
5 Steps to Maximize Your Customer Experience Through Service Design



by **John Sorflaten**, PhD, Certified Usability Analyst(CUA) #20,
Certified User Experience Professional(CUXP) #242

The Pragmatic Ergonomist

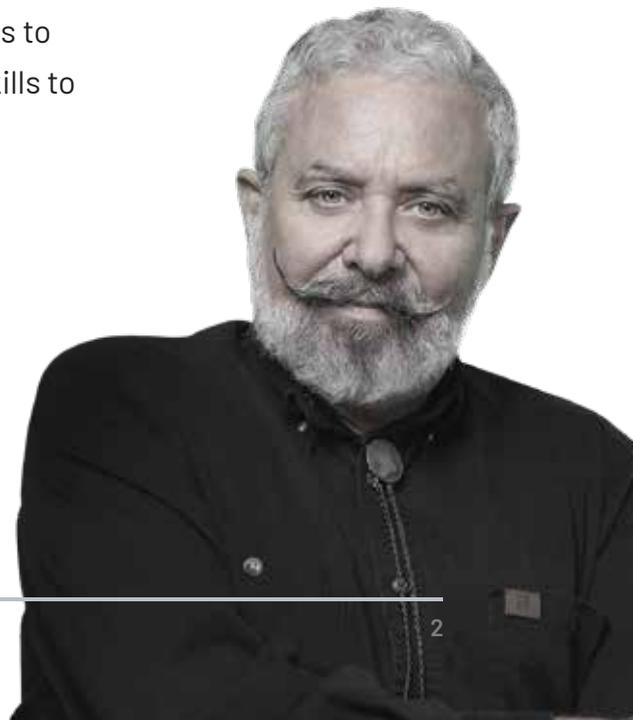
The growth in technical capabilities provides the UX designer with a lovely pallet of new capabilities. We can meet our executive's objectives better than ever before. We must cope in a world where the competitive structure of our solutions is growing and our ecosystems are changing. I also would challenge us all to think about the future culture that we are creating for consumers and workers. What will our lives be like? How can we promote happiness? And perhaps in some way it is our job to be the conscience of the information age.

Much of the world is suddenly living through digital technologies and the quality of user experiences is central to organizational success. Some organizations need speed and/or accuracy. Others are focused on engagement, conversion, and retention. But differentiated success is about the people now.

There are some ways you can quickly learn to systematically understand what people do and how they feel. And that is a super basis for making efficient tactical improvements, or even generating whole new business models or product concepts.

I really enjoyed working with our team to create our new 'Service Design Thinking' class. Just two days to understand service design and to have the skills to innovate with design thinking methods.

Eric M. Schaffer, PhD, CUA, CXA, CPE
Founder - CEO - Head of
HFI Laboratories



Beyond Just Business Survival

So you survived the COVID-19 lockdowns, downturns, and business doldrums in general. Welcome to season 4 billion of “Survival of the Fittest”.

Are you dealing yet with the raised expectations of customers and clients in the new world of instant Zoom calls, remote offices, 1-day Amazon delivery, and UberEats?

The answer is clear:
adapt or die.

Adaptation takes us rapidly to the question of “how do we avoid the thousand-year cycles of Darwinian natural selection”?

Wouldn't it be better to engage user-driven design thinking to accelerate your business adaptation to new conditions? Wait, ARE THERE new conditions for your customers and clients? HOW WOULD ANYONE KNOW?

Because you are reading this blog, I know you have some connection with serving customers and clients. And yes, you'd love to see THE FIVE STEPS TO MAXIMIZING CUSTOMER HAPPINESS.

Who wouldn't? I sort of know who you are, now. That's a start.

Here's your checklist for turning the tables on cultural change

Phase 1–“Define the Who” (folks doing “the what”).

You must already have an idea of WHO benefits from your business efforts.

Who buys your product? Who needs your consulting services? Who benefits from your website or government program?

You can even add “employees” and “staff” to your list of WHO your business serves. (The business of business!)

Defining the “who” supports your first glimpse into “what they do”, their “path”, and their “journey” towards getting your product or service. Knowing your users means you evolve an ecosystem for them and not just for yourself or your organizational in-crowd.

Recognizing this simple need means you benefit from **user**-centered design thinking and avoid **self**-centered design wandering (otherwise known as “design by executive”).

When you can map the buying journey of at least one of your user types, then you’re on the path to evolving your service or product offering to maximum customer acceptance.

If you have several types of users, great! You only need to define their differences and continue these next steps to find the points where your customers experience friction in their journey. Their needs become your insights!

For now, given your interest in reading this far, let’s imagine that YOU fall into my user group for this exercise in **Improving Support for Beginning Service Designers!** (You are a newbie Service Designer!)

Phase 2–“Define the Journey Map” (discover “the what” for improvement)

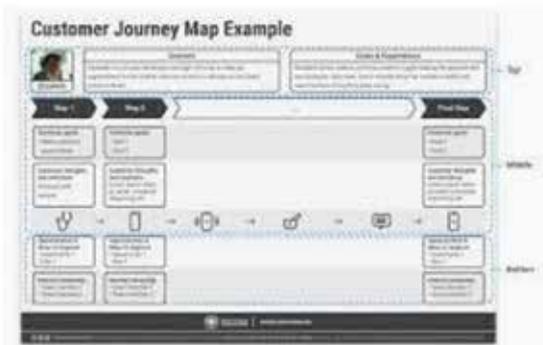
Your customers, employees, website visitors, and clients have goals. Have you described each step on the path to reaching those goals?

Knowledge is power. Can you make each step explicit–**for others to see and discuss?** Recall the benefits of the “wisdom of the crowd”.

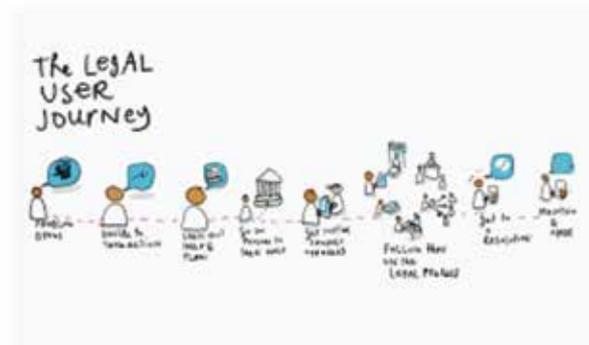
When was the last time your team reviewed ALL the steps on your customer’s journey?

And....don’t forget every purchase or service has a customer follow-up process. Some folks call it the “back-office” operation that creates customer loyalty and return visits. Include your phone support, invoice payment emails, help systems and FAQ pages.

OK, with these benefits in mind, let’s give it a try in the context of your own personal quest to create a better, faster and less costly customer experience. You can be a designer of services by updating your client Journey Maps using the following **5 Steps of Service Design**.



What are Customer Journey Maps ...
interaction-design.org



A Service Design approach to the Legal ...
openlawlab.com



Journey Map | Service Design Tools
servicedesigntools.org



How to Create a Customer Journey Map ...
uxmastery.com

Step 1. Define the domain

Let's do a brief journey map on getting the best training on "Service Design". So, this is all about you!

First, you need to **learn the domain of "how to improve business processes"** given your goal of getting more customers, clients, or site visitors. (Recall your goal: "adapt or die"!)

You may have little or zero knowledge of design thinking, journey mapping, process improvement, or Customer Experience (CX). What steps do you take to investigate this domain?

Step 2. Create a journey map

A journey map consists of a sequence of steps folks take to obtain a service or product.

For our example case here, make a list of “contact points” you would use to locate the best training in “Service Design”. Each contact point contributes to the steps of a journey map. (As a side project, you can map the contact points of how your clients discover and purchase **your own business service or product**, as well.)

Here’s a list of “contact points” or “channels” for **investigating training** on how to improve your business processes. (For your side project you can lead your team’s discussion on how to define the channels and journey steps used by your own clients!).

- a. **Search the web** to learn about new ideas like Service Design, Journey Mapping or even more generic New Product Ideas or Innovation Methods. (Wikipedia often becomes the gold standard for such answers.)
- b. **Look for books** on the topic. Amazon, Barnes & Nobel, Goodreads, Audible, Google Books, etc.,.
- c. **Talk to friends** and see what they know and recommend.
- d. **Check YouTube for cool videos** on those topics.
- e. **Search for free tools and instructions** on the internet. For example, this search link for “**Journey Map**” gives a number of tools and training.
- f. **Search for Do It Yourself (DIY) online courses**
- g. **Search for in-person courses**
- h. **Search for in-house courses for your team**
- i. **Search for consultants** from whom you can learn while they get it Done For You (DFY)

Step 3. Create an empathy map

Can your journey map describe **how you felt** about each contact point as you went through their steps? For your side project, which steps and contact points got your users get **more involved** in the process? And which steps gave your users **more satisfaction**?

These concepts allow you and others to **empathize with each step** in your user's journey to your goal.

An empathy map gives you insight into the emotional importance of each step of the journey.

This involves both emotional “importance” and emotional “satisfaction”.

When evaluating your own emotions in this little exercise, you can discover your pain points about shopping for training. (Plus, your side project gets a reality check. What does your team hear from your own buyers and end-users regarding pain points on their journey map to buying your product or service?)

How **involved** did you get at each of those “contact points”? Rate the step from 1 (low) to 5 (excited).

How **satisfied** were you at each contact point? Rate the step from - 2 dissatisfied to 0 (neutral) to +2 very satisfied.

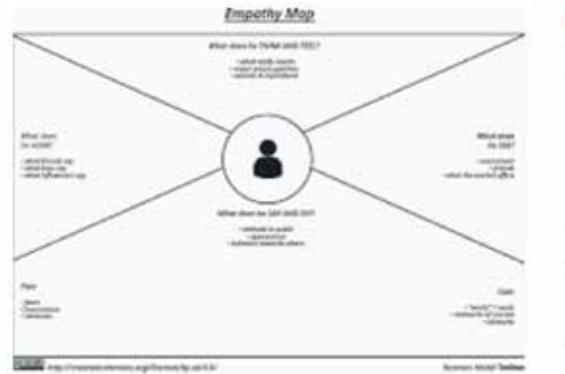
For example, at what point does viewing YouTube videos about Service Design exhaust your attention span? (YouTube Involvement: 5?; Satisfaction: -2?

These numbers imply lots of work (5 = heavy involvement) and little reward (-2 on satisfaction).

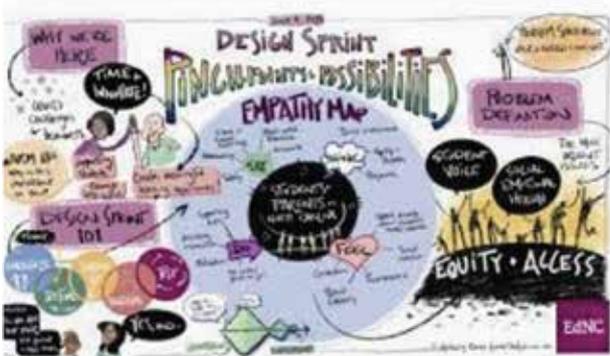
Different approaches to empathy maps show up on the web. The question remains, how do you know which is the best for your training expectations? See Steps 4 and 5 for the answer.



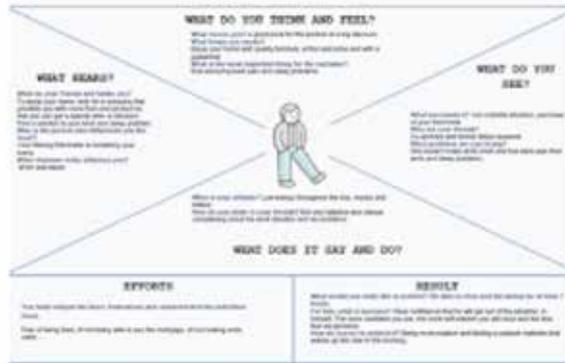
Employee Experience: Using Empathy Maps ...
hrbartender.com



Empathy Map - Business Model Toolbox
bmttoolbox.net



empathy map ...
ednc.org



Potential customer empathy map. Source ...
researchgate.net

Step 4. Identify Pain Points and Generate Solutions

The feelings revealed in your own journey map to your training solutions will show pain points and maybe pleasure points. Your YouTube experience, for example, may elicit particularly strong responses—either positive or negative.

A level 5 “Involvement” indicates it’s a lot of work to find suitable YouTube instruction!

A “Satisfaction” rating of -2 or even 0 (neutral) indicates that you’ll never be sure if it’s the best instruction out of all the other competing videos on YouTube.

(For example, can you remember WHO was the YouTube trainer and WHAT AUTHORITY they brought to the table? Did you even care? Should you have cared?)

What is a reasonable solution to this pain point you about YouTube training? Here is your creative moment!

You might converse with colleagues and even your spouse about YouTube training—and where you could find the best instruction to warrant your time and energy.

Or perhaps you prefer a different “channel” in your journey map, like books or group training (online or in-person).

In further searches for solutions, you might find forums on the web like Reddit.com that comment on training solutions across your various channels. You might even day-dream of a solution like chemist August Kekulé when he discovered the carbon ring structure of benzene.

Remember the standard process: “investigate then incubate” as given by the experts in problem-solving.

In any event, as you look across all the steps in your personal journey map, you will see points of pain which then give rise to ideas of improvement.

For your side-project, your team will identify solutions from your customers’ journey map.

Have you also included the “backroom” contact points as well?

- Was it **hard to organize** your self-training effort to ensure getting the full story?

- Was the training **engaging enough** to cement the memories in your mind?
- Did you have **follow-up available** to get further input from fellow students or the instructor?
- Did you spend the **right amount of time** for the results? Too much time? Too little time?
- Etc., etc.

More to the point, did you feel about having “**any old training**” as your professional mentor?

Did that training experience convince you that you found the go-to brand for **unequaled quality training**?

What “bloodline” did that training offer to validate that you would get authoritative and industry-recognized training?

Do you feel a training bloodline conveys a meaningless, abstract whim, or do you want maximum confidence in the source of your new knowledge?

Step 5. Prioritize and Implement Solutions

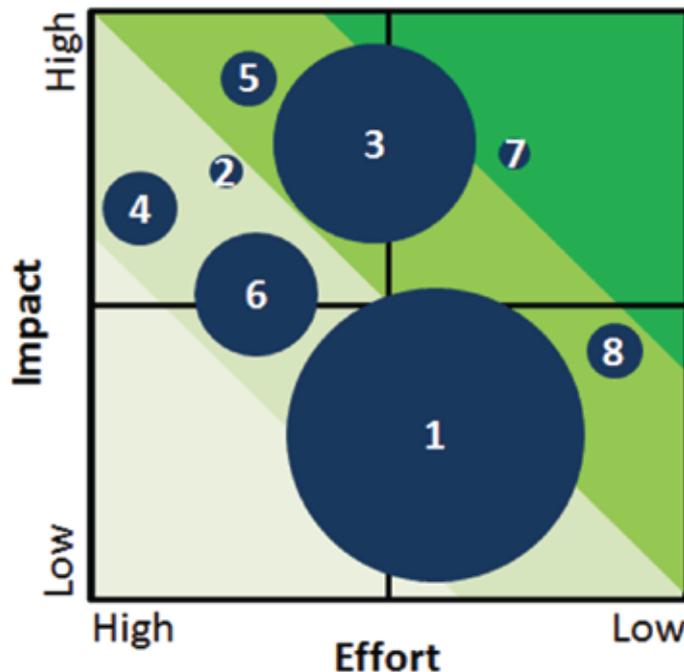
The evolution of your business requires taking action based on findings in your training journey map. Making choices is not easy—unless you have a method.

Borrowing from decision theory helps. When prioritizing and implementing solutions to end-user pain, we must consider the trade-offs between the

steps in your journey map versus your expected monetary payback.

This kind of analysis creates a grid in which you plot each solution for its contribution to both the effort required to implement the change and the payback or impact offered to you, as a customer of that training.

See this example plot of that calculation.



(Christoph Roser at All AboutLean.com provides this chart under the freeCC-BY-SA 4.0 license.)

This picture compares the effort and the impact of different journey-map solutions. A third variable (e.g., Prestige or “Bloodline”) is shown by the size of the bubbles.

Does this chart help you pick a choice of training methods that vary between effort

and impact? (And does it help your team with your side-project of evolving the journey map of your own clients?) It works! It supports conversations about the alternatives.

The Final Word for Your Service Design Training

Are you inspired about your future yet? Are you ready to get trained in Service Design? Are you ready to start your side project and journey-map your own business?

Customer pain confronts us all. Did the dinosaurs survive the pain of climate change from an asteroid plowing into Earth?

Nope. Evolution is tough on the slow movers.

Thank goodness we haven't had our own extinction event. COVID is over (more or less). Life goes on.

But what is your DNA for change? Is it dormant? Missing? Or raring to go?

There is no escaping the demands of evolution. But you can train your DNA to meet such demands.

As evidence, note that you read this blog about how to evolve your knowledge of service design. You really **are** sensitive about both Customer Experience (CX) and Service Design.

These two disciplines are like two legs for upright walking. Together they promote adaptation and survival.

Remember, **searching and buying** training or a product is only half of the user experience. The other half is **using and servicing** the training or product. For training, it's organizing the experiences, engagement, time-spent, follow-up, reputation, etc. For products it's unboxing, assembling, understanding, maintaining, etc.

In our example, we reminded you that **using that training with confidence** is a hidden component of the Empathy Map process.

- How does that training contribute to your BLOODLINE expectations?
- Do you FEEL like the expert you want to be?
- Does your team that receives training FEEL like it's getting the BEST?
- Did your bloodline prepare you for accession to the throne, like the TOP DOG you want to be?

Now you have the tools to follow the 5 Steps to Maximize Your Customer Experience Through Service Design

Go for it!

The secret sauce to great Service Design involves understanding the supporting tasks—those contact points and their steps.

About HFI

HFI (Human Factors International) is the world's largest company specializing in user experience (UX) design. We've been in the business since 1981. Our focus is on helping our clients develop mature and effective UX practices. We provide a complete and seamless suite of advisory, training, certification, methods, standards, and tools to help our clients institutionalize user (customer) centricity. Our vision is to help our clients build long-lasting relationships with their consumers across all touchpoints and leverage the influence that results from engaging digital experiences.

hfi

[hfi.training](https://www.hfi.training)