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Workshop 1: How to organise a roundtable

Led by **Lukáš Zorád**

Choice of Type of Public Meeting

Before conducting any meeting, it's always a good idea to make sure you select the right format. There are numerous alternative formats for meetings, and a common mistake is to call for a "workshop" or "roundtable meeting" when what you are really doing is a seminar with a series of presentations. When designing a meeting, several criteria can help you determine the right type.

The first criterion is to define the **purpose of the meeting**. Is it to provide information to the public, such as a public hearing or webinar? Or is it to solicit views and ideas from the public, like a workshop or a house meeting? Other purposes could be to encourage interaction between groups, as in a roundtable, or to reach an agreement on how to solve a problem. The second criterion is the **expected number of participants**, as this will determine the adequacy of the procedure and the need for technical support or subgroups. Third, consider the **level of interaction required** among participants, which depends on their interest in the topic and can range from low (information sharing) to high (problem-solving). The fourth factor is the participants' prior **knowledge of the different types of meetings**, which is especially important if you plan on using small group work. Fifth, you should consider the **credibility of your institution** within the theme, as the trust of the participants that the process is not chosen to "control, divide, and break" them is crucial. Finally, remember to consider the **geographical distribution of participants** and whether an online format would be more suitable.

Types of Public Meetings

There are several types of public meetings, each designed for a specific purpose. For **information sharing**, you might choose a format like an interactive presentation, public hearing, webinar, or briefing. These are effective for providing important information to large groups. When the goal is **mapping or qualitative research**, a focus group is ideal for obtaining illustrative and relevant information on a particular topic, such as attitudes towards human rights. **Exchange of information and experience sharing** can be achieved through roundtables, conferences, panel discussions, or seminars, which create a space for people to share stories and learn from each other. If the objective is **coordination, planning, or problem-solving**, a facilitated discussion, workshop, or evaluation meeting is best. These formats help a group agree on specific steps and responsibilities for a project. For **conceptual or creative** work, a workshop is the preferred format for designing a program or creating something new. Finally, a **motivational** meeting, like a roadshow or concert, is used to achieve public engagement and motivation.

Possible Types of Meetings with the Public

A **PUBLIC HEARING** is a large meeting of 50 to 200 people. It involves the presentation of prepared statements and little interaction between speakers and the public. A formal system is used for recording comments, and the format is best suited for meeting legislative requirements or summarizing information.

A **PUBLIC MEETING WITH CITIZENS** is a large meeting with a more informal atmosphere than a public hearing, allowing for slightly more interaction. It's often used for a town meeting with a discussion on any pre-announced topic.

The primary **objective** of a **BRIEFING / QUESTION AND ANSWER** session is to provide information to the public. It begins with a quick introduction of experts and presenters, followed by questions from the audience, and is commonly used for meetings between a mayor and journalists.

A **PANEL DISCUSSION** or similar **DISCUSSION FORUM** involves a selection of personalities representing different views. Audience questions and comments may follow. The focus of this format is on discussion between the public and the experts or candidates, rather than on their interactions with each other.

A **WORKSHOP** is a highly interactive form of participation, typically for up to 25 participants. It focuses on a specific topic, such as a proposal or the selection of alternatives.

An **OPEN HOUSE DAY** has the capacity for many people. It involves the presentation of panels or models, allowing participants to visit and study the information, talk to a staff member, and discuss topics in groups.

Finally, the **LARGE GROUP - SMALL GROUP** format involves dividing a large number of participants into smaller groups to solve a task, followed by a large group presentation.

Roundtable Events

Roundtable events are interactive gatherings that focus on a specific topic or issue. They allow for equal participation and the exchange of ideas, insights, and solutions. Roundtable discussions are popular in business, academic, and policy-making settings, promoting networking and in-depth dialogue in a supportive and collaborative environment.

There are two main types of roundtable events, both of which can be conducted online. A **closed roundtable** is for representatives of stakeholders involved in finalizing public policy or making mutual agreements. A **public roundtable** is a public discussion among personalities who represent different views.

Roundtable discussions attract a diverse group of participants, including industry experts, professionals, academics, policymakers, and stakeholders. Attendees are often leaders in their fields, looking to share knowledge, debate issues, and collaborate on solutions. The inclusive format encourages active participation from all attendees, making it a valuable opportunity for networking, learning, and influencing decision-making.

What are the benefits of roundtable events?

Roundtable events are a beacon of innovation, networking, and strategic growth. The key benefits include:

- Information exchange and sharing
- Diverse perspectives
- Structured and focused conversations
- Problem-solving and support
- Networking
- Learning opportunities
- Outcomes gain expert legitimacy and higher recognition.

What are the weaknesses of roundtables?

The success of your roundtable will depend on many factors, such as your planning, design, guests, and the political atmosphere. While consensus on general principles is often achieved, a study on Multistakeholder Collaborative Roundtables (2001) found that participants are more likely to agree on general values like "safety is important" than on specific details. The study also observed that learning was limited to **networking competencies**, as attendees are typically experts seeking to share knowledge, not to acquire new skills. Networking is often the most important outcome. Furthermore, **problem-solving was detected, but only in the form of incremental innovation**. In general, roundtables contribute "small wins" toward a larger objective, giving direction to "metaproblems" that are difficult to address otherwise.

How to Organize Roundtables: Checklist

Organizing expert roundtables requires meticulous planning. The following areas will guide you through how to effectively organize and facilitate them, ensuring productive outcomes.

- **Define goals and outcomes:** Clearly define the purpose of the event by establishing clear and measurable goals and identifying the desired outcomes.
- **Select participants:** A time-consuming but crucial step. Select relevant experts with the necessary knowledge and experience, going beyond your usual contacts to identify key stakeholders. It's more important to have quality participants over quantity, as a big group can intimidate guests. Remember to ensure diversity and inclusion to bring various perspectives.
- **Prepare and research:** Conduct thorough background research on the topics to be discussed. Additionally, prepare pre-meeting briefs for participants, outlining the agenda, topics, and expected contributions.
- **Set the agenda:** The agenda itself needs to be carefully structured with time allocations for each topic, while also maintaining flexibility to accommodate dynamic discussions.
- **Plan logistics and technology:** Choose a suitable venue that facilitates productive

discussions and ensures all necessary technology is in place and functioning.

- **Strategize communication:** Send your communication to participants well in advance, clearly stating the goals and agenda. Be transparent about who else has been invited.
- **Set the stage during the event:** Begin with a welcome and a clear presentation of the agenda and rules. Setting up "house rules" at the beginning is crucial, and they should be endorsed by every participant. Example rules include respecting one another, keeping sensitive information confidential, ensuring equal participation, and staying on topic.
- **Use facilitation skills:** The moderator's role is to guide discussions and manage time. They should use techniques to ensure active participation from all attendees and use open-ended questions to engage them.
- **Manage conflict:** You must also be prepared for conflict resolution. Techniques for handling conflicts and disagreements constructively are essential, as disagreements are a natural part of a diverse group discussion.
- **Ensure proper documentation and follow-up:** Decide on a method for accurately recording the discussion and decisions made. This may involve a note-taker and anonymizing notes for sensitive topics.
- **Follow up after the event:** Do not underestimate the importance of follow-up. When it's delayed, you may lose important momentum. It's important to send a thank you note and meeting notes as soon as possible, ideally with conclusions and next steps already attached. Lastly, remember to gather feedback from participants to improve future events.

Sample Roundtable Discussion Format

Please note that this is just one example, and every event will have a different program.

- **Introduction:** A 10-minute introduction where the moderator welcomes everyone, explains the purpose and objectives, and has the participants introduce themselves.
- **Opening Remarks:** A keynote speaker introduces the general context of the topic.
- **Panel Discussion (optional):** A moderated discussion with panelists representing different organizations.
- **Break:** Breaks are an essential part of the event and can last from 10 to 30 minutes, as many good conversations and meaningful connections happen during them.
- **Breakout Group Discussions:** Participants are split into smaller groups to discuss specific questions.
- **Group Sharing and Synthesis:** Groups present their discussion points to start an open discussion.
- **Closing Remarks and Action Steps:** A session to wrap up the event with a clear conclusion and next steps.
- **Thank You Messages:** A brief message of gratitude to all participants.
- **Informal Networking:** Leave enough time for participants to interact after the official closing remarks.

Workshop 2: Facilitation - Divergent and Convergent Tools

Led by **Dušan Ondrušek**, **Karolína Miková**, and **Ivana Ivanová**

Brainstorming and Other Instruments for Divergent Thinking

When making a decision, it's better not to consider only one solution. After defining a goal, we should widen the range of possible ideas and solutions, and only later choose the most appropriate ones. For this initial phase, a wide range of divergent (widening) instruments exists. Their form depends on the problem, the size of the group, and the community. The most well-known is probably brainstorming.

Brainstorming is a group technique for idea and solution creation. It was first used in the late 1930s by Alex Osborn, an advertising executive. Osborn defined brainstorming as "a conference technique by which a group attempts to find a solution for a specific problem by amassing all the ideas spontaneously by its members." Other definitions emphasize maximizing new ideas without immediate judgment.

The method looks easy, but its success depends on how well a facilitator can set a constructive and creative atmosphere. Brainstorming is often used to generate one-word ideas but can also be used for more complex, conceptual problems. An optimum group size is usually 7-9 participants, but it can be used with up to 30 people in different formats. It is important to have a diverse group with a variety of information, opinions, and views.

Procedure

After explaining the problem and setting a clear goal, the facilitator asks the group to generate ideas and reminds them of the brainstorming principles. The core principles are: **no criticism**, a focus on **quantity**, welcoming **unusual ideas**, encouraging **fully-fledged participation**, and embracing **mutual inspiration**.

All ideas are recorded by a co-facilitator on a flipchart or a computer so they are visible at all times. After about 15-20 minutes, a natural silence may occur. However, a free discussion should follow, with a short break and then a shorter 10-minute phase to generate more ideas. This is because the most innovative ideas often appear in a second "hump" of creativity after the initial obvious ideas have been exhausted.

Frequent Mistakes of Brainstorming

While brainstorming can be a powerful tool, it often fails due to elementary mistakes. The most common mistakes are a **lack of understanding of time dynamics**, choosing an **unsuitable form**, **ending in the divergent phase**, **clumsy recording of ideas**, and **destroying the ideas** with critical or judgmental voices during the idea-generation phase.

Versions of Brainstorming and Divergent Thinking

A variety of brainstorming techniques can be used depending on the situation. Some examples include:

- **Turbo brainstorming:** Participants write their ideas on cards simultaneously, hang them up, and then discuss and regroup them.
- **Beach ball brainstorming:** Participants "throw" ideas to each other, like a beach ball,

which can help create a supportive dynamic.

- **Questorming:** Participants generate questions about the problem instead of solutions, working toward a "metaquestion" that is essential for the solution.
- **Synectics:** This mental process uses analogies, metaphors, and contradictions to link unrelated elements, leading to new ideas.
- **Directed brainstorming:** If a clear criterion for selecting ideas exists, this method can be used to guide creativity. Participants pass on a suggestion, and the next person considers it based on the set criterion.
- **Brainwriting or Ideation:** Ideas are recorded on paper instead of being said aloud, and then shared or passed on to others for inspiration.
- **Idea bank:** A version of brainwriting where ideas are collected in one place to be used later. An easy way to do this is with a box where participants can drop in their ideas.
- **E-brainstorming:** A more sophisticated version of brainstorming where participants submit ideas via email, phone, or video, and the ideas are continuously published to stimulate more proposals.
- **Method 3-5-6:** This structured brainwriting method uses rotating papers and time pressure. In groups of six, each participant writes three ideas in five minutes, then passes the paper on, and the process repeats until they get their original paper back.
- **Mind-mapping:** Ideas are graphically branched out to find associations, leading to new solutions.
- **Affinity diagrams:** This method organizes ideas based on their natural relationships, revealing new patterns. Ideas are generated and then simultaneously grouped into subgroups.
- **Delphi method:** A divergent procedure where a facilitator sends a question to experts, summarizes their anonymous answers, and sends the summary back for their comments. This is repeated until a joint document is agreed upon. A faster version, mini-Delphi or ETE, involves only one cycle.

Flawless Voting Rules in Public Discussions

Before taking a vote in a facilitated discussion, a set of basic rules should be clarified and accepted by everyone involved. This ensures that the result is respected by all, regardless of how they voted. The facilitator should address the following circumstances before the vote:

- **Is voting the appropriate method?** A majority vote creates winners and losers. If a single decision is not necessary, or if there is no rush, alternatives like taking more time to find a consensus or allowing multiple solutions should be considered.
- **Importance of a decision:** For crucial decisions, a "super majority" rule (e.g., 66%, 75%, or even 90% of votes) can be agreed upon to prevent a simple majority from making a substantial change.
- **Eligibility to vote:** Clarify who is allowed to vote and whether proxy votes are counted. Define how the majority is counted (e.g., of those present vs. all eligible voters). Using a "quorum" ensures a minimum number of voters for the result to be valid.
- **Mandates:** Agree on the value of each vote. Do all votes have the same value, or do representatives of larger organizations have more weight?

- **Documenting the voting:** The group should agree on a clear method for approval (e.g., raised hands) and ensure the result is clearly and unequivocally announced, including to absent members.

NGT and Other Convergent Tools

After using divergent tools to generate a great number of ideas, group discussion must continue to narrow down the options. This is the purpose of convergent methods.

Convergent methods serve to evaluate, combine, compare, and finalize ideas so that a resulting solution can be implemented. The people responsible for implementation should ideally be involved in the selection process. Facilitators use various tools for this, including nominal methods, criteria-based methods, pair comparisons, and critique methods.

Let's imagine a non-profit with 61 ideas after a brainstorming session. In this situation, simple voting is not practical. The facilitator would suggest using a convergent tool to narrow the options to a few most suitable ones for further discussion.

Nominal Methods

Nominal methods involve nominating items with several votes per person. This helps narrow down a large list of ideas to a manageable number. The best-known nominal method is the **NGT (Nominal Group Technique)**, which combines both divergent and convergent components.

Nomination may be performed by selection, ranking, or assigning values. The degree of openness in the nomination process can also vary: **public nomination**, excellent in groups with perfect confidence where people decide independently, but susceptible to the **"Abilene Paradox"**; **half-public nomination**, where some participants see the trend of the votes, which may influence their own choices; and **anonymous nomination**, which is useful when a decision needs to be truly independent of any outside influences.

Nomination Techniques

- **Nomination by selection:** Group members mark their preferred items from a list, and those with the most votes are selected for further discussion.
- **Nomination by rank:** This is a more sensitive tool than selection, suitable for smaller numbers of items (ideally up to 7). Each member ranks the items in order from most to least preferred.
- **Nomination by indexing:** This provides an even higher degree of differentiation. Participants assign a certain value (e.g., points on a Likert scale) to each item. This method can be influenced by the "grey mouse effect," where extreme valuations cancel each other out, resulting in a low-value item with an average score. It is often a good idea to limit the total sum of points that can be distributed.

Collaborative Planning

Collaborative planning is a process where a group of stakeholders works together to find a joint solution to a significant problem over a series of meetings. The facilitator's task is to design the overall process, gradually modify it, and facilitate the individual meetings.

This tool is applicable for complex, interdisciplinary issues with multiple stakeholders where no single institution has the full authority to solve the problem. A key condition for success is that the interested parties are open to negotiation and perceive a common agreement as more profitable than blocking their opponents. It is not suitable for problems based on different values, legal violations, or where a legal procedure gives one party a significantly higher chance of achieving its goals.

Preparation of the Process

The facilitator is typically approached by the initiator of the process. Their first task is to help map the situation and decide on the most applicable process. The initiator must have legitimacy to start the process, and preliminary conversations with key stakeholders are vital to build trust. A planning committee may be formed to conduct interviews and guide the process. The facilitator and the committee consider the stakeholders, the urgency, existing conflicts, past decision-making mechanisms, and available resources.

Inviting Stakeholders

Stakeholders are representatives of institutions or individuals. They can be divided into three categories: those who are formally responsible for a decision, those who will be influenced by a decision, and those who could discredit it. It is crucial to involve representatives with various interests and points of view.

Agreement on Collaborative Planning

It is necessary to make an agreement with all stakeholders on the focus of the process and its rules. The first meeting is dedicated to discussing this agreement. The agreement should cover the goal and form of the output, the scope of the planning, the framework of the process (duration, institutions, etc.), responsibilities and obligations of stakeholders, decision-making procedures, ways to address power differences and conflicts, and procedures for providing information to the public. For a successful process, key stakeholders must commit to long-term participation. The political will of decision-makers is also needed for the final agreement to be implemented.

Possibilities for Designing Collaborative Planning

Susan Carpenter identified three basic models for structuring collaborative planning:

- **Coordination Committees Model:** This model combines the work of a collaborative committee and specific task groups. The committee, consisting of 10 to 30 key stakeholders, goes through the entire problem-solving process. Task groups are formed as needed to gather information or suggest alternative solutions. This model is useful for in-depth analysis and allows specialists to contribute without being involved in the full process.
- **Conference and Task Groups Model:** This model is suitable for a large number of

stakeholders (50 to 200 people) who need to be involved simultaneously in a relatively short time. The process starts with a large joint conference where task groups are formed. A second conference follows a few months later, where groups present their results. This model is repeated until a joint result is achieved.

- **Negotiating Teams Model:** This model is suitable for topics that lead to the formation of interest groups. It works best with a small number of teams (three to five) that are willing to negotiate. Each team works to define its interests and then negotiates as a single party. This model is often used in three-party negotiations, such as between trade unions, employers, and the state.

What to Pay Attention to in Collaborative Planning

The weakest point of the process is often the implementation of the agreement. It's crucial to distribute effort between planning and implementation. It is better to start with small, visible activities even during the planning process to keep participants motivated. The facilitator's role is to help design and lead the process. This includes directly proposing a design, providing consulting services, facilitating meetings, and pointing out if certain stakeholders are being left out.

It's effective to combine activities in small and large groups, public and closed meetings, and continuous involvement of key stakeholders with partial involvement of others. This reduces the risk of "exhaustion" and ensures the participation of all important people.

Workshop 3: Argumentation and Effective Communication

Led by **Jakub Kobela**

What is Critical Thinking?

Critical thinking is a crucial skill for effective communication and argumentation. It involves:

- **Observing your own thinking and decision-making processes** for self-awareness and understanding biases.
- **Being systematically curious and open-minded** by actively seeking information and being open to new perspectives.
- **Studying contextual bubbles** to understand the environment and context of information and arguments.
- **Thinking in a structured way** to organize thoughts and arguments logically.

The Basic Argument Structure

A good argument is structured around three key components: **Claim**, **Explanation**, and **Evidence**. The **Claim** is the statement you are trying to prove, while the **Explanation** clarifies why the claim is true. The **Evidence** provides the factual basis to support your explanation, which can include studies, facts, analogies, principles, or expert authority.

The argument is tied together with a **Link**, which connects the evidence back to the claim.

When all four parts are present and strong, your argument is much more difficult to refute.

The Golden Grail of Argumentation: Criterion

To make your argument more compelling and universal, you should introduce a **Criterion**. The criterion is the underlying value or principle that your argument is based on, answering the question, "Why should someone care about your argument?"

For example, instead of arguing that "managers should not be available during vacations because it's important for their well-being," you could introduce the criterion of **maximizing performance**. The new argument would be: "We should not expect a manager's availability during vacations because a lower level of physical and mental well-being causes drops in work and managerial performance." This argument is stronger because it's tied to a value that most businesses care about.

How to Disagree Respectfully

Disagreements are inevitable, but they can be handled respectfully and productively. It's important to recognize common "debate bullies" and know how to respond to them.

- **The Dodger** tries to change the point of the conversation. The best response is to gently steer the conversation back to the original topic.
- **The Twister** misinterprets your argument to create a "straw-man" version that is easier to attack. Your reaction should be to correct them precisely, emphasizing where your point ends and their misinterpretation begins.
- **The Wrangler** finds fault with everything but offers no alternative solutions. Your best approach is to ask them directly, "What exactly is your position?"
- **The Liar** argues with demonstrable falsehoods. Your reaction should be to choose the two most representative falsehoods and proactively replace them with the truth.

By understanding these archetypes and how to respond to them, you can navigate disagreements more effectively and keep the conversation focused and respectful.

Workshop 4: Online Campaigns

Led by **Marián Faktor**

Online Campaigns: Purpose and Principles

A strategically planned and targeted series of digital activities aimed at achieving specific business or communication goals via the internet. These campaigns utilize various online platforms and tools, including social media, email marketing, websites, online advertising (Google Ads, banner ads), SEO, and content marketing.

The purpose of online campaigns is to increase brand awareness, boost sales, acquire customers, build audience relationships, or improve engagement with the target audience. An effective campaign depends on clearly defined goals, an identified target audience, a selection of appropriate online channels, relevant content and creative materials, and performance measurement and analysis.

The core principles of online campaigns are:

1. **Identification of the target audience:** Find relevant target groups.
2. **Content customization:** Tailor content based on criteria for each target group.
3. **Targeting:** Target content based on audience behavior.
4. **Conversion:** The entire process should lead toward measurable results.

Selecting the Right Channels

PPC Platforms

PPC (Pay-per-click) is a paid advertising model where you pay per click. Other paid ad formats, like CPT/CPM, are based on impressions. **Google Ads** and **social media** platforms like Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and X are popular for PPC.

Google Ads Campaign Types

Types of Google Ads campaigns include video ads (YouTube Spots), GDN (Google Display Network) campaigns for static/responsive ads, Search ads, DSA (Dynamic Search Ads), Lead ads (form-based), and Shopping/PMax for e-commerce.

Meta Ad Campaign Types

Meta offers a variety of campaign types, such as **Brand Awareness**, **Reach**, **Traffic**, **Engagement**, **App Installs**, **Video Views**, **Lead Generation**, **Messages**, **Conversions**, **Product Sales**, and **Store Traffic**.

The Power of Visual Communication

Visual content is highly effective:

- 10% of people remember what they hear.
- 20% of people remember what they read.
- **80% of people remember what they see and do.**

Social Media Strategy

Use of Social Media in Slovakia

Over 4.16 million users in Slovakia are active on social media, representing 72.4% of the total population. Key platforms include:

- **Facebook:** Over 2.40 million users and the main communication channel.
- **Instagram:** Over 1.60 million users and a visual platform.
- **TikTok:** Over 1.06 million users and a quantity-focused platform.
- **YouTube:** Over 4.16 million users, effective for both widescreen videos and shorts.
- **LinkedIn:** A platform for professional audiences.
- **Threads:** A platform for short statements.

META Rules

It's important to have a strategy for your social media presence. Maintain **posting consistency** with a schedule, use a **unified visual style**, and create **unique sections** like Q&A, Polls, or Livestreams. Focus on **original, authentic content** and remember to be **mobile first**, as most users access these platforms on mobile devices.

Budget and Measurement

Budget Setting

You need to define a daily or lifetime budget and understand the difference between **CPC (Cost per Click)** and **CPM (Cost per Mille)**. Investments should be optimized based on campaign performance.

KPI Measurement and Evaluation

KPIs (Key Performance Indicators), such as CTR (Click-Through Rate) and CPA (Cost per Acquisition), are measured using tools like Google Analytics, social media insights, and CRM systems. The focus is on analyzing the business impact of the campaign results.

Workshop 5: Design Thinking and Empathy

Led by **Martin Veselý**

What is a Service?

A service is an economic activity or something non-material offered as a good. The key thing about a service is that it focuses on people—it is delivered to someone who has a need or a desire for it.

Human-Centered Design

Design thinking is a process that is based on the concept of human-centered design. This approach focuses on the overlap of three key areas:

1. **Desirability:** What people want or need.
2. **Feasibility:** What is technologically possible.
3. **Viability:** What is financially sustainable.

When these three areas overlap, you have a product or service that will be successful. Apple is a prime example of a company that is obsessed with human-centered design and customer experience, which is why people are so loyal to their products.

The Design Thinking Process

Design thinking is an iterative process with distinct stages that are meant to be revisited. The most important stages are **empathy** and **definition**.

The Power of Empathy

Empathy is the ability to put yourself in another person's shoes—to understand what they are experiencing from their perspective, not your own. This is different from sympathy, which is simply feeling sorry for someone. The key to empathy is **active listening**, which is not just hearing, but gaining new knowledge or a new perspective.

To practice empathy, you must ask good questions. These questions should be **open-ended**, **non-suggestive**, **simple**, and **non-judgmental**. They should also be **story-focused** to get people to open up and **emotion-focused** to understand the problem.

From Observation to Insight

An **observation** is what you see. An **insight** is the deeper, underlying need or job to be done. To get from an observation to an insight, you must ask "why." For example, an observation might be that a person needs a chair to reach a book on a high shelf. The insight is that the person needs the object on the shelf because they have a specific task to complete.

As the famous (though possibly apocryphal) Henry Ford quote goes, "If I had asked people what they wanted, they would have said faster horses." Ford understood that the observation was that people wanted to move faster, but the insight was that they needed a more efficient way to get from point A to point B.

The goal is to formulate an insight into a clear, concise statement: "A person needs to do something because of an underlying motivation."

Ideation and Prototyping

Ideation is the process of generating new ideas. Great ideas often come from looking at limitations or finding inspiration in completely different fields.

- **Look at your biggest limitation:** IKEA realized that shipping furniture was the most expensive part of their business. Their solution was to have customers build their own furniture, which made it affordable and easy to transport.
- **Look for solutions in other fields:** When GE needed to find a way to keep children still during an MRI scan, they looked at how kindergartens engaged kids. Their solution was to turn the CT scan into a "pirate ship" and the scan into a game, which made the experience less scary for children.

Ideation is followed by **prototyping and testing**. The purpose of testing is not to prove that your idea works, but to **learn something new about the problem**. You want to fail as fast as possible to save time and resources. For example, instead of building a full-sized cake, you can start with a small cupcake to test the most critical assumption—the taste—before investing in the entire project. The key principles are to identify the riskiest assumption, create a test, fail fast, and iterate.

Workshop 6: Crisis Communication Manual

Led by **Gabriel Tóth**

3 Laws of Crisis Communication

There are three fundamental laws of crisis communication. First, a crisis cannot be won; the goal is simply to minimize the damage. Second, a crisis will inevitably occur, whether you want it to or not. Finally, it will almost always happen at the least convenient time, such as on a Friday afternoon or while you are on vacation.

1. Preparation

Being prepared is the best defense. You must have a crisis plan in place before a crisis strikes. This involves creating a clear **organizational plan** that defines who is on the crisis team, who has decision-making authority, and who will serve as the media spokesperson. Additionally, it is crucial to conduct **media training** for key stakeholders, using real-life scenarios to prepare them for tough questions. You should also establish **continuous monitoring** of both social and traditional media to quickly identify any emerging issues. Finally, prepare materials in advance, such as a general media statement and a detailed Q&A document.

2. When the Crisis Breaks Out

When a crisis erupts, the worst thing you can do is panic. The immediate priority is to **get an overview** by assessing the extent of the damage and gathering all necessary information. It is essential that all key stakeholders collaborate during this phase. You must **take command** of the situation and ensure you are part of the core decision-making group. A **war room** should be set up with a dedicated team, clear leadership, and established communication channels to provide regular updates.

3. Reaction

Your response can either mitigate the damage or make it worse. You must be strategic about **when to respond**. Be mindful of the **Barbara Streisand effect**, where attempts to suppress information can make it more prominent. Only respond if the crisis has a real impact on your target audience. If an **apology** is necessary, it must be sincere, direct, and empathetic. Do not make excuses. It should include concrete steps to prevent the problem from happening again. In cases of misinformation, you must **debunk it immediately** on the channels where it originated. Always lead with the facts, explain the fallacy, and reinforce the truth. Finally, you can use **self-irony** and humor if the crisis has not caused any real harm.

4. Distribution

Communication during a crisis needs a strategic distribution plan. You need to identify **who to communicate with**, which includes the public, internal employees, business stakeholders, and regulators. The message should be delivered by a specific, trustworthy, and credible person, ideally the CEO or a member of the management team. You should use all available channels for distribution: traditional media, your owned channels (such as social media), and paid advertising.

5. Principles

There are three core principles to follow during a crisis:

- **Take the initiative** by setting the agenda and providing specific solutions.
- **Be consistent** by repeating your key message across all channels.
- **Respond and answer** inquiries promptly through all your touchpoints, from social media to your customer service line.

What Comes After the Crisis?

Once the initial crisis has passed, you must begin the process of repairing the damage. This involves determining the full extent of the damage through social listening and public opinion surveys. Do not stop communicating just because the initial wave of attention has subsided; you need to continue long-term communication activities to earn back trust. Finally, it's essential to **learn from the crisis** by evaluating your communication plan and adjusting it for the future.

How to Not Lose with the Media

How to Handle Media Questions

When a journalist contacts you, never answer immediately. Find out their deadline and gather more information before responding. It's always better to respond than to ignore them. When you do respond, provide short, clear, and understandable answers. You can also calmly provide further explanation through off-the-record information.

How to Handle an Interview

For a formal interview, always ask for the questions or at least the topics in advance. Prepare key messages for each question and be sure to answer what you want to, not just what the journalist asks. Start your answers with the most important point and, if possible, request to review the interview for approval before it's published.

How to Perform in Front of the Camera

Your appearance and demeanor matter. Avoid wearing stripes, checks, or patterns, as well as visible logos. Ensure your surroundings and clothing complement the content of your message. Maintain a stable and comfortable position, and avoid fidgeting. Speak briefly, in simple sentences, and use full sentences, not just fragments.

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