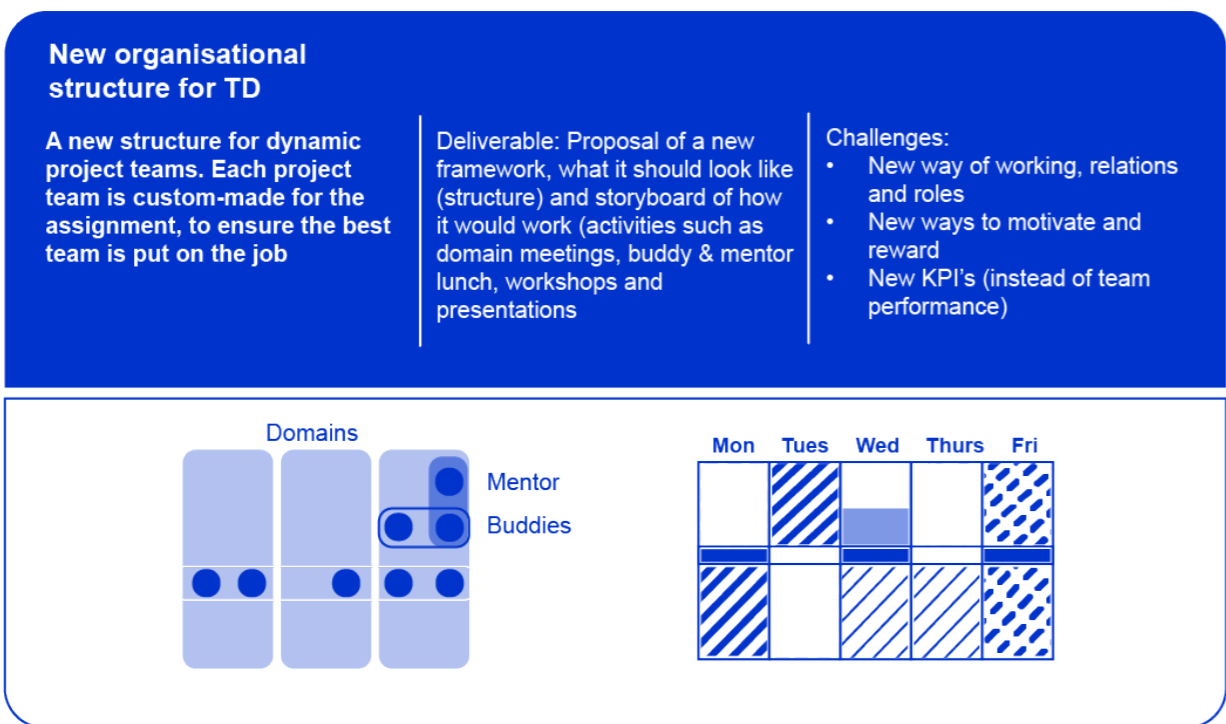


Figure 27: Design direction 1, New organisational structure.

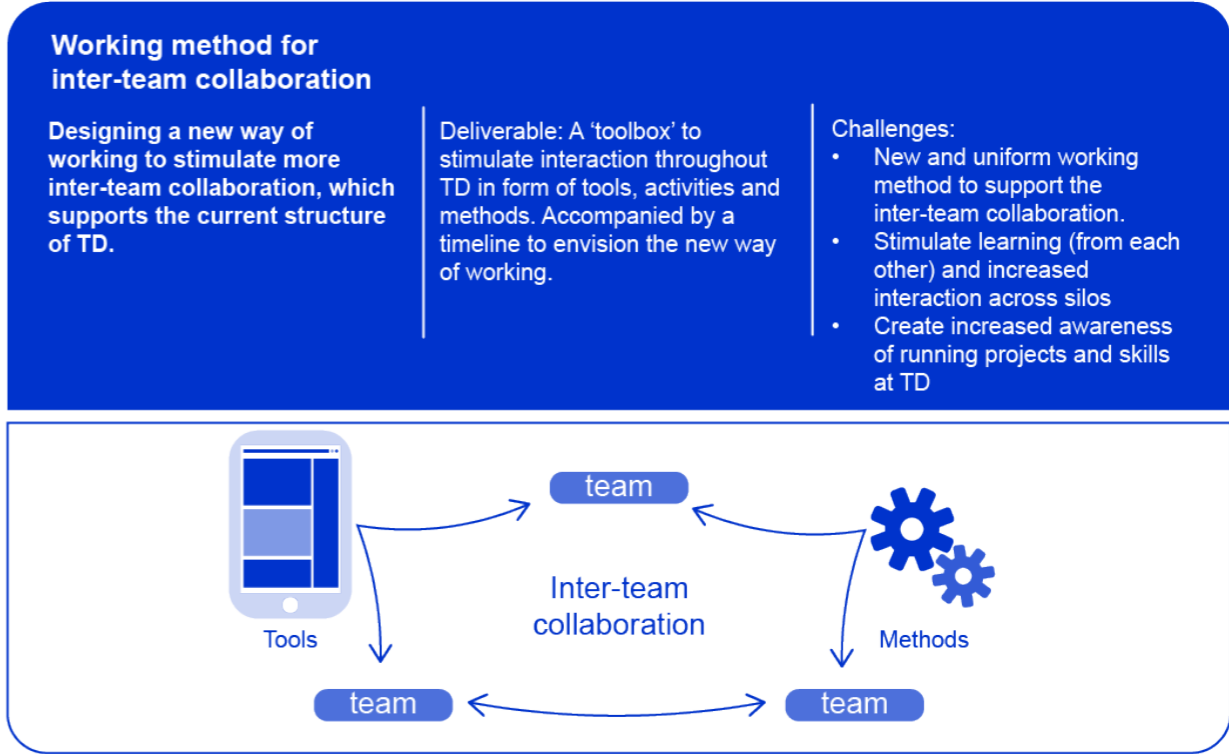


Figure 28: Design direction 2, New working method for more inter-team collaboration.

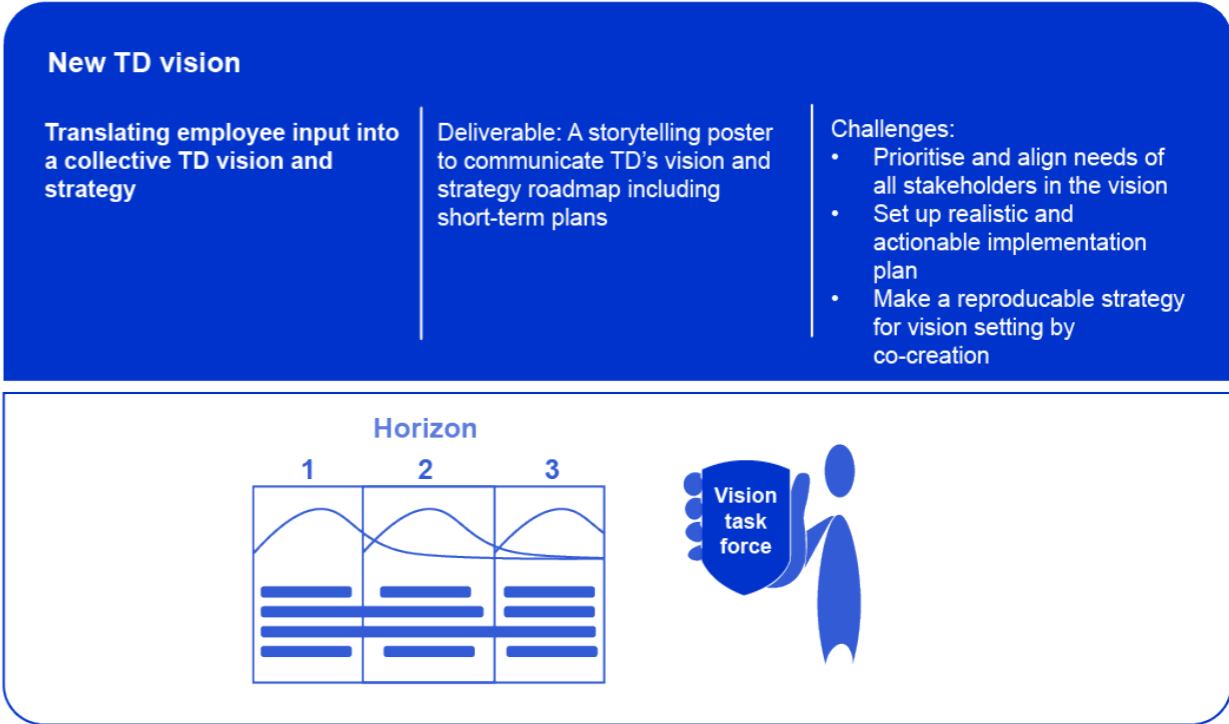


Figure 29: Design direction 3, New vision for TD.

5.3.2 Procedure

Ranking the Design Criteria

The co-creation session consisted of three activities, as seen in Figure 30. The first activity was ranking the design criteria. The participants were presented with the fourteen design criteria and could select their top 5, from most to least important. The top five criteria of each participant were translated into a scoring system of 1 to 5 points (number one receiving 5 points and number 5 receiving 1 point). Combining all scores of participants showed which criteria were considered most important. This was used to rearrange the list to rank based on importance.

Evaluating and Discussing Design Directions

Subsequent to presenting the three directions, participants evaluated the ideas based on their prioritised design criteria. The evaluation was done using a Harris Profile (Design method toolkit, n.d.), as described in Figure 30. Finally, the participants discuss their preferred design direction. This was an open discussion, including questions and feedback on the solutions used for further improvement.

5.3.3 Participants

Participants were contacted through email and six people of TD Amsterdam teams participated.

5.3.4 Findings

Ranking the Design Criteria

The first activity of the session resulted in a reorganised list of the design criteria, based on the perceived importance of the participants. Five out of fourteen design criteria were included in the top five of only one participant. This was used as the cut-off point, and these criteria were therefore excluded. The level of agreement between the participants was not very high, but there was a general consensus on the importance of certain criteria¹ and there were no extreme outliers. The nine remaining design criteria are shown in Figure 31, from highest to lowest importance.

1 Calculating the Inter-Rater Reliability (Statistics How To, n.d.) resulted in an average agreement of 55%. The lowest level of agreement being of a participant is of one participant whose highest level of agreement is 57% with one other participant.

Evaluating and Discussing Design Directions

The participants evaluated the design directions based on their own top 5 design criteria, aided by the Harris profile. All participants' points dedicated to a design direction are added up. Appendix C4 includes a table with the output of the Harris profiles of each participant. Figure 32 presents the total score of each design direction and shows that the new organisational structure received the highest score: 33 points. The next page offers a comprehensive breakdown of each direction and Figure 32 shows the key considerations of each design direction. Ultimately, the new organisational structure aligns best with the design statement and meets the prioritised design criteria, as ranked by the participants.

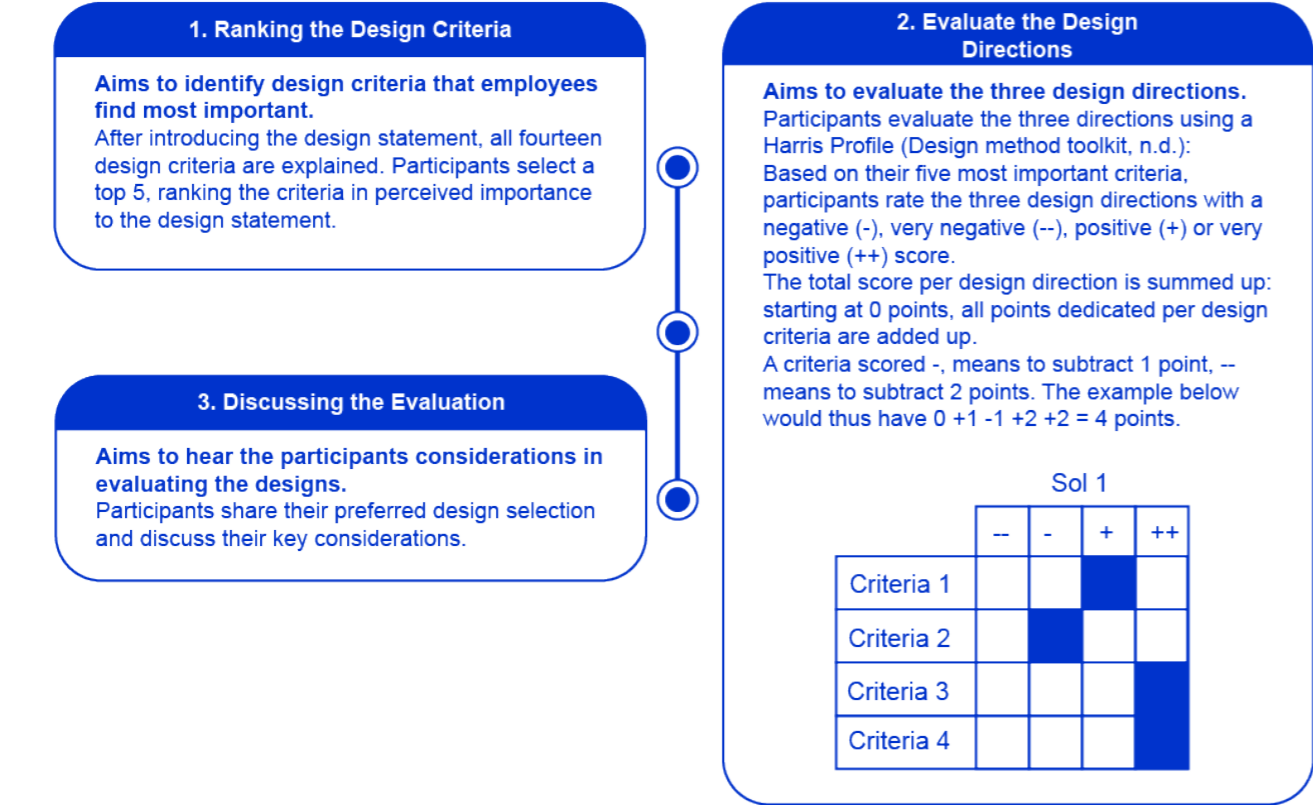


Figure 30: Procedure of co-creation session 5.

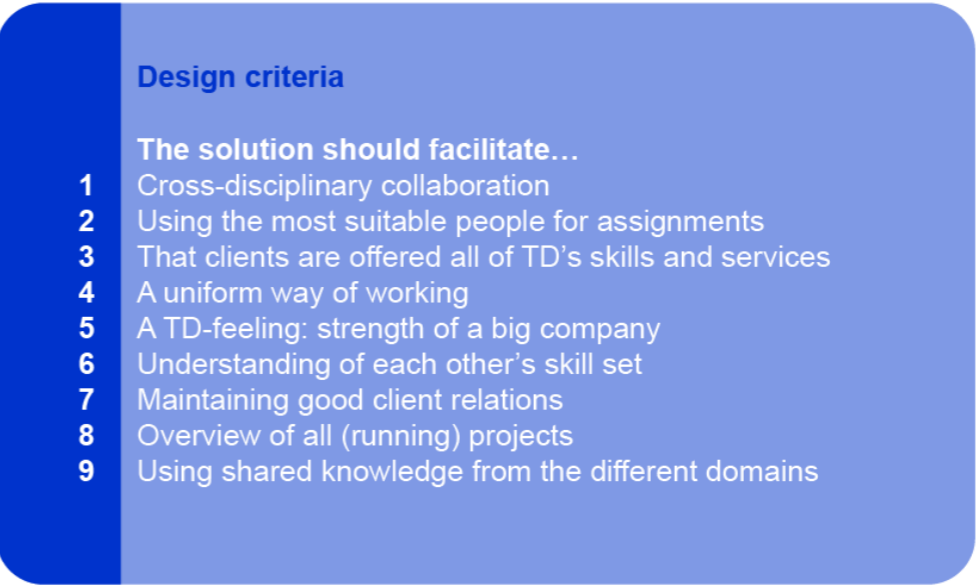


Figure 31: Top 9 design criteria.

A New Organisational Structure for TD

The participants collectively stated that the design direction most centered on the client should be pursued. They believe this new structure will ensure assembling the optimal team for each assignment. Moreover, they expect it to enhance client involvement as the project teams will give all project team members more ownership over the assignment and client, contrasting with temporary team attachments within the current structure. However, a drawback noted is that a new structure requires a standardised working method, as the dynamic structure excludes the use of standard teams that can create their team-specific approach.

A Working Method for Inter-team Collaboration

The second design direction is valued for its increased interaction. However, it is not considered the right solution, as it would build upon the current structure that in their words 'is faulty'. Secondly, it will not ensure that a client has access to all expertise as there will still be team targets. Thus, participants state the idea would only suffice if the financial team targets were excluded.

A New TD Vision

The third direction is valued by the participants and considered highly important, but participants think a vision should be made collectively within TD, instead of an external party. They say a collective vision is needed and would ensure that employees are on the same page, however for the remainder of this project, they would like more a tangible and actionable outcome.

5.3.5 Summary and Implications

The creative session aimed to evaluate three design directions and determine which of the design criteria are considered most important by the participants. The session resulted in a list of 9 design criteria, ranked based on importance. The list will be used to develop a design solution. Design criteria which the design solution should facilitate, from most to least important are seen in Figure 31.

Three design directions were presented during the session:

- 1. A new organisational structure for TD, in which project teams are composed for each assignment,
- 2. A working method for inter-team collaboration, which increases inter-disciplinary interaction, keeping the current structure,
- 3. A new TD vision, a solution aiming to co-create a collective vision and strategy for TD.

Ultimately, the proposal of the project team structure aligns best with the design statement and meets the prioritised design criteria, as ranked by the participants. The key consideration is that this solution is most client-focused. Participants voice concerns regarding the second direction, as it would keep the team targets, however they appreciate the employees of TD will be facilitated to collaborate more. In regards to the third direction, participants express a desire for more actionable outcomes from the project. Additionally, participants consider the vision to be a responsibility of TD, rather than an external party. They do however consider it rather important for TD to establish a collective vision and strategy.

Subsequent to this session, the input is used to compose two design proposals that address the design statement. The first proposal describes a new organisational structure for TD. This was the preferred design direction of the participants. The second proposal builds upon design direction 2 (Working method for inter-team collaboration), and integrates the input of the session into the new proposal which excludes financial team targets. The following chapter presents and elaborates upon the two proposals.

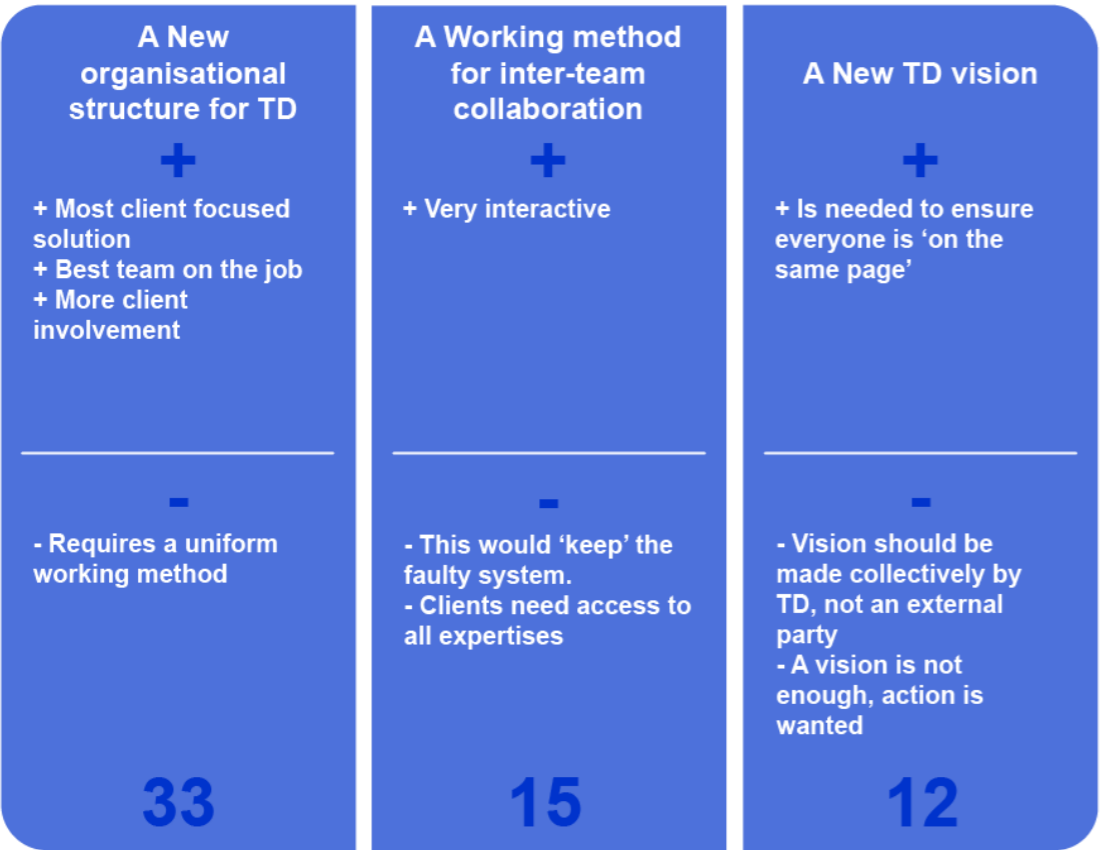


Figure 32: Key considerations per design direction.

Key Takeaways of Chapter 5

This chapter outlines the process from the design statement to three different design directions.

Future Vision Setting

In a co-creation session, a future vision is created to guide the ideation process. The short-term impact goal is to create dynamic project teams without any financial burden, while the long-term impact goal is for people to feel that they work for a company rather than just a team.

Design Criteria

The ideation phase begins by creating an overview of the team structure’s drawbacks and advantages, which are then used to devise design criteria. In a co-creation session, these criteria are narrowed down to nine that reflect what employees consider most important to improve collaboration at TD.

Three Design Directions

Based on the design statement, future vision, and design criteria, three design directions were created: a new organisational structure for TD, a working method for inter-team collaboration, and a new vision for TD. The three ideas were evaluated in a co-creation session.

Evaluating Design Directions

The new organisational structure received the most positive evaluation, followed by the working method for inter-team collaboration. However, participants expressed dissatisfaction with the idea as it is based on the existing structure, which includes team targets. In response to the valued aspects of the current structure uncovered in Chapter 4, it was decided to continue with this second direction but exclude the team targets. The third design direction, the new TD vision, was deemed unsuitable for this project as participants preferred more actionable outcomes and creating the TD vision themselves.

Ultimately, the co-creation session participants evaluated the new structure and working method as the best, making them the focus of development.

6. Catalyse Synergy Creation at TD

This chapter presents the outcomes of the final phase, Catalyse, and evaluates two proposals leading up to the final design. Figure 33 outlines the activities of this phase. Two design proposals, stemming from the previous phase, are presented in this chapter.

The rationale for introducing these proposals is elaborated upon in Section 6.1. In Section 6.2, the first design proposal, a new organisational structure for TD, is presented. In Section 6.3, the second design proposal is presented, which suggests enhancing the existing structure and introducing a supporting tool. Following this, in Section 6.4, a comparison is made between the two design proposals to determine which one to proceed with. Section 6.5 describes co-creation session 6, where the final design proposal is presented, and its positive impact and potential challenges are discussed. Finally, Section 6.6 evaluates the final design.



Figure 33: The activities of the catalyse phase.

6.1 Introducing Two Proposals

Based on the evaluation of three design directions in the previous chapter, two design proposals were developed. The first proposal outlines a new organisational structure, changing the day to day operations to facilitate collaboration across the domains. The second proposal alters and builds upon the existing team structure to make it more suitable for collaboration across the domains. Addressing the concerns of the participants' of the previous session, the financial boundaries between teams will be eliminated. The decision to pursue two design proposals instead of one is explained in detail below.

Developing Two Design Proposals

The first of the three design directions, the new organisational structure, is developed into one of the two design proposals given its positive evaluation in the previous co-creation session. However, it is important to note that a new structure can induce unforeseen problems and may involve greater implementation efforts than building upon or altering the current structure. Therefore, it is considered valuable to investigate how the existing structure can be altered to eliminate the described drawbacks. In addition, employees have acknowledged certain benefits of the organisational structure and thus, a second proposal is developed which is based on the existing structure. Another reason for the decision to pursue two proposals is because a comparison of proposals can foster valuable discussions. With more thoroughly developed proposals, employees will be able to make a more informed decision regarding their preference than in the previous chapter.

Both proposals are worked out to address the design criteria and answer to the design statements: 'how can we make all teams work as one team for our client?'. The design solution must particularly be client-focused and exclude the financial burden of teams, as participants have expressed in the creative sessions.

6.2 Proposal 1: A New Organisational Structure for TD

The following Section presents the first design proposal: an organisational structure grounded in project teams. Paragraph 6.2.1 offers a comprehensive overview of the structure and in Paragraph 6.2.2, the key characteristics are described. In Paragraph 6.2.3, the rationale behind this new structure is discussed and the section concludes with recommendations.

6.2.1 Outlines of the New Structure

The proposed new organisational structure makes a shift from the existing teams to dynamic project teams. These project teams are specifically composed for each assignment, so there are no standard teams. The basis of the new structure is presented using Figure 34, in which the formation of a project team is depicted. The team is composed from roles of the three domains, and a client manager, whose role is domain-broad. The project team formations ensure that each project team consists of the most suitable people for the assignment.

A project team is lead by a client manager and HoT, and operates with creatives, a Strategy Director and Creative Director. The type of project determines which specific individuals from the three domains are required. For instance: a project related to house-styles, will involve a Strategy Director, Creative Director and one or more creatives from Branding. Depending on the assignment, the team can also include creatives from Communications and/or Technology.

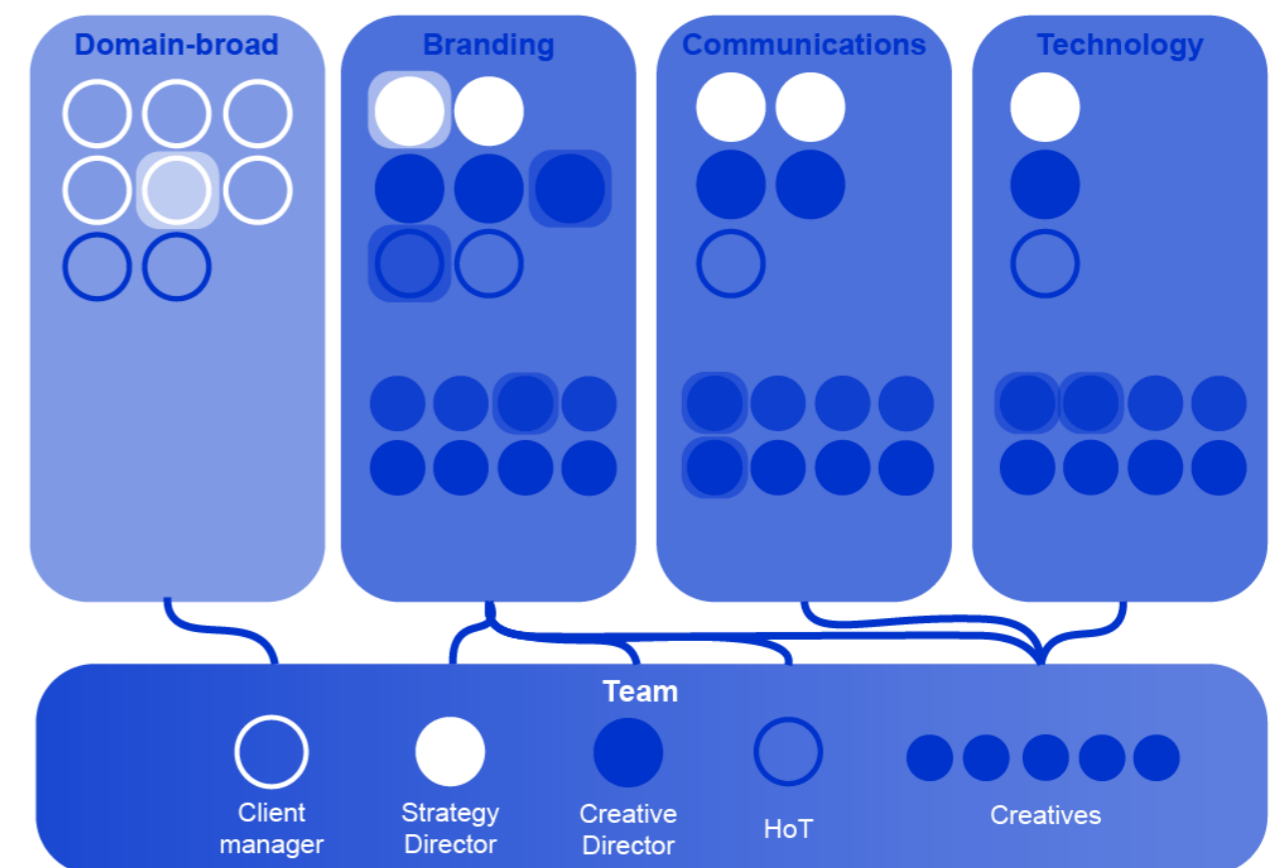


Figure 34: Creating project teams from the different domains.

Roles and Responsibilities

Different to the existing structure, the HoT will guide more than one team. Their responsibilities will become more domain-broad, rather than focused on one team. Some HoTs can lead teams of different domains, while others will lead teams more focused on their discipline, such as project teams with specifically web assignments. As there are no more standard teams, the financial boundaries will become either company or domain broad. Thus, HoTs will share the responsibility of financial performance. They are also responsible for the composition of teams and need to know the skills of people in their domain.

New Relations

Without the standard teams, there is a need to form alternative relations, such as mentors, buddies and groups of experts for personal development. The relations are depicted in Figure 35. A HoT mentors various creatives, preferably with similar expertise. The second column shows a buddy-system between creatives. Buddies are also of the same or of a similar expertise, for instance two developers. The third column depicts ‘experts: groups that transcend the borders of domains. Experts can host and participate in workshops related to their topic of interest, for instance AI.

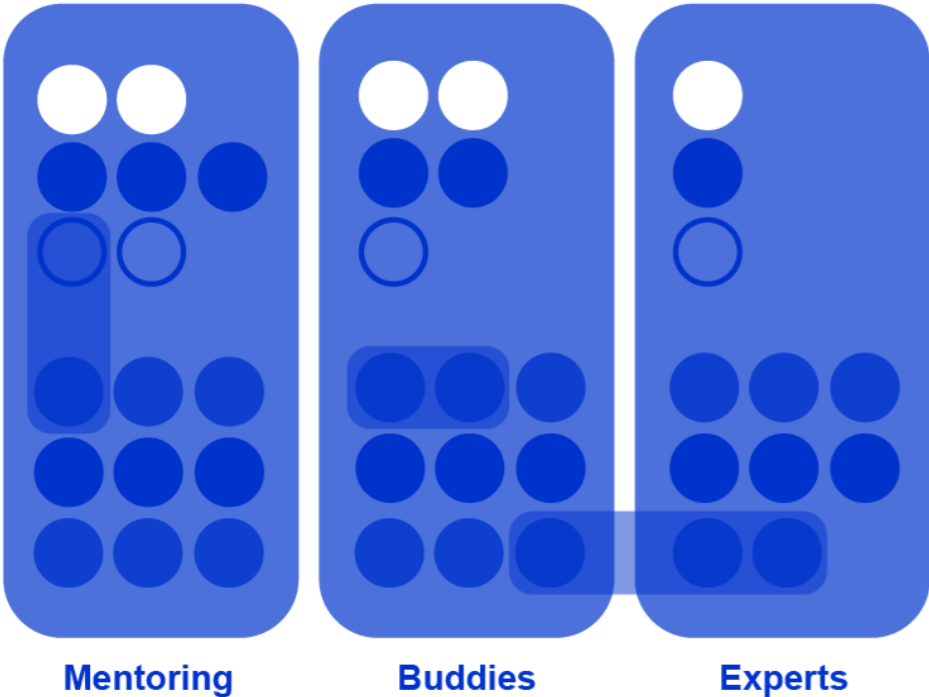


Figure 35: Relations in the new structure

6.2.2 Key Characteristics

The subsequent paragraph explores five key characteristics of the new structure. For each characteristic, a brief analysis compares the existing structure to the new structure. Figure 36 illustrates the characteristics, illustrating the current scenario (seen on the left) compared to the proposed scenario (seen on the right).

Client first

Currently, a team is selected to work on a client assignment. In the proposed scenario, a project team is a selection of individuals most suitable for the assignment and the client. By adopting a

client-first approach, TD can ensure that the best team is assembled to meet client needs, resulting in improved client satisfaction and better project outcomes with highly tailored solutions.

Client involvement

Presently, a team can be supported from someone of another team. However, this team member may not feel as much ownership of the client. In the proposed scenario, the involvement of employees on their projects is consistently high, as employees are not attached temporarily onto existing teams, but always form a new team together for projects.

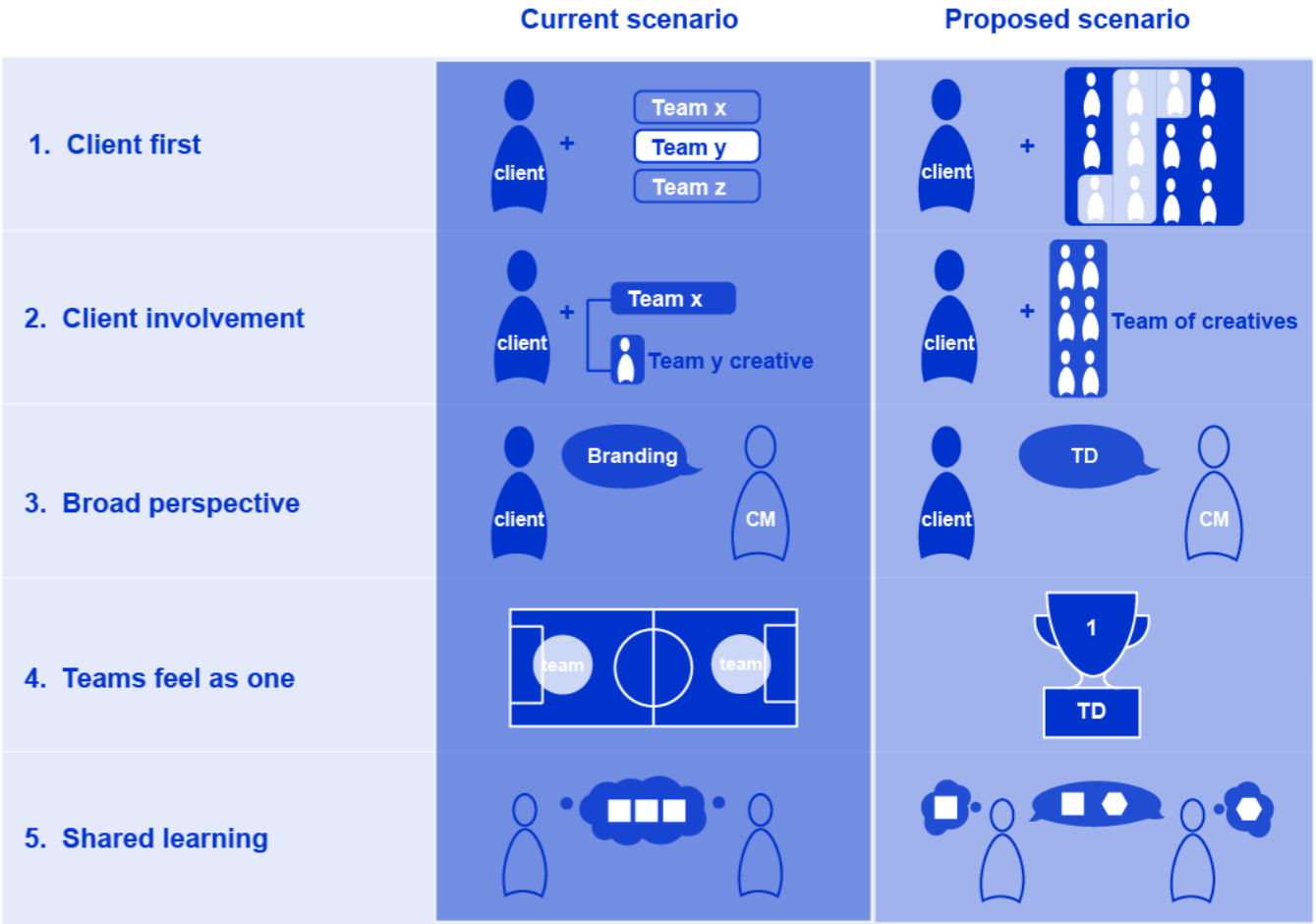


Figure 36: Illustrating characteristic in comparison to the current scenari

Broad perspective

In the current situation, the Client Manager (CM) of a team often sells their own proposition to clients, instead of all of TD's services. This is due to their expert knowledge on their own proposition and their motivation to reach their team targets. In the new structure without standard teams and thus no team targets, a general TD intake is ensured. The client is offered all of TD's services and a project brief will be formed from a broad TD perspective, ensuring that the right problem will be handled with the right means.

Teams feel as one

The teams currently experience competition and an internal team focus. They feel like small separate organisations within TD. As the new structure facilitates collaboration with various people in project teams, employees will feel more connected to TD. Without standard teams, the threshold to ask for help outside of 'teams' will be lower. More specifically, without team-specific targets, there is no team rivalry resulting in a more collaborative work environment. A unified pool of resources will result in client managers and HoT's operating to the best interests of TD, instead of their own team.

Shared learning

The standard teams have their own way of working and are attuned to each other. This can make cross-team collaboration difficult as teams stick to their established ways. In the new scenario, focused on inter-team collaboration, employees can work with various people and thus expand their knowledge and skills. This leads to improved problem-solving and innovative solutions.

6.2.3 Rationale

The new teams structure is based on input of employees, known considerations of different organisational structures used in creative agencies and based on conversations with employees of three creative agencies with similar structures.

Employees Propose a New Structure

During various co-creation sessions, employees have put forward their idea to shift to dynamic teams or project teams, composed for each assignment, and the idea to eliminate financial boundaries between teams. Particularly in co-creation sessions 4 and 5. In co-creation session 4, in generating solutions to the problem statement, several participants recommended a (financial) reorganisation of the teams. Their responses are shown in Figure C2.1 in Appendix C2. Subsequently, in co-creation session 5, the participants collaboratively proposed similar ideas, as depicted in Figure C2.2 in Appendix C2. The ideas have lead to a more in-depth investigation of such a potential structure.

Key Considerations for Choosing the Matrix-model

Different organisational structures for creative agencies have been proposed in the literature review in Chapter Explore. Whereas the current structure is a mix of a pod-model and matrix-model, this dynamic team structure shifts towards a matrix-model, since teams would no longer work as autonomous pods, but become project-specific. The matrix-model is suitable for agencies handling diverse projects and requiring high collaboration and flexibility (Indeed, 2023).

A key characteristic of the matrix model is the dual reporting system. In this model, team members report to both the project team lead and a domain head. The double reporting system proves valuable when team members have different project team leads for each assignment and ensures that all team members have a consistent departmental head to report to, hence facilitating streamlined overall communication and coordination (Vantrappen & Wirtz, 2016).

Looking at the current situation within TD, with teams functioning as silos, the dual reporting structure can be useful to foster oversight and alignment of teams and domains. Both the domain heads and team leads have oversight of project teams. In addition, the domain heads can align their strategies, resulting in a more cohesive and coordinated TD as a whole.

Three Creative Agencies with a Similar Model

Conversations with three employees of different creative agencies¹ using the matrix-model or similar structure have confirmed the above. Appendix C5 briefly discusses the three creative agencies' structures and roughly outlines them using figures. The three employees positively evaluate the organisational structure. To illustrate this, Figure 37 provides quotes of one the employees. The quotes originate from the employee of creative agency 3. The quotes highlight the positive evaluation of working in different teams, working with a dual reporting structure and the increased opportunity to learn. The quotes can be found in their original language in Appendix C6.

¹ The employees and their respective companies prefer to remain anonymous.

Quote 1

"What makes this work environment so pleasant is the opportunity to work on diverse assignments and collaborate with different teams. Unlike other organizations where standard teams with a single team leader are the norm, here, we utilize dynamic collaboration"

Quote 2

"Within a project, there is a Head of Visual Design who oversees the visual designers, but also a Principal Visual Design providing more substantive leadership. This structure, where each team is led by various types of leads, adds an extra layer of expertise and leadership to my daily tasks. It's not just a matter of dividing responsibilities but also an opportunity to learn and grow in the content of my work"

Figure 37: Quotes of the employee of creative agency 3.

6.2.4 Recommendations

Besides the aforementioned benefits, the new structure also raises concerns. These originated from a comparison to the design criteria and have lead to several recommendations. These recommendations relate to the importance of a uniform working method, coordination of the dynamic teams and maintaining client understanding and a team bond.

Uniform Working Method

To facilitate the dynamic teams at TD, it is crucial to ensure that employees can work with anyone around the office. This could be achieved by implementing uniform TD methods and/or providing training. Adopting a standardised set of working methods for all teams ensures that everyone is on the same page and can collaborate effectively with one another, regardless of the specific project or team they are part of. This can be done by creating a TD playbook, including various working methods. Second, employees can be provided with the necessary skills to work with different teams and projects. This can include training sessions on new tools, technologies or methodologies, as well as opportunities for employees to learn from one another.

Coordinating Dynamic Teams

The matrix-model includes potential drawbacks, including complex management and potential confusion due to dual reporting. These considerations also hold relevance in the proposed dynamic team structure. Inefficiencies and miscommunication can be prevented by providing channels for team members and encouraging open communication. Secondly, training can be provided to develop communication skills and collaborative methods. Finally, there are collaborative tools and technology to facilitate scheduling, communication and collaboration among teams. These tools can present an overview of ongoing projects, as well.

Client Understanding

To increase client involvement and enhance client understanding, it is desired that employees work on projects of the same client, forming standard client teams over a period of time. The formation of standard client teams is not considered negatively, as team members still work with others on various projects.

Team Bond

Employees positively evaluate the standard team formation for benefits such as the opportunity to collaborate with like-minded colleagues. The formation of standard teams can provide a supportive environment where individuals can always go to their teammates for help. To preserve such advantages, it is recommended to implement a buddy system and mentoring roles, as described in Paragraph 6.2.1. Additionally, bonding activities for specific interests or expertise can foster a positive and supporting working culture. These initiatives can serve as alternatives to standard teams, to offer support and opportunities to bond.

6.2.5 Summary and Implications

This section presents the first design proposal, a new organisational structure, that operates with dynamic teams and ensures that each project team consists of the most suitable people for the assignment. This new structure is partially shaped by the input of employees who proposed similar organisational structures during creative sessions. Additionally, it is endorsed for its likeness to the matrix model, which offers several advantages, and lastly for the positive feedback from employees who work in similar models in other creative agencies.

The new structure is described using five key characteristics, depicted in Figure 36. A key characteristic of the matrix model is the dual reporting system which proves valuable when team members have different project team leads for each assignment, facilitating streamlined overall communication and coordination. As the matrix-model is often a response to silos in corporations, it is a seemingly suitable option for TD. In addition, the project teams are expected to facilitate a more agile response to client needs, being composed for each project.

Based on the design criteria, the new structure raises several concerns, thus the section concludes with corresponding recommendations. First, it is recommended to establish a uniform working when the transition to dynamic teams is made. Second, to coordinate the different project teams, additional tools and practices are required. Third, to increase client understanding, it is desired that clients work with the same employees of TD. Finally, to recreate a team bond around dynamic teams, the creation of new relationships in the form of buddies, mentors and expert groups is recommended.

6.3 Proposal 2: Enhancing the Existing Structure of TD

The following section proposes an enhancement on the existing organisational structure. The current structure includes alterations, which aim to eliminate its drawbacks and includes a practical tool to support the interaction between domains. Paragraph 6.3.1 outlines the key characteristics of the proposed enhancement, highlighting the distinctions between the existing and the new structure. Subsequently, it introduces the practical tool and rationale behind it. In Paragraph 6.3.2, the rationale behind the design proposal is discussed. The section concludes with recommendations.

6.3.1 Key Characteristics

No Financial Drive of Teams

The main enhancement of the structure is to eliminate the financial drive of teams. This may result in several proposed drawbacks diminishing by themselves. For instance, removing the targets may diminish hesitance to collaborate and consequently, awareness of each other's skills could grow. In addition, when the threshold to ask for help outside a team lowers, teams may feel more part of the same company. Currently, the HoTs use the team targets to oversee the financial performance of each team. The new scenario without team targets removes the financial boundaries between teams. A new project for a team thus equals a new project for TD and assistance from employees outside the team is celebrated, as it keeps the financial resources internal. The funds are flowing in and out a unified pool. HoTs should support and motivate inter-team collaboration. Instead of team targets to oversee team performance, client evaluations or team reviews can be utilised. Recognising and celebrating good team performance becomes the new focal point.

TD Capabilities Compass

The TD Capabilities Compass is a strategic tool designed to support the existing organisational structure by providing an overview of TD's capabilities. The Compass is further described using five key features:
[1] Increased awareness of TD capabilities for clients: The Compass offers a clear overview of what TD can offer clients, in terms of services and capabilities. This overview can offer a broad perspective in client meetings and determine which services of TD best address the clients' needs.

[2] Portfolio management: In the Compass, colleagues can showcase their skills and work to create an overview of what all employees can do. This overview helps to identify employees with certain expertise, to ask them for feedback or assistance.
[3] Overview of running projects: The Compass offers an overview of running projects, including project descriptions to give insights in what teams are working on. This overview can be kept up-to-date by a portfolio manager and by uploading mid-process deliverables.
[4] Archive: The Compass can serve as an archive with prior solutions, categorised with tags for easy access. Previous work can serve as inspiration or to show clients.
[5] Save client information: The platform can be used to log client information, such as reviews or evaluations for later retrieval.

TD can benefit from the tool in different contexts: In client meetings, the Compass ensures that clients are offered all of TD's services. The tool also offers an overview of skills possessed by TD employees. This is particularly valuable in the current scenario where there is a lack of awareness of colleagues' skills. The Compass' skill overview can assist in identifying the right talent for specific tasks and facilitating collaboration. Particularly in situations where there is limited awareness of skills, such as between TD Amsterdam, Cascade, and Zuiderlicht, the tool can be highly effective in providing an overview.

6.3.2 Rationale

This paragraph describes the process leading up to the TD Capabilities Compass. Removing the financial team drive alone does not suffice in stimulating inter-team collaboration. To address the design criteria and encourage inter-team collaboration, four practical solutions were devised: a project dashboard, a TD helpdesk, a capabilities compass and employee portfolios. These four ideas are shortly explained below in Figure 38, which highlights their main features. In Appendix C7, the four ideas are explained in more detail. The four ideas came forth from employee input, individual ideation and ideation with peers. Figure 38 shows that the TD Capabilities Compass does not yet contain all its aforementioned features. After evaluation of the four ideas, aspects are combined.

Selection of Ideas

The selection of ideas was done through comparing the ideas to the design criteria. In this selection, the TD Capabilities Compass, as described in Figure 38, best met the design criteria. Table 4 illustrates the evaluation of each solution on the nine design criteria. This idea is further developed to incorporate aspects of the other ideas and has resulted in the TD Capabilities Compass, as described in the Paragraph 6.3.1.

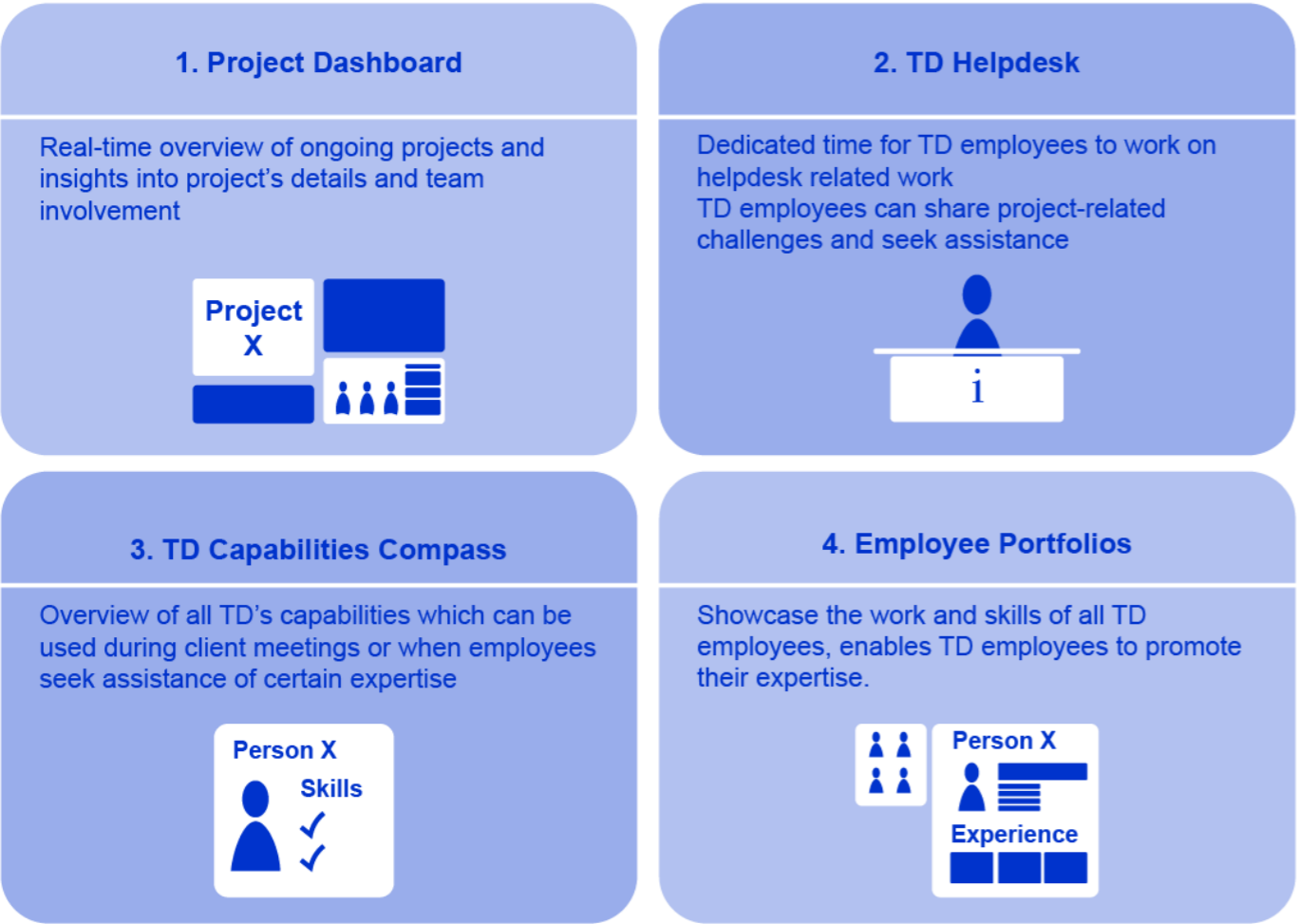


Figure 38: Overview of the four ideas.

6.3.3 Recommendations

The evaluation based on the design criteria has led to several recommendations, described below.

Platform Integration

TD currently utilises various platforms, for instance AFAS for registering declarations, Orbit for registering hours, Float for registering availability and Dropbox for saving and sharing files. The Capabilities Compass should not add to the amount of platforms and rather integrate the functionalities of one or more of the existing platforms. It is crucial that the platform simplifies employees' daily tasks to ensure successful implementation. If the platform is perceived as an extra burden which does not offer employees immediate benefits, this may lead to low adoption and acceptance rates.

Team Routines

It is recommended to incorporate the use of the Compass into a standardised checklist. To establish a consistent working approach across all teams, implementing a standard process can help ensure uniformity in how employees carry out

their tasks. This is one of the unaddressed design criteria.

Updates and Scalability

It is recommended that the Compass platform is created in-house and that it can adapt to changing needs. The tool should regularly be updated with the latest information on skills, services, and previous work, providing employees and clients with accurate and up-to-date information. It is recommended to appoint someone as tool manager or remind employees to update their work themselves. In future use, the Compass can include the skills and services of other Yuma companies as well, enhancing collaboration between different Yuma parties.

Training and Development

Employees should be provided with the necessary skills and knowledge to use the Compass effectively. Similar to the current new Orbit platform, frequent Q&A sessions should be hosted for employees.

Design criteria The solution facilitates...	Project Dashboard	TD Helpdesk	TD Capabilities Compass	Employee Portfolios
1. Cross-disciplinary collaboration	✓	✓	✓	✓
2. Using the most suitable people for assignments			✓	✓
3. That clients are offered all of TD's skills and services			✓	✓
4. A uniform way of working				
5. A TD-feeling: strength of a big company	✓	✓	✓	
6. Understanding of each other's skillset		✓	✓	✓
7. Maintaining good client relations			✓	
8. Overview of all (running) projects	✓			
9. Using shared knowledge from the different domains	✓	✓		

Table 4: Evaluating the four ideas on the design criteria.

6.3.4 Summary and Implications

This section presents the second design proposal, which is based on the existing structure and is accompanied by a tool. The main enhancement of the existing structure is to eliminate the financial drive of teams and thus the hesitance to collaborate.

Four practical solutions were devised to support the organisational structure and encourage inter-team collaboration:

- 1. Project Dashboard
- 2. TD Helpdesk
- 3. TD Capabilities Compass
- 4. Employee Portfolios

The four ideas were evaluated based on the design criteria. The TD Capabilities Compass is evaluated most positively and is enhanced, using complimenting features of the other ideas. The improved Compass is described using five key features: increased awareness of TD capabilities for clients, portfolio management, overview of running projects, archive and save client information.

The section concluded with several recommendations regarding the implementation and utilization of the Compass. These recommendations include integrating functionalities of multiple platforms into one, incorporating the utilization of the Compass into routines, ensuring updates and scalability and lastly, offering training and development opportunities.

6.4 Evaluation of Proposals

This section describes the evaluation of the two proposals. The evaluation is performed utilising a Harris Profile (Design method toolkit, n.d.). The section concludes with the selection of a final design solution.

6.4.1 Comparison of the Two Proposals

A comparison of the two proposals is made to see which proposal best meets the design criteria. Figure 39 illustrates the Harris profile used to do so. The nine design criteria are appointed weight according to their importance, and the points (-2 to +2) are summed up for each proposal. The Harris profile indicates that the new structure, proposal 1, outperforms proposal 2 in an evaluation: The new structure receives 67 points, the enhanced existing structure and Compass receives 49 points. In a first glance, Figure 39 may seem to suggest otherwise, but the new structure has a higher score due to its higher evaluation of the most important design criteria. The comparison of both proposals, listed per design criteria, is elaborated upon below.

[1] Cross-disciplinary collaboration

While both proposals support working in multidisciplinary teams, the new structure excels in facilitating collaboration with diverse teams and consistently empowers employees to engage with a variety of domains.

[2] Using the most suitable people for assignments

The new structure outperforms the enhanced existing structure, as it works with dynamic teams to ensure the best group composition for each task. The existing structure assigns existing teams, which may be less suitable groups.

[3] That clients are offered all of TD’s skills and services

The new structure has no standard teams, removing the incentive for client managers to exclusively promote their team’s skills. However, the second proposal includes the Compass, which simplifies offering clients TD’s complete skill set. Consequently, the second proposal receives a higher evaluation.

[4] A uniform way of working

In the existing structure, the standard teams enable employees to become attuned to each others way of working. This leads to all teams having a different working method. The new structure, however, necessitates a standardised working method to enable employees to collaborate in various team compositions. The new structure is thus evaluated positively, dependent on its implementation of a uniform working method.

[5] A TD-feeling: strength of a big company

The second proposal receives a positive evaluation. While teams can still function autonomously, the removal of financial barriers and increased awareness of colleagues’ skills motivate collaboration and fosters a stronger TD feeling. However, the dynamic project teams are expected to create even more cohesion, by eliminating standard teams. The standard teams feel as separate companies. Collaboration with various people within TD is expected to create a TD-feeling (rather than a team-feeling).

[6] Understanding of each other’s skill set

Collaborating with diverse individuals on projects may enhance the understanding of colleagues’ capabilities. The Compass, however, offers a clear overview of this. Therefore, the proposal including the Compass is evaluated most positively.

[7] Maintaining good client relations

The second proposal outperforms the new structure. Though both proposals entail that client managers stay with their client, the existing structure with standard teams may ensure better client understanding compared to the new structure. This advantage lies in the long-term collaboration between teams and clients.

[8] Overview of all (running) projects
The Compass facilitates an overview of all running projects and thus outperforms proposal 1.

[9] Using shared knowledge from the different domains
The new structure does not necessarily stimulate employees to use the shared knowledge of different in-house domains although the threshold to approach one another may be lower, given the absence of standard teams. Proposal 2 aids employees individuals to seek assistance from, and without financial boundaries between teams, there may be a greater inclination to request help from others. The two proposals have received an equal score.

Considerations of Selection
Proposal 1, the new organisational structure is selected as final proposal. This choice is substantiated by Proposal 1's higher performance on the primary and pivotal criteria. It also closely

aligns with employee-generated solutions and best fits the design statement 'make all teams work as one for our client'. The structure reduces fixed team boundaries and allows project teams to best meet the needs of the client, as the composition of the project team is customised, resulting in highly tailored solutions.

Notably, criterion 8 shows a high score in contrast to proposal 2's low score. In a new organisational structure featuring dynamic project teams, there would be little visibility into all ongoing projects. Conversely, the existing structure, when complemented with a tool, excels in this aspect. However, the new structure is a more comprehensive solution to enhance collaboration which avoids imposing another platform on TD employees, further complicating their daily work routines. To meet all design criteria, it is recommended the new structure finds a way to create an overview of all running projects as well.

Balancing Employee Input and Management Interests
The selection of the final design proposal has been carefully considered and reveals a conflict of interest. The decision to continue with the new organisational structure is shaped by employee input. However, employees have different interests and priorities than from a managements perspective. Employees have expressed their desire for a different structure, whereas board members have indicated they wish to retain the existing structure. From a managements perspective, the existing structure fosters entrepreneurship and facilitates easy management, with teams acting as financial units. However, research indicates that issues with collaboration arise from the internal team focus, therefore employees desire the removal of financial boundaries and shift to project teams. It is decided to lean towards the employees desires and continue with the new organisational structure for two main reasons. First, employees offered a greater amount of input and involvement in the research, from different perspectives who experience the day-to-day operations. Second, they expressed their discontent with top-down decisions, thus a final design should consider their interests.

Noteworthy, despite the initially expressed reluctance towards reorganisation, the new structure aligns with the outcomes of co-creation session 1 (depicted in Figure 11). In this co-creation session, participated in by the board members, suggested 'means' to foster synergy creation include "altering the current team structure, for instance by creating fluid teams or motivating the teams to make decisions unrelated to profit".

6.4.2 Summary and Implications
This section describes the assessment of the two proposals using a Harris profile based on the established design criteria. It is decided to continue with Proposal 1, the new organisational structure. This is due to its superior performance on critical criteria and alignment with employee preferences. This choice prioritises a comprehensive solution for collaboration enhancement over adding another platform to TD employees' daily workload. This decision has been carefully considered. The new organisational structure at TD responds to employee demands, addressing drawbacks associated with the existing team structure. However, a conflict of interest arises, as management has expressed their wishes to retain the current structure. It is decided to lean towards the employees' input, as this input includes more different perspectives and as they have expressed their discontent with top-down decisions, thus a final design should consider their interests.

Design criteria	Proposal 1				Proposal 2			
	The new structure facilitates...				The enhanced existing structure and Compass facilitate...			
	--	-	+	++	--	-	+	++
1. Cross-disciplinary collaboration								
2. Using the most suitable people for assignments								
3. That clients are offered all of TD's skills and services								
4. A uniform way of working								
5. A TD-feeling: strength of a big company								
6. Understanding of each other's skilsset								
7. Maintaining good client relations								
8. Overview of all (running) projects								
9. Using shared knowledge from the different domains								
67 points total					49 points total			

Figure 39: Harris profile on both proposals, based on the design criteria.

6.5 Presenting the Final Design: Co-creation Session 6

This section presents the outcomes of the last co-creation session which aims to finalise the selected design. In essence, the ultimate design proposes to reshape the organisational structure, prioritising multidisciplinary collaboration and client focus. In this session, participants evaluate the final design, its potential positive impact and potential challenges and discuss recommendations for the reorganisation.

6.5.1 Procedure

The co-creation session is initiated with a summary of the research project and findings, before presenting the final design proposal. Figure 40 describes the three main activities of the session.

6.5.2 Participants

Participants include the CEO, CFO and Partner & Strategy Director of TD. They are asked to participate in this evaluation session to offer a new perspective. Previous participants mainly consisted of employees with less of TD's commercial needs in mind. This participant selection aims to shed light on TD's management's perspective.

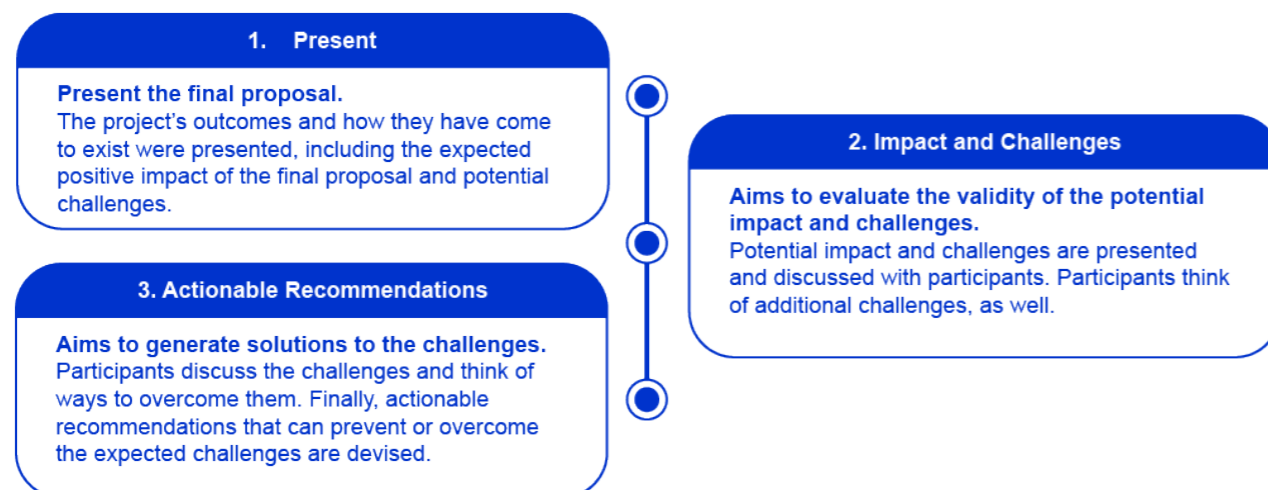


Figure 40: Procedure of co-creation session 6.

6.5.3 Findings

After presenting the new organisational structure, the potential positive impact and potential challenges were presented. These originated from the learnings of the research and are listed below.

Potential positive impact:

- [1] Enhanced Employee Engagement
- [2] Broader Service Offering
- [3] Collaborative Work Environment
- [4] Enhanced Learning and Innovation
- [5] Improved Client Satisfaction

Potential challenges:

- [1] Resistance to Change
- [2] Coordination and Communication
- [3] Client Transition
- [4] Loss of Team Identity
- [5] Performance Evaluation

The session aimed to uncover whether the participants concur with these expectations. In tables D1.1 and D1.2 in Appendix D1, each potential impact and challenge is further described, including the matter of participant agreement and participants' additional concerns. Subsequent paragraphs provide the outcomes participants' evaluations.

Potential Positive Impact

The expected impact participants value most, is the [2] *Broader Service Offering*: that the client is offered all of TD's capabilities instead of that of one team. The session showed that participants concur with four out of five potential positive impact factors. The concerns related to the fifth factor and other additional remarks are described below. These are then incorporated into the actionable recommendations on the next page. First, participants do not agree with the expected [1] *Enhanced Employee Engagement*: Contrastingly, they state standard teams lead to shared responsibility and thus more employee engagement. Participants also raise concerns related to [New] *Project Assignment*: Participants anticipate the likelihood of cronyism in dynamic teams. HoTs or client managers responsible for assembling project teams often have preferred designers they choose to work with, which could lead to the formation of similar team configurations repeatedly over time.

According to the board members, this progression is not necessarily problematic, provided that clients remain satisfied and have access to the full range of TD's services. This cronyism may however lead to a significant imbalance in workload, with certain designers consistently facing heavy workloads, which must be mitigated.

A final concern is the [New] *Suitability to the Work Mentality at TD*: Participants are uncertain if the new structure aligns with TD's working mentality and state that the new structure's success relies on the assumption that all creatives are motivated to excel in their work.

Potential Challenges

The participants affirm that two out of five potential challenges may occur and that the others do not raise their concerns. The challenges affirmed by participants and additional remarks are discussed below.

The main expected challenge is [2] *Coordination and Communication*: As the current streams of communication need to be reorganised, this might lead to inefficiencies.

The second expected challenge is [4] *Loss of Team Identity*: This can be a potential problem and adds to the concern related to employee engagement, as noted by the participants. Therefore, it is crucial to foster a sense of belonging among team members to effectively address and mitigate this challenge.

Finally, participants express additional remarks relating to [1] *Resistance to Change*: Participants agree that this may not be a challenge due to employee involvement in the decision-making process and their expressed desire for this specific structural change. Participants do however stress the importance to seek feedback from employees throughout the reorganisation.

Overall, the discussions during the session concluded that the board members' beliefs around the existing structure have been challenged and found that they are considering change. The subsequent activity of the session prepares TD for a shift towards the new structure by devising actionable recommendations for the reorganisation.

Recommendations for Reorganising and Establishing a New Structure

This paragraph presents an overview of actionable recommendations to realise the reorganisation, endorsed by the board members in the session. Figure 41 presents various steps in the reorganisation. The sequence of steps is chronological, but it's important to note that the order is flexible and can be rearranged based on the outcomes of preceding steps. The recommendations are further described below, including the rationale behind them.

Feedback Moments: It is recommended to schedule various feedback moments around initiating impactful changes. These moments include formal approval of changes before initiation and evaluation moments after with stakeholders. It is also recommended to inform clients of ongoing changes, to motivate open communication and ensure the transition is seamlessly experienced by them.

Align Vision: In the reorganisation process, it is important employees are committed to the new direction to maintain their support. Hence, it is advised to involve employees in designing a new vision for implementing the new structure and achieving desired outcomes.

Design an Implementation Strategy: It is recommended to co-create an implementation strategy. The implementation strategy should include KPIs and ways to evaluate the new structures effectiveness on collaboration and overall success.

Clear Roles and Responsibilities: The new structure requires clear roles and responsibilities to facilitate the coordination of project teams. Reevaluating roles and relationships can assist in identifying overlaps, addressing gaps, and eliminating any potential confusion in roles. It is important that throughout the process of change, employees take leadership. It must therefore be clear who has certain responsibilities. Second, for a shared sense of responsibility and employee engagement in the reorganisation of teams, buddy and mentoring roles are recommended. This also supports camaraderie and can compensate for a loss of team identity.

Overview of Capabilities: In line with the co-created design criteria, it is recommended to create an overview of the capabilities that TD houses.

Training and Skill Development: Ensure that employees have the right skills for the reorganisation and new organisational structure. As employees will work with various colleagues, providing adequate training and skill development opportunities to ensure they have the necessary competencies for diverse project roles will be essential.

Attach additional human resources: It is expected that human resources are needed to implement and sustain the new structure. With an overview of the capabilities, TD can assess who else to hire, such as planners, project managers and transition managers.

Tool Assessment and Improvement: Certain tools can aid in improving the workflow, such as tools to facilitate project teams' composition and to create overview in the running projects. Regular evaluation, updating, or replacement of these tools is recommended to ensure they remain effective and efficient.

Adjust Working Space: In line with employees expressed dissatisfaction with the working space, it is recommended to reconsider the physical working space and online working space to support the new dynamic teams structure.

The proposed design can serve as a basis to organise a new structure and is driven by a deeper understanding of the organisational challenges and the need for a more collaborative working culture. If the structure is not reorganised, it is recommended to reevaluate the financial structure of TD, particularly that of teams, to align this with employee demands. This can be done through a process of similar steps as those illustrated in Figure 41. For continuous evaluation and evolvement of the organisational structure, one could even consider the process in a loop, as depicted in Figure 42.

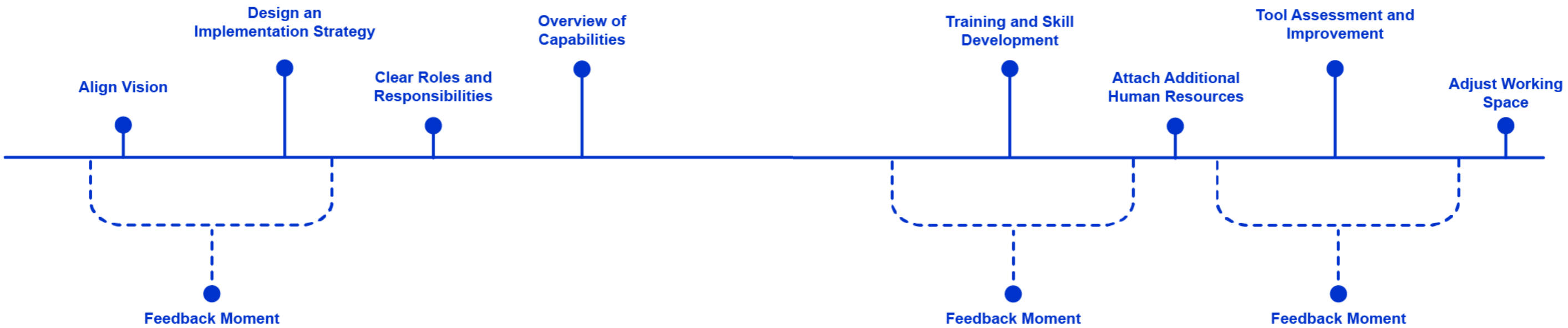


Figure 41 [1/2]: Actionable recommendations for reorganisation.

Figure 41 [2/2]: Actionable recommendations for reorganisation.

6.5.4 Summary and Implications

This section presents the final co-creation session, which evaluates the proposed reorganisation. The evaluation session involved TD’s CEO, CFO, and Partner & Strategy Director, to offer a management perspective.

The outcomes of the co-creation session show that participants agree with the presented potential positive impact, but pose additional remarks and concerns. In short, participants state that standard teams potentially create more employee engagement than dynamic teams and participants express their uncertainty about if the new structure aligns with TD’s working mentality. These are points of attention in the recommendations for implementation. Various potential challenges were then discussed. Participants affirm they

expect the coordination and communication to pose a challenge, working in different project teams. Second, the loss of team identity may present a potential issue. Lastly, participants stress the importance to seek feedback from employees throughout the reorganisation. In the final activity, these challenges are addressed by collaboratively devising recommendations for the implementation. This activity prepares TD for a shift towards the new structure by devising actionable recommendations for the reorganisation. Overall, the session showed that the beliefs around the existing structure have been challenged and that board members are now indeed thinking of altering the structure.

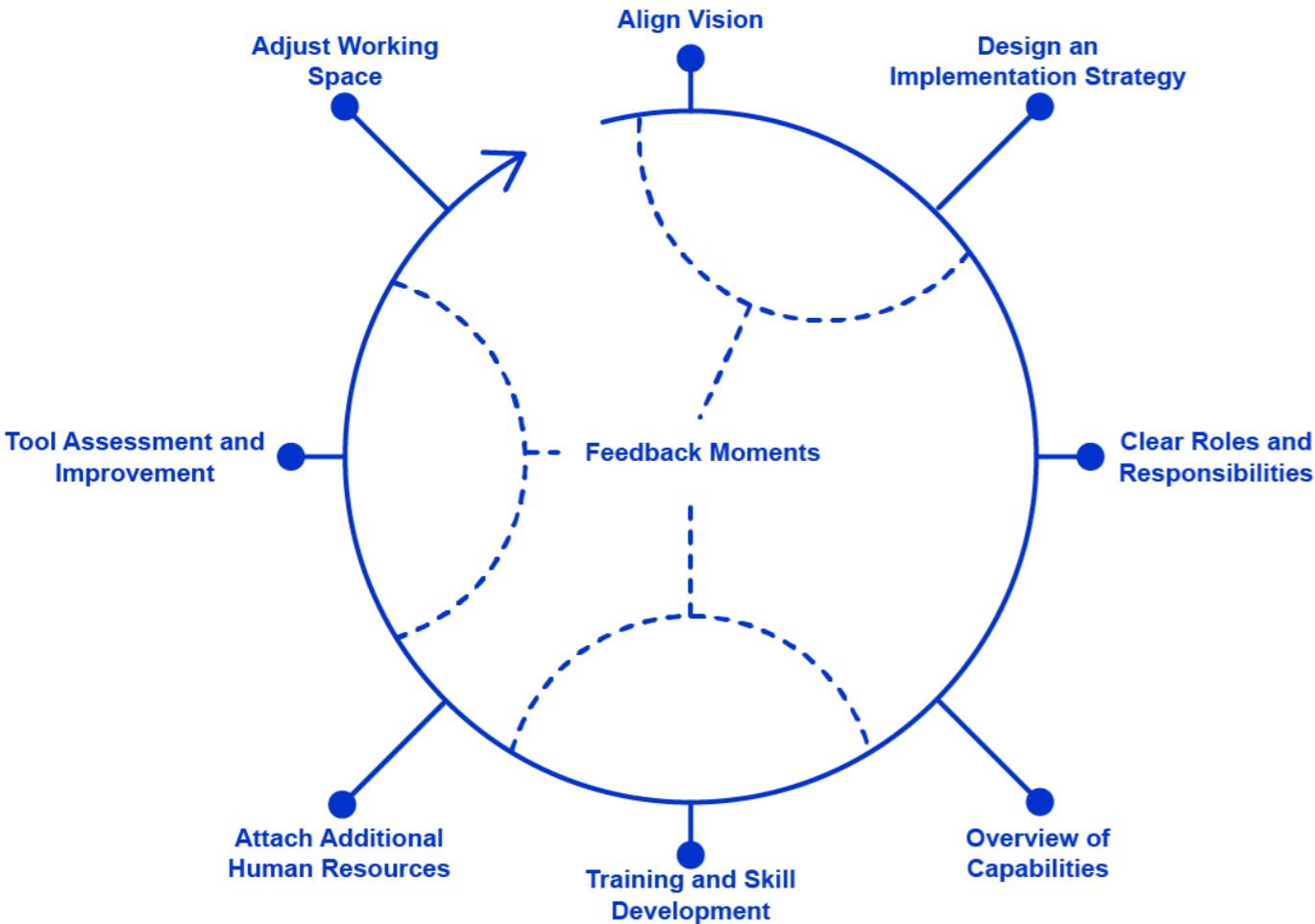


Figure 42: Recommended steps for continuous evaluation of the organisational structure.

6.6 Evaluation of the Final Design

Using the three factors of the Desirability, Feasibility and Viability model (IDEO Design Thinking, n.d.), the new organisational structure is evaluated.

6.6.1 Desirability

The design process and its outcomes are led by the input of various employees. The final design meets most design criteria, originating from employee input, and addresses the design statement, ‘all teams work as one for our client’. In addition, employees have suggested ideas similar to the new structure as well. More specifically, employees have stated in creative sessions that synergy creation requires a structural change and that they wish to see dynamic project team formations. Ultimately, the final design is presented to members of TD’s board who appraised it positively. They have transitioned from their initial stance of preserving the existing structure to contemplating the shift to (or integration of certain aspects from) the final proposed organisational framework. For clients, the new structure is desirable for its custom project team composition and consequently, highly tailored solutions, while maintaining client understanding through fixed client relationships. As noted in section 3.1.1, working in diverse teams could lead to improved creative performance, which would benefit client solutions.

6.6.2 Feasibility

The final co-creation session suggests that although structural reorganisation typically presents challenges, board members expect these to be manageable. Certain potential challenges have been discussed and actionable recommendations have been developed to address these during the reorganisation. Overall, with the help of frequent feedback moments during the reorganisation process and employee support, it is likely that challenges arising from the reorganisation can be anticipated and effectively addressed. However, board members have expressed concerns about the fit with TD’s way of working. As the success of a reorganisation depends on the organisations’ culture and ability to embrace the change, this may

take extra time. It should be further explored before the change is implemented, but is also considered manageable, given employees’ involvement in the decision-making process and their expressed desire for this particular change.

6.6.3 Viability

Financial considerations regarding the cost of the proposed transition have not been discussed in the report and should to be taken into account in order to assess the viability of the reorganisation. The new structure is expected to be profitable due to its positive impact on clients, as the board members confirm that the new organisational structure will lead to improved client satisfaction. In addition, the flexibility of the dynamic project teams offers the potential to adapt more quickly to market and client demands, although this is dependent on the success of the reorganisation in terms of effective collaboration.

6.6.4 Summary

The new structure is considered desirable because it focuses on employee needs, benefits for the client, and because it has been endorsed by the members of the board. It is expected to be feasible as the expected challenges are considered to be manageable. Finally, there are financial considerations that need to be further assessed, but overall the reorganisation is expected to have a positive impact not only on collaboration but also on customer satisfaction, depending on the success of the implementation.

Key Takeaways of Chapter 6

This chapter begins with the presentation of two design proposals: a new organisational structure and an enhanced existing structure combined with the TD Capabilities Compass. The chapter then describes the process of selecting and finalising a final design.

Two Design Proposals

The new structure involves dynamic project teams and is partly shaped by input from employees who suggested similar organisational structures during creative sessions. The idea was supported because of its similarity to the matrix model and its known benefits, as well as positive feedback from people working in similar models at other creative agencies. The second proposal, the enhanced existing structure and Compass, includes the existing structure without team goals and the TD Capabilities Compass. The Compass is described in terms of five key features: increased awareness of TD capabilities for clients, portfolio management, overview of running projects, previous work easily accessed and save client information.

Selection of Final Design

The new organisational structure is selected as final design proposal for its superior alignment to the design criteria and the research assignment. In addition, it is considered desirable to avoid imposing yet another platform, such as the Compass, on TD employees and further complicating their daily work routines.

Evaluation of Final Design

In a final co-creation session, the potential positive impacts and challenges of the new structure are discussed with three board members. In a nutshell, the positive impacts of the structure are a broader service offering to customers, increased learning and innovation, and improved customer satisfaction. Participants questioned whether the new structure would lead to increased employee engagement and foresaw potential challenges such as coordination and communication and a loss of team identity. Actionable recommendations for the reorganisation were developed to address the potential challenges. The chapter concludes that the final proposal is desirable for TD's employees and customers, is feasible including the manageable challenges, and that while the financial considerations need further evaluation, overall the reorganisation is expected to have a positive impact not only on collaboration but also on customer satisfaction, depending on the success of the implementation.

7. Discussion, Limitations and Recommendations

This chapter presents an analysis of the key findings and possible implications. In addition, the limitations of the conducted research are discussed. The chapter concludes with recommendations for future work.

7.1 Key Findings and Implications

The primary goal of this project was to enhance the collaboration between the domains Branding, Communications and Technology within TD. In a collaborative process, with a focus on employee engagement, various perceived barriers to collaboration were uncovered and a solution was sought. This section will outline the key findings of the research and their implications for TD.

Employee Feedback on Structure

First and foremost, the key finding of the research is employees' expressed dissatisfaction with certain aspects of the existing structure. Consequently, the research findings have led to a new organisational structure that aligns with employee demands and aims to enhance collaboration between the domains. Although the research has also found valued aspects of the structure, the project makes clear it is crucial to reevaluate the existing structure to address employees' expressed dissatisfaction. Responding to employees' demands is expected to benefit the overall organization, as it can improve employee morale.

Desire for Employee Involvement

The project confirmed employees' desire to be involved and to work towards a more collaborative environment. As TD moves forward with this reorganisation, continued employee engagement is recommended as this can increase the acceptance of outcomes (Aarikka-Stenroos & Jaakkola, 2012). The conducted co-creation activities can provide an example of how TD can involve its employees in decision making. The role of the researcher can be taken up by one or more employees as ambassadors for collective decision making within TD. Employee involvement can be implemented in TD's policy on decision making to ensure its continuation in the years to come.

Uncovering Organisational Complexities

A key finding was the complexity and ambiguity of the existing organisational structure. The research showed that there is disagreement about the current structure, but also that there is some ambiguity about the structure and the rationale behind it. This made the research somewhat

more difficult at times as it led to irregularities in the responses of the participants. This project has helped to frame employees' perceptions of the current situation, but more can be done to resolve the ambiguity surrounding the existing structure. Throughout the project, employees have suggested the creation of a shared vision. This has the potential to align people's perspectives on the structure and can resolve disagreement.

Identifying Barriers to Synergy Creation

The research conducted has revealed many perceived barriers to synergy creation. This project has focused on the barriers to multidisciplinary collaboration, and more specifically on overcoming internal team focus. Other barriers identified by employees should not be overlooked, as overcoming them would not only lead to improved collaboration, but could also make employees feel heard and thus improve employee satisfaction.

Tension Between Collaboration and Financial Responsibility

A prominent finding was the tension between employees' financial responsibility and the need for effective collaboration. Creative employees express dissatisfaction with the financial goals of teams, but TD management wants to preserve the entrepreneurial spirit and share responsibility for financial performance. The research revealed that responsibility for financial performance contributes to employees' hesitation to collaborate. The revelation of several practical considerations, such as not cross-selling, leads to the recommendation that TD further explore the employee perspective and possibly reconsider the financial structure. TD could consider revising bonus structures to reward collaborative efforts or explore the development of financial models that motivate team collaboration.

7.2 Limitations

This section outlines constraints and weaknesses in the study, like the participant selection and methodological limitations.

Theoretical Background

Due to the exploratory nature of the research, the problem was identified relatively late, which delayed the identification of relevant literature. This resulted in a limited amount of literature being consulted, mainly due to time constraints. This can be seen in the limited exploration of literature on the identified organisational challenges, which could have provided insights into different solutions.

Unresponsive Groups

Most of the sessions were open to all through a call for voluntary participation, and while the response from many employees confirmed their enthusiasm for greater involvement, the research also revealed a noticeable lack of engagement from certain groups. The Zuiderlicht and Cascade teams did not respond to the invitation to participate.

Participant Selection

A first concern is the diversity of the participant selection. In the interviews in particular, the participants were young and all relatively new to TD. In order to get a more accurate picture of the reality and diversity at TD, more employees could be approached for co-creation activities. A second limitation relates to employee bias. Employees were promised anonymity, but it is to be expected that employees expressed themselves in a certain way due to their current employment at TD. Especially in co-creation sessions with other employees, it is expected that employees' responses were influenced by the composition of the group. Employees' roles also influenced their responses. For example, many employees gave little or no consideration to the financial implications of their proposed changes.

Research Methods

The research relied primarily on qualitative methods, which may introduce researcher bias. Second, working with a small sample size may have led to subjective decision making. Finally, quantitative methods were occasionally used based on qualitative data, which raises concerns about the internal and external validity of the study and affects the reliability of the findings.

Replicability

The use of co-creation sessions in this study has limitations in terms of replicability. In particular, the co-creation sessions were built on the findings and insights of previous sessions. While this process is beneficial for in-depth exploration and tailored solution development, it poses challenges for direct replication. Factors such as the specific composition of participants and the changing context of TD influence the design of subsequent sessions. Thus, co-creation sessions are highly context specific. Therefore, replicating the study under different conditions or with different groups or a different researcher will yield different results.

Final Outcomes

A first limitation related to the final results is that the final design responds to staff demand for a new organisational structure, but lacks a comprehensive analysis. Additional time would have allowed for a thorough comparative analysis with existing organisational models in similar creative agencies. This may have revealed unforeseen challenges or benefits of the proposed organisational structure. A second limitation is that the final design presented in this study represents a conceptual framework for a new organisational structure rather than a ready-to-implement model. Due to the time constraints associated with this project, the development of a detailed, actionable plan for implementation and subsequent testing of the new structure was beyond the scope of this study. This limitation highlights the need for further research to validate and implement the proposed organisational changes.

7.3 Future Recommendations

This section outlines suggestions for further study, like methodological improvements and areas for further research.

Additional In-Depth Study into Reorganisation

In future work, it is recommended to further investigate organisational structures appropriate to the context. Due to time constraints, only five common structures were explored. In addition, further research could be done in relation to the reorganisation of a company to find out how to develop and implement a structure.

Expanding Focus Group

It is recommended to expand the focus group and follow up with non-responsive groups, like Cascade and Zuiderlicht. Furthermore, future research can expand the focus group to include clients as well. Current research excluded clients for a more focused and efficient use of resources. Because the research aimed to understand and address the internal barriers to collaboration within TD, it was considered best to leverage employee expertise for outcomes applicable and relevant to internal collaboration. However, the client perspective on the collaboration quality can provide valuable insights in how the collaboration between the domains impacts the quality of deliverables. Over time, clients can also provide feedback on how the proposed changes affect their experience with TD.

Additional Research Methods

Incorporating other research methods, like surveys, might provide additional insights and help validate the findings from the interviews. This could also address limitations like the small sample size and researchers bias. Leveraging quantitative data in future research can provide a more comprehensive understanding by combining the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative methods.

Follow-Up Studies

The creative sessions were kept short to encourage participation. However, the sessions could benefit from being longer and involving the same people repeatedly. Conducting follow-up studies with employees over time could provide insights into how perceptions change, particularly in response to any changes implemented based on the findings of this thesis. In addition, a long-term study can determine the impact of implemented change on employee satisfaction with collaboration quality and the quality of creative output.

Exploring Other Perceived Barriers to Synergy Creation

The participants mentioned various barriers to synergy creation that can be further explored and resolved.

Generalisability

The current research is highly specific to the context of TD. To increase the generalisability of the findings, other creative agencies could be researched for their challenges in multidisciplinary collaboration. Including multiple organisations in future studies could provide a comparative perspective and indicate if the findings are unique to TD or applicable to a broader context.

8.1 Conclusion

The research objective of the project was to enhance the collaboration between the domains Branding, Communications and Technology within TD. The research shows that there are various barriers that prevent collaboration between teams, the primary one being the strong internal focus. In collaboration with employees of TD, an exploratory research has lead to a final design proposal for TD to enhance multidisciplinary collaboration.

The final design is a new organisational structure, stemming from the input of employees. The proposed organisational structure introduces dynamic, project-based teams that replace traditional, static groups, facilitating fluid cross-domain collaboration and enabling a more agile response to client needs.

The strong internal team focus, which is currently seen as problematic for collaboration between domains, is eliminated by the dynamic team structure. The project teams allow employees to work with colleagues with different expertise and motivate employees from different domains to work together on each project. The transition to the new structure can be beneficial for clients, as the project teams are tailored to the assignment. The new structure allows for quick adaptation to client needs, results in a broader service offering for clients and ultimately in increased creative performance.

For TD employees, working in diverse teams is expected to enhance their learning and growth. The dynamic teams are expected to improve the collaborative environment and foster a sense of

TD beyond the current team bond. The move to dynamic teams also demonstrates TD's willingness to listen to what employees want. The study has shown employees' desire to be involved and responding to this with continued employee involvement could benefit the organisation.

The study has also shed light on the organisational complexities, revealing confusion among employees about the existing structure. This study has framed how employees experience the current context. In response, TD's board has expressed a change in attitude towards the existing structure and is considering change.

In conclusion, this research serves as a critical examination of TD's current organisational structure, challenging management's beliefs and setting the stage for TD to move towards a more collaborative working environment.

8.2 Personal Reflection

My motivation for this project was to experience what it was like to work in a creative company. Not only did I experience this by walking around the office, but I was also able to delve deep into the experiences of all the people who work at the company. I chose this topic because of the potential for employee involvement, and I can say now that I am still happy with that decision.

Time Management

Time has flown by very quickly and I believe time management went quite well. I did not work with a strict planning but followed general steps and only made concrete plans for the near future. This worked well with my exploratory approach, but my planning may not have worked in a different company. I am happy that I was empowered to invite employees of TD for co-creation sessions on my own and that I could always host activities on short notice, which offered me great flexibility in planning.

Main Challenges

My main learning is that I should have narrowed my focus earlier in the project. I spent a lot of time avoiding changes to the organisational structure, even though this would have given me more time to research different structures and find solutions to the challenges. Not choosing a direction earlier also made it difficult to ask for help. I was never afraid to ask for help, I just found it hard to decide what I needed help with. This was also because I wanted to include all the findings, as I thought all findings were or could be relevant. In line with this is that I found it a challenge to work with the overwhelming input of information from employees. People could relate personally to the topic and I sometimes felt that the barriers they proposed were very specific to them. I was sometimes swayed in a completely different direction after talking to one other person, when they stressed what they considered to be problematic. I think my openness to all information was good at first, but I could have kept a firmer line somehow.

Learning goals

I think my personal learning objectives show that I had no idea what would be the most challenging

part of the final project. I did not know beforehand how much time and work would go into writing the actual report. This is mainly because I did not know how difficult it would be for me to write a coherent report. It is definitely the part where I have made the most progress. I don't know when I will ever have to write such a report (I hope never), but we can say that I have learned from many mistakes.

Strengths and Weaknesses

Throughout the project I discovered new strengths and weaknesses in myself as a person and as a designer. I was told that I took on a professional role in the company and was not afraid to ask questions. Sometimes I may have been too gullible with the answers. This is also a weakness that can be seen in my reporting as an inability to separate what is important from what is not. As mentioned before, I thought all findings were relevant. To end on a higher note, I found I am good with handling feedback and I hope that my report reflects this.

Final Thoughts

I am happy with the way my thesis went and I feel that my research was relevant to TD, which I found very important. I am a slightly disappointed that my final results are not so tangible. Before, I saw myself delving into brand design and creating a cool final showcase model. But this is not where the project has taken me. No cool showcase model, but I am proud of the way I worked with all the people at TD. The project showed me how much I enjoy facilitating these sessions and the TD'ers made it a really nice and memorable experience for me. What I really like about co-creation is working with different people, uncovering different problems and finding unexpected ways to solve them. I hope to use these experiences in a design consultancy, for example.

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A1 Project Brief

6835

TU Delft

IDE Master Graduation Project

Project team, procedural checks and Personal Project Brief

In this document the agreements made between student and supervisory team about the student's IDE Master Graduation Project are set out. This document may also include involvement of an external client, however does not cover any legal matters student and client (might) agree upon. Next to that, this document facilitates the required procedural checks:

- Student defines the team, what the student is going to do/deliver and how that will come about
- Chair of the supervisory team signs, to formally approve the project's setup / Project brief
- SSC E&SA (Shared Service Centre, Education & Student Affairs) report on the student's registration and study progress
- IDE's Board of Examiners confirms the proposed supervisory team on their eligibility, and whether the student is allowed to start the Graduation Project

STUDENT DATA & MASTER PROGRAMME

Complete all fields and indicate which master(s) you are in

Family name	Fontijn	IDE master(s)	IPD <input type="checkbox"/>	Dfi <input type="checkbox"/>	SPD <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Initials	H F M	2nd non-IDE master			
Given name	Hella	Individual programme (date of approval)			
Student number	4666577	Medisign	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		HPM	<input type="checkbox"/>		

SUPERVISORY TEAM

Fill in the required information of supervisory team members. If applicable, company mentor is added as 2nd mentor

Chair	Erik Jan Hultink	dept./section	DOS	<p>! Ensure a heterogeneous team. In case you wish to include team members from the same section, explain why.</p> <p>! Chair should request the IDE Board of Examiners for approval when a non-IDE mentor is proposed. Include CV and motivation letter.</p> <p>! 2nd mentor only applies when a client is involved.</p>
mentor	Fernando Secomandi	dept./section	DOS	
2nd mentor	Martijn Arts			
client:	Total Design			
city:	Amsterdam	country:	the Netherlands	
optional comments	My topic is more the expertise of Fernando, therefore I asked him to join the team. Even though it is less the expertise of Erik Jan, I think he'll be of great help during my project, on a coaching level as well.			

APPROVAL OF CHAIR on PROJECT PROPOSAL / PROJECT BRIEF -> to be filled in by the Chair of the supervisory team

Sign for approval (Chair)


Name Erik Jan Hultink

Date 3 Oct 2023

Signature

To be filled in by **SSC E&SA** (Shared Service Centre, Education & Student Affairs), after approval of the project brief by the chair. The study progress will be checked for a 2nd time just before the green light meeting.

X	YES	all 1 st year master courses passed
	NO	missing 1 st year courses

Name K. Veldman Date 5-10-2023 Signature 

Does the composition of the Supervisory Team comply with regulations?

Name Monique von Morgen Date 10/10/2023 Signature

Name student **Hella Fontijn** Student number **4,666,577**

Complete all fields, keep information clear, specific and concise

Please state the title of your graduation project (above). Keep the title compact and simple. Do not use abbreviations. The remainder of this document allows you to define and clarify your graduation project.

Describe the context of your project here; What is the domain in which your project takes place? Who are the main stakeholders and what interests are at stake? Describe the opportunities (and limitations) in this domain to better serve the stakeholder interests. (max 250 words)

****Cambridge Dictionary.** (sd). Dictionary. Retrieved from Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary & Thesaurus: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/synergy>

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introduction (continued): space for images

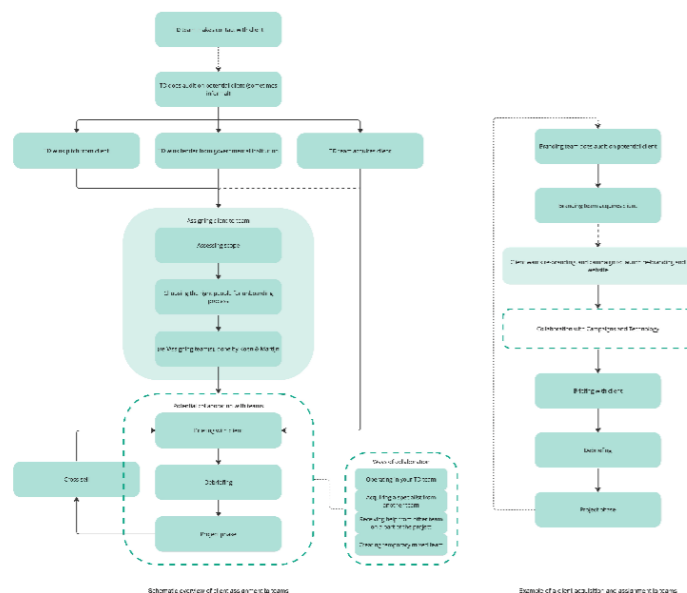


image / figure 1 Client on- to offboarding process, a schematic overview

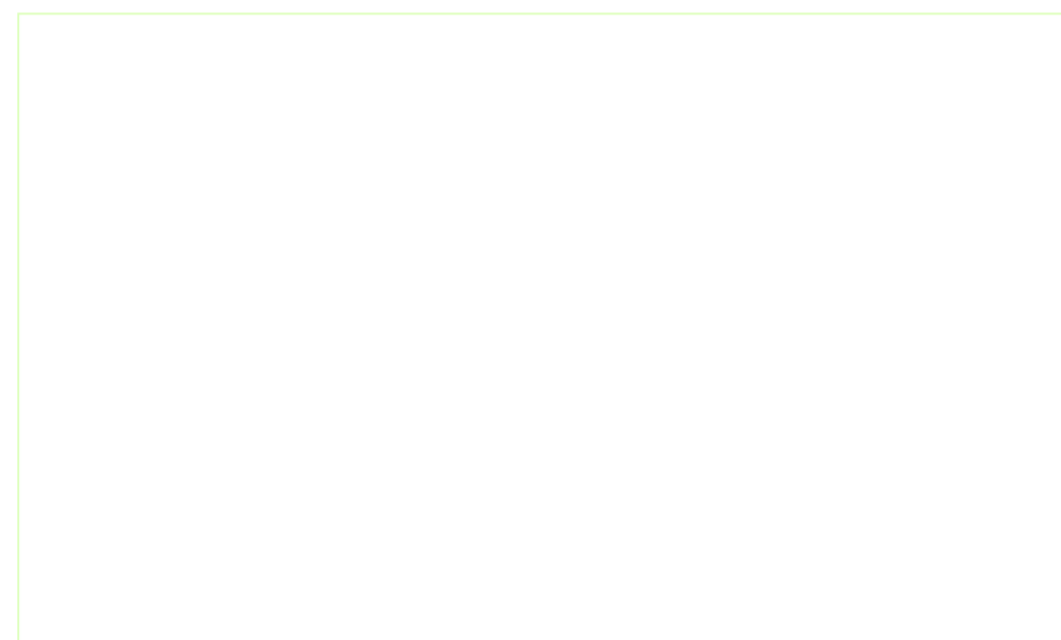


image / figure 2



Personal Project Brief – IDE Master Graduation Project

Problem Definition

What problem do you want to solve in the context described in the introduction, and within the available time frame of 100 working days? (= Master Graduation Project of 30 EC). What opportunities do you see to create added value for the described stakeholders? Substantiate your choice. (max 200 words)

The employees at TD are happy working in teams (stated in employee satisfaction survey and informal conversations), however the current structure seems to not fully support the synergy between communications, branding and technology. From asking around at TD, it seems there are certain barriers in place preventing continuous integration of the three domains. For example, its been said that the framework does not adequately support inter-team and individual collaboration, seemingly essential* for seamless integration. Other barriers mentioned are lack of communication amongst teams, trust and support in vision by employees and client understanding of 'synergy'. Problem statement: TD desires optimal integration of the domains technology, branding and communications, but experiences barriers that need to be defined and overcome. The goal at hand is to discover and analyze the barriers in place, propose effective solutions and motivate enhanced integration of the domains. By achieving this, TD aims to create more holistic innovations that exceed clients' expectations, thereby solidifying its position as a leader in the industry and ensuring client satisfaction. The clients' perspective must therefore be taken into account as well throughout the whole project. The end-deliverable is preferably to for internal and external use.

*It is yet to be researched what the drivers are of seamless integration

Assignment

This is the most important part of the project brief because it will give a clear direction of what you are heading for. Formulate an assignment to yourself regarding what you expect to deliver as result at the end of your project. (1 sentence) As you graduate as an industrial design engineer, your assignment will start with a verb (Design/Investigate/Validate/Create), and you may use the green text format:

Investigate the structure, culture & processes within TD to understand and overcome the barriers to synergy and finally write an advisory report and/or design an intervention to stimulate integration of the domains. This intervention can be a tool, method, framework or strategy meant to improve the collaboration between domains.

Then explain your project approach to carrying out your graduation project and what research and design methods you plan to use to generate your design solution (max 150 words)

Double Diamond approach:
Discover phase
-Discover TD, its processes, structures, culture, past projects, motivation behind the vision and stakeholders (interviews, co-creation & literature)
Define phase
-Define meaning of synergy and its boundary conditions, painpoints (barriers) & touchpoints for an intervention (customer journey maps, immersion, co-creating session),
Develop phase
- Develop possible solutions (co-creation, brainstorm, scenarios, storyboard)
Deliver phase
- Pitching ideas, user-testing, role-playing, evaluating & iterating
- Creating implementation plan

B1 Benefits and downsides to the team structure in original language

Project planning and key moments

To make visible how you plan to spend your time, you must make a planning for the full project. You are advised to use a Gantt chart format to show the different phases of your project, deliverables you have in mind, meetings and in-between deadlines. Keep in mind that all activities should fit within the given run time of 100 working days. Your planning should include a **kick-off meeting**, **mid-term evaluation meeting**, **green light meeting** and **graduation ceremony**. Please indicate periods of part-time activities and/or periods of not spending time on your graduation project, if any (for instance because of holidays or parallel course activities).

Make sure to attach the full plan to this project brief.
The four key moment dates must be filled in below

Kick off meeting 2 okt 2023

Mid-term evaluation 13 nov 2023

Green light meeting 22 jan 2023

Graduation ceremony 27 feb 2023

In exceptional cases (part of) the Graduation Project may need to be scheduled part-time. Indicate here if such applies to your project

Part of project scheduled part-time	<input type="checkbox"/>
For how many project weeks	
Number of project days per week	

Comments:

Motivation and personal ambitions

Explain why you wish to start this project, what competencies you want to prove or develop (e.g. competencies acquired in your MSc programme, electives, extra-curricular activities or other).

Optionally, describe whether you have some personal learning ambitions which you explicitly want to address in this project, on top of the learning objectives of the Graduation Project itself. You might think of e.g. acquiring in depth knowledge on a specific subject, broadening your competencies or experimenting with a specific tool or methodology. Personal learning ambitions are limited to a maximum number of five.

(200 words max)

Challenges:

To not overlook the client and think about internal vs external use in the design of the deliverable
To confidentially handle the information employees may give me (complaints about TD for example)
Working with the uncertainties that come from translating theoretical knowledge to practicalities
Positioning myself well in this professional working environment as student/outsider. While I can bring critical insights and theoretical knowledge, I lack real-world experience and therefore it may be difficult to get the needed time or respect from stakeholders to cooperate.

Goals:

Hosting fruitful creative sessions dealing with (and embracing) surprises
Following a both rational & intuitive process and offering insightful knowledge to the reader by rationalizing these choices

Voordelen

Deze structuur heeft de volgende voordelen:

- Kracht van een groot bureau en klein en dedicated gecombineerd
- Ondernemerschap breed in de organisatie
- Platte structuur met veel raakvlak met klanten
- Autonome teams en medewerkers professionals
- Agility en resilience flexibiliteit en stabiliteit
- Gemakkelijk te groeien en schalen en krimpen
- Persoonlijke ontwikkeling verticaal en horizontaal rouleren en klasjes

9 Total Design — TD

TD

Nadelen

Deze structuur heeft natuurlijk ook nadelen. Het is lastig om tegelijkertijd voor het beste total design resultaat te gaan en ook voor je eigen P&L en propositie te gaan. Wie zien de volgende nadelen die we moeten managen:

- Teams gaan voor zichzelf en/of concurreren
- Vakgenoten zitten verspreid over teams
- Gefragmenteerd aanbod in plaats van total
- Best team on the job lukt niet altijd
- Deze nadelen zijn soms merkbaar voor klanten

Een team wil soms specialisten uit een ander team erbij hebben. We hebben dat in- en uitlenen zo gemakkelijk mogelijk gemaakt, maar toch kan dat administratief en qua planning wel eens moeilijk zijn. Ook komt het voor dat je een project op jouw klant binnenhaalt, maar dat het qua propositie beter past in een ander team. Je haalt dan feitelijk omzet binnen voor een ander team en dat kan wel eens lastig zijn dat af te staan, zeker als je zelf leegloopt hebt.

10 Total Design — TD

TD

B2.1 Co-creation session 2: barriers to synergy creation

[1] Team structure	Quote
The HoTs state that teams are too internally focused and should collaborate across teams more. Currently, all teams have a team-specific way of working and mostly promote their own proposition to clients instead of TD's whole service offering. Currently, there are instances where a less-suited team handles a client to reach their P&L (profit & loss, the targets of teams).	"It happens that you pick up a project brief for a client when another team might be more suited. To reach your own targets, however, you want to do the project yourself, sometimes resulting in lower quality"
[2] Client ownership	Quote
HoTs state that the client relations have to be maintained better, personally as well. A HoT says the Client-client manager interactions have to be handed over better when clients start to work with another team. Another HoT even says that the client-manager should never change.	"For synergy creation, entrepreneurship and responsibility is essential. Someone has to act as director and integrate the disciplines in the client relation"
[3] Knowledge gap of TD's capabilities	Quote
Employees are not aware of all skills that TD houses. They do not know of all colleagues what skills they possess and experience as a barrier in collaboration.	"We should know what others can do and what they are doing. This way, we know who we can ask for certain tasks and when they're available"
[4] Productivity	Quote
The strong focus on productivity and writing hours is seen as limiting the creative space. There is hesitation to perform tasks that do not immediately show results.	"To involve other people at the start of a project requires financial space. When you haven't started a project yet and you do a brainstorm, that already costs a lot of money". The HoT say they need a broader perspective: "to, without the team, look at a client. There's no time and (financial) space for this now"
[5] The working space	Quote
The office space is not ideal. The HoT say the meeting rooms are not ventilated well and that concentrating at the office is hard. While employees value the freedom to work remote, it is also seen as a barriers. Lastly, the distance between Amsterdam and Maastricht makes it hard to collaborate.	"The office space is not ideal. Meeting rooms arent ventilated well, working from home isnt as efficient but concentrating is hard at the office. The distance between amsterdam and maastricht makes it hard to collaborate." "Working remote or the current situation around it does not support synergy creation. You don't know when people will be at the office or not"

B2.2 Co-creation session 2: barriers to synergy creation

[6] Culture	Quote
There is a lack of diversity at TD. The HoTs state that there is diversity in terms of skills and demographics but they are clustered in silo's (non-Dutch with non-Dutch and skills grouped per skill). There are also concerns about the hierarchy and power inequality. Additionally, they feel there is a lack of 'human care', as there is no HR. This results in HoTs trying to fulfill this role.	"There's a flat hierarchy, but will a junior developer talk back to a senior?"
[7] Little stimulus for personal development	Quote
HoTs express their desire for knowledge and skill development.	"Theres demand for knowledge and skill development, like effective listening training"
[8] Lack of vision and strategy	Quote
HoTs feel unsure if TD's message towards society is clear and question its position in society. When Total Design was still 'Total Identity' ¹ the market approach and client-focus was better, underscoring that TD should be more aware of trends relevant to TD and its clients. There is demand for more transparency, as vision and strategy are made behind closed doors. In addition, the HoTs express desire for transparency in team progress as well as financial insights. Finally, vision should be more long-term.	"TD has a focus on now, in contrast to being future-oriented. This gives a feeling of stress rather than space/freedom" "The vision should be more focused on answering the clients' future needs and creating long-term value for them"

¹ Total Design was known as Total Identity for a period of time

B3 Co-creation session 2: Defining Objectives

	Goals	Results	Means
Value to the client	Synergy would mean an increased value proposition for clients and more future-proof and integral solutions.	Improved value offering of higher quality and integral solutions.	Using KPI's to motivate, doing holistic & continuous intakes of clients and working with several teams on one client.
Value to TD business	Synergy would mean more profit, a bigger competitive advantage and expertise	Attaching more clients, financial stability, attracting talent	By reinventing and innovating: finding an overarching strategy
Value to TD culture	Synergy would mean working together in a collective direction. Working more efficiently and that offers more flexibility.	A culture of growth with authentic, brave people that use shared knowledge to transcend in terms of value creation: 1+1=3.	Aligned goals, structures that support collaboration, entrepreneurship and which offers space to develop

B4 Co-creation session 2: Enablers to synergy creation




[1] People	[2] Skills and operations
TD has a strong heritage and legacy. Enablers to synergy are an open culture that fosters enthusiasm, trust and team spirit. There should be collective celebration of success. Important is mutual respect and appreciation towards colleagues and freedom of speech and for creativity. Lastly, there should be more women on board level.	There is demand for more secondary skill development. Some say the flex working spaces should actually be used as flex working spaces. Lastly, there is demand for an HR department to take responsibility for the human-nature of employees.
[3] Structural support	[4] Strategy
Team structure should be reconsidered and bonuses are considered to be enablers for synergy. The HoTs express wishes for clear agreements, routines, processes and structure.	A common strategy enables synergy. Secondly, the HoTs state that claiming leadership is an enabler to synergy, meaning employees should decide themselves what they find important to spend time on and write hours for. Client ownership too, as TD should be more client focused and find the sweet spot for clients in terms of what to offer them. Lastly, there should be a collective long-term vision.

B5 Interviews: Question set up

Permission to take pictures, without your face or in the report with faces blurred
Permission to record the session
Explain the research goal and the session's goal
Problem statement and assignment
Hear your view on the integrated collaboration of domains, visualise the processes of projects and discuss motivators and barriers to synergy
All answers will be transcribed, processed and sent to you for validation
1. Do you think my research assignment (creating a tool to motivate synergy creation between the domains) fits with TD?
2. Mapping the processes on paper, including first client-team contact etcetera
3. (Past) incentives for synergy creation (why did they fail/succeed)
3a. If there's time, what are benefits of the team structure?
3b. If there's time, what are feelings that you imagine may occur when borrowing members of other teams or 'being borrowed'
4. Current barriers for synergy creation/motivation (write on post-its and rank which are the most pressing barriers)
5. Hypothetically: how would you integrate domains in past or current projects?
6. Information: name, occupation, team, working at TD since, age and language you speak at work



B6 Interviews: barriers to synergy

Table B6.1: Barriers to multidisciplinary collaboration, illustrated by quotes [1/2]

Barrier information	Quotes for illustration purposes	Quotes for illustration purposes (original language)	
<p>[1] Too little use of shared knowledge</p> <p>The available knowledge from different domains at TD is not utilized to increase the collective shared knowledge.</p> <p>Participant agreement: 3/5</p> 	<p>"The bi-weekly session does not motivate creative discussions. That's a shame, because if you have all these creative people together, they should be able to mess around together and create things. We have the people, but they're not encouraged to do this".</p> <p>"It'd be good to involve a designer, someone from branding for example. They're around anyways, why not ask them? We have the expertise; we should use it. I think this should happen more often" (on looking at each other's work cross disciplines).</p>	<p>"(de bi-weekly) is eigenlijk een one-sided presentatie moment. Ik zie daar weinig interactie Het nodigt niet uit tot creatieve discussie en dat is jammer, want een ontwerpbureau met veel creatieven bij elkaar: die wil je gewoon laten klooiën en creëren. Dat zijn geschikte mensen daarvoor maar ze krijgen nu niet de kans"</p> <p>"Soms zou het wel goed zijn een designer ergens naar te laten kijken. Dat je iemand uit een branding perspectief ergens naar laat kijken. En iemand vraagt 'hoe zou jij dat aanpakken? Je hebt de expertise, had dan even gevraagd of we even wat leuke dingen konden schrijven. Dat mag van mij veel vaker gebeuren (naar elkaars werk kijken dus, cross disciplinair)"</p>	
<p>[2] Attaching experts for multidisciplinary collaboration is not done (early) enough</p> <p>The various experts from different domains at Total Design do not collaborate (enough).</p> <p>Participant agreement:</p> 	<p>"The three domains are now creating in silos. Branding, communication and technology are super intertwined with each other and the assignments we get are also very integrated"</p> <p>"If a client comes in through campaigns, it would be cool to do a kick-off with everyone. (...) Maybe you find out early on that it's not a campaigns problem. If you find out too late, you've wasted a lot of money".</p>	<p>EN</p> <p>"Stel hij komt bij campaigns binnen, dat we toch een soort kick off hebben met iedereen. Dat zou heel tof zijn. Dan ontstaan er mooiere dingen. Anders kom je er misschien heel laat pas achter dat het probleem niet een campaign probleem is en dat je een ander team nodig hebt. Dan heb je al heel veel geld verpest"</p>	
<p>[3] Strong internal team focus</p> <p>The teams operate as separate identities within TD and have an internal focus, leading to an unawareness of skills amongst colleagues and clients.</p> <p>Participant agreement:</p> 	<p>"This (the associated costs) results in teams, especially amongst designers, attempting to manage workloads independently, even when outside their expertise, instead of collaborating with other teams within the agency"</p> <p>"We're all part of TD, but you start off by checking within your team if you can do it".</p>	<p>EN</p> <p>EN</p>	





Quotes illustrating value to synergy	Quotes illustrating value to synergy (original language)
<p>"I think everyone has their own discipline and what they're good at. If you put everyone together, you get a certain synergy or harmony. If some are good at design and work with people that are good in communication, then working together throughout the process instead of in silos works contagious. Keeping each other up-to-date, and sharp"</p> <p>"With the increasing complexity of projects, you need to look from different perspectives and capabilities to find the best solutions".</p> <p>"Different perspectives will inform a better practice and it will make you work more thorough".</p>	<p>"Ik denk dat iedereen een eigen discipline heeft en iedereen heeft waar ze heel goed in zijn. Als je dat samen brengt krijg je heel veel kruisbestuiving. Dus als mensen heel goed in design zijn, dat stuk goed laten doen, en samenwerken met iemand die bijvoorbeeld goed in teksten schrijven is of meer in campagne. Ook het samen optrekken in dat proces: niet mensen in eilandjes laten werken maar juist elkaar vertellen waar je mee bezig bent"</p> <p>"Omdat de complexiteit van projecten die eraan gaan komen steeds groter gaat worden en meer complexiteit betekent ook dat je meer vanuit verschillende perspectieven met verschillende capabilities moet gaan kijken naar wat de beste oplossing is"</p> <p>EN</p>
<p>"Involving influences from other disciplines does not make it (the process) more complex, but should make things easier: your team might be in search of a solution, which someone of a different expertise might immediately think of."</p> <p>"We're now working on a strategy, branding & campaigns assignment, but found out early on that we needed a technology aspect. (...) So someone suggested to involve person X. He/she only needed a few minutes to come with solutions, whereas it would've taken us much longer, as it's not our expertise. It makes the quality of your solutions better.. (...) They're around anyways, why not ask them? (...) I think this should happen more often (on looking at each other's work cross disciplines)".</p>	<p>"(...) Dat we met invloeden komen van alle teams die iets toevoegen, en het niet complexer maken maar dat het juist minder complex wordt omdat anderen wél die expertise hebben die jij misschien nog zoekt. (...) Het kan iets zijn waar je als solo team lang naar op zoek bent maar wat er zo uit kan stromen met een ander team erbij"</p> <p>"Nu zijn we bezig (...) een strategie, branding, campaigns opdracht, maar we kwamen er vrij vroeg achter dat we misschien wel een soort activerend technologie aspect nodig hebben. (...) Toen werd gezegd, haak 'persoon X' aan, vraag wat hij ervan vindt. Het kost hem dan maar een half uur en geeft ons genoeg inspiratie. En dan heb je toch een half uur van een ander teams tijd gekregen, waardoor wel weer je heel veel stappen hebt gemaakt. Dat is wel een voorbeeld van hoe je kruisbestuiving kan hebben en hoe de kwaliteit van je antwoord een stuk beter word."</p>
<p>"I have not experienced looking at it from a companywide perspective. Would be nice to do that at the start of a project: see what everyone is working on and get input from other teams."</p>	<p>"Nu kijken echt alleen de betrokken partijen ernaar. Company wide naar een opdracht kijken heb ik nog niet meegemaakt (...) leuk idee om dat juist aan het begin van een project te doen. Gewoon eens kijken waar iedereen mee bezig is en wat er in de steigers staat om input te krijgen van andere teams. "</p>

Table B6.1: Barriers to multidisciplinary collaboration, illustrated by quotes [2/2]

Barrier information	Quotes for illustration purposes	Quotes for illustration purposes (original language)
<p>[4] Clients' unawareness of the broad service offering</p> <p>Clients do not know of or do not make use of TD's broad skillset or service offering.</p> <p>Participant agreement:</p> 	<p>"Clients approach Total Design with specific needs in mind, unaware of the agency's full range of services. A client might come for branding or campaign work, already having a partner for their website needs."</p> <p>"Not all our clients know that what we do as a company. We do strategy, tech, web, campaigning, branding, motion design, editing, and many other things. (referring to unawareness of all capabilities at TD)"</p>	<p>"Wat vaak het probleem is dat sommige klanten met een specifieke vraag binnenkomen, maar eigenlijk is de klant vooraf al veel meer bezig geweest met wat ze nodig hebben. (...) Ze hebben dus vaak al een partner voor development en weten niet dat dit ook bij ons had gekund."</p> <p>"Niet al onze klanten zullen weten dat wij smartbuilds hebben en dat wij een campaign team hebben en een branding identity en motion en dat soort dingen doen. "</p>
<p>[5] Unawareness of skills at TD</p> <p>Outside of teams, there is lack of knowledge on the skills of co-workers.</p> <p>Participant agreement:</p> 	<p>"We were looking for an illustrator and we had no idea what kind of illustrator was available and only found out after asking ten people".</p> <p>"If I'm going to work with another team and I don't know their designers' expertise's or how they communicate, how they are on client calls... (...) I don't know what I'm getting myself into"</p>	<p>EN</p> <p>EN</p>



Quotes illustrating value to synergy	Quotes illustrating value to synergy (original language)
<p>"You should let clients know you offer these (all) services. If they enter via branding, you might as well advise them on other aspects and company strengths. The added value of TD to clients is offering a total solution with wide variety of expertise".</p> <p>"With cross-selling, you already understand the client and I could (as team branding), for example, brief the tech team in such a way that they sooner understand the client".</p>	<p>"Dus als er kennis zit in tech en in web design en in branding en in campaigning, dan ben je dat volgens mij ook verantwoord naar je klanten om dat te bieden. Dus als zij binnenkomen op bv branding traject, zou je ook heel goed advies kunnen geven over andere aspecten. Ik denk dat dat gewoon als bedrijf sowieso iets moois is wat je hebt en wat je ook moet gebruiken. (...) Ik denk dat het een meerwaarde is van total design. Dat je een totale oplossing kan bieden al is het maar adviesmatig"</p> <p>EN</p>
<p>"I don't know what my colleagues do or can do. It's not because i'm not interested, but because i don't have the time to find out. It's one of the biggest bottlenecks. You don't know their portfolio, their drive or ambition".</p> <p>"Overall, I it would be helpful if we knew who has what expertise in every team. (...) What if we had a profile of all designers or creatives and I could access it. (...) Then I can directly book him (a creative) if I need that (a certain skill). (...) Maybe we have the expertise but no one knows. Someone (a creative) may do that (photography for example) in their spare time and they don't do it at work, so their expertise is not known"</p>	<p>"Ik weet niet wat andere mensen/collega's kunnen. (...) Dat is niet omdat het me niet interesseert, maar omdat ik niet genoeg tijd heb om daar achter te komen. (...) Dat is een van de grootste bottlenecks. (...) Je weet gewoon niet wat in hun portfolio zit, wat ze hebben gedaan, wat hun drive is, ambitie".</p> <p>EN</p>

Table B6.2: Barriers to synergy illustrated by quotes [1/2]

Barrier information	Quotes for illustration purposes	Quotes for illustration purposes (original language)	
<p>[6] Productivity over creativity</p> <p>There is a focus on writing hours and being productive, so there is little time for activities that do not show direct results.</p> <p>Participant agreement:</p> 	<p>"If it's such an obvious problem, why doesn't anybody look at it?" The respondent elaborates: "in more complex, more service-design-oriented-projects (where TD wants to go, apart from Yuma as well), creativity is more important because you will not find the right solution in one go. (...) sometimes you need to step away from a design element and see if it still works within the whole. And maybe even go back and change everything"</p>	<p>"Productiviteitsding is overduidelijk een frustratie van heel veel mensen. (...) Dan denk ik, het is zo duidelijk een probleem. Waarom wordt er niet echt naar gekeken?" "(...)in de nieuwe grotere complexere meer service-design-oriented projecten, waar ze heen willen, ook los van yuma, (denk ik) dat daar die creativiteit heel belangrijk is omdat je daar nooit in een keer de goede oplossing gaat vinden. Dat kost tijd en uitzoomen. (...) Je moet (dan) weer even kijken of dit onderdeel van het hele grote complexe project wel klopt. Maar deze later misschien wel weer aanpassen"</p>	
<p>[7] Obstacles of working at the office</p> <p>The office does not stimulate creativity.</p> <p>Participant agreement:</p> 	<p>"It's just an office with screens. May be obvious, as most assignments are digital, but it limits the creativity of a design agency."</p>	<p>"Het is gewoon een kantoor met laptopschermen. Dus iedereen zit op zn laptop dingen te doen en dat is logisch want alles moet ook digitaal maar daarmee beperk je wel de creativiteit van zo'n ontwerpbureau"</p>	
<p>[8] Obstacles of working remote</p> <p>Working remote makes collaboration difficult.</p> <p>Participant agreement:</p> 	<p>"Number one barrier (to synergy creation) would be the fact that we're not all sitting in the same office. Working from home has made collaboration more difficult, because you don't see people on the same floor. Some people are at home or in another city so you need that connection over teams. You have to call someone and that's a barrier: to have to call them up or message them. "</p>	<p>EN</p>	
<p>[9] Lack of passion for creativity</p> <p>There is a lack of passion to learn from others, across the boundaries of other disciplines.</p> <p>Participant agreement:</p> 	<p>"I think in general there's a lack of culture or passion to be creative in this company"</p> <p>"The non-creatives at work don't need hard skills in Adobe, but should have soft skills, in terms of taste or aesthetics, or a passion towards creativity."</p>	<p>EN</p> <p>EN</p>	

Quotes illustrating value to synergy	Quotes illustrating value to synergy (original language)
<p>“That was an interesting project, cause it started out as an assignment for web design and lead to a whole new system for selling advertisements, which changed the business model of DPG. Its an example of you you can delve deeper if you have more time and ask the client ‘why do you want that?’ and ‘is that the best solution?’ or ‘can’t we do more for you, if we have more time?’.”</p>	<p>“dat was een interessant project omdat het begon met een website design vraag en helemaal is uitgegroeid tot een nieuw systeem voor advertenties verkopen, wat het business model van DPG heeft veranderd. Zo kun je verder en dieper gaan als je meer tijd krijgt om terug te vragen ‘waarom willen jullie dat’ en ‘is dat wel de beste oplossing’ of ‘kunnen we niet iets extra’s voor jullie doen? Al gaat dat extra tijd kosten?’”</p>
<p>“I think it (the office) should be more creative, should invite to step away from your screen and look at a problem differently”.</p>	<p>“Als (...) vind ik dat een ontwerpbureau veel creatiever moet zijn en dat je af en toe moet weg kunnen stappen van schermen en dat je na moet denken of je op een andere manier naar een probleem moet kijken”</p>
<p>“I don’t support the idea of forcing people to be in the office (...) when they can effectively work from home. To truly enhance collaboration, we should explore alternative strategies, such (...) making it (the office environment) a place people are drawn to voluntarily, rather than feeling obligated to do so.”</p>	<p>EN</p>
<p>“You need “cross-pollination”: a harmony that people can latch onto. A “sound board”. I think that’s a good motivator, that everyone does their thing and has fun and wants to do better”</p> <p>“As designers we need to be ahead of trends: to react and to make this world better. If we don’t access the latest, the coolest and the best, then how are we going to create something and lead the industry?”</p>	<p>“Op een gegeven moment heb je een soort kruisbestuiving nodig, of iets waar mensen op kunnen aanhaken. Een soort klankboard. Ik denk dat dat een hele goede motivatie is, dat iedereen goed z’n ding kan doen, dat iedereen er plezier in heeft en dat er dan vanzelf een soort motivatie ontstaat om het alleen maar beter te willen doen”</p> <p>EN</p>

Table B6.2: Barriers to synergy illustrated by quotes [2/2]

Barrier information	Quotes for illustration purposes	Quotes for illustration purposes (original language)	
<p>[10] Lack of personal development</p> <p>There is are not enough opportunities for personal development.</p> <p>Participant agreement:</p> 	<p>“Our company should encourage and invest more in employee growth. My previous companies all have employee growth budgets, so people can take online courses, go to conferences and access the latest news in their industry. (...) (Currently,) there are not enough creative workshops hosted to teach you skills. There are some workshops for head of teams or higher level management, but not enough for the rest of employees”</p>	<p>EN</p>	
<p>[11] Working atmosphere</p> <p>The working atmosphere and culture are suboptimal for synergy creation.</p> <p>Participant agreement:</p> 	<p>“A chief happiness officer, someone who is in charge of the culture, making sure people are happy and feel at home at the office, that they can be who they want to be. I think such a role is underestimated, but it is important to synergy: maybe even more so than other tools you can think”.</p>	<p>“chief happiness officer, iemand die de cultuur bewaakt, die veel meer bezig zijn met hoe happy zijn mensen, hoe thuis voelen ze zich op kantoor om echt te kunnen zijn wie ze willen zijn, dat dat echt onderschat is nog. Ik denk dat het wel belangrijk is voor synergie: misschien wel belangrijker dan allerlei rare tools die je kan bedenken.</p>	

Quotes illustrating value to synergy		Quotes illustrating value to synergy (original language)
	<p>"I want to share my learnings as everyone can benefit from this."</p> <p>"There's creatives that are only focused on their own specialty, but for me, the more I know the better my work will be."</p>	EN
	<p>"(...) it is important to synergy: maybe even more so than other tools you can think of. If people dare to come forward, and are driven to do so by feeling good at work then synergy will occur".</p>	<p>"Ik denk dat het wel belangrijk is voor synergie: misschien wel belangrijker dan allerlei rare tools die je kan bedenken. Als mensen vanuit zichzelf van nature naar buiten durven treden doordat ze daartoe worden enabled door een mensenmens, als mensen zich fijn en op hun plek voelen, dan gaat die synergie ook wel ontstaan"</p>

C1 Reframing co-creation session: the Five Whys



C2 Future vision setting co-creation session

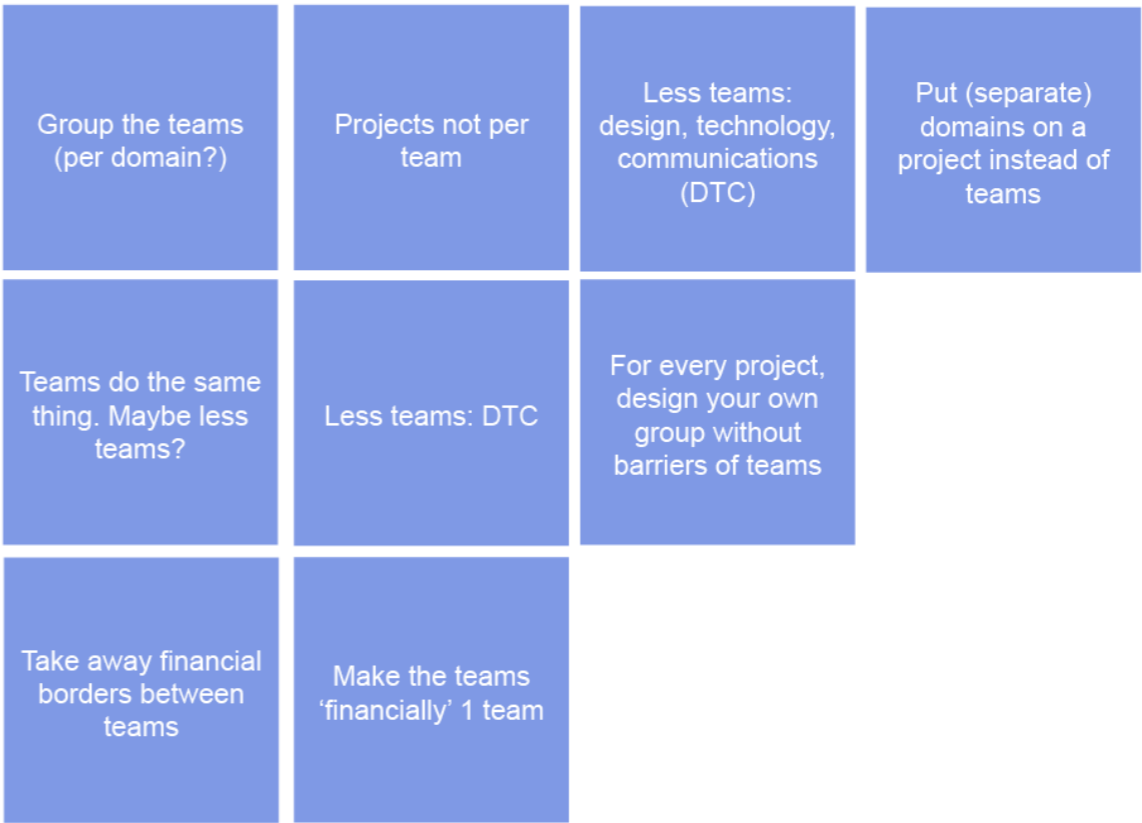
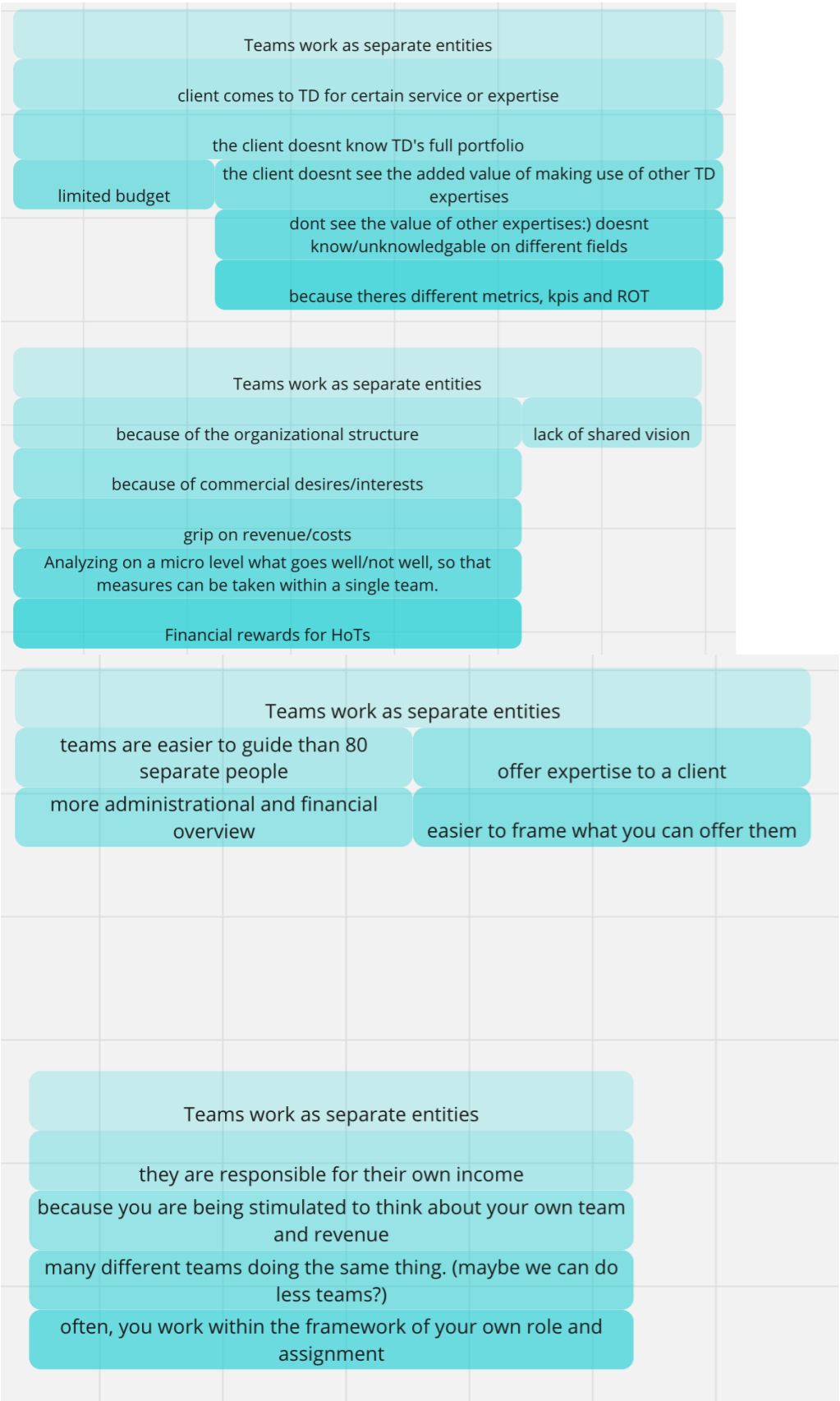


Figure C2.1: Digitalised post-its from Co-Creation session 4.



Figure C2.2: Digitalised post-its from Co-Creation session 5.

C3 List of all benefits and downsides to team structure

Topic	Advantages of current team structure	Disadvantages of current team structure	Design criteria
Various expertise's at TD	Specialist teams of different disciplines at TD can answer to client needs	With new assignments, your own team is put on the job. Hesitance to hire expertise because of associated costs and team targets. Expensive hourly rates create hesitance around using the best TD designers	Easy access to expertise and stimulate to put the best team on the job
Overview of running projects	Presenting new projects through e-mail or during bi-weekly (sometimes done)	Little interaction and feedback moments to make use of shared knowledge. No overview of the projects of others	Overview of all running projects and interaction
Working method	Each team is accustomed to each other and has their own way of working	There is no collective TD method. Working with another team means getting to know their ways, but it is a threshold to invite non-team members as 'onboarding' them in the project way of working is in conflict with efficiency	Uniform working method
New business	The entrepreneurial spirit of the team targets motivate teams to acquire new businesses	Teams want to reach their targets, thus sell their own team proposition to clients over TD's proposition	Deep understanding of client needs and what TD can offer them.
Cross-selling	TD offers clients what they need, within TD, and knows their client best, following extensive collaboration	In client transfers, not all knowledge is always passed on and because of different methods, clients can experience working with a new team as if it is another company	Maintaining good client relations
Financial and administrative overview	Measuring team performance gives insights in costs and allows for steering	The insights in team performance drive competitiveness and can hinder collaboration	Financial and administrative overview Performance overview (individual)
Rewards and motivation	Team targets and financial rewards stimulate team performance	Financial rewards like bonuses for HoTs and CMs create internal team focus and personal agenda's and the financial team targets hinder collaboration and exchange between teams	Rewards and motivations. Drive to perform because of targets.
Small teams	The small teams are attuned to each other and have their own way of working and communicating. The standard teams put like-minded people together within the comfort of your own team	The same team offers no fresh perspective, as it keeps the same routine and people. The internal team focus contradicts advantages of the structure: facilitating a broad perspective of different disciplines and collaboration with anyone at the office	Use of shared knowledge (Small) teams that are attuned to each other, Like-minded people together and comfort of 'own team'
Flexibility	Without sending an invoice, teams can attach non-team members from TD	Some teams are very busy, when others do not have work	Flexibility in helping each other when needed
Client offering	A division of teams per expertise clearly show what they can do for clients	There is no overview of what the individuals at the office can do, therefore it can be unclear if TD has a certain expertise	Overview of everyone's capabilities

Topic	Advantages of current team structure	Disadvantages of current team structure	Design criteria
TD strength	Strength of a big company in terms of resources and the dedication of small teams	There is no collective vision of TD and the teams feel like separate companies	Strength of a big company with a TD feeling and collective vision No ego's Small dedicated 'teams'
Growth	Independent teams: ease of growth, scaling and downsizing	As the demand for different expertise differs, the workload of teams does so as well	Flexibility to adapt
Development	Team members can learn from each other	Team members may fulfill same role for longer period of time	Personal development: learn from different people

C4 Determining design direction session

	participant 1			participant 2			participant 3			participant 4			participant 5		
	idea 1	idea 2	idea 3	idea 1	idea 2	idea 3	idea 1	idea 2	idea 3	idea 1	idea 2	idea 3	idea 1	idea 2	idea 3
1.Cross-disciplinary collaboration		2	-2	-1				1	2	-2		2	2	-1	
2.A uniform way of working					1	-1	2				1	1	2		
3.Using the most suitable people for assignments		2	-1	1		2	1	1						2	-1
4.A TD-feeling: strength of a big company		1	2	1		2	-1	2						1	1
5.Maintaining good client relations					-1	2	1							2	-2
6.That clients are offered all of TD's skills and services					2	-1	-1	2	2	2		2	2	2	2
7.Insights in employees' performance															
8.Motivation and rewards for TD'ers		1	-1	1											
9.Like-minded people to work together								1	2	-1					
10.Personal development		1	1	1											
11.Overview of all (running) projects								2	2	-2					
12. Understanding of each other's skillset											1	2	-1	2	2
13.Ease of growth, scaling and downsizing															-1
14.Using shared knowledge from the different disciplines															
	7	-1	3	6	0	5	5	9	-5	7	9	1	9	1	-2

C5 Three Matrix-model Organisational Structures

Creative agency 1

Creative agency 1 works in two zones (as illustrated in Figure 49). Each zone has a zone director (Z), strategist (S) and three producers (P). Both zones have their own clients. The creatives of each zone make up the project teams of the zone-specific clients and each team is lead by a project lead.

Creative agency 2

Creative agency 2, depicted in Figure 50, is a relatively small creative agency. There is a board, a finance and HR department and finally, client managers and creatives. The project teams can be composed of all creatives of the company and are each lead by a client manager.

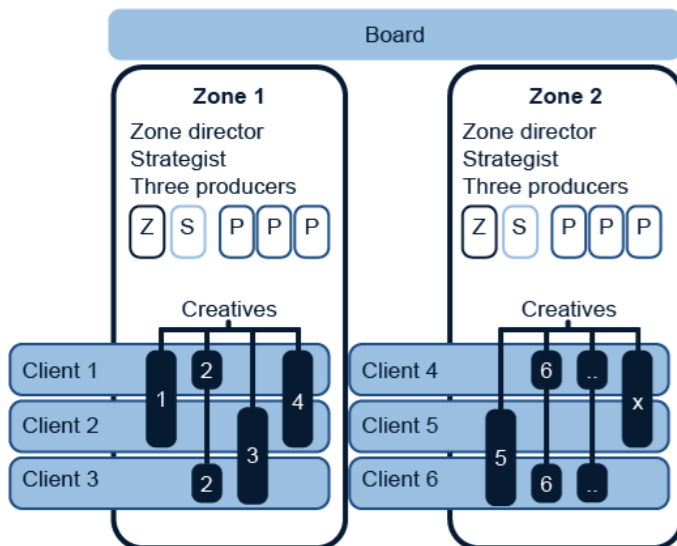


Figure C5.1: Schematic overview of the organisational structure of creative agency 1.

Creative agency 3

Creative agency 3 works in four departments, as illustrated in Figure 51. Each departments has different specialists. Department Design and Tech for example, mostly consists of designers (D), UX designers (U) and strategists (S)], as the columns in Design and Tech indicate. A project team is composed of different specialists and is lead by a project manager. A team always has a senior designer, junior designer and strategist.

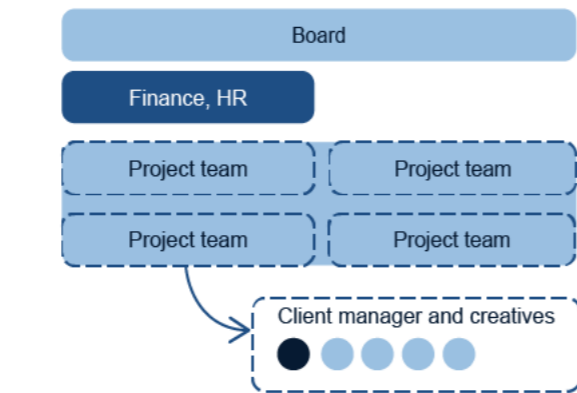


Figure C5.2: Schematic overview of the organisational structure of creative agency 2.

C6 Quotes of the employee of creative agency 3, original language

Quotes in English

"What makes this work environment so pleasant is the opportunity to work on diverse assignments and collaborate with different teams. Unlike other organisations where standard teams with a single team leader are the norm, here, we utilise dynamic collaboration."

"Within a project, there is a Head of Visual Design who oversees the visual designers, but also a Principal Visual Design providing more substantive leadership. This structure, where each team is led by various types of leads, adds an extra layer of expertise and leadership to my daily tasks. It's not just a matter of dividing responsibilities but also an opportunity to learn and grow in the content of my work."

Quotes in Dutch (original language)

"Wat deze werkomgeving zo aangenaam maakt, is de mogelijkheid om aan diverse opdrachten te werken en met verschillende teams samen te werken. In tegenstelling tot andere organisaties, waarin standaardteams met één teamleider de norm zijn, maken wij hier gebruik van een dynamische samenwerking."

"Binnen een project heb je een head of visual design die de visual designers aanstuurt, maar ook een principal visual design, die meer inhoudelijk leiding geeft. Deze structuur, waarbij elk team wordt geleid door verschillende soorten leads, voegt een extra laag van expertise en leiderschap toe aan mijn dagelijkse werkzaamheden. Het is niet alleen een kwestie van een verdeling van verantwoordelijkheden, maar ook een kans om te leren en te groeien op de inhoud van mijn werk."

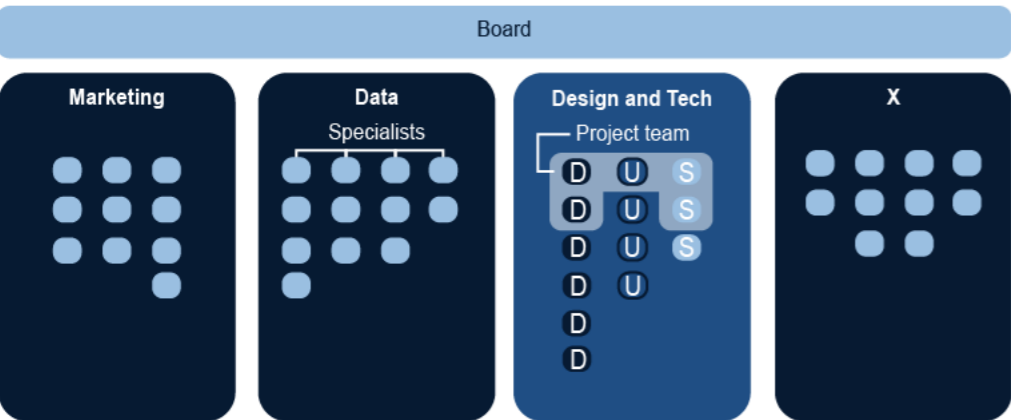


Figure C5.3: Schematic overview of the organisational structure of creative agency 3.

C7 Four ideas

The four different ideas are illustrated in figure C7.1, highlighting their overlapping features. The ideas are described in more detail below.

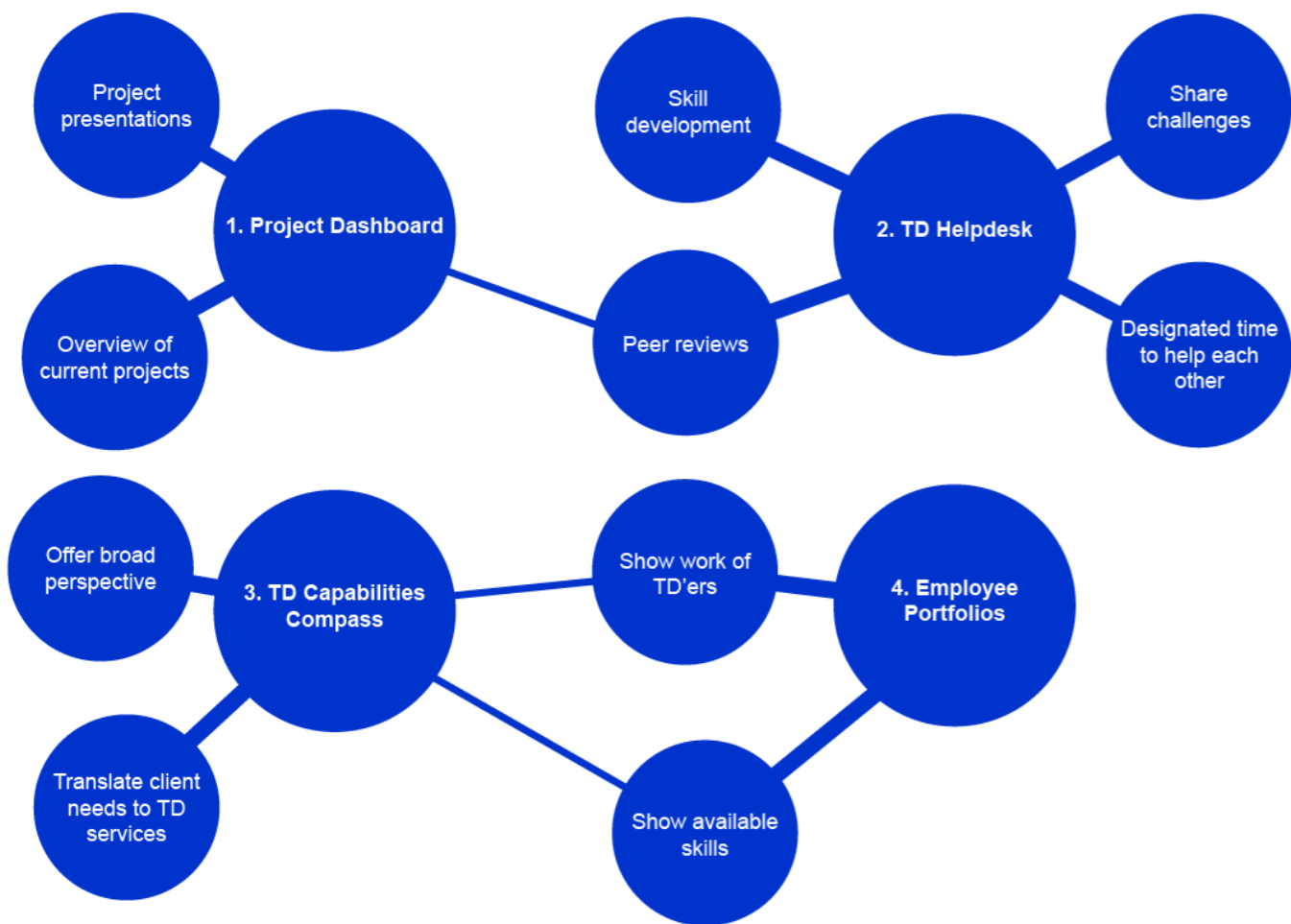


Figure C7.1: Four ideas.

1. Project Dashboard
The Project Dashboard offers a real-time overview of the ongoing projects within TD, offering insights into project details and team involvement. Utilising project presentations to TD departments or other teams fosters a comprehensive understanding of the company’s ongoing projects. These presentations also serve as opportunities for feedback such as peer reviews.

2. TD Helpdesk
The TD Helpdesk is a platform aimed at enhancing collaboration across the company by encouraging TD employees to support and learn from one another. Through this channel, TD personnel can share project-related challenges and seek assistance, whether company-wide, within domains, or in smaller specialised groups. Encouraging TD employees to allocate dedicated time, such as 1 hour per week, for TD Helpdesk activities is crucial. This time can be utilised for conducting TD reviews to provide project teams with external viewpoints or engaging in personal and skill development activities, such as hosting or participating in workshops.

3. TD Capabilities Compass
The TD Capabilities Compass facilitates in offering an overview of all TD’s capabilities. It can be used during client meetings, to uncover the client needs using the broad perspective of TD’s domains. It can also be employed when employees seek assistance of certain expertise. It can also serve as an archive of previous work, to serve as inspiration.

4. Employee Portfolios
The Employee Portfolios serve as a platform to showcase the work and skills of all TD employees. These portfolios enable TD employees to promote themselves for specific assignments by highlighting

their expertise and indicating areas they aim to enhance. This setup facilitates pairing experts with novices, fostering skill development within projects. By uploading completed projects to the Portfolio Platform, TD employees ensure that their portfolio remains up-to-date. A project can be categorised under different tags (such as #landingpage or #logodesign assignment), assigned to its project team and incorporate client feedback. The Employee Portfolios serve as a valuable resource for both clients and TD employees, offering a comprehensive overview of the in-house skills available at TD.

D1 Discussion of Potential Impact and Challenges

Table D1.1: Potential Impact

Potential Impact	As presented	Participant evaluation
[1] Enhanced Employee Engagement	With consistently high involvement in projects and the absence of temporary attachments, employees are likely to feel a stronger sense of ownership and commitment to clients and projects.	[+] In agreement [-] Teams lead to shared responsibility and more employee engagement.
[2] Broader Service Offering	The shift towards a broad TD perspective in project briefs ensures that clients are offered the full range of Total Design's services.	[+] In agreement [-]
[3] Collaborative Work Environment	The elimination of team targets and the promotion of collaboration over competition can foster a more collaborative work environment. This may lower the threshold for seeking help outside of teams.	[+] Enhances team culture, which currently is overshadowed by the more dominant individual team cultures. [-] Trafficker of projects will have a lot of power, Elimination of financial borders will not mitigate 'standard' team formations.
[4] Enhanced Learning and Innovation	The emphasis on inter-team collaboration allows employees to work with a variety of colleagues, expanding their knowledge and skills. This creates a culture of continuous learning, which can benefit the organization's overall capacity for innovation.	[+] In agreement [-]
[5] Improved Client Satisfaction	The new client-first approach will have a significant impact on client satisfaction. By assembling project teams based on client needs, Total Design can ensure that clients receive highly tailored solutions.	[+] In agreement [-]

Table D1.2: Potential Challenges

Potential Challenges	As presented	Participant evaluation
[1] Resistance to Change	Employees and teams accustomed to the current structure may resist the transition to the new one. Change management efforts will be essential to address concerns and ensure a smooth transition.	[+] There is expected employee support due to their involvement in the decision-making process and their expressed desire for this specific structural change. [-]
[2] Coordination and Communication	With teams constantly forming and re-forming for projects, effective coordination and communication become critical.	[+] [-] May pose a challenge, as current streams of communication need to be reorganized.
[3] Client Transition	Clients used to working with specific teams may require adjustment to the new structure.	[+] This challenge is said to be easily overcome by managing client expectations and ensuring a seamless transition. [-]
[4] Loss of Team Identity	The removal of standard teams may lead to a loss of team identity and camaraderie.	[+] [-] May pose a challenge. Important to maintain a sense of belonging is important to mitigate this challenge.
[5] Performance Evaluation	Traditional team-based performance metrics may need to be reevaluated. This includes establishing new criteria for evaluating individual and project team performance.	[+] This challenge is said to be easily overcome [-]



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