



Transferring the IKEA Culture

Co-creating a strategic intervention that allows
IKEA employees to adopt the company culture

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Preface

This report is the end result of a masters graduation project for the faculty of industrial design and engineering at the Technical University of Delft. The client for whom this report is also written is Inter IKEA systems.

The Graduation Project at IDE is the final culmination of a master programme. In this project, the student will demonstrate his/her capabilities as an Industrial Design Engineer to the University, the outside world, and to him/herself. The emphasis of this project is not only on testing competences, but also on developing knowledge, understanding, and skills. The student is expected to apply what he/she has learned, learn new things, and to operate as an independent Industrial Design Engineer, while executing this project. This course comes with great opportunity and responsibility.

The Graduation Project is a full-time project, and accounts for 840 hours of work (= 20 weeks of full time work = 100 days).

The master for which this report has been written is the master of Strategic Product Design.

The SPD graduate is specialised in designing innovative and strategy-relevant outcomes (i.e. products, services, business opportunities) for organisations, by balancing market desirability, technological feasibility and business viability. In the early stages of innovation, SPD graduates combine their creativity and the systematic application of state-of-the-art design, business, and research methodologies to identify business opportunities. They translate them into innovative, sustainable and strategically sound concepts. The programme builds on design and business disciplines, such as branding, creativity, consumer psychology, design methodology, marketing, organisational sciences, product innovation management, service design and strategic design.



(Iperion, 2015)

Acknowledgements

This project is the end of a life-changing journey at the TU Delft. (At least for now). It's actually the end of a journey that started over 20 years ago, when I had my first day of school at a kindergarten in the Hague. An exploration period that has changed me as a person and the way I perceive the world for good. It still feels a bit unreal that this important period of my life is now coming to an end, but at least I got to end it with a fantastic experience and surrounded by wonderful people!

This project did not take place at one of the steadiest of times. The Covid-19 pandemic and all the insecurities that came with it had a huge effect on me personally and on the project. But luckily, even though this project was mostly performed from home, I was surrounded with love and help and did not have to feel alone for one second.

Firstly, I want to thank IKEA and my mentor Ino for giving me the chance to perform this project at one of my favourite companies. I knocked on Ino's door as an IKEA kitchen seller with an unlimited dose of enthusiasm and that just had to have been quite overwhelming. But Ino knew how to direct my enthusiasm towards the right project, believed in me and gave me enough space to make this project my own. The time I got to spend in Älmhult because of it, contained some of the most exiting days I have ever had. I will think back fondly of that unique experience forever.

Cidi joined the team a little bit later, but with a same level of enthusiasm and openness. Even though she had no obligations towards this project, she did not hesitate to make time for me when I asked and was always there to lend a helping hand, even about non IKEA related topics.

Secondly, my TU Delft team. Trying to find a team for my project did not go very smoothly, but one project member I already knew I wanted on my team right from the start. Where most people replied

to my propositions with 'no, I'm busy', or 'I want to hear details first', all it took was one email to Annemiek and I got the reply " Sounds great! Let's do it! I'm in!". That email completely made my day and it was the best start of a project I would wish for. Annemiek already inspired my thought-out my years at the TU, because of our similar interests and passions. To have you by my side was amazing. I knew I made the right choice right after our kickoff meeting. I was feeling a bit overwhelmed by the meeting (that took more than 3 hours) we just had at the IKEA headquarters. You took me apart and said 'Relax, breathe. You are going to do this step by step. You are good enough, you are more than intelligent enough and you got this!' It was such a sweet moment and I knew that she was right, we got this!

Next to Annemiek I was very lucky to have Willemijn on my team as well. And boy, was I glad she was there! It was so great to know that there was always someone in my corner that I could have laugh with. Next, of course, to all the great educational advice she could give me. Whenever we would have a meeting with all the stakeholders and everybody's opinions were tumbling over each other, Willemijn always stepped in to give me a compliment. Giving me just the confidence boost I needed at that moment. I could always count on a laugh when I contacted her, which is just what I needed in these serious times.

Thirdly, of-course this project would not have been possible without all the help from the sales coworkers from IKEA Delft. Letting me pick them up and co-creating together at my house was a really lot to ask during these tense times. But they all contributed with all of their enthusiasm and inspiring ideas. It was so delightful to have people around me again after self isolating for such a long time and we came up with fantastic ideas together!

Next to the sales coworkers a few other people also took the time to sit down with me and answer all of my questions. Sales managers at IKEA Delft,

but coworkers in Sweden as well. Thanks for all your advice and providing me with way more information than I even asked for.

A lot of people from outside IKEA also lent a helping hand. When I needed help for the graphic design of the t-shirt, but could still not leave my house, designers from all over the world were excited to share their ideas. It was great to meet so many people from far away to work together again.

Lastly, my sweet family and friends. Who supported me in whatever way was possible. Even to the point of dropping grocery's of to my doorstep when I was not allowed to leave the house. Endless skyping and screen-sharing, and finding new ways to stay connected. Even though we were not allowed to see each other, we felt closer together than ever.

My grandparents who wanted to know every little detail from the project brief until the evaluation, and were always there to cheer me on.

My dad, walking the dogs together, sitting in the dunes or brainstorming over the phone. You are always my creative source of inspiration and this project would not be what it is without you!

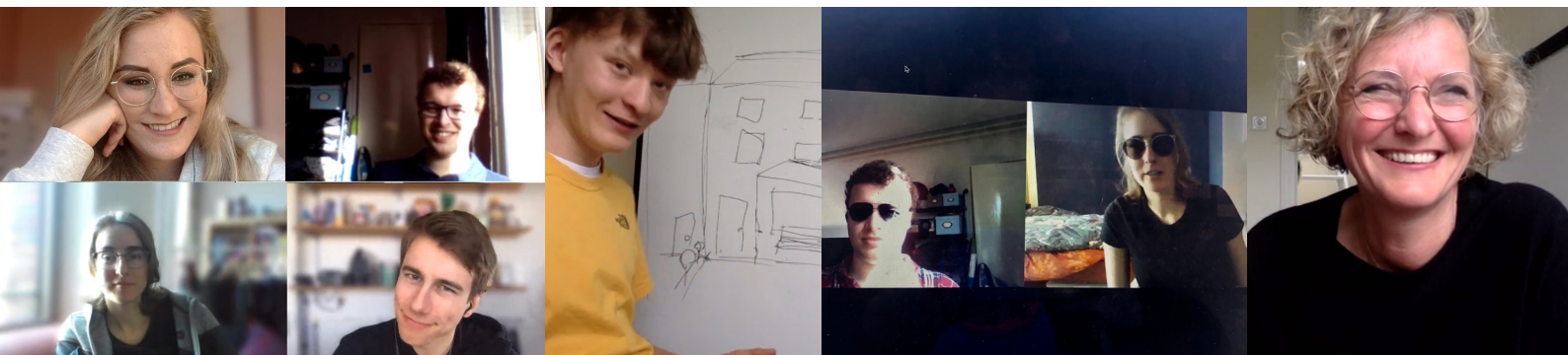
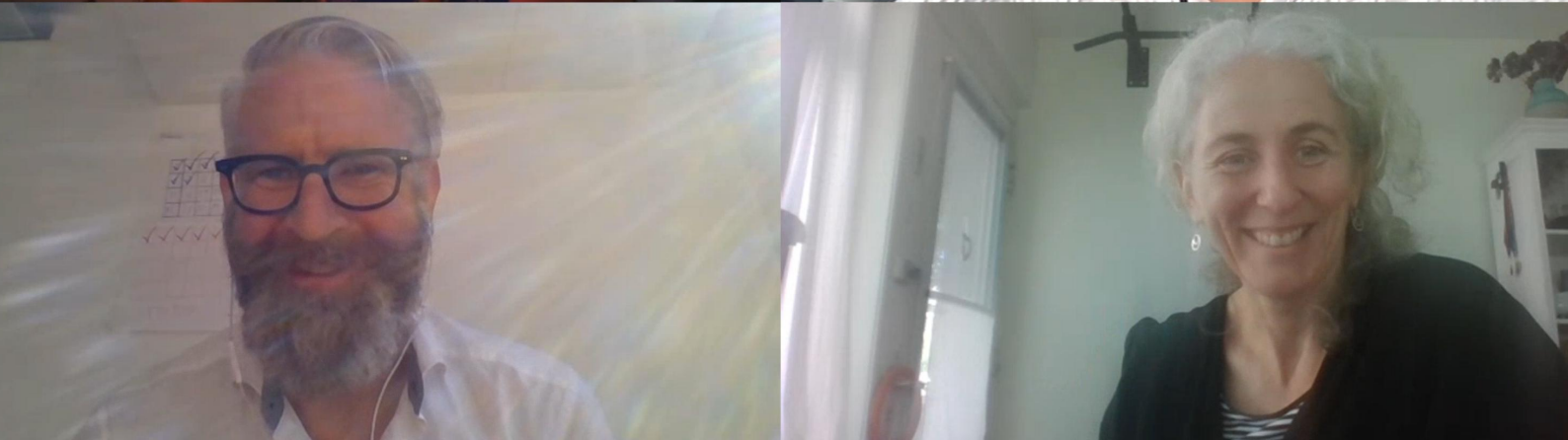
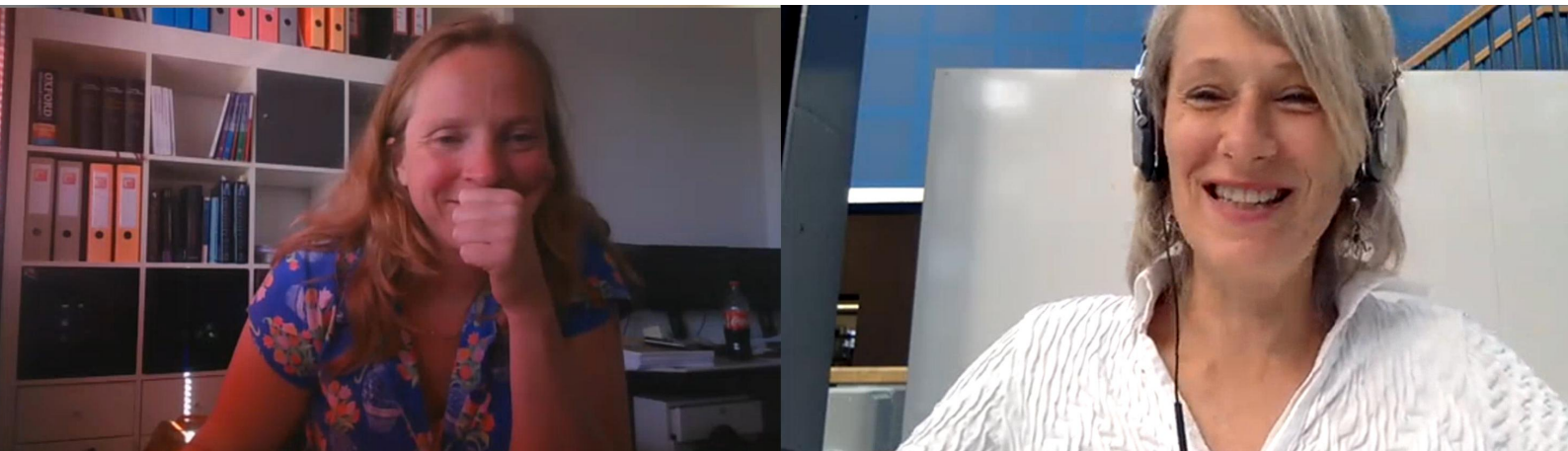
My sweet mom for always being there for me and being my personal cheerleader. Always willing to help me with a spell check or to talk with me on the phone for hours.

And lastly my fiancée, it could not have been easy to be cooped up with me in a small apartment for such a long time, with all of my attention going to this project. You were my rock. You are my everything.

I love you all and you all made this project possible.

I hope to see much more of all of you in the future and for now..

Thank you all so much!



And just like that, we were only able to see each other online.. But we still had fun! ↑



Executive summary

This is a strategic product design graduation project for the TU Delft and Inter IKEA systems. It describes a scientific underlined design process and the end result is a four part strategic intervention that is designed to enhance the IKEA culture.

Every company has its own unique work-culture. Famous furniture seller IKEA, being no different. IKEA is currently active in 52 countries and is still growing strongly, so more and more people of different cultures are coming together because of it. IKEA's culture has been formed through out the years and has the potential to help achieve great things. However, the IKEA sales coworkers do not have an incentive, nor the time to deepen their knowledge about the IKEA culture and its values. They therefore do not identify with it and do not use it in their every workday actions. This is bad for the IKEA brand and reduces the chances of company success.

The IKEA culture is designed at the inter IKEA office, but has a different result on the actual work-floor. In order to bridge that gap, this report takes a unique bottom up-approach, while at the same time maintaining a top-down view. This is achieved by creating solutions for and together with the IKEA sales employees, while keeping the global view of the IKEA office in mind, and is supported by the fact that I (the author) am one of the very few coworkers at IKEA, that has worked in the store and at the office at the same time. Providing me with the opportunity to take the role of both main stakeholders; the end-users (the store coworkers) and the client (the IKEA franchisor).

A work-culture is the result of employees living the company's key values in combination with their personal values. It is shaped by stories, artefacts, routines, rituals and symbols. All of which are researched through out this project. After the research grounded in literature, a lot of field research was also done. The main conclusions

being that the current knowledge of culture was lacking among IKEA coworkers (for example; only 12 out of the 85 participants could say how many key values IKEA has), that the introduction of new coworkers would be the moment of intervention and lastly, that the intervention can have the biggest impact on sales employees.

To support the bottom-up approach a thorough co-creation process took place. Lots of ideas were created in this session. They were clustered and detailed and eventually formed the inspiration behind three concepts; a strategic monthly intervention that addresses all key values, a board game that introduces those values and strategically designed ritual of introducing new coworkers to the IKEA culture.

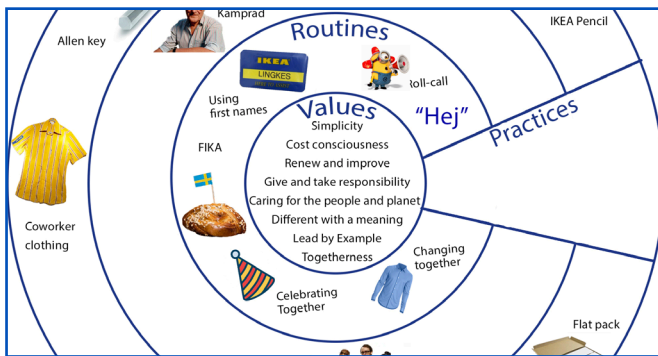
The concepts were presented to IKEA and all of the reactions were very positive, so a final concept was detailed. The final intervention revolves around the moment the new coworker receives his/her coworker uniform and consists of four parts: 1. the story the manager will tell the new coworker, 2. a key values box, 3. the new design of the IKEA clothing, with the key values printed on the inside, 4. a letter for inside the box. For each part a list of design criteria and design examples were given.

The intervention can be tested at IKEA Delft, but has the potential to scale up to international levels. It has the opportunity to bring people from all over the world together under a common goal and to, in the end, create a better everyday life for the many people.

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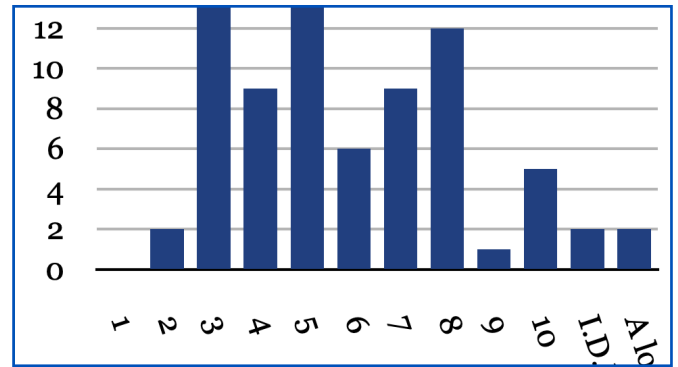
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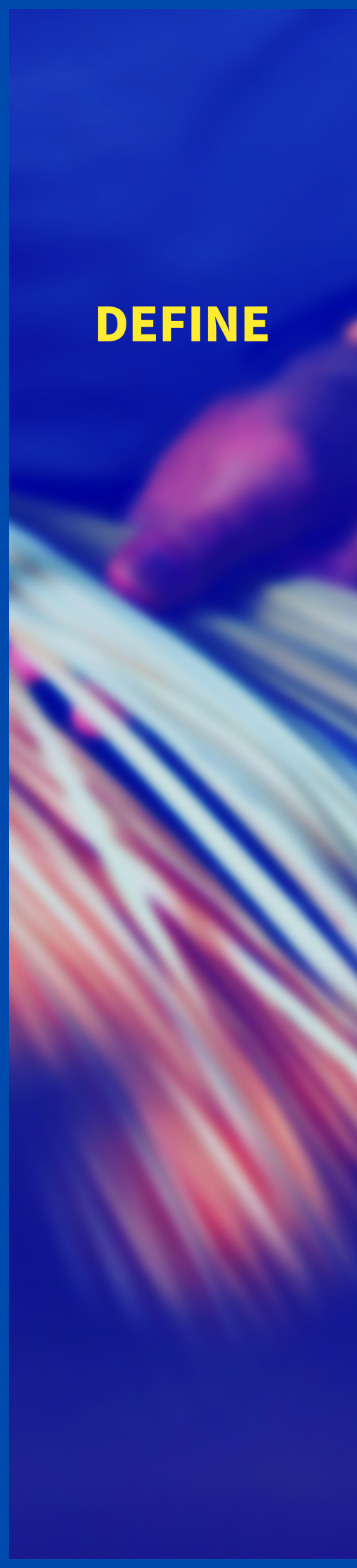


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A close-up photograph of a hand holding a stack of bamboo tubes. The tubes are cut into sections, showing their hollow interiors. The background is a blurred forest floor with green leaves and brown twigs. The entire image has a blue color cast.

DISCOVER

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a pen, poised to sign a document. A large red circular stamp is visible on the paper. The image is overlaid with a blue gradient.

DEFINE

A photograph showing a hand pointing at a document. A large red circular stamp is visible on the paper. The image is overlaid with a blue gradient.

DEVELOP

A photograph of a hand holding a pen over a document. A large red circular stamp is visible on the paper. The image is overlaid with a blue gradient.

DELIVER

Chapter 1.

Laying the foundation

In this chapter I explain the theoretical foundation for my project by means of several literature reviews. First, I define the concept of culture. Then, I substantiate the importance of an organizational culture, in particular IKEA culture, and the relevance and contribution of my project.



Figure 1.01: An example of company culture, CHANG (2020)

1.1 Defining Culture

In this project a company culture is viewed as a company's social structure. Within this view, culture and behavior are intertwined.

On the one hand culture shapes attitudes and behaviors in wide ranging and durable ways. But culture is, at the same time, the result of the decisions and patterns of behaviors, which are encouraged or discouraged by people and structures over time.

Cultural norms define what is encouraged, discouraged, accepted, or rejected within a group. I agree with Groysberg et. al (2018) that when properly aligned with personal values, drives, and needs, culture can unleash tremendous amounts of energy toward a shared purpose and foster an organization's capacity to thrive.

A culture is not set in stone. It can evolve flexibly and autonomously in response to changing opportunities and threats. Whereas strategy is typically determined by the very high-end executives, the company's culture can cross all departments. From the top leaders until the frontline employees. The academic literature on the

subject is vast. The term 'culture' pops up in literature from all sorts of disciplines. From history until communication and even philosophy (see Figure 1.02, van Boeijen 2015).

A review of the design related literature provides many definitions for corporate cultures and many models and methods for assessing it. Agreement however is scarce. This is due to the fact that 'culture' is a vague and comprehensive concept and can be interpreted in many personal ways. Which is the reason why I wrote this chapter.

Some of these definitions are:

'Culture or civilization, taken in its broad, ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.'

Edward Burnett Tylor (1832 –1917)

'Culture is the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others'.

Geert Hofstede (1991)

'Culture is the system of shared beliefs, values, customs, behaviors, and artifacts that the members of society use to cope with their world and with one another, and that are transmitted from generation to generation through learning'

Bates and Plog (1990)

Through a synthesis of seminal work by Edgar Schein, Shalom Schwartz, and Geert Hofstede, I have created an overview of fundamental characteristics that match with my personal understanding of the subject. A culture is: shared, lasting and implicit. If one of these is missing, I don't think you can speak of a culture any longer

Shared. Culture is a group phenomenon. It cannot exist only within one person. It resides in shared behaviours, values, and assumptions and is experienced through the norms and expectations of a group.

Lasting. Culture exists over a longer period of time. It cannot originate from and fully evolve in a one hour session. It should direct the thoughts and behaviours of a group over the long term. It develops

through critical events and though the learning of the group.

This endurance can be explained in part by the attraction-selection-attrition model first introduced by Benjamin Schneider: *'People are drawn to organizations with characteristics similar to their own; organizations are more likely to select individuals who seem to "fit in"; and over time those who don't fit in tend to leave. Thus culture becomes a self-reinforcing social pattern that grows increasingly resistant to change and outside influences.'* Rodgers, 2011.

Implicit. Culture can be seen as a silent language. Despite its subliminal nature, people often recognize and respond to it instinctively (whether this is integrating or assimilating themselves). It *can* be, but should not *need* to be explicitly described or documented for people to experience or notice it.

Discipline	Possible intention or focus
Design history e.g. Paul du Gay, Ketjil Fallan, Victor Margolin, Edward Miller	e.g. understanding the cultural meaning of artefacts in a specific time frame and context
Anthropology e.g. Clifford Geertz, Edward Hall, Mary Douglas	e.g. understanding the meaning of people's daily practices in a specific context
Organisation, communication, and management e.g. Geert Hofstede, Stella Ting-Toomey, Frans Trompenaars	e.g. understanding cultural differences to achieve effective cooperation within a business context
Phylosophy of technology e.g. Bruno Latour, Petran Kockelkoren, Peter Paul Verbeek	e.g. understanding the influence of technology on cultures and societies
Design	e.g. understanding the culture of intended users to create new products

Figure 1.02: Culture in different fields (van Boeijen , 2015, p34)

1.2 Why should IKEA focus on its company culture?

What is a company culture?

Company cultures are systems of shared beliefs, cognitions, and values that produce norms of behavior (Koberg & Chusmir, 1987; O'Reilly, Chatman, & Caldwell, 1991; Steiber & Alänge, 2015). A simplified view could be that of seeing the culture of a company as its personality. To gain insight in a company's culture, one can study a variety of elements, including missions, goals, behaviours, work environments, and expectations (Maldonado, Vera, & Ramos, 2018).

Companies are multicultural

The company culture often differs between departments, creating subcultures (Tran, 2017). Lower level employees can question the beliefs and values promoted by the leaders that shape the corporate culture, most often the top executives (Vera & Crossan, 2005). And therefore,

without knowing, forming their own subculture of not agreeing with the official company culture. That is why a company is most accurately viewed as multicultural (Gregory, 1983). Gregory (1983) also argues that another layer of subcultures can exist: the occupational culture. This culture transcends the company at which the employee works and can exist though several firms. An example given by Gregory (1983) is the culture that all accounting departments share, valuing great attention to details and little room for innovation, compared to the culture of a marketing department that promotes creativity and innovation.

A bottom up approach

This falls in line with my own findings during this project. As mentioned later in this report, I discovered a gap between what the higher executives think the sales employees know about the IKEA key values, and what these employees actually know. A culture should transcend all departments, so the solutions

to enhance this culture should not only be created by top executives. The needs and wishes of the sales employees should be taken into account. It confirms my idea of creating a bottom up approach when designing a solution.

Executives

However, executives do play an active role in shaping the culture of departmental and team cultures (Schein, 2009), so I should not leave them out of the equation completely.

For better and worse, culture and leadership are inextricably linked. Founders and influential leaders often set new cultures in motion and imprint values and assumptions that persist for decades (Groysberg, Lee, Price, & Cheng, 2018) (Schein, 2009). This is clearly visible at IKEA with its founder Ingvar Kamprad.

Executives can support the culture by promoting two aspects: values and behavioural norms.

Cultural dimensions

Organisational values

Organisational values are the underlying principles behind patterns of behaviours and norms, which are the ways of thinking and behaving that members in a socially constructed unit have in common (Cooke & Rousseau, 1988). According to Cooke and Rousseau these values could for example be; innovation for a software firm, ethical responsibility for a medical firm, healthy risk taking in a commodities department, or safety in a government compliance office.

Organisational values in IKEA

The culture in IKEA is also based on shared values and meanings (Reynoso, 2009). It is even referred to as a 'value driven company' (Edvardsson, Enquist & Hay, 2006). These values drive the company's strategy and provide guidance to leaders and co-workers alike. The values thus provide motivation to maximise the commercial potential of the company at all levels. The underlying theme is a customer focus (as IKEA puts it, 'to stand by the many'), combined with social and environmental responsibility. The focus is on solutions to real-life problems at home for the majority of people.

Organisational behavioural norms

Organisational behavioural norms are easier for new employees to discover and adopt. They are influenced by management practices and routines; individuals often incorporate the behavioural norms and patterns of the firm before adopting its values (Gundry & Rousseau, 1994).

Organisational behavioural norms at IKEA

At IKEA one of the unwritten rules, for example, is that all employees start their digital communication with the Swedish greeting: 'hej'. Such a practice could be linked to what is described in my project as a 'routine or ritual'. Writing 'hej' supports the IKEA values. In this case one could say that all using the same greeting supports the value of 'togetherness'. Such practice that becomes a behavioural norm is a way for executives to influence and therefore position their units for success. (Gundry & Rousseau, 1994)

Company culture and business success

A company culture affects many elements that determine business success (Maldonado, Vera, & Ramos, 2018). It is also an intangible asset

that is costly and very hard for competitors to copy or imitate. Strategy and culture are the primary levers at executives' disposal in their never-ending quest to maintain organizational viability and effectiveness (Groysberg, Lee, Price, & Cheng, 2018). Culture expresses goals through values and beliefs and guides activity through shared assumptions and group norms. When aligned with the company's vision and strategy, a strong culture drives positive organizational outcomes.

When looking at more historical papers, the underlying thesis of most of the articles dealing with this company culture is that Corporate Culture is a hard-to-spell factor but one which, if it exists, guarantees success (Deal and Kennedy, 1982; Business week, 1980; Pascale and Athos (1981); Magnet, 1982; Ouchi, 1982; Peters & Waterman, 1982; Scholz, 1987).

A company culture affects employee attraction and retention, productivity, innovation, crisis management, and reputation (Bennett & Parks, 2015; Bowers, Hall, & Srinivasan, 2017; Warrick, 2017; Moussa, McMurray, & Muenjohn, 2018). When focusing on employee attraction, for example, companies can attract the best available employees though enticing them with a company culture that future employees value. In that way you also attract employees that would be a good fit for the organization.

Maldonado, Vera and Ramos (2018) provide some examples; The Campbell Soup Company places a high value on the well being of its employees; employees' healthcare is 100% covered by Campbell's and it provides classes on cooking healthy meals, on-site fitness centres, and lactation rooms. Boeing values growth and innovation; it offers numerous perks to attract employees such as its Learning Together Program, which helps them gain the skills they need for upward mobility. And lastly, in the case of Mattel, a company that is devoted to the happiness of

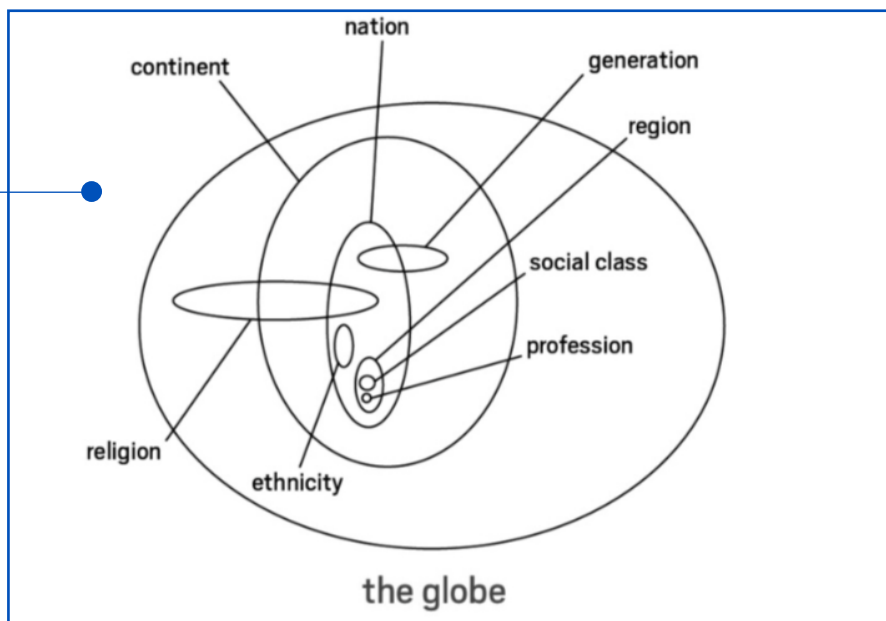


Figure 1.03: Cultural dimensions (van Boeijen, 2014)

children, also includes the children of its employees. Mattel employees can enjoy (1) paid time off to participate in their children's field trips and parent-teacher conferences, (2) programs that help defray adoption costs, and (3) discounts on company products.

How to use company culture for building effective tools

Culture plays an important role in the field of anthropology and it is therefore that anthropological models can be effectively applied for understanding company cultures. This is especially interesting in the case of a multinational company such as IKEA. As can be seen from figure 1.03 from van Boeijen (2013) every individual can have a multitude of cultural dimensions. Because the IKEA business operates around the globe in a very large variety of countries it can be expected that IKEA co-workers form one of the most diverse groups of people that one could possibly have within a single organization. Because of this, any tool used for promoting in IKEA will have to appeal to a broad range of subcultures.

Van Boeijen (2015) offers an interesting example to illustrate how a given object of interest can have very different meanings and values for the observer, depending on the background of that person.

In the example (see figure 1.04) three layers are distinguished: 1) human nature, 2) culture and 3) individual. First there is the concept of a bicycle from the human nature perspective. The picture is simple and practically any inhabitant of a developed and/or developing country will be familiar with this concept. These concepts are also defined as "inherited" (van Boeijen, 2015). As can be seen in the middle of the diagram is the "Dutch Bike" which has some distinctive characteristics for a type of bicycle that is used a lot by Dutch people and which can be attributed to a group. Then there is the individual level, which is a pink bicycle and which I, as an individual, know as "my bike".

The difference between "my bike" and the "Dutch bike" or any other bicycle is quite clear to me. As a Dutch person however, it may not be necessarily obvious to me that the "Dutch bike" is

significantly different from the human nature concept of a "bike". I am simply not aware any more of my own cultural bias which obfuscates the barrier between these two categories.

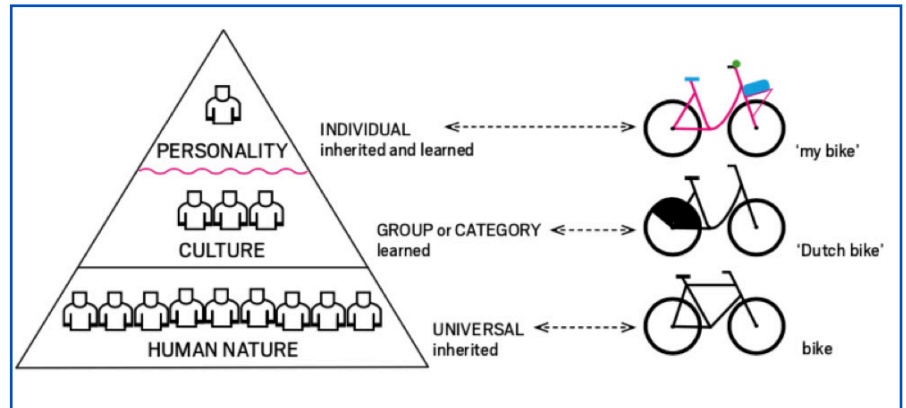


Figure 1.04: An object can have different meanings and values (van Boeijen, 2015, p37)

In promoting cultural values of a Swedish, Western European company, with headquarters in The Netherlands, it is very well possible that those responsible for the promotion of cultural values in the organisation may not clearly see the barrier between their own culturally universal concepts and truly universal concepts. It is therefore very important for anyone active in the promotion of cultural values in such an organisation that he/she is aware of this bias.

The only way in which IKEA can consistently promote the IKEA culture around the world is by using elements from the human nature level, that are clearly identified and understood by all co-workers around the world without any biased perspective induced by their local background. In other words, IKEA will have to make sure to find and promote "the bicycle" version of its cultural value and not the "Dutch bicycle" or perhaps the "Swedish bicycle". Furthermore, any tool used for the effective communication of the cultural values should also appeal to human nature and not contain any cultural bias.

In conclusion to this chapter, a strong company culture is an important way to enlarge the chances to company success.

1.3 A culture conscious approach to design

To make sure I did not lose sight of the cultural aspects of my design and to guide me through the project, I made use of the Crossing Cultural Chasms Card set designed by van Boeijen 2015. These cards are meant to support me as a designer by forming a set of methods and tools to study the culture of the intended users, see figure 1.05.

Following van Boeijen's strategy, if I want to design for a culture, I should have a clear understanding of what my intention is with regards to that culture. In my case this would be to affirm the IKEA culture. The cards are divided into three categories: Eye-openers (about: why?), Insights (about: what?) and Activities (about: how?). To start of, and as described in the card set, I selected three cards out of each category to prepare for my project.



the tool: 3 categories + content

Why? Designers' reasons for studying culture	What? Designers' knowledge relating to the study of culture	How? Designers' activities relating to the study of culture
To avoid blind spots and more	A lens to look at culture in the context of a design project	Methods, tools and tips to examine the cultures of the intended users
Card	Card	Card
To know one's own personal and cultural values in order to deal with external influences	Distinctions of designers' concerns (reasoning model)	Set boundaries, determine the cultural group
1.1	2.1	3.1
To avoid mismatches between product and users	Distinctions between personality, culture and human nature (definition of culture)	Generate culture specific questions and ideas (socio-cultural dimensions and onion model)
1.2	2.2	3.2
To affirm the cultural group	The importance of boundaries relating to the cultural group	Sensitise regarding other cultures (onion model)
1.3	2.3	3.3
To change a culture	Values: cultural values and practices	Tune participatory methods
1.4	2.4	3.4
To go from local to global designs or vice versa (to bridge cultures)	Morality and culture	Compare cultures
1.5	2.5	3.5
To generate new ideas (cultural differences as a source of inspiration)	Socio-cultural dimensions to generate culture-specific questions, to analyse and synthesise	Use dedicated tools
1.6	2.6	Preference booklets
To rethink local values, which opens up the design space	Hierarchy	Cards
1.7	2.7	Workbooks and timelines
To bridge cultural chasms in participa- tory sessions	Identification	3.6
1.8	2.8	3.7
To understand the meaning of desktop findings for a specific culture	Time	3.8
1.9	2.9	Use a variety of tools to collect stories
To avoid a culture shock	Aim	Observations
1.10	2.10	3.9
Three reasons to overlook culture	Gender	Interviews
Other focus	Space	3D-models
1.11	2.11	3.10
Blind spots	Attitude	Photo-elicitation
1.12	2.12	3.11
Not equipped	Expression	Product confrontation
1.13	2.13	3.12
Three quiz cards	Truth	3.13
1.14	2.14	3.14
1.15	2.15	
1.16	2.16	Learn from the past
		3.15
		Ask permission, be attentive to reciprocity and manage expectation of intended users
		3.16

Figure 1.05: The complete card set (van Boeijen, 2015, p175)

The eye-openers

Following my previously described intention I selected eye-opener cards 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3.

To know my stance I have described my definition of culture for this project in the previous paragraph. Due to the fact that I followed electives evolving around the subject of culture in both my bachelors and my masters, I also have quite a good idea of my own personal values and the cultures and subcultures I am a part of.



eye openers

reasons to study culture

I know my stance

You are raised in a specific culture with its own values and practices. As you grow up, some values stay the same while others change. All these values influence the way you think about design and what design can do. Knowing where you are coming from helps you to understand and define where you are going and what you want people to accomplish with your designs. If you develop your personal stance you have a solid basis to understand and cope with other people's values. If you are lucky you can 'step out of your fishbowl' and gain insight into your own cultural values.



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1 1

Of course I want my design to fit IKEA as a brand and to also fit the working culture that is already present. In order to avoid mismatches I took a close look at the current state of the IKEA culture, as can be found in chapter 3.



eye openers

reasons to study culture

I avoid mismatches

You need to understand the cultural context of your intended users in order to lower the barriers to acceptance. If their cultural conventions and routines are different from yours – e.g. reading from right to left – or they assign another meaning or value to your design than intended – e.g. the colour means something else than you expected – you might confuse or even embarrass them. People might also not understand the archetypes you refer to in your design, simply because they have never been exposed to them and do not know what they mean. Or they simply miss some functions that are important to them.



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1 2

In order to create a good fit I should not only focus on the identities I ascribe onto the IKEA coworkers, but also take into account the achieved company identity. Focussing on what the actual current state is of this culture, and not what it was designed to be.



eye openers

reasons to study culture

people need identities

We need identities to identify the values people represent as individuals or as groups, companies and nations and to communicate values to each other. Identity is about those characteristics that make us definable and recognizable. There are two kinds of identity: achieved identity, which means that one is judged by what one does, and ascribed identity, which involves fixed expectations based on non-chosen traits, such as gender and age. Both identities can be supported by design. Dutch Design, created by Droog Design, is a typical example of achieved national identity.



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1 3

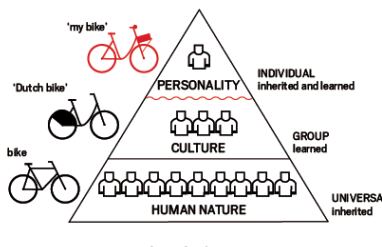
Figure 1.06: Eye-opener cards (van Boeijen, 2014)

The insights

Following these I selected three insight cards: 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4.


insights

what is it?
culture



after Hofstede, 2005

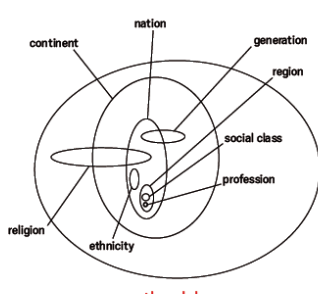
Culture is 'the system of shared beliefs, values, customs, behaviours and artefacts that the members of a society use to cope with their world and with one another, and that are transmitted from generation to generation through learning' (Bates and Plog, 1976). Culture in design concerns the meaning of things for a specific group of people in a specific context. Cultures also change. Designers influence this process of cultural change by contributing to the distribution of new products and services. When focusing on artefacts or things, we speak about 'material culture'.

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2 2

Card 2.2 has already been discussed in this chapter.


insights

what are the boundaries?
cultural groups



the globe

Cultural boundaries are not fixed and cannot be strictly defined. Indeed, people belong to different groups and these cultural groups can also change. Nevertheless, when using the term culture it is important to specify and define on which group you are focusing on and at what level. For example, you can look at culture at a national level; boundaries are set by nationality (where people are raised or where they live right now), or by region, by social class, generation, religion, profession, gender, by their political party they belong to, family, and so on... The more specific you are, the richer your findings.

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2 3

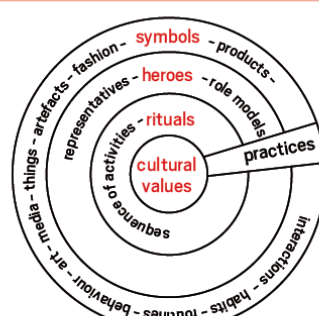
Card 2.3 has also already been discussed in this chapter.


insights

what are cultural values?
cultural practices

Values types:

- Utilitarian
- Symbolic
- Cultural
- Environmental
- Economic
- Aesthetic
- Brand
- Historical
- Social
- Emotional
- Political



after Hofstede, 2005

We perceive cultural values via our practices, here presented with Hofstede's 'onion model'. Symbols can be experienced in the way we dress and behave, what we believe, and the products we choose, in both private and public, and in many other cultural manifestations such as music, paintings and dance. Heroes or role models, such as famous actors, designers, politicians and even cartoon heroes, represent values that are shared by a specific group. Rituals, such as weddings, birthdays and tucking children into bed, are means of experiencing, celebrating or teaching specific values.

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2 4

Cultural practices play an important role in my design, as I am going to make IKEA's culture more tangible through its practices. The current practices were studied in chapter 3.

Figure 1.07: Insights cards (van Boeijen, 2014)

The activities

Lastly I selected three activity cards with methods that I will use in this project: 3.3, 3.10 and 3.15.

In card 3.4 Geert Hofstede's onion model is described, which we also already saw on card 2.4. I will use this model later in this report to map IKEA's culture.

A lot of other cards are actually used through this project (3.9 Observations and 3.14 roleplaying for example), but one that is used even more often is interviewing. I interviewed IKEA employees from all throughout the organisation.

Lastly I studied the history of IKEA's culture very closely. Looking at its heritage and specifying where each key values originated.

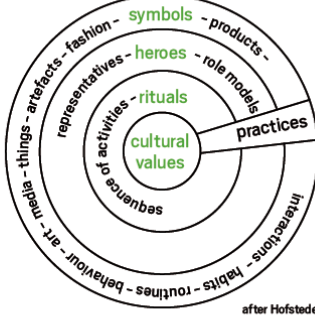
Having build a theoretical framework for my project, I will now described the IKEA brand in the next chapter.



activities

sensitise regarding other cultures

onion model



after Hofstede, 2005

The onion model (see card 2.4) can be used as a warming-up tool or icebreaker in participative sessions with intended users, but also among design team members, for example, to compare design schools, typical rituals, design heroes, etcetera. Just copy the model and fill in and discuss the layers one by one, starting with the values you think are relevant to bring in. This session can be based on text. However, as you are a designer, it is better to use visuals, drawings or images. You should use this card in combination with card 3.2.

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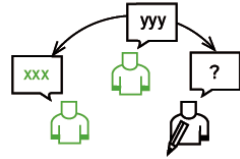
3 3



activities

get answers

interviews



In a culture you are not familiar with and where you do not share a common language, it is not easy to interview people. Based on your observations and other research, you will have specific questions that you want to ask people face to face. If you need an interpreter, select someone who your participants will trust and who also understands your research aims and cultural/professional background. Sometimes, interpreters only summarize a few facts. They are not aware that you want to hear all kinds of tiny inspiring details to help you understand the meaning of the information.

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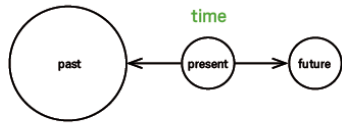
310



activities

learn from the past

history



You cannot understand the current culture that people belong to without understanding where they come from. Historical information will give you some insights about which values are dominant in a specific culture and why. Insights can be found in various ways, such as by studying literature (via books, magazines, the Internet), interviewing experts (via scientists, members of the culture, stakeholders of the culture), analyzing artefacts (collected via the Internet, museums, members of the culture) and studying commercials (via the Internet). You can use card 3.3 to ask relevant questions.

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315

Figure 1.08: Activities cards (van Boeijen, 2014)

Main Take-aways



To me, a culture is the result of **employees living the company's key values** in combination with their personal values. It is shaped by stories, artefacts, routines, rituals and symbols. If you want to speak of a culture, it usually is **shared, lasting and implicit**.

Culture is a result of attraction, selection and attrition. Meaning that those who are likely to fit into the culture are more likely to be attracted to join that cultural group. This same dynamic entails that a company that promotes a certain culture consistent with its strategy, will be more likely to employ and retain people that are beneficial to its strategy because they fit in with the company culture.

It is **confirmed by scientific literature** that a **strong company culture** is an important way to **enlarge the chances to company success**, and that a **bottom up approach** might be necessary to provide and maintain internal consistency of that culture. For a

multinational company such as IKEA, it is likely that a variety of **subcultures** within the organisation exists. Due to the large variety in backgrounds of the people that work at IKEA, it is important that any cultural value promoted by the company should be as universally recognisable as possible in order to appeal to all coworkers and guarantee a common understanding.

Effectively understanding such an ambiguous concept as a company culture can be difficult. To provide a means of structuring to this process the Crossing **Cultural Chasms Card Set**, designed by van Boeijen (2015), will be used for the proper identification of 1) why to study this culture, 2) what is the culture and 3) how to study this culture. A number of cards from this set have been applied at the end of this chapter to initiate this process.

“ To create a
better everyday
life for the
many people ”

- IKEA'S Vision

Chapter 2.

IKEA as a company

In order to fully understand a company's culture, I needed to get to know the company as a whole. In this chapter I will introduce the company IKEA. This section describes what IKEA means to me personally, explains IKEA's business model briefly and provides some facts and figures.

2.1 IKEA and me

I have been a lifelong fan of interior design and IKEA as a brand. It has always had a special place in my heart. As a little child it was my favorite day-trip to make with my parents, and when I drive by a store I still get a sense of that nostalgic feeling.

When I moved into my first own apartment I loved furnishing my own home for the first time. And as a student this would not have been possible without IKEA. I think it is incredible that the furniture of IKEA, because of its low cost, makes everybody capable of furnishing and decorating a complete house with a very limited budget. And that at the same time, the diversity and modularity of the products make sure that every house can keep a unique and luxurious appearance.

This enthusiasm is also why I started working for IKEA long before my graduation project started. I have worked as a kitchen designer and seller at the IKEA in Delft, and I still enjoy working there very much.

My graduation project however, took place at Inter IKEA Systems B.V., the owner of the 'IKEA Concept' and the worldwide IKEA franchisor.

I think that my experiences with both these departments allow me to look at this project from a unique perspective. It has rarely happened before that a coworker at IKEA worked in the store and at the office at the same time. Providing me with the great advantage of being able to take the role of two of my main

stakeholders; my end-users (the store coworkers) and my client (the IKEA franchisor).

I strongly believe in IKEA's vision (as can be seen on the left page) and I am honoured that I was able to do my graduation project at the heart of this company.



Figure 2.01: Me as an IKEA coworker

The most important and grounded parts are the forever parts. These elements form the foundation of IKEA and are meant to never change; the IKEA vision, the IKEA business idea and the IKEA culture and values. According to IKEA:

"The IKEA vision tells us why we are here. The IKEA business idea tells us what we should do. And the IKEA culture and values tell us who we are and how we do things." (IKEA, 2020)

Currently IKEA revolves around the direction of 'the three roads forward'.

Road 1: Make IKEA affordable for people who cannot afford IKEA today. Road 2: Reach and interact with many more of the many people, where they are. And road 3: Create a positive impact for people, society and the planet (UNECE, 2018).

These are very important topics for IKEA and my design should not interfere with any of these. The IKEA directions end with the following line: "What will it take? Living the IKEA culture and values every day". Confirming the need for a stronger and more present IKEA culture and thus the need for my project.

In the next chapter I will dive more deeply in IKEA's company culture.

2.2 IKEA's business model

IKEA's business revolves around its strategic landscape. This document is updated regularly and forms the basis of the organisation. It consists of several parts, which were researched but can not be discussed in this report due to confidentiality regulations.

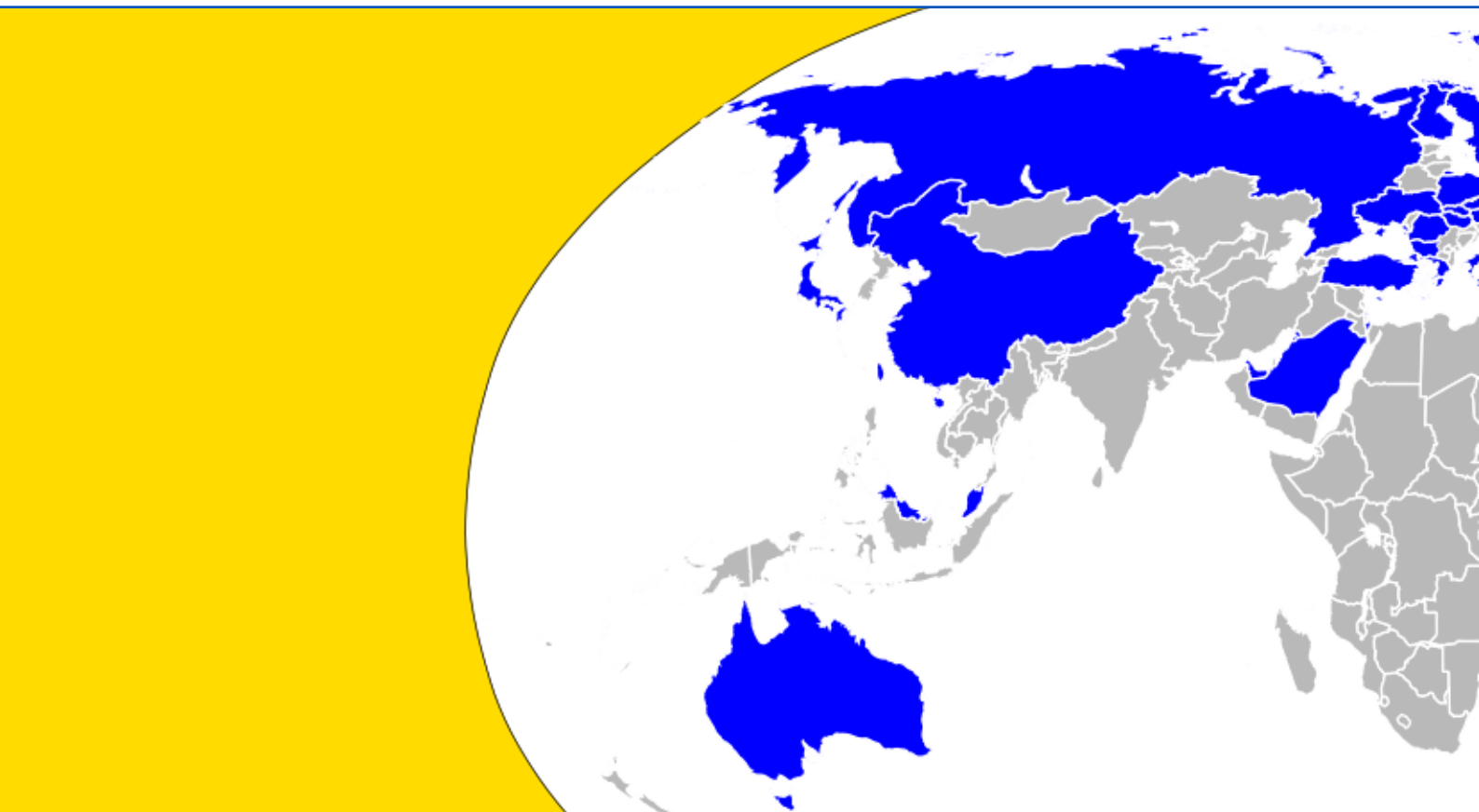


Figure 2.02: IKEA stores across the globe (WOLFESTONE, 2019)

2.3 IKEA as a company

IKEA has come a long way since it was founded by Ingvar Kamprad in 1943. From being a tiny Swedish business, selling furniture through a mail-order catalogue, IKEA has become one of the most well-known home furnishing brands in the world.

Nowadays, there are hundreds of IKEA stores around the globe, and more are coming. Even though IKEA has already been the world's largest furniture retailer since 2008 (Walter, 2017).

IKEA specialises in low-priced goods, sold whenever possible in compact "flat-pack" form for in-home assembly by the customer. The brand is known for its modernist and sometimes Scandinavian designs for various types furniture, and its interior design work is often associated with an eco-friendly simplicity. In addition, the firm is known for its attention to cost control, operational details, and continuous product development.

The IKEA stores also contain restaurants, bistros and grocery shops. Next to furniture (for every room in a regular house), IKEA also sells certain types of home appliances and smart home products.

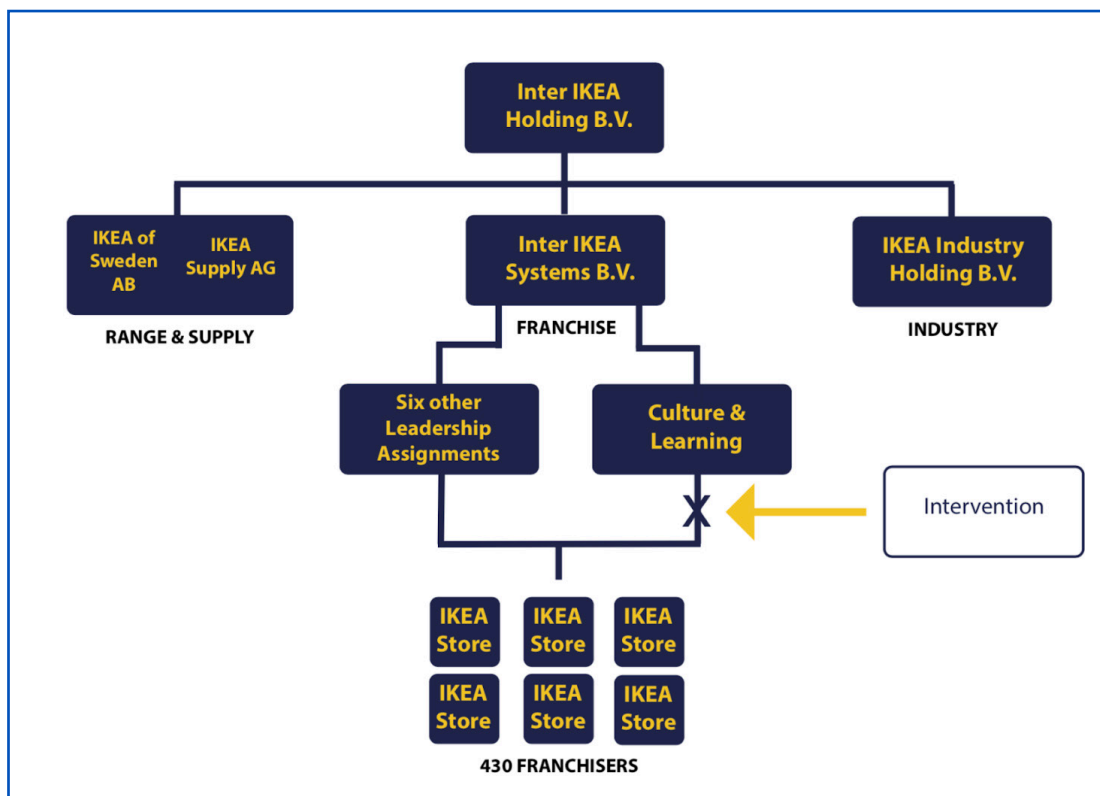
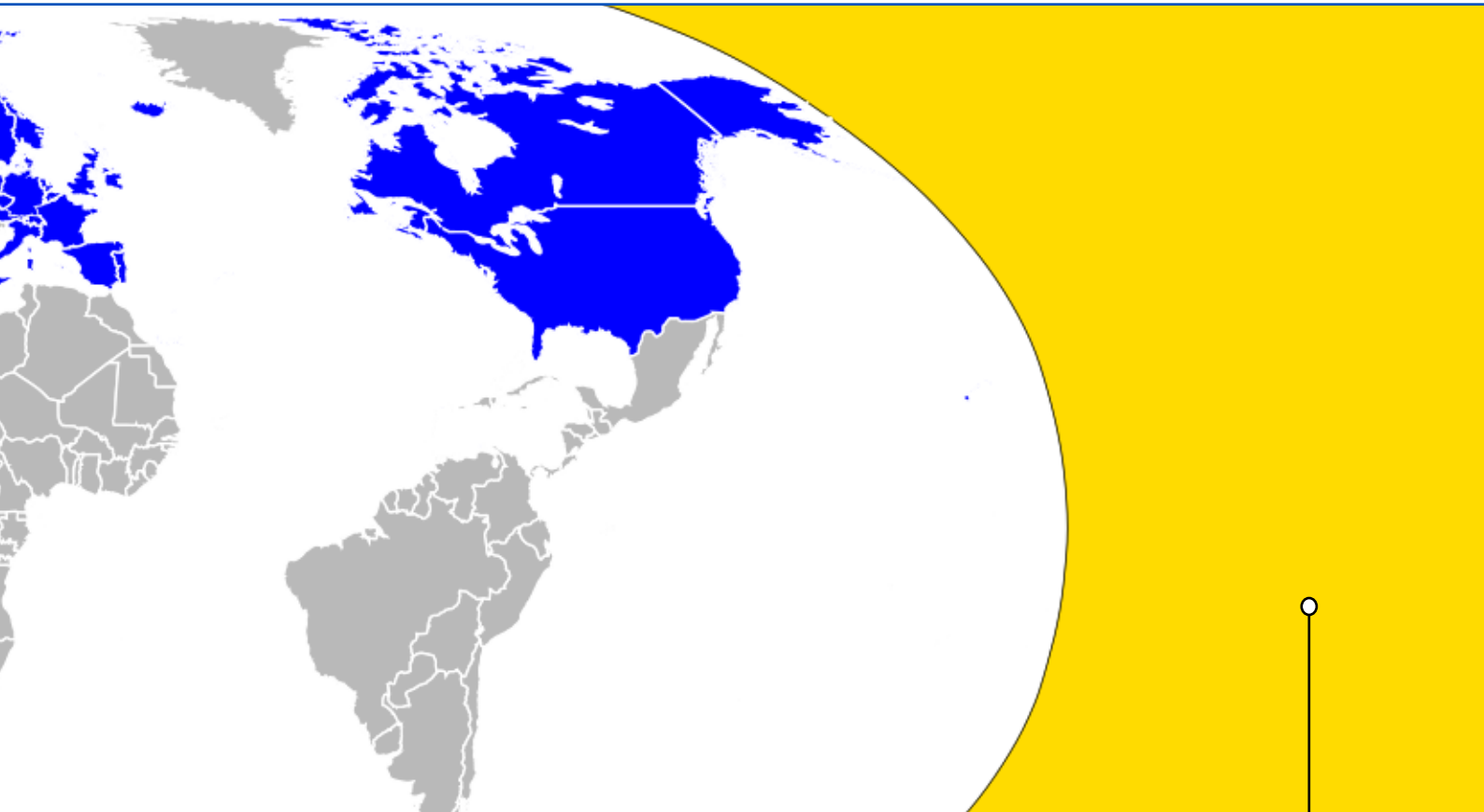
The company was founded in Sweden and that origin is still showing. The brand colours are those of the Swedish flag (blue and yellow) and are visible all throughout the company. The most obvious example being the logo and the store exteriors. In-store restaurants serve Swedish food, and the company's products carry Swedish names.

IKEA is not a publicly listed company. Instead, it is controlled through a number of operating companies, holding companies, and nonprofit foundations. The business is a private company owned by Inter IKEA Systems B.V. (hereby referred to as I.I.S.) (Reuters. 2016), registered in the Netherlands and controlled by the sons of its founder Ingvar Kamprad.

The company is divided in three main divisions, as can be seen in figure 2.03. These divisions are; range and supply (the product portfolio), industry (in house manufacturing) and I.I.S. (franchisers).

I.I.S. is continuously developing the IKEA Concept to ensure its successful implementation in new and existing markets. A big part of this is creating and enhancing the IKEA company culture among its employees at the (currently) 430 IKEA stores.

My project took place at I.I.S. As can also be seen from figure 2.03. Inter IKEA Systems B.V. has separated its senior management responsibilities by means of seven "leadership assignments". One of these leadership assignments is "culture and learning", which is the assignment under which I will be working. Each of the leadership assignments carries responsibility for certain aspects in the management of the 430 franchise stores around the world.



*All countries
with IKEA stores*

Figure 2.03: Organisational chart of IKEA

2.4 Facts and figures

Sales

As of June 2019, there are 433 IKEA stores operating in 52 countries and in fiscal year 2019, €41.3 billion worth of IKEA goods were sold to 800 million customers (Furniture today). The IKEA website contains about 12,000 products and there were over 2.8 billion visitors to IKEA's websites from September 2018 to August 2019 (Inter IKEA Systems B.v.).



433
stores



52
countries



800 million
Customers in BY29



€41.3 billion
worth of IKEA goods
sold in BY19

Ingvar Kamrap Elmtaryd Agunnaryd

The company's name is an acronym that consists of the founder's initials (Ingvar Kamprad) plus those of Elmtaryd, the family farm where he was born, and the nearby village Agunnaryd (his hometown in Småland, southern Sweden).



Leadership



Ingvar Kamprad
Founder



The Kamprad brothers
Successors and sons of Ingvar

*IKEA had over
211.000 coworkers in
2019*

Business Idea

"to offer a wide range of well-designed, functional home furnishing products at prices so low, that as many people as possible will be able to afford them."



1 Billy

Bookcase is sold
every ten seconds



1 in 10

European babies
were conceived in
an IKEA bed



212 million

copies of its catalog,
twice the yearly
estimated number of
copies of the bible



1%

of worlds estimated
yearly wood
consumption



**Jesper
Brodin**

Current CEO of Ingka



**Jon Abrahamsson
Ring**

*Current CEO
of Inter IKEA Group*

Main Take-aways

2

I am one of the few **coworkers at IKEA** to work in the **store and at the office** at the same time, providing me with the great advantage of being able to **take the role of two of my main stakeholders**; the end-users (the store coworkers) and the client (the IKEA franchisor).

IKEA is currently active in **52 countries** and is still growing strongly in a lot of new markets. Because of this, more people of different cultures are coming into contact with IKEA, both as customers as well as employees. IKEA has strongly recognisable **Swedish roots** and it is likely that this Swedish culture should also show in my solution. However, because IKEA is growing so strongly in such a diverse number of countries my solution should transcend Sweden and even Western Europe, to be able to appeal to all employees around the world.

The **strategic landscape** is a good tool to see what IKEA's current goals are. It is divided into several sections, based on the longevity of that section. IKEA's culture and values are part of the **"forever parts"**, meaning that the longevity should be equal to the lifespan of the company.

As such, my project intervention in this component of the business could be of high value and importance to IKEA in the long run.

Chapter 3.

IKEA as a culture

This chapter defines the 'IKEA culture'. First, a few models on how to capture a culture are described and used. All parts of Hofstede's onion model are detailed afterwards, as well as the way IKEA communicates internally about the IKEA culture. Lastly the subject of value based decision making is discussed.

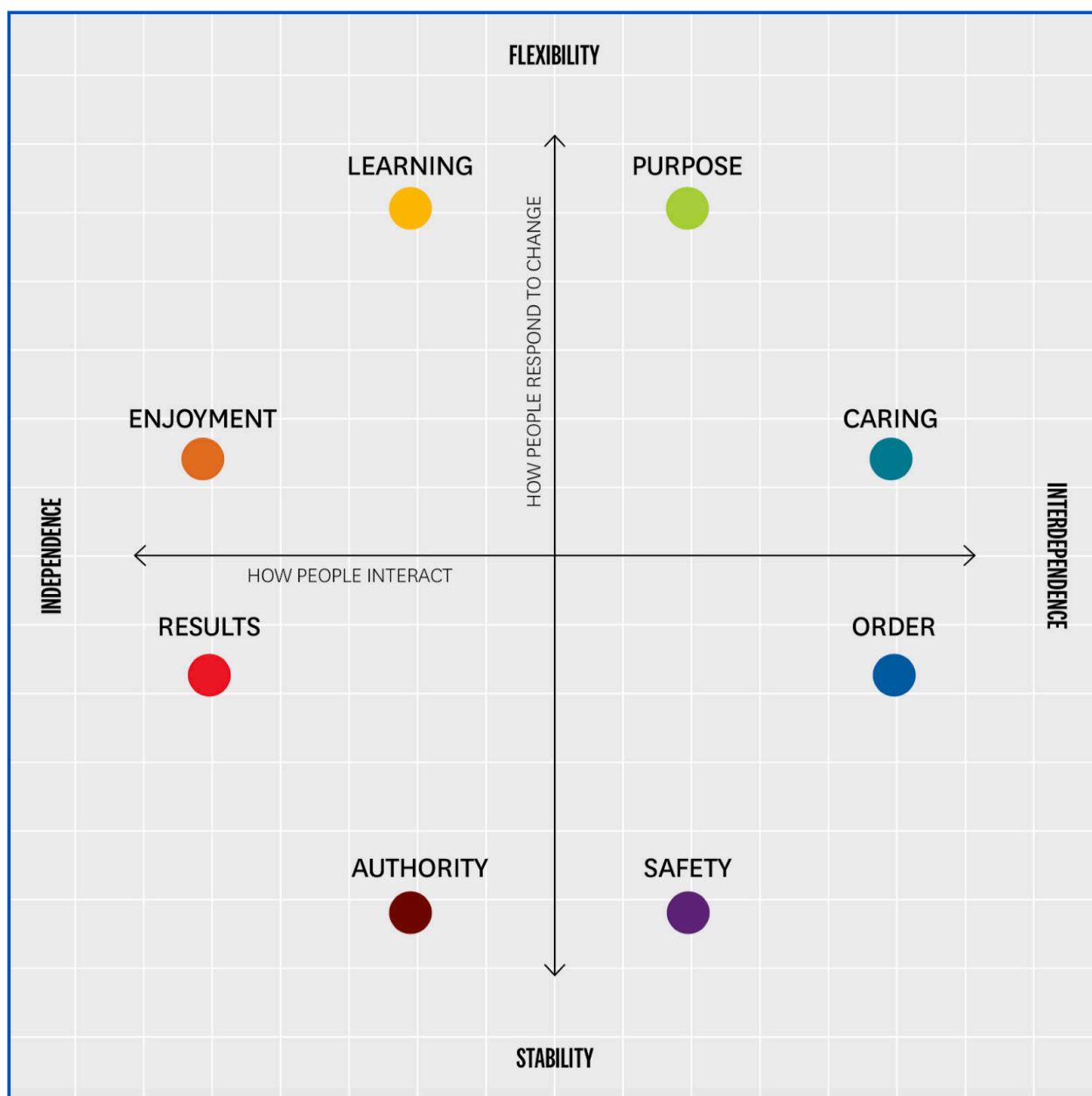


Figure 3.01 : Different forms of company cultures (Groysberg, 2018)

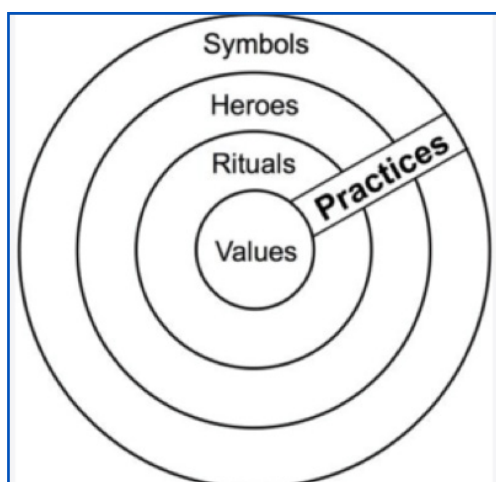


Figure 3.02 : The onion model (Hofstede et al., 1990)

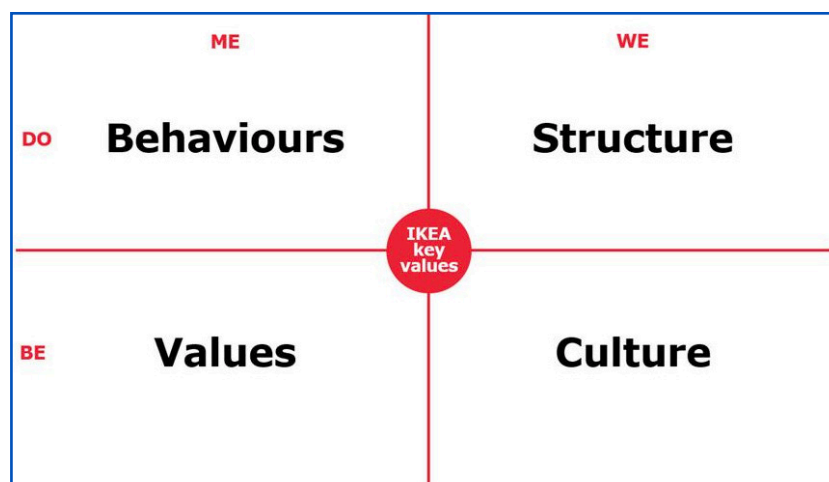


Figure 3.03: IKEA's culture model (IKEA, 2020)

3.1 How can I capture IKEA's company culture?

In literature, several methods have been described of capturing a (corporate) culture.

A very well known method that I will use is the onion model (Hofstede et al.), as can be seen in figure 3.02. All layers of this model (rituals, symbols, heroes, practices and values) will be discussed throughout this project in order to gain a vast understanding of what the IKEA culture is.

IKEA's also has its own model to capture, but mostly measure and improve, its own culture. This so-called 'Culture Model' is based on the original model: 'Integral Theory and Four Quadrants' by Ken Wilber and 'Whole System Approach' by Richard Barrett.

The model has been simplified and adapted to the needs of IKEA. The Culture Model is a tool to help strengthen the IKEA culture. Within IKEA it is used to review the health within each part, review the strength between each part and to take actions within and between each part.

Something that is notable is that at both models the key values are at the centre. This means I will lay an extra focus on the IKEA key values throughout this project. One can say that the quadrant of behaviours (according to IKEA: our way of doing things as individuals), can be best compared to the practices part of the onion model. And structure can be somewhat compared to rituals.

A third model that is used to assess a company culture is that of Groysberg, Lee, Price, and Cheng (2018). This model uses two axes to describe different forms of company culture. One is based on how people interact (independence to interdependence) and one on those people's response to change (flexibility to stability). From these two axes eight culture characteristics emerge. By doing extensive reading of characteristic descriptions and filling in the corresponding worksheet I came to the following conclusion: IKEA fits best in the upper right quadrant of begin caring and having purpose. It scores lowest on the lower left quadrant of focussing on results and authority.

Caring

Caring is described as having a focus on relationships and mutual trust. Work environments are warm, collaborative, and welcoming places where people help and support one another. Employees are united by loyalty; leaders emphasize sincerity, teamwork, and positive relationships.

Purpose

A culture that focuses on Purpose is exemplified by idealism and altruism. Work environments are tolerant, compassionate places where people try to do good for the long-term future of the world. Employees are united by a focus on sustainability and global communities; leaders emphasize shared ideals and contributing to a greater cause.

This means that if I want to create a successful solution it is most important I should be in line with IKEA's purpose and it should come across as caring. It should most definitely not feel authoritative.

3.2 Observing the IKEA culture

In order to sensitise with IKEA's culture I started off with some observations. Actively being part of this culture by taking the role of an IKEA co worker and inactive by just sitting at several departments and taking pictures.

These observations led to a collage that serves me as a form of inspiration. Tillsammans is the Swedish term for 'togetherness'. One of IKEA's key values that I felt was most visible during my observations.

A collage of examples of the IKEA culture at the IKEA Delft store.

Upper left corner: talking and laughing over lunch. Upper middle picture: giving a coworker a baby step as a joke. Upper right corner: having fun drawing together. Second row to the left; a sales manager painting the

walls himself, showing the value of leading by example. Middle row middle picture; laughing between coworker at a quiet time in the store. Middle right: A group of coworkers cheering together to get ready for a big sales day.

Lower left: coworkers leaving notes of appreciation at the IKEA museum. Lower right: receiving personal cards when a coworker leaves for another job.



TILL SAM MANS

3.3 Mapping the IKEA culture

In order to map IKEA's culture I started by filling in the onion model.

Values

The IKEA culture revolves around its key values, that can be seen at the core of the onion model.

These values are: Simplicity, Cost consciousness, Renew and improve, Give and take responsibility, Caring for the people and planet, Different with a meaning, Lead by Example and Togetherness.

These values are the core of the IKEA culture, and will therefore be discussed in a separate chapter; Chapter 4: the key values.

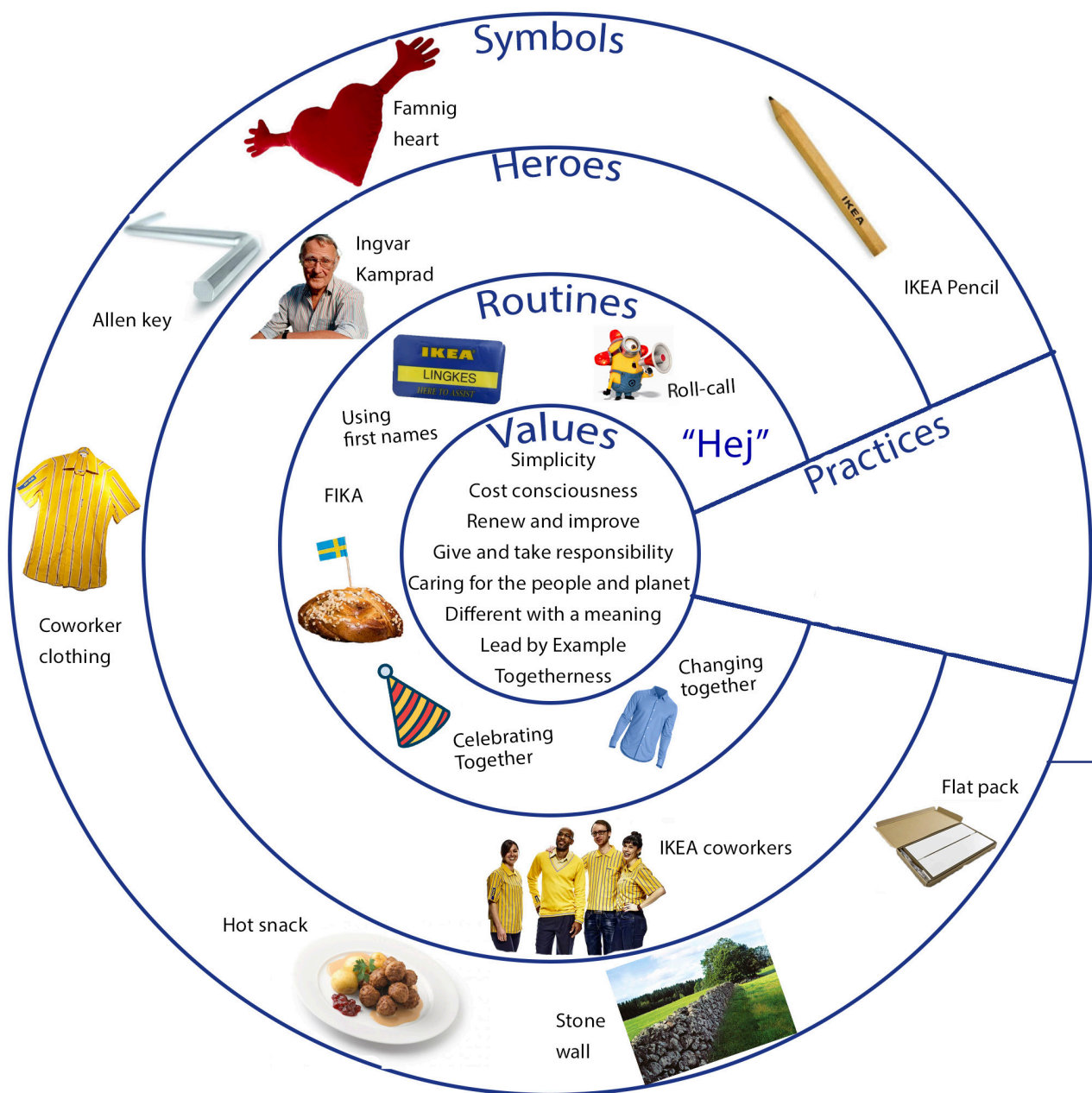


Figure 3.04 : The IKEA culture in the onion model

Routines

Routines and rituals that are carrying the IKEA key values can be strong IKEA cultural tools. Some examples I have found:

- Having fika to create a feeling of togetherness
- Giving a helping hand to colleagues in need
- Getting together for celebrations
- Gathering in the morning for the so called 'roll-call'
- Changing between work uniform and regular clothes together
- Knowing and greeting each other by first name
- Saying "Hej" when coworkers meet (and starting most emails with it, regardless of the persons hierarchical rank)
- Having each other's private phone numbers and talking to each other outside of work

Symbols

The stone wall

The stone wall captures the essence of the IKEA culture. It is a symbol that is less known to the customer, but is very important for the coworkers. It goes back to IKEA's Swedish Småland roots. In Småland the land is filled with stones. Normally, such rocky ground would be considered useless. In Småland, however, resourcefulness and hard work turned this rocky soil into productive fields and pastureland. The farmers used the stones to build walls around their farms that still stand today. It turned challenges into possibilities. It brought people together. And it provided them with a shared sense of achievement.

Heroes

The founder of IKEA 'Ingvar Kamprad' is a very important and special person within the company. Coworkers look up to him, almost to the level of viewing him as a saint. Letters he wrote are saved and framed, there is a wing in the IKEA museum dedicated solely to him, people travel to Sweden to see the house in which he grew up and there are many more examples. He serves as a massive form of inspiration for coworkers all over the world to keep improving themselves and the business.



Figure 3.05 : The stone wall (IKEA, 2019)



Hofstede's metaphor

**represents cultural values as the core of a culture, hidden in the centre
and surrounded by three layers: rituals, heroes, and symbols.**

- Van Boeijen 2015





Figure 1.06: Take your picture with the stone wall

When you visit Älmhult, the location of the first IKEA store, you can even take a picture with this stone wall. Holding up a sign related to one of our key values that described what you want to do better tomorrow.



Figure 1.07: The flat pack (Horizont, 2016)

The flat pack

The flat pack revolutionised the furniture world and the IKEA business. It remains one IKEA's strongest cultural symbols, communicating cost-consciousness and doing things a different way. Sometimes IKEA is even referred to as 'flat pack city'.



Figure 1.08: The allen key (IKEA, 2018)

The Allen key

The Allen key was a necessary tool for customers assembling IKEA products themselves. It symbolises the IKEA Concept of "You do your part. We do our part. Together we save money." It also symbolises simplicity.



Figure 1.09: The coworker clothing (IKEA, 2020)

The IKEA uniform

This is a symbol that is designed to clearly communicate to the customer who and where the employees are in a store. But is also works as a strong artefact of the IKEA culture for the IKEA employees. It strengthens the value of togetherness that all employees where the same clothes, as a uniform conveys a message of group membership (Craig, J. 2009) and can make someone feel like they are part of something (Barthes, 2011). It also makes the employees feel like they are representing IKEA and nudges them towards behaving responsible.



Figure 1.10: The FAMNIG heart (RTL, 2016)

The FAMNIG heart

The FAMNIG heart is a soft toy with a heart-warming story. It arose out of a problem where a factory was in danger of closure. The FAMNIG heart became a huge commercial success and the factory doubled in size. It symbolises warmth, care, simplicity and never giving up.

The IKEA pencil

The IKEA pencil is a shopping tool used throughout the IKEA world. It symbolises simplicity, cost-consciousness and function. Almost everybody has at least one of them lying somewhere in their home.



Figure 1.11: The IKEA pencil (Time, 2015).



Figure 1.12: The hot snack (IKEA HongKong, 2014)

The hot snack

The hot snack at a extremely low price that customers can buy just before they leave the store communicates low price. It says “goodbye” and “we hope to see you again” – without saying a word. It symbolises care and low price. It also makes sure people leave the store with a happy feeling, forgetting about the long waiting lines and the amount of money they spent in the store moments before that.

IKEA museum



3.4 IKEA'S heritage and Älmhult

IKEA's history means a lot to the company, it is taken very seriously. This ranges from them taking pride in their Swedish roots, as mentioned in chapter 2, to sending coworkers from all over the world to Älmhult every year to visit the very first IKEA store.

In order to fully understand this pride I also travelled to Älmhult. You could say the Swedish city Älmhult is the heart of IKEA. Here the design centre is located, the IKEA museum, the first IKEA store and many many other IKEA facilities (see figure 3.13). This was truly a unique experience. The company culture was almost tangible in the air.

A collage of my days in Älmhult can be found on the next two pages.

While I was here I was able to visit every step in the process of creating a new IKEA product. Starting at the design centre, the prototype workplace, the test lab, the concept centre, a manufacturer, a distribution centre, and finally the store. I also visited the IKEA museum, open to the public, and the more private exhibits for employees only. I talked to several people from the culture department and made sure I was a part of as many coworker lunches at different departments as I could.

In this way I tried to experience the IKEA culture from as many different perspectives as possible. I even managed to briefly meet Jesper Brodin, (current CEO of INGKA group) and Mathias, Peter and Jonas Kamprad (sons of founder Ingvar).

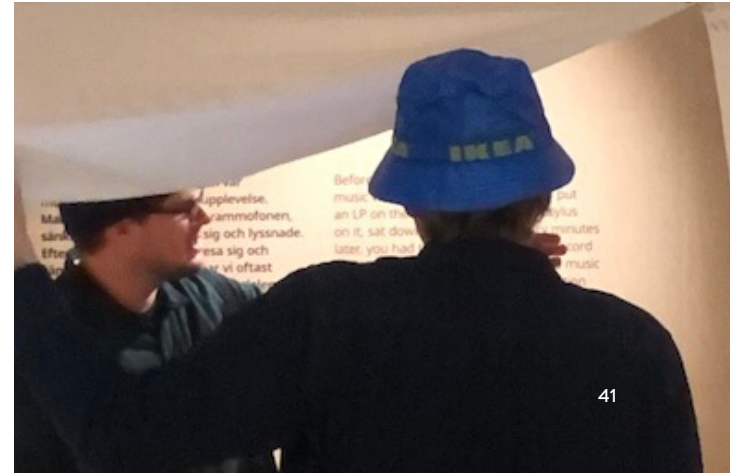
For this project I will only focus at the company culture of the sales employees, so I will not go into very much detail describing the working culture at the other departments. But one thing was really clear, whether I was talking to one of IKEA's 12 head product designers or to a factory worker who produced kitchen cabinet doors; a pride to work for IKEA.



Figure 3.13: A map of Älmhult (IKEA, 2020)

<- Figure 3.14: The IKEA museum in Älmhult (Kigsz, 2016)





3.5 Culture in IKEA's communication

As described in chapter 2, IKEA revolves around its strategic landscape. In this landscape one of the forever parts is the IKEA culture and values. This already describes how important this culture is to IKEA.

IKEA mandatories and commitments

If you want to open a new IKEA you have to fully understand the IKEA concept.

The IKEA Concept is a base for all aspects of the IKEA business. This concept is described by a list of 18 commitment and 46 mandatories, that create a framework for all users of the IKEA trademarks.

The IKEA **commitments** set the direction and provide a framework. Everyone working under the IKEA trademarks needs to commit themselves to these statements in order to clearly distinguish the IKEA Brand and support long term business success.

The IKEA **mandatory requirements** are closely connected to the commitments and support them with more concrete, measurable statements of what to achieve. Every user of the IKEA trademarks is responsible for fulfilling the mandatory requirements.

The third commitment on the list is the so called '**culture commitment**':

"With IKEA values guiding how we do things, we nurture a unique IKEA culture that shapes who we are. Our culture inspires, challenges and empowers us. It brings out the best in each of us as we work together, lead by example, find better ways forward and get things done. This helps us make a better IKEA, for and with the many people."

This is again a good example of how important IKEA thinks it is to have a strong company culture. Secondly it also says something about how hard IKEA finds it to measure a culture.

As the culture is not mentioned in any of the 46 mandatories. There is a ongoing discussion within IKEA if there should come a culture requirement. Therefore it might be important to try to make the results of my product/strategy measurable in order to support this.

The definition of culture according to IKEA

'The IKEA culture is our social system. It influences our way of being and doing things and reflects who we are and want to be. It's built on shared values and other cultural elements.

We often refer to it as "the way we do things around here" or "the IKEA way".'

Recruitment

Also in the recruitment process, the culture is taken into account:

'In a more connected, complex and constantly changing world, the IKEA key values become ever more important to help us navigate, align our efforts and create a more efficient and humanistic IKEA business. The IKEA culture is our unique asset. It builds trust, inspires, challenges and empowers people to make a difference. This sets us apart. Therefore we always recruit on values first.'

Culture and learning

The wished position of culture and learning, the department where I am doing my research at, is: 'IKEA culture and competent people drive better business'.

So there is a lot written about the culture. However, as Olov Hedlin, the main man responsible for the IKEA culture, states it: 'we have done a fantastic job in describing the importance of the IKEA culture from a historical point of view, but there is so much more to it'.

💡 We have done a fantastic job in describing
the importance of the IKEA culture from a historical point of view,
but there is so much more to it'.

- Olov Hedlin, 2019

”



Figure 3.16: Decision making (Rossiter, 2007)

3.6 Value based decision making

IKEA motivates its coworkers to apply the method of 'value based decision making'. By using the IKEA key values, coworkers are expected to make decision that are:

Better: If coworkers use a the key values as a compass that helps them make decisions, the values can give them direction and prioritise what matters for IKEA.

Faster: The IKEA key values are accessible to everyone in IKEA and can empower everyone to make decisions and act fast. And when speed goes up, costs go down.

What is interesting is that this decision making process can function as a way to make culture tangible. If I want the coworkers to use the values in their everyday lives, this should result in them taking these values into account with every decisions they make.

Seeing if the values are better represented in the actions and choices of the coworkers could be a clear way for IKEA to test whether my cultural intervention has had any effect.

In the next chapter I will go deeper into the key values and describe each of them in more detail.

Main Take-aways

3

An identification was made of where IKEA fits in the stability - flexibility vs. independence - interdependence quadrant. It was found that IKEA fits best in the rightmost upper quadrant focusing on **“caring” and “purpose”**, being relatively flexible and focused on interdependence. When taking pictures on the work floor, the most **directly visible** value was that of **‘togetherness’**, which feels consistent with a “caring” and “purposeful” business culture.

In accordance with Hofstede's onion model several **values, routines, heroes and symbols** were identified. Values in IKEA are concepts such as “togetherness”, “cost consciousness” and “simplicity”. Some examples of routines are “FIKA”, using first names and saying “hej” as a greeting, and important heroes of the IKEA culture are its founder Ingvar Kamprad and the “IKEA coworker”. Important symbols of what IKEA stands for are the coworker clothing (worn by all levels of the organisation), flatpacks, the

Allen key, the FAMNIG heart, the IKEA pencil, hot snacks and the stone wall.

As a company with a franchising structure, IKEA nourishes its business model by making sure all franchises understand and follow the 46 mandates and 18 commitments defined by IKEA. The third commitment is the **“culture commitment”**, again showing how important this is in IKEA's strategy. This culture aspect even stretches all the way to the recruitment process where IKEA is focussed on **value based recruitment**. The principal philosophy behind this is that if the coworkers are “living” the IKEA values, they will do what is good for IKEA. Since sales coworkers are in the best position to make a change, aligning values will make sure that **decision making** at lower levels in the organisation is effective and consistent with the company goals, so that people can be fully trusted with this decision making power.

Chapter 4.

The key values

At the centre of the IKEA culture are the 8 IKEA key values. In this chapter it is explained for each value what the IKEA definition is, where this value comes from, and what it means in a practical way. But first some information about where the values come from in a general manner and how they are used.



4.1 The Origin

As mentioned earlier, IKEA started off as a one-man company in Sweden. Keeping a strong culture was very easy when consisting of only friends and family members, but the more the business grew, the more important it became for all new co-workers to become part of the IKEA culture. By the mid-1970s, the business had expanded outside Sweden and employed several thousand co-workers. Ingvar took a step to make sure the original spirit of IKEA remained.

In 1976, he wrote '*The testament of a Furniture Dealer*' that describes and reinforces the IKEA culture. He later added '*the little IKEA dictionary*', containing and explaining his view on regularly used IKEA terms. These document contains the essence of what IKEA is, and are still referenced everyday within the company. The three sons of Ingvar later used these two documents to extract IKEA's key values.

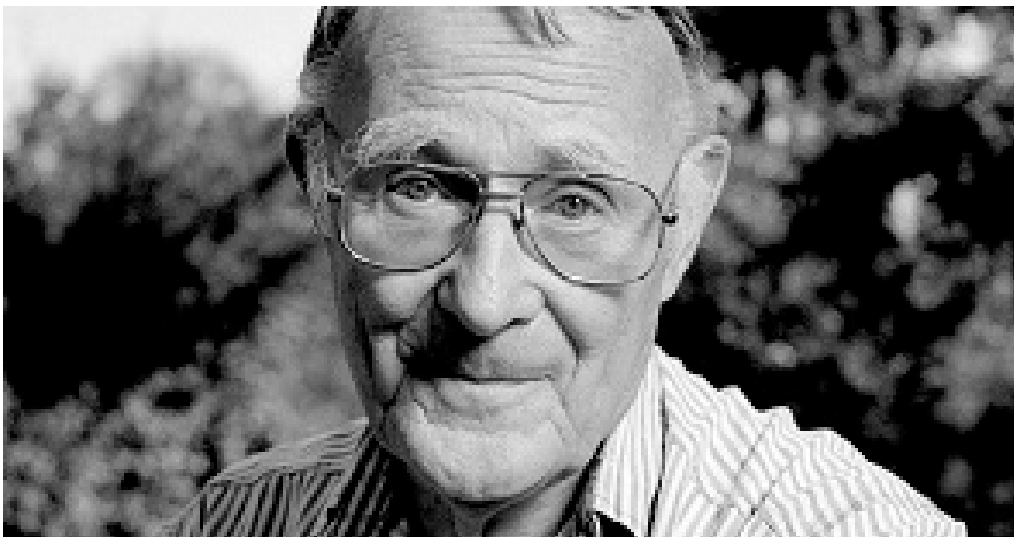


Figure 4.01 : Ingvar Kamprad (IKEA, 2018)

4.2 The key values

Togetherness

Where does it come from:

Ingvar grew up in the 1920s on a farm in the countryside. On a farm everyone joins in and works together, so the word 'tillsammans' (swedish for together) has been with KEA from the very beginning.

In 1970 the IKEA Stockholm store went up in flames due to an electrical malfunction. At this moment that store accounted for most of the companies sales. IKEA was at crisis. Coworkers from other parts of Sweden came to help. Coworkers that normally never worked with one another now worked day and night together. Hand in hand, to help salvage what could be salvaged. A reconstructed store could open again in record time. All this and having good fun working together created such a strong sense of togetherness that some of this coworkers continued working with Ikea far beyond their retirement.

What does it mean:

Togetherness, is at the heart of the IKEA culture. IKEA believes that they are strong when the coworkers trust each other, pull in the same direction and have fun together. Everyone is important, everyone is heard and everyone contributes.

Modern practical examples

Having a coworker only party every year, knowing your manager (and your managers manager) on a personal level, having a flat hierarchy, doing a lot for charity, having coworkers do job swaps, everyone working together for click and collect during Covid-19.

Caring for the people and planet

Where does it come from:

Part of IKEAs vision had always been to impact the many people. Being a global company (that is still on a growth journey) this means that IKEAs actions can have huge consequences for those many people and for the environment. Not only have they always wanted to make the most affordable products in the world, they also want to make products that are the best for the world.

Using resources effectively and responsibly is something that was part of IKEA from the beginning, as could be seen from the stone wall example in paragraph 3.3. IKEA had always been optimistic about the future.

What does it mean:

IKEA wants to be a force for positive change, they have the possibility to make a significant and lasting impact, today and for the generations to come. They try to do this by offering large volumes of sustainably sourced products and using new production concepts, materials and technologies.

Modern practical examples

Create products that save water and energy, preserve food and minimise waste, the IKEA foundation, being energy positive (generating more energy than ikea is using), only printing when absolutely necessary.

Cost consciousness

Where does it come from:

Ingvar Kamprad began doing business with two empty hands. As a young boy he caught fish and sold them to neighbours. He went on to sell matchboxes, magazines and Christmas cards. Later flower seeds became a big business. Every penny he earned he invested in his business. He biked all around his neighbourhood to sell his products. Meeting every customer personally. That's how he discovered the importance of affordability. Low prices were always necessary otherwise people didn't buy from him.

What does it mean:

As many people as possible should be able to afford a beautiful and functional home. We constantly challenge ourselves and others to make more from less without compromising on quality. Our entire business model is built on the idea of low prices generating large volumes. This together with low costs creates a healthy long-term profit. Profit that gives us resources to invest in reaching even more people with our offer. That is why a low-price company must also be a low-cost company.

Modern practical examples

Extremely low priced products, no excessive bonuses or salaries, staff only traveling when necessary.

Simplicity

Where does it come from:

In the early 1950s a price war in mail order led to poor quality perception. People at the time thought all mail orders where of lower quality. IKEA needed to complement mail order with a permanent exhibition in order to proof that it is possible to combine good quality and a low price. People came from long distances to see and touch IKEA products and they were convinced of the quality. The business format however, was still mail order. Bulky furniture was sent directly from the factory to customers across sweden. Resulting in a lot of product damages and high transport costs. IKEA's solution at the time was to sell the products in flat packs and let our customers assemble them at home.

What does it mean:

A simple, straightforward and down-to-earth way of being is part of our Småland heritage. It is about being ourselves and staying close to reality. We are informal, pragmatic and see bureaucracy as our biggest enemy.

Practical Example

Simple looking products, minimalist design, no unnecessary features, straight forward looking stores and website

Different with a Meaning

Where does it come from:

At the first two IKEA's, it was noticed that people left the store, simply because they were hungry and then they didn't return. To convince them to stay longer IKEA introduced its first restaurant. The beginning of, what today is, IKEA food. The stores became so popular that they were crowded and could not keep up with sales. Queues at the check out and merchandise pickup were huge. So the store manager decided to open parts of the warehouse so customers could pick up some products themselves. This freed up resources to opening more checkouts and help more customers. The idea of the self serve was born.

What does it mean:

IKEA is not like other companies and they don't want to be. They like to question existing solutions, think in unconventional ways, experiment and dare to make mistakes, always for a good reason.

Modern practical examples

The self serve area, the flat pack design

Give and Take responsibility

Where does it come from:

The iconic bookcase billy was first produced in 1979. It's been made in many models over the years and improved in a way that the price for customers is significantly lower than when it was introduced. But billy has also caused some trouble in the late 1980s when it was discovered that, due to production methods at the time, the wood emitted 'fromadegyde', which is an unhealthy gas. IKEA took responsibility and immediately stopped sales and production until they had found other sustainable ways to manufacture billy. They took the toughest environmental legislation in the world and made it it's internal standard. Going way beyond what was required. Since then IKEA does this for all their products.

What does it mean:

IKEA believes in empowering people. Giving and taking responsibility are ways to grow and develop as individuals. Trusting each other, being positive and forward looking inspire everyone to contribute to development.

Modern practical examples

My learning, Coworker sessions, Managers performing tasks like cleaning,

Renew and improve

Where does it come from:

Originally a department for home furnishing accessories was built by one sale coworker and a carpenter. They had taken initiative and with small means built a whole department by themselves. Pieces were so affordable that every visitor wanted to buy at least something. When the Stockholm store was rebuilt after the fire we IKEA learned from its experiences and developed a full scale home furnishing accessories department, that today we call the market hall. They also added an enormous self serve furniture area. The fire was a big challenge, but IKEA managed to turn it into opportunities.

What does it mean:

IKEA is constantly looking for new and better ways forward. 'Whatever we are doing today, we can do better tomorrow.' Finding solutions to almost impossible challenges is part of our success and a source of inspiration to move on to the next challenge.

Modern practical examples

The new store design after the fire, still redesigning already popular products, adding smart home products to their portfolio,

Lead by example

Where does it come from:

From the personal belief of Ingvar. He said that: 'Taking responsibility has nothing to do with education, financial position or rank. Responsibility-takers can be found in the warehouse, among the buyers, salesforce and office staff – in short, everywhere. They are necessary in every system. They are essential for all progress. They are the ones who keep the wheels turning.'

What does it mean:

IKEA sees leadership as an action, not a position. They look for people's values before competence and experience. People who walk-the-talk and lead by example. Taking responsibility is a privilege.

Modern practical examples

Managers and office workers working in the store during Covid-19

"Our shared values and strong culture make IKEA unique, both as a place to work and as a brand. In each and every IKEA unit you visit around the world, you find colleagues with the same wonderful values."

- Peter, Jonas and

Mathias Kamprad, 2016

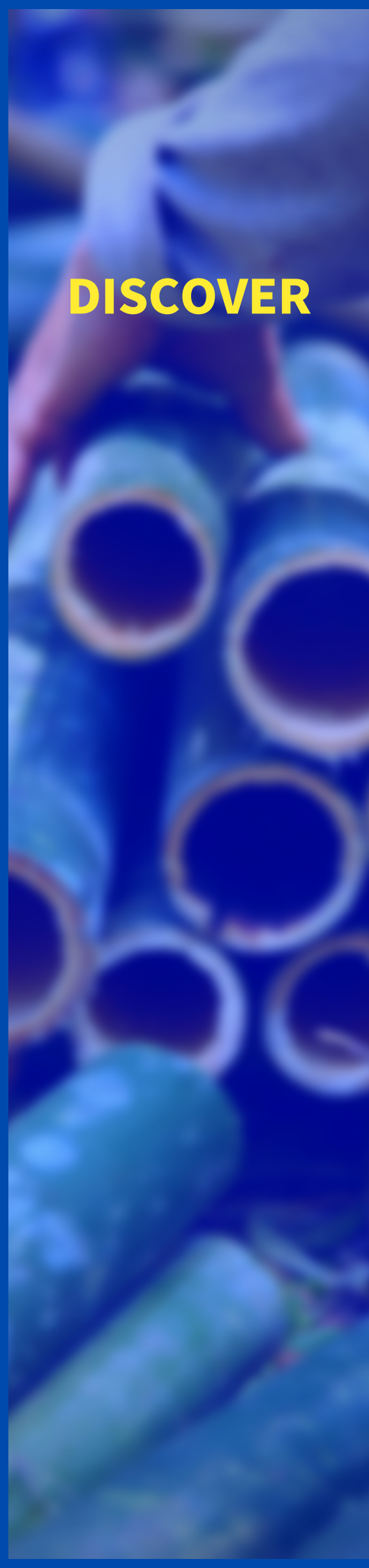
Main Take-aways



The eight key values are: **Simplicity, Cost consciousness, Renew and improve, Give and take responsibility, Caring for the people and planet, Different with a meaning, Lead by Example** and **Togetherness**.

These values have a lot of **history** to them and go back to the origin of IKEA. They are all equally important in IKEA's strategy. But already when trying to find modern day examples, **some are more visible than others**.

Values like 'Cost consciousness', 'Caring for the people and planet' and 'Togetherness' have tons of direct examples, while more abstract values like 'Different with a meaning' are harder to find. This might be something to take into account when designing a solution for all eight.

A hand is shown holding a roll of white material, possibly a pipe or a sheet of paper, over a pile of blue pipes. The scene is dimly lit with a blue tint.

DISCOVER

A pair of hands is shown holding a bundle of colorful fibers, possibly a textile or a composite material. The fibers are a mix of yellow, orange, and red, and are being held against a dark blue background.

DEFINED



DEVELOP

DELIVER

Chapter 5.

The Coworker journey

In this chapter I will describe the procedure a new coworker currently goes through when joining IKEA. All the steps that are taken to integrate this new coworker into their new job are described in detail. After each segment there is a 'my notes' section where I reflect upon the procedure and mention things that I think could be improved. A more detailed description can be found in appendix 01. Lastly, a journey mapping technique is used to create an overview of this journey.



Figure 5.01: A group of IKEA sales coworkers (IKEA, 2020)

5.1 Overview

The current procedure new employees at IKEA Delft go through will differ per person and per department. However there are some things that are the same for all new employees.

1. All new employees receive a document containing the 'house rules and code of conduct.'
2. All new employees follow the 'introduction training'
3. All new employees get assigned a 'buddy' from their own department.
4. All new employees get access to a 'my learning' account
5. Some new employees will receive additional training, specific to the job they are expected to do at IKEA

These moments are often, apart from their job interview, the first contact between IKEA and the new employees.

Especially the introduction training. For a coworker, it is first moment as an 'IKEA employee'. This means this is also their first contact with the IKEA company culture. The way you welcome your new employees is a crucial part in your company culture, as it is the first example you set on how you want coworkers to treat each other.

Disclaimer: The following chapter had been written from my own perspective. I have followed this procedure twice and I have also talked to some fellow employees about their experiences. My first time was in december 2018, when I started as a new employee at IKEA myself. And the second time was in januari 2020, this time I joined as a non participating observer. It could be that some of the elements are influenced by my own interpretation, but I think that if I experienced something twice, that it could be a good indicator of how an average new employee will experience it as well.

5.2 The house rules and code of conduct document

The house rules contains the practical aspects that a new employee needs to know off. Things like 'where to park your car', 'how to take care of you clothing' and 'how to use your discount' are explained.

The code of conduct shows the rules on how to behave. It describes how to handle privacy issues for example and what to do when coming into contact with situations like bribery.

One very important thing to note is that the document starts with explaining that these rules are based on our key values. However, afterwards the wrong key values are mentioned! Ten key values are listed (currently IKEA only has eight), and of these ten only two are still key values today!

This is the first, and often only, contact évery new employee has with information about IKEA's key values and it is not the correct information.

5.3 Introduction Training

This training is followed by everyone who is new to the store. So also employees who have already worked at other IKEA's. It consist of several parts:

- Welcome
- Introduction round
- Information about IKEA and the store
- Safety and security
- House rules and code of conduct
- Tour of the building
- Receiving IKEA clothing

Every part is described in much more detail in appendix 01, including more notes and remarks. At the next page the summerized version can be found.



Figure 5.02: The participants are waiting to be picked up

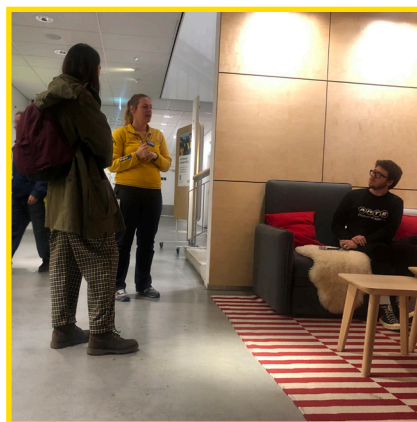


Figure 5.03: The participants are greeted by an IKEA coworker



Figure 5.04: The room in which the training was held



Figure 5.05: The participants are introducing themselves

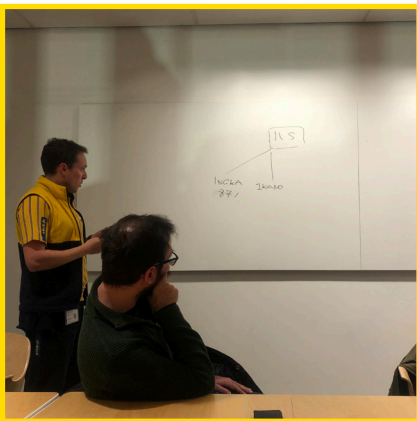


Figure 5.06: The organisational structure of IKEA is explained



Figure 5.07: The participants are laughing at the facilitator

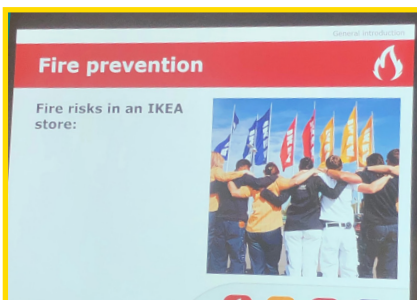


Figure 5.08: Showing the value of 'togetherness' in the safety video

Welcome

The coworkers are picked up at the entrance and dropped off at the designated room.

My notes: The room that they are dropped off at is cold and dark. There is no drinks or snacks.

Introduction round:

The facilitator starts by telling who he is and what his background and current function at IKEA is. It is a personal story, which inspires the trainees to also be personal.

My notes: The facilitator revealed he has quit a high position in the store, but no emphasis was put on hierarchy. The atmosphere is personal and informal.

Information about IKEA and the store:

This was an interactive presentation that the trainees clearly enjoyed. The facilitator asked questions like 'What makes IKEA Delft unique?', 'How many stores does IKEA have?' and 'how many people do we welcome here every year?'. The organisational structure was briefly explained. Making the difference between Inter IKEA systems and Ingka Clear. Explaining what the different offices in the building do and giving some fun facts and numbers. After that the hierarchy of the store was explained. Things like: 'how many managers are there?' and the number of departments inside the store.

My notes: This was a fun part of the training, but also the only informative part about IKEA. I feel like this is an enormous missed opportunity to do something with the company culture. So many details are given, like how many people exactly work in sales, but nothing about how these people treat each other or any other mention of our key values. The way however, in which this presentation was given was very good. It was personal, interactive, funny and interesting.

Safety and security

The safety and security expert gives this talk. A movie is shown explaining safety at IKEA, followed by a powerpoint presentation.

My notes: It is nice that a safety and security expert comes in. It makes you feel like they take this subject seriously. In the movie, I felt like you could clearly see our key values for the first time. They were not shown directly, but you could see they were taken into account when creating the video. Showing different employees from several departments working together (togetherness), seeing them taking action whenever they could do something themselves (give and take responsibility, lead by example) and many other details really reflected the company culture.

I feel like this should have also been way more evident in the previous presentation (about IKEA facts).

After this presentation the security expert left, but did not turn the light back on. At this point the employees could not feel any less welcome. They were alone, in a dark unpersonal room, without any food or drinks, and still very very cold.

Tour of the building

The trainees were told they would get a tour of the building. However, the only thing they did was walk from that room to the room where they could receive their clothing.

On the way we visited the coworker restaurant, the lockers and the wall of managers (which I will explain later).

My notes: The tour could be way more elaborated. This could be a moment to transfer some culture. For example pointing out some sustainable solutions that we have in the store (value: caring for the people and planet).

Receiving clothing

The participants receive a bag with their name on it. It contains a pair of safety shoes, two trousers, a shirt and a blouse. After this they are told the training is over and the facilitator leaves.

My notes: The bag of clothing could be a another great opportunity to convey some company culture. As this clothing already is a strong symbol of the IKEA culture! They receive a bag full of IKEA stuff. Why not add something to the bag? The ending of this training was very impersonal. The facilitator just left the group alone. They had to find their own way out, even though they had never been to this part of the building before. I think it is very important how you end the first day for a new employee, because it determines with what kind of feeling they go home.

Wall of managers

This was briefly mentioned earlier in this chapter and i shortly want to highlight this part of the building, as I believe it is a good example of the IKEA company culture. It is a wall with pictures of all the managers

you might encounter in the store. This gives a great sense of approachability. You can also notice that even the highest manager in the store still wears the same yellow IKEA uniform as everyone else.

Length of the training

In my notes I gave several suggestions of adding things to the training. A counter argument for these ideas might be that the training should not be too long, because it might be too much information for the participants. I however do not believe this to be true. First of all the training was scheduled to last until 21:00 and ended at 20:15. So there was plenty of time left to give extra information. Secondly it was clear that the participant did not feel the need to leave at all.

They reacted surprised when the facilitator suddenly left at the end and they really took their time walking back to the entrance.

One thing that most people went back to was the wall of managers. Showing again that this is a really good functioning facet of the building.



Figure 5.09: The participants get a tour of the IKEA building



Figure 5.10: The participants receive their clothing in an IKEA bag



Figure 5.11: The participants clearly do not feel like leaving yet. At the wall they recognize the people who just gave their training.

5.3 “My Learning”

My learning is the online training platform of IKEA. There are hundreds of sorts of training for internal purposes on there. These go from leadership training that you sign up for, and are given in a physical room, to online training on how to handle privacy related content from customers. Coworkers are free to sign up for any course they want, but they have to take this action themselves. What courses they sign up for and follow can be tracked by their managers.

On this platform there is also the training: ‘An introduction to the IKEA culture’. This training is not compulsory. I have looked at the results of this training and it is not very successful.

Since the start of this training (2018) it has only been opened 84 times in Delft. However, in Delft, of course, also the Inter IKEA office located. If you look at the store sales employees, the training has only been used **three** times. And none of those three finished it. The

first coworker opened it once and spent 790 seconds on the training. The second person opened it three times and spent a total of 699 seconds. The third sales employee also opened it once as well and spent 437 seconds on there.

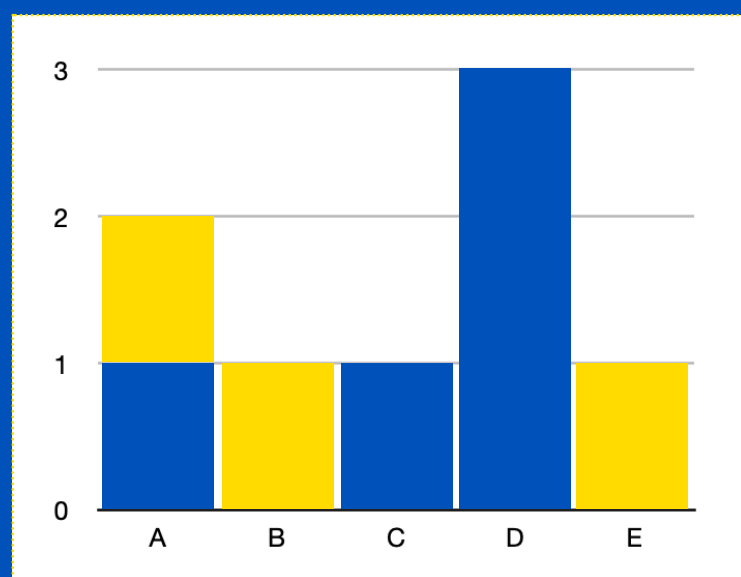
It is also not much more popular in other departments in Delft, as can be seen from graph 5.01. And even if you take the office into account, of the 84 people started the training, only 15 completed it since it was uploaded three years ago. That is why I do not consider this training part of the ‘current procedure’.

My notes: It is great that there is so much information available to all coworkers and that they can take their own initiative in learning. However, in my experience from the store, this is not encouraged at all. In my case even directly discouraged. I expressed to my sales manager many times that I wanted to learn and grow inside the company. And he directly said to me

I should not do that and focus on my own department. Of course this is a personal example and it can not represent the entire company. However when I asked around no one from the kitchen department (around 42 people) used my learning, except when directly told to. They just felt like they were too busy with their current job to do anything extra.

Another bottleneck is that you need your buddy or your manager to help you with certain parts, especially in the ‘An introduction to the IKEA culture’ training. Sometimes your buddy needs to hand out something to you before you can continue. Since the buddy system is not really in place this can be very discouraging to continue the training.

My learning is used more regularly at the office. Here a lot of people use it if they want to learn more about a specific topic.



Graph 5.01: ‘An introduction to the IKEA culture’ users

A Customer Relations Co-worker
B Furniture Builder
C HR Generalist
D Sales Co-worker
E Team Leader

5.4 The buddy

Every new employee is assigned a buddy from their own department. This buddy is meant to help you through the process of becoming a knowledgeable coworker. You can contact them for questions, they will introduce you to your colleagues and they will explain everything necessary to you. IKEA offers a 'buddy guide' per department to all buddies. Here they can read information on how to best support the new coworker.

My notes: The buddy is a great initiative. It is really nice to have someone who you can turn to if you are new to a big company. However, I do not think it is used to its full potential. I have also received two buddies myself. One for the kitchen sales department and one from the office. In both cases the buddy's take little initiative (this is not a critique on the buddy him/herself, but more to the task they were given). In the sales department I hardly ever saw my buddy. I had been working there for more than a week before I met her. This was due to the fact that we just did not have the same

working hours. When I saw her she was friendly and helpful, but it kind of defeated its purpose if she is just never there. The only thing I got from my buddy was answering questions when I wanted to, but I quickly learned that I could ask these to everyone. The coworkers in the sales department are very helpful towards each other, and after working there more than a year I still feel like I can go to anyone with questions. So that is a really good work culture, but it does mean that the buddy doesn't really add anything in that field. If you go to my learning (which will be covered in the next paragraph) a lot of the exercises say stuff like: "your buddy will provide you with the needed materials for this exercise" or "your buddy will ask you to do this or that". Meaning that according to the IKEA internal information, the buddy should have done way more than just answering questions.

The buddy could be an effective person to transfer the working culture, consciously or unconsciously.

5.6 Coworker Journey

In order to map the full process a coworker goes through when he/she starts working at IKEA I used a customer journey mapping technique. Two maps are made. The first one (that can be found on page 60) maps all the phases a coworker goes through and the corresponding contact point with IKEA. On the bottom two rows it can be seen when new coworker already receives information about the IKEA culture directly and indirectly. All the points that are still empty could be opportunities for an intervention.

The second one (that can be found on page 62) focuses more on coworker emotions and frustrations. I plotted the eagerness to learn at a certain point against the knowledge about the IKEA culture, in order to find intervention points.

5.5 Additional training

A lot of additional training is required for working at IKEA. Some of these are general, like the code of conduct training, or the evacuation training. And others are specific, like in my case the kitchen selling training. But these all are given once you started working at IKEA. For example this year all coworkers received a obligatory new online training about the new GDPR and a physical training about what to do in case of a terrorist attack. In this way you never stop learning, but I do not consider these to still be a part of my research as my scope would simply become too wide.

One last document I want to take into account is the BJK (basic job knowledge). This is a document that is given to new employees at the start of their job. In here are some assignments that you need to complete whenever you got the time. These are very practical, for example: learning where to return lost and found items, learning what different programmes are used inside IKEA ect. This could also be an opportunity to learn something about the company culture.

Starting at IKEA :

Coworker journey

Awareness

Consideration

Apply

Wants
a new
job

Drives
by an
IKEA
store

Browses
for jobs

Does
research
about
IKEA

Writes
letter
and cv

Manager

IKEA
Coworkers

IKEA
Store

IKEA
Online

IKEA
Documents

Direct
Culture and Key Values

Indirect
Culture and Key Values

*Asks for
experiences*

*Visits a
store*

*Visits a
store*

*Smart
Recruiters*

*Reads on
the website*

*Reads on
the website*



Has a job interview	Follows introduction training	Is showed around	Meets co-workers	Follows department specific training	Works at IKEA	Follows additional training
<i>Is interviewed</i>	<i>Meet another store manager</i>	<i>Tour done by manager</i>	<i>Is introduced by manager</i>	<i>Sometimes manager is present</i>	<i>Regular contact</i>	<i>Sometimes manager is present</i>
	<i>Training with coworkers</i>	<i>Tour done with coworkers</i>	<i>Meets direct coworkers</i>	<i>Training with coworkers</i>	<i>Working with coworkers</i>	<i>Training with coworkers</i>
<i>At the store</i>	<i>At the store</i>	<i>At the store</i>	<i>At the store</i>	<i>At the store</i>	<i>At the store</i>	<i>At the store</i>
				<i>My Learning</i>	<i>My Learning Teams Isell Ect.</i>	<i>My Learning</i>
	<i>COC house rules CAO Clothing</i>			<i>Training materials</i>		<i>Training materials</i>
<i>Values come up during interview?</i>					<i>Use value based decision making</i>	

Starting at IKEA :

Coworker journey

Introduction

First

Intro-
duction
training

Safety
and
rules
training

Re-
ceives
IKEA
clothing

Walk
around
the
store

Depart-
ment
shown
by ma-
nager

Motivation

*Getting to
know IKEA*

*Learning
how to be
safe*

*Becoming
part of IKEA*

*Getting to
know the
way*

*Getting to
know your
workplace*

Frustrations

*Not being
able to
document*

*Not being
able to
document*

*Not a
special
moment*

*To big, to
fast*

*Many
things to
remember*

Emotion

*Excitement
Curiosity*

*Concen-
trated*

*Excitement
Proud*

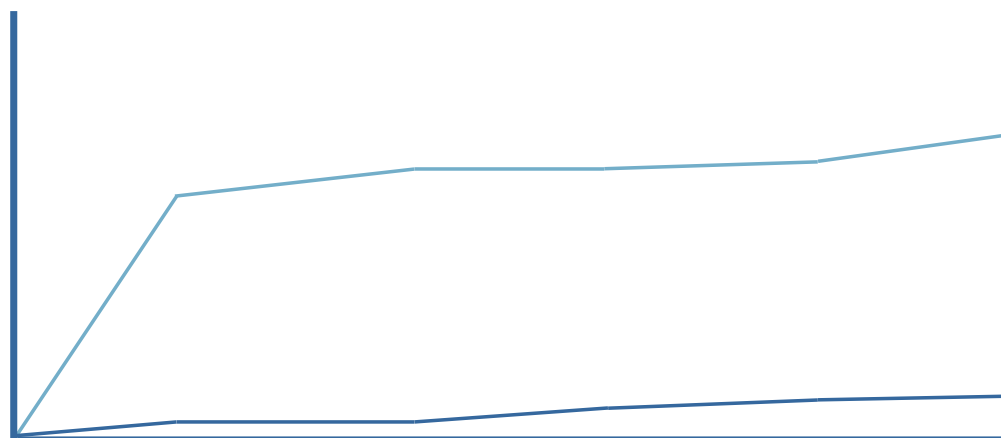
*Excitement
Insecure*

*Curiosity
Over-
whelming*

Eager to
learn

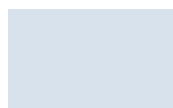
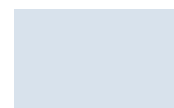
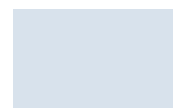
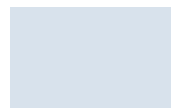
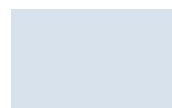
Knowledge
about Culture

More ->



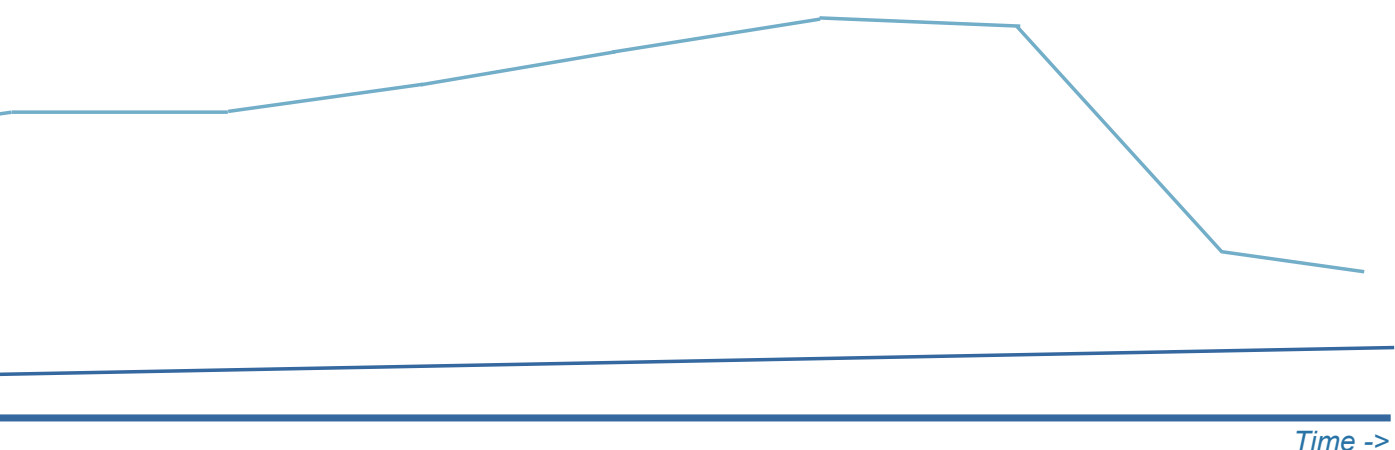
Direct
Culture and Key Values

Indirect
Culture and Key Values





Meets co-workers	First day	Follows department specific training	First 2 Weeks	First month	First year	Follows additional training
<i>Getting to know your colleagues</i>	<i>Make a good impression</i>	<i>Gathering more knowledge</i>	<i>Understanding the routines</i>	<i>Becoming fully integrated</i>	<i>Becoming loyal to IKEA</i>	<i>Gathering more knowledge</i>
<i>Many people to meet</i>	<i>Not being able to help</i>	<i>Not going fast enough</i>	<i>Not being able to help customers</i>	<i>Still being seen as new</i>	<i>Still wanting to grow</i>	<i>To easy or to difficult</i>
<i>Curiosity Overwhelming</i>	<i>Exitement Insecure</i>	<i>Exitement Boredom</i>	<i>More confident</i>	<i>Confident Proud</i>	<i>Confident Curiosity</i>	<i>Confident Curiosity</i>



				<i>Use value based decision</i>	<i>Use value based decision</i>	

Main Take-aways

5

In this chapter the process by which an IKEA coworker is introduced to his/her job is explained. Practical matters are discussed and the first thing employees receive is a document that has the **old IKEA values** in it. Only two of the ten values mentioned here are still current.

The introduction training is fun, but there is still a lot of room for improvement. First a facilitator explained about himself who he was and what he did. It was clear from his presentation that he was performing quite a high function, but there was no emphasis on his authority. The atmosphere remained personal and informal, which is a good representation of the IKEA culture.

However, the room in which the employees were received was cold and dark, which does not give the feeling of a warm welcome. The tour around the building was short and could really be improved by using this opportunity to transfer some of the IKEA culture by being in the workplace together with a guide.

Receiving the bag of clothing is already a strong indication of the IKEA culture, but it could be improved by adding something to the bag that could further enhance the culture awareness of the new coworkers. It was positive that

a security and safety expert came to talk to the new coworkers about how serious IKEA takes this subject and you could clearly see the values for the first time in this meeting during their video. Lastly, the **wall of managers** is something about which new coworkers are very positive. The sense of personality this gives makes the managers in the organisation very approachable. This is a very good visible example of adding something the IKEA way.

Nothing is done with teaching about the IKEA culture during this training. Not in an explicit nor in an implicit way. This could be a great moment for a first intervention.

You need your buddy to complete certain training on my learning (including the culture training). However, these buddy's do not hand you the required information. Creating an unnecessary hurdle for employees that are eager to learn.

There are many contact points between IKEA and new employees. They receive a lot of documents, training and other items. And none of these moments are used to enhance or educate about the IKEA culture. These are all opportunities for an intervention.

Chapter 6.

The current culture knowledge

In this chapter the knowledge about the IKEA culture among Delft coworkers before my intervention is measured. A questionnaire is held and the results are discussed. After that the results of several interviews with managers and top executives are described. Lastly a perceptual mapping technique is used to map IKEA's key values.

6.1 Coworker Questionnaire and Interviews

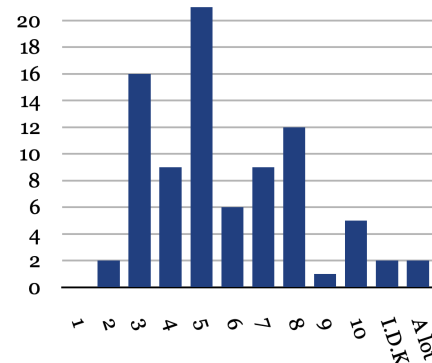
A questionnaire was created in both English and Dutch and distributed throughout the store employees at IKEA Delft. This questionnaire can be found in appendix 02. In the end it had 85 respondents. The questionnaire focuses on the current knowledge of the IKEA key values, whether these employees experiences a strong company culture or not and whether they think this matters. The result will now be discussed question per question.

How many key values do you think IKEA has?

Of the 85 respondents only 12 gave the correct answer. What stands out is that even more employees (21) thought that IKEA had only 5 key values.

This could be because it's more usual for a company to have a maximum of 5 key values than to have as many as eight. If you look at the companies that have been rated as 'having the best company culture' according to comparably (rated by anonymous employee feedback) the top 3 companies are: Costco, Google and T-Mobile (Comparably, 2019). All three of these companies have 5 key values, as can be seen in table 6.01.

NUMBER OF VALUES



Graph 6.01: How many key values do you think IKEA has?

	COSTCO	GOOGLE	T-MOBILE
1	Common goal of excellence	Openness	Customer delight drives our action
2	Positive attitude	Innovation	Go big - Stay scrappy
3	High energy and fast pace	Excellence that comes with smartness	Respect and integrity guide our behaviour
4	Service orientation	Hands-on approach	I am T-Mobile - Count on me
5	Teamwork	Small- company family rapport	Team together - Team apart

Table 6.01: Examples of other working cultures and their values

What are the IKEA key values?

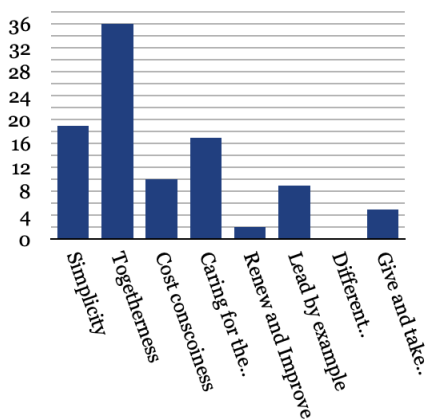
In graph 6.02 you can see how many times the actual key values were mentioned. For these results I also counted synonyms that described the same value as correct. For example I counted 'working together' as 'togetherness'. And 'sustainability' as 'caring for the people and planet'. As I believe it's more important that the employees know what the values are about than if they can name them correctly. It stands out immediately that 'togetherness' is the most well known value, as it is mentioned 36 times. 'Different with a meaning' is mentioned 0 times.

In graph 6.03 you can see the values that were incorrect, but that were mentioned more than once. Multiple employees mentioned IKEA's vision (design for the many people) as a key value.

How strongly do you experience an IKEA culture in your day to day work activities?

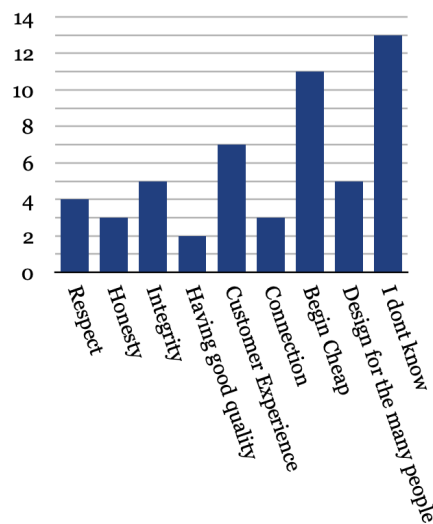
Participants were giving a scale from 1 till 7, 1 being not at all, 7 being very strong. You can see that this graph leans towards the right side, meaning more employees do experience an IKEA culture than don't.

ACTUAL VALUES



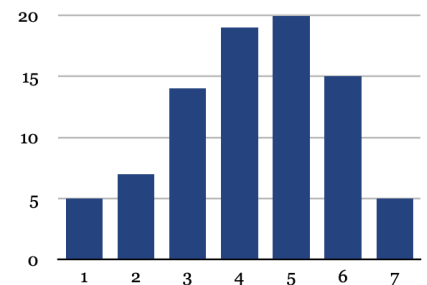
Graph 6.02: What are the IKEA Key values?
- real values

EXTRA VALUES



Graph 6.03: What are the IKEA Key values?
- other values

DAY TO DAY EXPERIENCE



Graph 6.04: How strongly do you experience an IKEA culture in your day to day work activities?

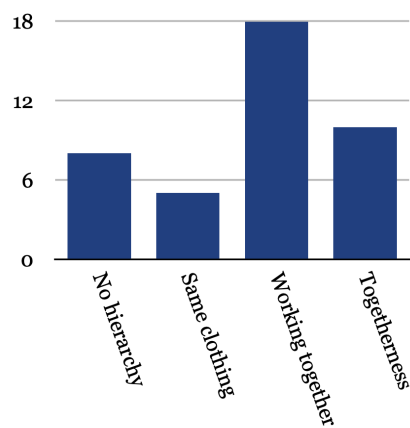
In what ways does this culture manifests itself?

In graph 6.05 you can see all the answers that were given more than once. In the tables 6.02 and 6.03 you can see some examples of other answers that stood out to me.

How often do you apply the IKEA culture in your day to day work activities?

Participants were giving a scale from 1 till 7 , 1 being never, 7 being in everything I do. You can see that graph 6.06 peaks in the middle with a slight lean towards the right side. Meaning that more coworkers don't use the culture than do.

EXAMPLES



Graph 6.05: In what ways does this culture manifests itself?

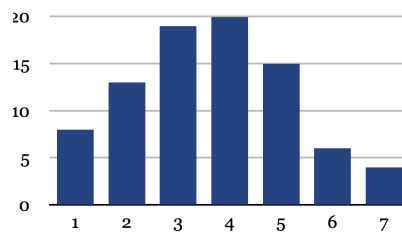
<i>Favouritism and nepotism</i>	<i>Having to fix your own problems</i>
<i>Getting nu help from higher up</i>	<i>To bureaucratic</i>

Table 6.02: Negative examples of the IKEA culture

<i>Helping each other</i>	<i>Being proud</i>
<i>Taking your own chances</i>	<i>Nice ambience</i>

Table 6.03: Positive examples of the IKEA culture

DAY TO DAY ACTIVITIES



Graph 6.06: How often do you apply the IKEA culture in your day to day work activities?

<i>Being honest (x3)</i>	<i>Being proud (x2)</i>
<i>The way I lead</i>	<i>I enjoy my work</i>
<i>Working together</i>	<i>Being collegial</i>
<i>How I treat people</i>	

Table 6.04: How do you apply the culture? (To your coworkers)

<i>Having an open attitude</i>	<i>Being friendly</i>
<i>Focussed on service</i>	<i>Being honest and telling customers to go elsewhere</i>
<i>Saying hello to everyone</i>	

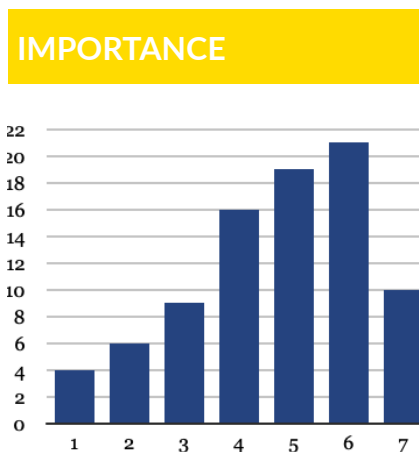
Table 6.05: How do you apply the culture? (To your colleagues)

<i>I don't feel any connection with IKEA</i>	<i>You are just a number in such a big organisation</i>
<i>The key values only make me feel frustrated</i>	
<i>Contact with customers</i>	<i>Creating a good IKEA experience</i>
<i>Way of working</i>	

Table 6.06: How do you apply the culture? (Negative answers)

Do you believe it is important to enhance this IKEA culture?

Participants were giving a scale from 1 till 7, 1 being not at all, 7 being very important. From this graph you can draw the conclusion that a lot of coworkers would like a stronger working culture.



Graph 6.07: Do you believe it is important to enhance this IKEA culture?

Quote from an sales coworker who has worked in the store for over 20 years:

"Ik heb vaak meegemaakt dat de mensen die hun mond vol hadden van de IKEA cultuur het minst begrepen wat die dan inhoud. Het is heel makkelijk om vanaf je kantoor dit te roepen, maar het verandert op het moment dat je op de werkvloer bezig bent met klanten en er moet ECHT hard gewerkt worden".

Translation:

"I have often experienced that the people who talk the most about the IKEA culture, understood the least what this culture actually means. It is very easy to tell us things from your office, but all of this changes when you are working in the store, talking to customers and actually have to work VERY hard. "

<i>I don't need it</i>	<i>It doesn't concern me</i>
<i>I already have enough to do (x4)</i>	<i>The employees don't need it, only the management cares</i>
<i>The people who create the culture don't experience it themselves</i>	<i>I can not influence it anyway (x6)</i>

Table 6.07: Is it important to enhance the culture? (Negative answers)

<i>It is worth to keep</i>	<i>Already strong enough (x3)</i>
<i>To keep everyone at the same level</i>	<i>It is the base of ikea</i>
<i>It creates a nice working atmosphere (x2)</i>	<i>Better customer experience</i>
<i>Without togetherness we are nothing (x3)</i>	<i>It's the core of ikea</i>
<i>We can create more efficiency</i>	

Table 6.08: Is it important to enhance the culture? (Positive answers)

<i>Teaching us how to treat each other</i>	<i>Getting to know each other better</i>
<i>Show us more about the IKEA foundation</i>	<i>Making job swabs obligatory for everyone! For a couple of months.</i>
<i>Show us direct in-store examples per value</i>	<i>Key value workshops</i>
<i>Make the difference between store and office smaller</i>	<i>More connection between departments</i>

Table 6.09: Examples of how to enhance the culture

6.2 Interviews with sales managers

One of the coworkers I spoke to was Dave Pomp, manager of the Kitchen department. On figure 6.01 you can see that he blends in with his team without showing hierarchy, following the values of togetherness. On figure 6.02 you can see him painting the walls of the kitchen department, even though this is not in his work description, following the values of leading by example and taking your own responsibility.



(Left) Figure 6.01: A manager showing togetherness.



(Right) Figure 6.02: A manager leading by example



The sales coworkers are at the bottom of the corporate hierarchy. They get a lot of influence from their managers. These managers can, for example, decide to assign a certain training to the coworkers or give them additional tasks next to their normal selling activities. The manager could play an important role in enhancing the culture, both implicitly as explicitly. They could reward the coworkers implicitly when they show a good example of the company culture or they could directly assign culture trainings.

That is why I talked to two sales managers at IKEA Delft formally, these interview transcripts can be found in appendix 03, and to some more sales managers informally at the store.

The most important conclusions from all of the manager interviews were:

- When you become a sales manager or team leader you have had a lot of IKEA experience and training. At least is some of these trainings the IKEA culture and values came up. So in general managers do have knowledge about the subject.
- Managers do consider it part of their responsibility to teach their coworkers about the IKEA culture. Usually not literally, but by explaining what they do and why they do it.
- They do believe enhancing the culture is important, because then they have to explain less and the coworkers will get a sense of belonging.
- If they were given extra time to assign training to their coworkers, this time would go to training that is already waiting.

Training about daily activities and department specific selling information for example.

- The IKEA culture, and especially the key values help the managers in the decision making process. Some that have been working there for over 20 years say that it even goes automatically.

- They do not believe directly rewarding the coworker for showing off the IKEA values is a good idea. They do believe however, that if they see a coworker using them, their overall work review would be more positive.

- They believe the managers have a better understanding of the culture than coworkers, but also believe both managers as co workers should enhance their knowledge.

- They do know that there are some forms of culture training, but have never looked at them. They also do not really know where to find them.

- When selecting a training to give to their team, the most important thing is the direct practical value that it brings to the everyday work of the department.

6.3 Interviews with IKEA culture experts

One of the reasons I travelled to Sweden was to be able to speak to some of the people who designed the IKEA culture. One of these people is Olov Hedlin, jokingly referred to by his colleagues as the 'culture god'.

He has flown all around the world for years, listening to coworker stories from all across IKEA, in order to map the IKEA culture. All the way from Seattle to Moscow to Beijing, and from the oldest pioneers to the youngest recruits. In China he worked hand in hand with Jesper Brodin, IKEA's CEO, strengthening the IKEA culture in Asia, starting with

India, Vietnam, and China. After that, six years ago, he was asked to come work with IKEA culture worldwide.

He is now continually trying to strengthen the understanding on why we behave the way we behave, and improving the knowledge of the cultural values, that is then fed in to training and learning solutions and different initiatives.

The full interview transcript can be found in appendix 04. The most important notes I took from this interview were:



Biggest problems:

- Key values are better understandable if you have a lot of contact with customers. If you think up the culture in your office, you are too far away from the real deal.
- More and more coworkers start feeling insignificant in such a fast-growing company.
- Because IKEA is growing so fast to be so big, hierarchy keeps increasing more and more. Which is not in line with our culture.
Because IKEA is growing so fast to be so big, hierarchy keeps increasing more and more. Which is not in line with our culture.
- Managers do not feel responsible for the IKEA culture anymore. They want a specialist to come in and do it.

"Ten / fifteen years ago, leaders and managers felt it was their responsibility and they felt competent to facilitate culture values themselves. It is not up to a specialist or a special group or anything, it is up to me as a manager. And I can increasingly see that managers are asking for help, asking for a specialist to step in. I don't know if it is that they don't feel equally competent today or if it's that they don't have the time or that there are other priorities. But they ask for help. We try to solve it by developing learning solutions that

often should be self-facilitative. But I understand that there are difficulties reaching out with these learning solutions. They are not used to that same extent as they were meant. The amount of requests to come in for us to facilitate is very high".

- The current training doesn't work because it is built on buddy thinking, but most IKEA's don't have a functioning buddy system in place.
- A big issue is that the cultural values are not tangible and are hidden from plain sights. It's not really about what we do, it's more about how we do things. And how we do things can be done in so many different ways, so it's tricky to grab.

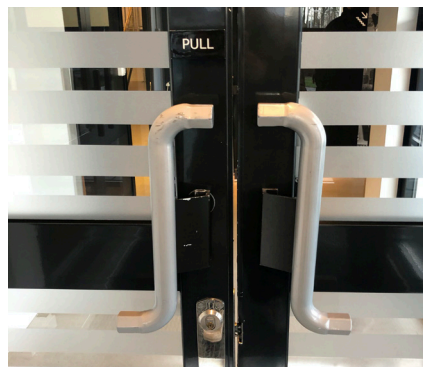


Figure 6.03: Allan Key (one of IKEA's cultural symbols) as doorhandles at one of Olov's offices.

Guidelines:

- To avoid becoming a sect, (where you allow tendency for manipulation, where people start doing things that they wouldn't normally do, unless they were strongly influenced) you should listen and document and use the many stories of the many coworkers, and let the stories be the fuel for cultivating a culture bottom up.
- Many IKEA coworkers are frustrated. Coworkers are expected to be really brilliant on values, but have to operate in a world that's not. So their work environment should reflect these values.
- Co Workers should have at least a little factual knowledge about the values.

Our way of thinking, our way of talking and our way of doing are interconnected. The most important is actually that you do the values, but thinking and talking about them can be inspiring. If we as humans don't have a word for something, we can feel it. As soon as we can put a word on it, it becomes more real and it has a greater probability to show up in our behaviours and decisions.

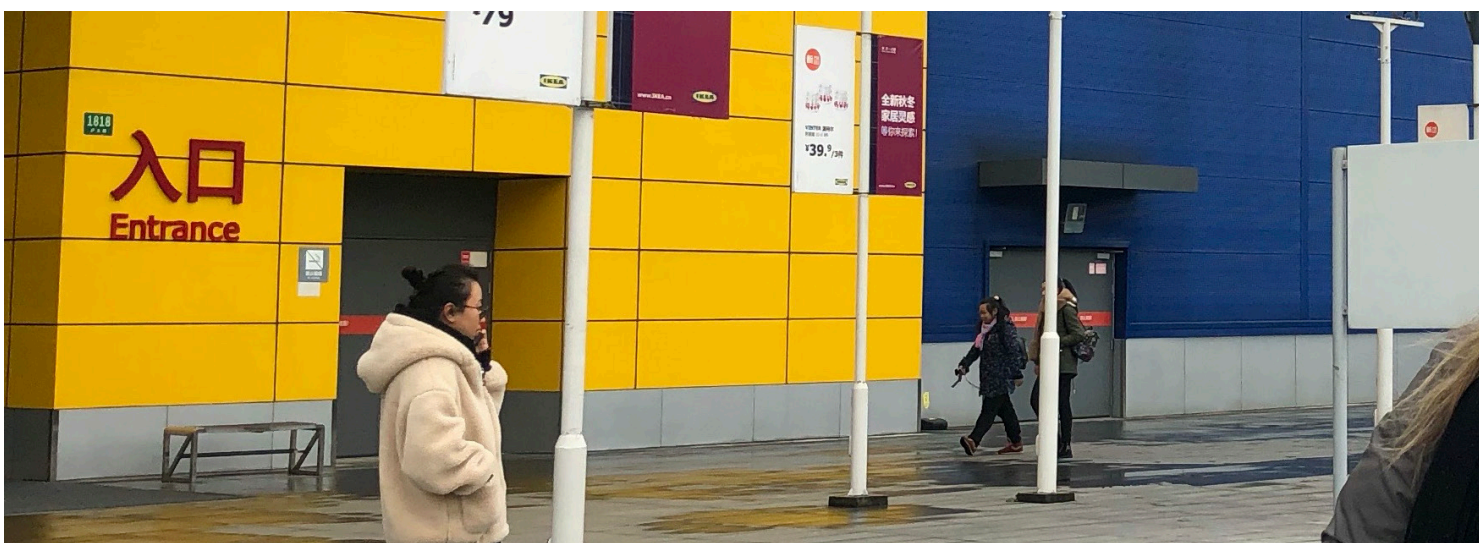


Figure 6.04: Me at IKEA Shanghai

Eyeopeners:

- Cultural differences with employees in Asia are not as big as you might think. People that are recruited at IKEA are not very typical. They come work at IKEA because they want something different. They have the courage to raise their voice and to share their ideas.

That is why we should not expand to quickly in asian countries, because we want to stay selective in our recruitment.

- Opinions to if culture should become a mandatory are divided, around 50/50. Fifty percent said: *"Yeah, it probably must be mandatory if we are to secure the survival of the IKEA culture."* We should come to the point where managers are measured.

Another fifty percent said: *"You can't measure culture."* We should avoid becoming a religion or a sect. A culture has to be voluntary. We should instead focus on recruiting coworkers who like to work with us and who help us strengthen the IKEA culture.

- IKEA is recruiting one new colleague every seven seconds.
- There are currently five generations working together in IKEA, which often comes up in the digital versus printed paper debate, when designing a training.



Figure 6.05: In 2019 IKEA has spend more than 1.2 billion on growth in China



6.4 Perceptual mapping

After talking with so many people about the IKEA values so much, I wanted to visualise this knowledge. Making use of a perceptual mapping technique these values are plotted on a map as can be seen in figure 6.06.

This tool can serve as a form of inspiration during the designing process. As the values that are in the right upper quadrant can currently be seen as most present and most well lived. While the values in the lower left quadrant are more abstract and hidden.

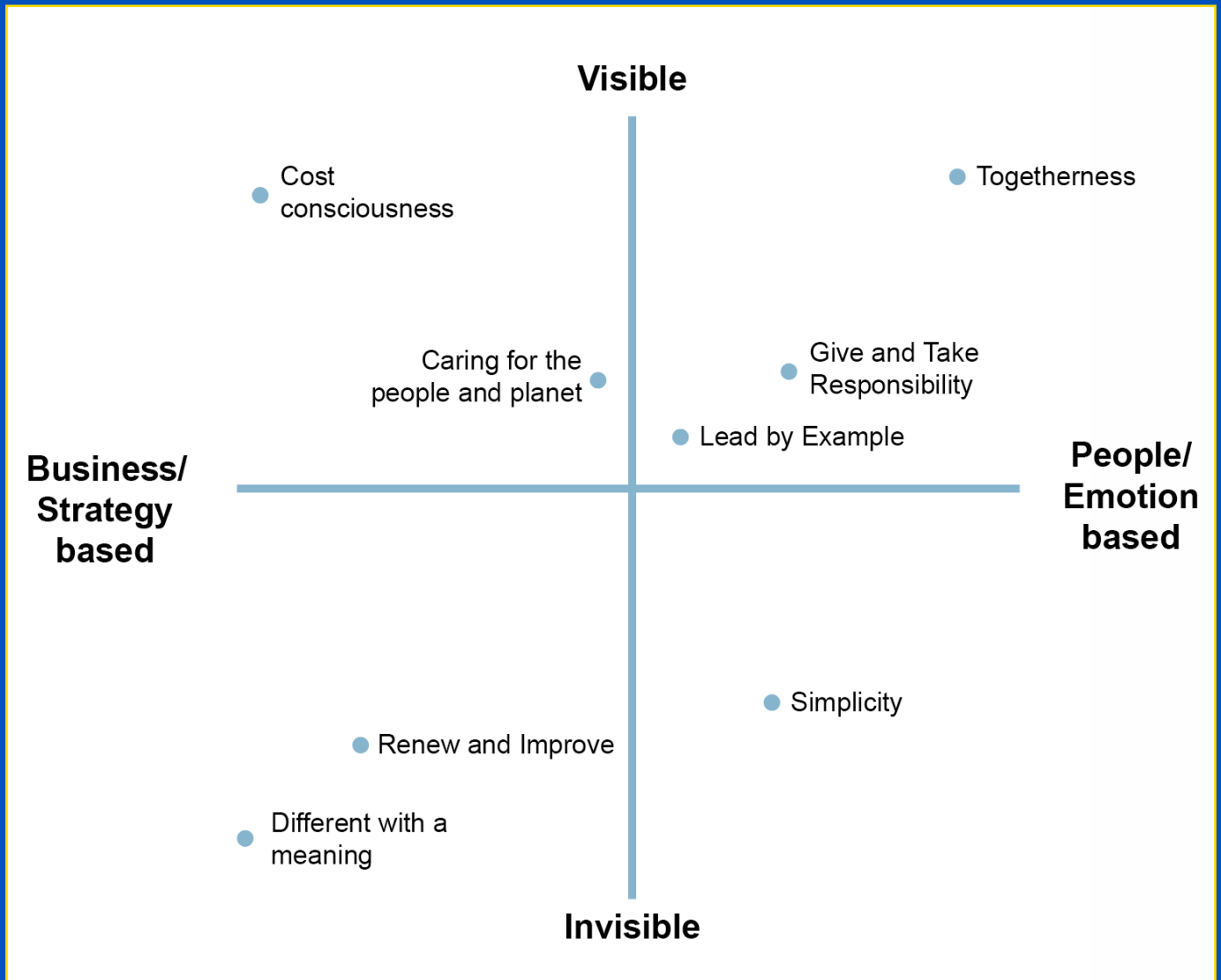


Figure 6.06: A perceptual map of the key values

Main Take-aways

6

When looking at the **literal knowledge** of the IKEA culture, you could say that **the results were not very good**. Only 12 out of the 85 participants could say how many key values IKEA has, for example. Out of the 283 answers given to name some of these values, only 80 answers were correct (including synonyms like 'sustainability' instead of 'caring for the people and planet'). All respondents work at IKEA Delft, the world wide reference store. Meaning everything that happens in this store should be above average. Results from other franchise stores can therefore be expected to score even lower.

However, most employees **do experience an IKEA culture** in their day to day activities and also apply this culture themselves. **So they do feel it, but they can not name it.**

One thing that is very clear is that the value of **togetherness** means the most to the employees. It shows up in answers to every question. It is the most mentioned value and when asked what exactly employees experience as the IKEA culture, almost all the answers were related to togetherness (working together, helping each other). Again when asking why this culture is important togetherness shows up ('without it we are nothing').

No one has any relation with values as 'renew and improve' or 'different with a meaning', as I already expected in chapter 3: the IKEA culture. Only two respondents listed 'renew and improve'

and zero respondents listed 'different with a meaning'.

It was found that managers are often knowledgeable about the culture and see the value in enhancing the culture among colleagues. When given extra time for trainings, this time would be allocated to training about daily activities and department specific training. **It is important to managers that a training has a direct practical value.**

The biggest negative aspect of the IKEA culture that was prominent in the results was the **gap between 'the office' and 'the store'**. Employees feel like they are on their own and should not expect help from 'above'. They don't think they can influence the culture themselves as they are just a little part of a big organisation, and they already have enough to do. They also think that the people from 'the office' who create the culture, do not actually know what goes on in the store, culture wise.

Another big problem is that **managers do not feel responsible** for the IKEA culture any more. They want a specialist to come in and do it.

Olov Hedlin also confirms that **designing bottom up** is the only way of preventing becoming a cult. He also stated that it is important that the **solution also represents the values itself**, and that coworkers should have at least a **little literal knowledge** of the IKEA culture.

Chapter 7.

The target group

In this chapter the target group of this project is defined. First the choice of target group is explained and the target group is described in more detail. Later, a set of persona's is shown to serve as a design tool.

7.1 IKEA Delft Coworkers

After talking to so many people throughout the IKEA organisation, it became clear to me that the lower in the IKEA hierarchy, the less knowledge about the culture and values was present. Taking into account all the conclusions from the above chapters I therefore have decided to focus on the bottom end of the hierarchy: the sales employees. As the knowledge here is at its lowest, my design can have the biggest impact. Most of the times this is the direct contact point between IKEA and the customer

and I therefore believe that this is the best way to enhance IKEA as a brand.

Because I have used the IKEA Delft coworkers as a test sample so far, this will also be my target group. But everything I design should be scalable to all other IKEA stores in the Netherlands.

At the IKEA Delft store there are currently working 214 sales coworkers. These coworkers can be divided into two groups. The full time coworkers and the so called KOZA's. KOZA stands for: 'koopavonden, zaterdag en zondagen', which translates to shopping evenings, Saturdays and Sundays. This group of coworkers works around 12 hours a week and usually consist of students. The full time coworkers work up to 40 hours a week and consist of a large group of ages, gender and ethnicities.

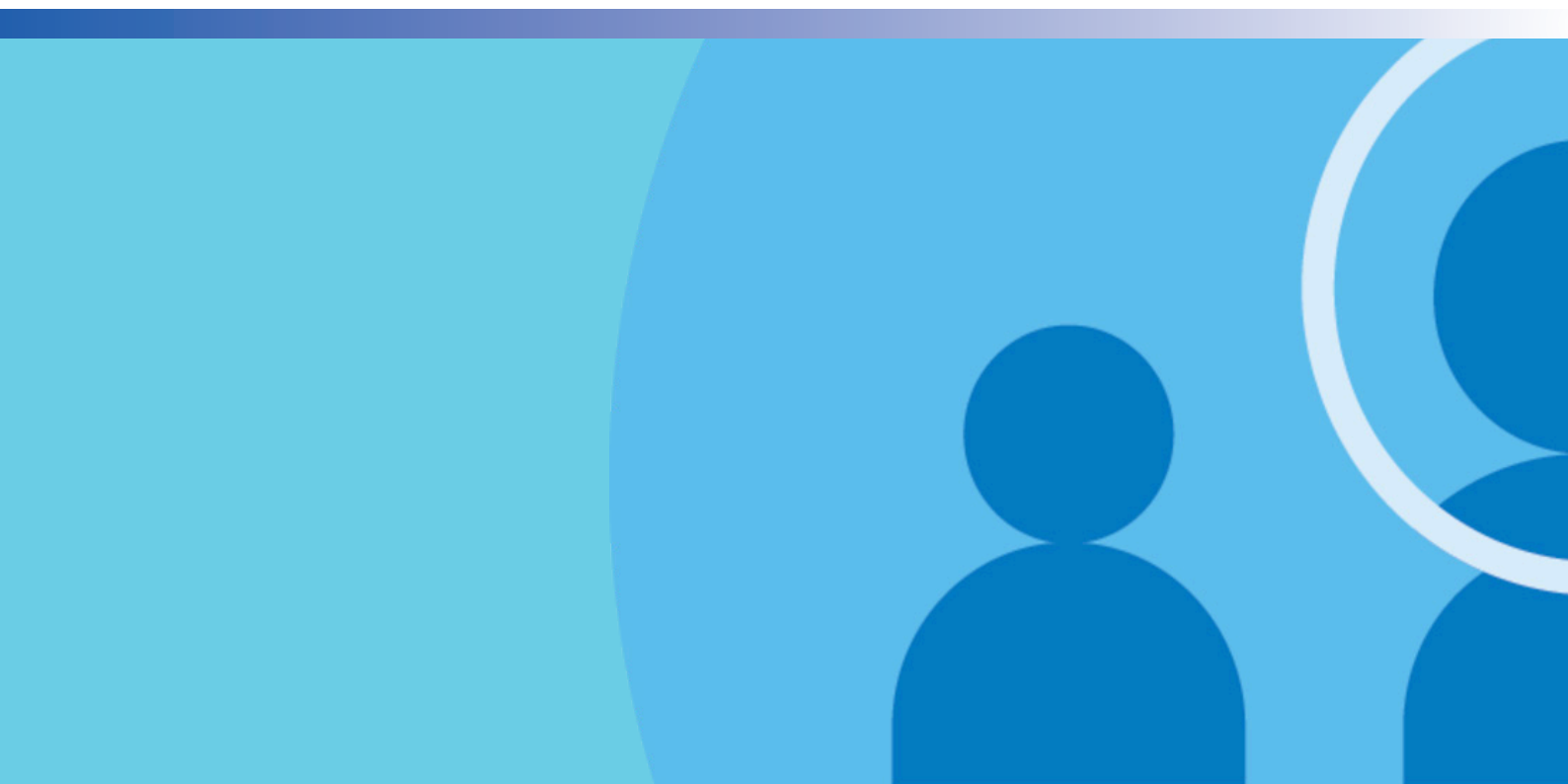


Figure 7.01: Target group (Aalto, 2019)

7.2 Persona's

As a new coworker can be seen as a blank page and is still very eager to learn, this will be my direct target group. But just because new IKEA Delft sales coworkers will be my end users, does not mean they are my only target group. The intention is that this new coworker will also set an example for and influence the coworkers surrounding him.

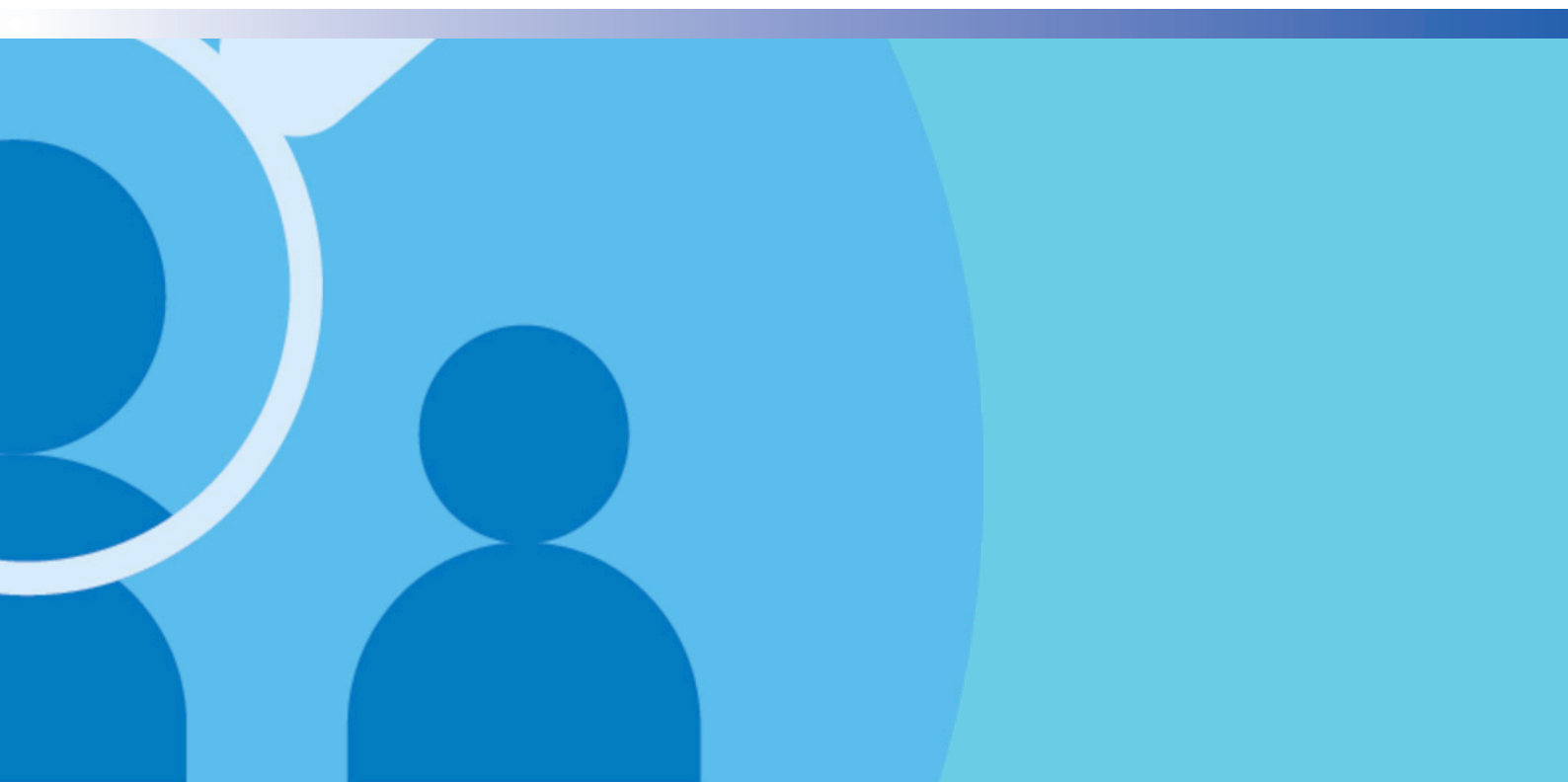
Another target group that I need to keep in mind are the sales managers and team leaders. As mentioned before and also grounded in the literature in chapter 1, if I want to change something for the sales coworkers, I can not leave their manager out of the equation. This manager also needs to see the benefits to my solution, or it will not be successfully implemented. He needs to 'lead by example' and inspire and truly believe in my solution, and should therefore not be forgotten when designing.

In order to understand the users' needs, experiences, behaviours and goals and to make sure I do not forget any members of my target group, a set of personas was created, based on the research in the previous chapters. Four different user types are identified and can be found on the next eight pages.

- 1) A new coworker
- 2) A coworker with 5 years of experience
- 3) A coworker with 20 years of experience
- 4) A sales manager

The general goals, motivations, frustrations and needs are discussed for each persona, as well as their motivations, needs and frustrations in direct relation to the IKEA culture.

Disclaimer: the images of the people on the next pages are IKEA stock images and their names are made up.



Lisa

Sales Coworker

“ I have to work quite hard, but I have fun with my colleagues and I am proud to be a part of IKEA. ”



ABOUT

👤 Age 25-35

€ 1800 p/m

📅 Worked here for 5 years

💕 Married

PERSONALITY

Empathic
Friendly
Helpful
Humorous
Impulsive

GOALS

A happy work environment
Happy customers
To always keep learning
To share knowledge

FRUSTRATIONS

Not enough time to complete tasks
No time for own initiative
Not being heard

MOTIVATION

Being happy to go to work
Knowing her colleagues
Having customer contact

CORE NEEDS

Efficient working infrastructure
Well functioning technology
Personal contact with colleagues and manager

CORE NEEDS TO ADOPT THE IKEA CULTURE

Recognition from her manager
Seeing her studying pays off
Feeling supported
A clear path to follow

CULTURAL MOTIVATION

Lisa wants to have a good relationship with her colleagues. She wants to be able to help them. She started working here because she is a fan of the brand, so she is very proud of being a part of IKEA. She would love to know more about the culture and to be able to use the values in her everyday actions, because she would like to grow to a higher position.

CULTURAL FRUSTRATIONS

However, every time she tries to learn something, other things get in the way. On the workfloor there is never time, and if she studies from home she will not get paid for it. She also does not know where to start. Here manager tells her to focus on more important things and does not track her My Learning.

“

I would like to know how to do more things the IKEA way, because I want to feel more secure about the decisions I have to make.

”

Nick

New Sales Coworker

“ I have always wanted to work for IKEA. I love the brand and can't wait to find out what happens behind the scenes. ”



ABOUT

👤 Age 20-30

€ 1650 p/m

📅 Just started working at IKEA

💕 Single

PERSONALITY

Cheerfull
Curious
Insecure
Humorisitc
Impulsive

GOALS

Climbing the sales ladder
Becoming an IKEA expert
Get confident at daily tasks

FRUSTRATIONS

A lot of new people to meet
Training not going fast enough
Lack of responsibilities

MOTIVATION

Being able to help people
Looking for a new challenge
Wanting opportunities to grow
Getting to know IKEA

CORE NEEDS

Regular feedback
Own responsibilities
Being treated with respect

CORE NEEDS TO ADOPT THE IKEA CULTURE

A clear path to follow
Someone motivating him and pointing him in the right direction
Facilitation
Time

CULTURAL MOTIVATION

Nick is just starting at IKEA and is ready to learn a lot. He is very eager to learn and curious and takes in as much as he can. He is given training materials and finishes them quickly. He really wants to fit in with the rest of the group as soon as he can. He wants to learn about the culture so he can understand how the co workers treat each other and how to make decisions that will make IKEA happy.

CULTURAL FRUSTRATIONS

As a new coworkers he has to learn a lot. He is even dreaming about all the new information every night. He has to know everything about the products he is selling as quickly as possible. That seems the most important right now. Everything thing that he has to learn on top of that, comes in second place.

“

I want to fit in with the group and no longer be ‘the new one’, understanding the IKEA culture will help me to speed up this process.

”

Shirley

Sales Manager

“*I am proud of my role as a manager. I feel close to my team and always try to do what is best for IKEA.*”



ABOUT

👤 Age 40-45

€ 3200 p/m

📅 Worked here for 15 years

💕 Married with children

PERSONALITY

Enthusiastic

Motivated

Confident

Bold

Persistent

GOALS

Creating more profit

Being open and approachable

Being a manager and coworker at the same time

Being a good example

FRUSTRATIONS

Not enough time to achieve goals

Having to hand over tasks

Unmotivated coworkers

Contradictory goals

MOTIVATION

Motivating people

Getting satisfaction

Improving the sales numbers

Being around people

CORE NEEDS

A lot of freedom

Appreciation from his managers

Honest coworkers

An informal atmosphere

CORE NEEDS TO ADOPT THE IKEA CULTURE

Direct Benefits

It should not take any extra time

It should be quick and easy to understand

It needs to be appreciated by his management

CULTURAL MOTIVATION

As a manager Shirley already has a lot of knowledge about the IKEA culture. She has followed training where the subject came up and has seen many examples first hand. The most important benefit of this culture is being able to explain to her team why we do things the way we do them. That is the way to get coworkers motivated. She would like the coworkers to have this knowledge themselves so she would not have to explain it anymore.

CULTURAL FRUSTRATIONS

However there is never enough time. She just gets rewarded when the sales number improve and there is so much more to worry about. There is a lot of training still waiting to be done to improve product knowledge under his employees, and even for that he can not find the time. So whenever she has some extra hours she has to give software update training or other obligatory subjects. The benefits are just not big enough that they are worth the time. Also, the culture seems to be getting more complicated every year. It's hard to keep up with all the different material that is posted about it online.

“

The most important thing is being able to tell coworkers the ‘why’ behind our decisions. If they would know about that themselves it would save me a lot of time.

”

Patrick

Experienced Sales Coworker

“My coworkers are my family. I will stay at IKEA until my retirement.”

”



ABOUT

👤 Age 45-50

€ 2400 p/m

📅 Worked here for 20 years

❤️ Married with children

PERSONALITY

Empathic
Friendly
Helpful
Humoristic
Impulsive

GOALS

A happy work environment
Happy customers
To always keep learning
To share knowledge

FRUSTRATIONS

Things that keep changing
New IT solutions
Colleagues not taking the rules serious enough
Having to solve everybody's problems

MOTIVATION

Being an expert on her job
Teaching new coworkers
Having a department family
Being loyal to an employer

CORE NEEDS

Personal contact with manager
Feeling appreciated and respected

CORE NEEDS TO ADOPT THE IKEA CULTURE

Having a clear benefit
Matching to what she already knows
It needs to give extra meaning to the work she is already doing
It should not cost her a lot of extra time

CULTURAL MOTIVATION

Patrick knows IKEA though and through. He fell in love with the working atmosphere and never left. He knows all there is to know about her department and is the go to person for questions from all his colleagues. He feels like he is already quite familiar with the the IKEa culture, but does not know the theory behind it. He is always interested to learn more about 'the why' of IKEA.

CULTURAL FRUSTRATIONS

Patrick feels like he already know a lot. Its is hard to keep up to date with all the software updates when everybody always expects you to have all the answers. He would like to live the culture and adhere to the concept of simplicity, but all the work-arounds in his job contradict that.

“

I feel like I have already experienced the IKEA culture for such a long time. But I would like to know more about the theory behind it.

”

Main Take-aways



My solution can have the biggest impact on **sales employees**, because they are in direct contact with customers and their knowledge is insufficient. The primary focus will be on **new coworkers**, who will be most likely to take over the values as they do not have a lot of preconceived notions about the business yet. An additional benefit is that by exhibiting culturally consistent behaviours, this group of new coworkers will influence other colleagues as well.

In my solution it is also important to include **sales managers and team leaders**. It was found that their knowledge of the cultural values was higher than among the general staff, but their support is needed for a successful implementation of the design. They will need to see the benefits for themselves and use the design to lead by example.

Lastly, a set of **persona's** is designed that will serve as a design tool further in the process.

Chapter 8.

List of requirements

In this chapter the list of requirements and wishes is defined. The requirements are divided into categories and they are written with all the previous chapters in mind.

1. Performance

R 1.1 The solution should (partly) solve the stated problem in the problem definition

R 1.2 The solution should be usable by all sales IKEA Delft employees and their team leaders/ manager

W 1.1 The solution should be designed, using a bottom up perspective as much as possible. Using the sales employees as experts.

2. Use

R 2.1 The solution should have a clear benefit for the IKEA sales department

R 2.2 All the aspects needed for the solution to succeed need to be facilitated

R 2.3 The solution needs to be approved by a sales manager

R 2.4 The goal of the solution should be clear to the users

W 2.1 Experiencing the solution should be described as 'easy and fun' as much as possible

W 2.2 Experiencing the solution should feel 'caring and purposeful'

3. Environment

W 3.1 the solution should be designed as environmentally friendly as possible.

W 3.2 The solution should be build using materials from renewed sources as much as possible

4. Life in Service

R 4.1 The solution should be designed for multiple uses

5. Maintenance

R 5.1 When maintenance is necessary, the solution should be able to be partly replaced in-house

6. Target product cost

R 6.1 The solution should have no cost of use

W 6.1 The solution should keep its manufacturing costs as low as possible

7. Quantity

R 7.1 Enough solutions need to be able to be produced to effect all IKEA Delft coworkers

R 7.2 The solution should be scalable to other IKEA stores in the Netherlands

W7.1 The solution should be as scalable as possible to all IKEA stores worldwide

8. Production facilities

R 8.1 If the users have to produce the solution themselves, the solution should be able to be produced within an IKEA store

W 8.1 Production should be kept as simple as possible

9. Aesthetics

R 9.1 The solutions appearance should be in line with the IKEA tone of voice

10. Materials

R 10.1 No single-use plastic can be used in the solution

R 10.2 The materials used can not be harmful to the users in any way

11. Ergonomics

R 11.1 Within a one time use, the solution can not be harmful to the users in any way.

W 11.1 The solution should be as ergonomically comfortable to use as possible

12. Storage

R 12.1 If the solution is bigger than 1 cubic meter, the user should be able to disassemble it for storage.

R 12.2 Storage should be taking into account when designing, only making parts bigger when this has a functional benefit.

13. Safety

R 13.1 The user instructions should be understandable and clear.

14. Installation

R 14.1 Any sales employee should be able to instal the solution

W 14.1 Installation time should be kept as short as possible.

Chapter 9.

Problem statement and design goal

This chapter begins with showing the problem statement that was created as a result of all the research up to this point. After that a little bit more detail is given to enlighten that statement. This chapter ends with a formed design goal.

9.1 The problem statement

Who

The IKEA sales employees and their direct managers

Where

IKEA Delft, as a starting point. This can later be used as reference for other IKEA stores.

What

- Do not identify with the IKEA culture
- Do not have enough knowledge of the IKEA key values
- Do not use the key values in their everyday decision making
- Do not have an incentive to deepen their knowledge on culture and key values
- Do not have the time to deepen their knowledge

When

- At the introduction meeting
- In the first weeks of worker as a sales employee
- In their everyday work

Why

- IKEA offers no direct reward for behaving that way
- Sales employees have no direct benefit to using the key values
- Sales employees don't have the time to use the key values or to learn about them
- Not a lot of the current solutions are designed bottom up

Why is it a problem

Having all the coworkers live the IKEA culture strengthens the brand and enlarges the chance of financial success



PROBLEM STATEMENT

The IKEA sales employees and their direct managers do not have an incentive nor the time to deepen their knowledge about the IKEA culture and its values, therefore do not identify with it and do not use it in their every workday actions. This is bad for the IKEA brand and reduces the chances of company success.

9.2 Design Goal

I want (main actors)

IKEA delft sales employees and their managers

To (experience you want to achieve)

use the IKEA culture and key values in their every workday actions and decision making

Because (reason(s) why this experience is relevant for your actors in the context)

- A strong company culture enhances the company's chance to success

- It will create a stronger IKEA brand across the globe

- It can make the decision making process for employees quicker and easier and can make the employees feel more secure about those decisions.

By (How will this be achieved)

Letting new IKEA sales coworkers experience a strategic intervention in the first weeks at work, that feels caring and purposeful and teaches them about the IKEA culture and the value of values in an easy and fun way.

How (how will I achieve this)

Co - creating a strategic intervention with and for the sales employees.

Main Take-aways

8+9

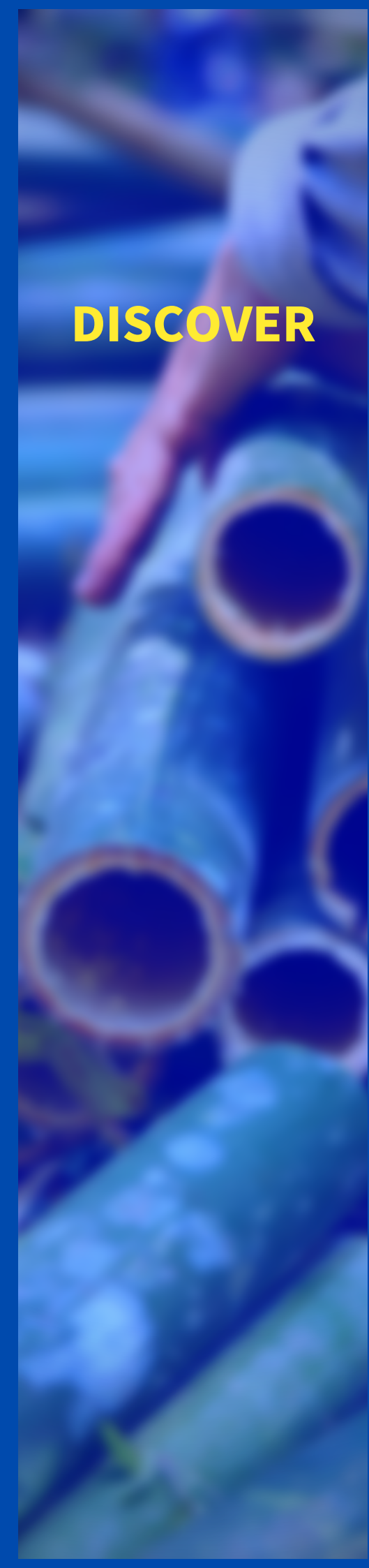
A **list of requirements and wishes** for the final intervention is made with regards to performance, use, environment, life in service, maintenance, target product cost, quantity, production facilities, aesthetics, materials, ergonomics, storage, safety and installation. The list is created based on all the chapters that preceded it.

These chapters also led to the following problem statement: **The IKEA sales employees and their direct managers do not have an incentive nor the time to deepen their knowledge about the IKEA culture and its values, therefore do not identify with it and do not use it in their every workday actions. This is bad for the IKEA brand and reduces the chances of company success.**

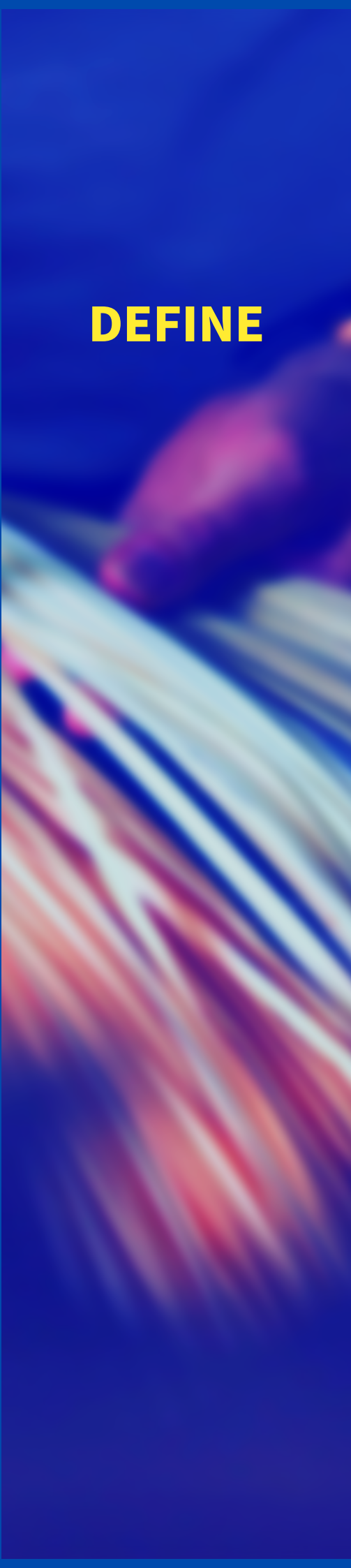
And to solve this stated problem a design goal is formulated :

I want IKEA Delft sales employees and their managers *to* use the IKEA culture and key values in their every workday actions and decision making, *because* (1) a strong company culture enhances the company's chance to success, (2) it will create a stronger IKEA brand across the globe and (3) it can make the decision making process for employees quicker and easier and can make the employees feel more secure about those decisions, *by* letting new IKEA sales coworkers experience a strategic intervention in the first weeks at work, that feels caring and purposeful and teaches them about the IKEA culture and the value of values in an easy and fun way.

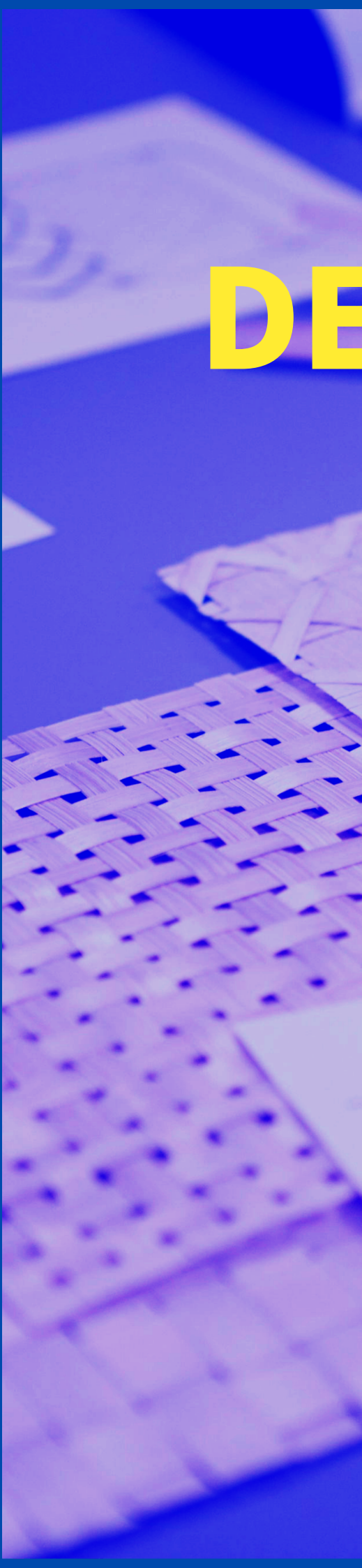
This goal will be achieved by co-creating a strategic intervention with and for the sales employees.

A close-up photograph of a hand pointing towards a stack of bamboo poles. The poles are light brown and have a hollow, circular cross-section. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the same material.

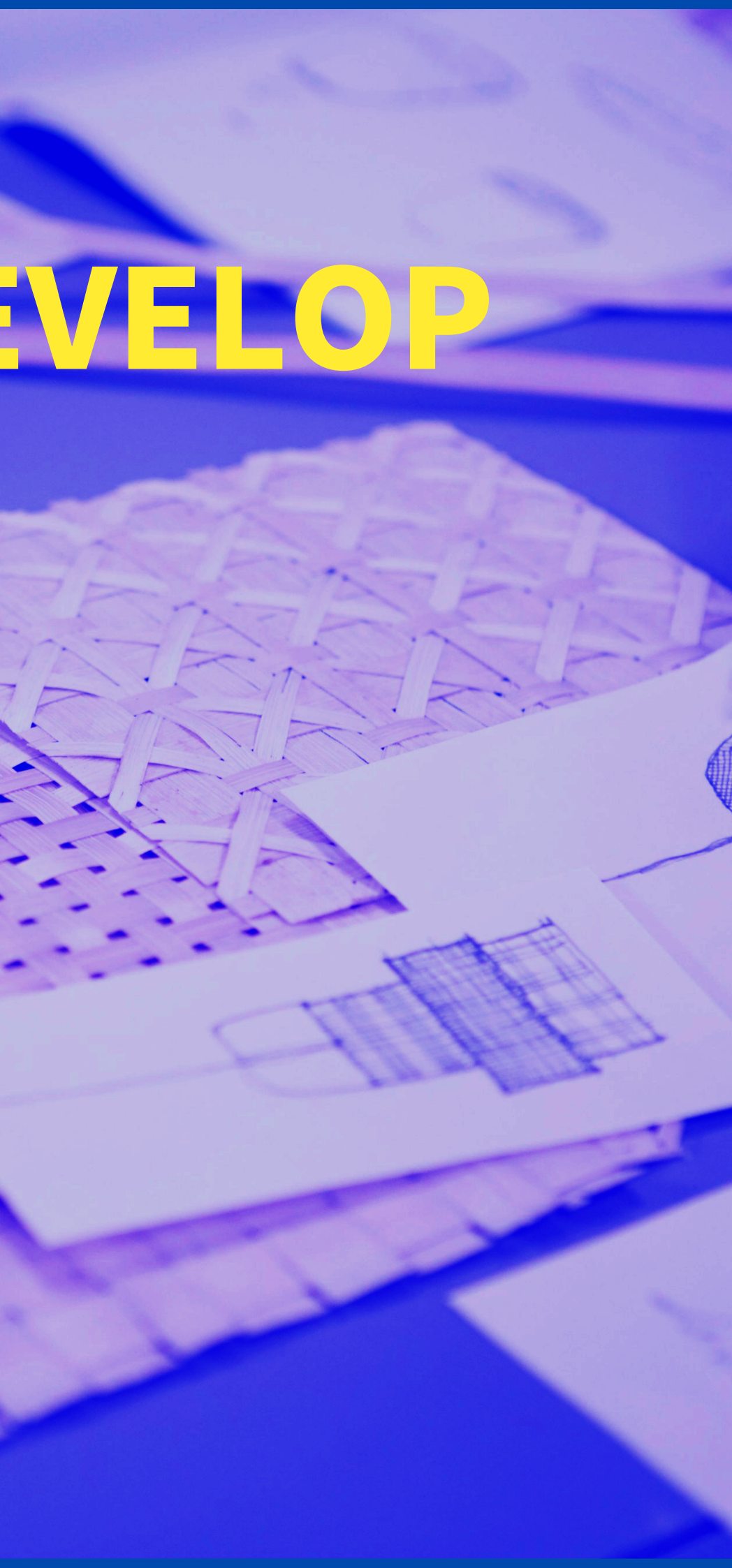
DISCOVER

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a bundle of bamboo poles. The poles are light brown and have a hollow, circular cross-section. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the same material.

DEFINE

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a bundle of bamboo poles. The poles are light brown and have a hollow, circular cross-section. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the same material.

DE



DEVELOP



DELIVER

Chapter 10.

Preparing for co-creation

In this chapter I perform a literature review, regarding the topic of co-creation. Potential successful outcomes and important principles to enhance the chances of those successful outcomes are explained and discussed.



Figure 10.01: Co-creation (KCS, 2020)

10.1 Co-creation as a design method

Co-creation is a design method that is aimed at including the end-user of a design as a co-designer (Voorberg, Bekkers and Tummers, 2015). As such, co-creation happens in the joint sphere between the end-user and the provider of a product or service (Grönroos, 2011). Potential outcomes of the successful application of co-creation methods are:

- More involvement from stakeholders (Voorberg et al., 2015)
- Increased effectiveness of solutions (Hoyer, Chandy, Dorotic,

Krafft and Singh, 2010) (Voorberg et al., 2015)

- Larger degree of end-user satisfaction and loyalty (Voorberg et al., 2015)

Co-creation will enable important stakeholders to unleash their innovative ideas, which will help transform their personal experience as well as the organization (Akhilesh, 2017). Consequently, the end-user (the coworker) will become an active partner in the development of the organization (Akhilesh, 2017).

For the successful execution of a co-creation process it is important that certain principles from literature are adhered to. A frequently used model is the DART model (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2002) (Akhilesh, 2017). DART is an acronym for Dialogue, Access, Responsibility and Transparency.

Dialogue, in this model, entails that the provider and the end-users should discuss knowledge and personal ideas in a manner that is conducive to the joint creation of new ideas (Akhilesh, 2017). In this dialogue, it is important that equity in interactions is maintained by a session supervisor so that everyone feels free to express their own ideas and opinions without restraint (Dollinger, Lodge and Coates, 2018).

Secondly, **Access** entails that end-users should be provided with relevant information, so that both the end-user and the provider are aware of the important capabilities of each other as well as project boundaries (Akhilesh, 2017).

Thirdly, **Responsibility** stands for the fact that it should be clear to all participants in a co-creation session what their responsibilities are and how risks of the design are distributed among them (Akhilesh, 2017). Awareness of risks of a design by all parties involved, will lead to designs that minimize these risks for all people involved, thus benefitting both the provider and end-users.

Lastly, **Transparency** means that end-users will have to be informed of knowledge from inside the organization that is relevant to them and that the provider will share information that is needed for improving the joint decision-making process in co-creation.

Two phases should be distinguished in the co-creation design process: First, there is the contribution of content. Second, there is the selection of content. In this process, the contribution of content will be performed in a joint session between the facilitator and end-users, while the selection of content will be performed by the facilitator alone.

According to O'Hern and Rindfleish (2010), who have defined a typology of (customer) co-creation, there are two dimensions to co-creation initiatives. The first dimension is whether it is led by the provider or by the end-user. The second dimension is whether the initiative is open, where new ideas can be provided, or fixed, where a fixed set of ideas is discussed (O'Hern and Rindfleish, 2010).

The type of co-creation that will be used in this thesis is a hybrid combination of the "submitting" method, which is a provider-led session with an open initiative, and the "collaboration" method, which is also open but end-user led (O'Hern and Rindfleish, 2010). This entails that the provider (me) leads the session and that end-users (fellow co-workers) are requested to come up with ideas, from which the provider can choose one or multiple ideas for further development. Furthermore, the provider will also present ideas to the group to trigger the imagination of the participants and critique its own ideas.

Meaningful dialogue will be guaranteed by the provider, through making sure that no hierarchical relations between participants exist, so that they will feel free to speak their mind, and kindly correcting those who give too much 'negative' feedback. Access is provided to the participants by making clear the scope of the design as well as the goals of the design. Responsibility is primarily deferred to the provider, as she is the one making the choice from the designs.

Transparency of the organization to participants is ensured through the fact that the end-users are all co-workers and are, therefore, expected to be in possession of relevant knowledge regarding the organization, as IKEA is a very transparent organization in general. Furthermore, questions can be freely asked to the facilitator of the session regarding key issues.

Additionally, the right selection of participants to the session is principally important. Good participants are people who are driven and motivated and who have trust that the provider will create a safe environment for them to participate in (Akhilesh, 2017).

Finally, it is important that the participants are familiar with the cultural values of the company (which is why they will be briefed on this knowledge at the beginning of their session) and that they bring along with them personal experiences of the company and its culture.

Main Take-aways

10

Co-creation is a design method that is aimed at **including the end-user of a design as a co-designer**. A frequently used model for successful execution of a co-creation process is the **DART model** (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2002) (Akhilesh, 2017). DART is an acronym for Dialogue, Access, Responsibility and Transparency.

The type of co-creation that will be used in this thesis is a hybrid combination of the **“submitting”** method, which is a provider-led session with an open initiative, and the **“collaboration”** method, which is also open but end-user led (O’Hern and Rindfleisch, 2010).

Meaningful dialogue will be guaranteed by the provider, through making sure that no hierarchical relations between participants exist, so that they will feel free to speak their mind, and kindly correcting those who give too much ‘negative’ feedback.

Finally, it is important that the **participants are familiar with the cultural values** of the company (which is why they will be briefed on this knowledge at the beginning of their session) and that they bring along with them personal experiences of the company and its culture.

Chapter 11.

Co-Creation

In this chapter the process of having the co-creation sessions is described. The setting and my role as a facilitator are explained, and after that each part of the session is described in detail. The results from the sessions are shown and finally the sessions are evaluated.

11.1 The setting

As the reader might recall, my project took place during the covid-19 outbreak. Which meant that my original plans for co-creation had to be adapted a little bit. I decided to organise the sessions from my own house. In that way I had the most control over the environment, making sure that I could provide a safe experience. As the participants should be able to keep a least 1,5 meter distance from each other at all times, and that they should preferable not have to touch the same materials. As can

be seen in figure 11.02, the table at which the participants would sit is over 3,5 meters long. So placing each participant at their own table end meant that they would be far away enough from each other. To guarantee that they would not move closer to each other by accident, I tapes lines across the table and the floor that they could not cross. All creative materials were provided in two fold, so that each participant had their own materials. I also made sure that the room had two ways of entering and exiting. In that way

the participants did not have to come close to each other if they wanted to leave the room. There was disinfected present for their hands and I cleaned the room and materials after each session. Lastly, I did not want the participants to have to take the public transport, so I drove them from IKEA to my home one by one.

By lack of a blackboard I pasted lots of A3 sheets on the wall, and wrote the key values on there in Dutch. On the table there were buttons present

Figure 11.01: The key values on the table





Figure 11.02: The setting

with the values in English, see figure 11.01, so that the participants could view them in both languages. On the table each participants had access to: a4 paper, A3 paper, colouring materials of different kinds,

post-its, magazines, scissors, glue and several other creative materials (such as oasis, stickers patterned paper ect).

11.2 My role as facilitator

A lot of the decisions I made in how I behaved as a facilitator were based on the literature research as described in chapter 10.

I tried to take the role of an observer, only participating when I felt necessary. Trying to find a mix of the “submitting” method and the “collaboration” method, as mentioned earlier (O’Hern and Rindfleish, 2010). When I participated

I took the role of an inspirator, encouraging everything the participants did, so they felt confident enough to come up with more ideas. Feeling more like a conductor to an orchestra, then like an active group member.

I also secretly tested some ideas I had, by mentioning them during brainstorming and watching how the participant responded.

Lastly, I kindly corrected participants that would have to much negative feedback, explaining that in a creative session there are no wrong ideas. And improvise when the session got ‘stuck’, thinking of extra little creative assignments to keep the flow going.

11.3 The participants

In total there were eight participants who join me for a co-creation session. Out of respect for their privacy they will not be named in this project, and some of them will be blurred in the shown pictures. I tried to get a mix of people based on gender, age and years of experience. The data below is put in a random order, so it can not be traced back to a specific person.

Ages: 21, 23, 25, 26, 35, 51, 53
Years at IKEA: 1, 3, 4, 11, 16, 21
Store: IKEA Delft
Department: Sales
Gender: Female (2), Male (6)

11.3 Collage making

The first exercises purpose was to supply me with insight, but also to serve as a warming up for the participants. To get them into the right mindset and to make them familiar with the topic. Our target group for this session was; co-workers that are new to IKEA. So, to remind them how they felt themselves during that period, the participants were asked to create a collage that represents that experience. As this is also my target group for the whole project, these collages were extra valuable to me. In figures 11.03 and 11.04, some of these collages are shown.

One of the main conclusions you can draw from these collages is that the first days at IKEA can be quite overwhelming. There are so many rules and so many new people, that it would be nice to have something to hold on to, to guide you through the process. Such as more contact with your buddy or a better understanding of the key values.

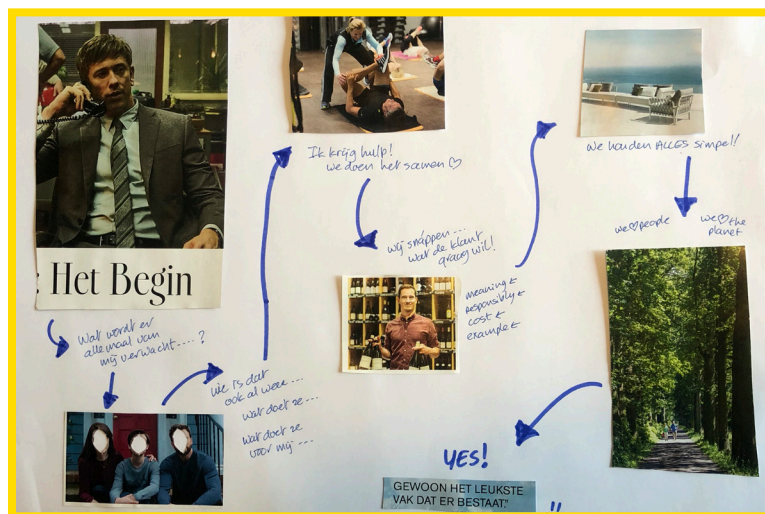


Figure 11.03: An example of a collage

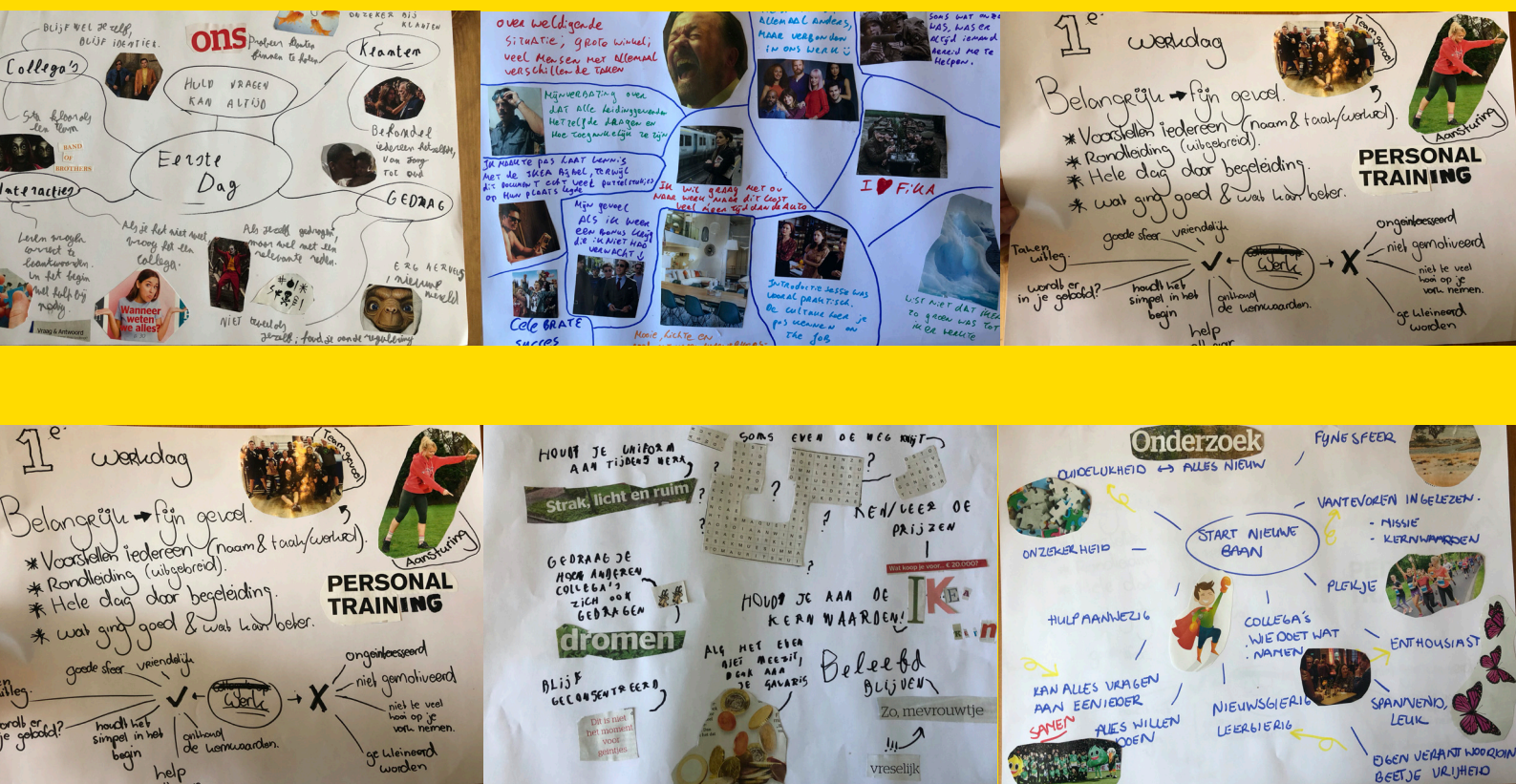


Figure 11.04: More examples of a collages

11.4 Brainstorming

Then the brainstorming for ideas began. This part of the session was highly adapted to the group that was in front of me. Some groups needed more encouragement than others to get going. When I felt that they needed more guidance we did 'how to's' (as can be seen in figure 11.05, the lower left picture), or when it seemed like the group ran out of ideas I joined them to get the session going again.

The participants were asked to come up with ideas to help new coworkers adopt the company culture and key values. And to make sure that these key values were used more in their every day work. If they had an idea, they were asked to write it on a post-it, stick it to the wall and explain it to the other participant. I asked them to directly share all their ideas, as usually these would lead to discussion and even more ideas. In figure 11.05 (the upper right picture),

you can see some participants while they were putting ideas on the wall. On the next two pages, you can see some of the groups while they were brainstorming.

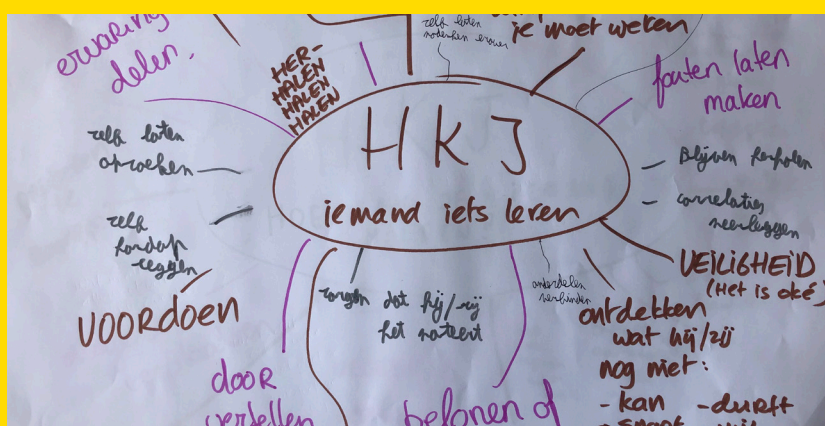
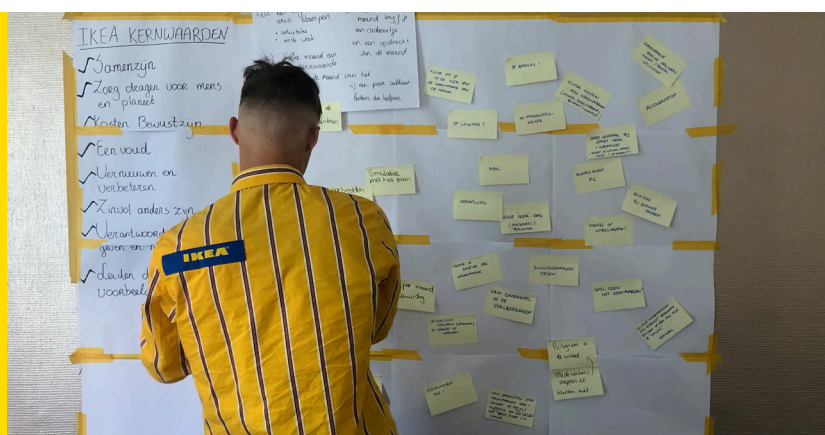


Figure 11.05: Brainstorming coworkers



Figure 11.06: The groups of participants



11.5 Clustering

In order to let the groups reflect on their process, I asked them to cluster their ideas. To see if there were similarities between ideas, or that they could discover an overarching theme. In figures 11.07 untill 11.10, you see the end results of this clustering process. While the participants were clustering, they had to read all of their ideas again, which sparked discussion. It worked very well as an evaluation method and the underlying patterns behind the ideas were soon discovered.

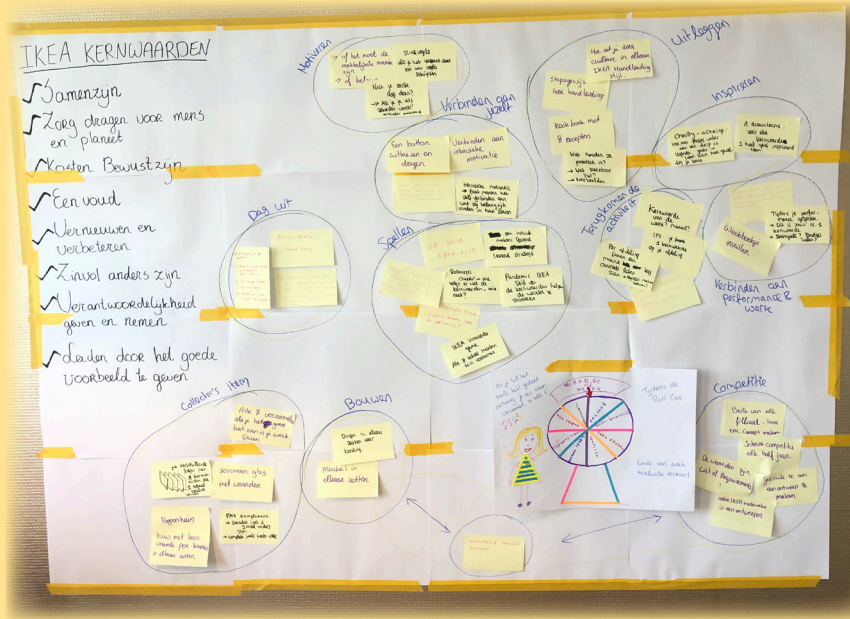


Figure 11.07: Clusters from group 1



Figure 11.08: Clusters from group 2

IKEA KERNWAARDEN

- ✓ Samen zijn
- ✓ Zorg dragen voor mens en planeet
- ✓ Kosten Bewust zijn
- ✓ Een veld
- ✓ Vernieuwen en verbeteren
- ✓ Zinvol anders zijn
- ✓ Verantwoordelijkheid geven en nemen
- ✓ Leiden door het goede voorbeeld te geven

creativiteit

109

11.6 The final idea

When the participants had finished clustering, I asked them to pick their favourite idea. The idea that they felt was the ideal solution, and would work the best. This could be one of the idea written on the wall, or a combination of a lot of them. Once they had decided on what idea they preferred we did a short rapid prototyping session. This was mainly in place to let the participant leave with a feeling of achievement. I felt it was necessary to round up a session. There were a lot of crafting materials present, but most participants wanted to create posters to further explain their ideas. A few of these ideas were:

1. Every coworker has to be the culture leader once during their career. This should be visible in the clothing that they wear that week. In figure 11.11, you can see one of the posters this group created. There should be a video with famous actors at the beginning of the introduction training that explains this concept.

2. Having a value theme every week. Every week there is another value, this value is linked to an assignment and a present that you receive if you complete these assignments. In figure 11.11, you can also see the posters that they created that show these assignments and presents.

3. A 'spin the wheel' game that is played every week at the roll-call. It lands on one of the values and that is the value of the week. Each week a winner is chosen that had best represented that value, and he receives an allen key in the colour of the value.

4. A trivia board game with value related questions. This game should be played at the introduction training. The drawing they made can also be seen in figure 11.11.

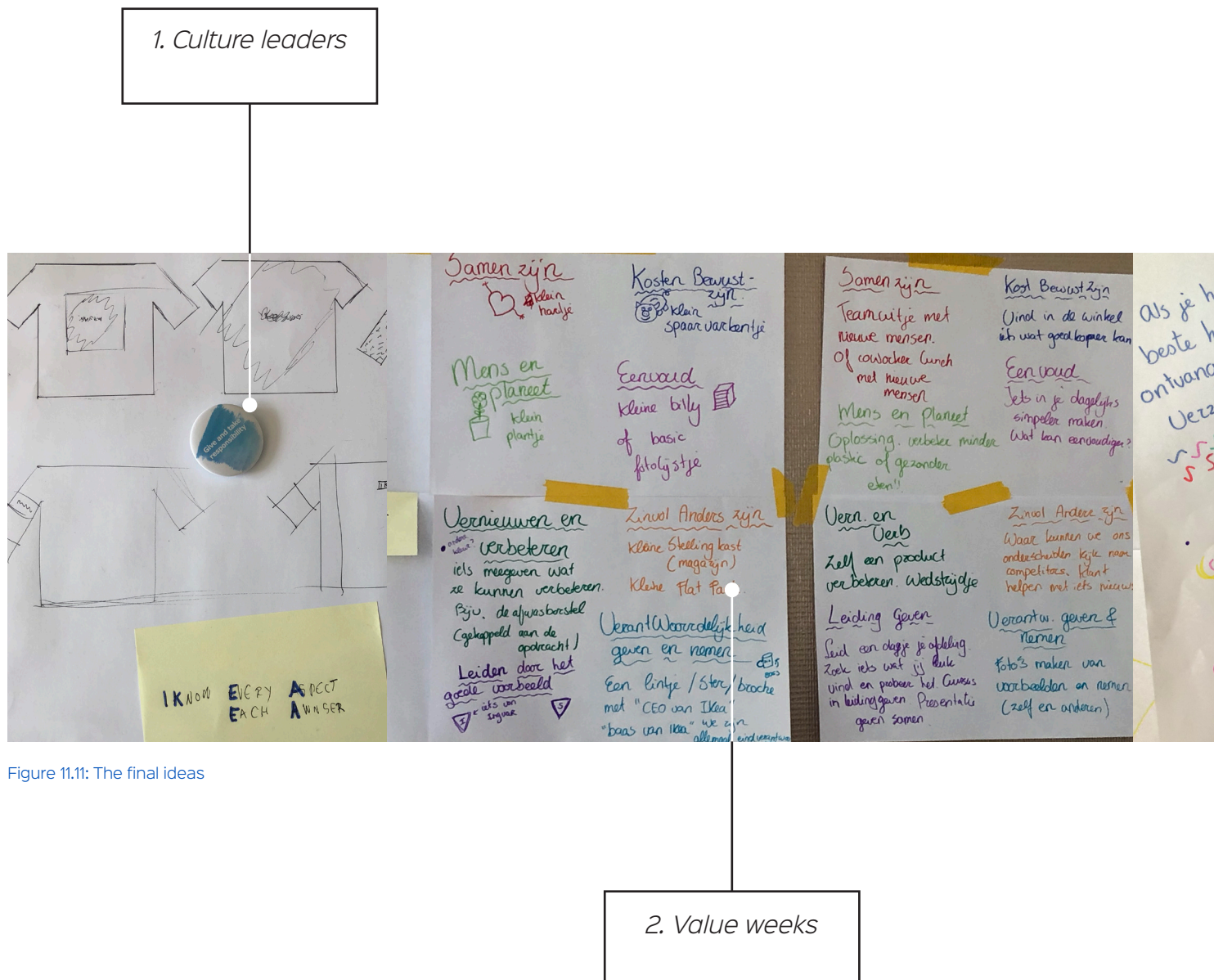


Figure 11.11: The final ideas

11.7 Evaluation

I had planned to do sessions with around 5 people at a time, but had to change these plans due to Covid-19. I chose to do session with two persons, because that would be less 'scary' for the participants than a one on one session. Due to these changes I might have gotten a little less ideas quantity wise, but I gained a lot in quality. I was able to talk to the participants about their ideas more personally.

I have enjoyed this experience very much. It was great to spent some time with my target group and to think of ideas together. It definitely will help my project along. For example in all four groups one of the clusters in the end was called 'games'. This means all of the participants thought of some sort of game in order to solve the problem. As is the goal of this project to

design bottom up, 'a game' should be one of the three concepts. The DART model helped me to make sure there was enough dialogue, access, responsibility and transparency.

I tried to keep the dialogue up by focussing on creating a safe environment. So that everyone felt free to express their own ideas and opinions without restraint. I took some participants longer then others to warm up, but in the end each participant had come up with several ideas.

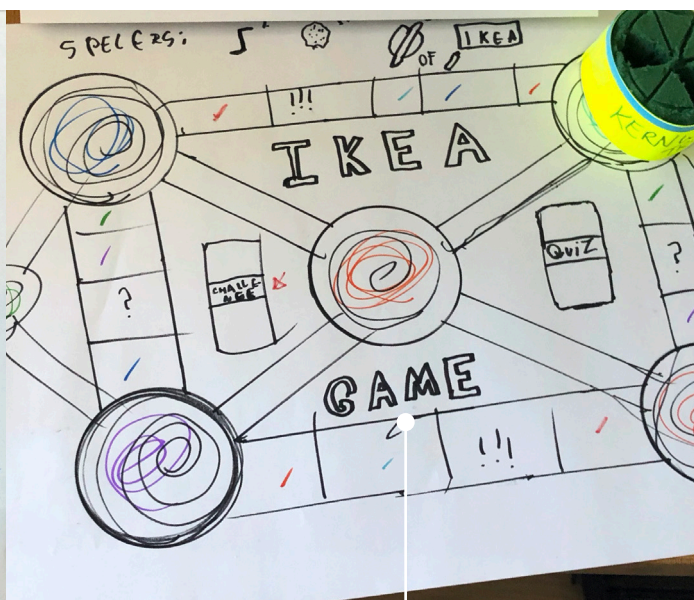
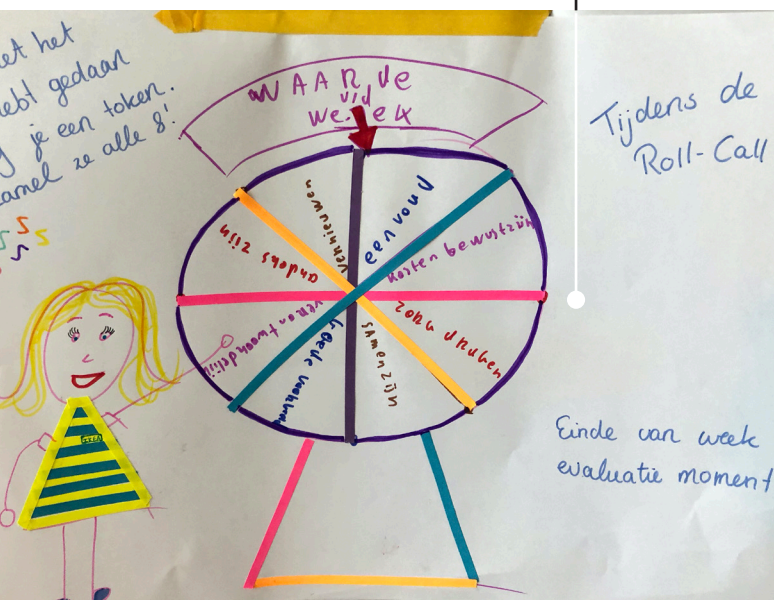
I created acces and transparency by posting the key values on the wall in Dutch and laying them on the table in English. I gave a thorough but short introduction about wat a company culture was and what my project entailed. It was difficult at fist

to find a balance between explaining the boundaries of my project, but at the same time not wanting to limit the participants creative process. It helped to discuss the boundaries at the beginning and to keep the rest of the session focussed on possibilities.

By making the end results visible (posting the ideas on the wall) I increased the feeling of responsibility among participants. Seeing tangible results for their peers often made them want to join in as well.

Overall I think this was a very positive experience and that there is enough information and inspiration collected to come up with multiple concepts. In the next chapter I will discuss the proces of turning these ideas into concepts.

3. Spin the wheel



4. Board games

Chapter 12.

Converging

In this chapter I describe how I used the ideas from the co-creation sessions to form three concepts. First, the clustering process of all the ideas from chapter 11 is described and afterwards the 'idea to concept' process is explained.

12.1 Clustering

After all the session were done, I was left with many post-its that were fully covered in ideas. To gain insights from these, I clustered them again for myself, as can be seen in figure 12.01.

The idea clusters created were:

- Application process
- Emotion based
- Business operation
- Visibility
- Team assignments
- Events
- Games
- Building something
- Souvenirs

Figure 12.01: The final clusters



12.2 From ideas to concepts

Next to the co-creation sessions I also had some brainstorming sessions on my own, using techniques such as, metaphors and analogies, scamper, brain writing, and how to's.

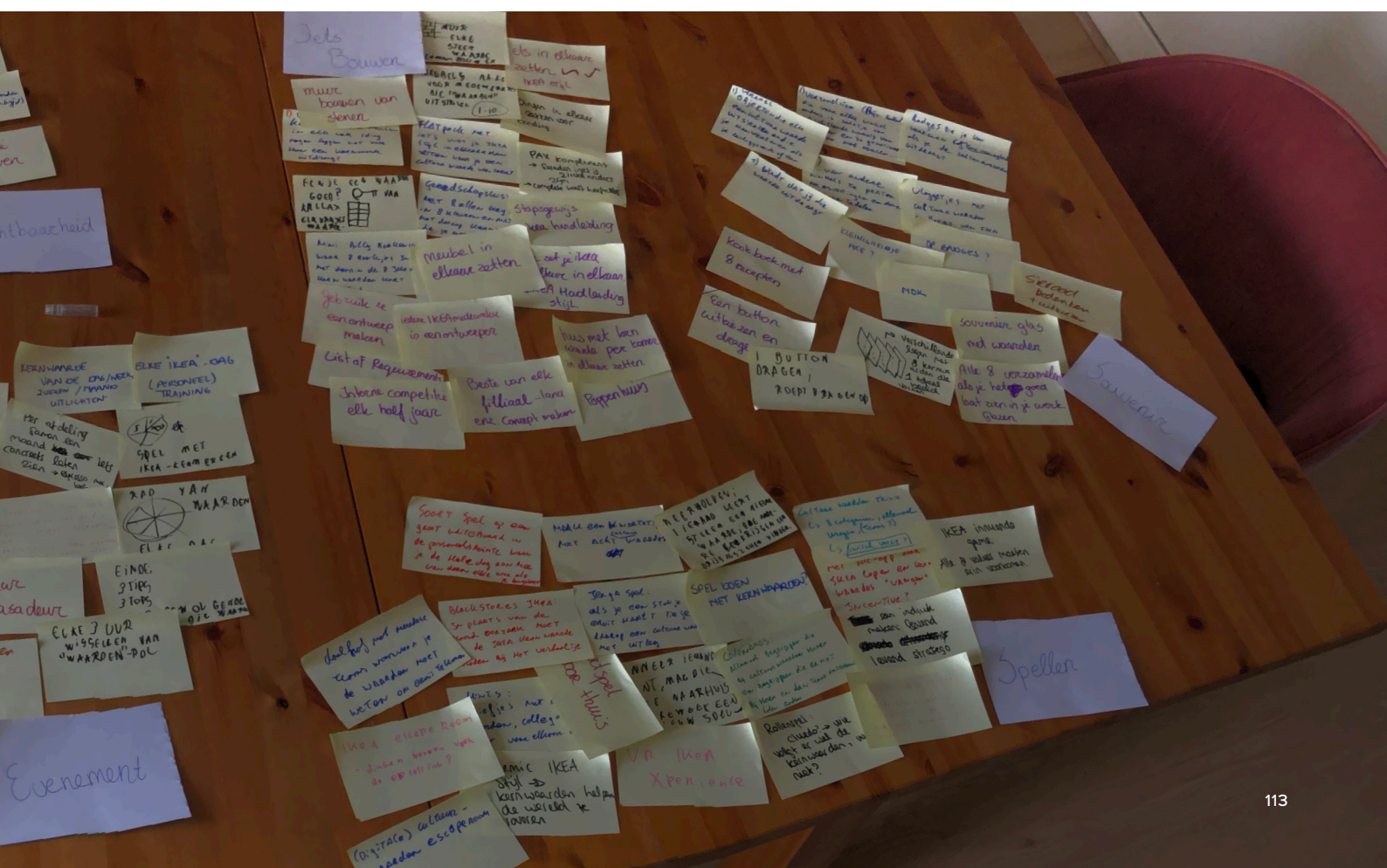
I combined these ideas with the clusters in order to form three concepts. I wanted the initial 'spark' behind the concepts to come from the co-creation sessions, as that fits with my bottom up approach. Which does not mean that each concept was thought of by a participant, but it does mean that the inspiration for each concept comes from the ideas from the sessions.

If I got particularly inspired by one of the ideas, or if I saw an idea would be mentioned by multiple groups I would try to elaborate on that idea.

Using techniques again as scampers and mind-mapping to arrive at ideas that were fit for a concept. After picking the three ideas that I thought were most viable, I elaborated on them.

I altered, detailed and visualised them to arrive at the concepts that can be seen in the next chapters. I aimed for three very different kind of concepts, so that I could show the client my capabilities at its best. I wanted one concept to be very realistic and extensive, one to be very easy to implement and one concept that was very 'out of the box' and that would serve as an inspiration for further projects.

In the next chapters each concept will be described in more detail.



Main Take-aways

11+12

Due to the Covid-19 outbreak, the cocreation sessions had to be held at **1,5 meter distance** at my own house. With a maximum number of participants of two at a time. This meant less quantitative but more qualitative results.

The facilitator took the role of an observer, only participating when necessary. If the facilitator did participate, it was in the form of an **inspirator**, encouraging everything the participants did, so they felt confident enough to come up with more ideas. Feeling more like a **conductor** of an orchestra, then like an active group member.

Each sessions consisted of four parts: **collage making, brainstorming, clustering and conceptualising a final idea**. A lot of great ideas were formed during the sessions and overall it was a positive experience for all parties involved.

The literature review that took place beforehand helped to make sure there was a good dialogue, and enough access, responsibility and transparency.

At the end of all the sessions, a lot of ideas were gathered. To gain insights from these, they were **clustered** into nine categories.

Techniques as **scamper and mind-mapping** were used to arrive at ideas that were fit for concepts. The initial **'spark'** behind the three final concepts came from the co-creation sessions, as that fits with the bottom-up approach.

Three very different kinds of concepts were created. One is very realistic and extensive, one is very easy to implement and one concept is very 'out of the box' and that serves as an inspiration for further projects.

Chapter 13.

Concept 1 - Value Months

In this chapter the first of three concepts is described; the Value Months. The idea behind the concept is explained and all aspects of the concept are detailed. Lastly, the concept is reflected upon taking the perspective of multiple persona’s.



Figure 13.01: Example of a value month 1



Figure 13.02: Example of a value month 2

General idea

The first concept is a strategic intervention in IKEA's general way of working. With this concept every month would be connected to a value. This value will be highlighted in internal communication, visible in coworker areas and connected to coworker assignments.

To make sure that there is still enough focus on sales on busy moments, there are 4 months that do not have theme, as can be seen in figure 13.03. The month during the summer and winter holidays and the first month of IKEA's business year are theme free.

Every month a theme

Every year this would the same value for the same month, so that it becomes a part of IKEA's normal routine. Each month would start with a special roll-call, a gathering of sales coworkers in the morning, reflecting on last month and discussing next month's theme.

The values are coupled to events and holidays that happen these months. These holidays have to be universal worldwide in order to work. For example October is the month of sustainability worldwide, so it would make sense to address the value of 'caring for the people and planet' then as well.

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN
Simplicity	Togetherness	Lead by Example	Cost-consciousness	Give and take responsibility	Renew and improve

JUL	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
None	None	None	Caring for people and planet	Different with a meaning	None

Figure 13.03: For each month a value

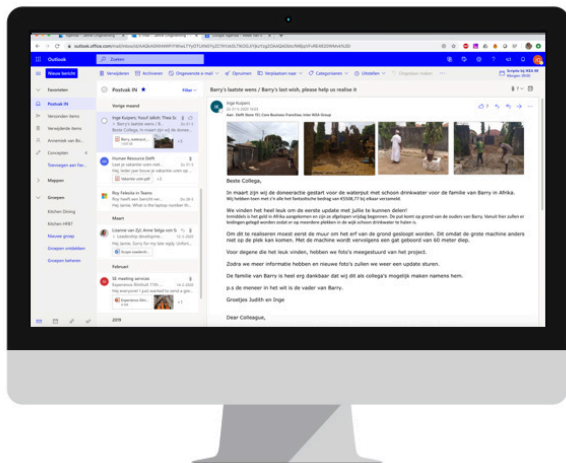


Figure 13.04: Inspiring stories



Figure 13.05: Worldwide stories

Culture ambassadors

At IKEA co workers work with a task system. Every coworker gets two or three 'tasks' a year. These are little voluntary assignments on top of their regular work. If the coworkers complete these tasks, they can earn a little salary raise. One of the standard tasks would become: 'becoming a culture ambassador', that each coworker has to complete once a year. The coworkers can choose in which month they would like to have this tasks, relating it to their personal favourite value.

When you are the culture ambassador, you are the responsible one for that value on your own department for that month. You have to be able to answer questions from coworkers and look for improvements on your department. Other tasks that could be used can be seen in figure 13.06. In this way every coworker is involved and the culture becomes something that is nurtured together.

Communication

Every month all IKEA employees would get an email, describing that month's theme and highlighting some inspirational stories, examples or great initiatives. Coworkers will be able to see stories from other IKEA stores from across the globe for inspiration. The coworker spaces, such as the locker rooms and the cafeteria, will be decorated according to the theme.



POSTERS

Create a new poster that represents leading by example



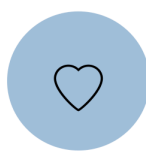
PHOTOS

Go into the store and photograph 5 examples of cost consciousness



IMPROVEMENT

Seek ways to implement caring for the people and planet more into your department



AMBIANCE

Decorate the coworker cafeteria with things that remind you of togetherness



Figure 13.07: The coworker spaces

Figure 13.06: Culture related tasks

The new coworker

And lastly, the new coworkers that need to be introduced into this system. As mentioned earlier in this report, each new coworker goes through the introduction training. IKEA already has a 15 minute video (and a shorter version of 3 minutes) in which the key values are introduced. The co workers will watch this video at the introduction training, after which they receive a souvenir. This souvenir is a calendar that also functions as a storage solution (figure 13.08). On the calendar all the themed months are visible. The storage can be used to store work related possession, as can be seen in figure 13.09. In this way, the coworkers have a little reminder of the values at home that they can use every workday.

So in conclusion, having a value theme every month, means sharing a lot of stories and inspiration and taking care of the IKEA culture together.



Figure 13.09: The coworker spaces



Figure 13.08: Calendar/storage solution

Nick

New Sales Coworker

Learning about the values one by one takes some time, but can express his enthusiasm in requesting extra tasks. Loves his IKEA souvenir and shows it at home with pride.



Lisa

Sales Coworker

Finally has the time to work on the values. She even gets rewarded for it! Each year she learns something new and she keeps seeing the values from different angles.



Shirley

Sales Manager

Does not have to focus on explaining the culture as much anymore. Now he can reward co-workers for it and they can ask each other for help in stead of him.



Patrick

Experienced Sales Coworker

Has a little bit of trouble with such a big change. But is happy to be able to share more stories about the culture.



Chapter 14.

Concept 2 - Values Game

In this chapter the second of three concepts is described; the values game. The idea behind the concept and the mechanics of the game are explained. Lastly, the concept is reflected upon taking the perspective of multiple persona's.

General idea

This concept is a board game that takes place at the introduction meeting (figure 14.01). It is a fun and short way to get to know our values for the first time, and immediately give them a good thought.

The game mechanics

The game has to be short and very easy to understand, so the coworkers do not have to waste a lot of time discovering the way its works. The game can be played in teams or individually.

Figure 14.01: A mock up of coworkers playing the key values game



You simply spin the wheel in the middle and whatever value it lands on, that's the card you have to draw. On this card there can be all sorts of challenges related to the value, for example:

- Trivia: For how many years in a row, has IKEA been elected as most sustainable retailer of the Netherlands?

- Scenario's : You are planning a new PAX closet for a customer. How can you let this value lead you?

- Descriptions: Describe this value to your teammates without naming it.

- Debating: What do you think this value stands for? What does it mean to you?

If you do something correct you 'collect that value'. This can be done in all sorts of creative ways. One way would be to collect the finches that you can see on the edge of the board in figure 14.02. But another way could be that you have to collect all inserts for a miniature kallax cabinet (figure 14.03 on the next page).

If you already collected that value, your pawn moves up a slot on the yellow and blue ring of the board. Once you reach the yellow box (after two or three correct answers), you can choose whichever card you want to draw next. In order to be sure you collect the values that you are still missing.

The introduction meeting facilitator is also the person who facilitates the game. He decides whether an answer is correct or not, although almost every answers is correct. He/she also keeps track of time and answers questions if the participants have any.

A copy of the game can be kept in store, for when the store is quite or to be used during other training sessions.

The goal of the game is to be the first to collect all eight values.



Figure 14.02: The key values game

Souvenir

After this first introduction the key values will be related to a fun experience. To lengthen this effect, the participants get to take a souvenir home. This has to be something useful, so that the user keeps getting reminded of this fun experience. In this case I propose that the coworkers can pick their favourite value, based on their experiences with the game, and take a mug home with the value on it.

(The current board game is based on the existing trivia crack game and would have to be altered a little bit in case of implementation, in order to avoid copyrighting issues).



Figure 14.04: Mugs with values



Figure 14.03: Miniature KALLAX

Nick

New Sales Coworker

I had a lot of fun at the introduction training and I immediately made some friends! Its nice to know these values even before you start working.



Lisa

Sales Coworker

An additional culture training was given to play this game. It was a lot of fun and a nice way to refreshen our knowledge, but I am afraid the effect might disappear again.



Shirley

Sales Manager

Its great that new coworkers already know our key values. This game can also be a handy tool if we want to give culture training and it does not cost me a lot of time.



Patrick

Experienced Sales Coworker

We had an extra culture training to play this game. It was a lot of fun and made me think of our values in a different way. It was also fun to test our IKEA knowledge with the trivia questions.



Chapter 15.

Concept 3 - IKEA demystified

In this chapter the third and last concept is described; IKEA demystified. The idea behind the concept is explained and every aspect is described in more detail. Lastly, the concept is reflected upon taking the perspective of multiple persona's.

General idea

The third and final concept is a strategic intervention again. With this concept it's all about the first contact moment between a coworker and the key values. Creating a special moment that feels important enough to make a lasting first impression. The coworkers receive their special printed clothing and the key values in a special box.

The moment

The first contact moment with the key values is so important, because it often shapes the way coworkers see these values for the rest of their career. So I want to make it a very special moment. If IKEA wants the coworker to know and use the key values, they need to feel proud of being a part of IKEA. And therefore willing to take an extra step of getting to know the key values, because they have an intrinsic motivation.

For the first contact moment between the key values and the new coworker I chose the moment that the coworker receives his/her IKEA uniform for the first time. Because, to many coworkers, this moment symbolizes becoming a part of IKEA. This should be a moment with just you and your manager, emphasising its importance.

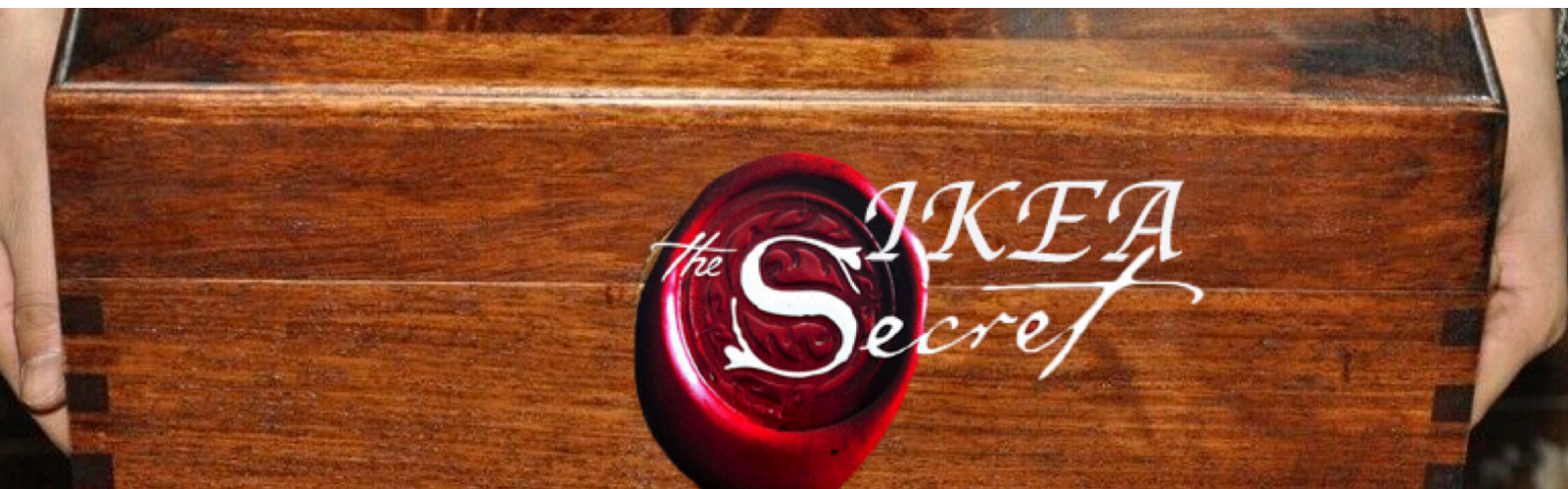


Figure 15.01: The IKEA secret

The storyline

The storyline should go something like this.

The manager talks about all great things IKEA has achieved, in the field of sustainability, democracy, and other inspiring stories. And then says something like: *'But how did IKEA achieve all of this? Not just everybody knows this, the secret recipe to IKEA's success? You are now part of us, so now you also get to know it.'*

This is not nothing, it has guided IKEA through the years and it can do the same for you! So treat them with responsibility and respect, because they can help you a great deal'.

After this talk, the manager hands a special box or package to the coworker. Like for instance the one that you see in figure 15.02. Inside is a booklet with the story the manager just told and the key values in it. By making it feel like a special gift, you immediately add value to the values. The coworker will take them home and hopefully look at them again and think about them.



Figure 15.02: An example of the key values box

The clothing

Together with the box the co workers receive their IKEA uniform. But these uniforms are different than the standard ones. These uniforms have the key values printed, on the inside. As for example in figure 15.03. So everyday when they put on their work clothes, they put the values against their heart. Wearing the values as a second skin. The outside of the clothing is still symbol for IKEA's brand, for the rest of the world.

But what goes on behind the scenes and what we stand for, is invisible. But all coworkers know it is there.

In the next chapter the process of choosing one of these three concept is described.



Figure 15.03: The coworker clothing with the Key values on the inside

Nick

New Sales Coworker

The moment I received my clothing was so special. I will never forget that anymore. I felt so proud about IKEA I told all my friends and family about it. I will try to use these key values in every decision I make in order to bring IKEA to the next level!



Lisa

Sales Coworker

I love the new coworker clothing and the giftbox we received. It's always nice and fun to receive something new. There were a lot of stories in there that I did not know and it has made me ever prouder of IKEA.



Shirley

Sales Manager

I already used the values in my work, but the little reminder every morning is very nice. Its a lof of work having the talk every time I introduce a new coworker, but the enthusiasm I get out of it from them is worth it.



Patrick

Experienced Sales Coworker

Its nice to have new coworker clothing because after a while you get kind of bored with the old ones. I did already know all the values and would still like to learn more about them.



Chapter 16.

Concept choice

In this chapter I describe the process I went through to pick one of the three concepts. First, the feedback IKEA coworkers and managers gave me is described. Secondly, Harris profiles are used to make a decision based on IKEA's key values.

16.1 Feedback IKEA

In order to make the choice that would be the best fit with IKEA's needs, I organised meeting with some of the people I talked to throughout this project. A list of the people who were present and their roles within IKEA;

- Of course Ino and Cidi were there, my mentors from IKEA's side, Ino is a solutions manager for the culture and learning department. And Cidi is a UX and learning designer for that same department
- Olov Hedlin, the IKEA culture and values specialist I interviewed in Sweden
- Anne Selga von Schantz, Learning Developer I also talked to in Sweden
- My chair for this project, Annemiek van Boeijen, an assistant professor for the design, culture and society at the human centred design faculty of my university
- Lizanne van Zyl - Learning and Culture Designer



Figure 16.01: The concept choice meeting

To this group of people I presented my process so far and the three concepts that arose from that process, as can be seen in figure 16.01. This was a great moment, because all of the reactions were very positive. Some of the things that were said about my process were:

Ino: "First of all jamie, thank you so much. This was really amazing to listen to. Absolutely fabulous."

Olov: "First of all, fantastic. Such an inspiration. When it comes to the problem statement that you have formulated. I believe it is brilliant. it's so clear, its spot on. it's clear, down to earth and hands on. It's very good work. You should be very proud already, for what you have achieved. It's very professional, very fun. It's filled with love, already from the beginning and it comes through. Fantastic."

Lizanne: "I just want to start with giving you kudos for how clear this is and how well laid out is its. it's really easy to follow and understand and it's evident that you really put so much thought and so much of yourself into this. And it clearly shows."

Anne: "This was great fun. I'm just thinking since you met so many people already. I'm sure there is a movement going on already, in the Delft store. Just by you asking them questions. I think raising their awareness and doing something

ht their minds. So I think you have already done something for the delft store. Absolutely."

From this meeting it was very clear what concept IKEA preferred. They believed that concept one was the most strategic and probably the most effective. They also liked concept two, because of its simplicity. But, concept three was the one they preferred the most. It unleashed something inside of them and inspired them greatly. Some of the reactions to the concepts were:

Olov : "Concept number one looks great. Fantastic, I could not think of any sort of feedback or fine tuning. The strength in that approach is the importance of routine and rituals, so hat is becomes parts of our habits. Very clever and smart. Easy to understand, easy to sell, easy to implement and easy to get people on board. Especially the role of the ambassador. Empowering coworkers to take the role of leaders, is great. Concept 2, also great. It's even simpler more playful. But, concept 3.. The idea of the values on the inside, made me feel like I want it immediately. Where can i get one ? It's an instant success. Concept 1 would probably be the most successful, but concept 3 is the most fun. The most 'new thinking' that will create good reactions."

Lizanne: I see value in these value months because it will become part of your yearly routine. And the rituals that you follow every year. So it's not something that you are exposed to when you start, but it grows with you in the company. Because your view of these values will change every year. As you face new challenges in the company every year. I really like that concept and I think it links clearly with the rest of IKEA, as in it's not a 'one solve. And it should not be a 'one solve'. The game I like very much, as it is interactive and engaging instead of one sided talk. But, my favourite is the third concept. There is something very personal and visceral about having these values close to your heart. And seeing it everyday, there is something in it that makes me so excited, I also want to order one right now! There is something really great and fresh about this concept.

Anne: I have a background in range and supply as a product developer and i must say; i just loved your little IKEA house, where you put your IKEA stuff. I think there is a little product designer in you! Very creative. That first moment at IKEA is so important and it's great that you make it tangible. But I must say that the winner is number three. When you talked about it and at the end when you showed these clothes. There is something happening within me. When you talk about it, i think it's such a nice idea.

“
**The idea of the values on the inside, made me feel like
I want it immediately. Where can I get one ? It's an instant success!**

- Olov Hedlin, 2020

”

16.2 Value based decision making

It was stated in my design goal that I want IKEA coworkers to use the IKEA culture and key values in their every workday actions and decision making. So, it only seemed logical to use those same values in my own decision making. The solution that lets you learn about the IKEA values should also represent those values itself, like mentioned in chapter 3.

In order to guide me in the decision making process I made use of two Harris profiles. One representing the values, as can be seen in figure 16.02. And one representing other criteria that have come up during my project before, as can be seen in figure 16.03.

These Harris profiles made me feel confident enough to go on with concept 3.

The final concept is a strategic intervention in the first weeks of work for a new IKEA sales employee. It revolves around the moment this coworker gets his IKEA coworker clothing, as this is a moment that is often perceived as 'the moment you become part of IKEA'.

The concept consists of four parts:

1. The story the manager will tell the new coworker.
2. The box that contains the key values and the IKEA clothing.
3. The new design of that IKEA clothing.
4. A letter inside that same box. Each of these parts will now be detailed in the next chapters.

HARRIS PROFILE $\pm + - =$ KEY VALUES

REQUIREMENTS		-2	-1	+1	+2	-2	-1	+1	+2	-2	-1	+1	+2
1.	Simplici												
2.	Cost- Consciousness												
3.	Togetherness												
4.	Lead by Example												
5.	Caring for people and..												
6.	Renew and Improve												
7.	Give and take respon..												
8.	Different with a mea..												
		CONCEPT 1 				CONCEPT 2 				CONCEPT 3 			

Figure 16.02: Value based decision making

HARRIS PROFILE $\ddagger + - =$ REQUIREMENTS

REQUIREMENTS		-2	-1	+1	+2	-2	-1	+1	+2	-2	-1	+1	+2
1.	Fun												
2.	Caring												
3.	Scalable												
4.	Wow Factor												
5.	Low maintenance												
6.	Easy to implement												
7.	Focus on new cowork..												
		CONCEPT 1 				CONCEPT 2 				CONCEPT 3 			

Figure 16.03: Other influences

Main Take-aways

13-16

In these chapters **the three concepts were introduced** and a final concept was chosen.

The **first concept is a strategic intervention** in IKEA's general way of working.

With this concept **every month would be connected to a value**. This value will be highlighted in internal communication, visible in coworker areas and connected to coworker assignments.

The second concept is a **board game** that takes place at the introduction meeting. It is a **fun and short way to get to know our values** for the first time, and immediately give them a good thought.

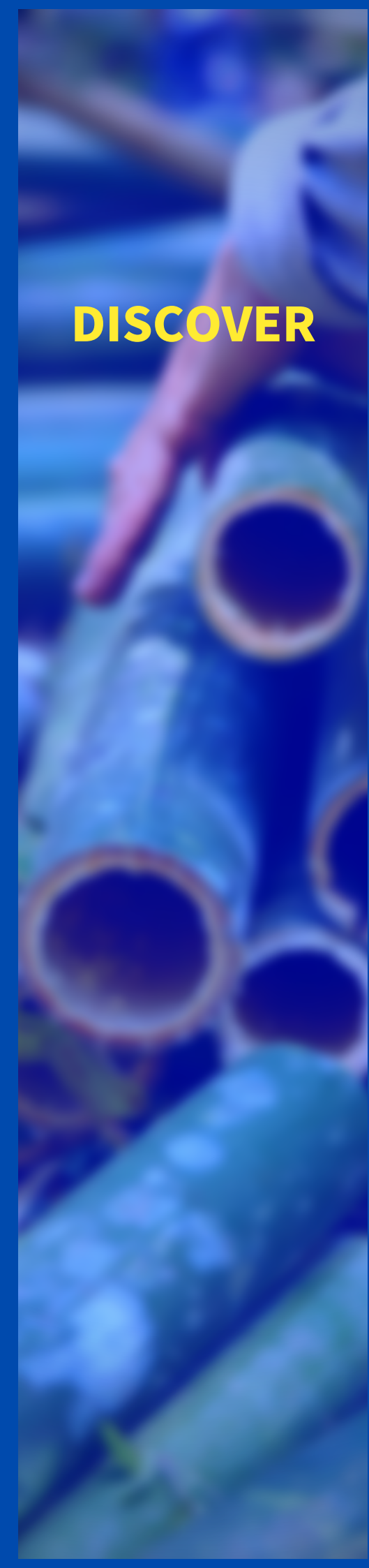
The **third and final concept** is a **strategic intervention** again. With this concept it's all about the first contact moment between a coworker and the key values. **Creating a special moment** that feels important enough to make a lasting first impression. The coworkers

receive their **special printed clothing** and the **key values** in a special box.

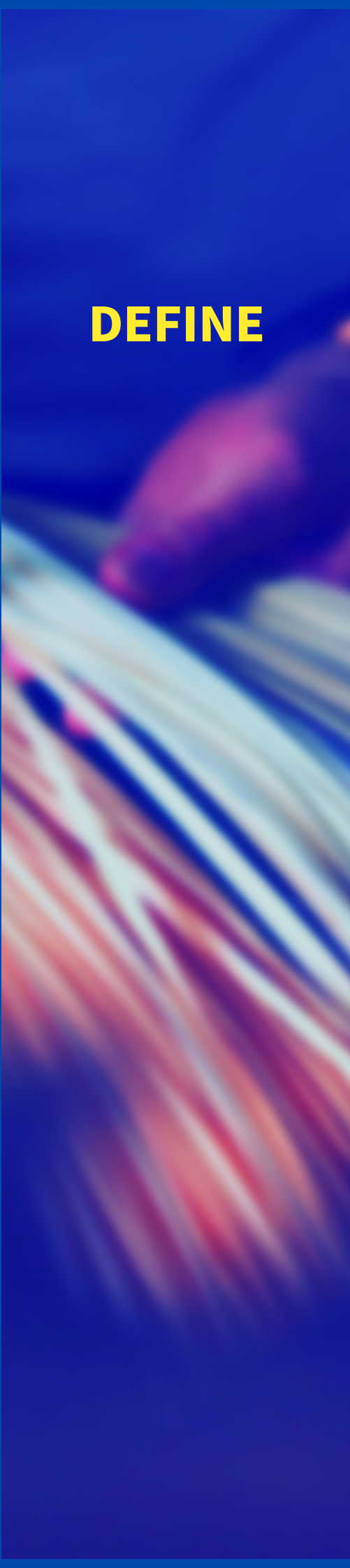
In order to make the **choice** that would be the best fit with IKEA's needs, a **meeting** was **organised** with some of the **culture experts** I talked to throughout this project. This was a great moment, because all of the reactions were **very positive**.

From this meeting it was very clear which concept IKEA preferred. They believed that concept one was the most strategic and probably the most effective. They also liked concept two, because of its simplicity. **But, concept three was the one they preferred the most**. It unleashed something inside of them and **inspired** them greatly.

Because this solution should inspire coworkers to use **value based decision making**, this method was also used to pick a concept. Two Harris profiles were made and from those profiles concept 3 also came out on top.

A close-up photograph of a hand pointing at a stack of blue pipes. The pipes are stacked horizontally, and the hand is pointing at the top pipe. The background is blurred.

DISCOVER

A close-up photograph of a hand pointing at a stack of colorful pipes. The pipes are stacked horizontally, and the hand is pointing at the top pipe. The background is blurred.

DEFINE

A close-up photograph of a hand pointing at a stack of colorful pipes. The pipes are stacked horizontally, and the hand is pointing at the top pipe. The background is blurred.

DEVELOP

DELIVER



Chapter 17.

Scenario

In this chapter the first of four parts of the final concept is described: the story. The moment of the intervention is detailed and the story that the manager will tell the coworker is described. Lastly design criteria for the story are given.

17.1 User scenario

Because the moment of the intervention is short but important, a wwwwhh method is used to describe the user scenario.

Who

The new coworker and his/her direct manager

Where

In a private room inside the IKEA store.

What

The manager tells a story and hands the co-worker the key values box

When

Before the first day of work, or at the beginning of that first day.

Why

The make sure the first contact moment between the coworker and the key values leaves a lasting and positive impression.

How

The manager tells a story following the storyline described in the next paragraph. He then hands over the key values box, described in chapter 15. Inside the key values box is the coworker clothing with the values printed inside.

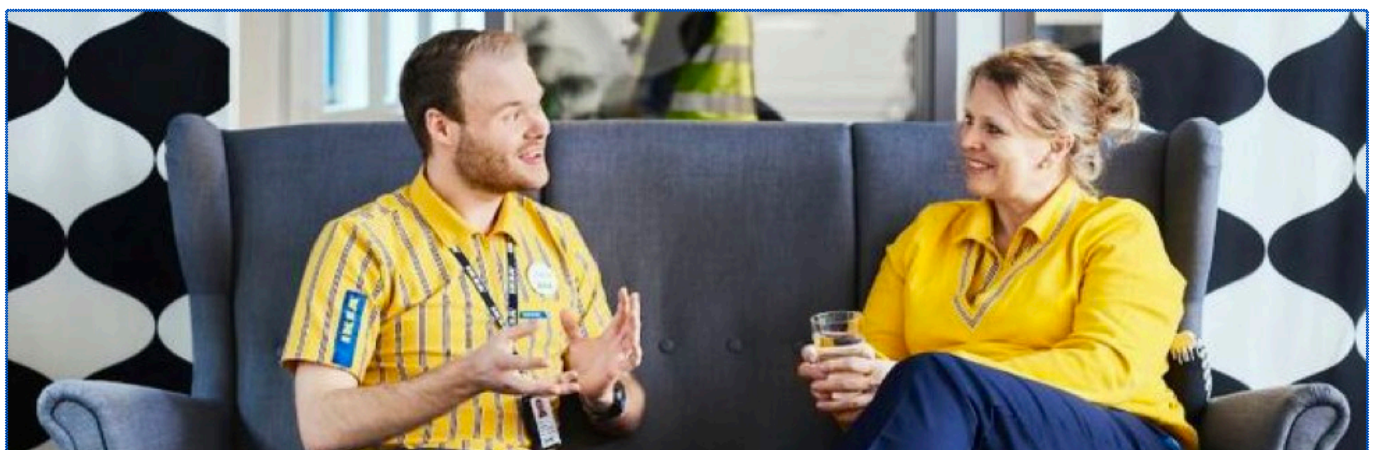


Figure 17.01: Welcoming the new coworker (IKEA, 2019)

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the final concept is a strategic intervention in the first weeks of work for a new IKEA sales employee, that consists of four parts, as can be seen in figure 17.02. Each

part is detailed in its own chapter. Because all of these parts need to be detailed by IKEA itself before they can be implemented and because of time restraints, this report focusses on each part on a concept level.

For each part a set of criteria is described that would need to be met if the parts would be detailed further. The make the concept clearer, each part also contains a design proposal of what that part could look like.

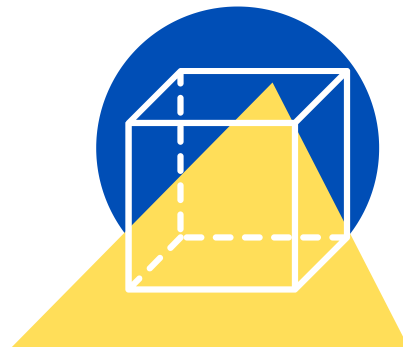


The Story

The story the manager tells when he/she hands over the key values box. This story should be personal, but should also follow a certain storyline in order to be effective.

The Box

The box that contains the key values and the clothing. The design should match IKEA's tone of voice and should look like a lot of love and attention went in to the design.



The Letter

The letter that is inside the key values box that explains where the key values come from and welcomes you into the IKEA family. This should be written by either the CEO or the Kamprad family.

The Clothing

The IKEA clothing with the key values printed on the inside. The clothing should also already have a name tag on there with the coworkers name.



Figure 17.02: The final intervention

17.2 Manager scenario - The Story

As mentioned in the previous paragraph it is important that the first contact moment between the coworker and the key values leaves a lasting and positive impression. It matters what the manager tells the coworker when handing him the key values box. Therefore, this speech is also designed. The managers do not have to learn it word by word by heart, as that makes it less personal. But they should all follow the same storyline as indicated below.

The storyline

Welcome to IKEA. Our company has grown from a single store in Almhult Sweden to a multinational company with more than 500 stores over more than 50 different countries! By offering affordable products to the many people, we have won over the hearts of more than a billion people which is one out of every eight people in the world! The IKEA catalog is the most printed book in the world, with even more copies than the bible and we are well on our way to become one of the first climate positive companies in the world in 2030. IKEA is a company that comes up for the rights of minorities and people neglected by society, regardless of the background and we are always committed to making the good things in life better and more affordable for everyone. But enough about us, let's talk about you..

By becoming a coworker, you are becoming part of this family, the IKEA family. Because of this we want to share with you, the things that we believe have made our



company something to be proud of. The concepts that we will share with you today, have taken several decades to develop and are important for everyone in our company, so we ask you to view them with responsibility and let them be your guide at IKEA. We believe it can inspire you make good decisions by giving you a strong understanding of what our company is about and what makes it work. We hope that you will embrace them and that they will help you form warm relationships with your colleagues and will bring you great success!

As a company we have done some amazing things in the past, but now that you are joining us, we believe that we can do so much more. We are certain that you will help us make a better future for the many people by being yourself, getting inspired by the things you find in this box and by bringing joy to our colleagues and customers. Welcome to the family!



17.3 Criteria - The Story



The story should be:

Conveyed in a one on one session between the manager and the new coworker

Be no longer than 5 minutes

Have a personal touch, contain elements from the managers own experience

Loosely follow the storyline provided by IKEA

Inspire a feeling of pride and welcomeness

Be held before the first work day of the coworker

Make the intervention feel like a special moment

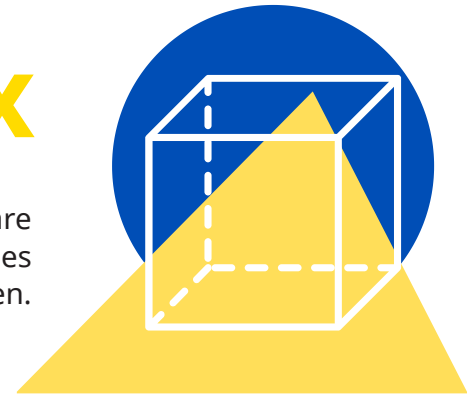
Make the key values feel valuable

Figure 17.03: IKEA coworkers (IKEA, 2019)

Chapter 18.

The key values box

In this chapter the second and third element of the final concept are described: the key values box and the letter inside that box. Examples for the design of the box are shown and the design criteria are given. Afterwards the same happens for the letter.



18.1 The box

As mentioned before, at the moment of the intervention, the co worker receives a gift.

Inside this gift is their first IKEA co worker t-shirt, surrounded by the key values. The design of this box should reflect a moment of importance and should therefore look like it was created with care. In this chapter multiple examples for the design are given.

Starting with a design idea to lengthen the experience of unpacking the box. This box is designed with multiple layers, that unfold as it is opened. In figure 18.01 on the right, you can see the box as it is still closed. Under the ribbon is

says' The IKEA key values'.

In figure 18.01 on the left, a render of the top view of the box. When you take the lid of the box off, the sides fold open en the top view would look like figure 18.01 on the right, revealing the IKEA values in a fun and interactive way. Inside there is another smaller box that says' these coworkers have preceded you'. The user has to take the lid of again, and another eight cards become visible (figure In figure 18.02 on the left), falling of the side and revealing yet another box. On these eight cards eight personal quotes/stories from coworkers that represent the key values are printed. The last box in the middle says ' and now it's up to you'. After taking the

third and final lid of the box, an IKEA shirt becomes visible, a name-tag with the coworkers name is already pinned on top, and it reveals the key values that are printed inside (figure 18.02 on the right). On top on the shirt there is a letter, that can be read in the next paragraph.

This design is fun and interactive, but might not fit with the value of simplicity enough.

A second, much more simple design can be seen in figure 18.3 on the next page. I designed this box to resemble the IKEA's culture symbol 'the flat pack'. The simple cardboard appearance showing off IKEA's modesty. Inside there is still a letter and a coworker t-shirt.



Figure 18.01: Step 1 and 2 of the key values box

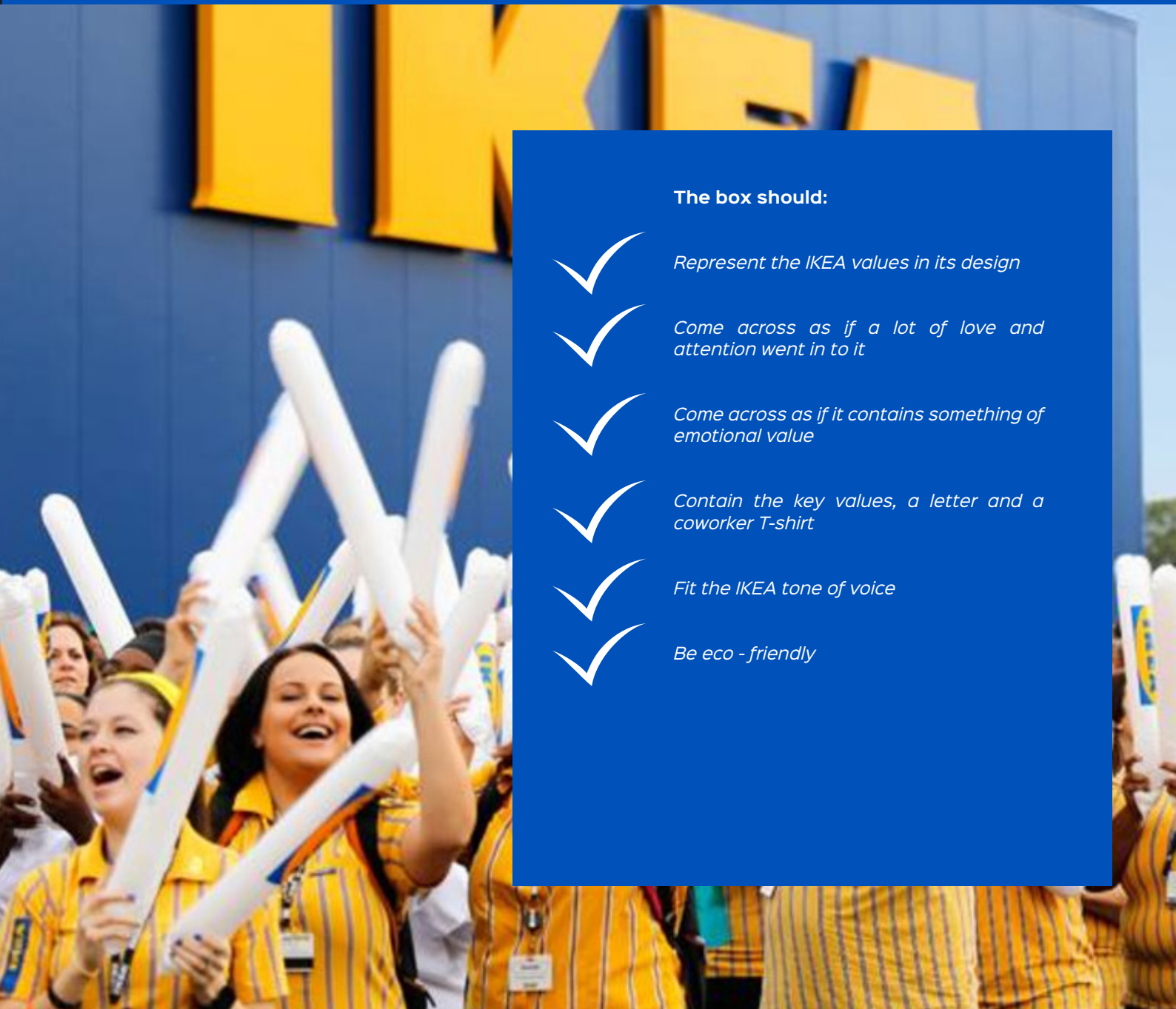


Figure 18.02: Step 3 and 4 of the key values box



Figure 18.03: The redesign of the key values box

17.2 Criteria - The box



The box should:



Represent the IKEA values in its design



Come across as if a lot of love and attention went in to it



Come across as if it contains something of emotional value



Contain the key values, a letter and a coworker T-shirt



Fit the IKEA tone of voice

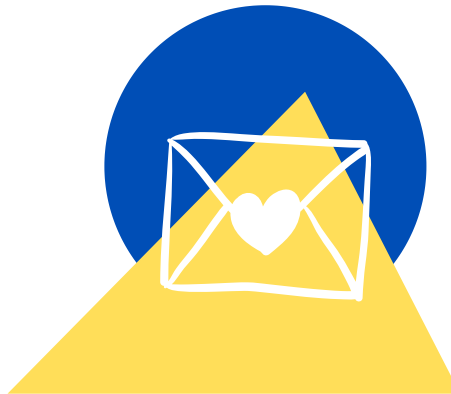


Be eco - friendly

Figure 18.04: IKEA coworkers (St. Louis Business Journal, 2016)

18.3 The letter

Inside the box, there is a letter to accompany the IKEA clothing. The coworker can read it at the moment of opening the box, but can also decide to read it later at home. It is supposed to be an inspiration, as well as an explanation of our key values. It is designed to provoke a feeling of pride and inclusion. The example letter shown is designed based on the book about Ingvar Kamprad: “the IKEA story”, and my personal experience with the brand. In the end it should be written and signed by a member of the Kamprad family.



The example letter

Dear coworker,

It was in the stone filled moraine in the south of Sweden that a boy, the offspring of a family of German immigrants, was born on the 30th of March 1926. He grew up in a time of scarcity and unemployment, in a place where survival was not a given, and started his mail-order business in the middle of an ongoing war. The strongest unit of cooperation in the world is the family and it is for this reason that, in the challenging environment in this region, the Ingvar Kamprad Elmtaryd Agunnaryd (IKEA) business started off as a family business at the Elmtaryd farm near the village of Aggunaryd and, in doing so, the business itself became a family, which it has remained ever since.

*By becoming a coworker, you are becoming part of this family, the IKEA family. And, like in any other family, this means that there are certain principles that we abide to, such as, “clean up after yourself” and “never take more than you can eat”. We **give and take responsibility** by trusting others to do the right thing and remaining positive at all times. You can expect that we, as your coworkers, will always be there for you to lend a helping hand, both in your professional and personal life. In a family we are all equally important and we address each other with our first names, to avoid unnecessary pretensions and make sure that everyone knows and feels in the deepest of their hearts that they are valuable to our mutual success. We claim that we don’t need status symbols. What we really mean by that is that setting a good example should be the manager’s most persuasive quality. What you do is more important than who you are.*

*Each and everyone of us should **lead by example** by doing things that are important to us all and helping each other out.*

Ingvar felt that it was necessary to make IKEA a brand that was accessible to everyone. In his first appeal to the broader community in Sweden he stated: “To the people ... you must have noticed that it is not easy to make ends meet. Why is this? You yourself produce goods of various kinds ... and I suppose that you don’t receive much payment for them. No I am sure you don’t. And yet everything is so fantastically expensive.” Ingvar acknowledged that nice furniture was only available to the rich people in society and thought that this was unfair. Therefore, during his lifetime he continuously looked for ways to democratise design, by looking for smart ways to transport goods, such as our flat packaging, and determining the selling price of a product first before designing



Figure 18.05: A mock up of the letter

it. Our idea is to serve everybody, including people with little money. As a company we are very **cost-conscious**, because everything that the company pays for, is ultimately paid by the customer. By focusing on **simplicity**, we can avoid becoming entangled in in-transparent business practices and continue to provide a better everyday life for the many people. Simplicity in our behaviour gives us strength. Simplicity and humbleness characterise us in our relations with each others, our suppliers and our customers.

In contrast to many other large companies, we are a family managed company that is owned by a foundation. Because of this, we are able to forego short-term profits to focus on what is better for everyone in the long term. What is good for our customers is also, in the long run, good for us.

As a company we are therefore working towards being climate positive in 2030, which means that we will reduce more greenhouse gas emissions than our value chain emits while growing the IKEA business. This is possible, because we have a system in place with which we can trace every material from the customer to its origin. We believe that sustainability should be an affordable option for the many people. We **care for the people and planet**.

In our mission to democratise furniture and provide people with affordable living spaces that are pleasant to live in, we focus on the many people in countries around the world that experience urbanisation in rapidly growing countries. It is for these people that we design our storage friendly solutions, so that everyone can make the most of their living situation, no matter how small their house is.

At IKEA we intend to be an example of “good capitalism” by combining our business interests with the needs of the community. In addition to improving our business for the betterment of the lives of the many people, we also fund projects related to Climate Action, Renewable Energy, Agricultural Livelihoods, Employment & Entrepreneurship and Special Initiatives & Emergency response through the IKEA Foundation.

*Through the years, because of the many people and because of our dedicated coworkers, we have achieved continuous growth, by being creative and thrifty **together**, and **renew and improve** our business by coming up with better solutions everyday. Creativity and believing in your work is absolutely a necessary part of success. We are not afraid of trying new things and we try to be **different with a meaning** by questioning existing solutions and daring to make mistakes. The word impossible has been and must remain deleted from our dictionary.*

By staying true to our roots and by holding on to our values, we expect to be successful in the future and make the world a better place by creating better and sustainable lives for the many people. A success we hope you will now share with us, as our coworker. In the words of our founder: “We still have a long way to go—or as I have written so many times, and said at the end of hundreds of speeches: We are just at the beginning. A glorious future!”

Welcome to the family!



18.4 Criteria - the letter



The letter should:

- ✓ Be written and signed by a member of the Kamprad family
- ✓ Be designed to provoke a feeling of pride and inclusion
- ✓ Explain the meaning and origin of the key values
- ✓ Fit the IKEA tone of voice
- ✓ Not be longer than 1,5 pages
- ✓ Be printed on eco-friendly paper
- ✓ Have an informal en personal tone of voice
- ✓ Be updated every year to stay current

Figure 18.06: IKEA coworkers (Huppert, 2018)

Chapter 19.

The Clothing

In this chapter the last of four parts of the final intervention is described: the new design for the IKEA clothing. The different designs that were considered are shown and a proposal for a final design is chosen. Lastly the design criteria are given again.



19.1 Brainstorming for designs

IKEA advised me to look outside of the current visuals of the key values, in order to design the new coworker clothing. Because I am not a graphic designer, I consulted a lot of experts. I tried to find designers online that I liked, from all over the world. And did online and offline sessions with them, depending on their preferences and location. The designs shown in this chapter were created by them or with their help. Because it was such a big group of designers, their credentials and the design they worked on can be found in appendix 05 and 06.

In this chapter you can see some examples of the design we came up with, and even more can be found in appendix 07.

Note: In many examples the design is shown on the OUTSIDE of the clothing. This is just for illustration purposes, the final design will always be printed on the INSIDE of the clothing!

Disclaimer: These designs were created in creative sessions without restrictions. Many of these designs do not completely comply with IKEA's regulations regarding, for example, the IKEA logo. These just serve as a form of inspiration and should be revised before they would actually be used.



Figure 19.1: Example 1



Figure 19.2: Example 2



Figure 19.3: Example 3



Figure 19.4: Example 4



Figure 19.5: Example 5

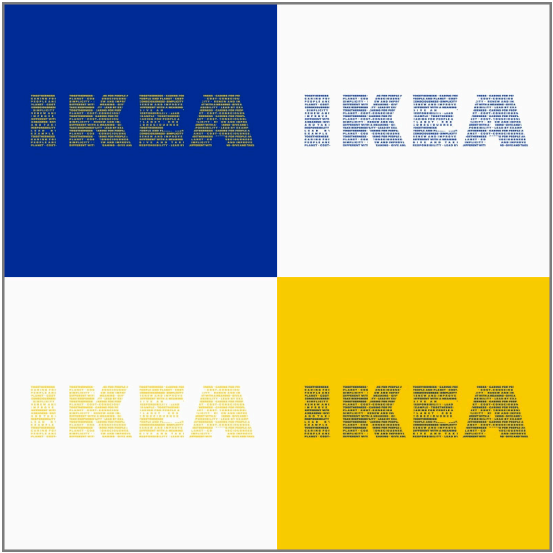


Figure 19.6: Example 6

Figure 19.7: Example 7

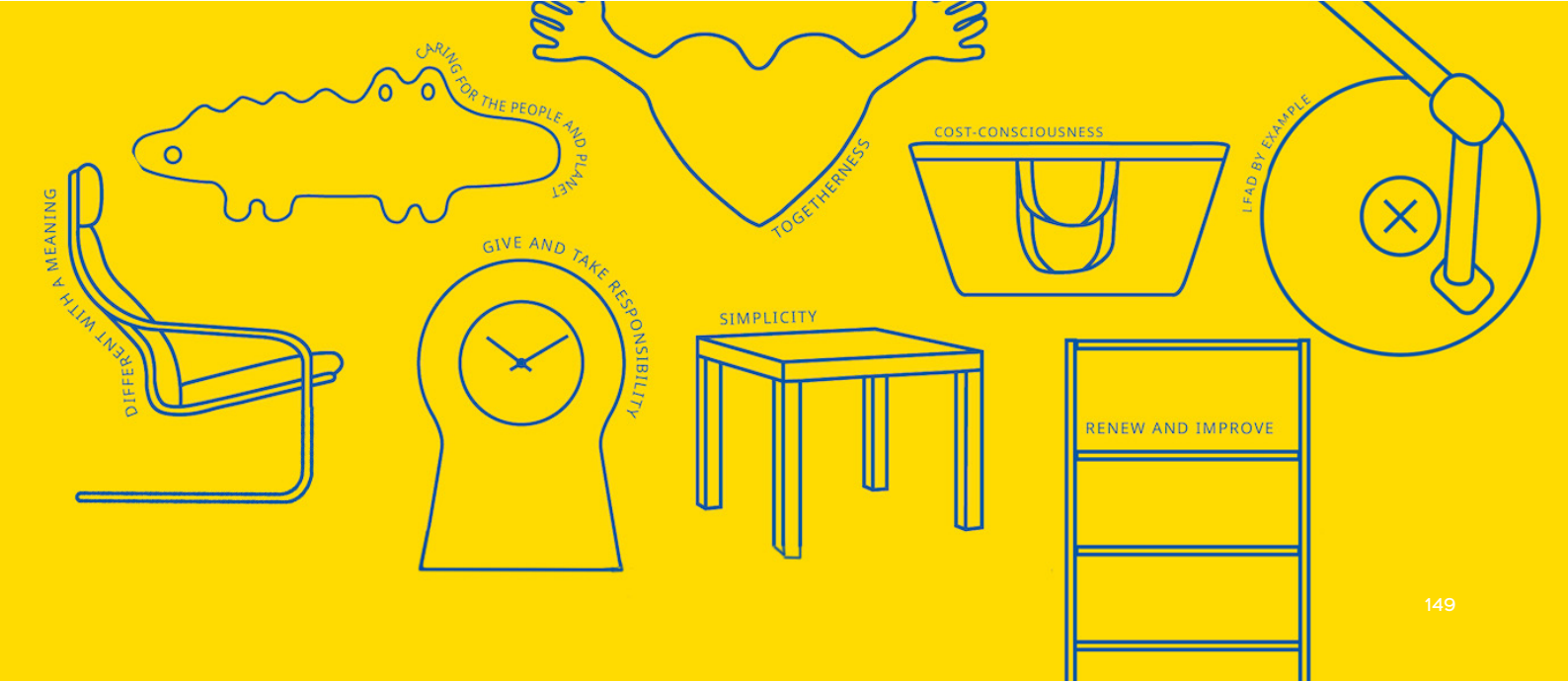




Figure 19.8: Example 8



Figure 19.9: Example 9



Figure 19.10: Example 10



Figure 19.11: Example 11



Figure 19.12: Example 12



Figure 19.13: Example 13



Figure 19.14: Example 14



Figure 19.16: Example 16



Figure 19.17: Example 17

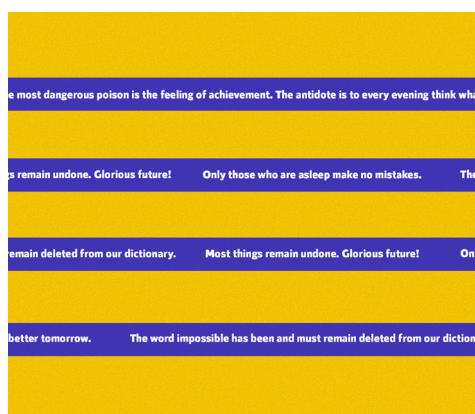


Figure 19.15: Example 15



Figure 19.18: Example 18

TOGETHERNESS • CARING FOR PEOPLE AND PLANET • GIVE AND TAKE RESPONSIBILITY • LEAD BY EXAMPLE • RENEW AND IMPROVE • COST-CONSCIOUSNESS • DIFFERENT WITH A MEANING • **SIMPLICITY**

People
furnishing meaningful Simplicity honest outcome possible

empathic beautiful TRUST legions-togetherness GERTY's challenge
quality road! PROBABLY shared humanistic possible helpful
BETTER COWAY different
inspiration
responsibility
CONCRETE CREATIVITY
CEPTIVE comfortable Caring for planet togetherness
POSITIVE attitude HOME
growth development positive enthusiasm
LEAD forward-looking Caring for people
straightforward
CONSCIOUSNESS
NEEDS
Enslavement heritage
Experiment better make
LOW graded
NICE
FUN

RENEW AND IMPROVE

CARING FOR PEOPLE AND PLANE

DIFFERENT WITH A MEANING

COST-CONSCIOUSNESS

LEAD BY EXAMPLE

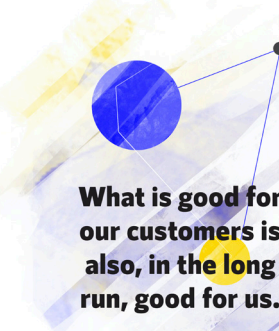
SIMPLICITY

GIVE AND TAKE RESPONSIBILITY

RENEW AND IMPROVE
DIFFERENT WITH A MEANING
GIVE AND TAKE RESPONSIBILITY
TOGETHERNESS
SIMPLICITY
CARING FOR PEOPLE AND PLANE
COST-CONSCIOUSNESS
LEAD BY EXAMPLE



**RENEW AND IMPROVE
DIFFERENT WITH A MEANING
GIVE AND TAKE RESPONSIBILITY
TOGETHERNESS
SIMPLICITY
CARING FOR PEOPLE AND PLANE
COST-CONSCIOUSNESS
LEAD BY EXAMPLE**



**What is good for
our customers is
also, in the long
run, good for us.**

151

19.2 The clothing

For the final design example I have chosen something subtle. It does not use the name IKEA or the IKEA logo, since the rules surrounding that logo are very strict. This design represents simplicity. I wanted the design to secretly show on the outside as well, without the customers knowing it. By

communicating the + sign together with the values in both the box and the clothing, coworkers will start to recognise this as a symbol for our key values. However by placing and colouring on the outside the customer will think it's a reference to the Swedish flag.

This gives the coworker a feeling of the VIP backstage experience I was going for with this intervention.

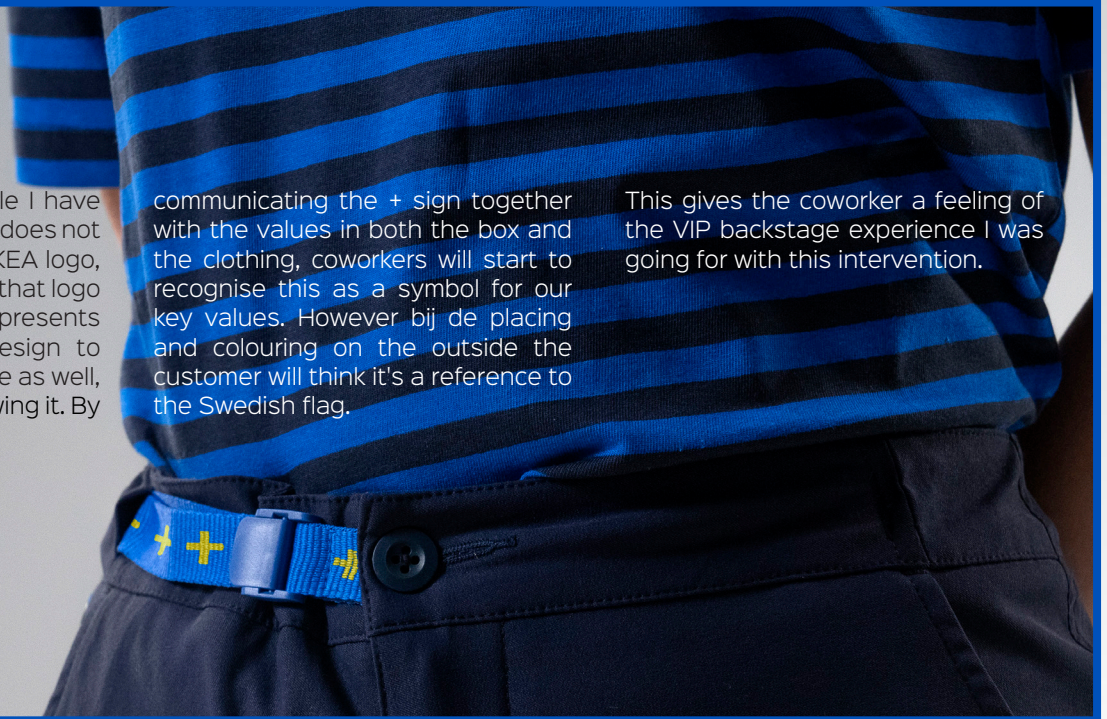




Figure 19.30: The final clothing design



Figure 19.31: More examples of the final design

19.3 Criteria - The clothing



The clothing design should:

- ✓ Not intervene with wearing comfort
- ✓ Be designed to provoke a feeling of pride and inclusion
- ✓ Represent all the key values
- ✓ Fit the IKEA tone of voice
- ✓ Not be visible from the outside (unless this is intended)
- ✓ Be washable and durable
- ✓ Be simplistic
- ✓ Be a match with the key values box

Figure 19.32: IKEA clothing (IKEA, 2020)

Chapter 20.

The final intervention

In this final chapter some promotional material is shown, including a video and two poster proposals.

20.1 The video

The goal of the video was mainly to inspire. It should be used to complement a presentation in which the project is explained. But should also be able to work on its own. So that it can be shown to IKEA coworkers who quickly want to know what this project is about.

It should make the person watching excited about this project and leave them wanting to know more. On this page you can see several screenshots of this video.

The posters on the next two pages should have the same effect. I've kept them simplistic to fit IKEA's tone of voice and made the people the centre of attention. As I believe that this is what this culture is all about after all: the people.

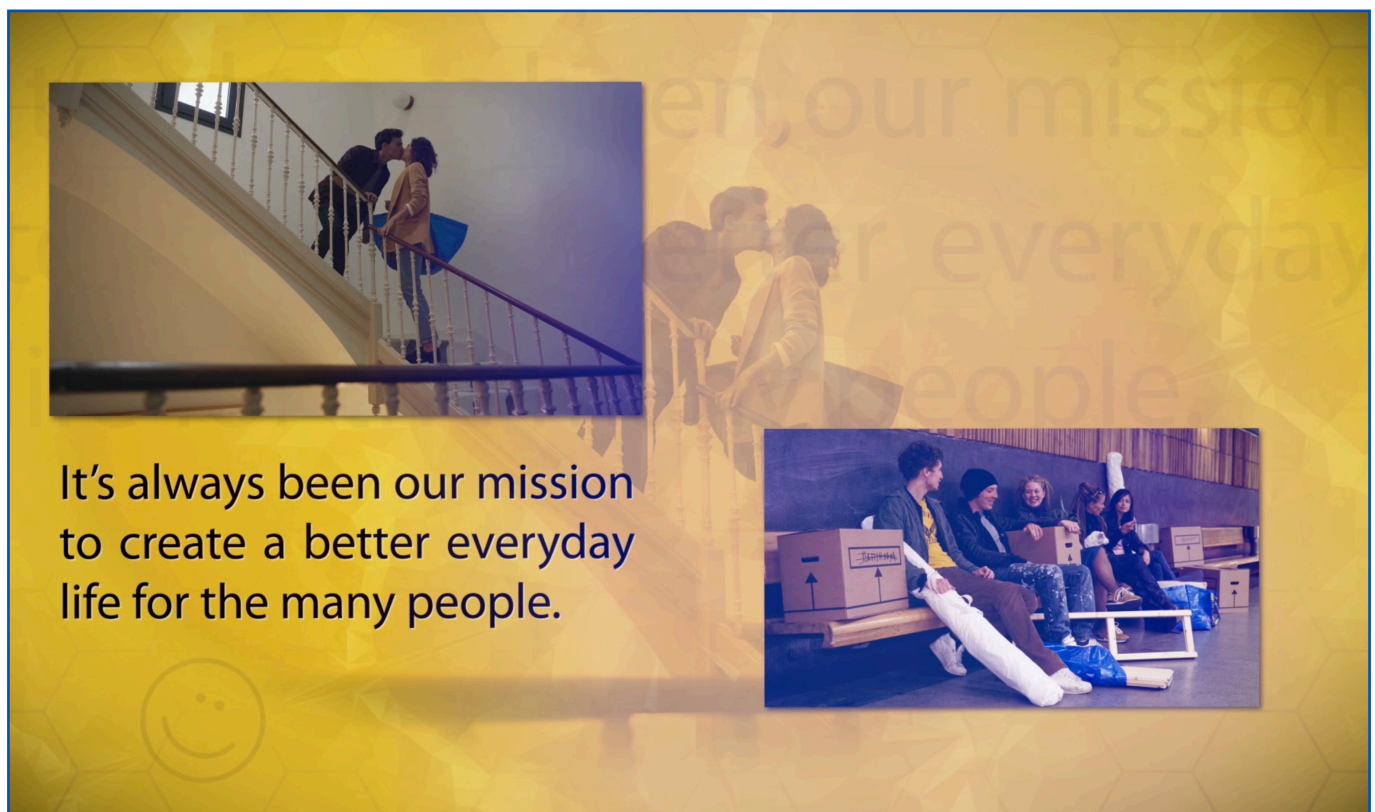


Figure 20.01: A screenshot of the video, showing IKEA's mission

We are certain that
you will help use
create a better future
for the many people



Figure 20.02: Screenshot of the video 2

After this talk you also receive:
A key values box with a letter
inside signed by the Kamprad
famil



Figure 20.03: Screenshot of the video 3

20.2 The posters



Figure 20.04: A poster proposal of the final intervention 1

Figure 20.05: A poster proposal of the final intervention 2 ->



THE HEART OF IKEA



Main Take-aways

17-20

The final concept is a **strategic intervention in the first weeks of work for a new IKEA sales employee**.

It revolves around the moment this coworker gets his IKEA coworker clothing, as this is a moment that is often perceived as 'the moment you become part of IKEA'.

The concept consists of four parts. For each part a **list of design criteria** and a **design example** was given.

1. The story the manager will tell the new coworker.

The first contact moment between the coworker and the key values should leave a lasting and positive impression. Therefore, this speech that is given when handing over the box is also designed. The managers do not have to learn it word by word by heart, as that makes it less personal. But they should all roughly follow a given storyline, about how happy IKEA is with the new coworker.

2. A key values box

Two designs are given for this part. One elaborated and one simplistic version. The key values box should at least contain all eight key values, a letter and a coworker t-shirt and look like a lot of attention went in to it.

3. The new design of the IKEA clothing.

A thorough design process was held in order to design the new IKEA clothing. Lots of examples were given and one final proposal was done. This is a very simplistic design that secretly hints at the key values by means of a + sign, that customers can interpret as the Swedish flag.

4. A letter for inside the box.

To explain the key values origin and to one more time welcome you at IKEA, each box also contains a letter. This letter should be written and signed by a member of the Kamprad family, but an example letter is also shown.

The final intervention can be communicated in different media forms. **A poster and a video** were made to complement this report.

Recommendations

On this page project recommendations for the future are given. The most important thing for the successful continuation of this project, is that the bottom-up approach is kept. When this intervention would be detailed and tested, the sales coworkers should be included throughout every step of the process. Furthermore, possible implementation horizons are explained.

The final idea is now detailed and the time for my thesis is up. However, this might not be the end of this project. In one month I will present these ideas to the entire culture and learning department of inter IKEA systems and share my ideas. In this chapter I will write some recommendations about how this project could continue.

1st horizon - IKEA Delft

In order to be tested, all the designs should be checked, altered and approved by an IKEA executive. Especially the design for the IKEA clothing will need very thorough approval before a prototype can be made. The Kamprad letter can first be written and signed by the IKEA Delft store manager, to have it ready for testing sooner.

If the design should still be altered, this should definitely be done by organising more co-creation sessions with the sales coworkers. Present them with this final intervention and improve the design together.

Once everything is approved a prototype can be made and the intervention can be tested at IKEA Delft. Now would be a perfect timing for that, as IKEA has had a hiring-stop due to covid-19. From September on, the plan is to slowly start this process again. So you have a perfectly isolated test group and can compare the results very effectively. As mentioned before in this project, IKEA Delft is a 'concept store'. Meaning this is the perfect place to have a first pilot, because if they do it right, the rest of the IKEA stores will follow.

At this point of implementation, co-creation will continue to be important. The danger is that this will become another office project, as soon as more office workers will get involved. Through every step of the way, the designers need to talk to the sales coworkers and hear what they think.

2nd horizon - IKEA NL

If this intervention turns out to be successful it could be implemented in all Dutch IKEA stores. In this way the transition and translation costs will be kept to a minimum, but the test group becomes significantly larger (13 stores).

3rd horizon - IKEA Global

After significant testing at IKEA NL, the project could be rolled out globally to all franchising partners. This is also when the Kamprad family can start writing their letter. The solution should be translated, but IKEA already has partners for that. The letter should also be re-written every year to keep it up to date.



(Ting, 2018)

Evaluation

Overall this project has been an exciting and positive experience. I have learned a lot, both on academic as well as on personal levels. I am ending this report with going deeper into some of the most important things I have learned.

Project brief

In my project brief, that was written at the start of this project, I stated that have always been more interested in the alpha side of designing than the beta side. And luckily, that is what I got, a project that centered around human contact. I got to explore the psychological, sociological and cultural side of things combined with a business perspective, which was a good match with my analytical and empathetic skillset. I've always wanted to be a strategic designer who was able to create human oriented solutions, and with this project that was exactly what I got the chance to prove. Now, I can say with confidence that I am able to do it!

I also mentioned that I wanted to use brand driven innovation, to create a solution that helps IKEA build a strong relationship with their employees right from the beginning. I think this was implemented successfully, as every design step kept IKEA's tone of voice in mind, and IKEA's values were used when important decisions had to be made.

I wanted to include the user as 'the expert on his or her experience', which I did by organising co-creation sessions and involving the sales employees throughout every step of the process. I enjoyed this process very much and will definitely use this method whenever I can in my future projects. After this experience I believe even stronger in the power of creating things together and that the role of a future designer should be; being there to help non-designers express their ideas and to translate those ideas into viable concepts.

Another thing I mentioned was wanting to do a deep dive. At the IDE faculty you often have to do so much in your short projects, that you research a lot for a little bit. You almost never have to time to fully understand a concept before you move on. In this project I was able to do a deep dive into working culture and a deep dive into co-creation. I enjoyed this very much. I've learned that it is no problem to let go of your project and to completely focus onto something new, as long as you set a timeframe before and keep to it.

Scheduling

My planning iterated quite a bit during the project. Mostly because of unforeseen events, such as Covid-19, that made some phases take longer than expected. However, I was able to adapt my planning. I learned from my mistakes and made sure to add some extra time for unexpected events in my new planning. After that decision my planning was a lot more realistic and I did not have to change it again.

With this project you get the chance to work very independently. In advance I thought I would have more difficulty with all that freedom than I actually did. I noticed that there were more than enough people I could turn to for help where needed, and plenty of literature I could fall back on when I got stuck. Working independently does not mean working alone. Talking and designing with so many people throughout this project is exactly what has taken it to a higher level.

Contact with stakeholders

In the beginning I found it a bit difficult to manage all my supervisors. Normally, in a project you have one or two and now suddenly I had four. I struggled with trying to please all of them, as everybody had different priorities. I really had to do my best to not lose track of what my own input was, but got better at it over the course of the project. In the end I was able to take what I could use from the feedback I got, but I was also able to make my own decisions. And more importantly, I learned to be confident about those decisions.

Perfectionism

Especially in the beginning, my perfectionism was something I had to deal with. I've learned to prioritise, and to take my own 'weaknesses' into account when making the planning. Making sure I had predefined dates on which I had to move on to the next phase of the project. Otherwise I kept going back to re-write and elaborate on subjects that were already done.

When I look back at the first stages of my project, there was a lot of insecurity about the direction of the project. The IKEA culture was an enormous subject and I really had to find my own direction. I still had to learn that you simply cannot do everything. But when I compare the time I spent on writing the first few chapters with the last, I have made big improvements. For the last chapters I gave myself a time frame in advance and made sure that I kept to it. It helped me continue with the project and come back to the material later when improvements were necessary.

This project has given me the confirmation and confidence that I can be a strategic designer and manage projects on my own, without losing sight of the end goal.

Altogether I learned a lot throughout this project and, above all, I am very proud of the end result.

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Figure 19.30
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Figure 19.31
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Figure 19.32
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Appendices

Appendix 01: The introduction training

This training is followed by everyone who is new to the store. So also employees who have already worked at other IKEA's. It consist of several parts:

Welcome
Introduction round
Information about IKEA and the store
Safety and security
House rules and code of conduct
Tour of the building
Receiving IKEA clothing

Welcome

The new employees enter via the co-workers entrance and wait in the hall. At the arranged time an IKEA employee shows up, wearing the IKEA store clothes (the recognizable blue pants and yellow blouse). She explains to the new employees how to use their coworkers pass to 'clock in' and guides them to the room where the training takes place. From the beginning all the facilitating is done in English. Very briefly the trainees are asked if they would like some water. Once in this room a second employee in a yellow shirt appears and the person who has welcomed you leaves.

My notes: It is nice that the new employees are welcomed at the entrance. It makes you feel welcome and protected, which is in line with IKEA's value of 'togetherness'. However, it feels very strange that this person leaves afterwards and another person takes over. Why does the person who gives the first talk of the evening not also collect everybody at the entrance? This would make it even more personal. Another thing that I experienced as negative: the room. The room was empty, very un-personal and most importantly; cold! Throughout the session you saw people shiver and by the end every single trainee was

wearing his or her outside jacket again. And not a single speaker said something about his or tried to improve it. The coffee and tea machines are turned off around 17 o'clock, even though the training start at 18:00. So the trainees can only get some water, if they get it themselves in a completely other room downstairs. Something that, in my opinion, a new employee will almost never do. As you are still insecure and new to the company and the building. It would be much better if there would be some glasses and water already on the table. Some hot water included on a cold night like this, and maybe even some snacks.

Introduction round:

The facilitator starts by telling who he is, what his current function is at IKEA en what his background at IKEA is. It is a personal story, also talking about his personal life a little bit. It is revealed that this is the Store Deputy Manager. Meaning the highest manager of the store after the Store Manager. After that all the trainees get to introduce themselves. Where are you from, what are you going to do at IKEA ect.

My notes: The story of the facilitator was very personal, that clearly inspired the coworkers to also tells some personal details if they felt like sharing them. He revealed he has quit a high position in the store, however did not use this to make his trainees nervous. No emphasis was put on the fact that he had a high position in the hierarchy of the IKEA store. If anything, it made the participants feel important en welcome that someone like that had take the time to introduce them. Some trainees expressed that they were nervous about not talking dutch very good. The facilitator was good at taking away these worries. "Delft is a multinational location. We are unique in this in the IKEA world. You will not need to speak Dutch".

Information about IKEA and the store:

This was an interactive presentation that the trainees clearly enjoyed. The facilitator asked questions like 'What makes IKEA Delft unique?', 'How many stores does ikea have?' and 'how many people do we welcome here every year?'. The organisational structure was briefly explained. Making the difference between Inter ikea systems and ingka clear. Explaining what the different offices in the building do and giving some fun facts and numbers. After that the hierarchy of the store was explained. Things like: 'how many managers are there?' and the number of departments inside the store.

My notes: This was a fun part of the training, but also the only informative part about ikea. I feel like this is an enormous missed opportunity to do something with the company culture. So many details are given, like how many people exactly work in sales, but nothing about how these people treat each other or any other mention of our key values.

The way however, in which this presentation was given was very good. It was personal, interactive, funny and interesting. One thing that stood out very clearly was that the dutch trainees were very eager to give their answer. They were clearly used to speaking whenever something came to mind and were not waiting until they were asked to speak. The international participants were far more quiet. The facilitator also saw this and pointed to them sometimes, giving them the opportunity to speak, which was very good.

Safety and security

A third person came in, being introduced as the safety and security expert. This person gave

powerpoint presentation. So the projector was started and the projection screen was lowered. The presentation started with the following message: 'At Ikea we think that making mistakes is not simply a need, it is a must. It is the only way to develop yourselves and the store. However, there is one exception, and that is safety.'

A movie is shown explaining safety at IKEA. You see a logistics-, a sales-, a food- and an interior design employee in an average day and see what they all do to keep the store safe. Afterwards there is an additional powerpoint presentation, explaining the different safety codes that you need to learn at IKEA. After this the security expert leaves again and leaves us alone in the room.

My notes: It is nice that's a safety and security expert come in. It makes you feel like they take this subject seriously. In the movie, I felt like you could clearly see our key values for the first time. they were not shown directly, but you could see they were taken into account when creating the video. Showing different employees from several departments working together (togetherness), seeing them taking action whenever they could do something themselves (give and take responsibility, lead by example) and many other details really reflected the company culture. I feel like this should have also been way more evident in the previous presentation (about IKEA facts). One thing that was a little bit un-inclusive, was that the video was in dutch. However there were english subtitles.

After this presentation the security expert left, but did not turn the light back on. At this point the employees could not feel any less welcome. They were alone, in a dark unpersonal room, without any food or drinks, and still very very cold.

Tour of the building

The trainees were told they would get a tour of the building. The person who welcomed us at the beginning came back and showed us around. However, the only thing we did was walk from that room to the room where they could receive their clothing. On the way we visited the coworker restaurant, the lockers

and the wall of managers (which I will explain later).

my notes

The tour should be way more elaborated. The building is much much bigger than what they showed us and I feel like only 20% at best was shown. This could also be a moment to transfer some culture. For example pointing out some sustainable solutions that we have in the store (value: caring for the people and planet).

Receiving clothing

The participants receive a bag with their name on it. It contains a pair of safety shoes, two trousers, a shirt and a blouse. After this they are told the training is over and the facilitator leaves.

My notes: The bag of clothing could be a another great opportunity to convey some company culture. As this clothing already is a strong symbol of the IKEA culture! They receive a bag full of IKEA stuff. Why not add something to the bag? The ending of this training was very impersonal. The facilitator just left the group alone. They had to find their own way out, even though they had never been to this part of the building before. I think it is very important how you end the first day for a new employee, because it determines with what kind of feeling they go home.

Wall of managers:

This was briefly mentioned earlier in this chapter and i shortly want to highlight this part of the building, as I believe it is a good example of the IKEA company culture. It is a wall with pictures of all the managers you might encounter in the store. This gives a great sense of personality and makes the managers very approachable. You can also notice that even the highest manager in the store still wears the same yellow ikea uniform as everyone else.

Length of the training:

In my notes I gave several suggestions of adding things to the training. A counter argument for these ideas might be that the training should not be too long, because it

might be too much information for the participants. I however do not believe this to be true. First of all the training was scheduled to last until 21:00 and ended at 20:15. So there was plenty of time left to give extra information. Secondly it was clear that the participant did not feel the need to leave at all. They reacted surprised when the facilitator suddenly left at the end and they really took their time walking back to the entrance. Once thing that most people went back to was the wall of managers. Showing again that this is a really good functioning facet of the building.

Appendix 02: The coworker questionnaire



De IKEA bedrijfscultuur

Hej allemaal! Mijn naam is Jamie en ik werk bij de keuken sales afdeling van IKEA Delft. Daarnaast ben ik ook een master studente van de TU Delft die op dit moment haar thesis aan het schrijven is over de IKEA bedrijfscultuur! Als jullie een minuutje willen nemen om deze vragen in te vullen zou je mijn onderzoek erg helpen en uiteindelijk meehelpen aan het creëren van een fijnere werk omgeving voor ons allemaal! De antwoorden zijn volledig anoniem. Alvast bedankt!

3. Kan je er hier zo veel mogelijk opnoemen? *

Voer uw antwoord in

1. Weet je wat het begrip 'kernwaarden (key values)' inhoudt? En zo ja, wat is volgens jou de betekenis? *

Voer uw antwoord in

2. Hoeveel kernwaarden denk je dat IKEA als bedrijf heeft? *

Voer uw antwoord in

4. Op een schaal van 1 tot 7 (1 helemaal niet, 7 heel erg sterk) hoe sterk ervaar je een IKEA cultuur op de werkvloer? *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
IKEA Cultuur op de werkvloer	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

5. Waar uit zich dit het meeste in?

Voer uw antwoord in

6. Op een schaal van 1 tot 7 (1 helemaal niet, 7 heel erg sterk) hoe sterk heb je het idee dat jij de IKEA cultuur toepast in jouw dagelijks werk? *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
IKEA Cultuur voor mijzelf	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

7. Waar uit zich dit het meeste in?

Voer uw antwoord in

Volgende

Verbetering

8. Op een schaal van 1 tot 7 (1 helemaal niet, 7 heel erg sterk), hoe belangrijk vind je het om de IKEA cultuur te versterken? *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Instructie 1	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

9. Waarom vind je dit wel of niet belangrijk? *

Voer uw antwoord in

10. Heb je zelf een idee om de IKEA cultuur te versterken of zichtbaarder te maken?

Voer uw antwoord in

Persoonlijke gegevens

11. Bij welke IKEA vestiging ben je momenteel in dienst? *

Voer uw antwoord in

12. Hoe lang werk je al bij IKEA? *

Voer uw antwoord in

13. Bij welke afdeling werk je momenteel binnen IKEA? *

Voer uw antwoord in

14. Optioneel: Wat is binnen deze afdeling je functie? (verkoop medewerker, teamleider, manager ect..)

Voer uw antwoord in

15. Optioneel: Als je het interessant vindt om te horen hoe dit onderzoek afloopt, kan je hier je email adres invoeren. Let op: Dit is niet verplicht!

Voer uw antwoord in

16. Optioneel: Om onze cultuur te versterken is het volgens mij belangrijk om dit met de juiste experts te doen, namelijk de medewerkers zelf! Ik zou heel graag wat sessies houden om samen met leuke ideeën te komen en om uiteindelijk deze ideeën ook uit te testen. Is dit iets waarvan je het leuk zou vinden om mee te doen? Laat dan hier je email adres achter en dan neem ik contact met je op! Let op: Dit is niet verplicht!

Voer uw antwoord in

Terug

Verzenden

Appendix 03: Interview transcript sales managers

Dave Pomp (DP)

JO: Heb je zelf iets van een specifieke training of uitleg gehad over de IKEA cultuur en Key values toen je in deze functie begon of van jouw manager, en zo ja wat dan?

DP: In bijna alle trainingen die ik gehad heb binnen IKEA kwam eigenlijk de IKEA Cultuur en Key Values aan het woord. Het is toch de manier hoe we met elkaar omgaan, het bedrijf leiden, de manier hoe ik het gebruik in het dagelijkse leven. In eigenlijk alle leadership trainingen komt dit naar voren.

JO: Vind je dat het jouw taak is deze cultuur bij te brengen aan de medewerkers die jij managed?

DP: Wat ik belangrijk vind is om de cultuur mee te geven aan de medewerkers, de manier hoe ik werk, hoe ik met medewerkers omga, uitleg te geven over hoe IKEA is ontstaan of wat ze maar ook willen weten. Vaak kom je er al snel achter of iemand een IKEA persoon is of niet. Is dit niet het geval, zal deze persoon zich niet op zijn gemak voelen. Vaak meegemaakt dat mensen bijvoorbeeld van de bijenkorf komen en dan de IKEA cultuur opsnuiven en dit totaal anders is als wat ze gewend zijn.

JO: Denk jij dat je er direct belang bij kan hebben als deze cultuur versterkt wordt onder de medewerkers? Of is dit wel goed voor IKEA, maar niet direct voor jou persoonlijk.

DP: Ja, dit is goed voor IKEA. Maar heeft niet perse direct invloed op mij.

JO: Als jij een uur training beschikbaar hebt voor alle medewerkers. Waar zou je deze dan idealiter aan besteden?

DP: Aan trainingen die al klaar liggen om te geven op de afdeling, waar we door tijdsgebrek vaak niet aan toe komen. (producttrainingen bijvoorbeeld)

JO: Helpt de IKEA cultuur of helpen de key values jou in het maken van beslissingen als leidinggevende? En zo ja, hoe?

DP: Ik denk vooral de key values. Alle key values kunnen je aanspreken, maar vaak schieten er toch wel

een paar naar voren bij mij zoals simplicity, lead bij example of cost-consciousness. Maar dit gaat vaak al automatisch bij het maken van beslissingen omdat ik de IKEA cultuur al bijna 23 jaar meemaak.

JO: Denk jij dat het mogelijk is om de IKEA Cultuur meetbaar te maken? (Bijvoorbeeld door de coworkers te belonen als zij een key value laten zien in hun werk)

DP: Nee, is niet van belang. Dit komt sowieso wel terug in de leadership capabilities (Gedrag). Maar om hier nou een beloning aan te hangen, vind ik geen goed idee.

JO: Als we de IKEA cultuur willen versterken, moeten we dan volgens jou de sales medewerkers inspireren of de managers?

DP: Beide. Vaak zit het bij managers er wel al meer in. Je neemt dit vaak ook mee in het sollicitatiegesprek met een toekomstig medewerker.

JO: Ben je bekend met het materiaal dat beschikbaar is (oefeningen, trainingen ect) om meer te leren over de IKEA cultuur?

DP: Ja grotendeels wel.

JO: Wat is meestal de belangrijkste reden, wanneer jij beslist een cultuur training niet te gebruiken?

DP: Kan het de business verbeteren? Heeft het een positieve invloed op mijn team? Waar wil ik naartoe met mijn team/afdeling in de toekomst, welke training zou daarbij helpen?

Jeroen Karssen (JK)

JO: Heb je zelf iets van een specifieke training of uitleg gehad over de IKEA cultuur en Key values toen je in deze functie begon of van jouw manager, en zo ja wat dan?

JK: Toen ik bij IKEA startte ben ik een programma in gegaan genaamd IMI (introductie managers IKEA) daarin zijn alle aspecten van de geschiedenis, de values en de cultuur uitgebreid aan bod gekomen. Daarnaast kregen we daar een boek over de cultuur van IKEA en over Ingvar Kamprad.

JO: Vind je dat het jouw taak is deze cultuur bij te brengen aan de medewerkers die jij managed?

JK: Ja, ik probeer steeds vaker de verbanden tussen wat ik uitleg en de IKEA values duidelijk te maken. Het managen is daardoor makkelijker omdat ik het waarom we het doen erbij heb uitgelegd.

JO: Denk jij dat je er direct belang bij kan hebben als deze cultuur versterkt wordt onder de medewerkers? Of is dit wel goed voor IKEA, maar niet direct voor jou persoonlijk.

JK: Het is zeker goed als de cultuur en values breed gedragen worden. Als manager is dat alleen maar prettiger omdat ik minder vaak het waarom hoeft uit te leggen. Een medewerker zal, als hij of zij bij IKEA past, hier ook veel meer voldoening uit halen.

JO: Als jij een uur training beschikbaar hebt voor alle medewerkers. Waar zou je deze dan idealiter aan besteden?

JK: Ik zou proberen het dagelijks werk van iedereen te koppelen aan het waarom.

JO: Helpt de IKEA cultuur of helpen de key values jou in het maken van beslissingen als leidinggevende? En zo ja, hoe?

JK: Het helpt bij het maken van beslissingen (al zijn Zweden over het algemeen niet sterk in snel knopen doorhakken) Als je de 'kapstok' IKEA values gebruikt kun je antwoorden en beslissingen onder brengen onder een of meerdere van de values (mits het een juist besluit is)

JO: Denk jij dat het zou helpen om de coworkers te belonen als zij een key value laten zien in hun werk?

JK: Persoonlijk denk ik van niet, op die manier zou je met de verkeerde motivatie mensen proberen te behouden. Ik denk wel dat medewerkers die volgens de Key values werken eerder in aanmerking komen voor een hogere score in de beoordeling omdat deze daarin uiteindelijk de key values leidend zijn.

JO: Als we de IKEA cultuur willen versterken, moeten we dan volgens jou de sales medewerkers inspireren of de managers?

JK: Beiden, managers zijn ook medewerkers.

JO: Ben je bekend met het materiaal dat beschikbaar is (oefeningen, trainingen ect) om meer te leren over de IKEA cultuur?

JK: Ik heb in mijn 20 jarige IKEA carrière al veel gezien maar weet

niet altijd alles te vinden. Al staat de toolbox wel vol natuurlijk.

JO: Wat zou een belangrijk argument zijn in de beslissing of je deze training wel of niet besluit te gebruiken of aan je medewerkers besluit te geven?

JK: De toepasbaarheid in het dagelijkse werk. Alleen maar vertellen om het vertellen schiet het doel voorbij, er moeten connecties gemaakt kunnen worden met wat iedereen dagelijks op de vloer meemaakt met collega's, klanten, managers en de range

Appendix 04: Interview transcript culture expert

Olov Hedlin (O)

J: Thank you, so more in the store than in the office, or?

O: Current observation is that. I don't have the statistics in front of me, but the IKEA culture is stronger and more lived in our stores, in our retail operation compared to different head offices.

J: Yeah, it's kind of a different interpretation of the culture as well, I think.

O: Very, absolutely.

J: Yeah, like the togetherness is by far the strongest value, like they really know it and they feel it and they think it's important, but when I tell them things like different with a meaning the reaction I get is always "Heh? What?".

O: That's correct. Cost consciousness is, well, lived.

J: Yeah, yeah. They call it being cheap.

O: You have ... [01:02] every single call ... [01:05]

J: Yeah, they know that and they know sustainability as well. But the togetherness is really the strongest one that comes out.

O: One explanation to that the culture often is stronger in our stores is that, the way we work in our stores would collapse, unless behind a store culture. The alternative is more loose, more controlled, more policies, more steering, and then the stores would become slower and the way it's setup and the way we collaborate is dependent on that strong sense of togetherness, that strong sense of trust. We step in for each other.

J: You wear the same clothes.

O: We fill up for each other. That strong sense of urgency and simplicity. No fancy theoretical discussions. Always being very cost conscious and aware of everything. Our customers will have to pay for it in the end if we waste. And the further way we come from

our customers, the more ... [02:30] that's our observation. Because then you lose the sense of cost consciousness. For example, ... [02:38] IKEA of Sweden. We are too far away to face the customer, who in the end has to pay for this.

J: But then maybe different with a meaning and renew and improve are stronger here than in the store, for example. You think that would be something that IKEA of Sweden takes into account when designing.

O: Yeah, perhaps on different levels, but absolutely. Because when you are on a creative role, of course you ... [03:18] it comes naturally, part of your day to day job. But there are numerous examples where there is so much to be done in our stores. Even though it's constant and everything is well-oiled machinery. Every single day there are things that can be further improved. We've seen this strongest in stores that are called VAB [03:51] stores. That means that they are stores that during a period are owned by the people. So they get parts of the profits. So if the store is doing well, the store manager and the store management team gets part of that as a bonus. So they are very key on constantly improving. And very much on there toes to make things a bit better. An update on some years ago, we were expanding these VAB stores, whatever that stands for, but independent. Today I don't know where we are and if that has changed, so you cannot quote me on that. But on your questions sort of bottom-up. That was actually how I also came to start working for IKEA.

J: Because you created the stories, right? The video examples.

O: That was an attempt from a bottom-up approach.

J: Because we're a very flat company, there is not a lot hierarchy. But still, Delft, I think, is like an enhanced example of that because they are so close to the office, but there is still kind of a sense of "we versus them, we are the sales team and they come up with what we think". Something someone said for example "I have often experienced

that the people who talk the most of IKEA culture understand the least of what this culture actually means. It is very easy to tell us things from your office, but all this changes when you are working in the store, talking to customers and actually have to work very hard.". So that is another example what I think they maybe need the sense of bottom-up that they feel like because when I asked them: "Do you have any ideas how this could become better?" they say: "We cannot influence it anyway because IKEA is so big and we are just a small part."

O: And that last point there, I can sense that anywhere you are even if you are working in a head office, you feel increasingly small.

J: Yeah, of course

O: Insignificant in such a fast-growing company. And that's an issue, that's a problem. That, I mean we know as a human that we, if you break it down and try to understand what is it that makes us engaged as humans, it very much comes down to two things. One is that we feel that we trust one another. We feel safe. Collaborating that is sort of the hygiene factor that needs to be in place. And then what really creates that higher level of engagement is the sense that you can make a difference. When you feel that you can make a difference, you feel that work is meaningful.

J: Yeah, you become motivated.

O: I don't think any organization has managed to solve that. Organizations tend to go from the centralization of empowering people moving decision making further further on from the lines. And then it's like that for some time and then you come to a point as an organization where you need to sort of bring everything together again because things are shooting off in all kinds of directions.

J: Yeah, all over the world.

O: So now you start centralize it again. And you can see that path turn into our biggest franchise, the INGKA group. They are right now in a strongly centralized movement. I

don't know if the CEO would agree with me. But right now they are centralizing a lot. Perhaps with the purpose of them being capable of decentralizing and unleashing power and agnostic later. IKEA is considered to be flat, a flat hierarchy. It has been like that for decades, is for sure our ambition. I would say many places becoming increasingly higher and higher hierarchies.

J: Yeah, it is also very hard of course, for instance, with the Asian culture. They are very used to hierarchies. Might be very hard for them to walk up to the store manager and greet him by his first name.

O: True. Yes, yes and no. I personally lived in China for six years. I agree. On the other hand the people we at that point had recruited to IKEA. Were slightly different from the normal Chinese.

J: Of course, yeah.

O: They came the search for IKEA and appreciated IKEA, stayed in IKEA because of this more informal flatter hierarchy. So they had the courage to, to a large extend, to raise their voice and to share their ideas. I would be afraid right now that we expand very very fast in China, in India, Indonesia. Because when we expand too fast, we risk recruiting anyone. With the risk that the IKEA culture becomes deluded, and we become more and more like any other company.

J: Do you think that the culture commitment can ever be mandatory?

O: That's a very good question. It was up for discussion some years ago. Are you familiar with what is called commitment [mandators? 10:18]? Not many people know. As a franchisor, it is one of a sort of a legal must.

J: But the culture commitment is hard to measure. But do you think it would ever be possible?

O: I got that question some years ago to investigate: could culture be a mandatory requirement? I did a very quick run around in the organization and asked various managers. I concluded then it was a bit like fifty

fifty. Fifty percent said: "Yeah, it probably must be mandatory if we are to secure the survival of the IKEA culture." They wanted to come to the point where managers are measured.

J: Exactly. They have a motive.

O: Another fifty percent said: "You can't measure culture."

J: No, that's the hard part.

O: If we should avoid becoming a religion or a sector, which is my favorite topic. I came from that field. A culture can never be mandatory, it has to be voluntary. We should instead focus on recruiting coworkers who like to work with us and who help us strengthen the IKEA culture.

J: I think it's very funny that when you meet people and introduce yourself to other coworkers, you always introduce yourself by telling how many years you have already worked with the brand instead of, I don't know, other companies maybe tell your background or something and here it is: "Hi, I have worked for eight years with IKEA." There is a lot of brand loyalty, I think.

O: Even though it's becoming less, I think. Ten years ago, that was a standard greeting phrase. Ten years ago people had worked like fifty years for IKEA.

J: That's insane. That's great.

O: I don't know the statistics, but I have heard that there is a slightly higher staff turnover.

J: Yeah, there is like fifty thousand new people every year. All over the world.

O: Yeah, you can say that on average the staff turnover is almost twenty percent.

J: Yeah, that is what I heard,

O: Which is not uncommon in a retail organization. The majority of turnover is in our stores.

J: Yeah, of course. Students.

O: [... 13:00] perhaps thirteen percent is healthy, that you need to have a fluctuation in order to create diversity and dynamics. So for IKEA that means, including our expansion plans, we are today recruiting one new colleague every seven seconds.

J: Wow

O: Yeah, something like that. Anyway, I think the question is bottom-up. If you knew my background, I came from studying a lot of religion, psychology. All these kind of topics because I focused already at university on culture. And I specialized on when you take culture to it's extreme. Sorry...

J: Don't worry

O: Sort of when you ... [14:23] fundamentalistic groups, I was quite curious to figure out sort of what is it that makes seemingly normal people go extreme. On all the mechanisms. And I focused on religious sects. Then as I started to study business. Some companies come out as having very strong cultures and IKEA is for sure one of them. So I wrote my master theses about IKEA as a religious sect.

J: Haha, that is very cool.

O: I was very critical. At the time it was posted in Swedish newspapers and there were TV interviews. It was crazy, because perhaps in a way you don't, at the time, criticize IKEA.

J: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah

O: It led to that I got paid a scholarship to continue study IKEA as a sect. My PhD studies. On that journey I thought that I actually didn't really know anything about IKEA. So I applied to a summer job at a store, to get sort of behind the curtains and I ran around with pen and paper and interviewed coworkers for a summer. Collecting materials. Then I pointed out that there are ... [16:00] tendencies. If you continue communicating IKEA culture in this way, it is similar to what you do in religious sects. When you use more feelings than logic. ... [16:15]. The rhetorical. Or when you allow tendency for manipulation,

where people start doing things that they wouldn't normally do, unless they were strongly influenced. Also the type of leadership that was cultivated...

J: I was just going to say also making God out of Ingvar.

O: In my case I wrote this theses and I was planning to do my PhD studies and I was packing ... [17:05] and ... one morning there was this gentlemen that came patting me on the back and asked me if I was Ollo [17:10] and I looked up and I said: "Yes, it's me" and he said: "We need to talk to you in your office". I was like "O, no". So I came up to the office and he came walking with another Swedish newspaper. And he pointed me on the article and said: "Is this you?" I was like "Oh, ooo".

J: Maybe...

O: I thought I am going to get sacked here. But instead he said: "You know, this is super interesting. We have several managers that have been reading your theses."

J: O, that's so smart.

O: And in that room, one of ... [17:50] are sitting. "We would like you to meet him." So I walked in with this news article and he was sitting there with my theses in front of him. He had particularly looked up a section where I was talking about story telling. That's a great way to avoid being a sect. Where you listen and document and use the many stories of the many co-workers and let the stories be the fuel for cultivating a culture bottle up. And apparently IKEA had for years been thinking of documenting the many many stories that are in IKEA, so they asked me if I would be interested to do that. And I was really tired of reading books. So I thought, sure.

J: Hahaha

O: And I more or less ran out of the room and booked flight tickets around the world and I kept spinning around the world for three years listening to funny stories from all across IKEA. I had a fantastic introduction onto IKEA. All the way

from Seattle to Moscow to Beijing to, you know. From the oldest pioneers to the youngest recruits. And often I was sent to China. So I worked hand in hand with Jesper Brodin, that is the CEO. And my first time there was to strengthen the IKEA culture in Asia. So I worked a lot in India, Vietnam, in China. And then six years ago I was asked to come work with IKEA culture worldwide. And my competence of strength is more on the knowledge side, so when I contributed trying to strengthen our understanding on why we behave the way we behave and to bring in the knowledge of ... [20:07], improve our knowledge of our culture values that is then fed in to training and learning solutions and different initiatives. We get ... [20:20]

J: Yeah, I have seen the digital version.

O: Okay, we have just a few copies printed but that is a summary on what we have learned so far on culture values. There are more of course but somber and also flirt towards the future with some content in every science, psychology, sociology.

J: Yeah, so the hormones and the nurturing and all that kind of stuff. Habit changing.

O: Exactly. Things that we're testing, to see if it's flying. And the way we go about it is that we are testing a lot of different perspectives. We facilitate a lot. We meet a lot of different groups, especially at IKEA of Sweden. And then I can quickly see whether this perspective is appreciated or not and then I can quickly say, okay that didn't fly so *whistles*. Something else might caught their interest and then I continue developing that.

J: And what is the biggest challenge that you face when trying to transfer or enhance the culture?

O: Good question. What could that be? On a practical level I feel personally that I get so much requests to come and facilitate and present. I cannot cope personally and there are too few others who feel that they dare to do it also. And what I conclude is that most likely is that ten/fifteen years ago, when I started

for IKEA, leaders and managers felt it was their responsibility and they felt competent to facilitate culture values themselves. It is not up to a specialist or a special group or anything, it is up to me as a manager. It is my responsibility. And I can increasingly see that managers are asking for help, asking for a specialist to step in. I don't know if it is that they don't feel equally competent today or if it's that they don't have the time or that there are other priorities. They ask for help. We try to solve it by developing learning solutions that often should be self-facilitative. But I understand that there are difficulties reaching out with these learning solutions. They are not used to that same extent as they were meant. The amount of requests to come in for us to facilitate is very high.

J: I thought that the last core business franchise meeting, the results from the happiness from the employees was not very good. Like that fifteen percent felt alienated.

O: In CBF?

J: Yeah

O: That's the worst score I have ever seen. Such a bad score.

J: That's kind of shocking. Only forty-nine percent of the people feel engaged with the company.

O: It's rock bottom scores. We are on the record. Hahaha. And then ask of course "why is that?". Last week all managers have the leadership ... [24:52] where they discussed that. I was skiing in France. I am not part of the management either. So I don't know what was said. My personal belief is probably two things. I don't know if that has been confirmed by others, but my belief is that the reason for that low score is the organization went through a quite heavy reorganization. And there has not been any follow up on how people felt about that. So now people, co-workers, leaders, took the chance to give their response in this survey about the reorganization rather than... So that can be one hand. Another reason is that CBF, core business franchise, we probably have the self-image that we should be the ones leading

by the good example. Our values should be on the top here. That's our expectation and then we operate in a world that's completely different. We are forced to operate in a system that doesn't support you or enables you, but rather prohibit you to live ... [26:24] core values. If you look, for example, simplicity. In many units simplicity has a score of zero. Meaning co-workers feel that we are way to complicated. So I think it's an expectation question. We expect to be really brilliant on values, but we operate in a world that's not. Then you get frustrated. Then there are for sure real issues and I think that low score tells me that there are basic hygiene factors that are not in place.

J: Hygiene factors?

O: Simple factors, low hanging fruit. Because if we think about ... [27:09] here at IKEA and human needs. That kind of high-level frustration tells me that there are basic levels of ... [27:20] that are not met. Meaning you don't feel safe.

J: You don't feel heard as well, I think.

O: You don't feel heard and acknowledged. Basic human needs. Those are not met. If you are higher up in the ... [27:39] between deep frustration. You are more sort of moving within more engaged and a little bit less engaged. That tells me that changing this figure shouldn't be too difficult. Because they are basic things. But I don't know what management tells.

J: No, of course.

O: I think they came up with a set of five concrete actions. One action I heard, which I appreciated, was that the management team themselves have realized that they could be a stronger team themselves. Because when they don't operate optimally as a team, it's sort of wrinkles waterfalls onto the co-workers.

J: That was also one of the things that came out, right? Low trust to your direct manager.

O: And now I myself also say ... [28:40]. And that is a constant

struggle. Logically we are wired for ... [28:56]. Because it protects us.

J: It also can enhance the store culture that they feel like they are a team against bad office people. Especially because they also have lunch together. There is a lot of friction between the two groups.

O: You have that going on all over IKEA. Another example is, our purchase teams sitting out in different countries working with our suppliers, with our products we produce. They talk a lot about we and then towards our developments ... [29:41].

J: Yeah, of course.

O: ... [29:43]. Of these people in Helmond and they don't understand. So slow and decisions are never made. And then you go to iOS and they say: "All these people out there, Portugal, they don't understand." One of the challenges is constant collaboration. How you collaborate and today it's increasingly difficult to meet and work face to face. We don't get the chance to build a sense of trust and build a relationship between one another. Instead we need to do that online and that is more difficult than when meeting face to face. But what we need to do is to find ways on how to build a strong sense of relationships online. But in this particular context, we wrote one text on remote collaboration.

J: Yeah, I read that.

O: Okay, what else do you want to know?

J: How important do you think the factual knowledge about our culture is among employees? Like do they need to know we have eight values, do they need to be able to name them? Because if you look at that, they score very low. I asked them what are the IKEA values and there were a thousand answers. Only fifty-five of those are actually values. But then again you can think how important is it that they know we have eight and that they can name them all. Or is it more important that they can feel the culture.

O: I don't think it's an either or. From a scientific point of view, our way of thinking, our way of talking and our way of doing are interconnected. Meaning, what I think will end up in what I say and what I say will end up in what I do. But also the other way around. What I do will influence what I say which will influence what I am thinking. So I think it's both. Most important is actually that you do the values. That's most important. Whether you can phrase the eight key values is than irrelevant.

J: When I look at doing, the most important value again is togetherness. That's actually the only one that comes up when you ask people: "How do you use the values in your day to day work." The things that they say is: "Working together", "How I treat people", "Helping my colleagues".

O: But on the other hand, if there are individuals or teams that are not doing or living by the values. One way to go about it is to teach them to think about them and to talk about them. Because then they will, sooner or later, show up in their behaviors. If we as humans don't have a word for something, we can feel it. But it's much more vulnerable and fluid. As soon as we can put a word on it, it becomes more real and it has a greater probability to show up in our behaviors and decisions. If you don't know the color blue, you will have difficulties to see the color blue. So if you know the value different with a meaning, there is a greater probability that you will actually start living different with a meaning. So I think it's both. But most important is to go and do it.

J: And are these trainings actually designed with the store employees in mind, or more with the managers?

O: Can be different, but very early on, when we designing a training or a learning solution, the target group is defined. Very early, if it's for managers or for particular specialists. In the field of culture values the absolute majority are focused on many co-workers. The challenge with that is that everything has to be translated to all IKEA languages and it has to be very clear about the amount of

time it consumes because a co-worker in store only has ten minutes. So you can see the way we have gone about it. ... [25:19]. When we are training a learning solutions called introduction to our IKEA culture. It is three hours long, but it is spread out over six months or three months. Meaning you do five minutes here, five minutes there and five minutes there.

J: But you do need your buddy a lot for that training. And that doesn't really work in the store in Delft, because I wanted to follow the training and then you have to go and ask your buddy and your buddy is busy and your buddy doesn't know what you are talking about and then it gets lost.

O: That's for sure a bottleneck and the same goes for another training called "onboarding". It's also built on buddy thinking. But of course when you don't have a buddy system in place.

J: No, no, it doesn't really work. Especially because the store has such long opening hours, so you hardly see your buddy because they always have a different working schedule than you. Plus also, like when I started in the store, I didn't see him for three weeks. So when I finally met him, I was already integrated in the department.

O: You have these challenges going on all the time. If you take this what's lying on the table. This is a printed book. Some people hate it, because it's a printed book. Today we should go digital. Everything should be on the phone. Why do you bother doing something like this? Another group of people say, "Finally, I am so sick of trying to consume all this content from a screen."

J: You stopped printing the testament, I heard. Downstairs and explore. These are the last printed versions. I thought it's so good and it's there in all languages and then you can take it.

O: What is also going in my argument is that, today there are five generations working together in IKEA. And I believe that the older

generation really appreciates the printed solutions. But if you look to what the books say in the world, it's actually increasing. It increased with two percent last year. So even we live in a technical world, a digital world. People read more books. So it's not either or, but both. Of course we need to go a hundred percent digital in order to reach the ... [38:10].

J: Yeah, and to be sustainable.

O: This is not environmentally friendly. But the IKEA catalog, and if you would use that technique it is produced and can be produced with zero CO2 emissions.

J: Yeah, that's true.

O: With completely recycled both paper and ink. So not even that is ... [38:38]. Of course there is a resource used here ... [38:45]. So my point is that when it comes to learning, it's tricky. And I am not an expert on ... [38:55]. But how to reach people and how to influence people and how to inspire people, how to challenge.

J: And give them a consensive to do it. Because the general motivation is: "I have already so much to do, I can't take on another thing."

O: One key factor then is that if we ... [39:20]. Then we don't need to invest so much in training. It would also ethically be in favor, I think. Because we don't have any right to change any person's values. It's up to each individual to choose themselves what they think...

J: You need to keep your own identity as well.

O: And third, it comes down to the most important influencer for strong culture, our leaders. And the importance to lead by the good example. So when you walk the talk and when you lead by example, that has to be the biggest impact. We have seen from numerous years that new leaders having increasingly difficult to create engagement around IKEA values and IKEA ambition compared to previous generations. So younger leaders feel increasingly difficult to how they should engage co-workers around our values and our ambition.

J: And they feel like they are being

judged on sales and not on culture, so they focus on sales. Even to the extreme. I visited a work meeting for the entire kitchen staff. A while ago the Tesla factory in Amsterdam burned down and a lot of IKEA stock was lost due to the fire and these work meetings are always very competitive and now it was like "Yes, they had a fire, so we are number one in The Netherlands.". And that was so against every IKEA value if you look at the fire we had here in Sweden and that all co-workers came together to rebuild it. Such an inspiring story and now this is actually the complete opposite. Like being happy that one of the other stores burned down so that your sales are better. I felt that was quite an extreme example. But probably because they are being judged on their sales and not being judged on culture or anything. And they actually also kind a discouraged me to follow any additional training or to learn something. Every time they said: "No, no, no, just focus on selling kitchens. Don't go ... [42:11]". That is not the way we want it to be. So that's why I am thinking like where in our chain does it get lost? Is it the manager or the kitchen manager ? Where in that system do we not care anymore?

O: Of course one of the points that you tend to come back to is conditioning our measuring. I have two children. What I put focus on and where I reward them when I give positive feedback on their behaviors I can immediately see that it influences them. And when we ... [43:15] are not very different from children, in certain ways. We are dependent on feeling acknowledged and recognized for what we do.

J: Rewarding works so much better than punishing.

O: The issue here is that culture values are not tangible and are hidden from plain sights. It's not really about what we do, it's more about how we do things. And how we do things can be done in so many different ways, so it's tricky to grab. It's been a long journey. Right now, just before our meeting, I was reviewing a set of culture quantitative questions that we are

going to launch. Which is one attempt of trying to help organizations measure the IKEA culture. Of course ... [44:28]. And there are no solutions on the market that, even though they say on the market that this is the best culture related tool you can ever... Not really. I was looking at the time and if you would enjoy, there is a lunch, I heard, going on. One of our colleagues is having his last day today. And there is a lunch out the golf club. So you can go there if you like to.

J: Yeah, sure. I don't know... I do have another meeting with Anne.

O: Is she here today?

J: Checking when and where?

O: Do you know if you were to go meet her face to face?

J: Yeah

O: I will call her.

J: Oh, okay.

O: Jamie, right?

J: Yeah, I was supposed to meet her here at two, I think.

O: two a clock?

J: Yeah.

O: *Talking to Anne on phone* Hey, Anne. I sit here with Jamie. *talking foreign language*.

O: You were going to meet her at two a clock. She had another lunch date apparently. I was booked for lunch either.

O: *Talking to other person on phone*
O: Join us.

J: Okay.

Appendix 05: List of designers of designs in chapter 19

19.1	Roy_A
19.2	BrandSupply
19.3	Trinyak
19.4	Lilie Design
19.5	Bryce Goodson
19.6	Fabrizio
19.7	Radial Labs
19.8	Fabrizio
19.9	Lilie Design
19.10	Mariem Hana
19.11	Lilie Design
19.12	Wim Deschuyter
19.13	Fabrizio
19.14	OlnaOlna
19.15	De Jonge Design
19.16	De Jonge Design
19.17	Ljalja
19.18	Lilie Design
19.19	Chris Petrini
19.20	Bartous
19.21	De Jonge Design
19.22	Bartous
19.23	Lilie Design
19.24	Mili G.
19.25	Fabrizio
19.26	Bartous
19.27	Bartous
19.28	Bartous
19.29	De Jonge Design

Appendix 06: List of designers of designs in appendix 07

A 01	Ljalja
A 02	Fabrizio
A 03	Lilie design
A 04	Mariem Hana
A 05	Mariem Hana
A 06	Lilie design
A 07	Radial Labs
A 08	OlartDesign
A 09	OlnaOlna
A 10	Mili G.
A 11	Lilie design
A 12	Lilie design
A 13	Marie Design
A 14	ACTIV
A 15	Ad Junayed
A 16	Marie Design
A 17	Cris Petrini
A 18	Brunex
A 19	Fabrizio
A 20	Fabrizio
A 21	Fabrizio
A 22	Curious Cabbage
A 23	Ron Shllaku

Appendix 07: Other designs



Figure A 01



Figure A 02



Figure A 03



Figure A 04



Figure A 05



Figure A 06



Figure A 07



Figure A 08



Figure A 09



Figure A 10



Figure A 11



Figure A 12



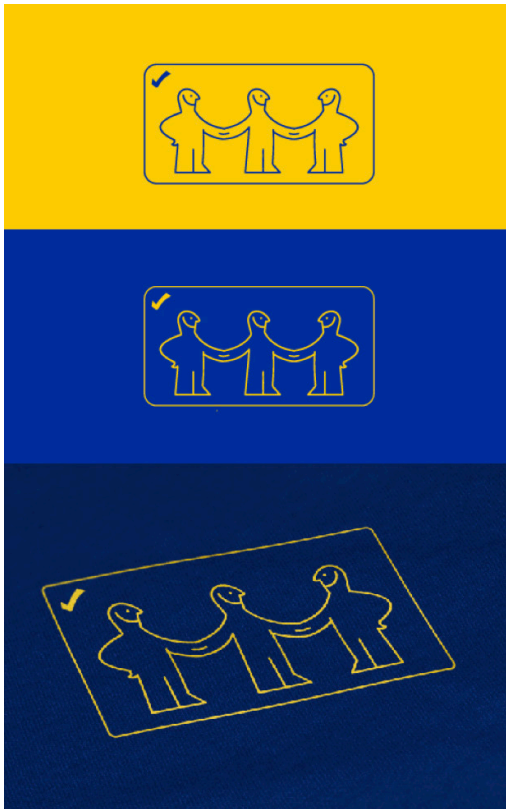


Figure A 13



Figure A 14



Figure A 15



Figure A 17

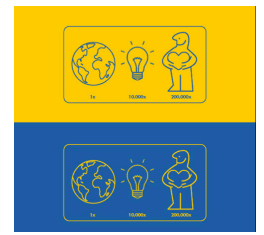


Figure A 16



Figure A 20



Figure A 18



Figure A 19



Figure A 21



Figure A 22



Figure A 23

