The Playful Mocktail Competition: Listening & Empathy (QAA123567) #FEEUK

Group Size
Small group (teams of 4-6), Large Group
Learning Environment
Any
QAA Enterprise Theme(s)
1Creativity and Innovation 2Opportunity recognition, creation and evaluation 3Decision making supported by critical analysis and judgement 5Reflection and Action 6Interpersonal Skills 7Communication and Strategy

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Objective:

Learners in this game develop customer problem solving knowledge, they don't receive it. They learn by doing, failing, and iterating. This failure drives them to ask questions and seek answers through active exploration, self-reflection, and interaction with 'customers'.

It evidences the power of moving from and inward looking, problem solving heuristics in teams to an outward looking, communication-based approach to solving customer problems.

Overview:

The focus in this game is deep listening skills and development of empathy with the 'other' (the customer). It allows learner teams to compete and recognise how listening and communicating with stakeholders increases the prospect of a start-up idea. For example, while in this version, the 'other' is the customer, we could transfer the game into user experience and design contexts.

Facilitators can reconfigure the game so that the emphasis is on inter-team cooperation and collaboration rather than purely about customer centricity.

The game can also be flipped to focus on resource planning and negotiation in supplier-side contexts.

Activity: GAME DETAILS

Group Size

- This game can be played with 9-60 people.
- It is a team competition
- A team consists of 3 (min)-6 (max) players
- A minimum of 3 teams compete.

Time

How long will this activity run for?

- Plan for approximate 45-120 minutes for this game: depending on the size and number of participating teams, and, the medium for delivery: off-line versus online

Purpose (Learning Objectives)

1. To develop an understanding of the need to experiment with assumptions about customers when building products in a start-up

2. To 'get-out-of-the-building' and learn to be 'punched in the face' by the market. To fail and succeed
3. To break the paradigm of "a market of one customer: myself"
4. To fail and iterate fast
5. To experientially learn the entrepreneurial principle of Bird-in-the-hand

Instructions for Participants

A client is about to launch her new cocktail bar in Barcelona. She has asked you to help. She wants to take full advantage of market trends and have a social impact through the UN's SDG goals.

YOUR MISSION IS:

"TO MAKE THE WORLD'S MOST "INSTAGRAMMABLE MOCKTAIL" TO LAUNCH BARCELONA MOCKTAIL WEEK 20XX & PUT HER NEW BAR ON THE MAP".

The Client has given you access to their what they see is one of her key resources e.g. their new Instagram and Twitter Feeds: (Twitter and Instagram feeds: Twitter: @MocktailWeek &
Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/mocktailweek/)"

TO TAKE PART EACH TEAM HAS TO CONTRIBUTE 1 Time-Keeper (Competition Watchdog) who will monitor competing teams' times to finish the Mocktail game.

 Reflections/Learnings Debrief

Below is a list of seed questions for learners to reflect on what they have learnt from the game and for facilitators to understand how effective the game was/what gaps occurred. This can also include take home questions for participants to continue reflecting on the skills that missed as a development opportunity or ones that they discovered in the session about themselves.

What did you do?

> Research?

> Team wastage

> Time wastage

> Resource duplication

> Beyond the room

What did you learn?

What about the exercise surprised you the most? •

What do you think went wrong with your initial plan? •

What did you learn by interacting with your customers that you couldn't have predicted in your plans?

What assumptions did you make about?

> Your customer?

> What they want: package, place, price, moment, taste?

What did you learn?

What about the exercise surprised you the most? •

What do you think went wrong with your initial plan? •

What did you learn by interacting with your customers that you couldn't have predicted in your business plan?

What do you need to discover about your customer?

How can you do that in 5 minutes and better understand them qualitatively and quantitatively?

(Samples of the types of previous responses that the facilitators/ instructors can work with can be found here: https://bit.ly/2Y9NIKn)

CONCULDING THE ACTIVITY:

 The instructor may remind participants:

1. Great ideas and innovations are drivers of SDC change.
2. The best ideas are not guaranteed market success.
3. The role of the entrepreneurial team is critical to market success, often generating unexpected or entirely unpredictable outcomes –
4. The entrepreneur team does not have to be the same persons as the idea team: they can form alliances and oust members.
5. Some drivers of market success may be partly or entirely out of the team's or entrepreneur's control.
6. Instructors are encouraged to make the full set of ideas available to participants after the activity for their own edification.

ADAPTATION OF GAME TO DIFFERENT CONTEXTS

This exercise can be changed around to suit multiple-contexts with a variety of skill developments in mind. The playful and fun nature of the sequencing of activities allows you, as the facilitator/instructor, to re-order sequences, materials or learning intentions to suit your specific contextual setting, be they intra or inter organizational settings.

First of all - use your imagination - you can simplify, adapt, shorten and lengthen most of the sub-activities presented in this exercise. To turn this gamified version into a quick activity or warm-up, scale down the materials, shorten the time allowed, and make the exercise easier. Most of the sub-activities can also be used for participants'' personal and not necessarily curricula-driven education and development, and for induction or exit stages of a team-based course - adapt them to suit.

The number of members per team affects activity time and complexity - teams of four or more need a leader and tend to take longer than a pair or team of three. Increasing or reducing team size, and introducing or removing the team-leader requirement, are simple ideas for increasing or reducing game complexity and exercise duration.

 Allow teams to negotiate mergers and alliances by stretching the exercise over more than one session.

Skill Development:

With this activity, a range of skills are emphasised by choice and context by the facilitator/instructor. Our preferences are for focusing on the tendency for founding teams to be self-referential, frequently defaulting to physically staying in the workshop space and not going beyond self-inflicted 'boundaries' of communication, research and openness. I.e. they frequently fail to "Get-out-of-the-building" to learn!

You can place the emphasis on different areas.

For example, the activity could be used to develop team building skill sets and developing team leadership competences

1. The core skills being developed are around *building customer empathy, 'peer and customer listening' skills, active creativity, negotiating resources, bootstrapping, effectual thinking, design-by-bricolage thinking.*
2. We would encourage facilitator/instructors to include deeper reflection, self-awareness and communication skills where the groups are required to analyse the challenge and their response to it, as well change their skills set.

Resources:

1. *Room – this exercise can be instructed/facilitated either on or offline. In both instances, facilitators are advised to use a whiteboard, flipchart or stickies to capture rules, hygiene instructions, learnings, seed questions and scoreboards. If facilitators conduct the exercise off-line, observation of the process and dynamic in a large conference or classroom is fairly straight forward.*
2. *The activity may be conducted with no materials or setup; the use of stickies or notecards, a flipchart, chalkboard, or A/V setup are recommended. Stickies or note-cards offer a record of the full set of innovations which may be of separate value. Instructors should distribute one sticky note or note-card to each participant and ensure that writing instruments are available. Similarly, instructors may prefer a learning space that facilitates ease of participant movement, though key lessons may be gained in a space that restricts movement by some or many participants. Background on drivers of innovation adoption may be provided at the instructor's discretion and pedagogical preference.*
3. *Specific, supplementary resources for facilitators and instructors are provided at the end of this game's setup details section.*
4. *Tech – all the above can be simulated using online whiteboards such as Miro board, etc in conjunction with virtual meeting facilities e.g. Zoom, etc*
5. *Mocktail ingredient suggestions and allocations that each participant will need to secure prior to the exercise (instructors can procure these if institutional budgets permit, but there is much to be learnt by participants procuring ingredients and materials themselves).* *https://bit.ly/2CzI0Kh*
6. *Here are Session Slides that you can adapt and use to keep the session on track. Copy and amend to suit:* *https://bit.ly/2Y8bSF7*
7. *Here is a link to a demonstration of how you can gamify the exercise. We suggest that you do not reveal these performance criteria to participants in advance. Having run the activity once you can use a Leaderboard or Scoreboard to motivate the participants to play a second round of the exercise. This time they would recognize the game performance criteria. We also suggest that you only reveal the Leaderboard or Scoreboard after the learning debrief and not before:* *https://bit.ly/31X7YzW*
8. *Samples of the types of previous responses that the facilitators/ instructors can work with can be found here:* *https://bit.ly/2Y9NIKn*
9. *You can share those experiences with us on the Exercise's Twitter and Instagram feeds: Twitter:* *@MocktailWeek*

https://www.instagram.com/mocktailweek/

References:

Gonsalves, E & Enciso-Zamora, R . (2017) LUDIC EXECUTIVES: The Case For Play in Entrepreneurial Learning Design: In Jones, P. & Pittaway, L., (Eds) Entrepreneurship Education: New Perspectives on Research, Policy and Practice, Emerald Publishing, UK.

Links: https://twitter.com/EddyGonsalves

Web-sites: https://cooplexity.com/

About the Author

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