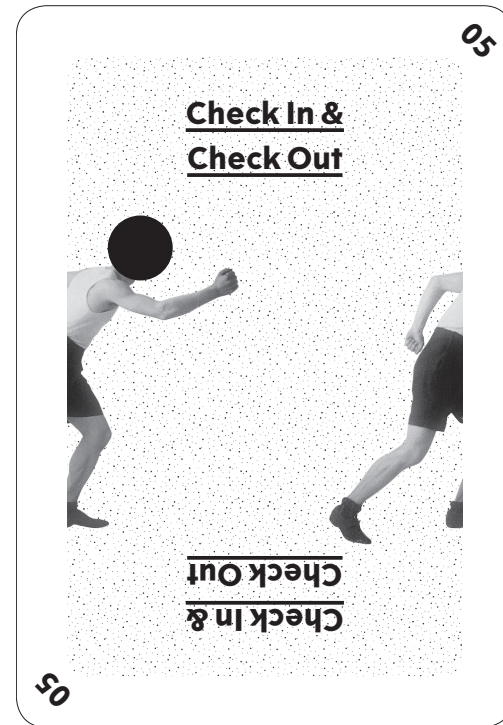


DSKD Method Cards



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BY SILJE KAMILLE FRIIS AND ANNE KATRINE G. GELTING
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Thanks to ...

We would like to express our deepest thanks and gratitude to the following individuals and firms who have helped make this method collection come true.

The people at e-Types, who initiated the first method collection in 2005 together with Silje Kamille Friis as part of her Industrial PhD project 'Conscious Design Practice as a Strategic Tool'. We owe e-Types big thanks for allowing us to reuse parts of the material in this collection.

Dr Min Basadur, Professor of Innovation at the Michael G. DeGroot School of Business at McMaster University and Founder of Basadur Applied Creativity, who has allowed us to share some of the unique approaches which he has developed as part of the Simplex System.

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DSKD Method Cards

The DSKD Method Cards is a collection of methods developed and used by practitioners and theorists working in the fields of design and innovation. The principal purpose of the DSKD Method Cards is to create a collective process language to be used by individuals, teams, leaders, and facilitators in relation to different types of design initiatives.

The collection consists of 62 methods, which have been designed in the form of individual cards in order to facilitate collaboration. Each card consists of a picture side and a text side explaining the method and providing an example of how to apply it. The cards are classified as five suits covering activities of the creative process: Collaborate, Collect, Comprehend, Conceptualise, and Create.

We acknowledge that the method descriptions are concise and might therefore not do full justice to the knowledge and experience on which they are founded. Whenever possible, we have put down the reference. However, our referencing is not complete, since many of the methods have a history that goes far back, and it would be impossible to acknowledge everyone, who has influenced the development of one particular approach.

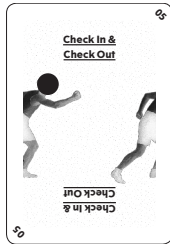
All of the methods can be used in different ways and at various stages of the creative process. They change with the people who use them and the context within which they operate, which means that there is a steady development of new ways of working. Thus, the deck should serve as a springboard for new methods in professional practices and organisations and within educational institutions.

In the process of producing the collection, all methods have gone through extensive iteration. First at strategic design firm e-Types, who initiated the method cards together with Silje Kamille Friis in 2005. Since then, teachers as well as 2nd and 3rd year students at Kolding School of Design have explored and commented on the methods. Some methods have thus been abandoned or changed entirely, and new ones have been added, for instance the methods by Min Basadur and Lotte Darsø, who most kindly have allowed us to share their unique approaches to creative team work.

We welcome and appreciate any feedback. Please contact us on these e-mail addresses:
sakf@dskd.dk and akg@dskd.dk
Kolding School of Design looks forward to hearing from you, and we hope you will enjoy the cards!

Card Categories

The DSKD Method Cards have been divided into five categories, which are overall descriptions of the types of activities they cover. The first category, 'Collaborate', covers approaches to the creative work in teams. The other four categories relate directly to phases in the creative process: Collect, Comprehend, Conceptualise, and Create. For identification purposes, each category has its own colour code.



Collaborate – Black

The methods in the Collaboration category support team endeavours throughout the creative process by surfacing knowledge about team dynamics and processes.



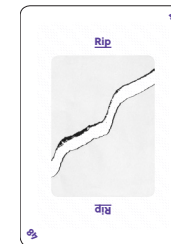
Collect – Green

The methods in the Collect category focus on producing knowledge about the existing situation through experience, for instance observing or interviewing.



Comprehend – Blue

The methods in the Comprehend category aim at producing knowledge about the existing situation by thinking, for instance by organising or analysing information.



Conceptualise – Purple

The methods in the Conceptualise category focus on producing knowledge about future possibilities, for instance by generating and evaluating ideas.



Create – Red

The methods in the Create category aim at creating new knowledge by exploring future possibilities, for instance by making experiments or prototypes.

The Concept

The model on the opposite page illustrates the underlying dynamics of the five method categories. Four of the categories relate directly to phases in the creative process and represent particular ways of producing knowledge: 'Collect', 'Comprehend', 'Conceptualise', and 'Create'.

Usually, we do not think of the 'Conceptualise' and 'Create' categories as producing knowledge. However, in relation to creative processes this approach makes sense. According to the Nobel Prize winner, Herbert A. Simon, "The natural sciences are concerned with how things are... design on the other hand, is concerned with how things ought to be."* To come full circle in a design or innovation process, one usually has to produce knowledge about the existing situation as well as the possible future.

You can produce knowledge about what is by collecting information, for instance through interviews and observation.

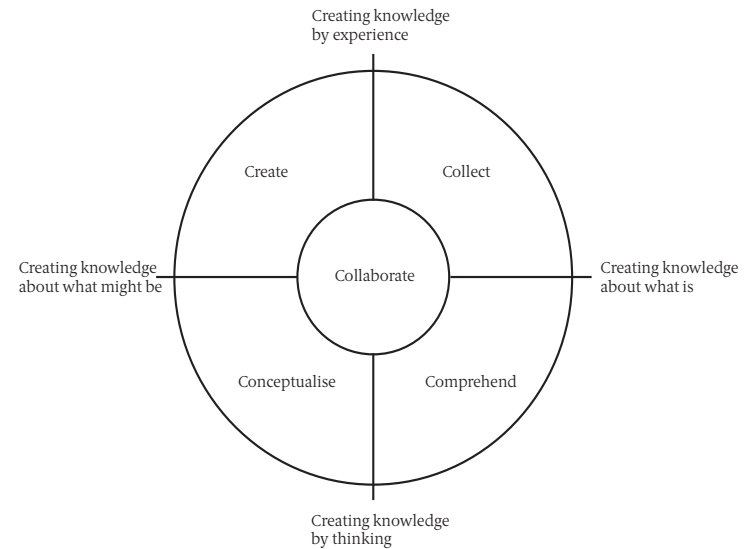
You can produce knowledge about what is by comprehending, for instance by organising and analysing information.

You can produce knowledge about what might be by conceptualising, for instance by ideation and evaluation.

You can produce knowledge about what might be by creation, for instance by experimenting and building models.

The four categories can be seen to represent sequences in a process starting with collecting information, comprehending the information, conceptualising new opportunities, and finalising by creating prototypes or carrying out experiments. While this is certainly one option, there are many different approaches to design and innovation, and it is possible to start with any one of the five categories, for instance by making real-life experiments (Create), by generating ideas (Conceptualise), by analysing and organising existing material (Comprehend) or by working on the team relations (Collaborate). You can even move back and forth between the phases of the creative process.

*) Herbert A. Simon, 1969, The Sciences of the Artificial, The MIT Press



The model illustrates different approaches to knowledge production in the creative process: Collecting and Comprehending information about the existing situation on one side of the circle, and producing new opportunities through Concepts and Creations on the other. Collaboration is at the core of the creative process.

The Methods

Collaborate

1. Codex
2. Road Map
3. Body Map
4. Who is Around the Table?
5. Check In & Check Out
6. Team Time Out
7. Positive Feedback
8. Prototyping Space

Collect

9. Photo Boards
10. Document Collect
11. E-mail Questionnaires
12. Personal Narratives
13. The Observer
14. Experience Mapping
15. 100+ Communication
16. Probe Kits
17. Discover in Situ
18. Biography
19. Open Questions
20. Being a Tourist
21. Under the Skin
22. Sort Cards
23. Investigate Opposites

Comprehend

24. Repertory Grid
25. Clusters
26. Visualising Data
27. Photo Inquiry
28. Day Cycle
29. Personas
30. Users in the Future
31. Visual Thinking
32. Challenge Framing
33. Challenge Mapping
34. Logbook
35. Positioning Diagram
36. Data Wall
37. Three Circles Map

Conceptualise

38. Scenarios
39. Success Criteria Grid
40. Telescoping
41. Hypothesis Meeting
42. Category Shift
43. Multi Perspectives
44. Take a Different Path
45. 5 Senses
46. Inverse Brainstorm
47. Discover Cards
48. Rip
49. Indirect Inspiration
50. Direct Inspiration
51. Brainstorm
52. Let Go

Create

53. Sketching Together
54. The Muse
55. Creative Constraints
56. Prototyping
57. Universes
58. Prototyping Behaviour
59. Collaging
60. Video Prototyping
61. Informing by Characters
62. Storytelling

Getting Started

With 62 method cards in front of you, you might think: 'how on earth do I get started?'

Depending on your situation, you might choose different avenues.

If you have a project starting tomorrow ...

... We suggest that you start out by reading the cases displayed in this folder. They will show you how others have put together projects and bring forward examples of methods from the five categories. This will provide you with a good starting point for selecting your own methods and where to look further.

If you want to include the team in the process ...

... You could start out by dividing the cards between the team members. Give them a set time to read & understand. You can either have them briefly present the methods to each other or move straight ahead to creating the process together. Use the Road Map method (02) as inspiration.

If there is no time pressure and you are curious ...

... Start out by reading the cases in this folder to get a sense of the span of the methods. Do not go ahead and read all the methods at once; as this becomes incredibly tedious. Build a tower using the cards or pin them to a wall and pick the ones, which you are drawn to. Then read them and let go. The methods will come to you when you need them.

The Cases

In the following, we will present three cases that illustrate the use of the method cards. We have chosen three very different cases to show the variety of approaches to creative work and to bring forth a number of different methods.

Case 1 Textile: Skins for Electronic Products

Case 2 Visual Identity: International Music Festival

Case 3 Innovation: Toys, Infant & Preschool

Case 1

A: Textile, A Collection of new “skins” for mobile electronic products

Logbook (34)

E-mail Questionnaires (11)

Photo Boards (09)

Clusters (25)

Prototyping (56)

Repertory Grid (24)

Prototyping (56)

Discover in Situ (17)

The designer started the process by breaking in a new Logbook (34) that she carried with her everywhere collecting images and gathering inspiration, illustrating concepts and writing down ideas and thoughts. This book helped her reflect continuously on different aspects of the project, and when giving her presentation, she could look back on the process and determine which decisions were made at which point and why.

In order to sense the kinds of relations existing between people and their electronic gadgets, the designer started out by sending an E-mail Questionnaire (11) to everybody in her social and professional network asking short questions like: What does your laptop look like? How old is it? How do you feel about it? What is the most beautiful object you have? Why do you consider it beautiful? She requested written responses and photos.

Also the designer went out into the streets and asked random persons to show her what they were carrying such as purses, cosmetics, and toys but also their laptops, phones, or other mobile electronic gadgets like hand-held video game consoles and tell a bit about them. She also took numerous pictures of the objects and made

very large Photo Boards (09) that she surrounded her workspace with, noting down on the photo boards the different interesting remarks she had heard while talking to people.

After collecting the different data, the designer decided to try to elicit different categories of aesthetic preferences and different attitudes towards mobile electronic devices by Clustering (25) information. She found that there were some recurring issues in nearly all e-mail answers and street interviews. When sorting the answers and photos from the street interviews into different categories she came up with titles for the categories that were suggestive and inspiring to work with. Some of them were: “Humans versus machines”, “Aging versus growing” and “My personal mark”.

Leaving the analytic and reflective part of the process for a while, the designer then went out and started gathering different objects and materials from flea markets, thrift shops, scrap yards, and toy stores and began building small three-dimensional sketchy Prototypes (56) in the form of collages that captured the categories established earlier. She used The Repertory Grid (24) to help reflect on and evaluate the collages and how the different colours and details used fitted the categories.

In the workshop she started making new Prototypes (56) experimenting with different materials like latex, leather, plastic and concrete and also working with surface variations and colours. Based on the experiments she developed 24 different swatches of materials, which she tested using the Discover In Situ (17) method. She received permission to set up a small workshop area in a local computer shop interviewing people about their initial reactions to the different materials. Subsequently, she selected two of the materials and developed a proposal for a new collection of “skins” for laptop and mobile phones.



Case 2

Visual Identity, International Music Festival

Methods:

- Road Map (02)
- Team Time Outs (06)
- Data Wall (36)
- Sort Cards (22)
- Discover Cards (47)
- Document Collect (10)
- Open Questions (19)
- Hypothesis Meeting (41)
- Universes (57)
- Prototyping (56)
- Positive Feedback (07)
- Three Circles Map (37)
- Positioning Diagram (35)
- Visualising Data (26)
- Success Criteria Grid (39)

The team, consisting of strategists and designers, commenced by making a Road Map (02) for how they wanted the process to be. They created a process where strategists and designers would work in parallel and meet regularly to share results (Team Time Outs 06) and continuously map results on a shared wall (Data Wall 36). As you will see, the central point of this process is a continuous loop between the strategic positioning of the festival and the visual design of the identity. Neither is in charge. It is a shared exploration and decision-making process.

The strategists started out by inviting members of the board and management group to a workshop applying Sort Cards (22) and Discover Cards (47) to help the participants explore, among other things, the vision, mission, and values of the music festival. When using the Discover Cards for disclosing values, the picture side of the cards face upward to help participants pick images in an associative way. In addition to the workshop, the team gathered material about developments in the market (Document Collect 10) and conducted user interviews (Open Questions 19). The information was then mapped by the help of The Three Circles Map (37), the Positioning Diagram (35) and Visualising Data (26).

Simultaneously, designers, who had participated in the workshops as observers, had a Hypothesis Meeting (41), diverging on possible directions. Next step was the creation of visual Universes (57) leading to the first sketches (Prototyping 56).

At this point, they all met up at the Data Wall (36), presented their work and compared insights and intuitions about where the project was heading. They evaluated their findings by giving Positive Feedback (07) and creating a Success Criteria Grid (39) for a more systematic evaluation, placing the client's criteria at the top, and the different design concepts on the left side. After going through a couple of iteration loops, the team was able to integrate strategy and design and present the result to the client.



Case 3

Innovation, Toys, Infant & Preschool

Methods:

Document Collect (10)

Probe Kits (16)

Clusters (25)

Day Cycle (28)

Visualising Data (26)

Scenarios (38)

Brainstorm (51)

Telescoping (40)

Sketching Together (53)

Prototyping (56)

The objective of the Dream Range project was to identify and visualise new opportunities within the Infant and Preschool toy market for a large toy company.

The project went through the four phases: Collect, Comprehend, Conceptualise, and Create. The team, consisting of four concept developers, started out by collecting data (Document Collect 10) about various aspects of the situation: the company (values, mission, competences), the users and their parents (knowledge about children's development, their interests, girls versus boys, etc.), and the market (identifying the players). They included futures studies to recognise possible developments in the user group and the market.

Simultaneously, they created Probe Kits (16), which were handed out to the children and their parents, in order to get a sense of the children's whereabouts and activities during a normal day and on weekends.

In the second phase, Comprehend, the team began to organise information (Clusters 25) in relation to what the children were doing when, where, how, and with whom. Seeing the astounding amount of activities during a single day, the team decided to map the children's Day Cycle (28), and realised that during a normal day, children within the user group spend little time at home playing, and indeed require other methods and objects to keep them activated and stimulated during a day of transportation, going to the kindergarten and being part of their parents' chores on the way. The team moved on to visualise their findings (Visualising Data 26).

In the third phase, Conceptualise, the team started out by creating a series of Scenarios (38), for instance the 'Quality Time' scenario and the 'Visible Child' scenario. These are based on the general facts that parents spend less time with their children, but want that time to be the best, and that children are planned and wanted, parents are older and better off, and in parts of society children have become a status symbol. At this point, the team went on to invite the company representatives to participate in a series of Brainstorms (51), using their visualisations and scenarios to prime them. After producing a large amount of ideas, they went on to evaluate and select the most promising ideas by Telescoping (40).

In the fourth phase, Create, the team used the Sketching Together (53) to bring the concepts to life. 'Mom's Equipment' – suggestions for a series of products for the mother during pregnancy and after giving birth; 'Togetherness' – ideas for products that focus on fast and fun entryways to playing together; 'Mobile Play Material' for children to bring along during the day, and so on. After presenting the 30 Dream Range ideas, the 'Mobile Play Material' was chosen, and the team went on to Prototyping (56) ideas for toys and other gadgets to bring along during the day.

The process lasted less than one month, and a large part of the findings and concepts were included in the development plan.



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The Kolding School of Design

The Kolding School of Design (DSKD) is an independent higher institution under the auspices of the Danish Ministry of Culture. The school has recently gained status as Design University and educates bachelor and master students. In addition, the school offers a Master's education in Design Management in collaboration with the University of Southern Denmark (SDU). As of January 2011, DK also hosts the master level Interaction Design Program at Copenhagen Institute of Interaction Design (CIID). There are presently 390 students distributed across six design domains of study: Graphic Design, Illustration Design, Fashion Design, Textile Design, Industrial Design and Interactive Design, and 14 PhD students of which 4 are Industrial PhD students.

For further reading go to www.dskd.dk

