

# Design Thinking for Business Process Design

## IN THIS ARTICLE

## Design Thinking for Business Process Design

Do you want to design a new or redesign an existing business process in a workshop mode? At the same time you wonder how Design Thinking can make a difference in this particular context? Then the next pages are for you.

### Why Design Thinking in this context?

Of course Design Thinking normally accompanies a whole project from scoping till implementation and operations. However, in case a full Design Thinking process is not feasible on customer side it often it makes sense to execute "Design Thinking inspired Workshops" that leverage principles and techniques of Design Thinking.

In the context of business process design you might encounter some of the following needs (not a complete list) and Design Thinking can help you to tackle these situations:

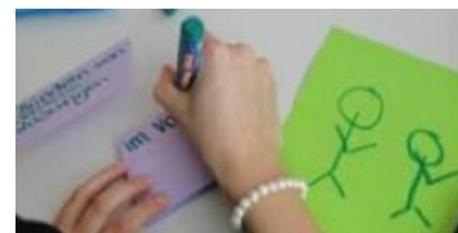
- You need to quickly gather knowledge about the as-is execution of the process (including process steps,

decisions, roles, data, tools, metrics, value contribution etc.).

- You need to establish collaboration across different lines of businesses and stakeholders for the process design.
- You need to get the buy-in from different stakeholders.
- You want to build momentum with the customer to raise the acceptance of the new process.
- You need to develop the to-be process design.

### Does Design Thinking replace ASAP?

No, not at all. All the templates and techniques shipped in ASAP are essential for good process design. Design Thinking is a technique that ASAP leverages for user-centric results in multiple contexts. Therefore Design Thinking nicely complements ASAP.



### This is for you, if...

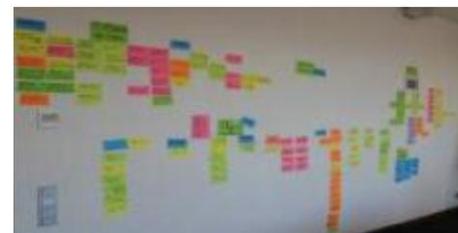
...you are in a customer situation where you are requested to design a new or redesign an existing business process and you want to understand how Design Thinking can be of value add for you and your client. You already have knowledge about the Design Thinking approach, principles and techniques.

### What you can expect from these pages

This article summarizes ingredients for success and techniques for a Design Thinking inspired workshop in the context of Business Process Design.

### This is not for you, if...

...you want to learn about Business Process Management and modeling in general, seek a modeling convention or an introduction to Design Thinking.



# Ingredients for Success

## Before you start

Before you start working on the process design, be aware of the customer's design principles and expectations. It is very important to understand whether the customer wants to implement a highly standardized process (e.g. Best Practice by SAP) or if the customer seeks for differentiation for the whole or parts of the process. This will define the starting point of your discussion. In the first situation you might want to start with a concrete proposal (best practice) and see if the customer can adhere to the standard. The second situation allows a more "greenfield" approach and generally requires more creativity.

The following ingredients for success will help you to understand needed actions and preparation that are necessary before going into a workshop. These involve

- Design Challenge
- DT Facilitator
- Team Set-up
- Agenda
- Research
- Logistics
- Time-Boxing
- Expectation Management

## Design Challenge

Defining the right Design Challenge is crucial as it scopes the workshop and enables the customer to assign the right resources to it. The Design Challenge should reveal the actual demand. That means a challenge called "Redesign the process" is not sufficient as it does not include the actual demand. A quick "why" might reveal demand such as "Redesign the process to enable mobile scenarios for employees in the field".

## DT Facilitator

Design Thinking in general and also leveraging principles and techniques during a workshop might feel odd to participants who are not used to it. Make

sure to have an experienced Design Thinking coach as a facilitator if it is not you. Projecting confidence and trust in the approach to the participants will make sure the team feels secure to head into the right direction.

## Team Set-up

Design Thinking always seeks for a diverse team set-up to ensure business viability, desirability of the solution for the people and technical feasibility. Hence having six developers in the workshop team isn't the recommended setting. Neither six end-users nor six project managers alone will lead to a thrilling outcome. Involve different roles like end-users, project managers, software developers, business analysts, functional analysts etc. in one team. This ensures different perspectives on the challenge and will lead to better solutions and concepts. A good team size is five to eight participants.

## Research

Understanding the context of the challenge is a central part of DT. This might require access to different areas of the customer premises. If research cannot be done onsite, ensure a participatory research set-up.

## Agenda

The agenda consists of the different phases of Design Thinking. Within each phase there are different techniques that you can use to create the needed output.

## Logistics

Make sure you have one room for the whole workshop, even if it is planned to run multiple days. DT techniques require a lot of wall space (look at the picture above, it is a subset of a result after four hours of work). It is very difficult to transfer all the data on the Post-Its to another location. DT workshops require a special set of material. A projector and a big screen is not enough (often not

even needed). Make sure you are picky about the material (to share a moderator's learning: "always bring your own stuff").

## Time-Boxing

Design Thinking is sometimes called a "messy process". And it is true, if you don't time-box each and every exercise, the discussions might get lost in space. Bring a large timer that everyone can see and time-box simply every item on the agenda.

## Expectation Management

People who are not used to the roller-coaster of emotions that come along with a Design Thinking set-up might quickly lose confidence and motivation during the workshop. Prepare your participants that this might feel different as it does stretch the comfort zone and that it is an intense and energy-sucking setting. A lot of participants always search for the  $a+b=c$  formula which is basically not there in a DT set-up.

## Checklist

Think through this checklist to ensure your Design Thinking workshop will kick-off without hurdles:

- ✓ Is a DT coach/facilitator available for the workshop?
- ✓ Is the Design Challenge defined, demand oriented and aligned with the customer?
- ✓ Is a diverse team set-up in place to ensure multiple perspectives on the challenge?
- ✓ Are the agenda and relevant Design Thinking techniques defined?
- ✓ Is the same room available throughout the workshop?
- ✓ Is the material list up to date in terms of quantity and sourcing?
- ✓ Are the participants aware of the emotions that come along with a Design Thinking set-up?

# Guidelines & Inspiration

The following sections show input, output, team set-up and techniques and agenda requirements. Please refer to them as inspirations and proposals as Business Process Design is quite a complex and multifaceted topic.

## Results and Outcome

The expected results and outcome of this workshop are:

- A common agreement of the group regarding the objectives and results of the process design
- Process design (on Sticky Notes) including
  - Process steps and decisions
  - Involved roles
  - Involved data (e.g. forms...)
  - Involved applications and other tools
  - Metrics (performance indicators)
  - Value contribution
- Action items and next steps

As post-production activity the outcome needs to be transferred to the common ASAP templates and with regards to the process design to a modeling tool (e.g. PowerDesigner, ARIS, Visio, Process Maps etc.).

## Team Set-up

A diverse team set-up in a workshop can consist of the following participants:

From customer side:

- End User
- Process Owner
- Software Developer
- LoB Manager
- IT Architect
- Business Architect

From SAP side:

- Solution Consultant
- Business Consultant with industry/process knowledge

## Input

The following things are valuable input for your workshop. Decide if you need participants to come with that knowledge or if you want to walk through the assets during the workshop.

- Customer expectation and objectives regarding process redesign
- As-Is description of the process
- Reference process description (e.g. SAP Best Practice Process) as to-be proposal
- Success metrics (maybe there is some numbers like "total clicks, time, transactions or roles until completion" etc. that need to be measured)

## Techniques

To ensure valid outcomes, it is reasonable to apply the following pattern to your workshop:

### Scope – Context – Ideas – Prototypes.

Scoping is needed to agree on the workshop results and to share perspectives before going into solution mode. Building a context for the challenge is necessary to lift the knowledge base of the participants and to build a basis for creativity. Ideation can start as soon as enough context has been created. Then low-fidelity prototyping will ensure early validation of your solution.

The following techniques can be used to support process design activities (the assignments regarding the above pattern are mentioned in brackets):

- Brain dump (Scope).  
You can use this technique to scope the design activities or also to reveal content regarding as-is process flow.
- Remember the future part I (Scope and/or Ideation).  
Use this technique to create momentum and a common agreement

within the group regarding the objectives of the redesign. You can also use it in a more creative set-up to reveal design principles for the to-be process.

- Research and interview techniques (if not done beforehand to capture As-Is state) (Context)
- Personas (Context).  
Use this technique to get a common understanding regarding needs, motivation and expectation of involved stakeholders (which could be end users but also process owners or developers etc.).
- Day in the Life of... (Context and/or prototyping).  
A derivation of "day in the life of..." can be used to describe the as-is process or also as a prototyping technique to define the to-be process.
- Brainstorming, REICC (Reduce, eliminate, increase, create, combine → see book "Blue Ocean Strategy" etc. for Ideation).  
Use for example the results of "day in the life..." and multiply given enhancements into it, e.g. "how might we decrease the cycle time of the process?".
- Low-fidelity Prototyping
- Remember the future part II (Prototype)  
This helps to identify relevant and immediate actions that need to be taken to come to the desired state.

## Agenda and Duration

The techniques shown above are already in a feasible order to support your agenda definition. Workshops like this can be run within one day however depending on the complexity of the process this might take longer. Often it is not possible to run a workshop in three consecutive days as there might pop up many open questions that need some answers before the team can go on with the process design.

Design  
Thinking  
for Business  
Process Design

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