


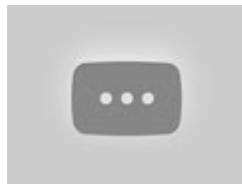
Discover Ideation ... a highly motivating, engaging and enlightening way to innovate, build and enhance your product

 ontheagilepath.net/2015/07/discover-ideation-a-highly-motivating-engaging-and-enlightening-way-to-innovate-build-and-enhance-your-product.html

By Sebastian Radics

Ideation, what a highly energizing experience during the last weeks. With this post I'll summarize my insights and I hope to inspire you to try the same (and maybe share your insights too).

Some years ago I watched this great video about the Ideo Shopping cart creation ... a cross functional team building a completely new shopping cart experience in just some days.



[Watch Video At: https://youtu.be/taJOV-YCiel](https://youtu.be/taJOV-YCiel)

It was amazing to see this engaged group working out of the typical department driven boxes. Until some weeks ago I often thought about it, but never joined such a group.

For me it changed when I got the opportunity to work with the Ideation method in a newly set up cross functional team, just for the purpose to discover a problem to solve and find a solution for it.

Ideation takes elements from Design Thinking (for a short and nice explanation, see video below)



Watch Video At: <https://youtu.be/Ee4CKIPkIik>

and for me roughly works like this.

1. Create a cross functional team – combining people from different departments, all bringing a unique perspective to the group. We worked in a group of 7
2. Discover a problem that needs to be solved by asking questions what we know and don't know about our current domain.
3. Ideate (further explained next)
4. Create Hypotheses for your assumptions and try to prove it
5. (Ideate)
6. Ask (a small group of) people via interviews (just find 5-10 interview partners) and gather input whether your assumptions need to be discarded or get further support
7. (Ideate)
8. Build and iterate with paper prototypes (fast to sketch and designed enough to ask questions and generate new insights) and validate via next interviews
9. Iterate as long as you can generate meaningful new insights
10. ... define and build your MVP

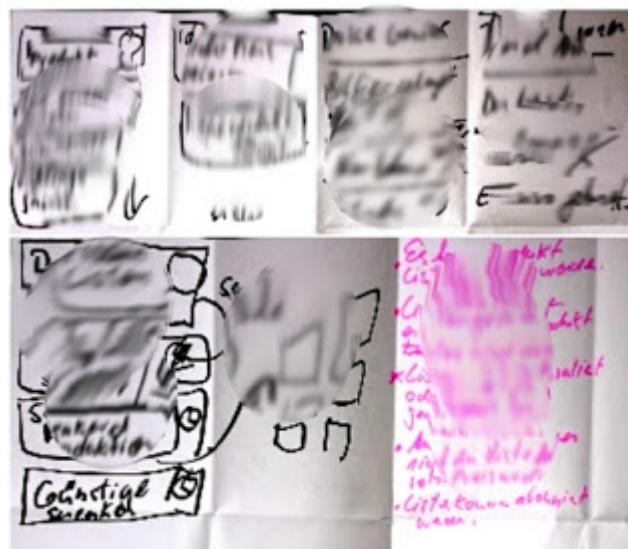
Ideate – a brief overview

It's a way to get many ideas generated in a really short time frame. Gather feedback by your peers, enhance ideas. Discard and select 2 candidates and learn from it.

How does it work – shortly explained:

1. Start by defining a topic to ideate (create ideas) about. E.g. use the 4W as a orientation – for WHOM, WHAT, WHERE, WHY.
2. Split your group in 2
3. Everyone: Scribble at least 6 ideas in 5' (prepare an A4 sheet with 8 areas ... fold it by half 3 times 😊 ... see picture below)
4. Explain your ideas to your group and gather feedback – whole group 5' – everyone selects one out of her 6+ ideas

5. Detail the selected ideas – on the backside of your A4 sheet. Again 5' to create at least 6 details
6. Explain your details and generate feedback in 5'
7. Write a short statement why it works – an elevator pitch – in 5'
8. One group member of every group switches the group (to bring in a new perspective in every group)
9. Every group selects **one** idea and prepares a short presentation in 15'
10. All group members (except the presenter) visit the other group a listen to the presentation of the “remaining” idea.
11. After the presentation the presenter turns around (backside to the group) and the group provides as much negative feedback as possible (by turning backside it's much easier to provide negative feedback). The presenter takes notes (step 10+11 takes 10')
12. Share the ideas including all the feedback in the whole group and gather your insights



This means – in around 2 hours you generate at least 7 (team members) x 6 = 42 ideas, you generate 42 details, you discard 40 and always combine it with a group feedback.

Key learnings

It is a highly engaging, motivating and intensive team experience.

Along the way you generate a lot of new insights about the problem domain and learnings about the processes and your company.

Prototyping and intense user contact via interviews is key to validate your assumptions and get out of our narrowed thinking perspective.

We had to discard so many assumptions where we were plainly on the wrong track ... just by asking some people.

It is a disruptive format with an integrated learning (by making mistakes) culture.

It's filled with energy and motivation – we worked 10 days full of thinking, group work, discussions and teaming. We discovered ... thinking all the time hurts (positively).

10 **days** ... more than **100 ideas** out of **5 ideation rounds** ... many usability tests ... using **4+ validated prototypes** ... (in just the time of one sprint cycle).

My recommendations

Try it ... and provide a working frame that:

- frees team members from their daily routine (e.g. we took 2 days a week, in total 10 days and worked “isolated” together without interruptions)
- ensures coaching support (by [Markus Andrezak](#))
- has the management by in (but leaves the group exploring without interruptions) and full support during the time frame
- works with an agile coaching support for group facilitation and capturing the results (in between)

There is much more to write about it, but would by far exceed the length of a blog post 😊

I hope it was a teaser for you to further investigate!?

Thanks to [Markus Andrezak](#) for this great experience.