CREATING INTERNAL BUY-IN

CREATING INTERNAL BUY-IN FOR A COMPANY'S CHANGE THROUGH COMMUNICATION

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ABSTRACT

This research thesis aims to create a new perspective of design as an integral part of internal change communication and attempts to showcase what design can contribute to the domain of internal change communication. It follows an exploratory research approach that was driven by a research question and where a design was used as a stimulus to test the research question (as can be seen in Figure 3 on page 21). The research question in this thesis is: what can design offer, in addition to contemporary approaches, in change communication to create internal buy-in? To attain an understanding of organisational change and change communication, both literature and field research (in the form of interviews) were conducted. This concluded the first part of the thesis, the Study, and moved it into the Design part of the thesis. After conducting interviews with eighteen people at six different companies, across the levels of hierarchy, a design opportunity presented itself: after the company change was announced, the employees had lots of questions and they felt like they weren't being taken seriously. The thesis proceeds to describe how a solution to this challenge was designed and tested. The testing of the design brought the Design and Study parts of the thesis together: the concluding remarks from the test reflect not only the feasibility, desirability and viability of the design, but present insights pertaining to the research question. This thesis concludes by offering the insights that what design can offer internal change communication to create internal buy-in are boundary objects and a user-centred approach to problem solving. Boundary objects could provide a form of common understanding and clarity about topics, that are complex or unclear, that allow for people to have facilitated discussions. By creating a better understanding about the change and how employee questions and queries will be addressed, you can reduce resistance to the change and create internal buy-in (Llenza, 2008). Having a user-centred approach allows for users to inform the design of a tool that they will be using, allowing for it to not only meet their needs, but also creating ownership over that tool and the company change. If the change isn't strongly or exclusively top driven, employees will feel a willingness to participate in the change and take ownership of the change, creating internal buy-in (Alvesson and Sveningsson, 2015).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0

THE PROJECT

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Perspective of a Designer

Being a designer doesn't only mean we make cool stuff, we do, but there is more to it. Designers are trained to look at the world differently. However, even as a designer it is hard, nigh impossible, to define what design is and what makes a designer. A common misconception is that the difference between a designer and non-designer is creativity. Where this can be considered partly true, it doesn't tell the whole story. At the Faculty of Industrial Design Engineering at the Technical University of Delft, we are taught that design is a process. Once again, although partly true, it still doesn't tell the whole story. The definition that best bridges these two thoughts and fits a personal notion of design is *'Design is the thought process comprising the creation of an entity'* (Miller, 2004). The design process, as it is taught, has been internalised, to some extent, by designers and forms the way they look at the world. This allows a designer a unique perspective of the world because even if the same design process were to be taught to all designers, the internalisation of this process allows John's designs to be different from Mary's designs. The final design is the output and physical manifestation of this process.

Design is therefore a unique domain in that it inherently teaches its students to become the design process rather than merely practice the design process.
As such, designers bring a type of analytical and generative thinking to the table that is hard to replicate.

There is a growing market for 'design consultancies'; where a firm hires a design consultancy, consisting of various designers, to solve specific cases or problems. These consultancies are being employed by the most diverse companies from the most disparate industries: from established corporations such as Shell, to newer companies such as Tony's Chocolonely. Firms that hire design consultancies essentially show that designers are relevant in their business. This is expanding more and more beyond the traditional domain of design (product design, packaging design, etc.) into other domains such as governmental institutions, social design, business models and company process optimisation. It seems that design has been contributing to a vast number of domains over the last few years and is increasingly doing so.

Companies are making more and more changes to their brand, portfolio's, target group, business models, organisational structures and cultures. The grand plan behind it all: keep up, or better yet, stay ahead of the market.

Communication plays a large role in the implementation and success of such changes. A generic model has been made to show what people go through during organisational change, and the first step that a Change Target (someone on whom the change is being enacted) must overcome is resistance (Armenakis and Bedeian, 1999). As Llenza (2008) has eloquently put it *'Communication leads to understanding, understanding reduces uncertainty, and as a result reduces resistance.'*

The question that this thesis raises is, can we further develop the perspective of a designer into the domain of internal change communication?

The Theory of Design as Communication

In their article, Crilly, Good, Matravers and Clarkson (2008) discuss one of the various ways in which design can be viewed as communication: the design (product) is a medium between a sender and receiver in a (communication) process. A few communication and design models are discussed as well as two main attacks by critics: 1) critics claim that this theory implies that meaning is contained in the message and not constructed by the receiver; and 2) this theory allegedly implies that the creator of the message has authority over the message. Crilly et al. (2008) proceed to defend the theory and debunk those attacks on the grounds that this theory never claimed that designers are the senders and users are passive receivers. Users form their own ideas of the message and of the designer's intent, this theory merely aims to justify and validate the idea that design is a means of communication (Crilly et al., 2008).

Crilly, Maier and Clarkson (2008) created an "integrated communication-based model of design" (see Figure 1).

This model portrays both perspectives of mass communication (the top part of the model) and interpersonal communication (the lower part of the model). What is made abundantly clear is that the artefact (or design) mediates between the designer (also referred to as producers) and the consumer. This means that regardless of intentions or inferences both parties interact with the artefact. In their diagrammatic representation of the interpersonal communication model they have therefore chosen to place the artefact between the two parties positioning both of them towards the artefact, but no directional arrows indicating *'temporal order (intentions precede the artefact and the artefact exists prior to interpretation), causation (intentions influence the artefact and the artefact influences interpretations) or reading direction (the models are simply read from left to right)'* (Crilly, Maier and Clarkson, 2008).

Although this choice was deliberate, there is value in seeing it differently. It could be said that the two domains that this model intersects and integrates (communication and design) each employ their own direction, see Figure 2. Communication looks at the

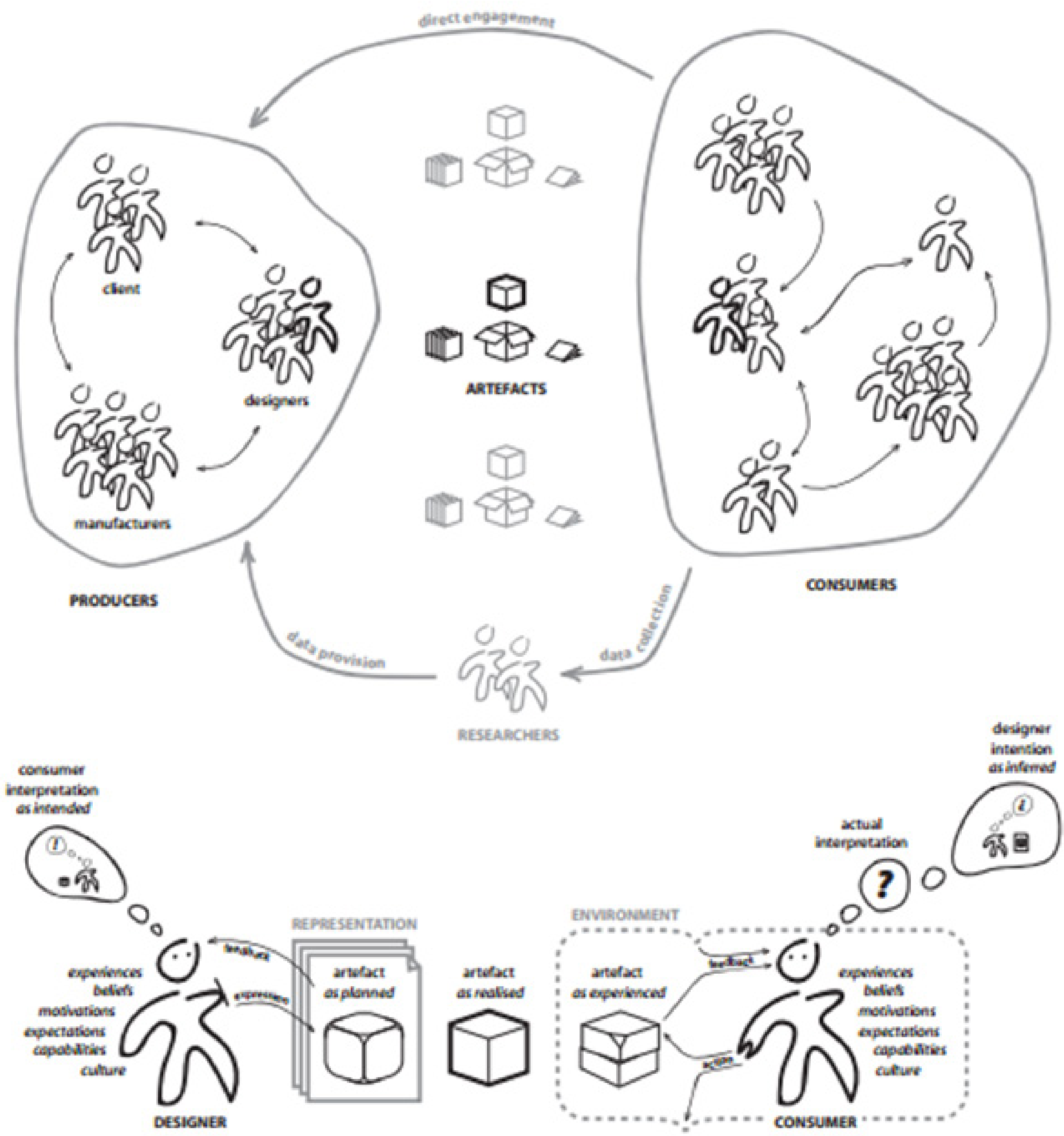


Figure 1. An integrated communication-based model of design. Crilly, Maier and Clarkson. Representing artefacts as media. 2008

communication professional as having information and transmitting it to a user through an artefact which would read left-to-right. Opposing this view, design looks at the user to help inform the designer through interactions with artefacts, reading right-to-left. This makes Crilly et al.'s (2008) distinct decision to leave out arrows all the more relevant. After all, their model aims to represent a communication-based model of design.

This thesis takes the stance that research into any subject (in this case the subject of design in internal change communication) should indeed be approached from a wholesome perspective (directionless). Rather than adopting the design approach (right-to-left) this thesis will employ

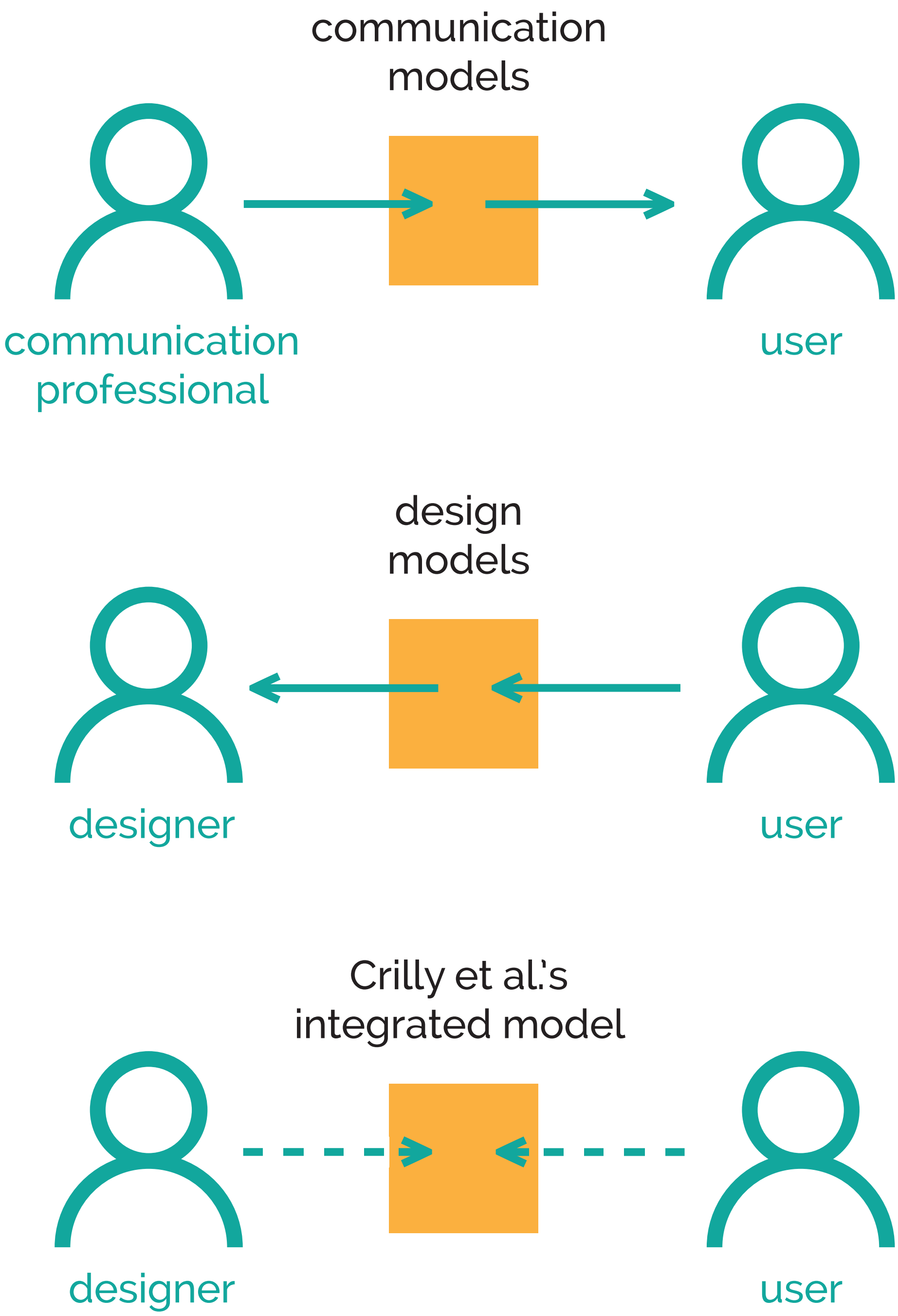


Figure 2. Typical communication and design models compared to Crilly et al.'s integrated communication-based model of design

the grounded theory method (Charmaz and Belgrave, 2007) to ensure that conclusions are based on where the data leads the researcher and not by a pre-determined hypothesis (which could be motivated by a direction).

This thesis links closely to what Crilly, Maier and Clarkson (2008) and Crilly, Good, Matravers and Clarkson (2008) theorise. Namely, it is aiming to create a new perspective of design as an integral part of internal change communication and attempting to showcase what design can contribute to the domain of internal change communication.

The Theory Behind Organisational Culture Change

"In this day and age" is a quote that one can't seem to escape these days. Stories about how much more "busy" life is now and that everything is turbulent and in a perpetual state of change. However, there is some truth in the matter. Increasingly so, companies are making changes to their brand, portfolio's, target group, business models, organisational structures and cultures. The grand plan behind it all: keep up, or better yet, stay ahead of the market. As Beer and Nohria (2000) have so provocatively stated 'Most traditional organizations have accepted, in theory at least, that they must either change or die.'

To put this into perspective, Alvesson and Sveningsson (2015) have taken a closer look at what organisational and cultural change look like. They identify various types of change, which in turn are triggered by various types of forces or drivers. The most relevant distinctions for this thesis are revolutionary change (changes that affect multiple organisational aspects) versus evolutionary change (changes that affect only a part of an organisation) and planned change (centralised, managerial changes) versus emergent change (changes by non-managerial or lower-level employees) (Alvesson and Sveningsson, 2015). Considering that change differs per organisation and context, it is difficult to place them in clearly defined categories. Each change is relative and may be viewed differently when approached from a different perspective: on a macro level a change may seem revolutionary, whereas the same change may appear to be evolutionary when viewed on a micro level (Alvesson and Sveningsson, 2015). However, for all purposes of this thesis, change can be categorised, and one type of change is addressed in this thesis. Therefore, throughout this thesis, when referring to "change" in a company, this will mean revolutionary (as perceived by the executive level), planned changes.

A revolutionary change, as defined by Alvesson and Sveningsson (2015), is a change that affects multiple organisational aspects. However, this could be construed as a relative term. The revolutionary changes that will be referred to in this thesis are changes that are of a strategic nature, initiated on an executive level, that affect the entirety of the company. A good example of such a change is when a company defines a new strategic direction – moving into product as a service, rather than selling products. This change is perceived as revolutionary by the executive level because it affects the entire company's way of working; a new way of working must be adopted to achieve this new strategic direction. The type of company that this thesis refers to is a large multinational company with multiple departments and more than a thousand employees.

CONCLUSION

Alvesson and Sveningsson (2015) theorise that culture is a part of organisational change and identify different types of organisational change. The change that this thesis refers to is strategic change initiated on an executive level that affects the whole company. The company that this thesis refers to is a multinational with multiple departments and more than a thousand employees. Such changes affect multiple departments and organisational components as well as company culture aspects.

Crilly, Good, Matravers and Clarkson (2008) have validated and justified that design is a means of communication. In their "integrated communication-based model of design", Crilly, Maier and Clarkson (2008) have provided a view that overarches the communities of communication and design and bridges them through a "directionless", communication-based model of design.

This thesis aims to build on these theories by raising the question: can we further develop the perspective of a designer into the domain of internal change communication?

1.2 RESEARCH THESIS

Research Question

This thesis is the result of a graduation project for the master Strategic Product Design at the Delft University of Technology. The aim of this graduation project is to explore what design can offer communication practice, specifically on the topic of improving the internal buy-in of a company's change. Particularly targeting the internal communication processes as a means by which to do so. This thesis assumes that if a company improves its internal communication about change, its employees' 'buy-in' to the change will improve (the employees will embrace the change).

Organisational change is a large topic and cannot adequately be explored in its entirety in the time-frame of a thesis, nor can communication. Therefore, this thesis will look exclusively at the internal communication processes of companies that are going through revolutionary, planned changes (as defined in the previous chapter). As such, the contribution this thesis aims to make, is to uncover what design can contribute to the domain of internal change communication. The specific research question this thesis will explore is:

What can design offer, in addition to contemporary approaches, in change communication to create internal buy-in?

This research question originated in the curiosity of whether the communication of a company change was executed as meticulously internally as it was externally, towards consumers. It seems that whenever a large company is going through a significant change, it gets a lot of media attention, sometimes even a spot in the news. The details of the change and the consequences for the market are explained to a 't' in the public eye, but what happens behind closed doors? It is this mystery that initially formed the research question.

Significance

This thesis contributes to the field of design in communication..

Where Crilly, Good, Matravers and Clarkson (2008) have used diagrammatic representations to examine the relationship between communication process theory and design theory and make the topic discussable, this thesis attempts to go beyond discussion. Although adopting the same perspective as Crilly, Good, Matravers and Clarkson (2008), this thesis looks at what design can offer internal change communication. Rather than discussing models of communication and design, the process of design is applied to a change communication problem: creating internal buy-in for a company's change. The essential difference is that the theory presented by Crilly et al. (2008) intended to prove that the relationship between intent and interpretation is valid in both communication and design, and this thesis intends to put design principles into practice to improve the relationship between intent and interpretation (embrace of change). This thesis will contribute by giving a concrete example of design principles applied to a change communication problem. The conclusions from this thesis will reflect what design can offer the field of internal change communication.

Organisational change has been a topic of interest for many Journals and Reviews in the past years. However, it has consistently been approached from a top-down managerial point of view (Balogun & Johnson, 2004; Cohen and Levinthal, 2000; Mohnen et al., 2008; Hölzl & Janger, 2014; Tushman and O'Reilly, 1996; Chesbrough, 2010; Das et al., 2018; Ewenstein et al., 2015). This thesis aims to approach the topic from a different point of view. There is no top-down or bottom-up focus that has driven the research and insights in this thesis. Although, there is an acknowledgement of the hierarchical systems that are being dealt with: corporations employ certain structures and those structures need to be respected otherwise the insights will become null and void. Therefore, the insights produced in this thesis do rely on the given structures that the cooperating companies have in place, but the results thereof are approached from an outsiders' perspective. This coincides with Crilly, Maier and Clarkson (2008) who decided not to look at the communication-based model of design in a directional manner.

As defined above, this thesis will exclusively report on revolutionary, planned changes. This implies that the changes are initiated in the upper levels of the company. However, Alvesson and Sveningsson (2015) have approached this topic in a similar case (planned changes), attempting to view it from a different perspective: organisational culture as an aspect of organisational change. By focussing on culture, they have embraced all employees in their research (seeing as a culture is enacted through people). When discussing a specific case they even go so far as to mention the employees and the effect that top-driven change may have on them:

> *'it [the change programme] is strongly top manager driven, which could restrain employees from feeling empowered and open to participate in and take ownership of the change process' - Alvesson and Sveningsson, 2015. p 78*

Even so, each of the 'players' in the cases are given distinct roles in the organisation: a manager, an HR worker, an employee.

Where this thesis will contribute to the literature is that it will approach each player in the scenario as a person rather than 'just an employee'. What previous literature has failed to consider is that these managers and employees have lives outside of the organisation. This thesis takes the perspective that respect is due to each individual outside the confines of their work life.

Approach

The approach to this thesis is that of a research thesis that uses a design as a stimulus. This may sound familiar, however, there is a clear distinction between the study (the research question) and the design (a solution to a design challenge). In this case the design could be seen as a thesis of its own: a design thesis in which the designer identifies a design challenge and designs a solution that is then tested for acceptance by the relevant stakeholders. However, by placing this inside a study (almost like a case study) the thesis looks at a research question that could yield more insightful and generalisable results and insights to the field of communication.

To understand the distinction between the two, it is easiest to describe the design as a case study through which a research question can be tested. In reality, the case study is the application and the testing of the research question because the researcher is a designer attempting to use design to add value to the domain of internal change communication. Figure 3 shows a simple overview of the approach (in terms of chapter headings).

The approach to the thesis as a whole (study and design) has been developed based on a variety of research and design methods. Such a mixed method approach has been adopted to stimulate viewing the topic from a new perspective. There is much to be said for following existing structures and processes, especially in empirical research. However, the aim of this thesis is to generate new insights, therefore it can be argued that a prescribed approach could limit the investigative intuitions of the researcher. To support this, the leading method throughout the research was grounded theory (Charmaz and Belgrave, 2007). Typically, grounded theory entails 1) simultaneous data collection and analysis; 2) categories developed from data rather than from hypotheses; 3) the development of theories; and 4) making notes to explain and fill categories (Charmaz and Belgrave, 2007). This theory allows for the researcher to:

> *'make conceptual sense of large amounts of data. A grounded theory analysis starts with data and remains close to the data. Levels of abstraction are built directly upon the data and are checked and refined by gathering further data [...] these methods are useful for studying typical social psychological topics such as motivation, personal experience, emotions, identity, attraction, prejudice and interpersonal so-operation and conflict.' - Charmaz and Belgrave, 2007. p 28-29*

To promote the data-driven insights, grounded theory was not only used in the initial research phase but was used throughout the thesis as a figurative backbone. It was used in the research phase, when defining the design challenge, during ideation and to help cluster insights in the final testing phase.

Other methods that were used throughout this thesis were interviews, emotional journeys, brainwriting, co-creation and analogies. Each of these methods are argued in their respective chapters.

EXPLORATORY RESEARCH

STUDY

RESEARCH THESIS

What can design offer, in addition to contemporary approaches, in change communication to create internal buy-in?

LITERATURE RESEARCH

CASE RESEARCH

DESIGN

INTERVIEWS

SYNTHESIS

DESIGN CHALLENGE

Design an intriguing, physical artefact that will be placed in the office to help workfloor employees feel like they are being taken seriously and embrace the company's change.

DESIGN

I don't want to test my design, I want to use my design as a stimuli in a test to come to an answer for the research question.

TESTING

This test should result in an answer to the research question, not whether the product is usable or accepted within the target group.

CONCLUSION

Figure 3. Exploratory Research, an overview.

THE STUDY

2.0

LITERATURE RESEARCH

2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

Goal

The goal of this chapter is to get a better understanding of the literature about company changes and communication. By understanding what has already been written about these topics it will be easier to identify where there are gaps that design could possibly offer a new perspective.

Method

A literature review is the best way to understand the topics at hand because it is informative and a useful method for synthesis (Bolderston, 2008). Being critical when reading and understanding the literature can help identify what is known and what is unknown in the topics and where there are areas of controversy or debate (Bolderston, 2008). This will help to frame the research and findings of this thesis and formulate questions for further research (Bolderston, 2008). However, generally speaking, the literature that is reviewed has been written from an academic perspective or for academic purposes, and therefore might not be of practical relevance but merely theoretically relevant. Nonetheless, the theoretical knowledge will provide an academic perspective for the findings of this thesis.

Strategise or Die

'Most traditional organizations have accepted, in theory at least, that they must either change or die.'

-

Beer and Nohria. Cracking the code of change. 2000. p 88.

There are a few elements that are affecting all markets: the increasing need for speed of innovation (Ringel, Taylor, and Zablit, 2015), a shift in employee demographic and a shift in hierarchy. Employees are changing, and so are their needs: they feel the need to be connected to the company cause (Richardson, 2017) and buy into the company's beliefs and values (Sinek, 2009). Driven by the new needs of employees, companies are starting to organisationally restructure into non-hierarchy systems (Chakhoyan, 2017). These fundamental changes are creating a culture and paradigm shift in companies. As a result, companies need to strategise to remain relevant in the future (Pisano, 2015).

'Against a backdrop of increasing globalisation, deregulation, the rapid pace of technological innovation, a growing knowledge workforce, and shifting social and demographic trends, few would dispute that the primary task of management today is the leadership of organisational change.' – Graetz. Strategic change leadership. 2000. p 550.

Generally, this only applies to established, traditional, global companies and not to start-ups. Some companies, that are neither start-ups nor long-standing companies, have developed in such a manner that they have adopted a system that seems to be able to take hits from the market. For example, Spotify, see Figure 4 (Kniberg and Ivarsson, 2012). This system is built not in traditional silos, but in various groups of cross-disciplinary Squads, grouped together in Tribes. Each Squad is responsible for a part of a product or service, and each Tribe is a grouping of various Squads that are working on the same or related products and services. As a replacement for the traditional silos based on expertise, Spotify has Chapters (people of the same expertise within a Tribe) and Guilds (people of the same expertise company-wide). By dividing the company into teams that are directly responsible for one product or service, the response time can be much quicker: there is much less hierarchy to go through and all the people needed to implement a change are already in the same room/team.

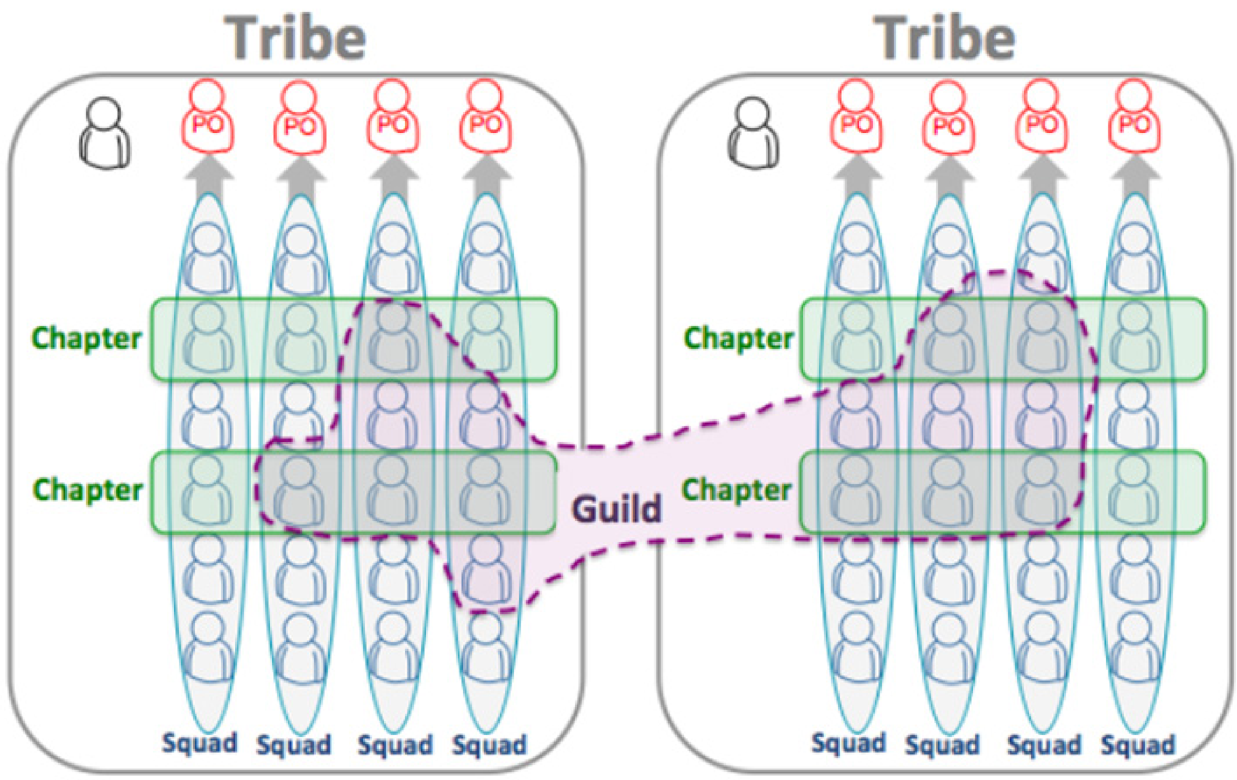


Figure 4. Spotify's company structure. Kniberg and Ivarsson. Scaling Agile. 2012.

Failure to Change

'The brutal fact is that about 70% of all change initiatives fail.'

–

Beer and Nohria. Cracking the code of change. 2000. p 88.

When a company does decide to change, it doesn't necessarily mean that the change will be successful. Some of the more common barriers to innovation and change are: lack of expertise/knowledge, the organisation of research and development, finances, leadership, organisational culture, a company's strategy and employee resistance (Cohen and Levinthal, 2000; Mohnen et al., 2008; Hölzl and Janger, 2014; Tushman and O'Reilly, 1996; Chesbrough, 2010; Das et al., 2018; Ewenstein et al., 2015). What stands out in this list is that all but three of the barriers are tangible; leadership, organisational culture and employee resistance are intangible. They don't have to do with specific industry expertise or organisational skills, they are about how people interact with each other. Eaton and Kilby (2015) confirm that the inability to leverage the people and culture of a company to drive change is a deciding factor as to whether your change succeeds or fails. People are a driving force behind the success, or failure, of strategies. They state:

> *'People are the reason strategies succeed or fail [...] Strategy only can be achieved when the organization's culture is aligned so that people understand the required behaviors and act accordingly.' - Eaton and Kilby.2015*

Companies fail to change because organisational culture and employees aren't leveraged to enforce change. Unless, you have a change that's driven by culture and the people of the organisation (as opposed to change driven by profit margins or market survival). An example of bottom-up driven change is the work that Floor de Ruiter does with his agency Flying Elephants. As an expert in his field, in an interview with him, he explained one of their cases where a company had attempted change through top-down push to avoid going bankrupt. After a few unsuccessful attempts the agency Flying Elephants was hired to help. What led to successful change in this case was that they started at the bottom. They simply asked the employees, who knew what needed to happen to avoid bankruptcy. The employees re-structured and re-adjusted from the bottom up in such a way that the company was back in the black within 6 months after implementing all the necessary changes.

Communication is Key

'Communication leads to understanding, understanding reduces uncertainty, and as a result reduces resistance.'

–

Llenza. Organizational communication and change. 2008. p 11.

A critical part of leveraging an organisational culture to enforce change is communicating with the employees. The organisational change process can be split into two parts: those people implementing change and those people trying to understand the change, see Figure 5.

The upper half of Figure 5 shows three phases within which a 'Change Agent' acts (implementing change) and the lower part shows the corresponding three stages that a 'Change Target' goes through (understanding change). The first stage of change for the Change Agent is defined as "Plan/communication/acceptance". However, the first stage that a Change Target finds themselves in is "Denial/resistance". According to Rogers (2010), uncertainty, caused by lack of information, is the key reason why someone resists an innovation or change. It is crucial to overcome the initial denial/resistance stage that employees (Change Targets) experience to be able to move on to exploration and commitment to the change. Communication is critical in

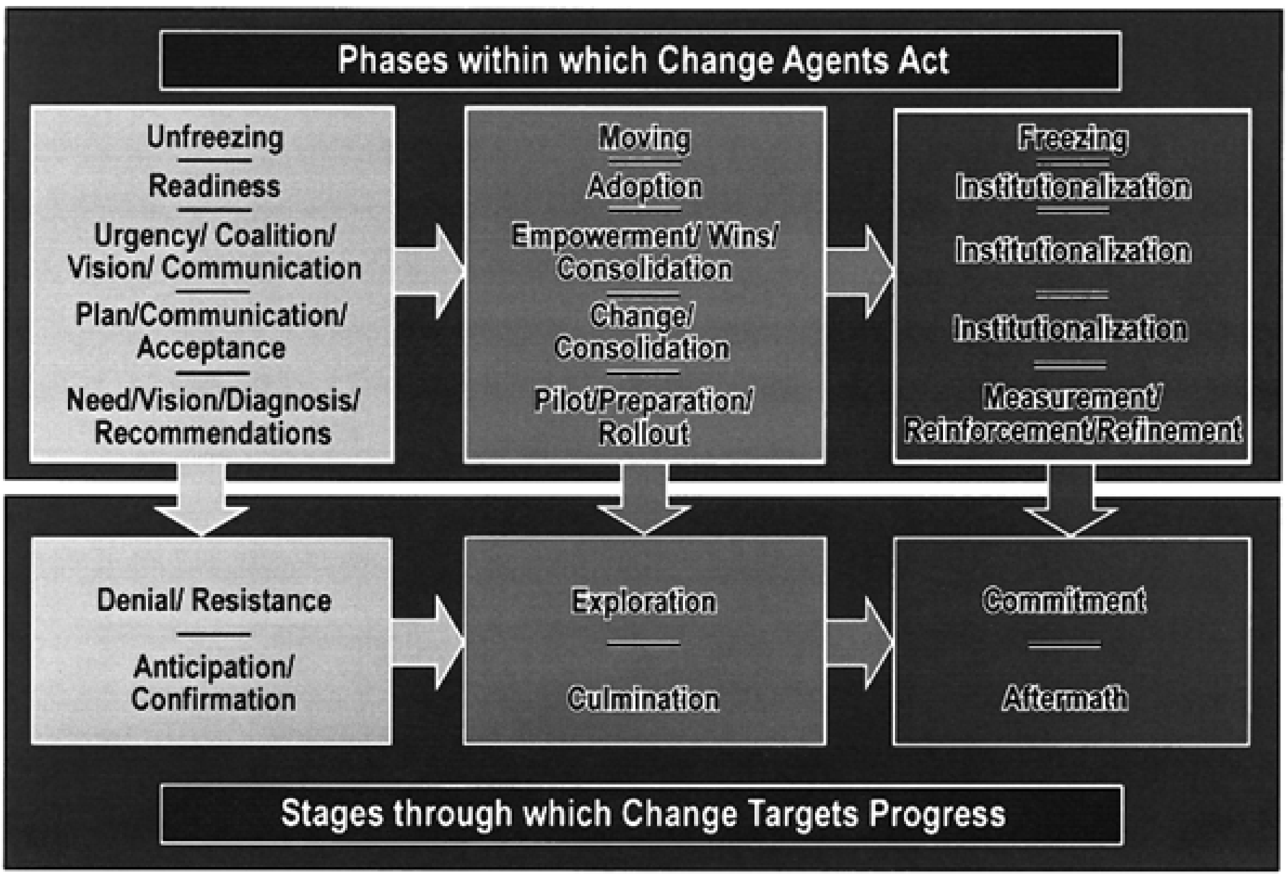


Figure 5. Change Agent phases and Change Target stages. Armenakis and Bedeian. Organizational change. 1999.

overcoming resistance and achieving effective change (Proctor and Doukakis, 2003; Husain, 2013; Llenza, 2008).

Communication is critical in overcoming resistance, only if your company is able to communicate in an effective manner. However, even if the communication is effective, it does not mean that by default the employees' resistance will reduce and the change will be implemented successfully.
A prerequisite for achieving change successfully is that the change is for the better and is thought out well. Even if both requirements are met, there will always be cases where a person is still resistant to change.

Meaning in Communication

'If meaning is not an inherent property of the message, then the Sender is no longer the sole creator of meaning. If the Sender's intended message doesn't 'get across', this is not a 'failure in communications' resulting from unfortunate 'noise' or the Receiver's misinterpretation or misunderstanding, but because the Receiver's active participation in the construction of meaning doesn't take place in the same ritual order as the Sender's.'

–

Ang. Living Room Wars. 1996. p 140

This quote touches upon two topics, that of making meaning an inherent property of a message and that of active participation, by the receiver, in

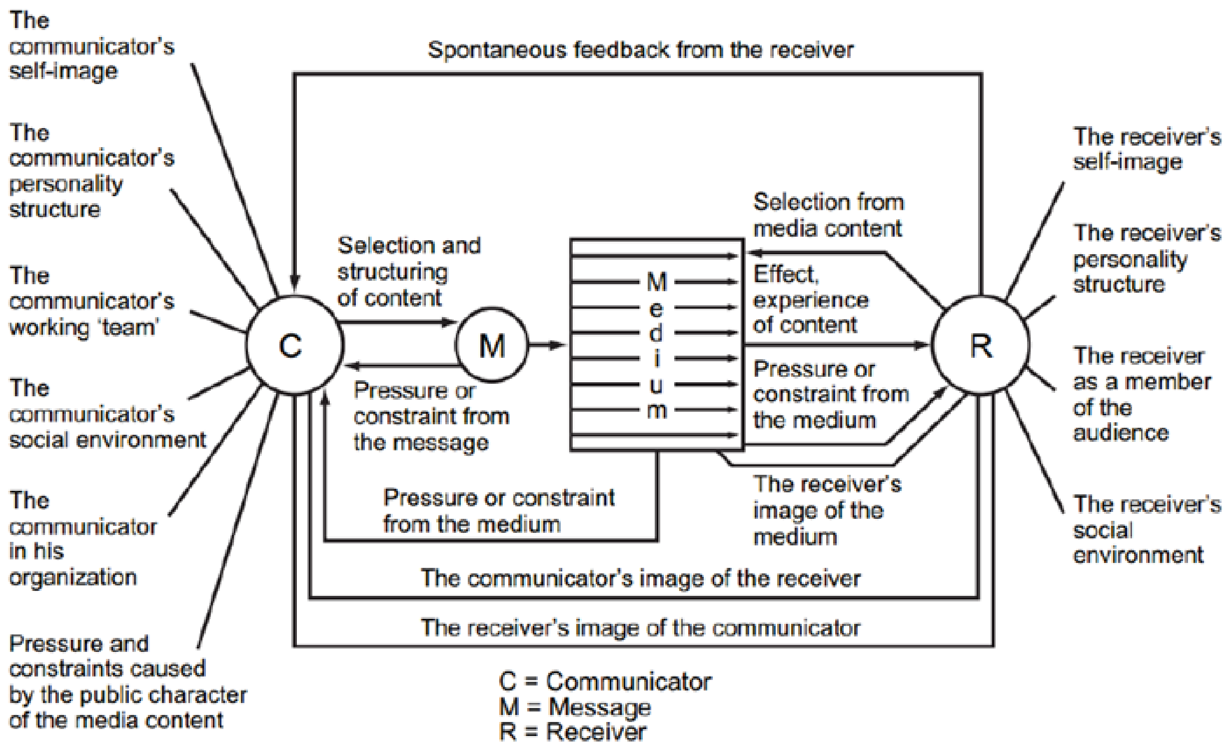


Figure 6. Model of mass media communication. Maletzke. Media effects research. 1981. Shown here as presented in Crilly, Good, Matravers and Clarkson (2008)

creating meaning (as also discussed by Crilly, Good, Matravers and Clarkson, 2008). The first can be solved by many relevant and effective presentation and pitching tools today, whereas the second is still somewhat elusive. Attempts have been made to bridge this gap by using co-creative methods to create content. However, it seems that the meaning of a message, as constructed by the receiver, depends solely on the receiver, their personal context and their interaction with the message and their environment (Crilly, Maier and Clarkson, 2008). Maletzke's (1981) model of mass media looks specifically at the role of the individual in the communication process. What is particularly interesting in this model, see Figure 6, is that a distinction is made between message and medium (Crilly et al., 2008). This distinction illustrates that the sender and receiver can be influenced by both message and medium, or the interaction between the two.

This is something that, although relevant in this case, was not included in Crilly, Maier and Clarkson's (2008) integrated communication-based model of design (see Figure 1 in Chapter 1.1 Introduction). This goes to show that a specific communication-based design model can have additional relevance to a problem or situation because it builds on the foundation of the integrated model presented by Crilly, Maier and Clarkson (2008).

THE DESIGN

3.0

CASE RESEARCH

3.1 INTERVIEWS

Goal

This section of the thesis describes the process of data collection and analysis. The aim of this data collection was to get an understanding for the experiences people have with a company change, and to look for a problem in the communication process during said change. By addressing each level in a company (upper management, middle management and work floor) a cross-section of the experiences was documented. This cross-section should help clarify if there are any discrepancies between the levels of the company and if so, what those discrepancies might be.

Method

To understand organisational change and the role that communication plays in change management, interviews were conducted. The interviews were conducted at a total of six companies: Barco, a large Dutch national bank (confidential), the Dutch Red Cross, KLM, Ultimaker and Unilever. Although previously mentioned that the companies relevant to this thesis should be large multinationals with more than a thousand employees, the time and resource constraints associated with this thesis have been cause for a compromise: the Dutch national bank and Ultimaker do not meet all of the prescribed characteristics but were used in the research anyway.
To make sure that the variety of hierarchical levels in each company was represented, the interviews were held with employees from 3 levels in each company: upper management, middle management and work floor.
A few examples of the job titles of interviewees are (in order of hierarchy): Head of Internal Communication, Product Manager and Designer.

After having consulted with Agnes Tan, a qualitative consumer research expert, it was found that informal, semi-structured interviews were the best way to collect qualitative data for this thesis because they allowed for concurrent verbal probing (Willis, 2004) which aids in collecting qualitative data. This entails that after the respondent has answered a question, the interviewer will ask another question either more specific about the question or the given answer. Considering that the purpose of these interviews was to roam the field of experience to find a problem, open-ended questions followed by concurrent verbal probing would likely provide deeper qualitative insights than any other typical form of data collection would have allowed (such as quantitative questionnaires and surveys). This became apparent when out of the eighteen interviews conducted, the most insightful conversations in fourteen of them followed a "why did you feel that way?" probe, see Appendix A for the structure used during the interviews. Of course, insights are gained through interviews granted that the interviewees are able to verbalise their experiences. It must also be taken into consideration that in this case the researcher conducted the research interviews. This means that there was a considerable amount of bias pertaining to the interpretation of the collected data. However, this fits within the framework of grounded theory data collection.

Synthesis

With the help of a few warm introductions, the interviews were underway at the six companies. After having spoken to eighteen employees/managers/directors, an abundance of insights accumulated. To synthesise these interviews into insights grounded theory was used. This means that the synthesis of the interviews happened simultaneously to the collection of data. In other words, after a few interviews some insights were already clustered into a group and all the interviews after that were used to fill and develop those clusters and new cluster groups.

Arriving at the final themes and insights took some shuffling back and forth of data. To create a clear overview of all of the categories and insights the information was limited to one page. To achieve this, it was necessary to abstract meaning from various insights to avoid writing down endless quotes. This led to a much denser and more manageable list of insights.

Key Findings

Synthesizing all the insights from each interview using the grounded theory method produced the following list of themes (the notes per interview and the entire list of insights per theme can be found in Appendix B and C respectively):

Timing
Where in the process is the company?

Energy
Getting involved costs energy and receiving attention gives energy.

Continuity
Normal work continues while the change is being implemented.

Sources
There is an overload of digital information sources.

Involvement
Creating change through internal change-agents (bottom-up).

Relevance
Some information is relevant for you and the rest isn't.

Process
The established procedures for communication are accepted.

There is a richness in each theme that cannot adequately be put into words. Each of the insights speaks to one (or more) person's experience with a change in their company. When they spoke of the change and how they experienced the communication, it was clear that in most cases they were genuinely affected by the change and the way that it was communicated.
In two cases the interviewees spoke specifically of the effect that the change had on them in a personal context. One of the interviewees expressed that they felt lucky they were able to quickly decide and commit to the company change (a change in location in this case) and expressed concern that other people may not be able to commit that easily due to any given personal situation.

"because he is in a different situation personally [...] your partner has a job here and sees few other possibilities to do that elsewhere and you have to decide: do I go back and forth every day, stuck in traffic, spend two or three hours on the way, or will we move. That is more difficult. My partner does not have a job at the moment and the children are at an age that it is possible. I also like new things, so I would also like to live in a different part of The Netherlands. Not everyone has that. If you don't, I think it is even more difficult to make that decision"

work floor employee

The majority of the remaining interviewees (eleven of the remaining sixteen) spoke of the effect it had on them personally in the work context. One of the interviewees explained what the change (a company-wide change in structure in this case) meant for them in the workplace, how it impacted not only them, but the cooperation of their entire team.

"if you are talking about a big change, then that was a very acute, unexpected change where we also had to jump in to secure the knowledge that the person had built up [...] I think this has a big influence on our entire team, because if there are a lot of quick changes, then knowledge preservation is a problem [...] Yes, certainly, change is not bad, indeed sometimes there can be more structure as a result, but there is also a disadvantage that knowledge will disappear"

work floor employee

Although it would be fantastic to address and hopefully solve each of the concerns, considering the timeframe of this thesis, that isn't possible. It is imperative, therefore, to scope the project towards one of the themes. To do so, a few criteria were applied to pick one theme that is manageable and rich enough to address within this thesis. Going down the list of themes and insights each insight was held up against the following criteria:

1. Is it within the researcher's field of influence?
Can the researcher address this concern, or is it something that only the company has influence over? For example, the timing of when communications take place or the energy that that is put into the change communication is entirely up to the company and the researcher has no influence over this (within the confines of this thesis).

2. Is it actionable?

Is there a possibility for the researcher to address this concern, or is it too big or too small for the thesis? For example, the use of follow-up meetings after an announcement or the planning and maintaining of regular updates are respectively too small and too large for this thesis.

3. Does it have the opportunity to help create/improve buy-in for the change?

Will addressing this concern have a positive impact on the buy-in for the company change? For example, limiting the amount information sources within the company or making the process of change more transparent will likely not directly result in an improvement of the buy-in.

CONCLUSION

After scrutinising each of the themes and corresponding insights, one theme and a few insights remained. The theme that remained was:

Relevance: people want to feel the relevance of the change for them in both their job and consequently their personal lives.

This theme prevailed because it seemed to meet the criteria as described above. It revolves around the employees and their concerns. However, there were such expressive and deep insights in other themes that these were revisited to see whether they might fall under this theme as well. This resulted in the following grouping of insights.

Relevance

1. **Clarity about the process and consequences**
2. **Information relevant to their job**
3. **Information relevant to their personal life**
4. **Personal, serious attention when receiving information**

These concerns were validated with another interview, where the interviewee specifically named 'certainty' as their main concern. The change that the company was going through meant that some jobs might change or disappear, and the person in question just wanted certainty (in the form of information) about what would happen to him. Whether it was that he would have to re-apply for his job, move to a different department or look for a different job outside the company, all he wanted was certainty (information) so that he could plan accordingly.

"it is not sure whether it will be your current job. It's still not the case to this day [...] I think people naturally want to have certainty about what they are going to do or what the possibilities are. [..] I think that's why you want clarity as soon as possible. I think this differs from person to person, but in my case, if you have a family with young children, you also want to know what you can tell about the future at home. [...] It's security that you want. If I do not take that step, is there a certain type of job guarantee for me? [...] Nobody can

give that to you, but those questions were asked, and I understand that when someone is more or less forced to make a big change. What about yourself? [...] It's security that you are looking for. "

work floor employee

From this validation interview the concerns couldn't have become clearer.

Concerns – Clarity, security and certainty about their job and feeling that they are being taken seriously

Relating these concerns, the most interesting observation during the interviews was that any and all communication about change revolved around facts and information rather than the meaning of the change. When stating facts rather than portraying meaning, the message can get lost between the sender and receiver. In these interviews it became apparent that what the sender was trying to get across to the audience, the receivers, wasn't always arriving as intended.

"I have means through my work to find a bond with [the company] and they are fulfilled in other ways and not necessarily by communication. [...] a nice team, and together making something beautiful that has added value for the customer, and also for [the company]. That's what it's about. [...] That makes it much smaller for me to feel connected [...] While at that level [structure changes from the top level] the communication is really big and abstract and I feel no connection with that, I feel connected in other things."

work floor employee

The phenomenon that is occurring here has been documented in literature before, see Chapter Literature Review: Meaning in Communication.

THE DESIGN

4.0

SYNTHESIS

4.1 EMOTIONAL JOURNEY

Goal

This chapter describes the creation of an emotional journey as a tool to help understand all the data collected in the interviews and to find out if there are any discrepancies between the levels of the company. The aim of this emotional journey was to create a generic overview of the various stages of communication and the corresponding emotional experience of employees in each level of the company (upper management, middle management and work floor). By overlaying each of the experiences, the emotional journey should help pinpoint any discrepancies between the emotional experiences of the different employees within the company.

Method

Creating emotional journeys was the best way to synthesise the experiences described in the interviews because this method helps to gain a better understanding of the 'user experience'. Howard (2014) states that journey maps offer *'a high-level overview of all of a user's interactions with your company'* (Howard. Journey Mapping. 2014. p 12.) Hearing people talk of their experiences is one thing, but by creating a visual overview it is easier to understand what the experiences are. Visualising the journey helps to *'highlight and understand the various stages, steps, and touchpoints a user must pass through in order to complete a task.'* (Marquez, Downey and Clement. Walking a mile in the user's shoes. 2015. p 136). Considering that the goal is to understand what the users (in this case employees) experience during a process, this method is well equipped to achieve that goal.

A consumer journey is usually created by the user, in collaboration or under the guidance of a designer. However, because there was limited time in which to complete this thesis and because of the multitude and variety of companies that were a part of the research, these emotional journeys were created solely by the designer. Needless to say, they were based on the qualitative interviews, but inferences were made by the designer to come to the emotional journeys presented in this chapter. Of course, these were relayed back and validated with a group of the original interviewees to make sure that they did reflect the emotional experiences.

Synthesis

To arrive at an emotional journey, it was important to first define the various phases that the employee goes through. To gain an understanding of what such a process looks like, the interviews conducted in the previous chapter were used as insights into the process, as well as insights into the experiences during the process. When zeroing in on just the phases of change communication, a generic process quickly presented itself through the data collected in the interviews. As did the media through which each phase was communicated. This could now be used as a framework on which to plot the emotional experiences of the interviewees.

As mentioned above, the interviews were a well of abundant, invaluable experiences. By listening closely during the interviews, and re-listening to the recordings to find the nuances used in describing their experiences, it was possible to infer emotional journeys. The emotional journeys are, therefore, an interpretation by the researcher of what the interviewees discussed during the interviews. A few of the respondents were asked to validate the emotional journeys during the final testing of the design (see Appendix G for the transcriptions of those interviews). As a result, the emotional journeys were slightly tweaked to reflect their comments and represent the final validated journeys that can be seen in Figure 7. The interviewees were descriptive in detailing what they were going through and the affect that each type of communication (or lack thereof) had on them. Expressions such as the following were used to generate the journeys.

"You want clarity very quickly, you get an announcement, but you think about the consequences. That is exactly what you want to answer immediately. We have noticed that at many feedback sessions, we were often left with more questions than answers."
work floor employee

"You leave disappointed. [...] You want answers, you want to know where you stand."
work floor employee

"I don't know [how she receives the new overall plan]. It's always there all of a sudden and then I get it via-via. [...] I have to look for it, instead of that it comes to me."
middle manager

"It depends where in the organization you are [...] if you are [a work floor employee] then you are not so concerned with the larger goals [...] then there are managers who are busy with those kinds of things."
work floor employee

Figure 6. Model of mass media communication. Maletzke. Media effects research. 1981. Shown here as presented in Crilly, Good, Matravers and Clarkson (2008)

Key Findings

To help make sense of the abundance of data collected, three emotional journeys were produced to reflect the three predominant emotions found in the interviews, each with the three layers of the company represented, see Figure 7. Each journey represents the emotional experience of an employee in a different level of the company and is based on the insights accumulated through the interviews.

Each up or down should be seen as an integral part of the whole journey: every sub-section of the line was placed relative to the previous one and is descriptive of the intensity of the emotion. A consequence of choosing to plot the journeys in this manner is that they are hard to compare: is the starting point the same, where can the journeys be placed in relation to each other? However, it can be argued that comparing experiences is already like comparing apples and oranges. Every person has their own frame of reference and personal context which shape the experience they have. Therefore, the point of comparing these journeys was not to nit-pick which emotion goes where, but to identify whether there are significant differences in the way that the change communication was experienced in different levels in the company.

Layering the journeys of each level uncovered a few discrepancies. The first significant discrepancy occurs after the presentation announcing the change, when the work floor employee is stressed and worried about the impending change and the director and manager are not stressed about the coming change. There is an obvious difference between the two, which provides an opportunity for improvement.

The second significant discrepancy happens during and after the follow-up on questions about the change. The manager is stressed about answering the questions and the work floor employee is stressed about what the change means for him and that his questions won't be answered, but the director is neither stressed nor relaxed, they are indifferent to it all. Again, there is a big difference between the two experiences, offering an opportunity for design.

CONCLUSION

Creating the journeys helped to get a better understanding of what stages there are, the types of communication and the emotional journey that the employees experienced during a company change. It became clear that there are two significant discrepancies between the emotional journeys of the director, the manager and the work floor employee. These show that they are experiencing the change communication differently. The word 'differently' is crucial here. An argument can be made that different doesn't mean bad. As mentioned before, experiences are hard to compare, so a difference in experience does not mean that one experience is better than the other. Therefore, the point of this tool was not to pick one experience or emotional journey that is the best, but to identify whether there is a difference in experience.

It can be concluded that there is indeed a difference in experience between the different levels within the company. This provides an opportunity: it might not be necessary to get the different levels on a more similar line, but it is an interesting area for exploration. For all intents and purposes of this thesis considering the time and resource limitations, only one of those moments will be explored further: the moment after the presentation. Apparently, something there is causing the different hierarchy levels to experience that moment differently.

4.2 BRAINWRITING SESSIONS

Goal

This chapter details the use of two brainwriting sessions to get inspiration for the ideation process and define the design challenge. The aim of these sessions was to ask and answer four questions relevant to the topic of internal change communication and derived from the insights from the interviews:

1) How do you make someone feel like they are being taken seriously?

2) How do you make a large change relevant to one person?

3) How do you help someone understand a complex process?

4) How do you make a complex change clear?

After the brainwriting sessions the aim was to see which question had the most potential to be answered through a design and translate that into a design challenge.

Method

Brainwriting was the best way to achieve this goal because it is one of many techniques used to generate a multitude of ideas and is seen as having more potential than others. The most widely adopted method to generate multiple ideas is brainstorming (Heslin, 2009). However, *'Groups can potentially generate more and better ideas when 'brainwriting'; that is, silently sharing written ideas in a time- and sequence-structured group format.'* – Heslin. Better than brainstorming? 2009. p. 129.

Such generative methods shouldn't be used as the main source of idea generation, but they can be used to fuel the generative process with inspiration in a structured format. Brainwriting is, amongst other things, a more structured way of generating ideas than the most popular method, brainstorming.

> *'Brainwriting can overcome several brainstorming disadvantages. For example, brainwriting ensures equality of participation, eliminates dysfunctional interpersonal conflicts, minimizes status differences and the negative influence of a dominating personality, and, in some cases, can produce more and high-quality ideas than is possible with brainstorming.' – VanGundy. Brain writing for new product ideas. 1984. p. 73.*

These brainwriting sessions were held with design students rather than with stakeholders in the situation. This was a deliberate choice because it was the out-sourcing of the ideation as opposed to a co-creative session that one might expect to do with relevant stakeholders.

Synthesis

Two brainwriting sessions were organised with a group of three and four Industrial Design students. Each session handled two of the four questions presented above. First, each participant had 5 minutes to think of answers/ designs to solve one question. Then, they passed their paper on and received a different paper with someone else's designs on it. Every time the paper was passed on the participants could use the ideas on the new paper to build on or inspire them for new ideas. This continued until their original paper came back to them. At this point, the ideation stopped and a group discussion about the designs ensued.

After this discussion the process was repeated with the second question. The Positive Emotional Granularity Cards (Yoon, Pohlmeyer and Desmet, 2015) were provided as an optional source of inspiration for the participants.

Key Findings

Although four questions were considered in the sessions (see Appendix D for the results of the brainwriting sessions), a choice must be made which one of the four will determine the design challenge. It is apparently a typical pitfall in graduation projects to want to design for everything and solve all problems. Therefore, some scoping is necessary, and a clear choice must be made. After clustering the ideas (see Appendix E for the clusters), it seemed that the most promising directions fell under the question

How to make someone feel like they are being taken seriously?

4.3 DESIGN CHALLENGE

The goal of this chapter is to create a design challenge to design for. The aim of the design challenge is to create clarity and a directed scope during the ideation. A brief recap shows that the aim of this project was to create an internal buy-in for change. The design goal can now be formulated as: help employees embrace the change. Based on the decisions made so far during the process, the following specifics can be listed and need to be incorporated in the design challenge.

The target group is work floor employees

–

because they had the most challenges when dealing with company change

The intended effect is to intrigue

–

because it should attract attention, feel light and spark conversations

The medium is a physical artefact

–

because employees don't want another digital tool/information source

The experience should be a physical one

–

because then it is unavoidable

The goal is to embrace change

–

because change is inevitable and is becoming the new default

Design Challenge

Design an intriguing, physical artefact that will take place in the office to help work floor employees embrace the company's change.

The choices that led to this design challenge were all grounded in the research conducted in the earlier phases of this project. The emphasis here should be on the intended effect: embracing the company's change.

Revisiting the promising directions from the brainwriting sessions reveals that the design challenge should be applied to helping work floor employees feel like they are being taken seriously. Therefore, the design challenge can be tweaked to reflect this.

Design an intriguing, physical artefact that will be placed in the office to help work floor employees feel like they are being taken seriously and embrace the company's change.

This new design challenge has two goals: an employee should feel like they are being taken seriously through the design and the design should help that employee embrace the company's change.

THE DESIGN

5.0

DESIGN

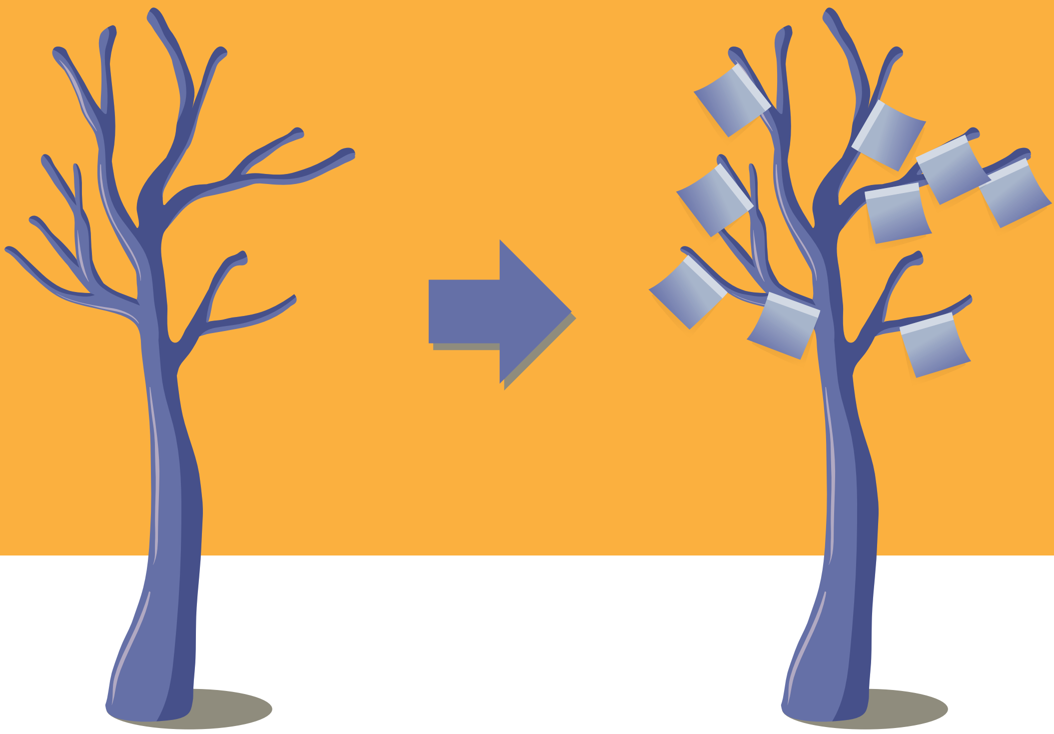
5.1 IDEATION

Goal

This chapter shows five ideas that were generated based on the brainwriting sessions and the ensuing design challenge. The aim of this chapter is to showcase those ideas, pick one, and reflect on whether they match the previously defined design challenge.

Synthesis

Each of the following ideas is built up in a similar way: an image of the idea, the name with a short description, a section where the role of angel's and devil's advocate was played and a short storyboard .The storyboard shows the preparation needed for the idea, the interaction between the employee and the idea and the effect the idea has on the employee. The ideas aren't fully developed but give an indication of the types of ideas that were generated using the brainwriting sessions as input.



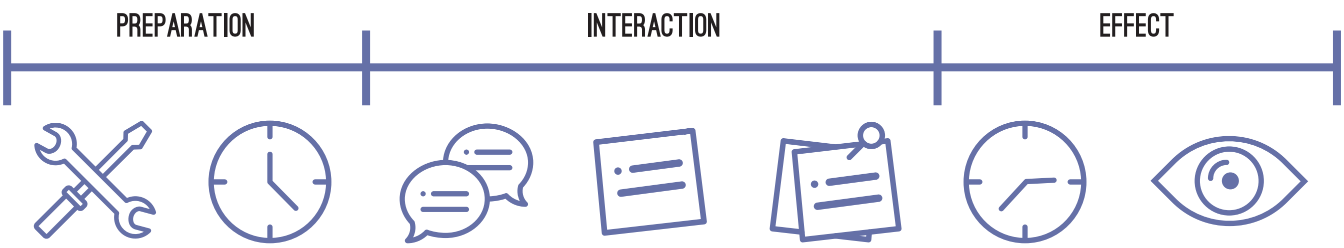
CAMPFIRE TREE

This is an artefact (illustrated above as a tree) that functions as a focal point, in the office, around which employees can have a centralised discussion about the company's change. The idea is that conversations that now occur at the coffee machine will now take place around the tree. This is meant to simulate the story-telling that is typical around a campfire.

The artefact functions as a wailing wall of sorts: anyone can leave a message, a concern or feedback on the artefact. This means that everyone can see what other people think and feel, which will lead to discussions about various concerns and opinions.

- Stimulates group feeling
- It is a social
- It is a physical product
- Works like a purge - complaint purge
- It can be used all day, any day

- Need a facilitator to lead group session
- Doesn't look professional - kumbaya caliber
- It's "just another meeting" or tool
- It's a negative approach
- What's done with all the input?



Build the artefact

Plan a moment to talk around the artefact

Talk about concerns

Write down what you feel

Hang it on the artefact

Plan a discussion at a later moment

See what others think and feel

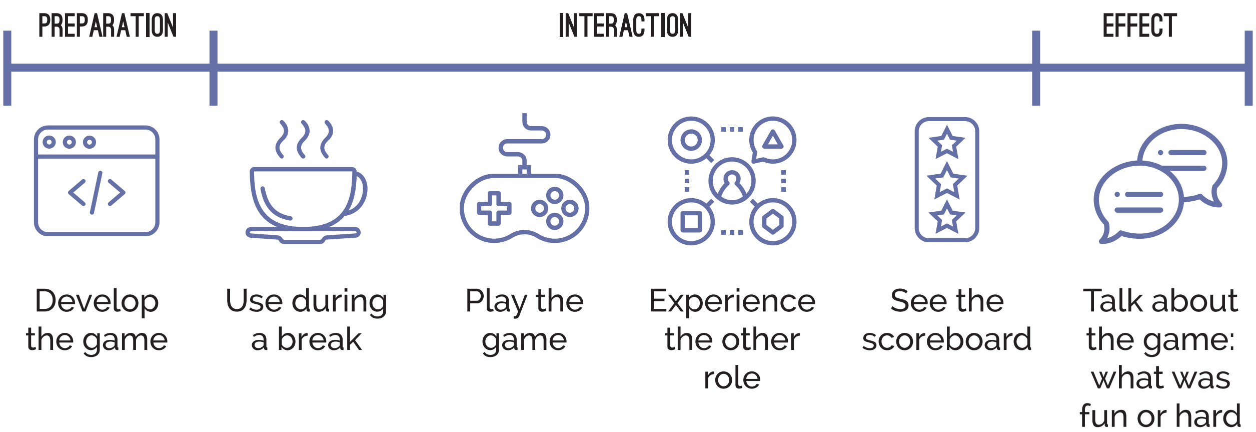
DIGITAL ROLEPLAY GAME

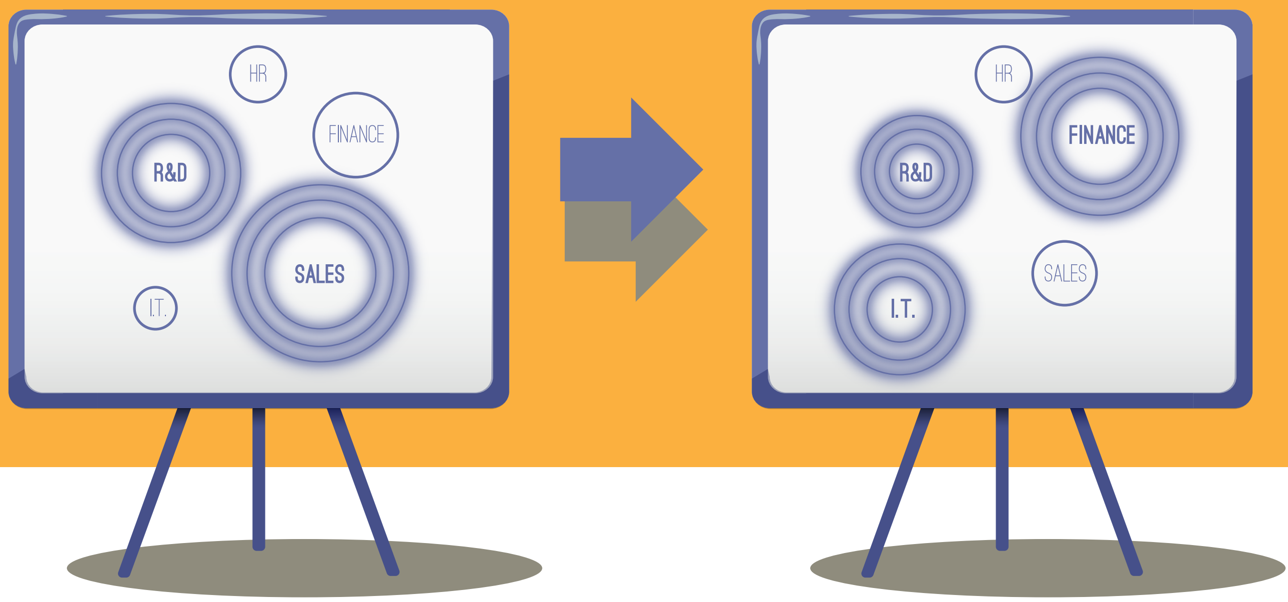
This is a physical game (illustrated above as an arcade game) that functions as a roleplaying tool. The idea is that the person playing the game takes on a different role in the company (an employee plays a manager) and experiences what it's like to enforce change from that role. This is meant to create understanding between the different roles and levels in the company.

The game functions an emersive experience: the player will experience first hand the stresses and complications that come with the role that they are playing.

- It is interactive
- It can be played anytime
- It doesn't take up much time
- It stimulates a social interaction afterwards
- There is a reward at the end

- Risk promoting rivalry
- Not everyone enjoys gaming
- It's high maintenance to keep it relevant
- Interactions aren't work or change related
- Why would anyone play the game?





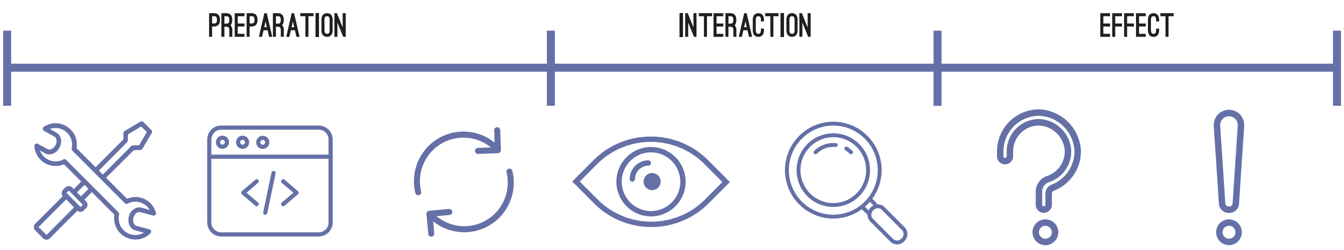
PULSATING HEARTS

This is an artefact (illustrated above as a digital board) that functions as a visual representation of the company focus and priority, pertaining to the change. It will be placed in the office where all employees can see it. Each department is represented on the digital board and will grow in size and pulsate according to which department needs priority (it is updated in realtime).

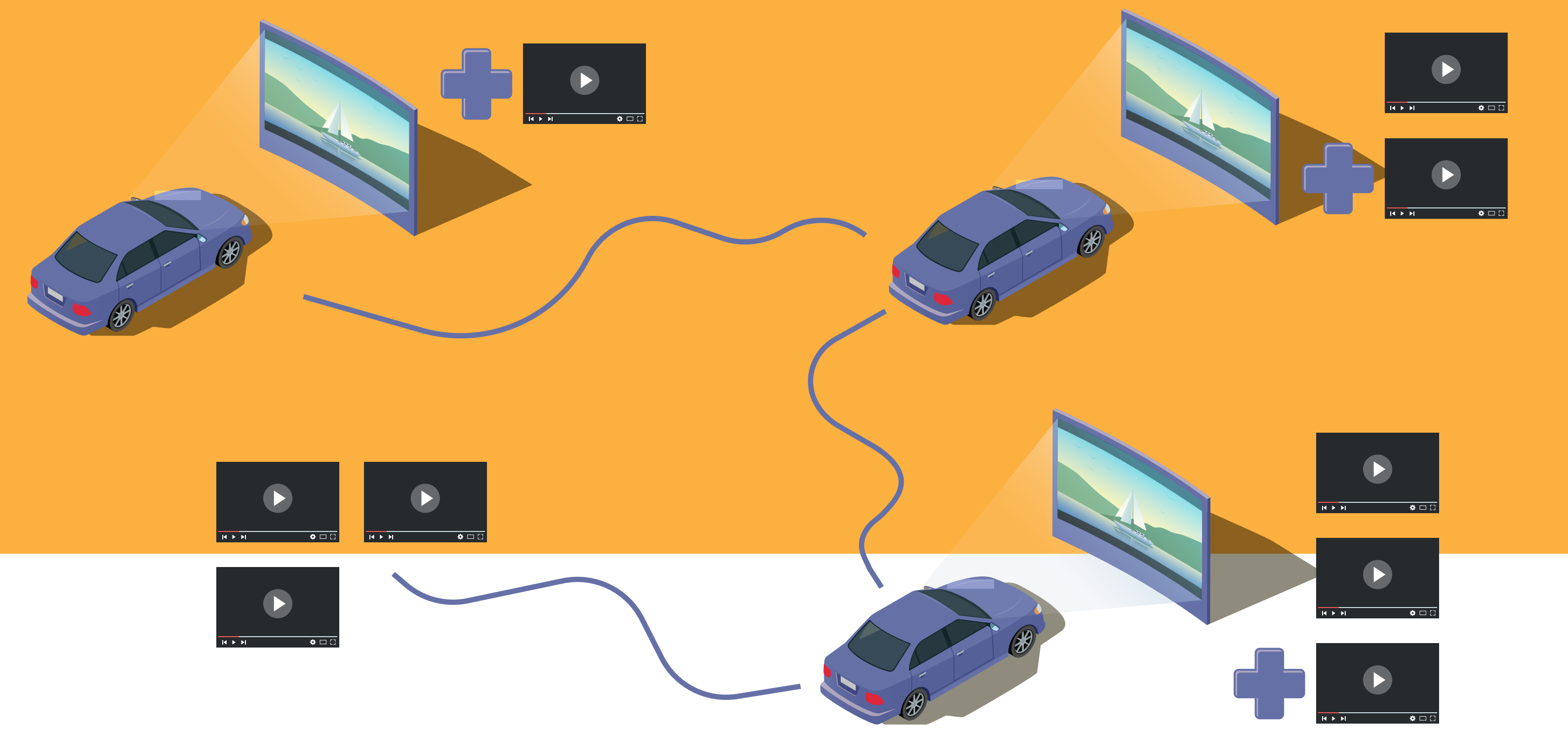
The idea is that employees will be able to see where the company's priorities lie at any given moment, creating a realtime overview of the change process. When, for example, a department is small and not pulsating, they will not get priority over a bigger, pulsating department. This will create understanding amongst employees about their momentary place in the priority list.

- It's a realtime representation of the company
- It's dynamic - it always looks different
- It is unintrusive
- It's nice to look at
- It's a conversation starter

- It's too abstract
- It's passive
- There's no possibility to interact with it
- It's high maintenance to keep it updated
- Conversations aren't work or change related



Build the artefact | Program the digital board | Update the data to keep it realtime | Look at the artefact | See the difference realtime | Question what is means | Understand that another department has priotity



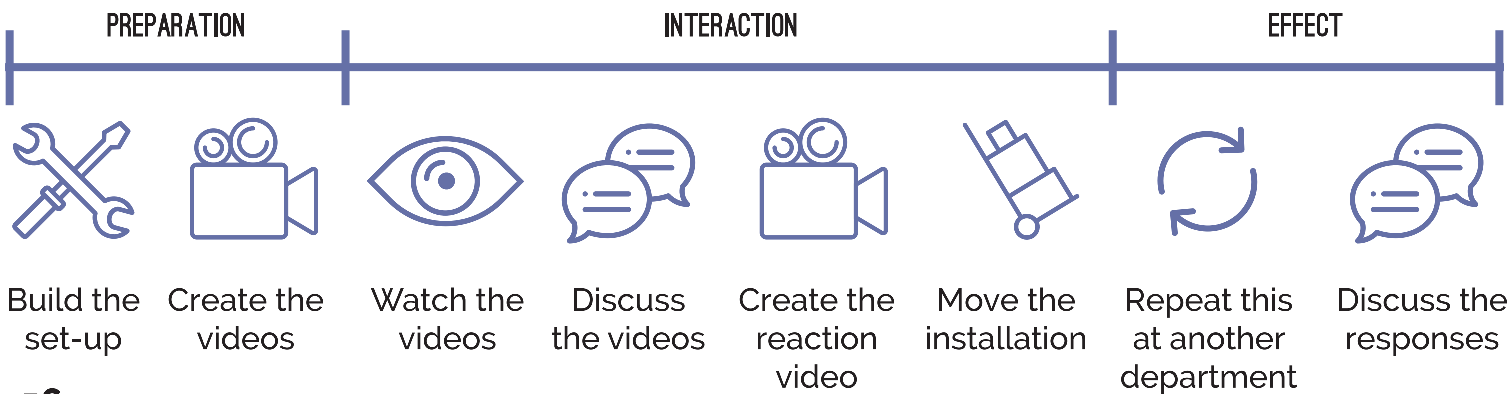
THE TRAVELLING EXPERIENCE

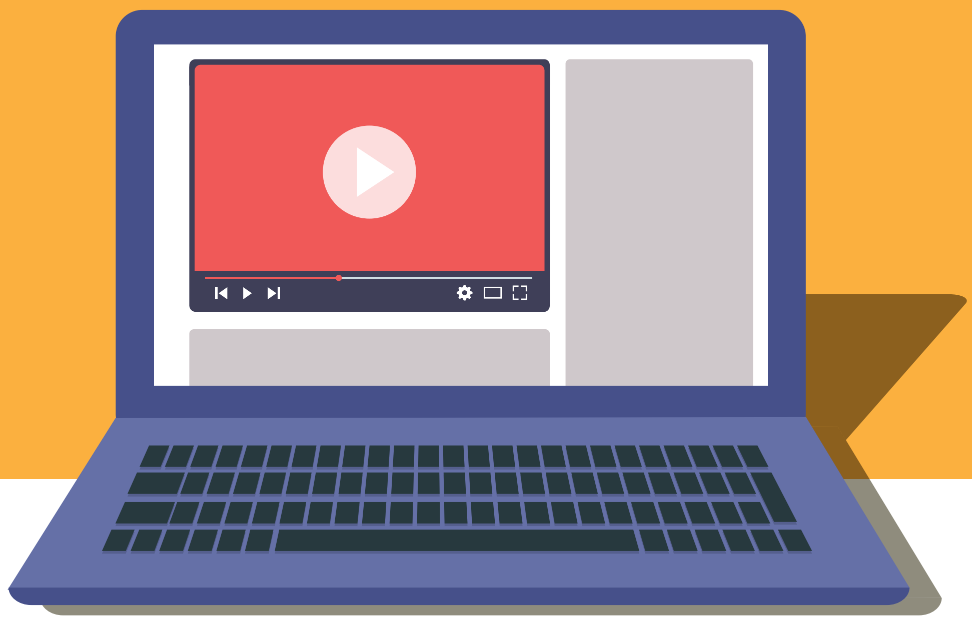
This is an artefact (illustrated above as a drive-in movie) that functions as a conversational catalyst. The idea is that there is a set-up in the office where employees can sit and watch a series of short, provocative videos. After watching the videos, the department formulates a response and creates video content to add to the series of videos (an opinion or a different perspective). The entire set-up, including the new video content, is moved to the next department.

The videos initiate conversations and the response videos provoke discussion. The system works like "Chinese whispers", eventually the set-up comes back around to the first department and all of the responses can be watched.

- It arouses curiosity and conversation
- It encompasses a group activity
- It is an active way of engaging with the topic
- Multiple departments interact
- It can be watched at any time

- A lot of preparation is needed
- Logistical nightmare of moving the installation
- Takes a lot of time to set up and to create reaction
- Risk that people won't participate
- Risk that the video reactions won't be relevant





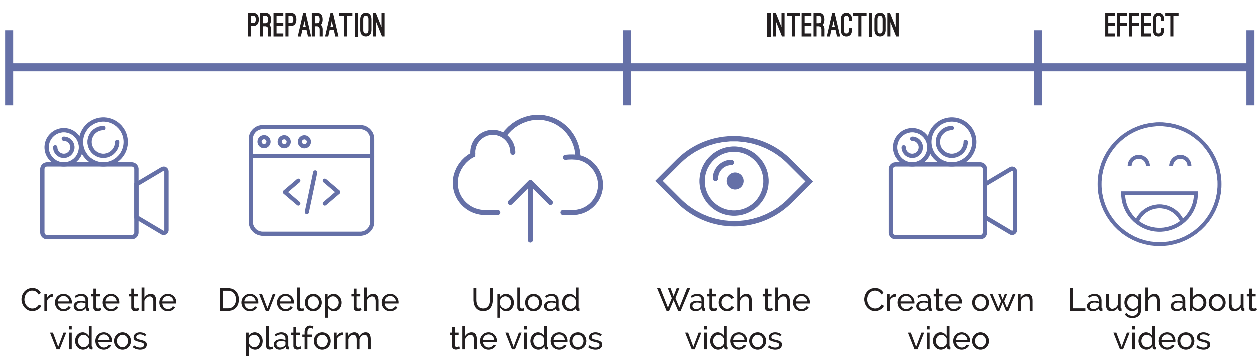
VIDEO PLATFORM

This is an online platform (illustrated above as a webpage) that functions as sharing community. The idea is that funny, interesting or educational videos are made (about the company change) and uploaded to the platform. Everyone has access to the platform and has the opportunity to react to the videos by writing something or uploading their own video.

This is meant to create a buzz around certain topics, getting people talking. It is presented in a positive manner and stimulates conversations about relevant topics.

- There is a possibility to provide content
- It's amusing and educational
- It makes abstract topics more concrete
- It is possible to share videos with others
- It has a wide reach, across all levels

- High maintenance: someone has to manage it
- It is a "one-hit wonder" and won't stick
- It is yet another digital platform
- People won't actively participate
- There's no call to action



CONCLUSION

Although a few of the ideas show potential, they do not accurately reflect the design challenge.

Design an intriguing, physical artefact that will be placed in the office to help work floor employees feel like they are being taken seriously and embrace the company's change.

Therefore, an iteration is necessary to look at the data and questions that led to the design challenge. Some of the questions that need to be asked to come to a relevant design that can achieve both goals in the design challenge are:

1) **When does someone feel like they are being taken seriously?**

2) **What happens to make feel like they are being taken seriously?**

3) **When does someone embrace a change?**

4) **What happens to make them embrace that change?**

To advance the design to a next level and ensure that it matches the design challenge, it is necessary to look at the interactions that could answer the questions above.

5.2 ANALOGIES

Goal

This chapter explains the process taken to get from the rather abstract ideas in the previous chapter to a more defined and relevant design and describes this final design. It is based on the design challenge but takes a closer look at the interactions that occur when someone embraces a change and feels like they are being taken seriously. Using analogies in way that is described as drawing from a repertoire of examples, experiences and interactions (Schön, 1938), the final interaction is designed. The aim of this final interaction is to bring the employees and management a step closer towards each other in communication.

Method

At this stage the previous ideas seem to be rather superficial and don't emphasise the interaction between the stakeholders in this situation: the employees of the company and the management levels.

To get a better grip on this and create a more fitting design, two experiences from a personal repertoire (Schön, 1938) are used as analogies to explore and understand (Hey, Linsey, Agogino and Wood, 2008) the interaction behind embracing a change and feeling that you are being taken seriously. This is the best way to design an interaction because an analogy is a way to compare situations from different domains. Designers use the

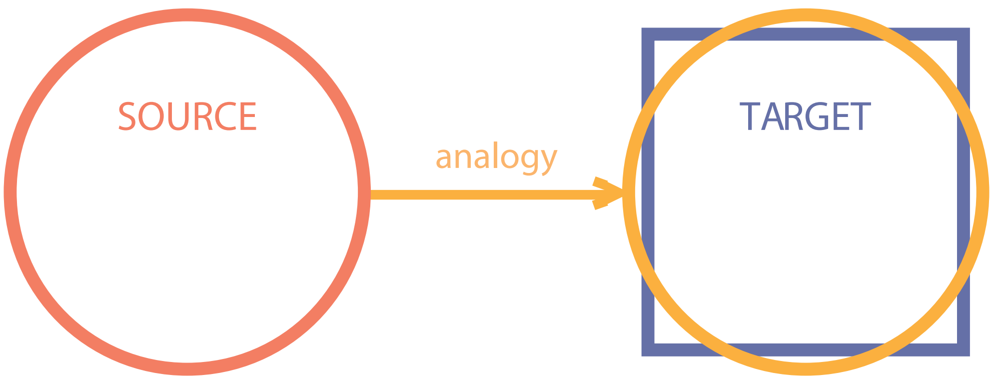


Figure 8. Using an analogy to map situational knowledge from a source situation to a target situation.

situational knowledge and relations of one situation to map that onto another (see Figure 8). Approaching conceptualisation in this way allows for new insights and inferences. It is said that the most potential for creative problem solving occurs when the two situations seem very different from each other on the surface (Hey et al., 2008).

When a person reasons using analogies, the following cognitive process is followed, see Figure 9. The result of the process is that someone makes inferences of the new situation based on the mapping between the two different domains. When looking at the difference between the use of metaphors or analogies in the design process, metaphors tend to be used in problem-framing and understanding, whereas analogies are often used in the concept generation or ideation phase to find a solution to the design problem. (Hey et al., 2008).

> *"design-by-analogy is a well-recognized method" - Hey et al. Analogies and Metaphors in Creative Design. 2008. p. 286*

The more common types of analogy in design are analogies using nature and previous designs (Hey et al., 2008). However, this situation is more complex than solving a tangible design problem. It involves an interaction between stakeholders that needs improving. Hence, the analogy will likely not be based on a previous design but on a previous interaction between people. This means that the properties that need to be mapped from the source domain to the target domain are experience based. Therefore, the analogies will be based on personal experiences; considering that everyone is an expert in their own experiences it will provide better insights than if one were to try and map someone else's experience onto a target domain.

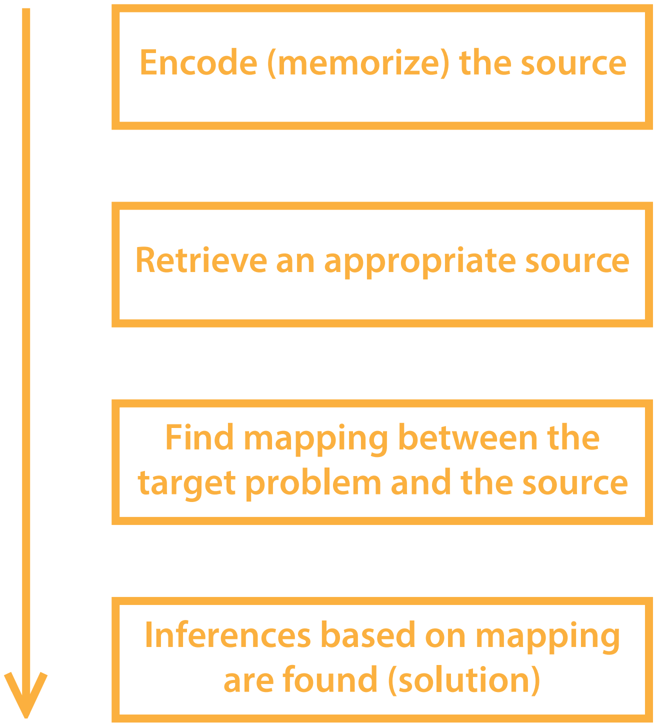


Figure 9. The cognitive process in reasoning by analogies.

Synthesis

Two analogies were used to understand why someone would either reject or embrace a change. Both of the following analogies refer to a personal experience of change. The first analogy reflects a change in which I strongly rejected the change. The second analogy reflects a change that I was able to embrace.

Rejecting Change

The change: moving from England to The Netherlands when I was 12.

I rejected this change because I liked the way things were. I had friends, activities, school. I didn't want to have to start all over. I thought I was losing everything I had built up. It was out of my control. My parents tried to help me embrace the change, because it was inevitable. They reassured me that I would make new friends, but I didn't want new friends. I just didn't want anything to change. Everything would be new and unfamiliar.

Embracing Change

The change: moving from my parent's house into student housing.

When I was eighteen, I had just started studying and was commuting from my parent's house to University and back every day. I had to get up very early to do so and came home very late, so I was always tired and had to do my homework in the train. In the long run, I knew that this wasn't sustainable for me. Therefore, I made the choice to move out of my parent's home to live in Delft, nearer to my University.

This change meant that I would have to live in a completely different way: not only was there an added benefit of living close to University, I would have to cook, clean and wash my clothes myself.

I embraced this change because it felt like my choice, I controlled it. I made a conscious decision that because living at my parent's house wasn't sustainable in the long run, I was going to move. Once the decision was made to move, I had control over where I was moving to and who I would live with. I knew what I was getting into, even though a lot would be new, I was able to mentally prepare beforehand.

When looking for a new place to live in Delft, my parents were very supportive. I was excited to be starting a new chapter in my life, but also nervous. My parents helped me look and gave suggestions as to what I should look for in a new home. Any time that I showed them a house that I had found, they would take the time to sit with me and discuss the pros and cons. Once I had found a place that I could move to, my parents helped me to plan my move, paint my new room, buy furniture and helped move me into the new place.

It took a while to settle in to my new house. Whenever I had questions about how to cook, wash, or even just wanted to talk, my parents made time for me. They made sure that they were available to me.

Mapping onto The Design

In these analogies I have equated myself with the employees and my parents with the management. The conclusion that can be made from these two analogies is that the physical artefact should be like me moving to my student house because:

1) **It was a forced decision, but it felt like my choice (company changes are forced decisions)**

2) **There were at least two major stakeholders involved (in a company there are multiple stakeholders involved)**

3) **It was exciting, but also nerve racking to start something new (company changes are exciting but make people nervous)**

4) **It encompassed a change that meant a whole new way of living (company changes mean a new way of working)**

5) **I had to make changes on a smaller level (cooking and cleaning) to accommodate the larger change of moving (company changes involve lots of small changes that help to accommodate the larger change)**

The following qualities that this analogy reflects should be included in the design:

1) Supportive
2) Exciting
3) Advisory
4) Helpful
5) Readily available
6) Reassuring

These qualities can be translated into more concrete characteristics that the design must have:

1) **Be there to help**

2) **Be something dynamic**

3) **Give suggestions**

4) **Give answers**

5) **Be accessible at any time during the day**

6) **Address concerns**

Being Taken Seriously

To explore the interaction of being taken seriously another personal analogy was used. This analogy refers to a recurring personal experience in which each and every time I have felt that I was taken seriously.

The situation: Going to the doctor with an issue.

Whenever I go to my doctor with an issue, I always feel like she takes me seriously. Even if I overreact and tell her that I think I have some sort of illness, she always takes me seriously. She calmly listens to what I have to say, doesn't dismiss my crazy theories but simply says that we will get to the bottom of whatever is bothering me.

I come in and she asks what she can do for me. I proceed to tell her what's troubling me and she attentively listens. She asks related questions, which shows me that she is listening and is interested in finding out more about what is troubling me. She acknowledges whatever I am going through and reassures me that I am not crazy for thinking I have some sort of illness. If anything, she encourages me to return anytime I have a similar thought due to a different complaint. I feel like she is taking her time for me, not rushing to get to the next patient. It feels like she wants me to leave with a feeling of reassurance and calmness. Just thinking back to my last doctor's visit brings a certain sense of calm over me.

Mapping onto The Design

The reason that this experience can be used as an analogy for the situation described throughout this thesis is because:

1) **I have a concern that I want to address (employees have concerns about the company change)**

2) **I am seeking answers from someone who has more information and knowledge than I do (the top levels generally know more about the company change than the work floor employees)**

Considering the interaction described in the analogy, it can be said that in order for the design to create that same feeling and interaction the design should have the following qualities:

1) Not dismiss the concern
2) Acknowledge the person and the concern
3) Be attentive
4) Encourage the person to return with more concerns
5) Be calming
6) Be reassuring

Translating these qualities results in the following characteristics that the design must have:

1) **Address concerns**

2) **Recognise the importance of the concern**

3) **Allow for input by the user**

4) Ask for more concerns

5) No loud noises or loud colours

6) Provide answers

CONCLUSION

Pooling these two analogies and the characteristics that they have put forth has yielded the following list of characteristics to help define the design.

1. Address concerns
2. Allow for input
3. Ask for more concerns
4. Accessible at any time during the day
5. Recognise the importance of the concern
6. Be there to help
7. Give suggestions
8. Provide answers
9. Be dynamic by combining media
10. No loud noises or loud colours

5.3 THE DESIGN

Goal

This chapter introduces and explains the final design. Combining the characteristics, found in Chapter 5.2 Analogies: Conclusion, into one design resulted in the following, final design.

Change

Companies are enforcing large changes. From the six companies interviewed during this research the following outline of the process of change communication was made.

SolutionSpace

To scope down the solution space and bring focus into the design, one moment was chosen to design for. The moment after the presentation, when everyone has questions about the change.

STAGES OF COMMUNICATION	communicate new change	share information about change	follow-up on questions	ask for involvement
TYPE OF COMMUNICATION	presentation	internal information sources	meetings and emails	emails

Problem

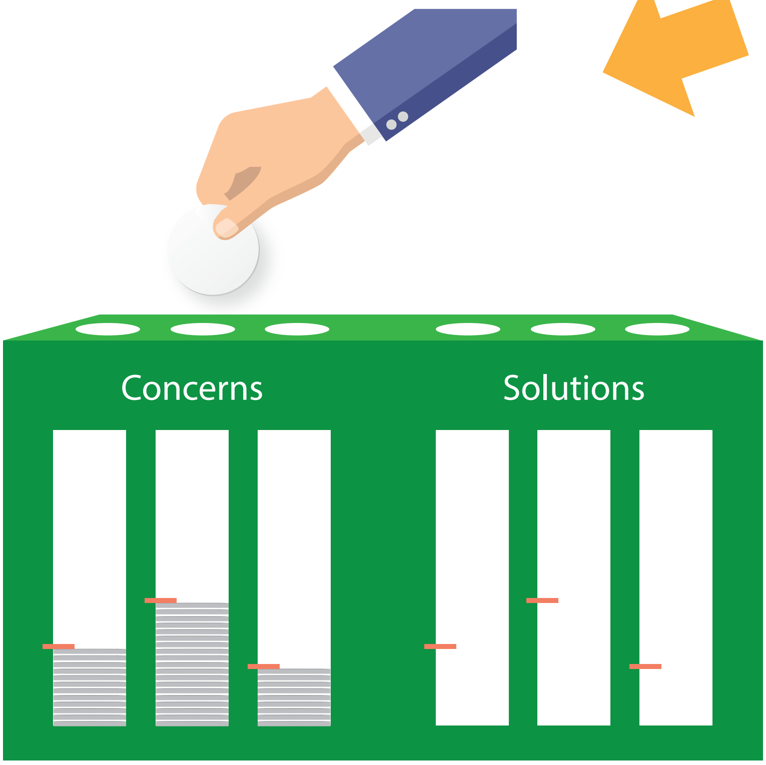
The employee doesn't feel like they are being taken seriously during the company change.

Solution

A visual, physical representation of their concerns and what is being done with them. Getting answers.

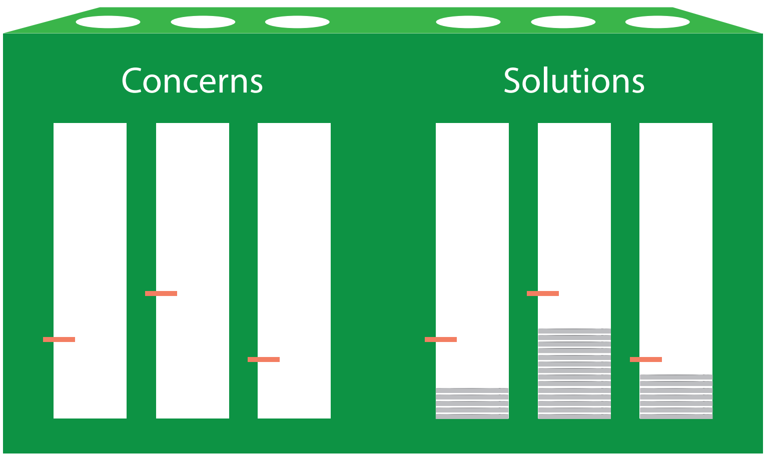
CONCEPT

Write your concerns, feedback, or questions on a coaster.



Put your coaster in the corresponding cylinder.
Each cylinder represents a different theme (e.g. child daycare, public transportation, new responsibilities, etc.)

After a week the coasters are collected and brought to the designated team to process them.



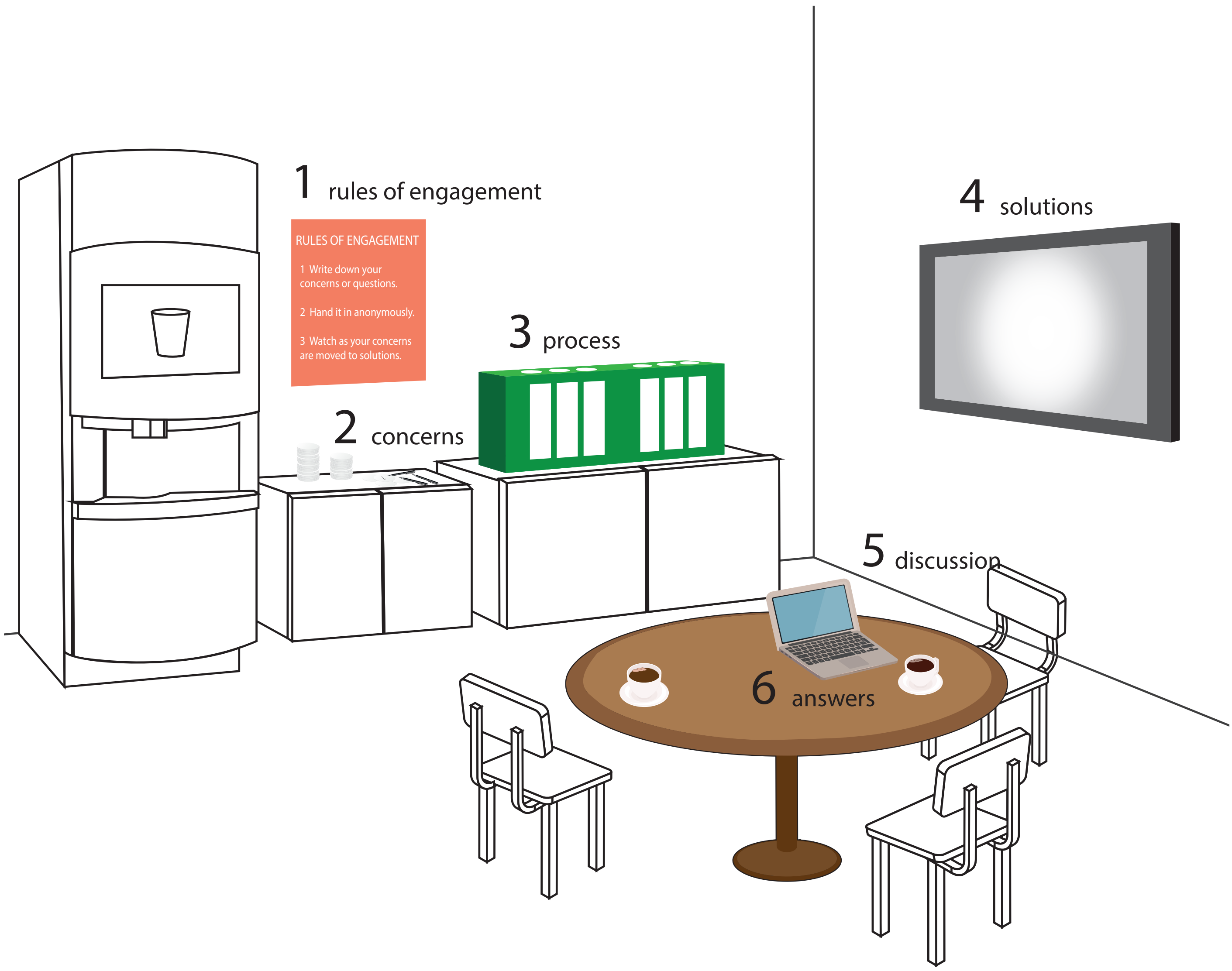
See that slowly all of the coasters are processed.

The answers, to the coasters that have been processed, are posted on an open forum that people will be referred to.

CONCEPT IN CONTEXT


RULES OF ENGAGEMENT
1 Write down your concerns or questions.
2 Hand it in anonymously.
3 Watch as your concerns are moved to solutions.

CONCEPT IN CONTEXT



CONCEPT EXPLANATION

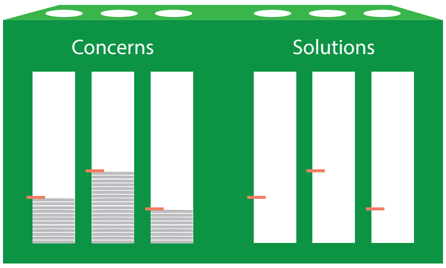
1 rules of engagement

The rules of engagement poster explains what the coasters and the 'ballot box' are for and how it works.

2 concerns

The coasters are provided as a blank slate for anyone to write their concerns, feedback or questions on. They can be deposited in the 'ballot box' to be processed and answered.

3 process



This 'ballot box' is where people can leave their concerns and see that the transformation team is busy answering the concerns. It's a representation of the upper levels taking everyone's concerns seriously.

4 solutions

While the coasters are being processed, some of the questions and answers will be shown on a screen in the same area as the 'ballot box'.

5 discussion

The questions and answers portrayed on the screen provoke conversations over coffee. This ensures that everyone is included in the conversation, not just the people who left a concern in the box.

6 answers

The answers to the questions and concerns put in the 'ballot box' can be found on a dedicated page on the company's internal website.

The Back Office

Some preparation is necessary for this concept to reach its full potential. This requires a commitment and a little work from the transformation leaders within the company. The biggest task that needs to happen before this concept can be placed in the office break rooms is that a few themes for the 'concerns' need to be defined. The best way to do so would be to already have some sort of poll within the company to see what concerns are most common. These can then be grouped into themes that will then be used, each for a separate cylinder, in the concept. By preparing in such a way, the transformation team is already communicating (indirectly) to all employees that they want to hear what people have to say and take them seriously.

Another way to really emphasise the feeling of being taken seriously is by announcing this concept with a handwritten note, from the CEO (or someone else from the top layer), personally addressing every employee. Of course, logistically it is a nightmare if your company has thousands of employees, so it can be a photocopied handwritten note. What matters most here is that as soon as an employee sees that the note is handwritten, it gives them the feeling that the CEO has taken time out of their day to write this. This translates into them feeling that they are being taken seriously. Although, if their name is in print letters and the rest is handwritten, that effect might be lost, so the ideal version is to have a personal handwritten note for every employee.

After the change has been announced, the concept needs to be placed in the office break rooms. Although it may not seem like it, this is also crucial in creating a feeling of being taken seriously. If the concept is just left in the break room and no one really knows where it came from or who left it there, then it might not be taken seriously and therefore the employees won't feel taken seriously. It is easy enough to avoid this; have a leader from the team in that department formally introduce the concept (possibly together with someone from the transformation team). This not only helps to clarify what it is and why it's there, but it also helps to create ownership amongst the team. The person introducing it could then also be the first to place a coaster in a cylinder, to set an example and lower the threshold for others to join in as well.

Once the concept has been in use for a week, the transformation team will be in charge of collecting the concerns and processing them. This includes everything: collecting the coasters, reading them, answering them, posting questions and answers on the dedicated intranet forum, returning coasters to the 'solutions' cylinders and creating and updating the screensaver in the break room. It seems like a lot of tasks, but most of these are already a part of what a transformation team does for the employees: answering questions and updating the intranet. If anything, this might even be a more efficient way for the transformation team to handle all the questions and feedback because now it is addressed in bulks rather than odd questions here and there spread out through the days and weeks.

CONCLUSION

For both points in the design challenge to be met (feeling taken seriously and embracing change) the product cannot be stand-alone. Essentially this design is creating a common ground between employees and management (see Figure 10), bringing them a step closer to each other and providing a cycle in which they can interact with each other with clear boundaries and expectations. The cycle (see Figure 11) consists of three interlocking cycles that allow for anyone to take part: cycle 1) someone who provides input, sees the process, takes part in discussion, gets an answer and repeats; cycle 2) someone who hasn't provided input but sees the process and takes part in discussions and repeats; and cycle 3) someone who takes part in the discussions, finds the answers and repeats.

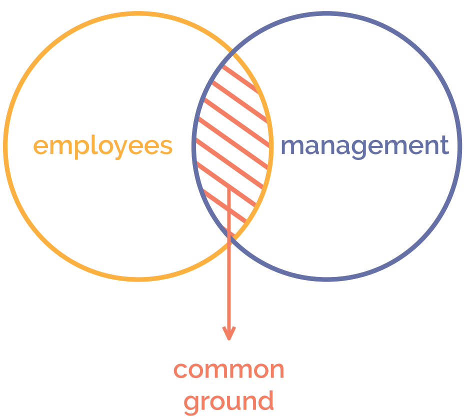


Figure 10. Creating common ground.

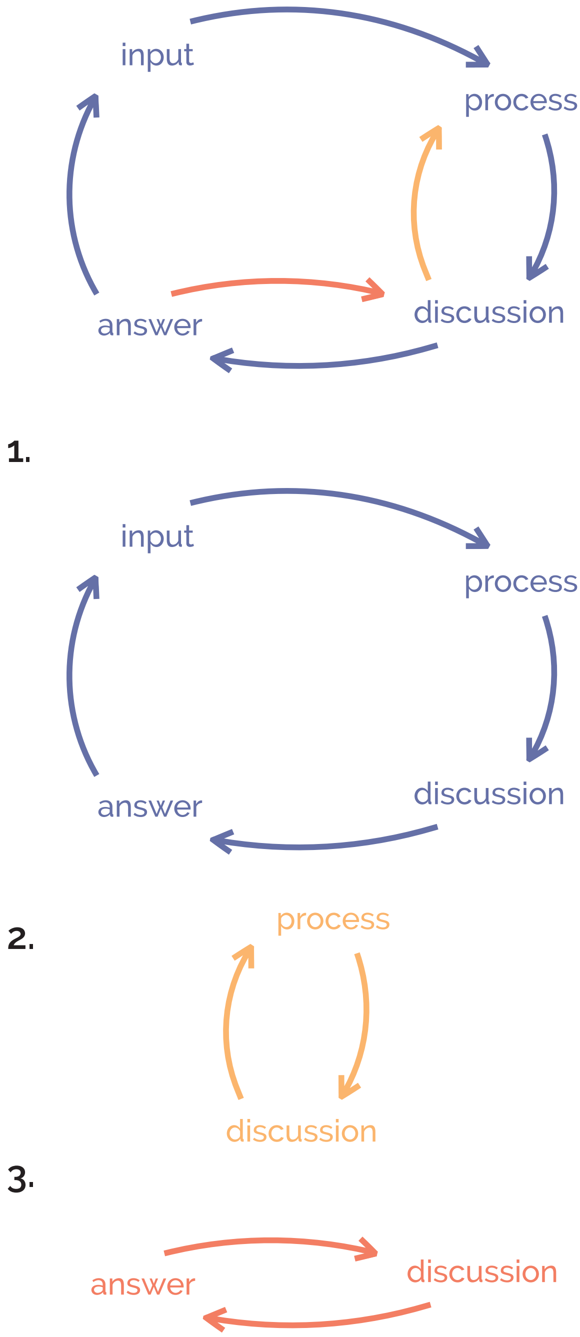


Figure 11. The interlocking cycles

Why is this a good concept?

It is anonymous

It creates a sense of togetherness in the office about the concerns

You can physically see that your input is being processed

Both management and employees can see what the concerns are in the office

Management can prioritise those concerns that are prevalent

The concerns become visible and tangible

Concerns can be addressed

It provides an ice-breaker to address concerns

There are clear boundaries (rules of engagement)

There is clear expectation management

Everyone can be a part of the cycle

Even people that haven't provided input can be a part of the cycle

Reflecting on the Emotional Journey

When looking back to the emotional journey, a specific moment in the timeline was chosen to design for. This design is a tool through which the communication in the transition can become more fluent and it might be able to address more than just that one moment in the transition. It can be seen as a recurring tool, with adjustments. For example, towards the end of the timeline when employees are asked to get involved it could be used to gather opinions about involvement as a more poll-style tool, rather than gathering questions as a more information-based tool.

THE DESIGN

6.0

TESTING

6.1 TESTING

Goal

The goal of this chapter is to test the concept and formulate an answer to the research question. It is important to distinguish between the study and the design (see Figure 12). As mentioned previously in Chapter 1.2, this is a research thesis. The biggest consequence attached to that distinction is that the final result and conclusion will not be a design, rather, it will be an answer to the research question. The design was therefore used as a stimulus in a test with respondents.

Method

Having spoken to an expert in consumer research, Lilian Henze, it quickly became apparent that there was a way to test both the acceptance of the design and the research question posed at the beginning of this thesis: co-creation. Lilian Henze suggested that an interview followed by an elaborate co-creation session with the respondents would not only help to find out whether the design would be accepted in a real-world situation but would also help to determine whether design could help create internal buy-in through change communication. One of the purposes of co-creation is to generate and develop meaning together (Ind and Coates, 2013). According to Ind and Coates (2013), involving the end user in co-creation can lead to more relevant and usable designs. It can involve the use of prototypes as a means by which to test user reactions (Ind and Coates, 2013). In this case, the 2D representation of a design is presented to users as a stimulus to test their reactions and together create more meaning: *'meaning emerges as the idea is used and in the conversations that recipients have with each other'* (Ind and Coates, 2013).

Considering the time constraint that accompanies a thesis and the variety of companies that would be addressed, it wasn't possible to perform an on-location co-creation session (in a room with a prototype, pens, papers, sticky-notes and an hour to co-create). Hence a compromise was made to perform said interview followed by a shorter co-creation with the respondent, over the phone. Of course, there are many limitations in co-creating over the phone, most importantly not being able to interact with the respondent in a physical space and not being able to see how the respondent interacts with the design as a stimulus. However, the results from the co-creation are a valuable addition to the testing of the design. They allowed for both the testing of the design and the testing of the research question.

EXPLORATORY RESEARCH

STUDY

RESEARCH THESIS

What can design offer, in addition to contemporary approaches, in change communication to create internal buy-in?

LITERATURE RESEARCH

CASE RESEARCH

DESIGN

INTERVIEWS

SYNTHESIS

DESIGN CHALLENGE

Design an intriguing, physical artefact that will be placed in the office to help workfloor employees feel like they are being taken seriously and embrace the company's change.

DESIGN

I don't want to test my design, I want to use my design as a stimuli in a test to come to an answer for the research question.

TESTING

This test should result in an answer to the research question, not whether the product is usable or accepted within the target group.

CONCLUSION

Figure 12. Exploratory Research, an Overview.

Synthesis

Over the course of three days, six of the original interview respondents were interviewed over the phone: two people from upper management (one of which is an internal communication professional), two people from middle management and two work floor employees. The research interviews at the beginning of this thesis were conducted at six different companies, and the respondents of these interviews were from four of those companies: Barco, a large Dutch national bank (confidential), KLM and Ultimaker. The purpose of not interviewing employees from the same or from merely two different companies, was to maintain the wide range of insights that reflect the variety of industries that these companies specialise in. As stated at the beginning of this thesis, the aim of conducting this thesis as a research thesis is to be able to explore the topic and yield a new perspective of design as an integral part of internal change communication. Part of what makes this thesis exploratory research is the inclusion of multiple companies and industries in the study. Hence, it was more applicable to conduct the test interviews with multiple companies than with just one or two. The interview protocol can be found in Appendix F and the transcriptions of the interviews can be found in Appendix G.

Key Findings

This thesis was determined to be a research thesis with the use of a design as a stimulus. The distinction between the study and the design (see Figure 12) means that there are also two different conclusions to be made: the feasibility, desirability and viability of the design and the answer to the research question. The following chapter (Chapter 6.2 Key Findings Design) discusses the feasibility, desirability and the viability of the design and concludes with redesign advice. The chapter after that (Chapter 7.1 Key Findings Study) discusses the conclusions that can be made pertaining to the research question.

6.2 KEY FINDINGS DESIGN

The stimulus that was used in this test was a PDF file containing the problem definition and the concept. The contents of that PDF file were the same as the contents in Chapter 5.3 on pages 64-69 of this thesis.

Design: Feasibility

A design can be deemed feasible if it is possible to do easily or conveniently. In this case, it was almost unanimous, the six respondents agreed that it was possible to create and use the design as it was presented to them. No one questioned the practicality of making or using it.

"This [the design] requires some time to process. But that also allows everyone to write down their comments."
upper management

It says "almost unanimous" because there were a few concerns. Although it was deemed to be possible to create and do by all six respondents, one respondent questioned the scalability of the design, and another referred to the cliché location of the design as being something that he found to be a disadvantage of the design:

"If you have a very large company, you are bound to one place with such a box, at least I think so. Or you have to place the same box in different places or something. I wonder how it scales."
middle management

"that it is placed near the coffee machine, that is a bit cliché [...] I find it quite a bit of a disadvantage because if it has not had any effect earlier then people will not take it so seriously"
work floor employee

Of course, there will always be concerns, especially when a design is tested for the first time. It is interesting that both concerns are about the location of the design. The concern about the cliché location could be remedied by placing the design in a different designated space. However, in other locations there will be different conditions that will need to be dealt with. For example, in a hallway people will just be passing by and there is no intention of discussing the topic in the hallway. A solution to this could be to create a designated space for the design, much like a "situation room" where the purpose of the room is to facilitate the design and its interaction.

The other concern, however, could be a little more complicated to remedy. The question is whether it is possible to scale up the design. How could the design be adapted to facilitate 1.000 different locations (for example)? The correspondence of each location could be shared.

A revised version of the design could include a digital data-dashboard that reflects the amount of concerns and the types of concerns from each department. This will contribute to feeling a part of something bigger and being taken seriously because your concern is up there and the whole company can see it (anonymously). Taking it a step further, this could almost function as a democracy: whichever concern theme has "the most votes" (has been handed in the most by each department) will be leading and get priority in the next meeting. This will lead to a feeling of being taken seriously because people will see that their concerns are being taken to the company and the company is responding by giving it a place in the next meeting.

Design: Desirability

Desirability has to do with whether someone wants to have or use a product/service. Again, this is where the distinction between a design thesis and a research thesis is important. In a design thesis the correct approach to this question would be to redesign until the answer is "yes, it is desirable". However, in a research thesis, where the design is used as the stimulus, there is less of a need to redesign until the design is desirable and accepted. Having said that, of course it is important to have a desirable design otherwise it will not be adopted, even in theory.

The results from the interviews show that the matter is a split decision. Three respondents said that they would use it, or at least consider using it, if they were to be the ones to place it in the office or if they were to be the ones to use it.

"I would consider it [...] I think it is certainly worth considering trying"
upper management

"Yes, I think so. Because I also think that people are very easy to complain about things, talk among themselves. And I think that the moment you have an opinion and there is a way to collectively collect it then you have to give your input"
work floor employee

The remaining three respondents weren't so quick to accept the design as it was presented to them. The reasons they presented for not wanting to use it were related to their beliefs of what was more important than collecting concerns:

> **"feeling that you are heard is based on that you take them [the employees] with you in a timely manner and personal attention is really the most important thing. I would always link this [the design] to something where you can also have personal attention."**
> middle management

> **"No, I do not think so. That's quite blunt, perhaps, but I think it is more effective for me to immediately start a conversation in person than to say something anonymously"**
> work floor employee

All in all, it was very apparent that this design isn't finished. Every respondent had some form of improvements to the design or conditions of use. This could be seen as something negative, but in the context of this research thesis it can be considered positive: this design led to solution-based thinking in a lesser version of a co-creation session.

The re-design suggestions, or conditions of use, that the respondents formulated are summed up under the heading Redesign Advice.

It is clear that this design is not ready to be introduced into a company situation, but with the adjustments according to the recommendations given by the respondents it could become a more desirable design. Desirability is often, if not always, a subjective matter, so it is seldom that everyone shares the same opinion considering the desirability of a design. However, when the opinions are split, as in this case, fifty-fifty, it is a clear indication that there is still some redesigning to do. Even with all of the criticisms, every respondent did see an advantage in the design, even those who didn't want to use the concept.

> **"The visibility. There is a lot of attention for the change because it is very visible. I think that is an advantage and I also think that it is advantageous that you see how many concerns there are and you see how many solutions there are, that also gives a kind of reflection of the group"**
> middle management

> **"The advantage, I think, is if people don't have time to talk to each other, this is of course timeless. You don't have to make an appointment with someone. It is always available"**
> work floor employee

Design: Viability

Viability can be seen as the question whether something is capable of working successfully. In this case that means two things: a) would the design be used if it were placed in the design context; and b) would the design lead to employees feeling that they are being taken seriously. In both cases, this design had a split answer. As mentioned above, only three of the six respondents would use the design. However, this only speaks to part of the question whether the design would work. The other part is that there might be components that make it attractive for other people to use (besides the six interviewees).

"You notice that Q&A sessions don't always work, because of a lack of time or people who do not want to speak in public [...] I think it [the design] can work, that it will certainly contribute to the conversation to answer the questions that arise after a certain announcement"

upper management

"This [the design] makes it more accessible [lowers the threshold], I think"

middle management

"It is very practical, so I think that is very good and on the one hand it shows that people have thought about it, a kind of acknowledging [of the employees and their concerns]"

work floor employee

The two main points here are that the design lowers the threshold for people to give feedback or express their concerns and that the anonymity provided through this design plays a large role in giving an opportunity to people, who would otherwise not have spoken up, to express their concerns. This last point is interesting, because as one of the respondents pointed out, there is both a pro and a con to the use of anonymity in this design. The pro is that people might feel more comfortable contributing and providing genuine input. The con is that this design doesn't provide an opportunity to see what kind of concerns have been handed once they have been placed in the box. Only when they have been processed is it possible to see what concerns were handed in, which speaks to the transparency of the process. The respondent stated it very poignantly:

"It is about the balance between transparency and discretion."

middle management

Design: Discussion

The three topics of feasibility, desirability and viability have been discussed because this is what could determine whether a design is accepted and implementable or not. The overlap of where those three meet is the so called "sweet spot" of where the most valuable designs exist. Although it is relevant, this thesis isn't looking to fill that sweet spot. The aim was to create a new perspective of design as an integral part of internal change communication. In a sense, this has been done. This isn't a one-size-fits-all solution, but it can provide a generic design to build from and tailor to specific needs. It has already been mentioned that opinions are a factor in deciding whether a design is desirable, but context plays a large role in determining whether a design is viable or feasible. Each industry, company and department has their own culture, methods and processes that need to be taken into account when designing a solution. A few of the respondents were quick to place this design in their own situation and relate to it from their context. Some even pondered the differences between their context and that of someone else's.

"I can very well imagine that at the head office you would place it differently or call it something different than here [...] where a very different type of people work"

work floor employee

When asked whether this was something recognisable or new to the respondents the general reaction was that it felt familiar but that they hadn't seen it in that form or process before.

"[interviewer: have you seen a similar type of solution before?] No, not like that. Yes of course message boards on which people can post things and Yammer boards [a tool for companies for internal use] and things like that, but not in this physical form"

middle management

"[interviewer: is the solution recognisable?] No, I don't think so. Well the forum part [...] The concept of asking questions about change and we give you the answer, I recognize that. I think the way of "we just put a thing down" and that in combination with a screen where the follow-up is also given, submitting [input] is often very separate or very digital, I think that's good, and that's different from what I've seen"
work floor employee

There were two respondents who had seen a similar concept before. One of those two had equated it with the classic suggestion-box:

"No, this is actually, as I see it, an idea box with some extra features. So, I think an idea box works the same [as this design]"
work floor employee

The other respondent had already implemented a very similar design in a department in their company:

"this [the concept] is a system that is known to [the company], especially when it comes to production. There we work with what we call "Employee Driven Initiatives" E.D.I. To actually strive for continuous improvement [...] there they ask [the employees], what is a problem that you run into and what do you think is a solution that ensures that we can do better in the future."
upper management

This begs the question, if it was so recognisable, what did design contribute to this communication solution? This will be discussed in Chapter 7.1 Key Findings Study and Chapter 7.2 Conclusions and Contirbutions. To conclude this chapter with a very observing, poignant and to-the-point quote:

"The quality of such a tool depends on the input that people give"
middle management

Redesign Advice

Before getting into the research question, this section provides some advice for possible redesigns. As explained previously, part of the test interviews was a short co-creation session, in the broadest of the term, with the respondent. The redesign advice that the respondents gave are summed up below.

Provide a choice of different designs that could support the solution process, creating ownership amongst the employees over the design.

Rephrase the concept to "correspondence and process" rather than "concerns and solutions" to accommodate more types of feedback or comments and not just questions.

Clearly explain the context of the change (that might be a part of the back office or come before the implementation of this design).

Make the input open and transparent by using writable magnets on a magnetic board rather than coasters in a tube which you can't read.

Make the output of the design a dialogue or conversation rather than just an answer on the company intranet.

Have a group of motivators or opinion leaders from the department help implement the design and stimulate people to join in.

Stimulate solution-thinking by making the coaster half-half for concerns and solutions.

These are all interesting and valid points and could lead to a better design that is more feasible, desirable and viable. The point about making the input transparent relates back to the quote from earlier where a respondent said that there should be a balance between transparency and discretion. A design solution to maintain that balance could be to have a magnet wall behind a curtain: the writable magnets can be read by everyone, while the curtain provides anonymity and discretion when leaving behind a comment. Of course, this is an elementary and undeveloped solution, so it is merely a suggestion that could lead towards a more mature design where that balance is kept.

Another interesting redesign could be to stimulate solution-thinking. This could indeed be done by making the hole for the coasters a semi-circle (as opposed to the circle that it is now). The coaster would need to be torn in half to hand it in, one half in the concerns side and one half in the solutions side. This is one example of how solution-thinking could be stimulated. A different way to do so is to have two separate boxes, one for concerns and one for solutions, and alternate them. Everyone has two days to hand in their concerns in the first box, after those two days they are hung up in a public space, and then everyone has two days to think of solutions for those concerns and hand those in the second box. This is a less subtle way of stimulating solution-thinking and may not work as effectively, but it does provide the opportunity for people to hand in solutions as opposed to just handing in concerns. Some more generic ways to stimulate solution-thinking could be to involve a competitive angle or a reward system, but these might be considered too aggressive or insensitive considering that this can be a sensitive topic.

The best advice, which incidentally one of the respondents also mentioned, is to take the design and test it. Not on the phone, but build a prototype and test it in various settings.

THE STUDY

7.0

CONCLUSION

7.1 KEY FINDINGS STUDY

The research question presented at the beginning of this thesis was:

What can design offer, in addition to contemporary approaches, in change communication to create internal buy-in?

Taking into account the considerable time and resource constraints that accompany the writing of a thesis, it is not possible to answer the research question with complete confidence. It is, however, possible to present insights from the study and make conclusions, with a degree of certainty, about the study.

One way in which design could contribute to creating internal buy-in through communication is through the use of creative methods such as the use of brainwriting, analogies and co-creation (as used in this thesis). However, the "contemporary approaches" in the research question refers to the use of such methods as co-creation to help design solutions to problems. Currently co-creation is becoming more popular in multiple domains as a way to approach problem solving or design innovative solutions. Therefore, it would be too superficial to say that design offered co-creation as a tool. It is much more interesting to look at the process and what design has offered in terms of the process of solving an internal change communication problem.

In Conversation with a Communication Professional

Creating Dialogue

To get a better understanding of what the process of a communication professional would look like, it is important to consult one. Unfortunately, only one out of the two communication professionals that was a part of the original interviewing was available for testing. This interviewee was quick to recognise the concept and saw more faults in it than effective solutions. However, they did say that it was important to get all of the stuff out from under the table for it to be dealt with. They recognised the design because it was very similar to a design that is already implemented in their company.

What they found interesting about the design presented during this interview was the idea of making it measurable: how many questions are there and how many solutions are there. Their largest concern was that even though this design lowers the threshold and gives employees the chance to write down their concerns, it doesn't provide the possibility of a dialogue. It keeps the two groups, employees and management, separate. In their experience, they found that it works better not to make the employees dependent on the management group for answers, but it is more effective to stimulate employees to find their own solutions.

An Approach to Problem Solving

In their opinion there isn't such a thing as a ready-made solution to change implementation problems. Their approach to solving a similar problem would be to gather information and then to make sure that employees get the space to express their concerns and search for solutions together. The early adopters would be used as ambassadors who will share success stories about the change. That is what they are attempting to do now. Listening is crucial: the reason behind a question is usually more important that the question.

> **"listening is very important [...] it may be a bit more psychology than communication, but the reason for a question is usually more important than the question itself"**
> communication professional

Where they have recently had trouble is during Q&A sessions that there weren't many questions, perhaps due to a lack of anonymity. There was a need for a conversation-starter.

7.2 CONCLUSIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Goal

The aim of this chapter is to conclude this thesis by discussing what contributions design can offer internal change communication in both practice and theory.

Method

The conclusions made below are a culmination of this research thesis. They were made using all of the research conducted throughout this thesis and validated with qualitative interviews. Collecting data through interviews allows for concurrent verbal probing (Willis, 2004) which aids in collecting qualitative data. Unfortunately, due to the restrictions in both time and resources, only two professionals were consulted. One professional was trained in design and could offer the design perspective to these conclusions: Eva Frese, a PhD expert in innovation management and corporate entrepreneurship. The other professional is an innovation consulting leader at Dutch consultancy firm Strategiemakers, Jochem van Hove, who deals with communication as an integral part of his work. These two professionals were consulted to help validate the following conclusions.

Contributions in Practice

After speaking to a practicing communication expert (referred to in the previous chapter), it seems as if design has very little to offer internal change communication. However, Eva Frese was consulted to help clarify and validate what design can offer communication. After discussing this thesis with her and explaining the design, she said that it was clear that design could contribute to communication.

Boundary Objects

An interesting insight from the conversation with Eva, and possibly the most relevant contribution design can offer internal change communication, is the use of boundary objects.

> *'Boundary objects are objects which are both plastic enough to adapt to local needs and the constraints of the several parties employing them, yet robust enough to maintain a common identity across sites. They are weakly structured in common use, and become strongly structured in individual- site use. These objects may be abstract or concrete. They have different meanings in*

different social worlds but their structure is common enough to more than one world to make them recognizable, a means of translation. The creation and management of boundary objects is a key process in developing and maintaining coherence across intersecting social worlds.' – Star and Griesemer. Institutional Ecology, 'Translations' and Boundary Objects. 1989. p. 393

When testing the design in this thesis, the conversations became easy because there was already a representation of a design, something visual that everyone had a basic understanding of, and that people could point at and discuss. This made the conversation more tangible: instead of talking about theoretical ways that the problem could be solved, it was possible to get into the nitty-gritty details of an existing, visual design with actual features. It provided a map that helped to guide the people into a certain frame of mind and stimulate their creative thinking. Considering that this was merely a representation of a design, the effect would be much stronger if there was an actual, tangible prototype. This would make the conversation even more fruitful and lead to much deeper insights about what the communication solution needs to be. Internal change communication could really benefit from the use of boundary objects as discussion facilitators because there is often a lot of uncertainty and lack of clarity concerning the change.

Boundary objects could provide a form of common understanding and clarity about topics, that are complex or unclear, that allow for people to have facilitated discussions. By creating a better understanding about the change and how employee questions and queries will be addressed, you can reduce resistance to the change and create internal buy-in (Llenza, 2008).

Although this claim was not validated when consulting Jochem, it is still something that could contribute to communication. Boundary objects could be used to help stakeholders converse in the same language across departments and hierarchy levels. The idea is that the object has different meanings to different departments or levels of hierarchy, but that it is still common enough for each department or level to understand it. It can help create a common understanding within the company.

Users Inform Design

As mentioned in the beginning of this thesis, design looks at the user to help inform the designer. Often in the field of communication it is the other way around, the communication professional has the information and transmits it to the user. What was attempted in this thesis was an unbiased approach, to let the data speak for itself, as it were. By using grounded theory as the main data collection and synthesizing method, the insights and conclusions formed themselves. However, the problem definition and therefore the solution design were approached from the user perspective. It could be argued that this is an inherent trait of the designer and not a coincidental occurrence driven by the data, but that is an entirely different discussion.

Regardless of the intent, this is where design can offer a new perspective. By adopting the design perspective in communication, it would mean that the receivers of information would help to create the tool through which they receive the information. This is also what the communication professional was referring to when they mentioned that listening was so important: listen to what the employees want and need and then help them to attain it. It was also inadvertently brought up by one of the test interviewees, who said that to create a feeling of ownership, the employees should have a choice in what tool they want to use.

Having a user-centred approach allows for users to inform the design of a tool that they will be using, allowing for it to not only meet their needs, but also creating ownership over that tool and the company change. If the change isn't strongly or exclusively top driven, employees will feel a willingness to participate in the change and take ownership of the change, creating internal buy-in (Alvesson and Sveningsson, 2015). Considering that the communication professional that was consulted for this thesis already seemed to be aware of this approach, but that none of the literature even breached the topic, this might be less relevant in the world of practicing professionals. However, the change communication literature could definitely benefit from this new perspective.

This claim was validated Jochem. Involving users in the creation of both the message and the means by which the message is portrayed can help them to embrace the change. As mentioned in Chapter 4.2 Brainwriting Sessions: Conclusion, change is becoming the new default, which makes it important to be able to embrace changes as they come.

The Research Question

What can design offer, in addition to contemporary approaches, in change communication to create internal buy-in?

The research question deliberately names "contemporary approaches" as something that has already contributed to communication and is therefore a limitation to the answer of this question. However, the understanding of contemporary approaches is relative. For example, if you have worked in a traditional corporation for years, then Design Thinking (for example) might sound quite new to you, whereas if you work at a design consultancy, then that methodology might not sound new. Although methodologies such as Design Thinking may be considered as a contemporary approach, and therefore might not be the answer to this research question, it can still offer a new perspective on communication.

Contributions in Theory

This thesis has mainly dealt with communication in practice, but there is still a theoretical aspect to be considered. As mentioned in Chapter 1.2 Research Thesis: Significance, the literature in change communication has almost exclusively been approached communication from the top-down perspective. It is hoped that this thesis will contribute to the theory by adding a bottom-up approach to change communication. This bottom-up approach includes seeing employees as more than just employees. People spend most of their lives at work, so when something there changes, it is bound to effect their personal life.

This thesis not only introduced a perspective of design as an integral part of communication, but a bottom-up approach to change communication, attempting to look beyond the scope of the company and include personal emotions and struggles in the design challenge and solution.

Design in change communication is a topic that is underrepresented in academic literature, and this thesis has opened the door for more students and academia alike to explore this topic.

7.3 LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

Limitations of this Research

This thesis has only just scraped the surface of what design might be able to offer internal change communication. Having been conducted as exploratory research, this thesis hasn't even begun to reach the depths in either research or insights that deep-dive research could reach. It has allowed for a reflection of design as an integral part of internal change communication. It has not, however, allowed for deeper and more practical research into the difference between a practicing designer's approach to communication design, and a communication professional's approach to communication design.

The intent of this thesis was to explore what role design has in the field of internal change communication and to hopefully shed light on an underrepresented topic in change management: internal communication. To this end, the results of this thesis have attempted to create this new perspective and opportunity for further research into the topic.

Considering that there were very limiting time and resource constraints that accompanied this thesis, the conclusions and insights should be treated as preliminary and in need of further research and development. Unfortunately, the limited time did not allow for more thorough testing of the design in practice or for the consulting of more practicing communication professionals. This could have provided a more critical view on both the design and the answer to the research question.

Recommendations for Further Research

Further research is needed to truly be able to conclude what design can offer internal change communication. First and foremost, further research should be done into the difference between designers and communication professionals. Finding out which tools, methods and approaches each professional employ will help to determine what design can offer communication, or what communication might be able to offer design.

Furthermore, it would be interesting to build a prototype of the design and test it with users. This could provide more clarity as to why certain tools do or don't work in change communication. With this knowledge, it could be valuable to redesign and iterate until it could become a generic tool. Such a tool could provide many companies with a simple blue-print of how to approach their internal change communication.

This thesis offers an insight into the world of internal change communication and the struggles that companies and employees are dealing with on this topic. The conclusions presented show a first attempt at integrating the perspectives of design and internal change communication.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

PERSONAL REFLECTION

At the beginning of this thesis I had set some personal learning ambitions: I wanted to create a project to be proud of and that would be enjoyable to work on for twenty weeks, and I wanted to find my own graphic style for the report. I feel that I have achieved both of these ambitions.

The final style of my thesis is very simple, which at first, I thought wasn't "designer enough", but it is very debatable whether that exists and what that would mean. I am very happy with the look and style of my report. Looking back on previous projects, I may have already had a style without noticing it. A lot of my previous reports, although adapted to the colour palette of the client and made together with a group, were also very simple, functional styles. Granted, this wasn't a huge priority in my thesis, but it is important for me to know that I am able to make a presentable report in a style that I am comfortable with.

By making the deliberate choice not to graduate with a company I was able to explore a topic unfettered. Although it was sometimes difficult for me to pinpoint what the purpose and final goal of the thesis was, I think it was worth it. Being able to explore this topic on my own terms has helped me to get a better understanding of what internal change communication is and what role design can play. It has also allowed me to experience what it is like to lead and carry out a project independently. Thus far, in my master, the projects have all been either in a group or in two's. Now, more than ever, I have learned that it is important to play to my strengths but to also continue to learn. Using tools and methods that I hadn't used before (e.g. grounded theory, emotional journey and interaction analogies) was exciting and I look forward to using some of them again in the future. I believe that during this thesis I understood what my strengths were and that I was able to ask for help where I felt that I was lacking.

Even though there wasn't a company directly involved, of course I still had to take multiple stakeholders into account: everyone that I spoke to as a source for my research, but also my supervisory team. In hind sight, I think that I could have asked for more input from my chair and mentor at times where I felt that I was stuck or not getting results. Regardless, I feel that I was able to handle their input well, even if it was something that I decided not to take aboard. I felt that I was informed enough to make decisions concerning the direction of the project and was able to take feedback into consideration, but ultimately made the decision whether to use that feedback or not based on the knowledge I had gained.

In a next project I will seek for more structure, which will help me to define a purpose or a final goal at the beginning of the project. In turn, this will help by pointing me in one direction, knowing where the project is headed and will help to gather the right tools and methods to use in order to reach that point. Although I feel that I did ask for help when I needed it, I could have asked for help sooner or more often, which I aim to do in future projects.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

Semi structured interview.

The structure that was used to interview respondents in the research phase of the thesis.

Research questions

Are changes communicated to all levels of the organisation?

What tools are used to communicate?

What are the pains and pleasures concerning communication?

Good afternoon, how nice that you want to participate in my research.
I will introduce myself and briefly explain what the research is about: I am Stephanie and with this project I want to graduate from TU Delft in the field of innovation and communication. My project is about improving the internal 'buy-in' (support base) for the innovation and change of a company.

What I am currently investigating is how change and communication are going within your company. Before we start, I would like to ask if mind that I record this interview?

- **The recordings are for personal use in this investigation.**
- **I will also mention your job title, but otherwise it is anonymous.**
- **I will save the recordings on my computer during my project (6 months), and then I will delete them.**
- **You can end this conversation at any time without having to give a reason.**

Do you agree that I record this?

Intro

What is your job title?

What does that entail?

Change

Can you think of a number of changes in the company that you experienced in the past year? [one positive and one negative]

How did you experience that?

Communication

Was it communicated to you that this change would take place?

How was it communicated to you?

Who was involved?

What did you like about this?

What did you not like about this?

Who was responsible for the communication?

What would you like to change about the communication?

Closing

Do you have anything to add or any comments?

Thank you for all your input and for allowing me to take so much of your time.

I would like to share the research results with you. If you are interested in that, then I can write down your name, and I can send you the result at the end of the project, around the second quarter of 2019.

Possible probes

Who was involved

Who was responsible for the communication?

Who was the target group? Who was meant to receive the communication? (Was it adjusted accordingly?)

APPENDIX B

Notes per research interview.

The notes that were taken about each interview. They reflect the general topics that were discussed. Organised per company, alphabetically, and within each company in order of hierarchy (upper management first).

To see the confidential appendix, please contact the author.

Barco

Head of Internal Communication

In this interview the respondent explains that the purpose of internal change communication is to get rid of all complexity, bring clarity to everyone about the roles and responsibilities. The respondent proceeds to elaborate on the complexity of change communication that accompanies a global company such as Barco. They also explain the situation concerning unions in their country and what influence that has on change communication. Specifically, the restrictions it places on communication. Current internal communication channels are named and the process of how the respondent has approached change communication is described. They try to involve all employees as much as possible concerning the change. The interview concludes with the respondent saying that the change project that was just described isn't a standard for how they approach change and that in other projects they try to involve employees much sooner.

Barco

General Management

This repondent describes the change that their company is currently in and proceeds to elaborate on why a change didn't work in the past, and why the current change communication is working. They explain that what they liked about the communication was that the CEO gave a presentation that was then easy to use in all other meetings concerning the change. What they didn't like was the motivation behind the change. If the respondent were to do it differently, they would make the general announcement shorter and more concise.

Barco

Director of Innovation and Design Thinking

During this interview, the respondent

elaborately explains the change project that the company is currently in. They say who is responsible for the change communication and describe how the company is trying to cultivate a network and culture rather than just communicating change. They praise the current Head of Internal Communication for making the communication much more personal and suggest that in the future all the communication should be more personal and more like story-telling.

Barco

Director Product Management

In this interview, the respondent speaks of the change that the company is making and names the types of channels that are used for communication. They explain that there is a need for ‘proof-points’ that can show employees that the change is relevant to their jobs. An interesting point that is made by the respondent, is that the people who aren’t actively involved in the change are still doing their work and keeping the company afloat and that there should be more attention for those people. After all, they are keeping the business running which allows for the change to happen.

KLM

Product Manager

This respondent explains what KLM calls the Flight Plan that details their new strategy. They name the various communication channels that are used and how frequently they are used. A consequence of being such a large company is that whenever there is a company announcement, it needs to be done in multiple sessions to accommodate everyone. An example of a communication tool that could work really well is given: the Intern on a Mission videos that can also be found on YouTube. If these videos were to be applied to company changes then they could really have an impact.

KLM

Management trainee

During this interview the respondent talks about more small-scale changes that occur within their department. The Flight Plan is also referred to and the respondent says that the 'how' is written in the Flight Plan but that it doesn't really have an influence on their work. The different channels used for communication are named and the respondent critiques the communication in that the 'people-care' is lacking. A concluding comment was made that there is no overview or communication in between the Flight Plan that is company-wide strategy and the department specifics.

KLM

Product OwnerThinking

The respondent in this interview explains their job and how they go about implementing changes internally within KLM. They speak about how they handle the communication concerning these smaller, but impactful changes. The Flight Plan is mentioned and the respondent cannot recall where they received it from, they say that it is something everyone receives through the proverbial grape-vine. In their specific department there are people who have direct contact with the top management of KLM, which is something that they like and makes the communication easier.

Dutch National Bank

Customer Experience Design Lead

During this interview the respondent explains the change that the company is currently in and the communication channels that are used to communicate the change. They recall a different situation in a previous job at another company, where the change communication was very different. They debate which of these approaches to change communication might be better and what advantages and disadvantages there are to both approaches. What the respondent finds most important in change communication is personal attention. They believe that every manager should be responsible for the change communication in their team, and should approach every team member personally. The respondent also breaches the topic of transparency in the process. A concluding remark is made that when changes are communicated the context is provided, which provides a better understanding of why the change is happening.

Dutch National Bank

Designer

The respondent in this interview briefly explains the change that the company is going through and names the different channels that are used for communication. This respondent was one of a select few that were included in the earlier stages of the change process. Therefore, the communication that they experienced wasn't generalisable for other employees at the same company. Considering that the respondent was included relatively early on, their opinion of the communication is positive. They felt informed and liked that the context of why the change was happening was provided.

Red Cross

Head of Communication

This respondent elaborated on the different stakeholders that all need to be included in communication, not only within the structure of the company, but also (for example) all of the volunteers of the Red Cross. The respondent detailed the process of determining the new company strategy and explained that everyone was allowed to have a say in what the new strategy would like like. They then elaborate on how the new strategy is being formed. In terms of improvements in communication, the respondent did say that there is room for improvement: currently there is much information to be found, but it is hard to find. Currently, they are trying to create an ecosystem where everyone can find the information that is relevant to them.

Red Cross

Head of the Disaster Response Unit

During this interview, the respondent named a change that was recently implemented in their department. When referring to the recent change, they mention that it was a long time coming, but that the change itself happened very rapidly. They elaborate on the types of communication used when the new company strategy is introduced. Everyone has the opportunity to give an opinion or feedback about the change.

Red Cross

Portfolio Officer

In this interview the respondent refers to a change that was recently made and what the consequences were of that change. The respondent says that a lot of what may be considered to be smaller changes are put on hold to be picked up and taken along with the larger change process. They say that change isn’t bad and that sometimes it can lead to more structure, but it takes a lot of energy. A concluding remark is that they feel that the communication in their team is really good.

Ultimaker

Senior Vice President Product Management

In this interview the respondent explains how the communication concerning company changes is approached in their company. They take measures to make the changes relatable, visual, tangible and accessible to every employee. Internal resistance to change is mentioned and the respondent says that they don't necessarily believe in cultural change projects but wants to let the market speak to their own needs and lets this guide the company's strategy and changes. To conclude, they remark that only once everyone understands the change and why it needs to happen is it interesting and valuable to talk about any resistance or objections to the change. These are discussions that can lead to progress.

Ultimaker

Manager

This respondent details the biggest changes that the company has gone through in the past five years. They explain that because of their growth, a majority of their team has been working at the company for less than a year. This has its consequences on the internal communication, because some employees may have missed a kick-off if that was an event that only happened at the beginning of the year. They explain their role in translating the communication from upper management to their team. An improvement that they would like to see is that a few employees are included in the change process early on, to help create a better understanding of the context and why the change needs to happen. To conclude the interview, they explain the way that the communication works now and say that it works very well.

Ultimaker

Software Engineer

Straight away this respondent points out that they think getting everyone in a company on the same page never quite works. They explain the change that the company has gone through and says that the communication about the change was continuous, clear and transparent. The respondent then proceeds to explain the process of communication. Their one critique was that they find a lot of meetings to be redundant. The respondent understands that the meetings might be necessary, but that they still feel useless sometimes, which annoys him.

Unilever

Vice President Food Solutions

During this interview the respondent elaborates on the complications of communicating within such a large, global company. There are lot of logistical components that need to be taken into account. The respondent says that the most important part of internal change communication is the communication of the company purpose and vision. Only after that is it relevant to explain the 'how', the mechanics as to how the purpose and vision will be achieved. What they also deem to be important is to listen to the employees. The respondent would like to see that the offices located around the world are more connected, so that the communication between colleagues doesn't have to depend on your location.

Unilever

Research and Development Transformation Lead

This respondent explains the process of a change that is currently being applied within the company. They go into detail about the types of communication used to communicate the change. The respondent describes a lesson that they learned during their previous experiences in change communication: don't spend too much energy on the resistors of change, instead, spend energy on those that are enthusiastic and are invested in carrying out the change. They mention a communication tool that was developed as a part of the recent change communication and then they explained that it wasn't used because the employees felt that there was no need for it. As a concluding remark, the respondent would have liked to have seen a tool, or some other way to get people actively involved in the change.

Unilever

Innovation Chef

During this interview the respondent recalls their reaction to hearing about the change that the company is still busy implementing. They go into detail about how the change was announced and what the follow-up procedure was. What they find most important is that they wanted to get clarity, as quickly as possible, concerning their job. They elaborate on the consequences that such a change could have on their personal life, not only on their work life. They recall that the people in charge of the change didn't have answers to the questions and that they had to go after it themselves. The respondent would like to see an improvement in expectation management: knowing what you can expect from a change announcement.

APPENDIX C

List of insights.

The list of insights that resulted from the interviews.

Timing

- waiting on each other

- on hold until it can be included

- insight into the phase of change the company is in

- long preamble, short and fast end sprint (find balance)

- more regular updates wanted about direction

- one large scale announcement for everyone otherwise there will be speculation and rumours

Energy

- reinvent the wheel, sometimes it's a better wheel

- personal attention from manager/team lead feels good

- getting people involved creates more energy and enthusiasm for the change

- focus on people that are already willing to change, not on the resistors

Continuity

- constant change can be difficult

- departments that transform independently but simultaneously (keep an eye on timing & continuity)

- work outside the transformation continues (people outside the department still expect the same)

Sources

- overload of information sources

- combination of formal and informal

- every source has own abbreviations

- combination of meeting & presentation & written, sometimes videos

- people aren't waiting to receive yet another tool

Involvement

- are allowed to ask to be more involved

- those involved are privy to information others are not

- those that show leadership skills are involved

- creating change through internal change agents (bottom-up)

- slowly involving more employees in the change

Relevance

- feel connected to colleagues and work, not company (it's smaller that way)

- context sometimes provided

- might not feel the relevance to your job

- might not be involved if deemed irrelevant for you

Process

- there are procedures in place for communication, everyone accepts that

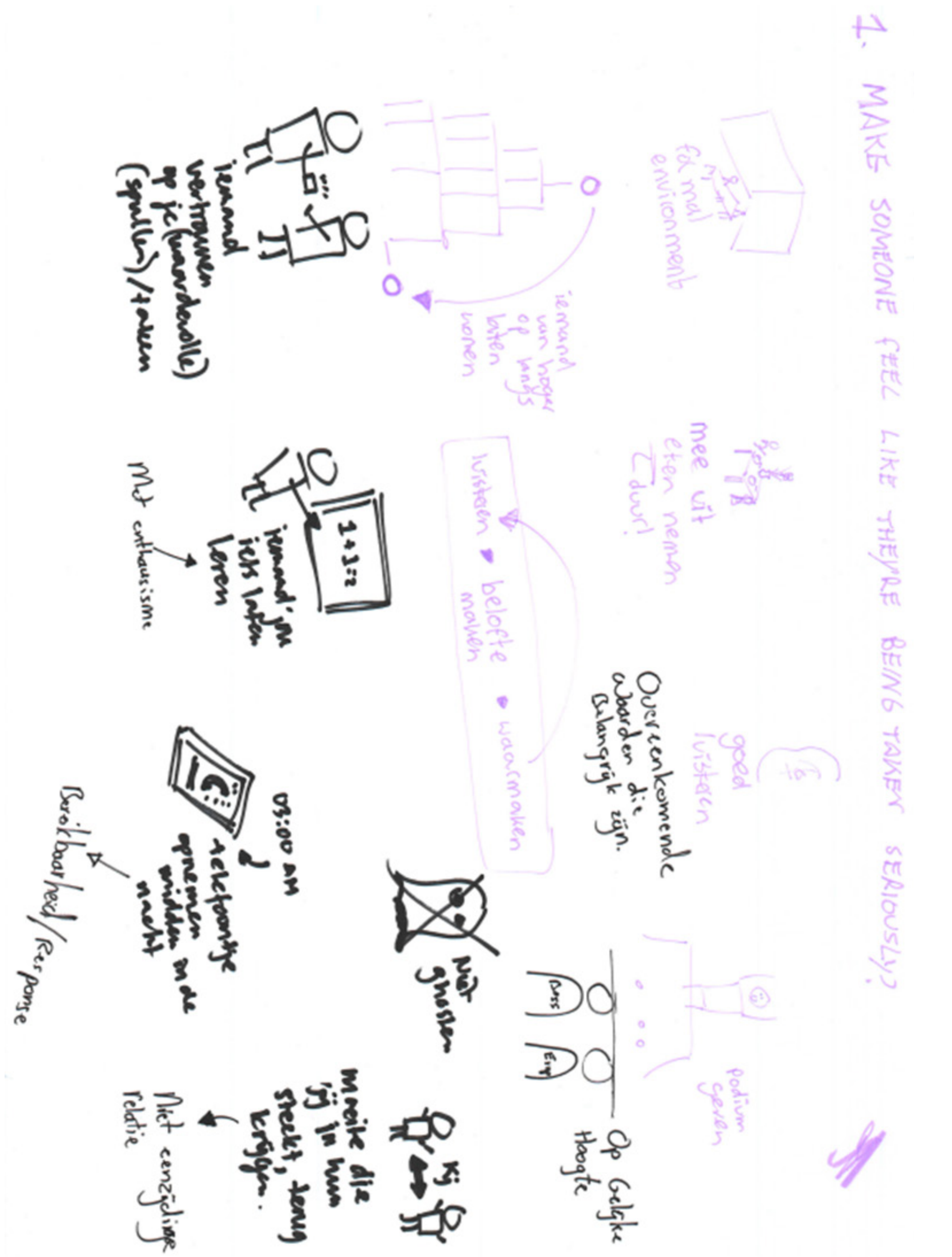
- follow-ups are planned to check in with employees

APPENDIX D

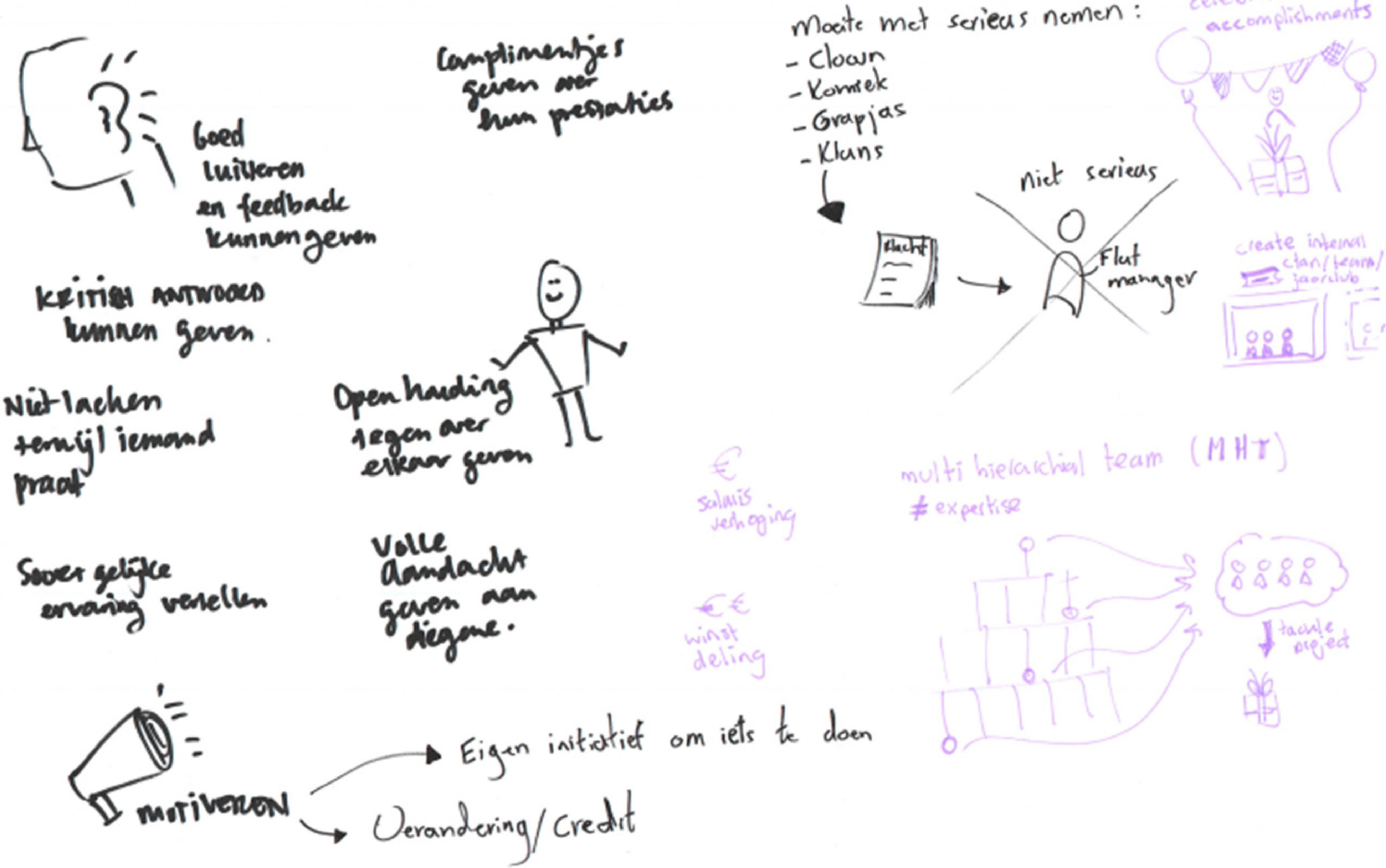
Brainwriting sessions.

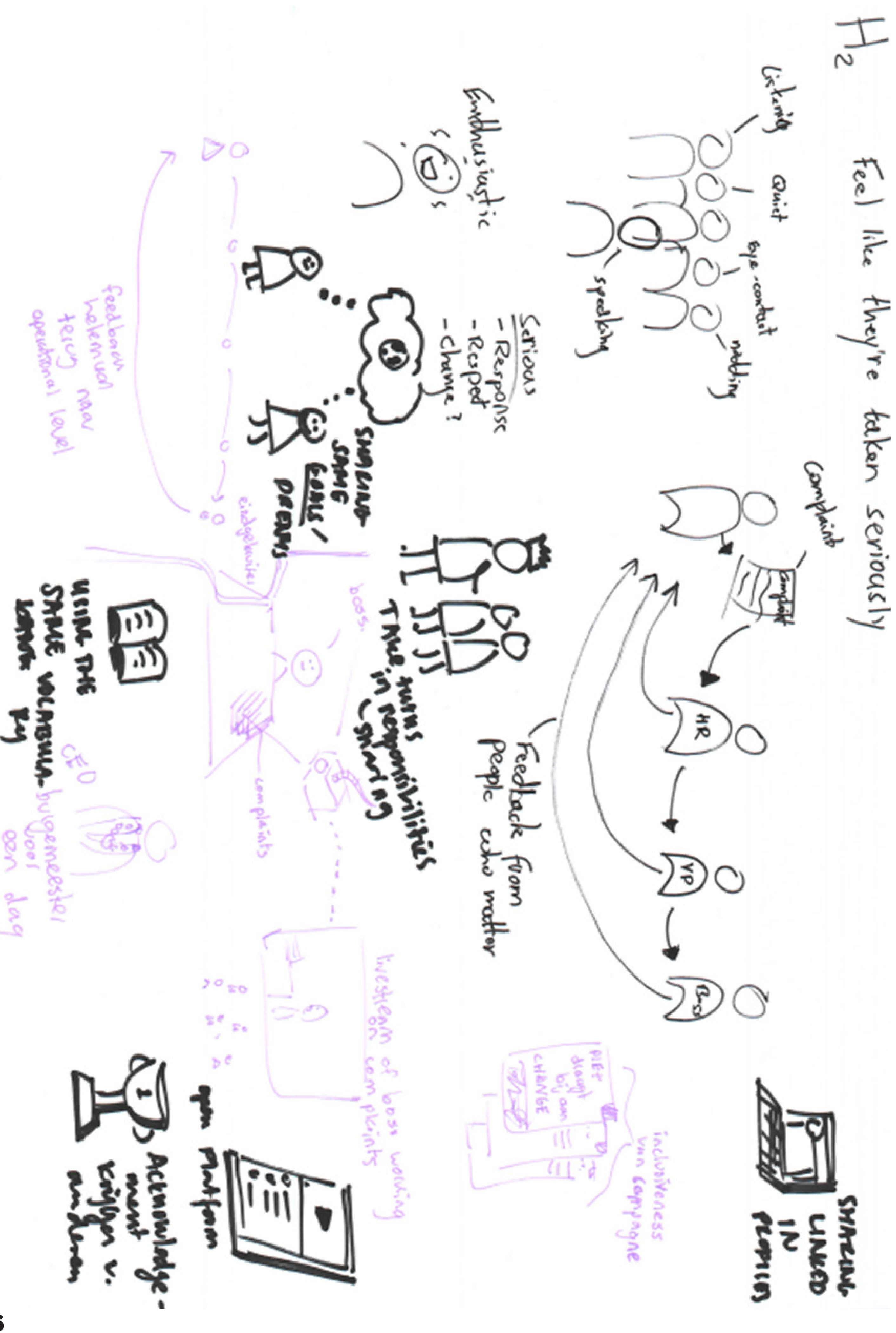
The results of the brainwriting sessions, organised per question.

Question 1: How do you make someone feel like they are being taken seriously?

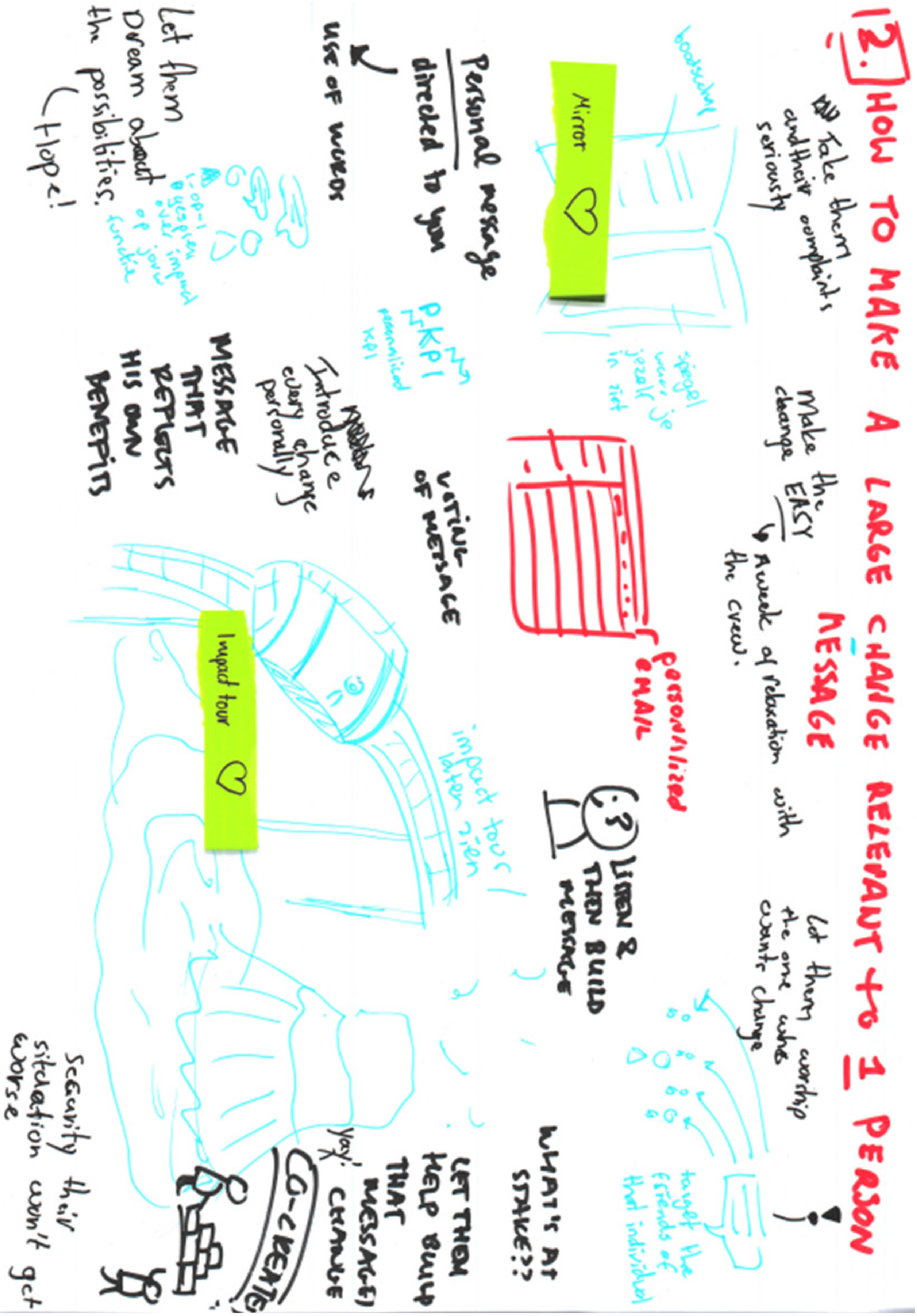


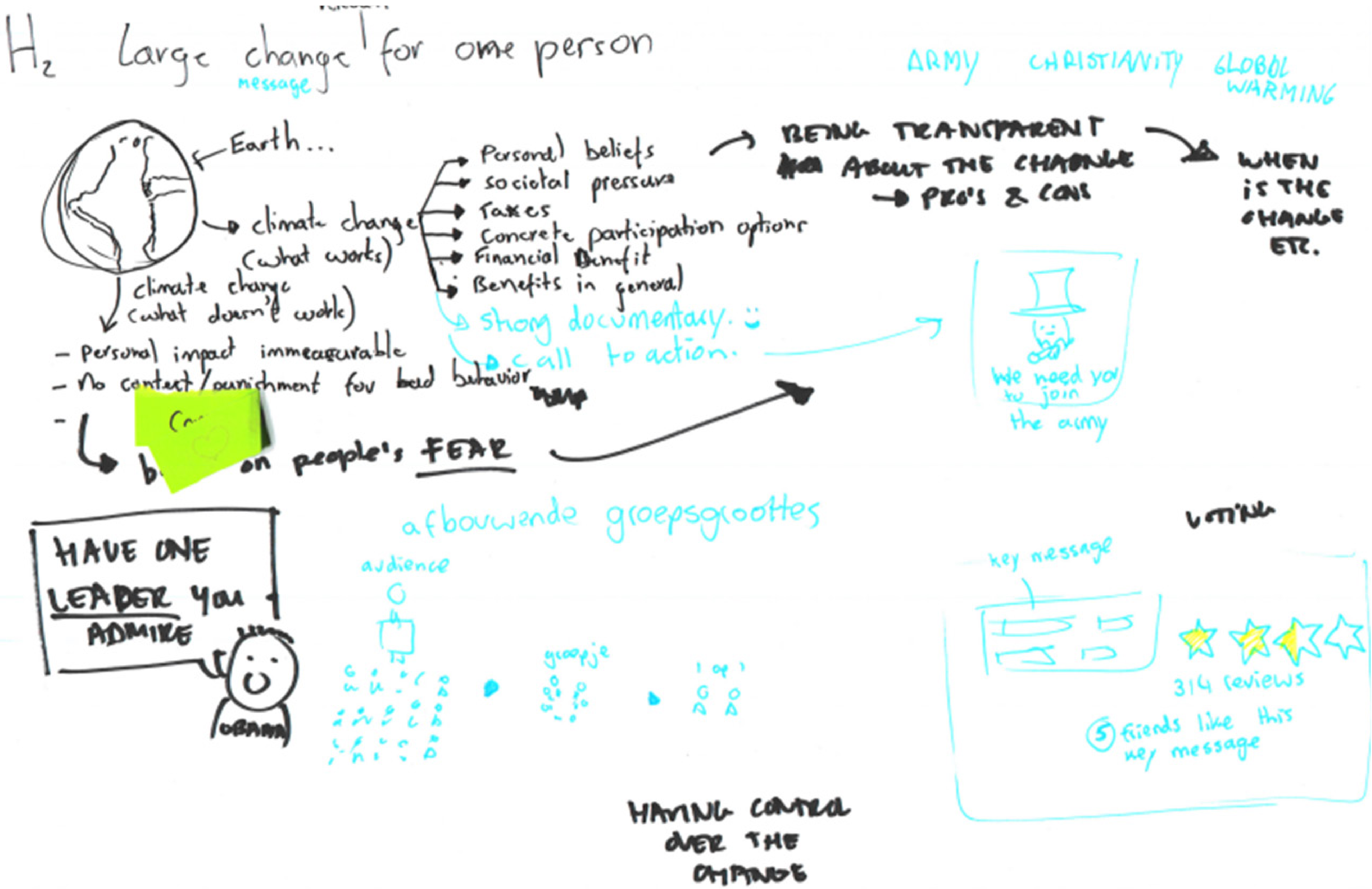
.. MAKE SOMEONE FEEL LIKE THEY'RE TAKEN SERIOUSLY

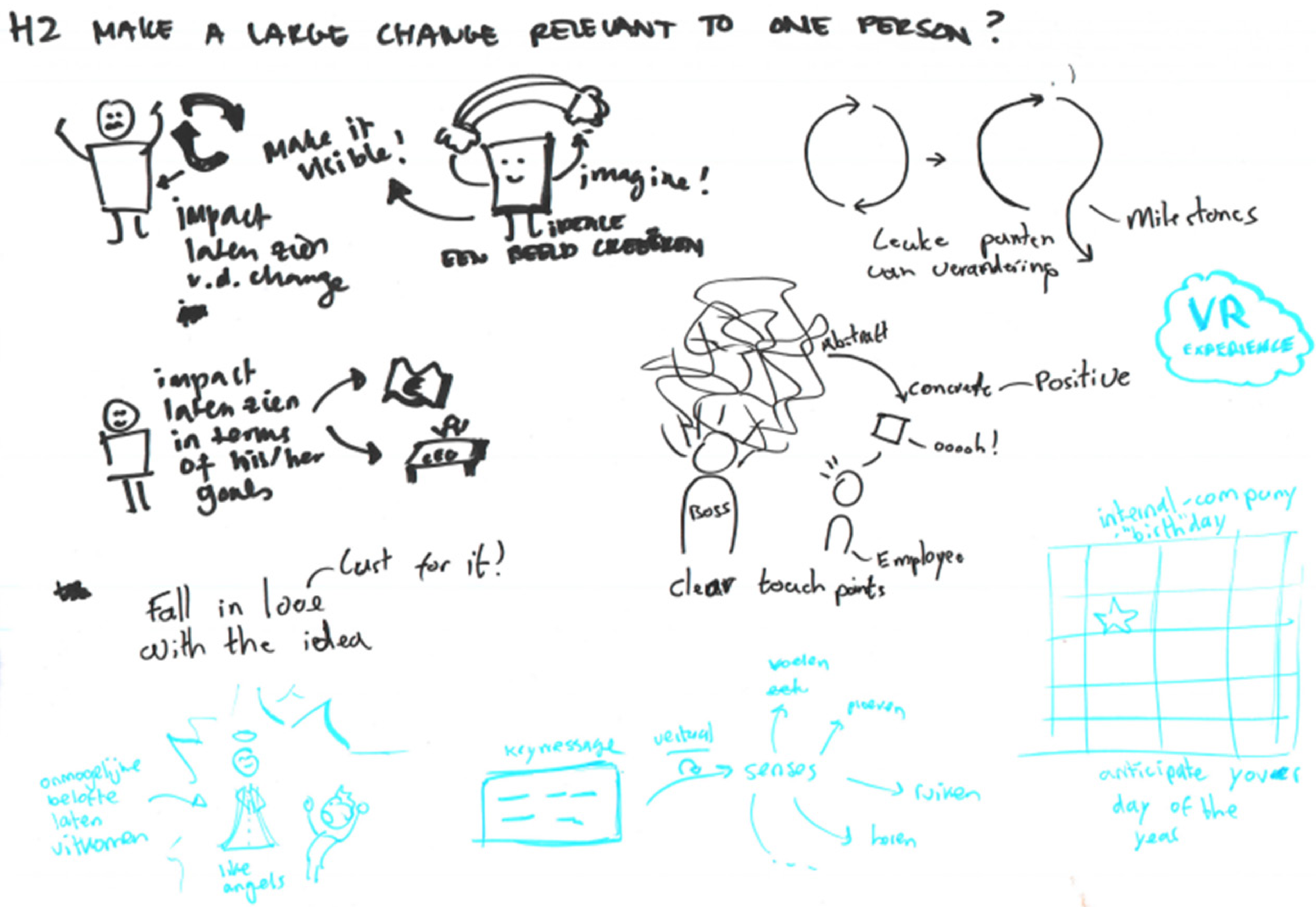



H2 Feel like they're taken seriously
Listening
Quiet
Eye-contact
nodding
speaking
Complaint
Complaint
HR
VP
Boss
Feedback from people who matter
SHARING LINKED IN PROFILES
inclusiveness van campagne
PIET draagt bij aan CHANGE
Enthusiastic
Serious
- Response
- Respect
- Change ?
SHARING SAME GOALS/
TAKE turns in responsibilities sharing
boss
livestream of boss working on complaints
complaints
eindgebruiker
open Platform
Acknowledgement krijgen v. anderen
feedback helemaal terug naar operational level
USING THE SAME
VOCABULARY
CEO
burgemeester voor een dag

Question 2: How do you make a large change relevant to one person?




H2 Large change for one person
message
ARMY CHRISTIANITY GLOBOL WARMING
Earth...
climate change (what works)
climate change (what doesn't work)
Personal beliefs
societal pressure
Taxes
Concrete participation options
Financial Benefit
Benefits in general
show documentary.
call to action.
BEING TRANSPARENT ABOUT THE CHANGE
PRO'S & CONS
WHEN IS THE CHANGE ETC.
- Personal impact immeasurable
- No contact / punishment for bad behavior
on people's FEAR
We need you to join the army
afbouwende groepsgroottes
audience
groepje
VOTING
key message
314 reviews
5 friends like this key message
HAVE ONE LEADER YOU ADMIRE
OBAMA
HAVING CONTROL OVER THE CHANGE


H2 MAKE A LARGE CHANGE RELEVANT TO ONE PERSON?
make it visible!
impact laten zien v.d. change
imagine!
IDEALE
EEN BEELD CREËREN
Leuke punten van verandering
Milestones
VR EXPERIENCE
impact laten zien in terms of his/her goals
Abstract
concrete
Positive
ooooh!
Boss
Employee
clear touch points
Fall in love with the idea
(Lust for it!)
internal-company "birthday"
anticipate yourself day of the year
onmogelijke belofte laten uitkomen
like angels
keymessage
virtual
senses
voelen
zien
proeven
ruiken
horen

Question 3: How do you help someone understand a complex process?

3

EXPERIENCE THE PROCESS BY BEING THE PROCESS

EXERCISE

maak een puzzel → opgelost → stop 't het

→ creer een secte, een extreem eigen geloof. 'complex proces' is onderdeel van de interne bijbel

— leesboek
— fotoboek
→ popupboek

How to help someone understand a complex process?

explain step by step

→ explain their role clearly

give them a clear role

use simple words (geen vakwoorden)

visualy met schakels animatie

art

→ rol employee wat gebeurd er als die stopt? → laat consequenties zien.

FEMKE LOUISE

Rapper Sjors (als hij't kan uitleggen...)

Vloggers

— youtube kanaal → make it public knowledge

guide them through it → VR/AR

mentors

PEERS

not only in the beginning but untill the end

visuals → drawing → video

exampels → from practice

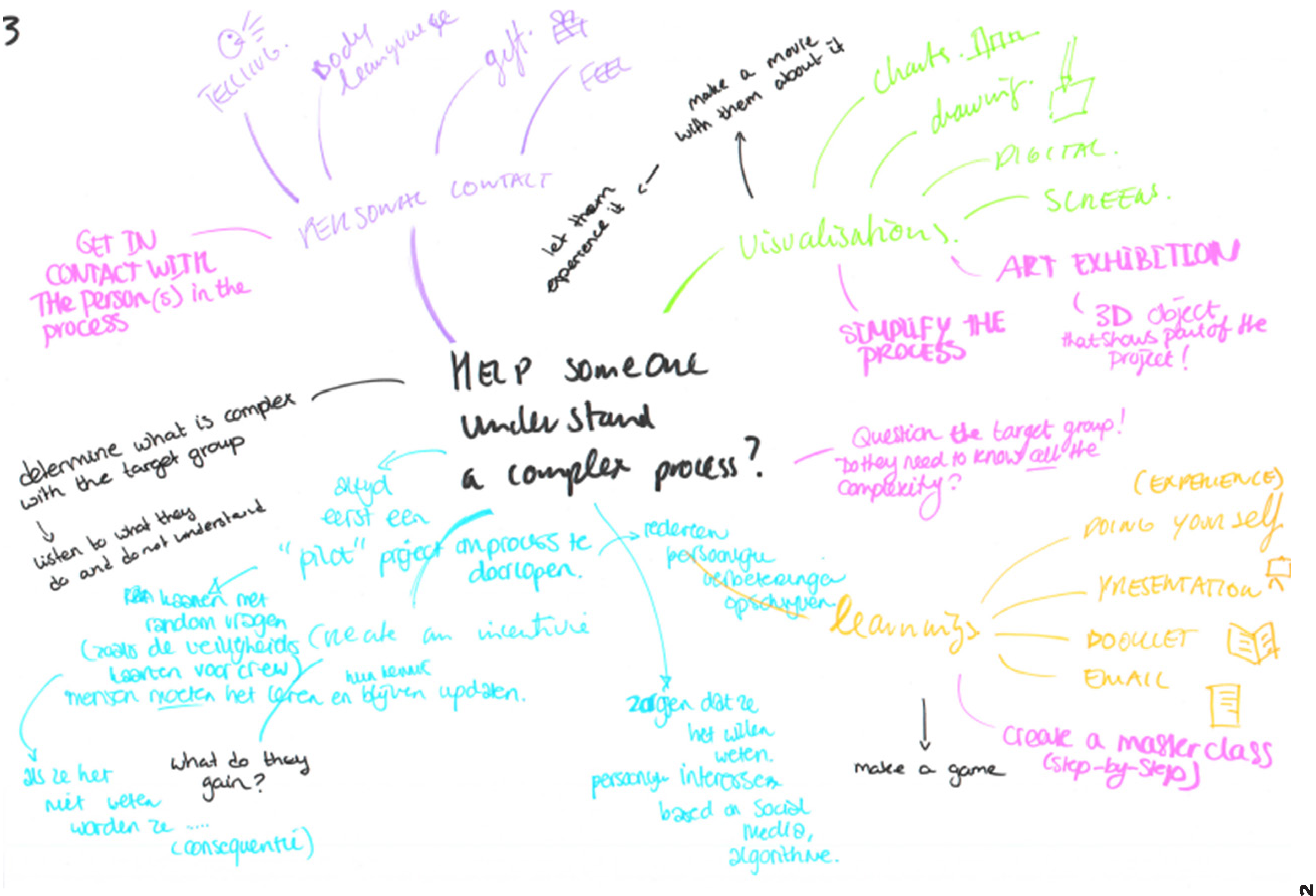
make it tangible (avoid the abstract)

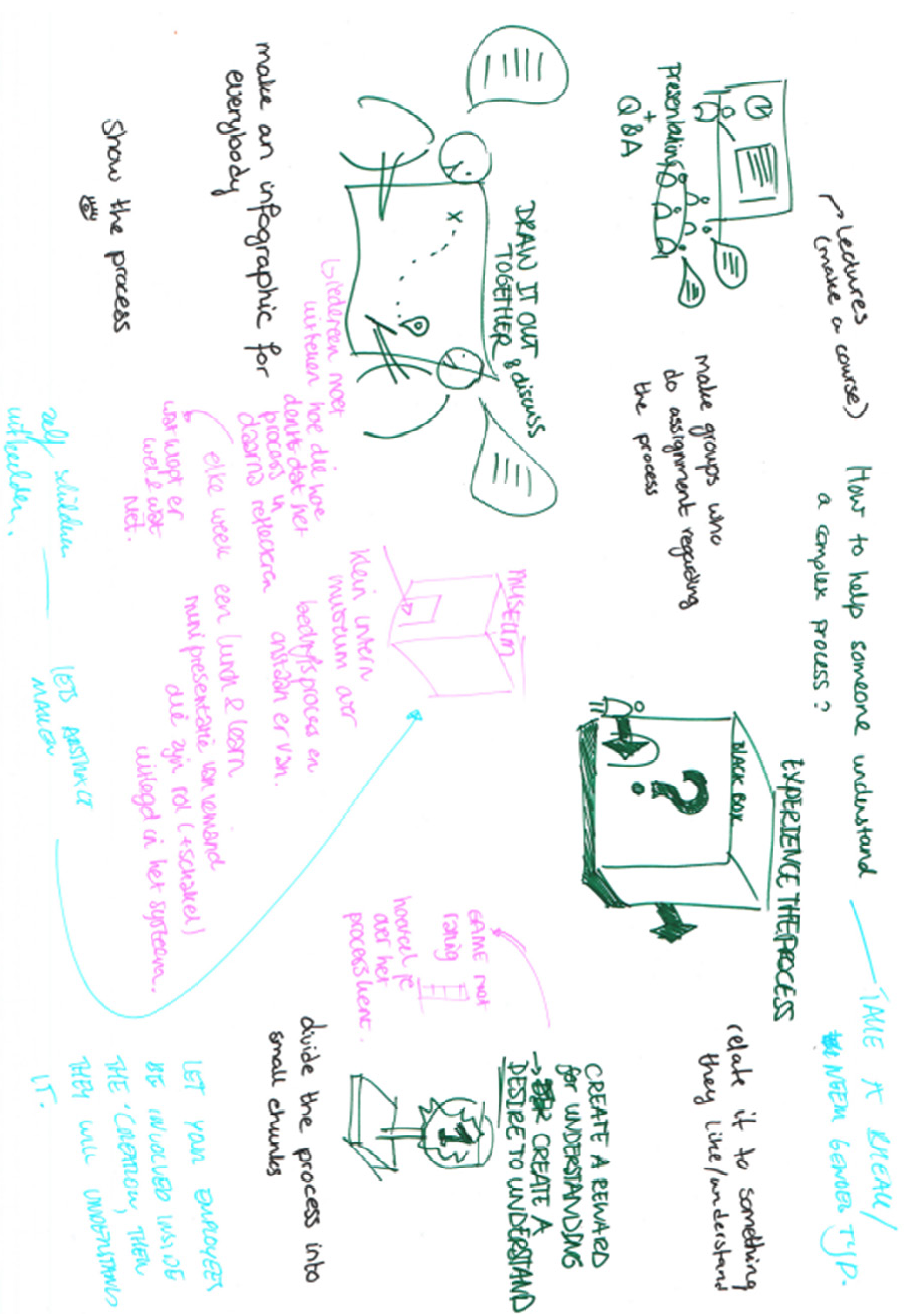
→ proces is uitgebeeld/fysiek gebouwd in centraal punt in bedrijf.

→ kettingreactie spel

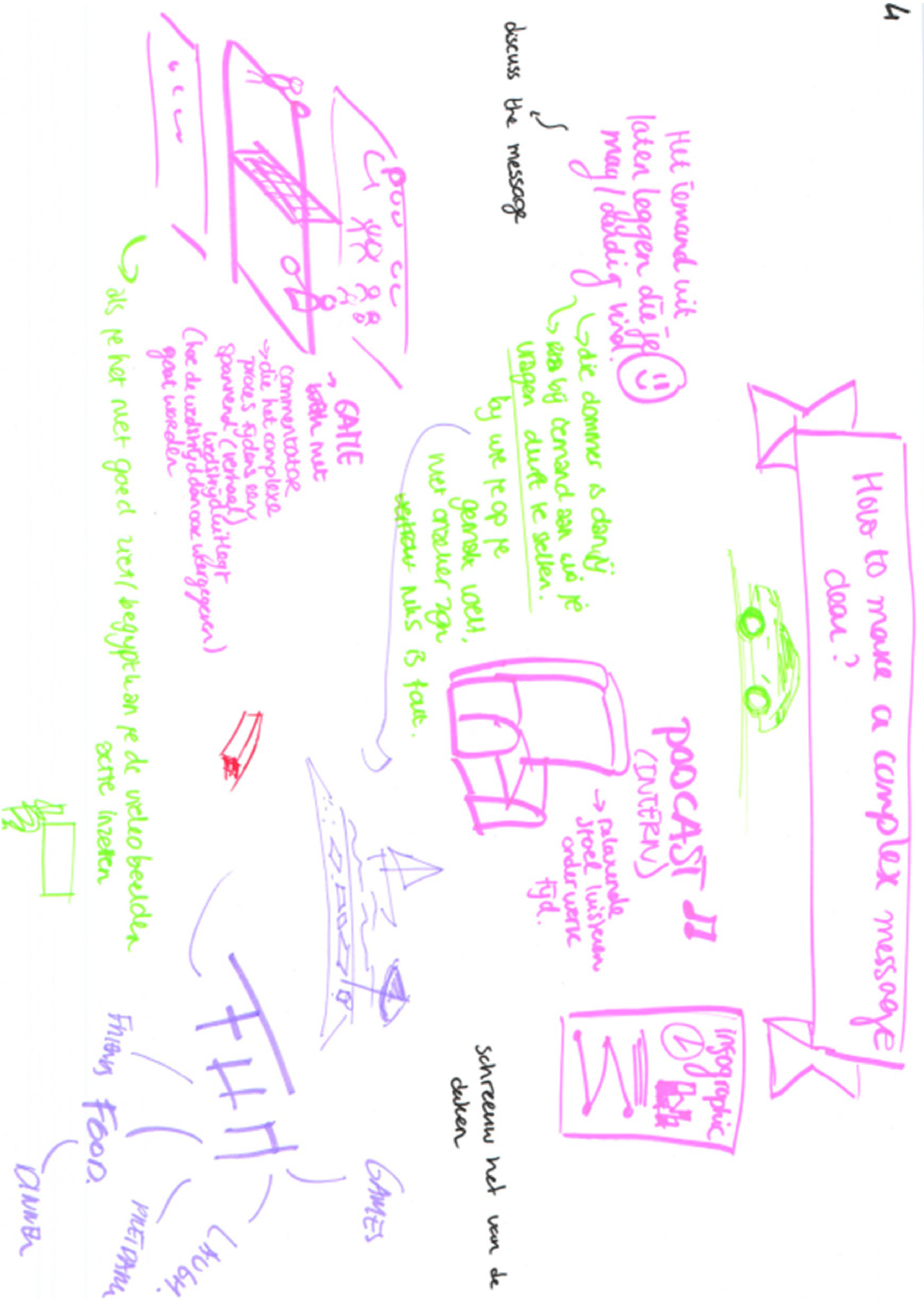
→ zoals dat KLM ding met balletjes erg over customer journey.

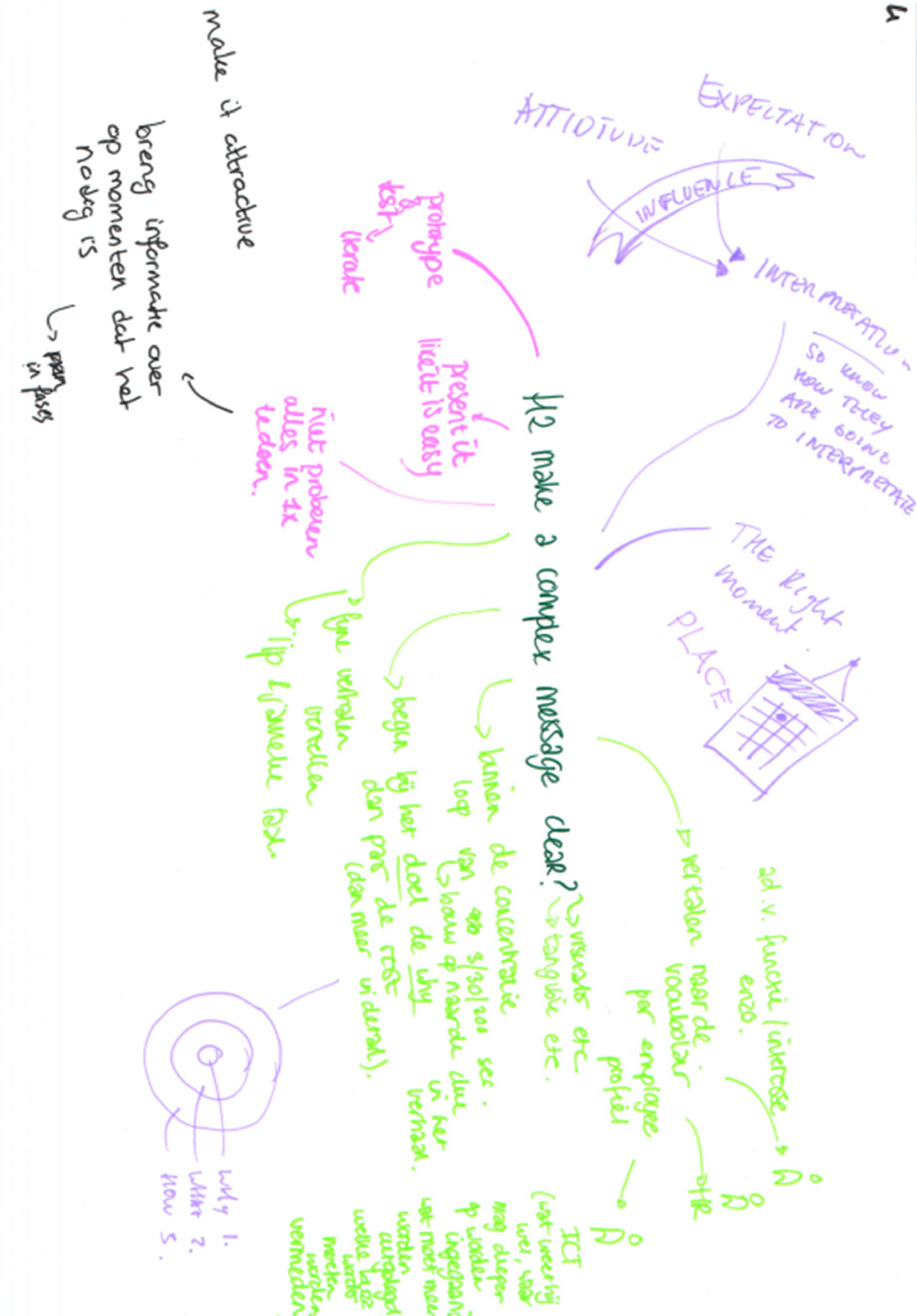
→ metafoor van process → wat is al wel herkenbaar voor mensen?

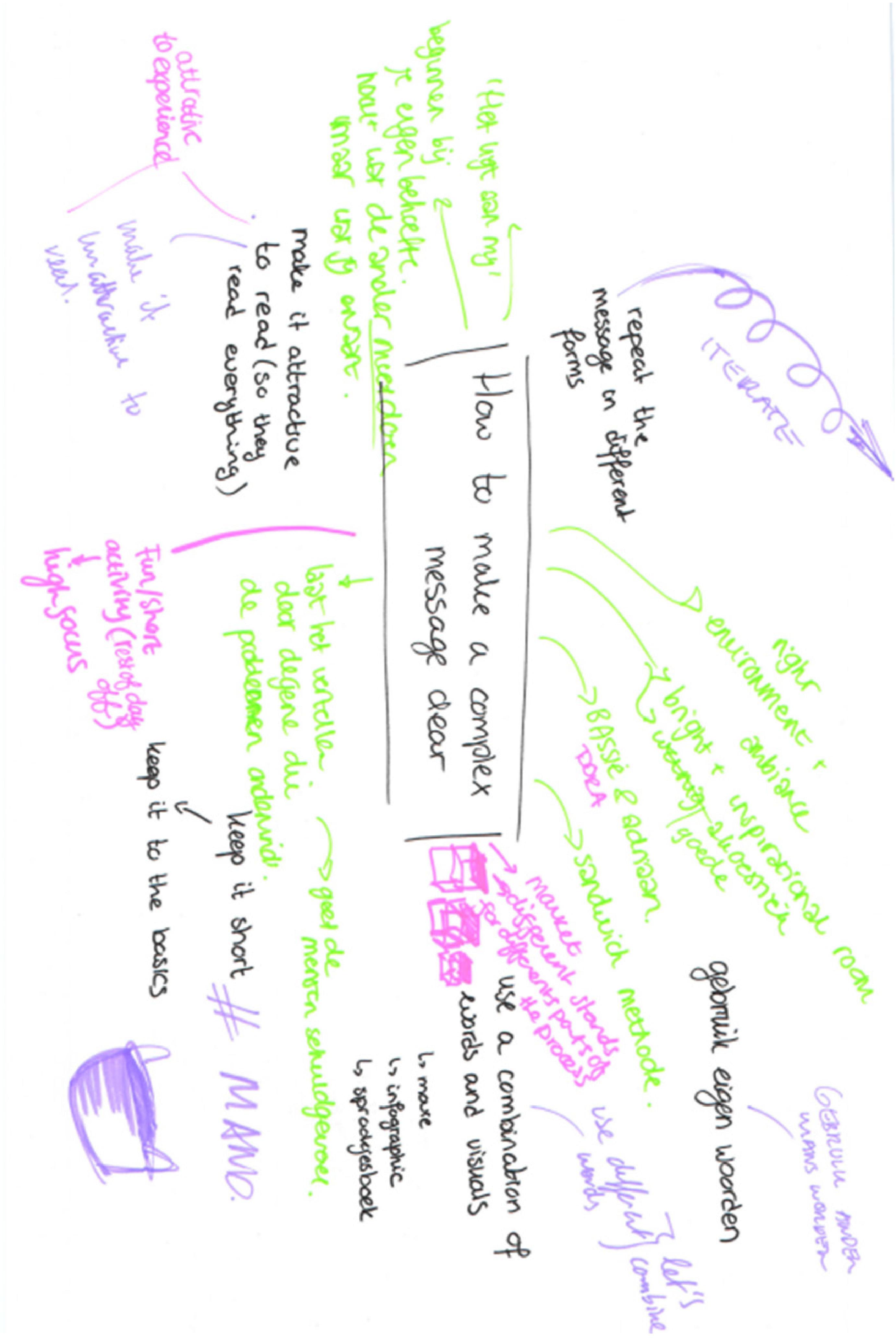

3
HELP someone understand a complex process?
PERSONAL CONTACT
TELLING.
body language
gift.
FEEL
GET IN CONTACT WITH THE person(s) in the process
let them experience it
make a movie with them about it
Visualisations.
charts.
drawing.
DIGITAL.
SCREENS.
ART EXHIBITION
(3D object that shows part of the project!
SIMPLIFY THE PROCESS
Question the target group! Do they need to know all the complexity?
(EXPERIENCE)
DOING yourself
PRESENTATION
BOOKLET
EMAIL
learnings
create a master class (step-by-step)
make a game
determine what is complex with the target group
listen to what they do and do not understand
altijd eerst een "pilot" project om process te doorlopen.
redeneren persoonlijke verbeteringen opschrijven.
laanen met random vragen (zoals de veiligheidskaarten voor crew)
Create an incentive
mensen moeten het leren en blijven updaten.
hun kennis
als ze het niet weten worden ze .... (consequentie)
what do they gain?
zorgen dat ze het willen weten.
persoonlijke interesses based on social media, algoritme.


How to help someone understand a complex process?
Lectures (make a course)
presentation + Q&A
make groups who do assignment regarding the process
EXPERIENCE THE PROCESS
BLACK BOX
TAKE A BREAK / NEEM GENOEG TIJD.
relate it to something they like/understand
CREATE A REWARD for UNDERSTANDING
→ CREATE A DESIRE TO UNDERSTAND
GAME met ranking
hoeveel je over het proces kent.
divide the process into small chunks
DRAW IT OUT TOGETHER & discuss
MUSEUM
Klein intern museum over bedrijfsproces en ontstaan er van.
iedereen moet uittekenen hoe die hoe denkt dat het proces is daarna reflecteren
make an infographic for everybody
elke week een lunch & learn
mini presentatie van iemand die zijn rol (+ schakel) uitlegd in het systeem.
wat loopt er wel & wat niet.
Show the process
zelf schilderen uitbeelden.
IETS ABSTRACT MAKEN
LET YOUR EMPLOYEES BE INVOLVED INSIDE THE 'CREATION', THEN THEY WILL UNDERSTAND IT.

Question 4: How do you make a complex change clear?




4
EXPECTATION
ATTITUDE
INFLUENCE
INTERPRETATION
SO KNOW HOW THEY ARE GOING TO INTERPRETATE
THE Right moment.
PLACE
H2 make a complex message clear?
visuals etc
tangible etc.
ad.v. functie / interesse enzo.
vertalen naar de vocabulair per employee profiel
HR
ICT (wat weet hij wel, waar mag dieper op worden ingegaan? wat moet meer worden uitgelegd, welke taal moeten worden vermeden?)
binnen de concentratie loop van 3/30/300 sec.
bouw op naar de clue in het verhaal.
begin bij het doel de why dan pas de rest (dan meer in detail).
fijne verhalen vertellen
present it like it is easy
prototype & test iterate
niet proberen alles in 1x te doen.
make it attractive
breng informatie over op momenten dat het nodig is
plan in fases
why 1.
what 2.
how 3.

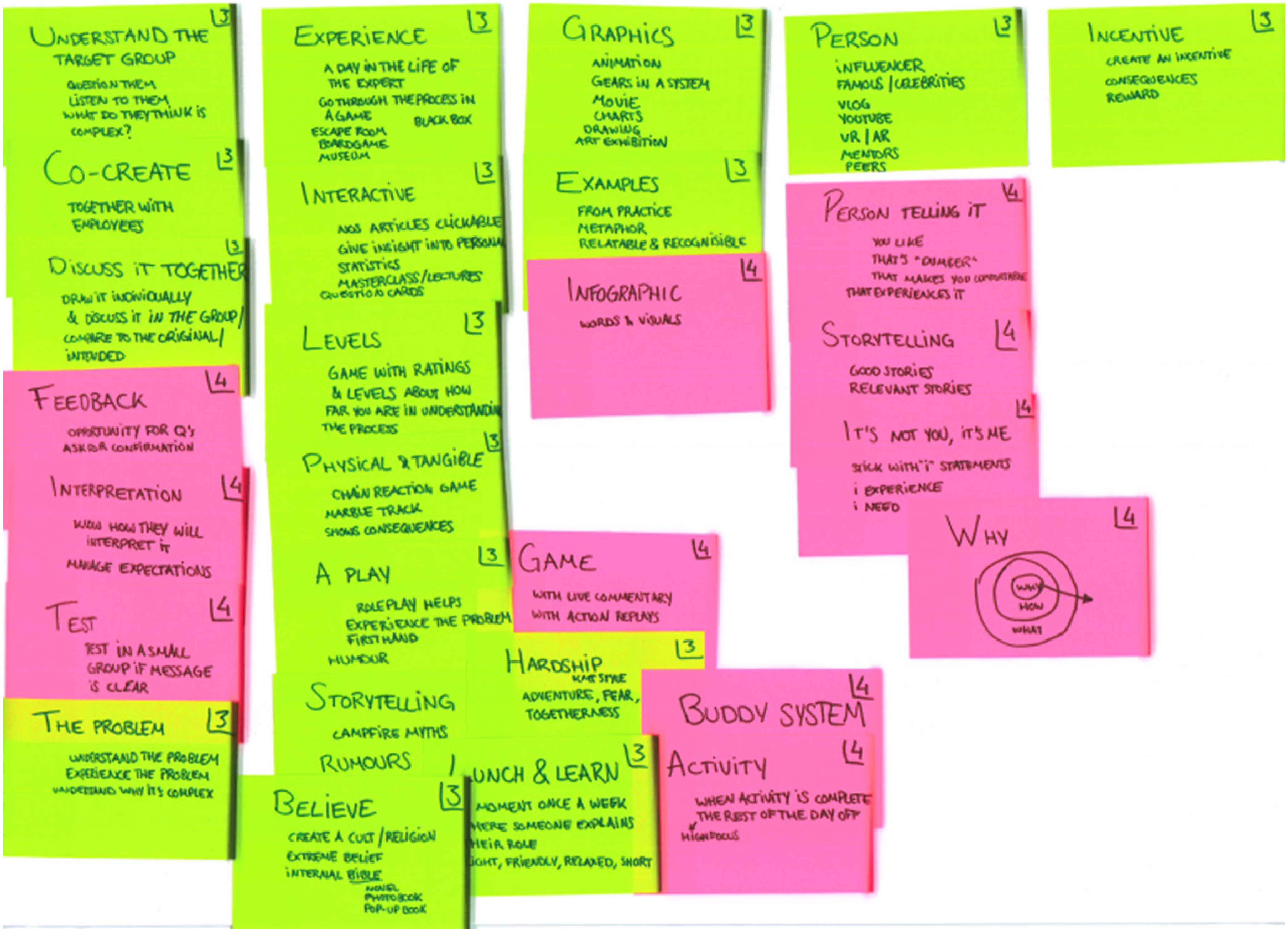

How to make a complex message clear
repeat the message in different forms
ITERATE
right environment + ambiance
bright + inspirational room
gebruik eigen woorden
GEBRUIK ANDER MANS WOORDEN
BASSIE & adriaan.
DORA
sandwich methode.
use different words
let's combine
market different stands for different parts of the process
use a combination of words and visuals
↳ movie
↳ infographic
↳ sprookjesboek
'Het ligt aan mij'
beginnen bij je eigen behoefte.
naar wat de ander meedoen maar wat jij ontaat.
make it attractive to read (so they read everything)
attractive to experience
make it unattractive to read.
laat het vertellen door degene die de problemen ondervindt.
geef de mensen schuldgevoel.
keep it short
MAMO.
keep it to the basics
Fun/short activity (rest of day off)
high focus


H2
Make a complex message clear.
give an opportunity to ask questions
create highlights in the message (what is very important?)
maak het als een raadsel die mensen op willen lossen. AI/VO puzzel
create empathy
maak details en info groot
leesbril
write a newspaper/ magazine about the message
TOOLS — CARDS
HAND UITDRUKKINGEN.
DUIKERS.
sign language
make it simple
Ask for confirmation.
→ wat begrijp je wel?
→ welke onderdelen?
Do you understand?
→ vanaf waar niet meer
NO?
zien
vragen
voelen!
Creëer verschillende manieren voor mensen om het op te nemen (mensen willen soms alleen luisteren etc)
heel vaak uitleggen
mensen er mee dood gooien
→ want heel vaak terug tv schermen in bedrijf.
een buddy creëren die je eenvoudig vragen kan stellen!

APPENDIX E

Brainwriting clusters.
The results of the brainwriting sessions clustered into categories using post-its to represent ideas/concepts.


Interpretation of the change
make it easy
a week "relaxation"
Admire your leader
Call to Action
"we need you"
to join the army
Deliver on your promises
Give & Get
2-way relationship
Responsibility/ Trust
(entrusting something to someone)
Celebrate accomplishments milestones
Share in profits
Acknowledgments from others
Compliments
Listen
Attention (undivided)
Seeing that someone does something with your input
Hierarchy leveling
Teams
multi hierarchial photos
"jaarclub"


UNDERSTAND THE TARGET GROUP
QUESTION THEM
LISTEN TO THEM
WHAT DO THEY THINK IS COMPLEX?
3
CO-CREATE
TOGETHER WITH EMPLOYEES
3
DISCUSS IT TOGETHER
DRAW IT INDIVIDUALLY
& DISCUSS IT IN THE GROUP/
COMPARE TO THE ORIGINAL/
INTENDED
3
FEEDBACK
OPPORTUNITY FOR Q'S
ASK FOR CONFIRMATION
4
INTERPRETATION
KNOW HOW THEY WILL INTERPRET IT
MANAGE EXPECTATIONS
4
TEST
TEST IN A SMALL GROUP IF MESSAGE IS CLEAR
4
THE PROBLEM
UNDERSTAND THE PROBLEM
EXPERIENCE THE PROBLEM
UNDERSTAND WHY IT'S COMPLEX
3
EXPERIENCE
A DAY IN THE LIFE OF THE EXPERT
GO THROUGH THE PROCESS IN A GAME
BLACK BOX
ESCAPE ROOM
BOARDGAME
MUSEUM
3
INTERACTIVE
NOS ARTICLES CLICKABLE
GIVE INSIGHT INTO PERSONAL STATISTICS
MASTERCLASS/LECTURES
QUESTION CARDS
3
LEVELS
GAME WITH RATINGS
& LEVELS ABOUT HOW FAR YOU ARE IN UNDERSTANDING THE PROCESS
3
PHYSICAL & TANGIBLE
CHAIN REACTION GAME
MARBLE TRACK
SHOWS CONSEQUENCES
3
A PLAY
ROLEPLAY HELPS
EXPERIENCE THE PROBLEM FIRSTHAND
HUMOUR
3
STORYTELLING
CAMPFIRE MYTHS
RUMOURS
BELIEVE
CREATE A CULT/RELIGION
EXTREME BELIEF
INTERNAL BIBLE
NOVEL
PHOTOBOOK
POP-UP BOOK
3
GRAPHICS
ANIMATION
GEARS IN A SYSTEM
MOVIE
CHARTS
DRAWING
ART EXHIBITION
3
EXAMPLES
FROM PRACTICE
METAPHOR
RELATABLE & RECOGNISIBLE
3
INFOGRAPHIC
WORDS & VISUALS
4
GAME
WITH LIVE COMMENTARY
WITH ACTION REPLAYS
4
HARDSHIP
KME STYLE
ADVENTURE, FEAR, TOGETHERNESS
3
LUNCH & LEARN
MOMENT ONCE A WEEK
WHERE SOMEONE EXPLAINS THEIR ROLE
LIGHT, FRIENDLY, RELAXED, SHORT
3
BUDDY SYSTEM
4
ACTIVITY
WHEN ACTIVITY IS COMPLETE THE REST OF THE DAY OFF
HIGH FOCUS
4
PERSON
INFLUENCER
FAMOUS / CELEBRITIES
VLOG
YOUTUBE
VR / AR
MENTORS
PEERS
3
PERSON TELLING IT
YOU LIKE
THAT'S "DUMBER"
THAT MAKES YOU COMFORTABLE
THAT EXPERIENCES IT
4
STORYTELLING
GOOD STORIES
RELEVANT STORIES
4
IT'S NOT YOU, IT'S ME
STICK WITH "I" STATEMENTS
I EXPERIENCE
I NEED
4
WHY
WHY
HOW
WHAT
4
INCENTIVE
CREATE AN INCENTIVE
CONSEQUENCES
REWARD
3

MOMENT L4

A RELAXING MOMENT
TO FIGURE IT OUT
LISTEN TO A PODCAST

TIMING L4

DON'T EXPLAIN ALL
AT ONCE
RELEVANT INFO AT
RELEVANT TIME & PLACE

TYPES OF MEDIUM L4

MOVIE
FAIRYTALE BOOK
INFO MARKET
RIDDLE/PUZZLE
MAGAZINE
CARDS

LANGUAGE L4

SIMPLE ~~[illegible]~~ LANGUAGE
VOCATIONAL LANGUAGE
IN TERMS OF INTERESTS
VISUAL LANGUAGE
TANGIBLE
SIGN LANGUAGE

REPEAT L4

REPEAT THE MESSAGE
OFTEN
DIFFERENT MEDIA

ATTENTION SPAN L4

3/30/300
AIDA
ATTRACTIVE TO READ/SEE
UNATTRACTIVE TO SEE/READ
SHORT & BASICS
HIGHLIGHTS

APPENDIX F

Test and co-creation interview protocol.

Concept test.

What can design offer in change communication to create internal buy-in?

I did reserach at six different companies to try to find problems in their internal communication.

First of all I would like to know if you agree with the emotional journey, do you recogise yourself in it?

The problem that I have found is that employees do not feel that they are being taken seriously during the change process. To be specific, they don't feel taken seriously when they have questions about the change.

For my graduation thesis I investigated how I would solve this as a designer. Here is my example of how I would solve this problem.

As a *communication professional* I would like to hear what you think about this. My questions to you, about my concept, are:

1. **Would you use this concept in your company? If so, how?**

2. **Do you think it would work and solve the problem effectively?**

3. **What do you see as an advantage and disadvantage of this concept?**

4. **Do you see anything else here that you have not seen in the field of internal change communication?**

5. **What would be another way to solve this problem? (How would you change this concept or create a new one?) Co-creation**

As a *manager* in a company that is now undergoing a change, I would like to hear what you think about this. My questions to you, about my concept, are:

1. **Would you use this concept? Why would you/wouldn't you?**

2. **Do you think it would work and solve the problem effectively?**

3. **Would this make you feel that you are being taken seriously? Why would it/wouldn't it?**

4. **What do you see as an advantage and disadvantage of this concept?**

5. **Have you ever seen or experienced anything similar?**

6. **What would be another way to solve this problem? (How would you change this concept or create a new one?) Co-creation**

As an *employee* in a company that is now undergoing a change, I would like to hear what you think about this. My questions to you, about my concept, are:

1. **Would you use this concept? Why would you/wouldn't you?**

2. **Would this make you feel that you are being taken seriously? Why would it/wouldn't it?**

3. **What do you see as an advantage and disadvantage of this concept?**

4. **Have you ever seen or experienced anything similar?**

5. **What would be another way to solve this problem? (How would you change this concept or create a new one?) Co-creation**

APPENDIX G

Transcriptions of the test interviews.

Organised per company (alphabetically) and hierarchy level within the company. Some of the pleasantries at the beginning and end of the conversations were left out of the transcriptions.

To see the confidential appendix, please contact the author.

Barco

Director of Innovation and Design Thinking

During this interview the respondent says that they would definitely consider using the concept. They are interested in testing it in a real situation and seeing whether it works or not. They name both advantages and disadvantages of the concept. What they respondent found to be interesting was the physicality of the concept: it makes it visible for everyone. They have seen something similar in the form of a classic suggestion box but say that what makes this concept different is the process, the visibility of the process. They think it would be interesting to test and that it could definitely contribute to helping get the conversation about the company change started.

Barco

Head of Internal Communication

This respondent is a communication professional and proceeds to analyse the concept and compare it to existing solutions that have been implemented within their company. They name an initiative that has been implemented in their production factories and that is really similar to this concept. It is driven by the methodology of Genba (originating in Japan and often applied in production companies and factories). This is about continuous improvements and innovations in the production process. The respondent says that it has not yet been applied to an office setting, they tried to put it in an office, but it didn't work. The respondent says that because this concept is so similar to the initiative in place it is definitely recognisable. They suggested that what they try to do differently in their company is to avoid putting the responsibility of answering the concerns on management. In their company they stimulate employees to come up with their own solutions. What stood out to the respondent about this concept was making the amount of concerns and solutions measurable and that the concept brings the possibility to give feedback and comments close to the people. When it comes to approaching internal change communication the respondent says that they don't believe there is one ready-made way to approach all change projects. They explain how they approached the communication of the change at hand and said that the most important thing is to listen to the employees.

KLM

Product Manager

In this interview the respondent puts forth a strong opinion that when people have comments or critique that they should definitely use the tools provided to them to communicate that. They would definitely use the concept and would encourage colleagues to use it too. They say that the anonymity provided by this concept might lead to vague concerns, but that the concept does lower the threshold to express your concerns. They suggest to have an ambassador or group of ambassadors that are a part of the team who claim the design and promote it internally, this could help create ownership over the concept and encourage people to use it. They say that the fact that someone has put thought into such a concept could be seen as a sort of acknowledgement of the employees and their concerns, which could lead to people feeling like they are being taken seriously.

Dutch National Bank

Customer Experience Design Lead

During this interview the respondent talks mainly about the transparency of the concept. They say that there should be more transparency concerning the filter: who answers the concerns and how can you make visible that they aren't only picking the concerns they find easiest or most relevant. Another layer of transparency they mention is the handing in of the concerns: once it is handed in no one else can see what has been handed in, people should be able to read each others remarks and questions. The respondent very poignantly states that it is about a balance between transparency and discretion. What the respondent found to be an advantage of this concept was that it lowers the threshold to ask questions and the visibility of it: everyone in the office can see it and see how many concerns and solutions there are. The respondent suggests an improvement that would involve stimulating more solution-thinking instead of only problem-thinking. As a concluding remark the respondent says that personal attention is most important in change communication.

Ultimaker

Manager

This respondent mentions that what you usually see is that there is a lot of sending of information, but that the collection of input in such a manner is usually quite hard. What they see as an advantage of this concept is that it combines media, that there are both digital and physical aspects to the concept. The respondent has seen similar types of input collection before but hasn't seen the closing of the loop: in the other cases people could provide input but didn't know what was going to be done with that input. Concluding the interview, the respondent says that this concept could function as a conversation starter but that they would first want to understand the context of the change and why there needs to be a change.

Ultimaker

Software Engineer

During this interview, straight away, the respondent recognised the problem as something that other people might have trouble with but that it wasn't something that they struggled with. They wouldn't use the concept because they felt it would be more effective to have a conversation with someone. If the concept were to function as a conversation starter, they could see the point in using it. The respondent suggested that an improvement would be to change the solutions part of the concept. In their opinion this is something that should be done together, discussing the problem and possible solutions, rather than having one person in an office answering questions. They mention a similar type of tool that was used in their company, where there was a poster that people could leave input on and the point was for it to be a conversation starter.

Master thesis by
Stephanie Raaphorst

March 2019