

# Organizational Designing at the **Total Design** agency

Experiencing Total Design  
through an Organizational  
Designing lens.



Tim Wolkers



T. Wolkers

Delft University of Technology  
Master Strategic Product Design  
Faculty of Industrial Design Engineering

***Supervisory team***

Prof. dr. Eekelen, B.F. van  
MSc. Wegener, F.E.  
Ir. Bluemink, R.G.H.  
Faculty of Industrial Design Engineering

***Support***

Martijn Arts  
Total Design





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# Executive Summary

In this report a collection of experiences at Total Design is presented while looking through a lens of Organizational Designing. The concept of looking through a view-master is used as metaphor for the purpose of this report.

To highlight this Organizational Designing, two main questions had to be answered;

## **How can we look at Organizational Designing?**

### **Where do we see Organizational Designing at TD and in this project?**

To recognize Organizational Designing within the ways of working, some existing literature is used to set up its first attributes. By the use of design perspectives like the action-centered perspective (Schön, 1983), a Human Centered Design perspective (Junginger, 2005) and the four orders of design (Buchanan, 2019) we start to make an effort on what Organizational Designing is. Then a view on the complexity of organizations (Norman & Stappers, 2015) and their 'wicked' problems (Buchanan, 1992) is given to see on what entity this design process works. This literature overview is closed with some things Organizational Designers encounter and work with, such as the need for 'satisficing' (Simon, 1969), the incremental strategy of 'muddling through' (Lindblom, 1979), improvisation (Weick, 2017) and designing 'interventions' (Stacey et al., 2000). To capture the ways of working at TD various ethnographic methods were used (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007), such as observation, participation and the use of field notes and 'thick descriptions' (Geertz, 1973).

Throughout the report examples of these thick descriptions are presented to illustrate the point of

view of me as a user of the organization TD. Together with these examples, different frames on how TD as an organization can be viewed are showed to emphasize how complex the definition of what an organization is, can be.

The captured experiences are categorized into three areas where Organizational Designing can be seen. The first area is at the interface between TD and its clients, where the design inquiry in projects the collaboration with the use of online tools and the integration of different design disciplines led to organizational impact at the clients side.

The second area highlights the organizational designing within TD itself, where observations triggered the process of incremental changes in interaction of the standup, and the evolution of the agency call. As well as how the hourly billing creates tension between the freedom of creativity and the need for having a financially healthy agency. The third and last area the design interventions of this project are discussed. Here, methods of reflection and the use of archetypes challenge the way TD could think about themselves. And reflection-in-action lead to shifting the purpose of a given workshop while doing.

In the end we conclude with an overview of how organizational designing at TD can be seen. As well as a discussion on the fact that organizational designing can be seen in other design disciplines, since the design of an organization deals with problems that require integration of problems of communication, construction and interaction. This is why we can see organizational designing on different moments at TD, since they integrate various design disciplines to create organizational impact at their clients.



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I enter a garage box where there are a lot of moving boxes with different contents. See fig (1.1). A stack of boxes with brand manuals for TD their clients. These describe how to use the client's brand. Think about fonts, color profiles, grids, and so on.

On the other side are a number of filing cabinets filled with slides from different periods of TD's history. Here was Frederike looking for public commissions from TD. Frederike Huygen is a Fellow of the Wim Crowel Institute and teaches the history of design, particularly that of Dutch graphic design. She asked TD to have a look through these archives. This was the created opportunity for me to join this day.

Tom, who is responsible for TD's archive, was there to support in this. Tom has been working at TD since the late 80s early 90s. He also came across several projects that he has worked on so I think he is one of the designers. However, he now works part-time at TD as an office manager. A true 'Amsterdammer' of around 50 years old, I estimate. He was wearing a cup match shirt of Ajax under a lumberjack blouse. He was very pleased when he found some old photos he had taken of when the roof of the ArenA was installed.

I asked later if people from TD ever come to this archive more often, he says that TD staff members never really ask about the old days. He has never really had a question about anything in the archive, except from Martijn (partner at TD) and Frederike.

Martijn, my mentor at TD, arrived around 15:00 and joined in sorting out some things. Frederike mostly searched herself to see what interesting things she could find. Martijn and Tom browsed through some other stuff of which they could not immediately figure out where it came from and what it was. However, some interesting things were found. For example, a newspaper article about a book of and designed by Total Design. The spine of the book was slanted to make it look like it was not straight in a cabinet.

Martijn responds enthusiastically to various things, such as prototypes of TD's famous postage stamps. He takes them to frame in the office. See fig (1.2) Another object that is taken out of the archive is a handbook with the corporate identity for the ANWB (a Dutch organization for traffic and tourism). Martijn indicates that 'ANWB Golf' is a client of TD and this book could be a nice artefact to bring along to a new meeting to perhaps do more at ANWB. An artifact of past collaborations might bring in new projects.

It was a fun afternoon. With a number of different people in a garage box searching for interesting finds. Tom and Martijn reminisced and made a few jokes. There were many references to people and projects from the past that I couldn't really make sense of (yet). I notice that even though I have only just arrived at TD, I am already getting a small sense of how long TD has existed and that they have been able to do many projects for clients of big influence.



**Fig 1.1**  
TD their own archive



**Fig 1.2**  
Prototypes of famous  
posting stamps

## 01

## Introduction

***“Either we purchased an expensive rebranding or inexpensive organizational change” - A client of TD***

The quote above captured what Martijn already thought. There is something TD does that has more impact at their clients than the final deliverable on itself has. According to Martijn almost half of the hours billed on a project go to the organizational or strategic problems of the brief, where the other half is creative and production.

So somehow TD does something that could probably be seen as Organizational Design.

This was the main trigger to start this research into TD. A project where we try to answer two main questions: How can we look at Organizational Designing and Where do we see Organizational Designing at TD and in this project?

To find answers to these questions we, first, take a look at what is said about the topic in existing literature. Then, we view the organization TD from different perspectives and use captured experiences to highlight organizational designing at TD. Finally we shall conclude and discuss the answers to the main questions.

### **Relevance**

Literature on organizations and management is extensive and major theories of design can be seen as theory of design. (Buchanan, 2015) However the introduction of the design perspective in these areas is still in an early stage. Concepts of design on an organizational level can be hard to grasp since the object is intangible and complex. Therefore finding examples from within a design agency can help understand what can be seen as organizational designing.

The descriptions of my experiences at TD can be relevant as a form of reflection for TD. It can be a fresh perspective on their ways of working that could be helpful for future development and help as an interpretation of what they add to the organizations of their clients. By labeling Organizational Designing in practice, TD could be more conscious about their designing and name explicitly what they do.

At last, is this project relevant for me to develop as a (strategic) designer. The experience of going through the process of a graduation project helps me to learn a lot about how I could work with complexity, planning and the workings of a design agency.



# 02

## The Organizational designing View-Master

### A metaphor for the purpose of this report.

While developing this thesis, the metaphor of seeing organizational designing through a special lens was mentioned a lot. I decided to embrace this metaphor and use it as a vehicle throughout this report.

This report tries to help the reader 'seeing' the abstract topic of Organizational Designing. I use the View Master, to appeal to the imagination. Back in 1938 the view master added another dimension to viewing pictures. The user could see depth in the pictures while using the view-master. As the View Master is used to see depth in pictures, this report could be used to see organizational designing within TD.

The 'pictures' in the case of this report were created by experiences I have had and observations I did during my time at TD. In this report, I will describe these experiences through "thick descriptions" (Geertz, 1973)

On top of these descriptions, I will give my perspective on what can be seen as organizational designing.

These examples are categorized in three different 'areas'. These were the areas where I was able to look during my project.

- **Where do I see organizational designing at the touchpoints/interface with TD its clients? Where do I see organizational designing within TD?**
- **Where do I see organizational designing within this project and my practices?**

The three areas I mentioned can be seen as 3 different 'reels' (discs with images).

After these, I conclude by giving an overview of the 'simplified'/'generalized' Organizational Design practices. These can be used to see and practice organizational design within the future.



# 03

## Looking for existing lenses

### A perspective on Organizational Designing from existing literature.

When looking for organizational designing within a design agency it is important to get a first sense of what Organizational Designing could be. In order to make a distinguishment on what ways of working are organizational an what are not.

So we need to ask ourselves the following questions:

- **How is organizational designing described?**
- **What perspective on Design within the context of Organizational Designing is relevant?**
- **How can we look at an organization within this context?**
- **What are ways of working or that can be recognized as, or used for organizational designing?**

This chapter is constructed by searching through existing literature before, during and after my field work. Since the scope of this project was shaped during the whole duration of the project.

### *From Organization Design to Organizational Designing*

To start this literature overview we need to clarify why the term Organizational Designing is used in this project. Within some conventional management and organization literature the term Organization Design is used. Where 'Design' is used as a metaphor to describe a structure or lay out of the organization (Magalhaes, 2018).

To take a more design oriented approach, where the process of design is emphasized we use the term Organizational Designing. Since the word Design can be seen as a noun (which implies a static form) and a verb (which sees it as a process or act). The use of Designing takes away this variation in interpretation. (Yoo et al., 2006)

***What perspective on Design within the context of Organizational Designing is relevant?***

To approach Organizational Designing from the perspective of the Design field, we first need to specify what we mean by Design. Once one says Design, one could easily understand it in different ways. In this section, I will explore various definitions and perspectives on Design. It will be a basic introduction and will discuss topics relevant to the scope of organizational Design. This overview will be far from complete as the realm of Design, and its definitions are extensive and fall far out of this project's scope.

A well-known perspective on Design is the one that sees design as a rational and planned process of problem solving. (Simon, 1969). The design process consists of sequential stages that when followed, result in a new design. Which is a solution to a certain problem. There are certain constraints and objectives formulated that can be tested in the end. This perspective could work well when a problem can be fully understood and the results can be predicted. Therefore, in certain engineering design problems this perspective fits. When a problem is complex or there is not a certain well defined problem this approach does not function well. (Dorst, 2019)

Another perspective on design is one that is called 'action-centric' design. This approaches design from a different way. In contrary to the rational perspective, this action-centric approach is based on the fact on how designers actually work, based on empirical evidence. Besides the analytical framework, the designers also use creativity, emotion and improvisation. There are no separate sequential stages, these alternate and are flow together. From the 'action-centric' perspective, Design is more presented as an intuitive act (Schön, 1983). The designer practices reflection-in-action. They (re)frame, makes a move (a design intervention) and reflect on that move. This perspective on design can be used when the problem or its outcome is not clear in advance.

Dorst (2019) argues that, within complex problem situations (which occur within organizations), the problem-solving perspective is limited. Designers should embrace the complexity and go on a more exploratory design route. The 'newness' comes from emergence, instead of going through a set of stages to get to a certain goal. Where design 'interventions' can get the organization to a more desired state (Stacey et al., 2000). Design becomes an ongoing process.

*"[...] Design moves beyond problem-solving toward being the solution in itself." (Dorst, 2019).*

**Four Orders of Design**

Another often-cited view on Design and how it has evolved comes from Buchanan. He describes four orders where design can take place. As seen in fig (3.1) (Buchanan, 2001). This representation suggest that there are hard boundaries between the different design disciplines. However this is not how it was intended. It should be seen as a

: "...creative matrix of topics or commonplaces that are suggestive as places of invention, discovery, and innovation—even places of intuition—for exploring the diverse opportunities for influence that design thinking can have on our lives." (Buchanan, 2019)

To illustrate this, he places the discipline of Interior Design as a 4th order design discipline across all the other orders. The discipline of interior design deals with the problems of communication (1st order), problems of construction (2nd order), problems of (inter)action (3rd order) and with problems of integration (4th order).

Another case where design problems cover the 4 orders is in a case study at a Swedish media company. Here is found that design challenges can oscillate between these orders. (Nylén et al., 2014). They suggest that the four orders are becoming more co-dependent in, in this case, the digital design process. Every decision can have a ripple effect into the other. In both cases, interior and digital design the problems occur in all of the four orders and are co-dependent.

**Organizational Designing in the fourth order**

When placing Organizational Designing in the orders, it can be seen as a fourth order design discipline. Buchanan describes the fourth order of design as a domain of core ideas and values that hold environments and systems together. It is the integration of information (1st), physical artifacts (2nd) and interactions (3rd) within environments (in our case within the organization). Fourth order designing the focus is on transformation of a system. Or

in our case an organization.

*"the problems of transition are not problems of action but of reaching a new understanding of purpose and ends."* (Buchanan, 1998)

If we conclude that organizational designing falls under 4th order design. We have to see the co-dependence with the other design areas.

For example, let's take a look at online applications that facilitates collaboration. These applications are interaction design artifacts. They influence the way of working of the users in their way. The Design of the software can facilitate but also limit users from interacting in a preferred way. Which influences the rest of the organization.

Another example is doing a creative session in a physical space or doing it via an online tool. A creative session with post-its, markers and some playful toys in a physical area is a different creative session than when it is held on a virtual platform while communicating via video calling. The way of working together is very different, even when we use the same participants, structure, and goal. The tools used, therefore, influence the Design of the organization. These tools can limit or enhance the workings of the organization. It is a constant interplay, different sides of the same medal. Form and function co-exist. Or as Buchanan uses the following quote of Winston Churchill. *"We shape our buildings, and afterwards our buildings shape us."* We could say this as well for products or in our case an organization. *"We shape our organizations, and then our organizations shape us."* (Buchanan, 2015)

**Fig 3.1**

The discipline of interior design places across the four orders of design (Buchanan, 2019)

**The Four Orders of Design**

	1st Order Problems of Communication Signs	2nd Order Problems of Construction Things	3rd Order Problems of Action Actions	4th Order Problems of Integration Thoughts
Signs	Graphic Design			Interior Design Communication
Things		Industrial Design		Interior Design Construction
Actions			Interaction Design	Interior & Environmental Design Interaction
Thoughts				Dialectical Design Humanistic

### **How can we look at an organization within this context?**

Within the context of organizational designing the organization can be seen as the thing, or product, that is being designed. Just as Junginger sees the organization as a product that can be changed by using product development as a vehicle (Junginger, 2008).

Seeing the organization as an entity that has users, such as product has. We can use design methods and tools to emphasize with these users and add a more human perspective to Organizational Designing (Junginger, 2005). That's why experiencing the ways of working in an organization and using the tools is so important. Experiencing the organization firsthand helps understand how it feels to 'use' the organization and design for it to create a better experience for all who are affected by the organization.

#### ***An organization as a complex object, a system (Sociotechnical system)***

Whitin organizational designing an organization can be seen as a complex or sociotechnical system that deals with complex or 'wicked' problems (Norman & Stappers, 2015). These problems consist of a combination of tangible technical difficulties and intangible things like human behavior, politics and values. The complexity results in to a problem that does not have a right or wrong solution, if there is a solution at all. It requires a system thinking perspective that focuses on the relationships between different components, the components themselves and the properties of the larger whole of the organization. (Monat & Gannon, 2015).

#### ***Boundaries of an organization/system***

One way see why it is hard to define an organization is by trying to describe its boundaries. Where does an organization end and the rest of the world begin? Since the influences and mechanisms of the system can reach far and wide, finding the boundaries of what we can see as an organization is open for discussion.

In an organization, this is complex. An organization has no physical framework. So the question of where the organization ends is hard to answer. One could say that an organization consists of the people who work there. This suggests that the organization only influences those who do the actual work. But I would argue that the organization's influence reaches further than that. Take the employee's private environment. The organization's influence will affect how much time or money one has to spend. Design perspective is there to influence the quality of experience for all of those served by the organization. Another example could be the client of the organization. Do the organization's boundaries end there? It is hard to say. When there is a collaboration with another organization, then these organizations will impact each other. One is providing services that will have an impact on the other. Also, the client's way of working will again affect the organization. Related to this, another example; are freelancers or outsourced jobs part of the organization or not? If an organization wants to change something, think of working conditions, where does that responsibility reach—choices are made on how far the organizations scope lays.

We have now mainly zoomed out. We can also zoom in. we could have a look at an organization in smaller parts. Take, for example, a department or team within the organization. These can also be seen as a stand-alone organization. A project or workshop can be a form of organization. Even the way an individual does their work is a form of organization. Al these different scopes can be approached as an organization.

Since the definition of what an organization could be and where its boundaries lay differ it is hard to conclude with one answer to the question of what or how big an organization actually is? But, by being aware of the differences in scope and how far the influence of an organization can reach, choices could be made differently. However, this complexity has not made these choices any simpler.

### **What are ways of working or that can be recognized as, or used for Organizational Designing?**

#### ***Drivers for designing/Going forward***

If we cannot fully understand problems of complexity or even know what the problems are, what keeps the process of Organizational Designing going forward? There must be a particular drive to begin consciously with designing. Traditional approaches of organization design work with things like a strategic vision or planning. This suggests that there is knowledge on what to achieve and how to do that. This is not always the case. When approaching this from the design perspective, intentions or desires are driving forces in the unpredictable design process. (Nelson & Stolterman 2014).

This intention is described by graphic designer Milton Glaser

*“Design is intent, intent to communicate something to somebody so they move to action, and that includes practically everything in the world, from making a lunch date to designing an office building.”- Glaser (Wolfe, 2018)*

**These intentions or desires can change over time while gaining more insights into the context.**

#### ***(retrospective) Sensemaking***

To make an attempt at understanding the workings of the organization designers make use of the process of sensemaking. People try make sense of what is happening and needs to be done.

*“When people make sense of flows, they impose labels that are good enough to move their projects along. But they hold those labels lightly and update them without apology and return again and again to knowledge of acquaintance and direct exploration consolidated into dreams and intentions. Thus, updating and repeated sensemaking become a testimony to the soundness of the process [of organization design], not an indictment of the [end] product.” (Weick, 2003).*

This sensemaking process is, something that was happening widely during this project.

#### ***Improvisation***

Within organizational designing sensemaking happens to help design in moments where the future is unpredictable. Weick shines light on this sensemaking within improvisation in jazz music, and draws a parallel with this improvisation and organizing. He thinks that improvising may be an underlying quality of organizing that is overlooked, because of the more notable artifacts such as structure, planning, and standard procedures. (Weick, 2017). When improvising in music the player creates in the moment, not able to know what he is going to play, but by knowing what they have played. Each creation on the moment can be shaped in relation to its past. They create knowing where they come from (Gioia, 1988). This leads the designer in the direction of an explorative, reflective, practice approach to designing.

### ***Muddling through and interventions***

To practice organizational design, designers need to accept that an organization is not something that they can understand fully after an analysis. To make change happen within an organization with all its complexity they have to act opportunistically and create small incremental steps though the organization towards a desired outcome. This is described as ‘muddling through’ or ‘incrementalism’ (Lindblom, 1979)

The designer has to manage and negotiate with multiple stakeholders and they have to be satisfied by incremental changes that result from such practice (Flach & Behymer, 2016). This can be a frustrating process when a designer is used to a situation where the things they design are implemented or produced exactly the way they wanted.

The organizational designer is far more dependent of the fluctuations of the organization. And needs to accept that it is impossible to have an fully optimal situation. Something that is called ‘satisficing’. (Simon, 1969)

The designers can try to influence the organization by creating so called ‘design interventions’ (Stacey et al., 2000). Creating an artifact and place it in the organization. These artifacts can come from various design disciplines. It can be in a form of a new product to be used, or a new way of interacting in a meeting. Doing these interventions incrementally, they can steer an organization into a more desirable state.

### **Key insights:**

What do we make of all this? To recognize Organizational Designing at TD and in this project, we can use these key insights from this literature review.

- Organizational Design should be seen as a verb to emphasize that it is an ongoing process, therefore the term Organizational Designing is used.
- Within Organizational Designing there is not solely a rational sequential order of activities. Heuristics, improvisation and intuition take a big part within Organizational Designing. Especially when the context cannot be fully understand or predicted.
- An organization is never a fixed entity. It is constantly in motion and being influenced from outside and within.
- An organization can be seen from different perspectives and the scope of what can be seen as an organization varies. A single meeting can be seen as a form of organization as well as a whole complex system.
- Design interventions and experimentations can be used to provide change in an organization. Since these influence the organization in an incremental way.
- In existing organizational literature the design perspective is underrepresented. This design perspective add the experience of the user, and the form giving role of designers to the more technical attributes of an organization such as structure or recourses.

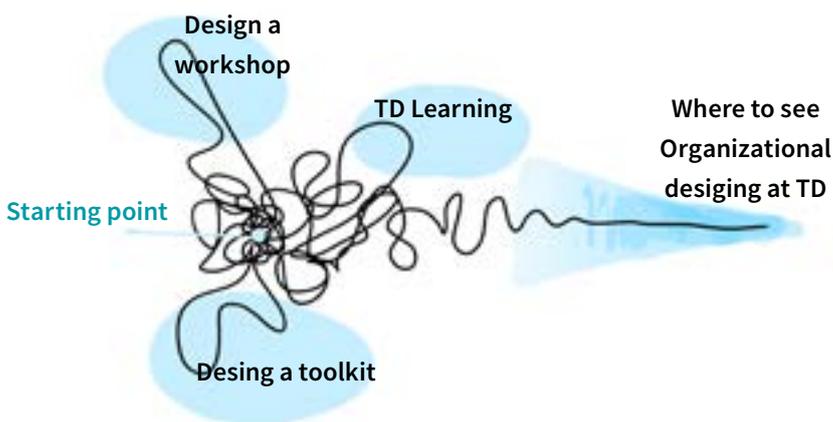
## 04

# Creating the reels

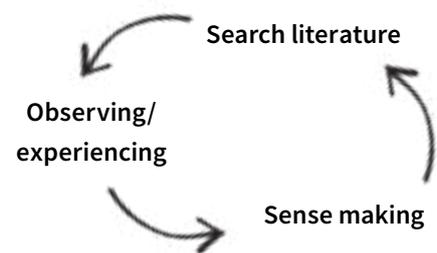
**To capture experiences and find out how organizational designing at TD takes place, various methods and tools are used.**

As discussed in the literature section, the action-centered perspective on design lends itself better for situations where the outcome is not clearly defined. This is the case within this graduation project. I emerged myself within TD and had a certain motivation to look for organizational designing. However it was unclear what I would encounter. In the end my process could be visualized as follows. Where heuristics play a big part to go forward (Ulrich, 1983). While exploring different solution-spaces in the process, such as workshop design or designing a toolkit. (see fig. 4.1)

During this process I roughly worked as follows. To have some knowledge of the topic I read some literature on the topic. Then feeling ready with some basic knowledge I went into the field and used observation methods to experience TD fully. Then, with the gathered data I went into a process of sense making. (Weick, 2003) What did I see? Can I recognize things from the literature? Then the loop continued. When I needed to get more knowledge I searched more literature. Observed new things and so on. (see fig 4.2)



**Fig 4.1**  
Process of this project



**Fig 4.2**  
Iterating and sensemaking

## Emergence and Experience

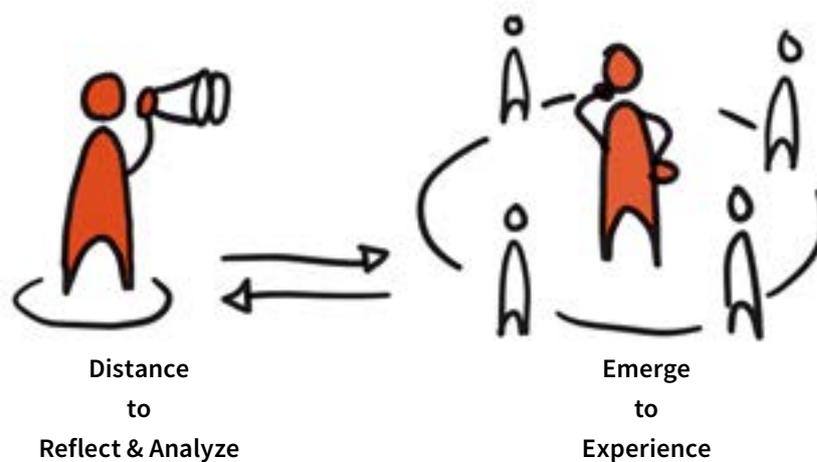
I captured the ways of working and my experiences within TD by the use of methods from ethnography (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Mainly by the use of observations, participation and recordings. I gathered these within fieldnotes to keep track of my fieldwork. During my research I attempted to describe my experiences in an elaborate manner by the use of “thick descriptions”(Geertz, 1973)

Examples from the journal of business anthropology helped me to get a first idea on what I could expect. (Briody et al., 2013)

Not only describing what happens but how I feel as well. Trying to immerse myself within TD and be perceptive for what happens, how people react and how I react. To emphasize with the users of the organization I became one of the users. When dealing with the complexity of an organization the point of view of the individual is important to take into account. By the use of these ethnographic methods certain issues rise above that were absent in traditional analyses. (Norman & Stappers, 2015)

While observing and participating I tried to be conscious of my biases, since these influence my experience. This is in practice impossible since I have my own knowledge and experiences as a design student, so it is probable that I took things for granted that others would have found rather odd. This could also happen if I would habituate and get used to the ways of working during my time at TD. On the other hand, this habituation is necessary to get some deeper insights that only can be seen when feeling more comfortable in the organization. There is a tension between being part of the organization to experience it fully and stepping out to describe it and reflect on it. It feels like being in a superposition of these two different modes. (see fig. 4.3)

Staying conscious about these biases and tensions helped me to reflect carefully on my findings during my field work.



**Fig 4.3**  
Being in superposition

### **My touchpoints/channels with TD**

Due to the pandemic and the advice to work mostly from home, the means of connection with TD were different than normally would be the case. In the beginning I had some days where I was able to go to the office, which was less occupied than normal. Some of these moments will be described further in the report. After the number of corona infections rose in December I solely worked from home. This resulted in contact moments over Microsoft (MS) Teams most of the times, sometimes over Zoom with clients. Other communication channels were MS Mail and the MS Teams Chat. This meant that I was limited in a way to experience TD as it would be in a 'normal' situation.

In a 'normal' situation I would experience being in a physical space with colleagues, being able to see more nonverbal communication, over hear conversations and have some more small talk during the day. During this pandemic there was a lack of these in between moments. The experience with TD was mainly through my computer screen.

On the more positive side, this was an opportunity to experience a design agency in abnormal circumstances and see how the organization deals with the limitations of this situation and how they managed to keep collaborating and stay creative.

*More on how the covid pandemic affected the ways of working of TD in chapter 6.*

### **My influence on the situations**

During my fieldwork I tried to vary the possibilities of being present in the meetings. In the first meetings, I was more like a fly on the wall, not interfering with the things that were happening. Just observing. Especially when there were meetings with just a few people (3-4) I turned my camera and mic off. To limit my influence on the meeting. I asked the participants in the meeting if it was distracting if I had my camera on or not. They said they found it not a big problem but could imagine it is a bit weird for some people. Therefore I decided when I was solely observing I would turn my camera and mic off.

Later during my field work, I could help by participating in the meetings, mostly the creative sessions. For example, my view as a student was helpful for the projects for Radboud and Vrije Universiteit. In the beginning I tried to write down notes for my own project while participating in the sessions. I found it very difficult to do this simultaneously, so I decided to write down my experiences after the sessions and be as perceptive as possible while participating.

Sometimes at the end of a meeting, one of the participants asked me what my opinion was on a problem or topic. It caught me off guard sometimes, because I was busy typing or focusing on other things. My presence was felt even when I did not participate actively in the meeting. This is important to acknowledge since this could influence the participants their behavior.

### **Design tools**

During the project I made use of the skills and tools I acquired during my education as a strategic product designer and life. Tools such as a survey to collect data on TD before Covid from multiple people in a short amount of time. But also creating and doing a workshop with employees of TD. How and why I used these tools within this project I discuss in chapter 6.

**VIGNETTE: Arriving at the office and a first conversation.**

*The day is already off to a good start, the sun is shining and I'm on my way to the Total Design office at the mouth of the IJ to the IJsselmeer. When I reach the top of the 4th floor I find a half empty office. However, there are a few more people present than during my first meeting on a previous Friday. I say good morning softly and don't know where to go. A young man at one of the tables gets up and kindly asks if he can help me and I mention that I have an appointment with Martijn. He goes to see if Martijn is there and offers me something to drink. I wait for a coffee in the waiting area at the entrance to the open office. The office is a big room with various white tables that provide working spaces.*

*On the coffee table in front of me, there are various magazines about branding and marketing. Behind a few plants (Sansevierias) I see a number of men working. I hear different conversations about pixels, how things turn out in Outlook, but also something about 'this is timeless'. I expect these to be two tables with different goals within TD. Judging by the clothing and the language of the men at the tables, I expect that at one table they are graphic designers, wearing a checkered blouses and a pen behind the ear. At the other table I think they work on marketing, wearing a jacket (Colbert) on top of a pullover. They both have a semi long hair cut.*

*Vincent (2nd supervisor) passes by and gives me a friendly greeting. Furthermore, a small number of other people who pass by say nothing or smile briefly. I suppose they are busy.*

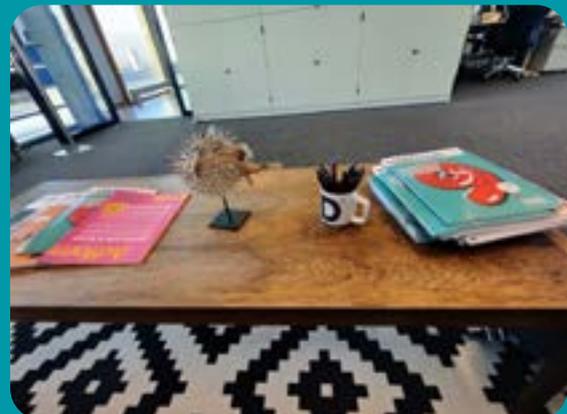
*Then Martijn is ready and receives me at the back of the office in a sitting area. Vincent also joins in and we talk about the assignment and how we will organize it in the coming period. The ways of communication are discussed. Martijn often spends a lot of time in meetings and prefers to have 'asynchronous' contact over email and Whats-app. He likes to do this 'instrumentally', by this he means he wants clear questions and emphasizes that mails do not necessarily have to be beautiful. I am warned that e-mails may come along from some colleagues where whole 'prose' is written in which the questions may be hidden. Although this probably contains a lot of info it is not necessary for Martijn and Vincent.*

*Martijn further explains to Vincent what the purpose of the project is from his perspective.*

*I found that it is sometimes hard to catchup and understand everything fully. Probably because I still need to discover the goal of my project for my own.*

**Fig 4.4**

The view from the office on the IJ river



**Fig 4.5**

The coffeetable with design magazines

## 05

# Exploring perspectives

## Total Design from different perspectives

As we seen within chapter 3 an organization can be viewed from different perspectives and scopes. In this chapter I will discuss some of the different perspectives on TD that I found.

### TD and their legacy

In the first chapter I shared my experience of the history of TD at the TD archives. This showed me how TD can be viewed from the perspective of their history and as an organization that is more than what they do in the present. It is one of the oldest design agencies in the Netherlands. Founded in 1963 by Wim Crouwel, Friso Cramer and Benno Wissing. They had great ambitions to give form to the world of tomorrow. At the time there was a belief in the malleability of the world. Graphic, industrial and spatial Design came together in their philosophy. 'Design' was still young in the Netherlands at that time. Our faculty, one of the first Industrial Design faculties in the world did not yet exist at the time when TD started. (The faculty of IDE was founded in 1969). (de Rijk, n.d.) The founders of TD had the ambitions to set a new style and had a greater vision to Design the Netherlands. TD is one of the founding fathers of the Dutch creative design Industry.

In the first decade, TD became famous across the whole world. The novel design approach, based on grids and structures, was admired and copied around the world. Today the ambitions within TD are to climb back to

become an international renowned agency again.

When I visited the archives, Tom (who was in charge of the archives) said to me that, except from Martijn (partner) and Frederike (Scholar), no one asked something from the archives. This suggests that people within TD are not really interested in the agency its history. However, the history of an organization can be used for organizational historicizing said by Hatch and Schultz. With organizational historicizing, the history is used for claims of authenticity and as an inspiration for present and future activities of the organization. The history of the organization could be used by placing artifacts from history within the current organization. (Hatch & Schultz, 2017)

The perception of what the organization of TD is, broadens when we take the history and its past designs into account. And this history can be used for organizational designing today.

**(Organizational) structure and teams**

One way of looking at TD is to look at the structures that are present within the organization. From my fieldwork and conversations I found that even with something ‘tangible’ as structures, the perspectives are different. Most of the perspectives I have heard had the following description: TD is divided different teams. Every team has its own specialty and provides different services. Every teams has a ‘head of team’ that will participates in the ‘head of teams’ - and ‘sales meetings’. Every team has their own clients and projects. When a client wants to do a new project which requires the specialty of another team they can be passed on to other teams. For example, a client that had a new brand made by the ‘branding’ team can go to the ‘Smart Builds’ team when they want a website to be designed.

During one of my first conversations, which was with the CFO of TD, I saw a difference in how he described TD with how Martijn described it to me. Martijn told me how the teams all worked as a flat organization where the board was there to facilitate them in their work. All working on the output of TD.

When the CFO described TD he began to explain how the TD as a holding was structured. With shareholders and their percentages of shares. (see fig 5.1)

Both representations of the organization would probably be considered as true by both persons. However, this shows that the definitions and perspectives on what the organization is differ, even on the structure. Something that is regarded as something ‘tangible’ or rational.

The explanation of the structure with separate teams suggests that there is no collaboration across teams possible. In practice this is not the case. There are a few people that work across or outside of the teams. These are the administrative employees, the office manager and a tender manager, to name a few.

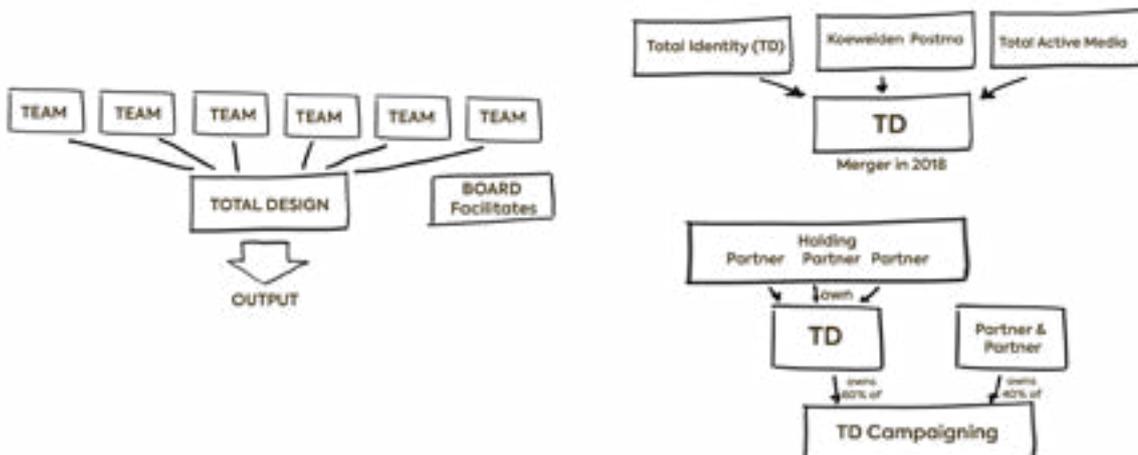
Between the teams, the boundaries are not that strict. Designers and other employees sometimes work across team boundaries. Depending on what the projects require and who is leading the project. After being explained about the teams, I met one of the account managers. In the presumption that everyone was part of a team I asked in what team she was. She replied the following:

**‘I am ‘team’-blind.’ ‘Although my own team feels like a warm bath’ – Account manager**

Officially she takes part in the Branding team. However she works across different teams on different projects. The representation of the organization structure with separate teams is not a real representation of reality.

*More on how employees are able to work between teams because of the billing system in chapter 6.*

**Fig 5.1**  
The structure of TD according to Martijn (left) and according to the CFO (right)



## Core business

Another ways of viewing TD is to describe its services they provide, since these together make TD its core business. And this is where the value is created. TD presents their services in the following categories. This list captures in what design disciplines TD is active. (Total Design, 2020)

### Design Management

Brand Experience  
Information design  
Brand management

### Digital Transformation

Service design  
Digital strategy  
Web design & Development

### Digital Design

User Experience Design  
Digital marketing  
Design systems

### Content Marketing

Content strategy  
Copywriting  
Corporate stories

### Campaigning

Campaign concept  
Digital Advertising  
Campaign plan and - strategy

### Branding

Brand architecture  
Creative sessions  
Implementation Design

*Another perspective on TD is one of the user's point of view. The vignettes throughout this project illustrate this perspective.*

## Insights

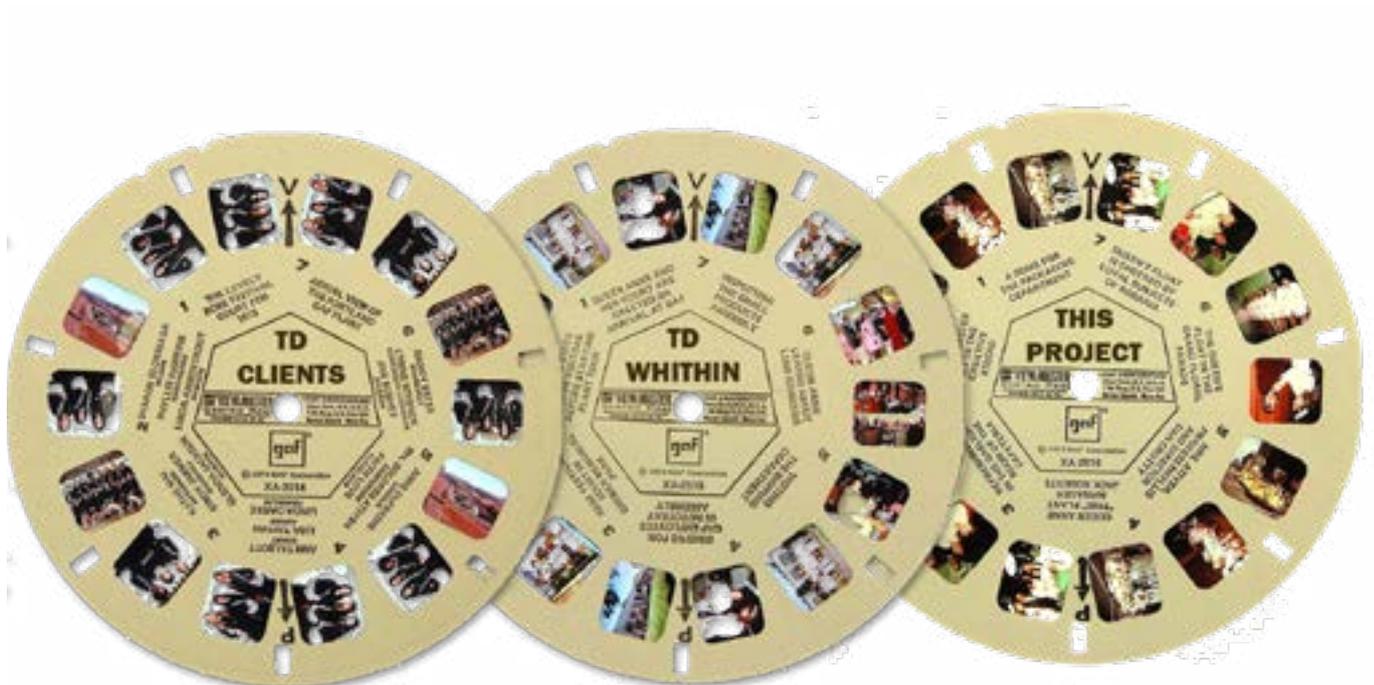
These few different ways of seeing TD give a sense of how an organization can be perceived as a different entity by different people. Even things as tangible as its structure differ. This shows how complex organizational designing can be. Since the 'thing' to practice design on has various forms. Therefore I would argue that Organizational Designing can happen for different perspectives of the organization.

## 06

## Viewing the Reels

## Highlighting Organizational Designing at Total Design

During my time at TD I tried to discover where and how TD practiced Organizational Designing. By looking at various aspects of working there. In this chapter I will elaborate on various situations where I see TD practicing some form of organizational designing. These situations are presented within 3 different areas. The first area is at the interface of TD and their clients. Since apparently TD had some organizational impact at their clients organizations. The second is organizational designing within TD itself. The third and last one is organizational designing within my own work on this project and my interventions with TD.



## Reel 1:

### The interface between TD and their clients

In this part I will describe some of my experiences on the interface between TD and their clients. I was allowed to be at meetings with different clients. Among of the meetings where a few design sessions.

#### Using Miro for creative collaboration online

The online collaboration software called Miro was used during multiple projects I followed. This was for a lot of people new to use at that time. During my field work more and more people got used to it.

Instead of coming together in a physical space and have creative co-creation sessions, this was now done remotely.

Martijn was a bit skeptical about doing session online. Would this be the same environment of creativity as being together in a physical space? After a few sessions the advantages of doing sessions online became visible. Since it can be done online, there was no travel time and it could be done more efficiently. Yet, working together in one virtual space created a feeling of being together. The feature where cursors of everyone moved across the screen added to this feeling. A great example how a 'simple' design feature could create a certain atmosphere of togetherness that helps being creative.

Another advantage was that all the created content stayed in the virtual working space and everyone could work on it whenever they wanted. This resulted in situations where aside of the sessions people from TD as well as people from the client worked on the project. The done work could be presented in the next session. The clients were surprised how well this worked and came to the virtual meetings full of enthusiasm.

During one session a hybrid form was tried; The 'Bring Your Own Device' session. We went to the building of the university and sat together in a Covid-safe distance from each other. We still worked on the online Miro board since all the previous work was on it and one of the participants had to work from home. (See fig 6.1)

It was an interesting session because a few things did not went well. It was hard to get power for the laptop and therefore we had to improvise to get the session going. (See fig 6.2)

We found out that this hybrid setup did not work. Although it was a good experiment.

#### *Where do we see organizational designing here?*

The use of tools during a creative session, or within an organization for that matter. Influences the way of working of the organization. In this case the workings of the collaboration software of Miro created a certain setting. That would be hard to achieve in a normal video call. Again, this working together online differs from real life sessions with real post-its and markers. These different tools play a big part in the experience of the users of the organization. It is, therefore, important to be conscious of what tools are used and how they impact the organization

## Two long term clients

Two of TD their clients are universities in the Netherlands. Both had earlier collaborations with TD so Martijn knew the client well. Because of this, he could use these previous projects as context for the projects that I joined. For example, TD had created a so called ‘brand compass’ and a recruitment campaign for the Radboud. Due to these previous projects, Martijn was already familiar with the whole brand and recruitment strategy of Radboud and the thoughts behind them. This creates an advantage for upcoming projects since they can be integrated with the previous ones and the organization. This integration of TD their different design disciplines with the organization of the client is one of the main reasons why I think TD has an impact on the clients their organization.

I was able to follow two projects with these clients.

Both started with a brief where the form of the outcome was not set. One project was a search for a new service concept and the other was a search for a new form of digital interaction for students. In both cases I joined the creative sessions that were held. Via Miro, as said in the previous section. The sessions functioned as a process of exploration, creation and sensemaking. There were moments where all participants were thinking on questions like; What is great service in the case of our university and what should be the purpose of this new digital interaction. Via the use of metaphors and analogies Martijn tried to make these questions more tangible.

Sometimes after a few moments of brainstorming he tries to look back together at the delivered ideas and make sense of what was said. Another thing we tried was to let the client use the design method of creating a customer journey to let them experience the perspective of their customer. Both participants really enjoyed looking from this perspective to the problem and discovered new insights. When Martijn thought some ideas could be worked out he asked a colleague of TD to join in and create a first draft of the possible outcome. This helps to get the process going and gives the client new options to choose from.



**Fig 6.1**  
The Bring Your Own  
Device session



**Fig 6.2**  
Adapt and improvise  
on the spot

### **A design inquiry as organizational reflection**

One of the clients, a start-up, wants to create an online tool to map a team's sales competencies. I joined a meeting where 2 UX designers from the team 'TD Lab' have created an online session in the web tool Figma, which functioned as a digital whiteboard in this case. I was a fly on the wall during this meeting. The two men from the company joined the client manager and product owner at the TD office. The two UX designers called in online, me as well. The session was designed to gain information for the development of the application. Together with the clients they tried to answer questions on what users could need, what the purpose of the app was and how the client imagines their new product. This inquiry helped the UX designers to understand the client and their needs. As well as that the inquiry helped the clients to look at their product and service from a different perspective. During the session the 2 clients had some mutual discussion. The view on their product or even company was not always aligned. The process of design inquiry helped them to understand their product and service better.

### ***Where do I see organizational design?***

In these cases the design inquiry that was intended as gathering of information for TD to create a good UX, Brand or Service had another effect on the client side. The process of this inquiry was a way for the clients to develop a mutual understanding on their product, service and even organization. If their understanding of these topics were not clear enough, this process helped them to explore this understanding.

This relates back to the quote from the beginning: (***“Either we bought an expensive rebranding, or an inexpensive organizational change.”***) I think the process of creating, in this case, a brand, acts a process of discovering what an organization stands for and what they want to propagate. A big part of what an organization holds together. The rebranding process form the client with TD resulted in a by-product of organizational change within the clients organization. Which, I would argue, happened at the UX- and service inquiry of previous cases as well.

## Reel 2:

### Organizational Designing within TD

In reel 2 Organizational Designing of TD within their own organization is discussed. I describe how there are certain tensions and needs within the company and how they, if so, are used as trigger for Organizational Designing.

#### The tension of quantifying Design work (billing hours)

One of the first conversations I had was with Marc the CFO of TD. It was a scheduled meeting for new employees. Here Marc gave a talk about some ways of working at TD. For example, how we have to ‘write’ our hours every day, or at least every week. (How many hours did one work on what project or for what client.) And what the procedure was for requesting leave and holidays.

During the conversation the CFO emphasized that it is very important to write the assigned hours and not work overtime. This happens far too often, he says. The CFO mentioned that he could not understand why designers would work more hours over the agreed limit of hours.

**“Not every design has to win a design award you know, especially when the client doesn’t pay for it. In the end we are here to make money, right?” - CFO TD**

To keep track of the worked hours per project, the head of teams have weekly ‘Margin-meetings’. Here is discussed with the CFO if the costs for a project do not exceed the agreed limit or if the quotation needs to be changed.

I could follow the CFO, he needs to have an overview of the costs and profits to have a financially healthy organization. Although, I could also emphasize with the designers.

They want to make something that they are proud of. From my own experience I know that it is easy to get lost into the details of a design and a design is never finished. Architect Gehry describes this feeling as a dream that is never achieved. *“For Frank Gehry, designing a building is a continuing existential struggle to pursue the dream image that he can never fully realize in reality.” (Yoo et al., 2006)* One of the other problems is that is hard to predict how much time the making of a (novel) design is going to take. Especially when the outcome of the project is not clear. Quantifying (in time and money) a complex problem, or the fuzzy front end of a design process is hard. Experience with these type of projects could be the most reliable course of knowledge for these guesses.

During my workshop (which I will discuss in the next reel) some of the designers mentioned that the writing of these hours puts on pressure on the design process. The ‘uurtje-factuurtje’ (bill every little hour) way of working is not always appreciated within the creation process.

**‘I work differently when there is said: You have this set amount of time to deliver X and write every hour separately. Than when I have the opportunity to just sit together and work on the design.’ - Desinger**

*This tension between the creativity and the commercial, practical side of the agency is not new. In 1968 one of the founders Friso Kramer left Total Design because of this tension:*

*“The troubles around Kramer’s team and Industrial Design exposed a weak spot of TD: the contrast between ideals and pretensions from the founders and the commercial, practical side of the agency as a company. Between dream and deed laid a hotbed of conflict and trouble that TD-ers in 1968 couldn’t or wouldn’t see. The board had their hands full with daily worries and creating a breeding ground for their work at clients” (Huygen & Broekraad, 1997)*

However, this way of writing hours gives some flexibility as well. During conversations with people from TD, they said they need to write hours on the project or client they worked for, not the team. Individual employees can switch teams for different projects if necessary. The billing system also gives these people the freedom to work across teams.

**“Sometimes when I need a new insight I ask someone from another team. Although this feels as a barrier, I don’t mind. I needed to send him an order number and remind him of writing these hours though.” - Vincent (Product owner)**

#### ***Where do I see organizational designing?***

This way of working is part of the design of the organization. There are clearly tensions between how designers would like to work freely and the necessity to have a proper administration and a financially healthy agency. This is a tension between the quantifying world of making money and the qualitative world of creating the best designs.

Recognizing this tension can be a first step of an organizational design process where alternatives to this way of working can be explored to improve the experience of this quantification for all participants.

## VIGNETTE: My experience of a regular stand-up

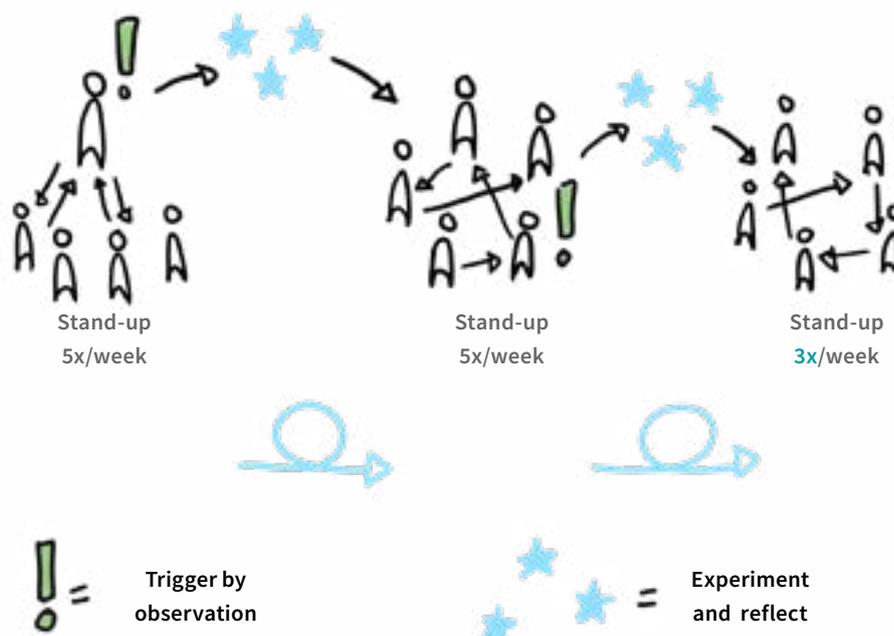
The online meeting is opened by the first to open the link. If all goes well, several participants will quickly enter the video call. Most of them have their cameras on. Sometimes it happens that someone can only make an audio connection. Then a photo or just the initials of that person will appear. This is something that seems a lot less personal to me, you cannot see any expression or non-verbal communication.

We use Microsoft Teams, in this application the sizes of the videoframes differ per person. Because of this I notice that I focus more quickly on the larger frames and therefore more on one person than the other.

Often it does not take longer than a minute or 2 before everyone is present, sometimes there is a little talk while waiting, about small things such as today's weather or the new corona measures, which is a popular new topic

for small talk. Other times, after a short greeting, it is quiet and people are already busy with work. In general, Martijn, the "head of team", starts the stand-up. "Let's get started" he says and gives someone the turn to tell what they are working on, what the plan is for today and if there are any expected obstacles. This is short, about a minute, max. 2 minutes per person, as there are around 8 people present and the stand-up should not last longer than 15 minutes. When the person whose turn it is has finished talking and there are no questions and/or comments, they give the turn to a teammate, until everyone has said their things. Everyone has to pay close attention, because the turn can be given to you at any time. All the participants have to keep track of who has already had their turn and who has not. This does not always go well. It may be that someone is busy with something else during or it is just simply too much to keep track of. And a mistake is made.

**Fig 6.3**  
Incremental changes in the stand-up



### The incremental design of the stand-up

Every morning at 9 am I gather with the SmartBuilds team in the scheduled MS Teams meeting. It's time for the daily stand-up. A meeting form that is often used within Scrum teams. (Noll et al., 2017)

The starting point for the stand-up of the SmartBuilds team is that people briefly share with the rest of the team what they will be working on this day and where they may need help. Also, problems are briefly discussed that can may be resolved by the team. This ritual ensures that everyone starts the day together, is aware of each other's projects and keeps busy during the day. In this way people can help where necessary and this promotes the team spirit.

### Where do we see organizational designing here?

In one conversation with Martijn he said that he initially always took the lead in the stand-up. He opened, gave people turns and closed. But that has changed. At one point, working from home, he was told by his wife that this stand-up came across as very school-like. This stimulated him to take a different approach. For example, what if everyone had to give each other turns? There is not a single 'schoolish' leader and everyone will have to pay attention to who has already been there. (This still does not always go well, as mentioned.) I still notice that people are waiting for Martijn to open and close the meeting, if he cannot be there or is later, they often wait a bit more quietly. So he's still seen as the leader, but the round of updates feels less like sitting in a classroom. So why do I see this as Organizational Designing? It is in the approach of Martijn to this small, seemingly unimportant interaction.

First, he was being triggered by an observation ("it seems schoolish"), then reflecting on the situation ("I don't want to be the teacher in this situation"), and trying to design a change/ an intervention in the interaction ("Let's try giving each other turns.")

This new interaction happened a first time, as an experiment by Martijn. The experiment being the change of giving each-other turns instead of leading the stand-up. This experiment was evaluated well and so the change of interaction changed the design of the stand-up. This was just one change in a list of more to come. The stand-up has evolved further during my time at TD. One team member had the thought that it was not necessary to meet every morning of the week. So they tried to held the stand-up 3 times a week. This was evaluated as positive and now the smart-builds standup is only 3 times a week. See fig (6.3)

I think this change in the organization of the stand-up happened implicitly. Martijn did not think by himself: Let's create a new design for the stand-up. These changes can happen, because there is room for feedback and it is made possible to think about improvements. The determination and evaluation of the current situation, the current design of the meeting (being a small form of organization itself and being a part of the bigger organization TD), is the first step of the design process. Something that reminds strongly of the first steps of redesigning products. If one wants to improve a product, one must first look at the current product and evaluate this in their environment of use.

Without being conscious about it, Martijn is constantly busy designing the organization of TD, or its smaller sub-organizations (such as workshops, meetings, projects). He told me that he tries to look back every week at where things can be improved, within a project or, for example, the stand-ups. This reflecting and try to improve is necessary within any design process, and since he does this throughout the organization I would label this as Organizational Designing.

## The Social Committee

Due to the covid pandemic, almost all work had to be done from home. The informal aspect of being at the office fell away. Having small talk between work was gone. To fill in this gap a group of people formed the 'Social Committee'. This group is responsible to create some social moments and organize agency broad activities. One of the things they do is notify the whole agency that it's the birthday of a colleague or there is something else to celebrate. These small notifications help to have some more personal moments with colleagues. Although, I must say, it does not replace the feeling of real life contact moments.

### *Where do we see organizational designing here?*

There was a gap in social moments within TD. A few colleagues thought to do something about it. There was no one responsible for these social moments and notifications. Maybe because they would originate spontaneously in a 'normal' office situation. Although this new solution of having a committee for these moments is maybe not as authentic as real-life personal contact, the online gestures help to show the personal moments within the organization. I would label the entrepreneurial attitude of creating a new entity within the organization to fulfil a need that is discovered as Organizational Designing.

## From agency call to TD Talk & Drinks

Every week there is an Agency call. When I joined TD it used to be at Friday morning at 11 am. This was held in an online video meeting due to corona. People trickle in one by one and some of them have a little small talk, looking forward to the weekend or some small work related things. Most of the times the talking and jokes come from a few extraverted people, mainly from the branding team. Some colleagues still work on their

things and have this call on the side. We wait for Koen (CEO) to open the meeting. He has some company broad announcements about new business, new covid rules or upcoming collaborations. At the time of the second lockdown he mentions that it is a hard time for everyone and that it is possible to change the regular way of working if needed. When colleagues have children at home, for example, flexibility in working hours is needed. After the announcements, people are asked if they want to present something to the rest of the company. Most of the times this is a finished project and the same presentation as for the client is briefly walked through. Reactions (almost always positive) are given and questions can be asked. I noticed that most of the times the presentation only contains the end result and the process or hiccups are not mentioned. When Martijn gives presentations, though, he tries to implement a piece of the process to explain the story behind a design. In addition, when a colleague from the ING team gave a presentation about a workshop they did with ING, he added an explanation of how they came up with the workshop design. I think that this focus on how they came up with a design is more valuable for TD than the polished end-result. Especially the process and the hiccups are interesting for colleagues in other teams. Since they could recognize these problems and learn from each other's experiences. Doing is more important than the outcomes.

Or as Weick interprets the architect Gehry.

*““We proved we could do it.” [...] the “it” was dispensable, whereas the “doing” was not.”(Weick, 2003).*

The last few weeks of my time at TD the format of the call has changed. Now, the meeting is at Thursdays in the afternoon at 4:30pm. So everyone who is not working on Friday can join as well and there is a more relaxed 'afternoon drinks' ambiance. Every week the new 'Social Committee' asks around if there are employees who want to share a project that is finished or something else that could be interesting. In this new format, the meetings

are opened by one of the Committee members. New colleagues are introduced by asking a few questions which are also more focused on the personal life of the person. So they can share their personal interests as well. Once a month a third party is asked to give a presentation on something that could be relevant for the work at TD. For example, a partner agency who worked on sound design for brands, and a talk from an expert in Social Media advertising. This new concept is called TD Talk & Drinks.

***Where do we see organizational designing here?***

In this example there are a few things that I would see as organizational design.

***- The discovery of a need from the users***

During Covid there was a need for more informal contact between colleagues. In addition there was a need for a moment to acquire new learnings. These needs were confirmed during my workshop. On which I elaborate in Reel 3.

There are people that are not working on Fridays and therefore were not able to come to the weekly calls.

These were triggers to change something within the organization. These needs need to be discovered.

Observation and having conversations with colleagues were used in this situation.

***- The use of a present routine to add value***

People are used to the routines and habits they formed within the organization. To make change within an organization, a present routine can be used to adjust to meet the needs. In this way there is not a big change in the way of working of persons.

In this case the (half)hour of agency call was already planned, therefore the colleagues did not have to make more time for this 'new' routine.

## Reel 3:

### My design interventions, Organizational Designing within this project.

In reel 3 I will use my experiences from working on this graduation project. The design interventions I did myself and how this can be seen as organizational designing.

#### The survey (TD before and during the pandemic)

When I started at TD it was the beginning of November, it has been 8 months since the coronavirus started to have an impact in the Netherlands. Everyone needed to work from home unless it was impossible to do so. TD had to make the change to working from home as well. To get a sense of what changed and how people worked at TD before the pandemic I send out a survey to gather quick insights on what employees miss about their way of working before the pandemic and what they not miss when working from home. In other words, what are the advantages and disadvantages of working at the office and working from home?

The survey benefitted me as well as the board of TD. For me, the gathered data could help me get a better view of the changes that have occurred since the norm became working from home. Via a survey I could gather data from a broad set of respondents. This added to the data I gathered by observations, participations and conversations.

For the board, the results could help to create a rationale to the plans of combining working from home and at the office in the future.

After a few iterations discussed with Martijn I finished the design of the survey. He advised me to make it easy to fill

in, otherwise people would not do it.

I divided the survey into 5 themes:

- The office and working from home.
- Quality of work
- Internal collaboration
- Client contact and collaboration
- Social contact and atmosphere

Per theme the premise was as follows, what do you miss about this from before the pandemic and what do you not miss? A few options are given to stimulate the respondents' thoughts and give a frame of reference. Additionally, there was an open text box for personal answers. Each theme ended with the request for an anecdote, which could help me get a fuller perspective on the matter.

*The full survey and its results can be seen in Appendix B1*

***The outcomes:***

First, most people would like to see a mix of working from home and office work in the future. If we look at what people miss and what they don't miss about these 2 forms of work, I think that working from home can mainly be used for work that requires focus. The "straight forward" production work, such as administrative work, coding, the time-consuming and focus-required detailing on designs. There is less distraction at home (provided that there are no other distractions, children aren't home) and it is easy to organize their workplace. However, people at home miss out on personal contact and interaction with colleagues. The physical creative sessions are missed, these are moments where spontaneous inspiration and creativity arise. Here I see a (new) purpose for the office. The office can function as a place where people can come together. A place where creativity and interaction are central. How the current open office-like space should be set up for this purpose still needs to be well thought out. This is a great interior design challenge that interfaces with all forms of Design. (Buchanan, 2019)

## Workshop Organizational Designing

After a period of observing and participating at TD I wanted to let colleagues at TD experience their own organizational designing. The goal for the participants during the session was to get acquainted with organizational designing at TD and find a way to share this knowledge within TD.

My own goal for the session was to gather experiences from the participants with their organization and help them recognize their organizational designing, if there is any.

### Participants

To acquire a broad spectrum of perspectives on the topic I asked people from different teams. The team consisted of a Senior Designer and a Creative Director how worked at TD for around 20 years, so they have a great amount of experience in the agency. Furthermore a client manager with around 2 years of experience at TD and an intern with around half a year of experience for some fresh perspectives. It was quite easy to get this team together for this two hours session. They were all open to participating although some of them were quite busy. Which I appreciated.

### Miro Structure

Before the collective session I did short 1 on 1 conversations where I gave an introduction to the topic and tried to explain what I expected from them as preparation. Here I asked them to think of a piece of their organization (such as a meeting, session or a project). I created a canvas to fill in where the participants could analyze their chosen organization. The subtopics were: People and roles, group dynamics, infrastructure, vision/goals and process. As an example I filled in one canvas. See fig. (). My example was the organization of this session. Which was probably a bit complicated to understand because it was rather meta.

## Changing the purpose of the workshop while facilitating

During the workshop I encountered a few situations that I had not expected and needed to adjust the process of the workshop. First, some of the participants did not have the time to fill in the matrix upfront. And from the ones that did fill in the matrix, only one had actually filled it in as I meant. Because of this start, the perspective was not set correctly on what I meant with what I meant as an organization. The conversations began to shift towards opinions on TD as a whole and on what could be done better. The participants were direct and honest during the whole session. So I saw an opportunity to gain more insights on what views they had on TD as a whole, instead of persisting to achieve my previous goal.

Eventually the workshop functioned as reflection space to ventilate opinions. Even if that was not the initial purpose I let it go during, since I heard interesting things come up. I had to improvise to get the flow of the workshop going. Which did not went fluently, but the participants were very forgiving.

In the end one of the participants felt a bit 'hungover' from the session. Some negative feelings about the ways of working came up during the session. For which I felt a bit guilty. Another participant had the opposite and felt motivated to get going and bring some change to TD.

*The results of the workshop can be found in appendix C1.*

**Where do we see Organizational Designing here?**

The purpose of the workshop shifted during the workshop itself. In a small timeframe I experienced what Organizational Designing can be. This is where the purpose or direction of the organization can shift, while doing. I reflected-in-practice on what was happening and if it could benefit my project. If I did not had the feeling that I could get anything out of the workshop I would have tried to steer the participants back to the main structure of the session.

Although this workshop did not resulted in a way that I was expecting it to be. The results were useful. The workshop functioned as a place to ventilate some tensions and thoughts on how TD should function. These perspectives helped me to understand the workings of TD better. But mainly that the perspectives on TDs ways of working vary between different employees and their roles. Of course this is obvious, but being conscious about the different perspectives on the users of the organization is important when designing organizational change. If we want to improve the experiences of all the users involved in the organization.

**The validation of ideas**

The idea for the ‘TD Drinks & Talk’ from Reel 2 was mentioned during my workshop. The client manager mentioned afterwards that the workshop and the conversations that were held at that moment, confirmed a lot of premonitions she had. This confirmation gave a push into the direction of organizing these events and changes within the agency call. This shows that a workshop or open conversation about the organization can give a push over the edge to go on with new ideas and create rationale for these new concepts. The workshop functioned as a validation for her to go on with the idea.



**Fig 6.4**  
Creative workshop in Miro

## Design intervention: The Funhouse Mirror reflection (provoke reactions)

After around 6 weeks of my research at TD, I was asked to give a short update on my first insights. I was struggling to find what I wanted to share and in what form. After a meeting with my coach from the university, we came to the idea of using a laughing mirror as a metaphor for the upcoming update. This mirror reflects the person who is standing in front of it, but exaggerates some aspects of this person. As a caricature as it were. The idea was to use my experiences as a first reflection moment to my mentors from TD, with some exaggerated aspects of my findings and some provocative statements.

By doing so, the participants are triggered to think about their own organization and whether they actually agree or disagree with the statements.

The statements, however, were not taken out of thin air. They were based on experiences I have had during those first weeks and therefore had some load. I created some short statements in the form of 'TD is ...'. I combined these statements with an image that I thought. Not always in a literal manner, so the images were open to own interpretation.

The first round of 'mirroring' was with my two mentors of TD: Martijn and Vincent.

### The reactions

The reactions from my mentors were not always what I expected. For example, I had not experienced any creativity sessions where new things were created. At that time, I had sat in meetings where solely practicalities were discussed and the (web)designers and programmers went on with the tasks at hand. This felt to me as a sort of factory where employees produce what was delegated in an almost automated way. I therefore created the statement: 'TD is a design factory.' Together with an image of an old-fashioned office with drawing tables. (see fig.6.6).

After presenting this statement the reactions from Martijn and Vincent were more positive than I expected. Martijn said: 'If one could mass produce great and original designs it will be great.' and that if I saw TD that way, it would be a compliment. Although, Martijn also saw that I tried to give it a more negative annotation by the use of the old-fashioned repetitive image.

*The metaphor of TD being a design factory is used later on to show TD their different roles.*

Another statement I made was: 'TD is old.' Together with an old black and white image of the founders together in a room, talking. I knew TD had a great history and is one of the oldest design agencies in the Netherlands. But I also didn't see that many young (40-) people at the agency yet.

After presenting the image the reactions of Martijn and Vincent both were quite proud. They both were conscious about the heritage TD had and thought that more employees should be aware of this history. Vincent added that TD is sometimes framed by its competitors as an old-fashioned design agency due to this long history. Martijn says that back in the days TD was ahead of its time in their way of designing and wants to TD to be ahead of its time at present day as well.

*All the statements can be found in appendix D1*



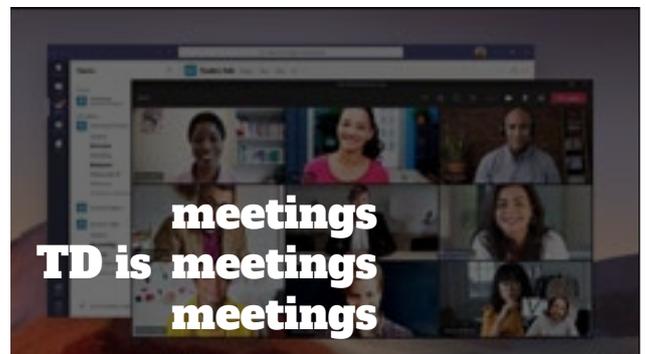
Fig 6.6

Statement and image: 'TD is a design factory'

**Where do we see Organizational Designing here?**

The 'Laughing Mirror' session resulted in some interesting reactions. These revealed how the participants saw their organization and what they were proud of. This was done by confronting the participants with statements that could be provocative and create some friction. One of the statements even made into a 'Sinterklaas' poem that Martijn had written to his fellow board members. The statement was: 'TD is meetings, meetings, meetings.' Referring to the many different back to back meetings I experienced, wondering where the creativity and production within TD was held. Apparently this resonated with Martijn and it was something he wanted to share as something that need a good look at. The fact that such a reflection session got one of the board members thinking about their way of working and their organization is something I would see as how an organizational design intervention (the statements discussed in a session) can result in possible change. These statements functioned as reflection to the participants. Reflection is an important part in the design process. It can change the perspective or challenge the existing thoughts on the organization. These thoughts can be an underlying principal behind the complexity of an organization. (Buchanan, 2015).

This intervention was a way of reflecting some ones experiences (in this case mine) and creating a conversation about those personal experiences. For my research, the reactions from the participants are useful to understand their view on the organization. On the other side, the statements gave the participants on how others experienced their organization. Therefore, this tool of reflection could be useful for both parties. Challenging the thoughts on the organization via reflection is something I would consider as something that is part of Organizational Designing.

**Fig 6.7**

Statements and images:

'TD is meetings, meetings, meetings'

'TD is straightforward/ direct'

## Archetypes TD

During my research I tried to make sense of what I was experiencing. I saw that every project had a different goal. The client had a ‘problem’ or wanted a certain product; e.g. brand, digital product, campaign. But the role TD played and therefore the service they offered within these projects differed.

I tried to make sense of these different roles by finding archetypes that fit these roles of TD. TD uses this method of using archetypes to make sense of a role or identity of their client. Mainly during projects of rebranding, but also when dealing with more ‘fuzzy front end’ projects to deal with vagueness. The archetypes help to get a sense of complex or ‘vague’ topics such as an identity or in this case what roles to play.

I created three archetypes that could fit the role TD plays; the factory, the director and the creative guide.

### *The design factory*

The first role I saw was when TD offered the service of creating designs themselves, in-house. These are the practical design assignments. Assignments with a set outcome. This looked to me as production work and designing happened in a defined space. The projects where for example: ‘build a website with these specifications.’ ‘create the logo and icons for a certain identity.’ These were tasks individual designers and employees could do, supervised by a product owner or team lead who had an overview of the project. The archetype/metaphor I saw here is the one of a factory, where TD produces products (designs) in an almost automated way. This does not mean the individuals do ‘brainless’ tasks. The individual tasks can be rather difficult but the form of the outcome can be predicted upfront to a certain extent. In this process, the client is mainly involved when they need to be informed or a choice needs to be made. In essence it comes down to the following: The client gives a brief, and TD gives back the designs.

### *The director*

Another role that TD could have is the one of creative lead. Where the production of the individual pieces is outsourced to other agencies or production companies, but TD keeps the ownership of the creative and strategic process. This is often the case when TD does not have the skills of production in-house. Think of, the shooting of commercials, photography or sound design. When this is the case, a partnership is made with another agency and TD functions as the creative lead over the project. When TD plays this role, the client is also mainly involved when there is a go no-go moment or specific feedback is needed. Similar to the factory situation.

***TD as creative guide and experience center***

The last role I saw was that of TD being a creative guide or where TD functioned as an experience center. During meetings and workshops with clients there were moments where clients experienced TD its designing by themselves. This resulted in moments where TD could be seen as a creative guide, where TD shows and leads the client through the design process. Sometimes a client took over a design method or tool that TD used. Then they went on and used it in their own time. *This is mentioned within the collaboration with the two universities in reel 1.*

TD lets their clients experience a design process which helps the clients to open their minds to new perspectives and ways of working that they could use within their own organization.

The most clear example of this is the way we all collaborated within the same online creative space of Miro. We used the application during creative sessions, but outside of this meetings the environment was used by both parties to work in. Sometimes TD gave some homework assignments to the client and they worked on this homework in the online environment. In other times, the client worked out something in the environment by themselves and they could present this during a jointly meeting.

*Using this perspective of facilitating a learning experience, TD could position themselves as something more than an agency who makes (aesthetically) beautiful solutions for a clients problem. But as a place where the client learns the methods and way of working of TD. So they learn how to be more flexible, creative and innovative.*

***Playing different roles***

There is not a hard boundary between these metaphorical roles. TD can provide different roles in the same project. They can produce, direct and co-create in the same project and play all 3 roles at once. The archetypes can help to change the views on the different roles TD can play for their clients.

If we look at TD as a factory that produces designs, then the client can put a design brief in the organization and a design or product comes out of the agency without much collaboration between the client and TD. When TD is seen as an experience center / design academy. The client needs to participate throughout the whole process and TD needs to lead them through it as a sort of being a teacher. Then, not only the final product is the valuable outcome, but the client's learning process as well.

The shift of perspective on TD's role can result in different choices within workings of the organization.

The archetypes work as a frame that bind the activities, processes and services together in a single thought. (Buchanan, 2019). Therefore the use of these archetypes can be seen as a tool for organizational designing.

## 07

# Did you see that?

## Conclusion and discussion

To find Organizational Designing at TD we proposed a few questions that helped us guide through this search. The two main questions were: How can we look at Organizational Designing? And, where do we see Organizational Designing at TD and this project? In the following section I give answers to these questions.

One of the important factors to see Organizational Designing is being conscious of the fact that an organization is never fixed and design is an ongoing process where there is no end with a single result. Also the scope of what can be considered an organization can vary. One can practice organization design on a small piece of organization, as we saw with the subtle changes with the stand-up. As well as challenging the thoughts on the whole organization, as was tried to change perspectives on the roles TD plays.

The practice of organizational designing consists of various design methods and tools. For example to steer or nudge an organization to a desired state, designers can create so called design interventions. This intervening is a way to deal with the great complexity and evolution of organizations, and still do something. This often starts with an observation that triggers the designer to create this intervention. Such as we saw when the Social Committee was introduced and the agency call was changed.

The design artefacts such as software that is being used, furniture that is present in the office or even the food and drinks that is available at the organization, influence people and therefore (workings of) the organization. It is important to be conscious about this fact while making choices acquiring or creating other design artefacts that cannot be created in house. We saw that the software of Miro could create a feeling of togetherness that was necessary for the creative sessions.

We saw that a design inquiry can have an organizational by-product for solving or exploring organizational questions. Such as, what service do we provide, who is our target group, or what are our values and how do we propagate them? We saw this inquiry at the sessions of the universities and the UX design inquiry.

It is important for an organization to make room for reflection and create a safe space for feedback on what is happening. Then certain observations can be made and discussed that could result in ideas for a new design of the organization. Think of the evolution of the stand-up that only could happen if there is room for observations to be made and reflection to be done. This together with the room to experiment with new ways of working makes the organization able to constantly redesign itself and be flexible for change. This iteration of reflection, experimentation is already a big part of the process of (digital) product design.

Design on an organizational level is also seen as the design of thoughts and values (Buchanan, 2001) therefore the design tools of using analogies, metaphors and stories can help within organizational designing. In my experiences this helped users to reflect on their organization and therefore change their thoughts on the organization. This change in perspective can change how decisions will be made and can affect the ways of working of the organization.

Being aware on how other users of the organization see and experience their organization is important in the organizational designing process. Within an organization, the users are also part of the organization. This results in a certain complexity that is hard to fully understand and predict. The users also directly influence the form of the product (organization) they use. This is why practicing design on an organizational level requires a great level of people skills. One needs to understand people as the users as well as the functioning parts of the organization. This is why the workshop where perspectives and opinions were shared was valuable as an Organizational Designing tool.

### **Limitations**

First, I would like to discuss the limitations of this project. Unfortunately, due to the Covid-pandemic it was harder to experience at TD and its more 'soft' components such as in between conversations and working at the office together with colleagues. However this gave a unique insight in how the organization functioned through digital media.

Another limitation could be the fact that I mainly used my own experiences at TD. And therefore could 'see' only a certain part of the organization. This results in a view that only is represents a small part of reality, which on itself is inevitably biased.

### **Discussion**

From my experiences at TD, I would argue that organizational designing can occur within different design disciplines and on different levels. Since the artifacts from these disciplines shape the organization. The artifacts created shape the communication, construction, interactions between people and challenge people their thoughts on the organization. Just as were Buchanan places interior design across all the 4 orders (Buchanan, 2019). We can do the same with Organizational Designing.

For now, the most organizational value for clients is within the design inquiry TD does with their clients. This inquiry itself fits in the 4<sup>th</sup> order of organization design where the thoughts on what the underlying forces in the organization are. Who are we, for what or why do we exist? In addition, the integration of different design disciplines for their clients results in TD being more emerged within the clients organization, than when it is just a single design assignment. This helps to 'add' a broader organizational layer on top of the individual projects. As we saw at the Radboud and VU projects. The way TD can use their skills from different design disciplines, results in this integration. If Total Design becomes more aware of this Organizational layer of integrating multiple design forms they could become even more Total.

### **Recommendations**

As further research on this topic I would like to give some recommendations. I experienced that it is still hard to capture the real organizational impact that is a result of design interventions. Although new things happen after the intervention, it is hard to prove some causality and to measure the impact, especially when the impact is intangible, such as cultural change for example. For TD it would be interesting to explore their impact on their clients organizations so it becomes more explicit and they can provide some more evidence on the impact of their work.

Explore how more different forms of design can be integrated to achieve an even more coherent and holistic organization with the optimal experience. For example, what organizational impact does architecture have? Or sound design? Can even music play a role in organizational designing?



# Appendices

A1 References

A2 Project brief

B1 Survey results

C1 Workshop Design

C2 Workshop Results

D1 Reflection slides 'TD is...'

## A1

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## A2

## Project Brief

DESIGN  
FOR OUR  
future

TU Delft

## IDE Master Graduation

## Project team, Procedural checks and personal Project brief

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

- The student defines the team, what he/she is going to do/deliver and how that will come about.
- SSC E&SA (Shared Service Center, Education & Student Affairs) reports on the student's registration and study progress.
- IDE's Board of Examiners confirms if the student is allowed to start the Graduation Project.

**! USE ADOBE ACROBAT READER TO OPEN, EDIT AND SAVE THIS DOCUMENT**

Download again and reopen in case you tried other software, such as Preview (Mac) or a webbrowser.

## STUDENT DATA &amp; MASTER PROGRAMME

Save this form according the format "IDE Master Graduation Project Brief\_familyname\_firstname\_studentnumber\_dd-mm-yyyy". Complete all blue parts of the form and include the approved Project Brief in your Graduation Report as Appendix 1 !



family name	<u>Wolkers</u>	Your master programme (only select the options that apply to you):
initials	<u>T</u> given name <u>Tim</u>	IDE master(s): <input type="radio"/> IPD <input type="radio"/> Dfl <input checked="" type="radio"/> SPD
student number	<u>4279050</u>	2 <sup>nd</sup> non-IDE master: _____
street & no.	_____	individual programme: _____ (give date of approval)
zipcode & city	_____	honours programme: <input type="radio"/> Honours Programme Master
country	_____	specialisation / annotation: <input type="radio"/> Medisign
phone	_____	<input type="radio"/> Tech. in Sustainable Design
email	_____	<input type="radio"/> Entrepreneurship

## SUPERVISORY TEAM \*\*

Fill in the required data for the supervisory team members. Please check the instructions on the right !

** chair	<u>Prof. dr. Eekelen, B.F. van</u>	dept. / section: <u>HCD</u>
** mentor	<u>MSc. Wegener, F.E.</u>	dept. / section: <u>DOS</u>
2 <sup>nd</sup> mentor	<u>MSc. Arts, M.</u>	
	organisation: <u>Total Design</u>	
	city: <u>Amsterdam</u>	country: <u>The Netherlands</u>
comments (optional)	..... ..... .....	

Chair should request the IDE Board of Examiners for approval of a non-IDE mentor, including a motivation letter and c.v.



Second mentor only applies in case the assignment is hosted by an external organisation.



Ensure a heterogeneous team. In case you wish to include two team members from the same section, please explain why.

**Personal Project Brief** - IDE Master Graduation

**Organizational design at Total Design**

project title

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

start date 02 - 11 - 2020

- -

end date

**INTRODUCTION \*\***

Please describe, the context of your project, and address the main stakeholders (interests) within this context in a concise yet complete manner. Who are involved, what do they value and how do they currently operate within the given context? What are the main opportunities and limitations you are currently aware of (cultural- and social norms, resources (time, money,...), technology, ...).

The agency at which I will do my graduation project is Total Design (TD). TD is a design agency in Amsterdam founded in 1963 by a few designers, including Wim Crouwel. Back then these designers tried to form the world of tomorrow. Graphic, industrial and spatial design came together in their philosophy. This combining of various design disciplines to achieve a more total design is still a focus for TD.

Design (verb) is still developing and is applied at more broad and complex topics. As seen by Buchanan in the four orders of design, design started being applied in communications (1st order), then objects (2nd) and interactions (3rd) and now is applied to systems and organizations (4th). This application of design on organizations fits the philosophy of TD in achieving a 'total' design and will be the topic of my graduation project.

During my time at TD I will be mentored at the client side by Martijn Arts. Martijn is a partner at TD and will help me to get in touch with the right people and can provide me with necessary practical and substantive information.

From the TU Delft side I will be supervised by Frithjof Wegener (mentor) and Bregje van Eekelen (chair). Frithjof is a PhD candidate in organizational design and will help me with the overview of the project and can provide me with knowledge about this topic. We will meet weekly.

Bregje is professor of design, culture & society and we will meet every 3 weeks to discuss my progress and findings.

**Covid limitations**

At the start of my project we are heading into a second (partial) lockdown. This means everyone will work from home again unless necessary. Especially for my ethnographic studies this forms a challenge. I will not be able to experience the normal way of working within TD. Interactions between employees will be very different and it will be hard to quickly talk to people. I have to find ways to get in touch with people in a different way.

However, this situation is also an opportunity. First, people are more conscious of what they miss and don't miss from interactions and routines in the old world. This could be interesting to ask for in online interviews. Secondly, this situation shows a whole new way of working online at TD. Positive aspects of this new situation could be taken over when things will be back to normal.

space available for images / figures on next page



**Personal Project Brief** - IDE Master Graduation

**PROBLEM DEFINITION \*\***

Limit and define the scope and solution space of your project to one that is manageable within one Master Graduation Project of 30 EC (= 20 full time weeks or 100 working days) and clearly indicate what issue(s) should be addressed in this project.

There is a growing tension between the form of organizations and their changing environment. An organization often wants to keep their known structure, habits, way of working. However, the environment is constantly changing. This generates friction.

How can organizations organize themselves to cope with this ever changing environment and stay relevant and functional? This is where Total Design sees an opportunity. TD thinks they can use and combine their design skills to achieve a 'total' design of an organization, which will help survive this continuous change. TD does sort of offer this organizational design to its clients, but it is not always clear if and how the client will need it.

"Or I bought a very expensive re-branding or a very cheap reorganization." - a TD client.

I would like to know how TD works to achieve this total organizational design and try to find a way to make this more clear to their clients and TD itself.

A first research question could be something like:

'How can Total Design use organizational design practices to achieve a 'total' design of an organization?'

What are the tensions between different fields in the system of TD working with and for their clients. Which are important to keep and for which a solution can be found?

**ASSIGNMENT \*\***

State in 2 or 3 sentences what you are going to research, design, create and / or generate, that will solve (part of) the issue(s) pointed out in "problem definition". Then illustrate this assignment by indicating what kind of solution you expect and / or aim to deliver, for instance: a product, a product-service combination, a strategy illustrated through product or product-service combination ideas, ... . In case of a Specialisation and/or Annotation, make sure the assignment reflects this/these.

Find routines and ways of working of Total Design by using ethnographic methods. With insights gathered, design a \_\_\_\_\_ tool/routine that helps TD achieve their goal: offering a 'total(holistic)' design of the organization of their clients.

In the first weeks I will work and gain experience at Total Design (TD). This will be achieved by using ethnographic methods and tools. I will try to grasp how it is to work at and work with TD. What are the routines and habits? How is the culture? How gets work done? and so forth.

After gathering this data I will use this to gain insights and spot how TD uses their way of working to provide a 'total' design to their clients. Using creative and generative sessions with Total employees (and clients?) I will try to co-create a definition of the 'total' design that is pursued. In addition an analysis of the touchpoints between client and TD could help to create an overview of the practices done.

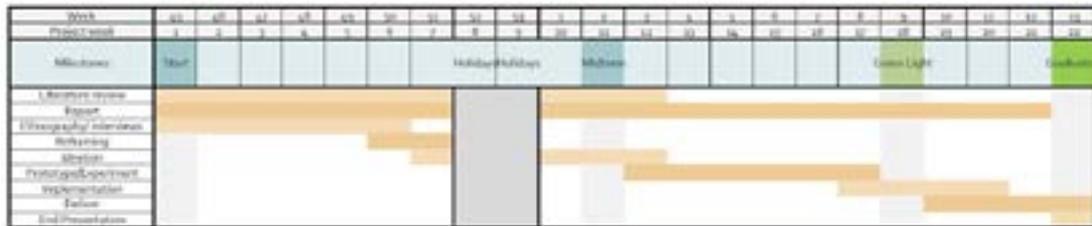
When these insights on the way of working are gained and the definition of 'total' design is made. The next step would be to find a way to implement a designed method/tool/way of working, to achieve this 'total' design (-practice) at the clients organization and/or TD.

**Personal Project Brief** - IDE Master Graduation

**PLANNING AND APPROACH \*\***

Include a Gantt Chart (replace the example below - more examples can be found in Manual 2) that shows the different phases of your project, deliverables you have in mind, meetings, and how you plan to spend your time. Please note that all activities should fit within the given net time of 30 EC = 20 full time weeks or 100 working days, and your planning should include a kick-off meeting, mid-term meeting, green light meeting and graduation ceremony. Illustrate your Gantt Chart by, for instance, explaining your approach, and please indicate periods of part-time activities and/or periods of not spending time on your graduation project, if any, for instance because of holidays or parallel activities.

start date 2 - 11 - 2020 \_\_\_\_\_ end date \_\_\_\_\_



In this Gantt chart is a rough overview of my graduation project shown. I will start with ethnographic studies, interviews and observations, while participating in projects at TD. In these first weeks I will get a sense of how it is to work there and will start searching for opportunities. When having more experience from and knowledge about the organization I will reframe the project's direction and start with ideation for a possible end product. It is hard to set the activities in the second half of the project since a lot of that is depending on the first months. Every week I will discuss my progress, insights and thoughts with my mentors and I will adjust my planning accordingly.

**Personal Project Brief** - IDE Master Graduation

**MOTIVATION AND PERSONAL AMBITIONS**

Explain why you set up this project, what competences you want to prove and learn. For example: acquired competences from your MSc programme, the elective semester, extra-curricular activities (etc.) and point out the competences you have yet developed. Optionally, describe which personal learning ambitions you explicitly want to address in this project, on top of the learning objectives of the Graduation Project, such as: in depth knowledge a on specific subject, broadening your competences or experimenting with a specific tool and/or methodology, ... . Stick to no more than five ambitions.

A few months ago I got an email from Frithjof with the question if I was maybe interested in doing a graduation project by Total Design. I did not know what TD was at first, but after reading the proposals and a quick search on the internet I was already enthusiastic.

During my study I was always interested in the work that these kinds of agencies do. From creating brands and campaigns to designing UX and new digital products. Doing a graduation project at TD will be a great experience within this profession. I will put my design skills (soft and hard) to the test within this project to end my SPD master with a great result.

Use drawings to make sense of abstract topics

I always loved to draw and I like the fact that this skill can help me explain abstract and complex topics. However, this is something I still don't do too often. My ambition therefore is to draw more and expand more to the visual realm. This is valuable because within conversations about these topics misunderstandings often occur. The addition of visual thinking can decrease these misunderstandings.

Ethnographic studies

In this project I will need to use various ethnographic methods to gain insights on the topic of organizational design within TD. I want to get experience with interviewing, observing and writing down thoughts about what I sense. I want to get better in this area, because I think it is very useful to have these skills being a designer. Because the exploration could help in finding latent needs and desires of a user. Those are hard to find and important in the development of a new product or service.

Project planning

I want to become better at planning and executing a big (individual project). I always find it hard to plan things ahead and stick to it. This skill is needed in this project to end it well and within the time frame. With design projects this is often hard because there are a lot of things not clear in advance. Getting used to these situations will help me further in my career.

**FINAL COMMENTS**

In case your project brief needs final comments, please add any information you think is relevant.

If you have any questions about this brief feel free to contact me.

# B1

## Survey results

### Enquête resultaten

Werken bij Total Design in coronatijd

1

#### Introductie

Door de coronacrisis is Total Design (TD) genoodzaakt een significant deel van de tijd vanuit huis te werken. Wat vindt men binnen TD hier van? In de periode tussen eind november en eind januari hebben de mensen bij TD een enquête ingevuld met daarin vragen over het werk van vóór en tijdens de coronacrisis. In deze presentatie worden de resultaten gepresenteerd. De presentatie zal afsluiten met een eerste suggestie voor het werken bij TD na de coronacrisis.

**45**

Respondenten

#### Onderwerpen

**Kantoor en thuiswerken**

**Kwaliteit van werk**

**Interne samenwerking**

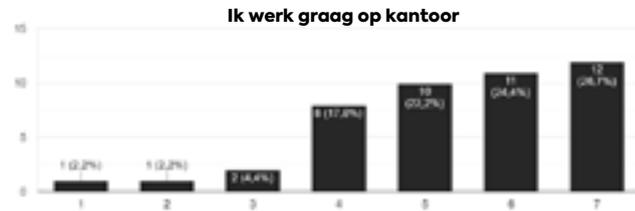
**Klantcontact en –  
samenwerking**

**Sfeer en sociaal contact**

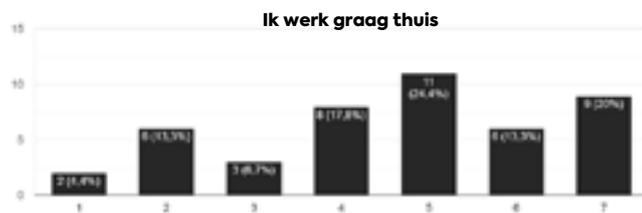
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## Kantoor en thuiswerk

Men werkt over het algemeen graag op kantoor.



Over het thuiswerken wordt wisselender gedacht.

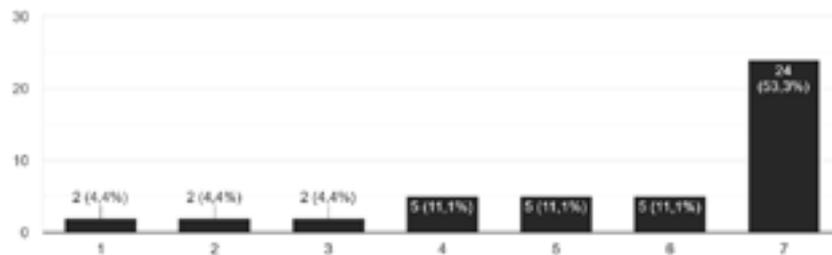


3

## Kantoor en thuiswerk

Ondanks dat over het thuiswerken wisselend gedacht wordt, zou een overgrote meerderheid graag een mix zien van deze twee vormen van werk.

**Ik wil graag een mix van thuiswerken en werken op kantoor.**



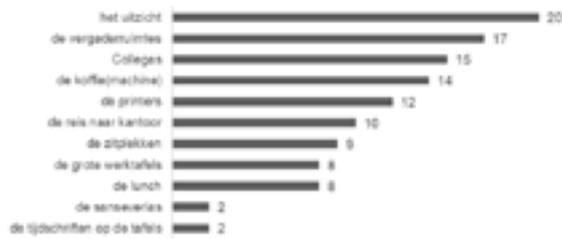
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## Kantoor en thuiswerk

Als we kijken naar wat men mist aan het kantoor zien we dat men het prachtige uitzicht erg kan waarderen. Naast een aantal van de faciliteiten worden ook de collega's vaak genoemd. Het persoonlijke contact is een ding wat erg gemist wordt.

De drukte die vaak op kantoor aanwezig was, wordt door veel mensen als negatief ervaren. Ook is met name de reis een minpunt aan het werk op kantoor.

**De dingen die men mist aan het kantoor...**



**De dingen die men NIET mist aan het kantoor...**



\*open antwoorden zijn waar mogelijk geclusterd. Eenmalige antwoorden kunnen in de resultaten in de bijlage gevonden worden.

5

## Interne samenwerking

Men mist de korte lijntjes met collega's. Het snel even kunnen sparren en meekijken. Verder worden de creatieve sessies, brainstorms en workshops gemist.

De afleiding en interrupties die bij het werk op kantoor horen worden als ergens gezien. Dit wordt samen met de inefficiëntie van meetings met collega's het vaakst genoemd.

**De dingen die men mist aan de interne samenwerking...**



**De dingen die men NIET mist aan de interne samenwerking...**



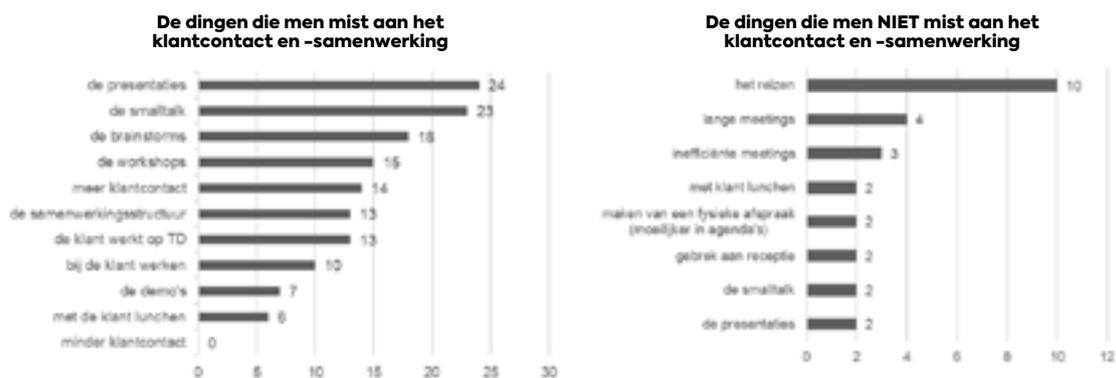
\*open antwoorden zijn waar mogelijk geclusterd. Eenmalige antwoorden kunnen in de resultaten in de bijlage gevonden worden.

6

## Klantcontact en -samenwerking

Ook hier zien we dat de creatieve sessies worden gemist. Het persoonlijke contact met de klant wordt ook als waardevol gezien.

Net als het werk op kantoor is het reizen een van de negatieve aspecten aan het werk met de klant. Ook hier worden de (inefficiënte) meetings genoemd.



7

## Een aantal opvallende open antwoorden

Men heeft ook de kans gekregen bij de onderwerpen een toelichting/ anekdote te geven. Hier een aantal opvallende antwoorden hierop.

“Ik merk dat ik eerst een **brainstorm online** niet zag zitten. Pas toen ik echt moest door quarantaine ben ik gaan kijken hoe het wel kan. Miro als tool gevonden en gebruikt. Nu meen ik dat **een brainstorm met Miro (goed voorbereid) zelfs beter is dan live!**”

“... zoals ik de entree op de 4e verdieping ervaar zullen klanten dat ook hebben. Omdat er **geen receptionist** is op de verdieping kom je binnen en denk je: uhhhh wat nu. . .

Dit **eerste contactmoment is belangrijk** en als dit strakker/consistent wordt uitgevoerd werkt dat naar mijn mening bij aan een betere klantervaring. . . . Het zijn de kleine dingen die het doen: aandacht en waardering.”

8

## Een aantal opvallende open antwoorden

“... het is een kantoor, **geen creatieve ruimte**. Vind ik vaak weinig inspirerend.”

“Door het vele thuiswerken en het feit dat ik werk in een heel klein team heb ik **niet meer zo vaak het gevoel dat ik voor een organisatie als TD werk**. Ik zou net zo goed een freelancer kunnen zijn bijvoorbeeld. Ik probeer daarom ook 1 keer in de week naar de studio te gaan om nog wat **binding te houden met TD**.”

9

## Hoe verder? Het beste van 2 werelden

Uit de enquête kunnen we een aantal aspecten concluderen. In de toekomst ziet men graag een mix van thuiswerken en werk op kantoor. Als ik kijk naar wat men mist en niet mist aan deze 2 vormen van werk, dan denk ik dat het thuis werken vooral gebruikt kan worden voor werk dat focus vraagt. Het 'droge' productiewerk. Thuis is minder afleiding (mits er geen kinderen meer rondlopen) en kan men goed hun eigen werkplek indelen.



**Productiviteit**  
Minder afleiding  
80% Focus 20% Interactie

Echter mist men thuis wel het persoonlijk contact en de interactie met collega's. De fysieke creatieve sessies worden gemist, waar spontane inspiratie ontstaat.

Hier zie ik een (nieuw) doel voor het kantoor. Een plek waar men samen kan komen. Een plek waar creativiteit en interactie centraal staat.

Hoe de huidige open kantoor-achtige ruimte hiervoor ingericht moet worden moet nog goed uitgedacht worden. Dit is een mooie design uitdaging, die raakvlakken heeft met alle vormen van design.



**Creativiteit**  
Reuring en gevoel van teamwork  
80% Interactie 20% Focus

10

## Discussie

Het zou kunnen zijn dat, als de rest van het leven weer 'normaal' wordt, de meningen van de respondenten kunnen veranderen.

### Sociaal contact

Het zou kunnen dat men de sociale aspecten van het werk bij TD minder zal missen als er weer andere sociale activiteiten toegestaan zijn.

### Afleiding thuis

Sommige mensen gaven aan dat ook thuis veel afleiding is. Als deze afleiding komt van schoolgaande kinderen, dan zal dit afnemen als ze weer fysiek naar school mogen.

# C1

## Workshop design and results

### Groepsdynamiek

Wie is de groepsdynamiek? Denk aan formaliteit, samen-of-voor, spelende dingen.

- Men haakt op elkaar in
- 'safe space'
- Open gesprek
- collaboratie netwerk

### TIMS VOORBEELD

De organisatie van Tim

De organisatie van

### Mensen

Wie nemen er deel aan dit soort organisaties? Wie zijn de rollen?

- Paul Senior Designer
- Edwin Creative Director
- Marloes Account manager
- Wessel Intern UX
- Tim Facilitator

### Infrastructuur

Via welke kanalen wordt er gecommuniceerd? Welke tools worden er gebruikt? Hoe worden bijvoorbeeld documenten gedeeld?

- MS Outlook voor mail
- MS Teams voor video's
- Arzo voor creatie en presentatie
- 1 op 1 contact via chatbot

### Goals/Visie

Welke doelen zijn er gesteld? Is er een bepaalde visie? Waar moet waar naartoe wordt gewerkt?

- rapportage organisatie design van de
- nieuwe visie of ideeën met de tijd van T&T
- steden en instellingen van Toern veranderen

### Proces

Ward er volgens een bepaald proces gewerkt? Wardt de proces door iemand gemaakt? Wat is het tijdschema?

- Sessie duur 2 uur
- Facilitator

### Groepsdynamiek

Wie is de groepsdynamiek? Denk aan formaliteit, samen-of-voor, spelende dingen.

- vooral open en oprecht
- er wordt in de groep een voorbeeld gegeven
- er mag maar geknuffeld worden maar de regels zijn daar om te
- met 3 per team verspreid

### De organisatie van Edwin

komen tot een

### Mensen

Wie nemen er deel aan dit soort organisaties? Wie zijn de rollen?

- open mensen die met een idee kunnen komen
- design vriendelijk bakend
- topdown opbouwen

### Infrastructuur

Via welke kanalen wordt er gecommuniceerd? Welke tools worden er gebruikt? Hoe worden bijvoorbeeld documenten gedeeld?

- teams

### Goals/Visie

Welke doelen zijn er gesteld? Is er een bepaalde visie? Waar moet waar naartoe wordt gewerkt?

### Proces

Ward er volgens een bepaald proces gewerkt? Wardt de proces door iemand gemaakt? Wat is het tijdschema?

**Groepsdynamiek**   
 Hoe is de groepsdynamiek? Denk aan formaliteit, tone-of-voice, opvallende dingen.

Vooral formeel

Informeel moet je zelf doen

Gevoel van trots

  
**De organisatie van Wessel**  
 TD algemeen

**Mensen**   
 Wie nemen er deel aan dit stuk organisatie? Wat zijn de rollen?

Vooraf oude mensen 

Mag meer diversiteit op de werkvloer

Beschikbaar

**Infrastructuur**   
 Via welke kanalen vindt er communicatie plaats? Welke tools worden er gebruikt? Hoe worden bijeenkomsten documenten geleefd?

Email

MS teams, Zoom, Google Hangouts

Sketch cloud

Figma

We transfer

**Goals/Visie**   
 Welke doelen zijn er gesteld? Is er een bepaalde stijl? Weet men waar naartoe wordt gewerkt?

keine structuren

structuren

**Proces**   
 Wordt er volgens een bepaald proces gewerkt? Wordt dit proces door iemand benaamd? Wat is het systeem?

Sprints

Producties

Handelen met mensen die werkt

als mensen vanuit gic met vanuit anderen

We zijn meer op de resultaten die we behalen

**Groepsdynamiek**   
 Hoe is de groepsdynamiek? Denk aan formaliteit, tone-of-voice, opvallende dingen.

semi formele setting

Martijn heeft het bij een woord

Nina / Suzanne doen vragen en betrouwen in de workshop

Andera teamleden in de workshop

  
**De organisatie van Paul**  
 Weekstart

**Mensen**   
 Wie nemen er deel aan dit stuk organisatie? Wat zijn de rollen?

Martijn

Vincent

Nina/Suzanne

Paul

Robbert

Nick

**Infrastructuur**   
 Via welke kanalen vindt er communicatie plaats? Welke tools worden er gebruikt? Hoe worden bijeenkomsten documenten geleefd?

Teams (incl. Covid)

TD1, TD2, TD3, TD4 of TD5 (voor Covid)

Bewerking naar in Excel

Documenten via mail of Teams

**Goals/Visie**   
 Welke doelen zijn er gesteld? Is er een bepaalde stijl? Weet men waar naartoe wordt gewerkt?

Doel planning goed hebben of vragen

Voor optimal functioneren team (1)

**Proces**   
 Wordt er volgens een bepaald proces gewerkt? Wordt dit proces door iemand benaamd? Wat is het systeem?

Geen gedefinieerd proces

2 hoofd-onderwerpen

Planning zijn er nog gaten?

Soms mededelingen in

Webb: Wat versta je referentie



### Sharing is caring



Op welke manieren kan je kennis of ervaringen delen?



TD

### Hoe doen we dat bij TD eigenlijk?

Hoe delen we nu ervaringen met elkaar binnen TD?



### Hoe ziet het eruit?

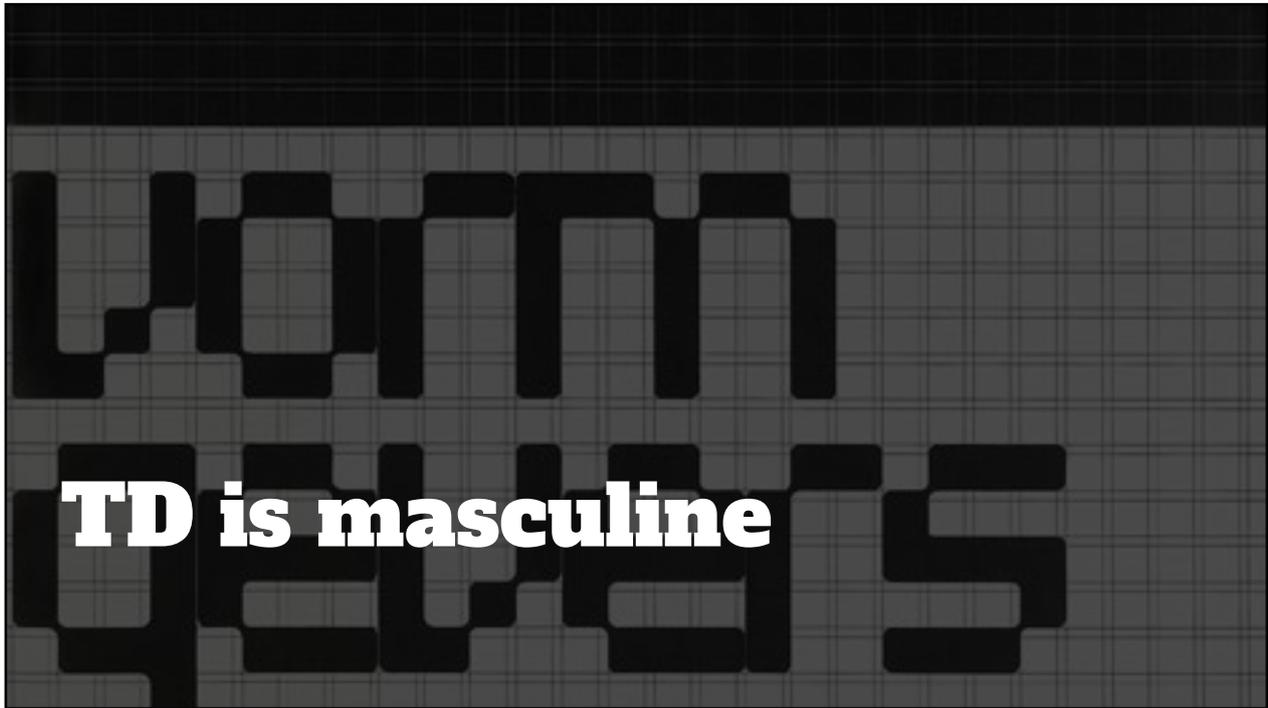
Kies een van de bovenstaande opties en probeer deze kort uit te werken.

# D1

## Reflection slides 'TD is...'









**TDLab is de enige plek  
waar geïnnoveerd  
wordt**

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**Organizational Designing**  
at the **Total Design** agency

**Tim Wolkers**