| #1 Understand the needs	#2 Explore the Idea	#3 Develop the product/ service	#4 Implement the work	#5 Scale the potential

2.1 Develop the concept

What?

Exploring and developing the concept together with the users to help shape solutions that are something that the users want in the end.

Why?

A structured way to develop ideas makes the process of going from insights to action much easier. It also helps "putting all ideas on the table" and collectively and systematically agreeing on which ones to scrap and which ones to go forward with.

How?

Ideation and Concept Development is a process for groups to work creatively and collaboratively to generate creative ideas. Ideation tools can be adapted and customized to suit many different scenarios. They include basic principles for idea generation and several steps for groups to work with, as well as concrete steps for idea selection and development.

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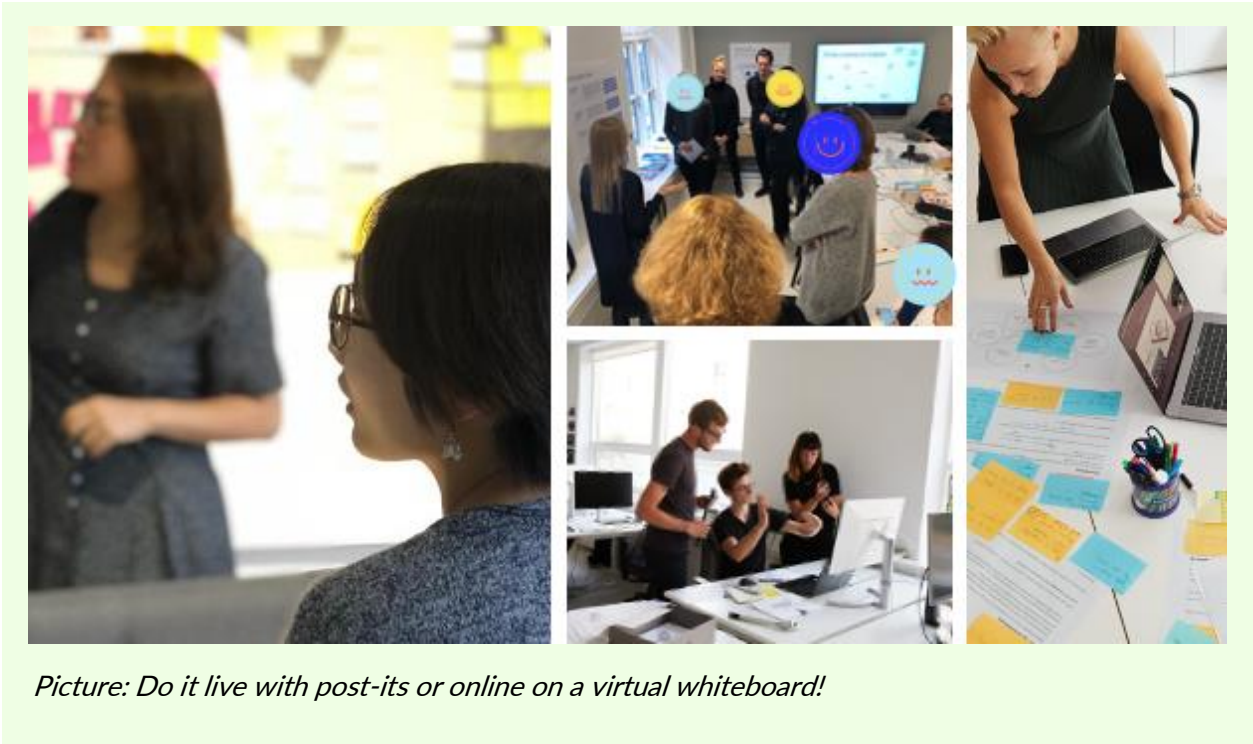
Picture: Do it live with post-its or online on a virtual whiteboard!

Step by Step!

First of all, decide on timeslots for your creative exercises. The time frames help focus the participants. A break in the middle where discussions can fly free is a good way of maximizing insights. You can do this exercise live with post-its and put up on a board — or you do this digitally. Miro is one great collaboration tool for this that works just as a virtual white board.

1. Begin with a short presentation of principles for effective ideation. These are simple guidelines to support creativity, divergent thinking and quantity of ideas in the initial stage of ideation.

    A few principles to keep this exercise interesting and engaging:
    -   Build on the ideas of others by saying yes! Listen actively for opportunities to build and elaborate.
    -   Focus on generating as many ideas as possible rather than striving to come up with really "good" ideas. Get it all out. Anything goes and the time for judgement is later.
    -   Create space for everyone to contribute their ideas.

2. Next, introduce the challenge identified in the exercise 1.1 Problem mapping or a key observation identified during the 1.2 Validating needs exercise that teams will ideate around. In some settings, teams may come up with their own questions. In other settings there may be a main question that all teams work on. "The key question" should be an open, clear and engaging one that seeks a solution to a compelling problem or need.

    These are a set of exercises that will help you explore the questions and generate ideas. Feel free to choose the exercises you feel would be a good fit for the specific context of your session.

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User Perspective: Explore the focus question from the perspective of specific users. What would it look like for a 15 year old boy? For your grandmother? Etc.

Negative Brainstorming: Flip the key question to its negative form and ideate around that. For example, how could CESH create the world's worst Toolbox? Think of it as a way to tap a group to brainstorm all the ways a plan could fail. Then you can start problem solving.

Chinese Whisper: In this nonverbal brainstorming method everyone passes their ideas to the person on their right, who will then build off of the ideas for a few minutes. After another few minutes, everyone will pass the piece of paper again until it makes it all the way around the table.

Exploring potential: What if this innovation was introduced in another domain? Would it make sense? What would need to change if anything? Could it be used in another sector or for a new target group? A new country?

Starbursting: You start with an idea or challenge at the center and then create a six-point star around it. Each point represents a question: who, what, when, where, why, and how. For example, who is this product or service targeting? When would be a good time to launch it? What is our motivation for creating this product/service?
Because it focuses on questions rather than answers, starbursting encourages the group to examine an idea from every angle. Make sure to make use of the insights that you have gained from previous exercises when observing users and mapping who the stakeholders are.

Rolestorming: This simple brainstorming technique encourages group members to take on other people's identities while brainstorming. This reduces the inhibitions that many people feel when sharing their ideas with a group, and it helps people come up with ideas that they may not have otherwise considered. What if – you where the patient, doctor, nurse or receptionist?

3. Ideate! Give teams a set amount of time to ideate around your set task using one or more of the tools introduced. There should be sufficient time to allow some flow to develop, but short enough that groups feel some pressure.

4. Cluster & Narrow: After the ideation phase, have teams cluster and organize their ideas. This involves grouping common themes and similar ideas. They should remove duplicates and give each cluster a title.

5. Selection: Once teams have clustered and organized their ideas, have them select one or several ideas to move forward with. Provide a set of selection criteria or have teams generate their own criteria. For example: ideas should be selected based on the three criteria of relevance, feasibility, and newsworthiness. With criteria set, one rapid method for selection is to use Dotmocracy, in which each participant has a certain number of dots to assign to the ideas on the table. The ideas with the most dots then have the most collective endorsement from the group.

6. Develop it! The final step is to further develop the most promising idea identified in the above step. Here, participants develop the ideas further, exploring the details of the concept, functionality, feasibility, business model, etc. This can be done within the same session or could be done in a longer session of its own.

Resources/Sources:

https://toolbox.hyperisland.com/idea-concept-development

https://www.wework.com/ideas/professional-development/creativity-culture/effective-brainstorming-techniques

https://miro.com/guides/online-brainstorming/techniques-methods

https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/rolestorming.htm

← **1.4 Analyse the context**   **2.2 Analyze Feasibility** →

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