COOPSTARTER

Becoming a cooperative entrepreneur and ambassador

CoopStarter 2.0
Intellectual output 3

Ambassador Learning Materials.

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(2) ABOUT THE LEARNING MATERIALS

Who the learning materials are for – ambassador profiles

This learning material is aimed at young leaders who are interested in setting up their own community-based cooperative business. These coop ambassadors will already have a range of resources, expertise and networks, as well as a range of skills acquired through their activities as youth leaders.

Coop ambassadors will typically be young people who have demonstrated experience in successfully designing, setting up and implementing youth projects and/or managing youth organisations, or they may simply be motivated to start up their own cooperative business.

What additional skills should coop ambassadors have?

Coop ambassadors will also have the skills and confidence to get out into the community, develop relationships, assess what the needs are and encourage people to take action together. Ideally they will be passionate about their activities and are considering scaling them up, or making a living out of them and are interested in becoming a cooperative entrepreneur.

Coop ambassadors could already be part of a group or a community (whether physical or online) of young people who have identified a common need or who have a shared interest or activity to pursue together.

What the learning materials are for and how they should be used

This manual is designed to be a resource for coop ambassadors, who can use this learning material to develop their own skills and those of others as well as using their practical experiences as youth leaders. The learning materials will also offer useful additional knowledge and expertise to become cooperative entrepreneurs. Using this manual, coop ambassadors will learn how to set up a cooperative business, through physical training sessions provided by mentors.

This manual gives coop ambassadors basic information about how people learn and also how to effectively engage communities so that they can make best use of the training sessions, materials and the toolkit resources. It also helps them to understand the process of developing and refining their business ideas and working collectively with others as cooperative entrepreneurs.

What's in the different sections of the learning materials?

The learning materials have been developed in four sections:

- **Introduction – Introduction to Training Methodologies**
  This section of the learning manual explores a range of learning styles and encourages coop ambassadors to consider the impact this has on how you facilitate 'training' sessions and explains cooperative teaching and learning methods and how they can be used in a range of different learning environments.
- **Section One – Let's cooperate: engaging with communities**
  This section of the learning materials outlines the basics of community engagement, such as how to identify a community and what do we mean by community as well as examples of different tools that can be used when working with communities on an idea or project.
- **Section Two – CoopStarter hackathon: generating business ideas**
  This section guides you through the process of generating and developing cooperative business ideas using the format of a dynamic and immersive community event, a hackathon.
- **Section Three – Let's start for real: starting a cooperative business**
  This section of the learning materials explains some of the different practical considerations that need to be covered when setting up a cooperative business.
- **Resources – Handouts and activities to support the learning materials**
  This section contains all of the supporting resources to accompany the learning materials, including factsheets, additional resources and the instructions for activities suggested in each section.

Where can I find other useful resources?

Other resources connected to this project that you will find useful are:

- **'Young leaders, cooperative entrepreneurs' report**
  This report outlines the context for youth entrepreneurship activities across the EU as well as showcasing case studies for inspiring ambassadors with their own cooperative start-ups.
- **Guidebook for ambassadors**
  This guidebook is designed to be a practical manual to help ambassadors to organise local events and activities. It covers basic cooperatives principles, fine-tuning business ideas, compiling a business plan and risk analysis.
- **Training tools for mentors**
  These tools aim to enable mentors to support and up-skill ambassadors by providing resources in the form of practical training methods and tools. It will also help give ambassadors a deeper understanding of the cooperative economy.

(3) INTRODUCTION TO TRAINING METHODOLOGIES

As an ambassador, you will learn a lot about how to engage people in a cooperative project. But you will also need to share your knowledge with your community. Engaging people involves raising their awareness, and providing them with the necessary skills and knowledge to start a cooperative business. In practice, as an ambassador, you will do so through 'non-formal learning practices': it involves transferring knowledge outside formal educational spaces, such as through gaming activities or workshops.

The aim is not to make you an expert trainer, but to give you a better understanding of different learning processes so that you are aware of all of the different routes into learning for yourself and your community… to eventually help your peers join you in a cooperative project!

What is learning?

- The act, process, or experience of gaining knowledge or skill
- Knowledge or skill gained through schooling or study
- Behavioural modification especially through experience or training

The learning process

Developing new skills and capabilities effectively is not only about formal training but is also about profiting from your everyday work experience. It involves:

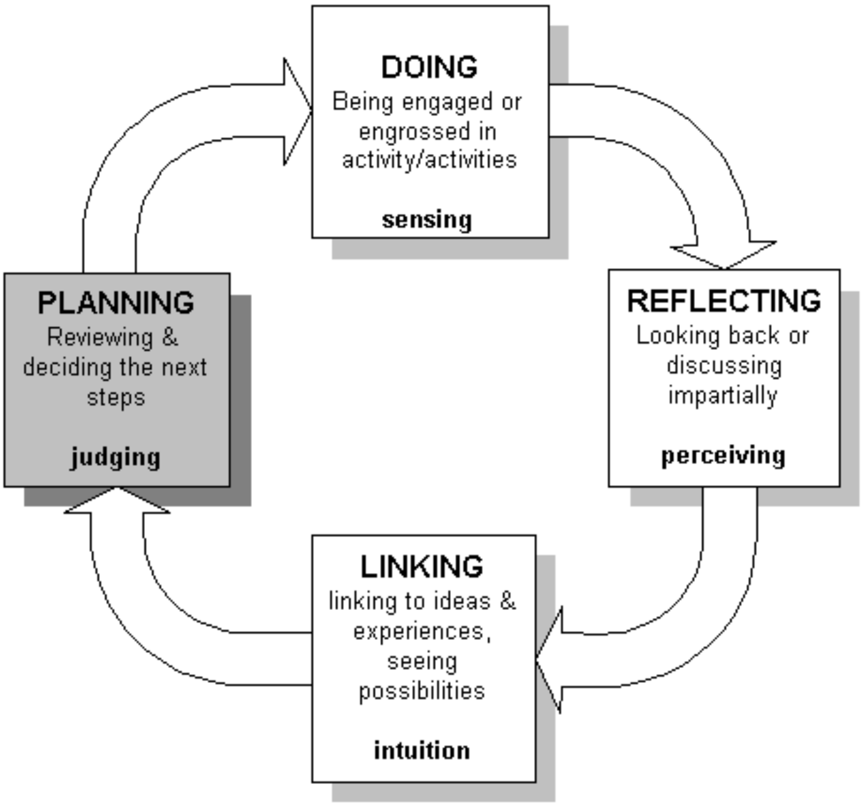
- **Doing:** carrying out and being aware of all the activities you are participating in
- **Reflecting:** reviewing and summarising what has just taken place
- **Linking:** making links and connections with previous knowledge
- **Planning:** using what you have learnt to make improvements, which involves planning, structuring what you do in a new way, and setting targets

We naturally cycle through each of these stages in the course of our daily lives; however most of us tend to focus on one or two areas more than the others.

The four stages of the learning cycle

Doing involves activity, participation and engagement with experience. People who are most comfortable in this stage emphasise practical achievement and involvement.

Reflecting involves impartially gathering information about activities that have taken place. People who are most comfortable in this stage emphasise discussion, exploration and playing back experiences in their minds.



Linking is the stage during which we make connections between experiences and ideas, and see how the experience ties in or conflicts with other concepts and models. People who are most comfortable in this stage emphasise knowledge, conceptual thinking and abstract ideas.

Planning enables us to modify our actions by deciding how we will do them differently the next time. It involves reviewing and summarising what we have learnt, and deciding the next steps. People who are most comfortable in this stage emphasise decision making, categorising, applying judgements and organising.

Learning is an ongoing process that can be seen as a cycle of continual improvement. Depending on our natural preferences we tend to be most comfortable at one particular stage of this cycle, and least comfortable at another. To learn fully from all our experiences however, it is important to engage in each stage of the cycle.

How do we learn?

Different people learn in different ways. These learning styles are said to consist of three inter-related elements:

- **Information processing** – habitual modes of perceiving, storing and organising information (for example, pictorially or verbally)
- **Instructional preferences** – predispositions towards learning in a certain way (for example, collaboratively or independently) or in a certain setting (for example, time of day, environment)
- **Learning strategies** – adaptive responses to learning specific subject matter in a particular context

Rather than representing a single concept, 'learning styles' is therefore an umbrella term covering a spectrum of modalities, preferences and strategies.

Learning modalities

A modality is a combination of perception and memory – in other words, how the mind receives and stores information. Learning modality theorists argue that all learners have a preference for one or more of the sensory modalities: **visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic**. Some theorists also include a **tactile** modality.

A person's sensory learning preference determines how he/she will best receive information.

Visual: These learners like to get information through their eyes by looking at images, mindmaps, demonstrations and body language.

Auditory: These learners like to get information through their ears. They like to listen to the trainer, repeat things in their head, and take part in discussions.

Kinaesthetic: These learners like to get information through their hands, bodies or movement. They like to touch, move things around and write things down.

Tactile: these learners like to write things down, read books, look at pictures and diagrams and take notes.

Activity: accommodating sensory learning preferences
Based on the descriptions above, make a couple of suggestions of activities you could carry out with different learners according to the following learning preferences: ● Visual ● Auditory ● Kinaesthetic ● Tactile

Honey and Mumford learning styles

Learning style is defined as "a description of the attitudes and behaviour which determine an individual's preferred way of learning".[1] Most people exhibit more than one trait.

In the 1970s in the UK Honey and Mumford identified a range of preferred learning styles which were published in the 'Manual of Learning Styles' in 1982. Some three decades later these are still recognised and used globally.

Activity: Honey and Mumford's Learning Styles Questionnaire (LSQ)
See Handout 1 for the LSQ questionnaire, answer all of the questions and work out your preferred learning style, then read the descriptions at the end of the handout.

Activity: Reflecting on Honey and Mumford's learning style preferences
See Handout 2 – Training Methods Factsheet. It is important to consider the impact of your preferred learning style on the way you learn – but also on the way that you work with others and train people. What impact does your preferred learning style have on the way you engage with people attending training events in the community? When running a training event you should consider a range of different activities and approaches to help you engage with different people with different learning styles. The way in which you deliver the session is also important.

Cooperative learning techniques

Cooperative learning involves a number of learners working together in small groups to achieve a structured task or goal. It is more than just working in a group as group work alone does not guarantee cooperative learning.

As you may have experienced when people are simply required to work together, they are usually rewarded by the success of the entire group. It is all too often the case that only some members of the group do all of the work. It cannot be said that all of the members are actually learning.

[1] Honey, P. & Mumford, A. (2000). *The learning styles helper's guide.* Maidenhead: Peter Honey Publications Ltd

In cooperative learning, members of the group are not only rewarded based on the success of the entire group but also individually accountable for their own work. The task or activity is structured in a way that requires the input and participation of every group member. As a result, all of the members of the group learn from each other and are able to clearly identify their own contribution to the success/failure of the group.

There are 5 elements to cooperative learning:

1. Face to face interaction – this includes any form of direct action so may be face to face, over the phone, via Skye or email. Group members must interact to cooperate.
2. Positive interdependence – group members rely on each other and can only succeed together.
3. Individual accountability – as an interdependent group, each individual is responsible for his or her work and can be held accountable for that work.
4. Collaborative skills – the group members must be able to work together.
5. Group processing – the group needs to monitor itself to ensure that they achieve the activity or task and that each individual fits well within the group's tasks.

Activity: Reflecting on cooperative learning methods
See Handouts 3 and 4 for two examples of methods that encourage cooperative learning, the 'jigsaw' method and the World Café. Read the handouts and reflect on how you would use these methods to encourage a more cooperative approach to learning. Both of these methods can help you to ensure that people are working collectively to achieve their tasks.

Validation and evaluation

What is validation?

Validation describes the process of checking that an action leads to a consistent and reproducible result. In the case of training this 'result' is typically identified through methods used to check or test that learning has taken place.

The ultimate goal of your event is to increase people's knowledge of cooperatives. It is therefore important to think of different ways to 'test' the participants to make sure that 'learning' is taking place. The most effective way to do it is during the session so that you can go over things if you need to before moving on.

Validation tips and tricks
Read the description of tips and tricks below.

1. Avoid yes/no questions.

Avoid yes/no questions and phrases like "Does this make sense?" In response to these questions, learners usually answer "yes". To help learners grasp ideas in the session ask open questions that also require them to use their own previous knowledge, thus building confidence at the same time.

2. Ask learners to reflect.

As you approach the end of a topic or stage of the training, ask your learners to reflect and if appropriate you can ask them to note down what they've learned. Then, ask them to consider how they would apply this concept or skill in a practical setting. See Handout 3 – Personal action plan

3. Use quizzes.

Giving a short quiz at the end of a training session is a good way to check for comprehension.

4. Ask learners to summarise.

Ask your learners to summarise or paraphrase important concepts and sessions. This can be done orally, visually, or otherwise.

5. Response cards.

Index cards, signs, whiteboards, magnetic boards, or other items are simultaneously held up by learners to indicate their response to a question or problem presented by the trainer. Using response devices, the trainer can easily note the responses of individuals while training the whole group. If you notice someone is struggling but isn't happy to ask in front of others, approach them during a break or whilst all learners are completing task so that you do not appear to single them out in front of others.

6. Four corners.

A quick and easy snapshot of learners understanding, 'four corners' provides an opportunity for movement while permitting the trainer to monitor and assess understanding. The trainer poses a question or makes a statement. Learners then move to the appropriate corner of the room to indicate their response to the prompt. For example, the corner choices might include "I strongly agree," "I strongly disagree," "I agree somewhat," and "I'm not sure."

7. Think-pair-share.

Learners take a few minutes to think about the question or prompt. Next, they pair with a designated partner to compare thoughts before sharing with the whole training session.

8. 3-2-1.

Learners consider what they have learned by responding to the following prompt at the end of the session: 3) things they learned; 2) things they want to know more about; and 1) question they have. The prompt stimulates reflection and helps to process the learning.

Activity: Reflection on Evaluation
In pairs discuss evaluation methods that you have experienced as a learner (or a trainer) and identify which would be the best methods to use in your current role when running your event. Each pair then takes it in turns to present a summary of their discussion back to the whole group.

Evaluation method you have experienced	*Where and when did you experience this?*	*How effective was it?*	*Would you use it in your current role when training people?*
Evaluation methods I plan to use for the events		*Why am I going to use this method?*	

(4) SECTION 1 - LET'S COOPERATE

Introduction

Youth leaders interact on a daily basis with their communities, engaging groups of people to collectively address needs and implement projects. The first step of setting up a cooperative business is very similar: it's all about getting people together in a non-hierarchical yet organised way. However, you do need to think about certain issues when setting up a cooperative, such as securing a fixed group of people who are ready to invest capital and participate in the setting up of a viable, sustainable economic activity. This section outlines a number of tools that can be used to engage communities in a cooperative project.

In this section we will discuss the basics of community engagement, such as how to identify a community and what do we mean by community. There will follow some examples of different tools that can be used when working with communities on an idea or project, starting with mobilising the community and working through to empowering that community.

What is a community?

A community is a group of people interested in a common subject and who share a vision of their own, but above all who take action to achieve the goals they have set for themselves. This community can be a geographic community who are interested in a project or issue in their local area, or it may be a community of interest who form a community around a particular theme. It is important that this community have a shared interest in working together to achieve a shared goal.

Identifying your community

You may have already identified a community to work with within their existing group, then it's possible to start right away in working with this group and get them interested in your project idea. If this has not been finalised, there are many different ways to get more people to join you if you want to expand the group:

- Social media – use platforms such as Twitter and Facebook to drum up interest in your project and let people know how they can get involved
- Use flyers and posters – put flyers or posters in your local area in public places (local shop, community centre, student union etc.) with details of how people can get involved
- Networking – encourage people to use their networks to reach out using face-to-face meetings and online networks

What are the basic skills for engaging a community?

Community engagement works best as part of a process that builds and strengthens over time and the engagement events will help to provide a space for this community to develop. It's important that the purpose and scope of the community engagement activities are clear from the outset and these are communicated to participants.

It can be useful to start the activities with a session where the aims of the day/event etc. are set by the group and written up on flipchart paper where everyone can see them. Another activity could be to set 'ground rules' for the work everyone is doing together. Ground rules that are mutually decided, and enforced, by the group can be used to create a supportive and respectful space for group work. They can be an important part of keeping group activity focused by providing a framework to ensure that the activity takes place within pre-defined parameters. This can be done by getting people to shout out or by getting people to write them on post-it notes and sticking them up on a piece of flip-chart paper.

Typical ground rules
• Arrive on time • Come with a positive attitude ready to take part • Complete tasks in time • Everyone should contribute to the best of their ability • Take turns to talk and don't interrupt others • All ideas should be shared and considered equally • The group should decide how they will best reach an agreement
Display the ground rules during each session and draw people's attention to them before starting to ensure people follow them.

About the following sections

This section takes you through a 5-step process of community engagement:

- **Inform** – suggests ways in which to get your ideas across and help a group come up with shared values

- **Consult** – covers techniques on how to ask people feedback on ideas

- **Involve** – outlines how to make a 'call to action'

- **Collaborate** – describes methods to bring people together
- **Empower** – highlights some ways to work together as a group to strengthen joint working and decision-making

Inform

Firstly you need to ask yourself the following questions about informing somebody as this gives meaning to the process and helps people to understand the purpose of the exercise:

1. **Why** are you doing it?
2. **What** need are you responding to?
3. **How** are you going to do it?

The following 3 activities will help you to clarify your aims and answer the WHY, WHAT and HOW questions. Once you have worked out the WHY, move on to the following 2 activities to work out the WHAT and the HOW of your project.

Activity: Working out WHY you are doing what you're doing
The answer to the **WHY** question gives the vision. It defines where you want to go, helps to communicate what you want to achieve as a goal(s) and to motivate people to follow you in that direction. See Handout 6 and work though the activity to help you clarify the aims of your project.

Activity: Working out WHAT need you are responding to
The answer to the **WHAT** expresses the mission of a project. See Handout 7 - Responding to need. By working through this activity, this will help you to be clear that you're responding to a legitimate need that you can clearly identify.

Activity: Working out HOW you are going to do it
The answer to the **HOW** expresses the approach taken or strategy of a project. See Handout 8 - Visioning exercise. By working through this activity, this will help you to develop the concrete actions and next steps that need to be taken to get your project off the ground.

Consult

In this section we cover how to ask people for feedback on your idea. This means you need to present your ideas to other people at the earliest stage possible as this will affect your next steps. You first need to identify your own needs: what do you need to know now in order to proceed to the next step?

Before asking for feedback, evaluate what you need to know in order to confirm or inform choices/decisions/directions in the context of your project. Feedback is about giving information in a way that encourages people to accept it, reflect on it, learn from it, and use it as the basis for improvement to a product, idea, behaviour or service. When asking for feedback your questions must be clear and precise so that people understand what you are asking.

What makes good feedback? Good feedback is positive and constructive. A good approach to giving feedback is to comment on 4 positive elements that have been observed in what is being presented, and to select one element that would benefit from improvement. If you need to make a comment that points out a negative aspect, make sure this is constructive and that reasons are given, as well as possible suggestions for improvement.

As a first step, you need to make sure that your proposal meets the needs of the target group or issue. So it is important to ask for feedback from people who will be affected by your proposal. It may be relevant to involve people you know and people you do not know. The information provided may come from potential customers, competitors, entrepreneurs, mentors, partners, investors or from supporters.

Activity: Giving feedback
See Handout 9 – this activity helps you to use feedback effectively by demonstrating how to give and receive feedback in a constructive way. The activity is undertaken in small groups and is designed to help you practice giving and receiving feedback in order to improve your understanding.

Involve

In this section we will give you ideas on how to mobilise people around your ideas and encourage people to take action together.

In order to get your project off the ground, you need a range of different people to be involved who share you and your project's aims and interests. This could take the form of a 'call to action' to cooperators, providers, mentors, experts, media, clients, sponsors, investors and ambassadors. Getting this right will enable you to access a huge range of useful skills, knowledge and ideas, as well as other assets such as buildings and materials.

A call to action is a statement which quickly and clearly articulates your needs to the community and encourages them to back your idea for building a cooperative. It will let people know what you are looking for.

Before making your call to action you need to make sure you are looking for the right things. In order to do so, follow these steps:

1. Identify your resources: what equipment, talents, skills, expertises and funds do you have? Make an inventory.
2. Identify what you need: do your team have all the necessary knowledge and skills? Do you have all the resources you need? What is missing?
3. Identify people/organisations that can help, meet them and discuss your mission, goals and values with them.

Now you are ready to make your call to action to encourage people to get behind your idea. A good way to do this might be to practice it as an 'elevator pitch' so that you are focusing on the essential points and clearly presenting the most important information. Click here to learn about elevator pitches in more detail:
https://strategypeak.com/elevator-pitch-examples/

Collaborate

Getting people together to collaborate in a cooperative way is the cornerstone of creating a successful project. A good way to encourage cooperation and mutual aid is to bring people together in a shared space (such as an online community or local meeting space) as this will help you to facilitate collaboration within your community. Collaboration aims to:

- strengthen the community
- welcome new people to the community
- provide an opportunity for participants to learn something new
- provide a space and a time for participants to find solutions to problems they are interested in and develop their ideas

You can organise an event (like a hackathon) in which people meet to engage in a collaborative way. They work in groups on projects with the goal of creating something together. See Handout 10 for full details of all of the practical considerations of running a hackathon, and Section 2 of this manual for a range of ideas to engage your community in developing your cooperative business ideas.

Empower

It is important to make sure that participants involved in the process of setting up a cooperative feel empowered, and to do this it is important that people feel they have played a meaningful role in defining the focus of any community engagement activity.

Community empowerment is based on the idea that giving people skills, resources, authority, opportunity, motivation will enable them to take action together on the issues that they define as important. Working well together means good quality communication, integrating everybody's points of view and allowing everyone to be involved. Practising active listening is a key element of learning the necessary skills to promote effective communication.

Active listening is an important interpersonal communication skill that takes a while to learn but is absolutely worth getting to grips with. The purpose of active listening is to fully concentrate on what is being said with *all* of your senses. You can use a variety of verbal and non-verbal means (such as smiling, eye contact, nodding, agreeing, etc.) to convey to the speaker that you're actively engaged in what they're saying. If you don't do this, the speaker might conclude that you aren't interested.

The process of active listening involves you:
- listening to the speaker with all your senses, using verbal and non-verbal methods (content, form)
- remaining neutral with respect to information or opinions that are formulated
- questioning the speaker in order to improve your own understanding (clarification)
- reformulating what was said with similar language to reinforce their points (synthesis)

Activity: Active listening exercise
See Handout 11 for an active listening exercise that will help you to develop the skills needed for active listening, by practicing both as a speaker, and observer and a listener.

Another way to encourage people to feel empowered is for them to take part in decision-making processes about issues that affect them. The exercise below helps participants understand the key elements of reaching a consensus.

Activity: Decision-making exercise
See Handout 12 for a useful way to practice consensus decision-making by using a scenario to help examine the different considerations.

This section of the learning materials has introduced you to methods to help you gather a community or team around the business idea. Now you are ready to develop this further, and Section 2 sets out how to shape this process using the hackathon format.

(5) SECTION 2 - COOPSTARTER HACKATHON

Introduction to the CoopStarter hackathon

The practical and pedagogical aspects of gathering a community around one single idea has already been discussed in the first sections of this manual, as well as some examples of cooperative tools and techniques. This section uses one of those tools, the hackathon (as outlined in Handout 10), to give a structure to the process of collectively shaping and fine-tuning your business idea with a group of people who will go on to form a cooperative.

Hackathon content: *using the double diamond process model to generate, develop and test your business idea*

The starting point for most projects is a preliminary idea or inspiration. Having already gathered a community around one central idea, the task of this hackathon is to develop and qualify this idea, and make sure that customers, partners and cooperators understand and appreciate what the business is supposed to achieve.

The working content of the hackathon is formed around the ideas of design thinking, specifically the double diamond process model. We suggest dividing the hackathon into four phases (workshops) that reflect an iterative process of divergent and convergent thinking that aims to generate, develop and test the business idea in preparation for starting a cooperative business (Section 3).

The first diamond focuses on specifying the needs that the business idea is aiming to satisfy (designing the right thing), and is often called the strategy diamond. It consists of two distinct phases, that represents the twofold process of researching what potential customers and stakeholders need (DISCOVER: divergent), and synthesising findings into one or a few focal points (DEFINE: convergent). This process is about establishing a strategy ("doing the right thing"), and the result of this process will be carried on to the second diamond.

The second diamond focuses on the generation of business ideas, and delivering a product that satisfies the needs defined by the first diamond (designing things right), and is often called the solution diamond. It consists of two distinct phases that represents the twofold process of ideation on how to practically meet the needs of customers and stakeholders (DEVELOP: divergent), and implementation of these ideas through building, prototyping and testing (DELIVER: convergent). This process is about executing on design ("doing things right"), and the result of this process should be a product and business model as finished as practically possible.

A divergent phase (and workshop) aims to open up a field of investigation, and branch out possible challenges or ideas as wide as possible. During this process, very few limits to subject matter and scope should be applied, but certain methods of structuring research and development are suggested, in order to keep the process on track.

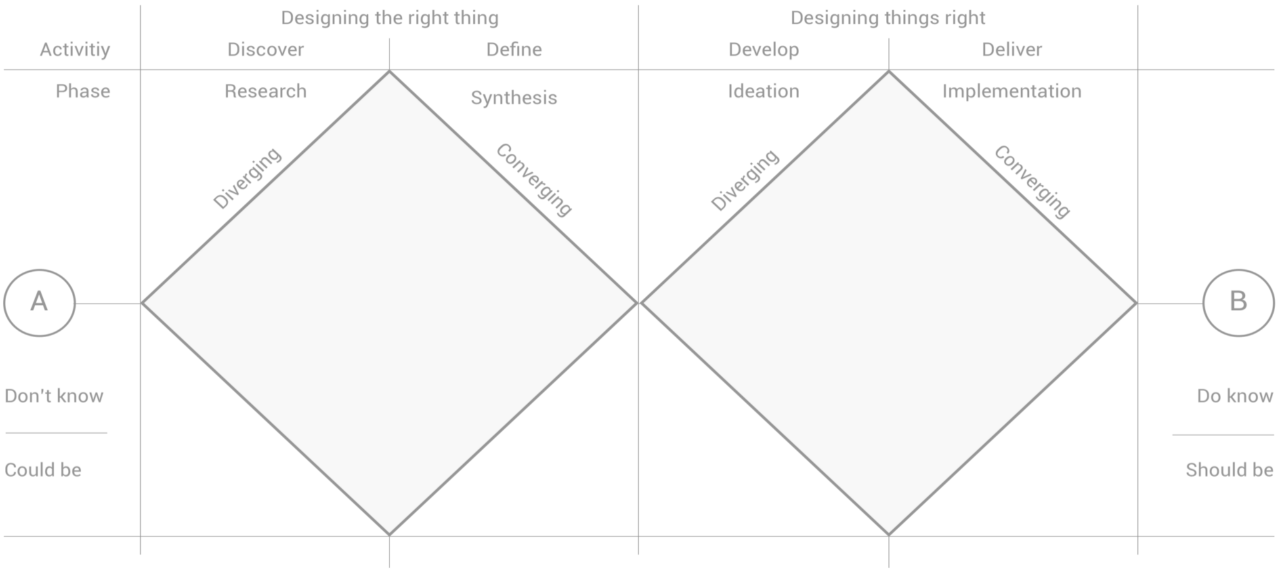


Illustration 1, Dan Nessler 2016

A convergent phase (and workshop) aims to close a field of investigation, narrowing down possible challenges or ideas to be as specific and precise as possible. During the DEFINE phase, the gradual categorisation of research material in themes, 'clusters' and insights should help identify what specific needs the business should address, and during the DELIVER phase, repeated prototyping, testing and analysis should bring the business idea as close to completion as possible.

Getting people engaged in the hackathon – setting the scene

Once everyone's arrived at your hackathon event, it's important to give an introduction to the activities planned for the day and to outline a timetable of activities, as well as making sure you have covered health and safety requirements. You may also want to set ground rules, as discussed in the previous section. Once you have these formalities out of the way, a great way to get people ready and engaged for the day ahead is to start with an icebreaker or energiser. See Handouts 13 and 14 for some example icebreakers to try.

How to encourage inclusive engagement

Before starting, it's important to clearly define the problem that you want to solve and also any criteria that need to be met. Encourage people to contribute as many ideas as they want. It's important to give people plenty of time to think of ideas, they can either do this on their own or in pairs/groups and then feed back to the whole group. Try to ensure that everybody's ideas are given equal consideration at this stage, even if they are later not taken forwards. This doesn't have to be merely people shouting out ideas or writing on post-it notes or flip-chart paper. You can ask people to imagine different scenarios that may help to add depth and detail to the ideas being generated. For example (list not exhaustive):

- **Get creative** – provide craft equipment and get people to create models or pictures of ideas.
- **Give out 'character' cards** – so that people take on a range of different perspectives on the ideas being generated – such as older people, young people, people with certain interests etc.
- **Reverse the problem** - instead of asking people to come up with ideas to solve or prevent a problem, ask them to suggest how the problem could be caused or made worse. This can help highlight things to avoid and can help to build positive ideas.

Part 1 – DISCOVER - First workshop

Discovering the business idea – Introduction

The starting point for the first workshop is the initial idea or inspiration. It is now time to activate the strength and skill of the community that has been gathered, in order to develop something of value for everybody. This is done by making sure that whatever cooperative you decide to build, you are building the right thing for the right people.

The DISCOVER phase (and workshop) is characterised by the branching out of the team's capabilities and focus, and the investigation of a broad range of product opportunities and possibilities. This phase is about asking questions, specifying problems and researching hypotheses in order to locate the proper business opportunity.

DISCOVER – Theory

When developing ideas for starting ANY business, it is important to be able to ask the right questions. In building a sustainable business environment and organisation one central theme is the satisfaction of needs, which traditionally is divided into three parts: The needs of the customers, the needs of the organisation (community and individual members) and the needs of the partners.

When we are developing ideas for starting a cooperative business, the central concerns should be 1) the needs of customers of the cooperative, and 2) the needs of the people building the cooperative. Responding to the following questions is one way to approach this.

Why are we doing this?

We think we have a good idea, and we want to develop this together. Because we want to create a sustainable cooperative business, we must find out what value we can bring to our customers, and what values we share.

How are we supposed to do this?

To discover the needs of our customers, we empathise.
To satisfy (and discover) our own needs (and principles), we cooperate.

The research phase (DISCOVER) is about figuring out what knowledge is needed, how to obtain this knowledge, and doing proper research with this in mind. This process can be carried out in three steps or tasks:

- The first task is to 'rip the brief', which means to question the central assumptions behind the initial idea, in order to discover new fields of interest and possibility. The community should do this together within a given time constraint.

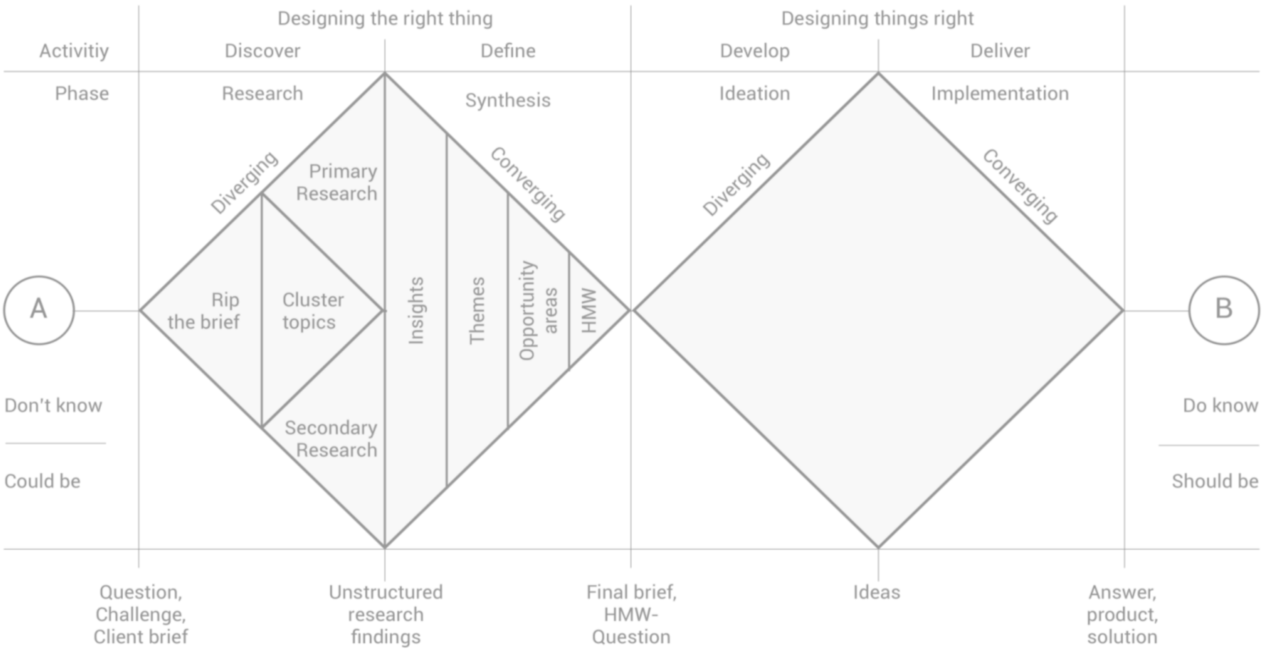


Illustration 2, Dan Nessler 2016

- The second task is cluster whatever topics and material you have come up with, and choose relevant areas of research and investigation. Do not leave out a topic if anybody finds it relevant. Simply let them handle the research.

- The third task is to start researching the topics of your choice, applying both primary (field) and secondary (desk) research methods, and trying to come at problems from every possible angle. Please take into account the professional skills of the members of the group, and know that you are now building a cross-functional team.

The product of the workshop

Should be a fairly ordered, but wide-spread array of ideas, general and specific observations, customer statements, academic and non-academic documentation, information and links about related subjects, and whatever else the group considers relevant to the starting of YOUR cooperative business. Please consult the different tools in order to decide how you want the content to be presented.

DISCOVER – Practice

In order to carry out the practical work of questioning the initial idea, grouping material in understandable categories (topics) and diving into proper research of the business idea, a broad variety of tools are available online, some of which we have sketched in the section below. We suggest you follow the three steps (tasks) above, and choose whatever tools you find necessary.

Walking conversation - qualitative interview

This will hopefully generate insights about the needs that customers and stakeholders have, and give you an idea of how your cooperative can help solve real problems.

https://innovationenglish.sites.ku.dk/metode/walking-conversation/

Point of view

Having collected information from customers sketching a "Point of View" helps keep track of the different profiles and their specific needs.

User . . . Thomas (engineer)
needs to . . . estimate the duration of the project
in order to . . . develop a work plan
because . . . this will increase the chances of success

https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/article/define-and-frame-your-design-challenge-by-creating-your-point-of-view-and-ask-how-might-we

Stakeholder analysis

A stakeholder can be a person, an organisation, a business, a union or a community. Any one specific entity that takes in the project, even in an abstract sense.

The stakeholder analysis is a great strategic tool, and should be used to draw an overall picture of the specific interests involved in creating and sustaining our cooperative business.

https://innovationenglish.sites.ku.dk/metode/stakeholder-analysis/

Observation

This tool is extremely useful when you need to examine the workflows and activities of customers, and will often uncover habits or unspoken truths about what they truly need.
https://innovationenglish.sites.ku.dk/metode/observation/

Activity: Additional tools to support DISCOVER
A comprehensive range of additional tools to support the practice section of DISCOVER can be found in Handout 15.

Part 2 – DEFINE - Second workshop

Defining the business idea – Introduction

The starting point for the second workshop is the research that has been generated in the first workshop. The initial idea will now be completely buried in questions, all sorts of information and endless topics and sub-topics. It is now time to for your team to work on locating central insights and interesting opportunities. This is done by slowly becoming more and more specific about what your cooperative is actually going to do, and how.

The DEFINE phase (and workshop) is characterised by the narrowing down of the team's capabilities and focus, and categorisation of the research material in general. This will be done by gathering data, locating patterns, confirming or denying hypotheses and synthesising information into one or a few ideas for further development.

DEFINE - Theory

When working on defining the business idea, and narrowing our field of interest, we need to answer some of the same questions that we used to open up our investigations during the first workshop. Our focus should be on understanding the full scope of the core tasks of our business, and pinpointing specific insights about the needs of our customers, the service we are going to perform, and the opportunities that comes with this.

We should now be able to confirm or reject prior hypothesis about the needs of customers and community, and be able focus on one (or a few) central ideas, through a process of categorisation and elimination.

Why are we doing this?

We have researched a broad range of ideas and subjects that reflect how we can bring value to customers and to ourselves. We now want to focus the best opportunity for our community to come together and actually do this.

How are we supposed to do this?

We DEFINE the needs of our customers (and ourselves), in order to understand our product and activities. We hope to communicate the cooperative values that we share to the world.

The categorisation phase (DEFINE) is about deciding on the focus of our business idea, and asking ourselves: 'What do we know?', 'What is OUR opportunity?' and 'How might we satisfy these needs (or perform these jobs)?' This process can be carried out in three steps or tasks:

- The first task is to gather material, locate central insights, and divide the research into themes or categories. Different areas are allowed to overlap, as long as each section has a clearly defined focus. The community should do this together, and under a time constraint.

- The second task is to consider the business opportunities related to the remaining ideas, and evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of each of these. It is advised to briefly consider possible markets, long term development, organisational hazards and partnerships.

- The third task is to ask yourselves the question 'How might we' in order to get a clear view of HOW the business is going to satisfy the needs of customers, WHO is going to do what, and HOW your cooperative is going to function on a day to day basis. This step answers to the 'Point of view' methodology sketched in the previous section, and will be excellent preparation for real business planning (as we will see later).

The product of the workshop

Should be a clear and detailed understanding of what the research is telling you, a definition of the needs and jobs that your cooperative will be working with, and a suitable agreement and phrasing of a preliminary vision for your cooperative. Your team should start talking about roles and skills, potential areas of development, and be able to set three short term achievable goals for the cooperative.

DEFINE – Practice

To assist in the difficult work of narrowing down your material, and deciding on the focus of your cooperative, we suggest the tools that can be found below. In terms of process, we recommend to follow the three steps (tasks) above.

Mindmapping

A mindmap can be used to uncover themes in the research material, and to develop thoughts and ideas. The objective is to draw an overall picture of the project, in such a way that relationships are visualised, and patterns emerge. The method is suitable for group work.

https://innovationenglish.sites.ku.dk/metode/mindmap/

How might we?

The obvious continuation of the Point of view methodology, this question directly addresses the issue of HOW to satisfy the needs of the customer, and helps us continue our work with a very practical outlook.

https://designsprintkit.withgoogle.com/methods/understand/hmw-directions/
http://www.designkit.org/methods/3

Cluster analysis

A method for gathering and ordering material in groups. Facilitates dialogue.
https://innovationenglish.sites.ku.dk/metode/cluster-analysis/

Activity: Additional tools to support DEFINE – Practice
In addition to the tools mentioned above, we have also suggested a range of great online resources to choose from in Handout 15. Please be aware that tools suggested in the previous section may apply again here.

Part 3 – DEVELOP – Third workshop

Developing the business idea - Introduction

The starting point for the third workshop is the well-defined challenge or problem (user needs) that was the result of the second workshop. The initial idea will now have turned into a very basic business idea, which should now be developed in terms of coherence, business areas and general scope. It is time for the team to analyse the practical possibilities of the cooperative and make the first draft at a business model.

The DEVELOP phase (and workshop) is characterised by the second opening up subject matter, in which the team approves of the central business idea, and one or more of the concepts is developed further. The methods resemble those from the DISCOVER stage, but focus more on realisation, and include brainstorming, idea selection and business modelling. The central customer segments, value propositions and partners will be sketched for the first time during this phase.

DEVELOP – Theory

When working on developing the business idea, we must branch out our endeavours a second time (divergent thinking), and try to unfold the field of business opportunities that surrounds the central challenge of our project. Our focus should be on the practical side of satisfying customers' needs, and our goal is to generate a broad range of ideas and possibilities about how to we are going to execute.

This process will once again lead us to form hypothesis about customers and how to structure our cooperative, and we will generate as many potential solutions as possible, and evaluate these, while trying to make our vision as tangible as possible.

Why are we doing this?

We have defined the needs that our cooperative wants to address, and we have a specific idea about how to bring value to customers, and to ourselves. We now want to develop this idea for business, uncovering the practical and strategic possibilities of creating a sustainable cooperative business, and preparing our community to come together and actually do this (execution).

How are we supposed to do this?

We generate ideas in order to find the right answer to the problem we are faced with and to understand the full scope of our business, and the value it is creating.

This ideation phase (DEVELOP) is about searching for practical solutions, and modelling our business to fit the needs of our customers. We come with ideas (ideation), we evaluate our ideas (evaluation) and we decide on sets of ideas to execute on. This process can be carried out in three steps or tasks:

- The first task is to gather generate as many ideas as possible. Do not limit yourselves, work together, and seek out all possible solutions or angles, the crazier the better. The community should do this together, and under a time constraint.

- The second task is to evaluate ideas without judging, or even commenting on them. Please focus on value creation, and please choose the tools used for this wisely. Again, you are advised to briefly consider possible markets, long term development, organisational hazards and partnerships.

- The third task is to decide upon the strongest set of ideas, and try to create an overview of your business, using the business model canvas. Be as specific as you can, and know that the first canvas is never completely accurate. Make sure to focus on the link between value propositions and customers.

The product of the workshop

Should be a few detailed and developed ideas that can go into prototyping and testing. By now, you will have a clear vision of the central values of your cooperative, and what kind of business you are going to be. The preliminary vision that was the product of the last phase can now manifest itself in a preliminary mission, and your team should decide on roles and skills, potential areas of development and be able to set three short term achievable goals for the cooperative.

DEVELOP – Practice

To assist your team in developing ideas and concepts for your business, we have suggested a range of great online resources to choose from, as described below. Please be aware that tools suggested in the previous section may apply again here. In terms of process, we recommend to follow the three steps (tasks) above.

Brainstorming

The classic brainstorm can be facilitated in many different ways, and it is very much up to the preferences of your team to decide how you want to generate a lot of ideas, in a very short time. One way could be to revisit the "How might we" question posed in the previous session, only this time without limits in scope and subject matter. You decide.

https://innovationenglish.sites.ku.dk/metode/classic-brainstorm/

Idea selection by dot-voting

This is a simple and effective method for choosing ideas, based on set criteria, that is especially effective for group work. The method facilitates dialogue and supports the interdisciplinary nature of starting and running a cooperative business.

https://innovationenglish.sites.ku.dk/metode/idea-selection-by-dot-voting/

Business model canvas

This is without comparison the most widely used and tested method for creating a business model. Please spend some time on discovering and working with the tool, and know that your efforts will be awarded.

https://innovationenglish.sites.ku.dk/model/business-model-canvas/

Activity: DEVELOP – Practice
In addition to the tools described above, we have suggested a range of great online resources, detailed in Handout 15. Some of the tools suggested in the previous section may also be useful for this section, so feel free to experiment with the tools you think are most appropriate.

Part 4 – DELIVER – Fourth workshop

Delivering the business idea – Introduction

The starting point for the fourth workshop is the focused business idea(s) that was the outcome of the development phase. After having been the subject of evaluation and a first business modelling, your idea should now be tangible enough to be prototyped and tested in order to discover areas of improvement with regard to usability and feasibility. It is time for the team to focus solely on the practical solution of customer needs.

The DELIVER phase (and workshop) is characterised by the second closing (or defining) movement of scope and subject matter, in which your team works out what skills and resources are necessary to execute on the business idea. The methods resemble those from the DEFINE stage, with the exception that the tasks of this phase (build, test, repeat) can (and should) be repeated several times before completion of the workshop. We are now attempting to physically build a model of your product, and putting it in the hands of potential customers.

DELIVER – Theory

When working on delivering on the business idea, we must focus on the most relevant and unique features of our product and try to replicate a scenario that comes as close to a real customer experience as possible. Your team should try to synthesise the broad range of research, definitions and ideas acquired in previous phases, in order prototype a product or service that brings value to the customer, and lets you decide how to go forwards.

This process will start with your hypothesis about customers needs and the business (cooperative) that you want to start. You will learn important lessons about how to structure our cooperative, not just as an organisation, but also as a practical business entity that needs to get stuff done. Please make a list of ALL the physical and technical aspects of your business as you go along.

Why are we doing this?

You now have a solid business idea. You know who our customers might be. You have an idea of how to bring value to people (and yourselves). Now you need to figure out if this will actually play out the way you think it might.

How are we supposed to do this?

We prototype and test to make sure that our product brings value to the people we think are our customers, and to discover how and if our product satisfies their needs.

The test phase (DELIVER) is about trying to make a practical solution to a problem, and shaping our business model to fit the daily routine that will eventually manifest itself once we start our business. We build and test until we are satisfied, that our product is good enough. This process can be carried out in three steps or tasks:

- The first task is to build a prototype that comes as close to how the finished product will be as possible. Do not be frightened by lack of proper materials, time or tools, but work together, and experiment to find the best simulation of function and tactile experience. Be creative and bold. The community should do this together, and under a time constraint.

- The second task is to test and analyse. Please locate people as close to your potential customer as possible, let them try your prototype, some without explanation, some with, and make sure to record their comments. Please focus on value creation, and ask questions about requirements, expectations and desires for your product. Analyse findings.

- The third task is to repeat the build/prototype and test/analyse tasks until you are satisfied that your prototype cannot become ANY better. For each iteration, please make sure to record what changes you made, and how your test person responded. Revise your business model if needed. Your focus should still on value propositions and customers, but feel free to consider resources, costs, partners and revenue as you slowly develop a better understanding of your business opportunity and how your cooperative will function.

The product of the workshop

Should be a prototype that has been tested several times, and a more advanced understanding of the practical undertaking of building a business. Your community should try to evaluate possible markets, long term development, organisational hazards and partnerships as objectively as possible. It should be fairly clear what resources and professional skill you are lacking (if any), and you try to set up a timeframe for the starting of the business. Most importantly, your cooperative should work on creating a set of values and principles on which to properly found your business once this becomes relevant. A business that is founded on great ideas and principles, and is able to bring this to customers, can never fail, and will be a great workplace for everybody.

DELIVER – Practice

To assist your team in delivering ideas and concepts for your business, a number of different tools to support the DELIVER section have been described below. Please be aware that tools suggested in the previous section may apply again here. In terms of process, we recommend to follow the three steps (tasks) above.

Activity: Additional tools to support DELIVER – Practice
To give you and your team a good selection of tools to support the DELIVER section, there is a range of online resources to choose from, outlined in Handout 15. Some of these tools can also be used to support other parts of the hackathon.

Rapid prototyping

This method will allow your team to quickly build (and test) a simple prototype, in order to quickly test the central functionalities of your product.

https://innovationenglish.sites.ku.dk/metode/rapid-prototyping/

Service blueprint

This method facilitates a visual representation of customer experience, AND the organisational processes that comes with it. It provides an overview of the link between customer segments, front- and backstage activities, support and product evaluation. Integrates the User journey tool.

https://innovationenglish.sites.ku.dk/metode/service-blueprint/

User test (simulation)

This method simulates product-user interaction, by using role-play and interview techniques. This should be applied if a potential customer is not available.

https://innovationenglish.sites.ku.dk/metode/user-test/

Pitch

A pitch can be used both to uncover the relationship between your product and the customers' needs, AND as a means of communicating your value proposition to potential investors or customers. If the link between customer needs, business concepts and activities and end user value is hard to explain in a simple way, this probably means something is missing in your value chain.

https://innovationenglish.sites.ku.dk/metode/pitch/

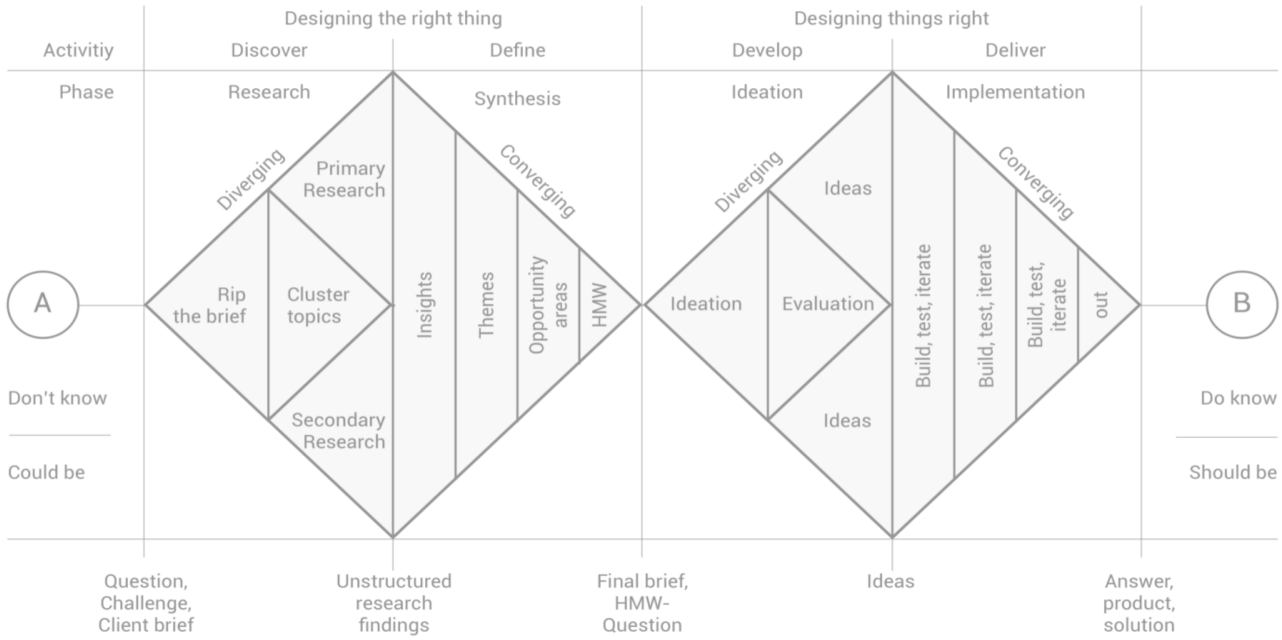


Illustration 4, Dan Nessler 2016

Moving on to starting your cooperative

Once you have completed your hackathon event and have worked cooperatively with others to generate, develop and test your business idea, you can now think about some of the considerations of the type of cooperative you would like to form and how it will be run. The following section of the learning materials takes you through a number of different aspects of setting up a cooperative business, and the steps needed to get your business off the ground.

(6) SECTION 3 - LET'S START FOR REAL

Introduction and overview

Cooperative businesses are a powerful and well-established democratic way of people working together to achieve shared goals. Once you have your business model and planning in place, you need to take the final and important steps towards establishing your own cooperative and this step involves legal and governance considerations and putting the final touches to your business plan.

Legal considerations

You need to select an appropriate legal structure for your cooperative, the choice of which will depend on the way you set up the cooperative. In this part of the process, it is important that you take both the cooperative values and principles into consideration as they should be incorporated and reflected in the organisation of the cooperative. Therefore, you should give great consideration to the following:

- What is the purpose of the cooperative
- Ownership structure
- Governance structure
- Distribution of profit
- Financial model

The statutes of the cooperative should be adopted in line with existing cooperative legislation in the given country. Where no specific cooperative legislation is in place, the statutes should include elements of cooperative principles as much as possible. It is important that the cooperative values and principles are used to inform the business and strategic planning. This can include examples such as regard to sustainability and development, continuous cooperative education, methods of democratic control and professional training and cooperation between cooperatives.

The seven cooperative principles are at the heart of cooperative identity and should inform the statutes of the organisation as much as possible, taking account of national legislation and the precise nature of the cooperative business. For more information on the cooperative values and principles and how they affect the operation of the cooperative, see the 'Guidebook for ambassadors'.

Legal framework

Legal frameworks and tax regimes for cooperatives vary from country to country. It is therefore not possible to describe a universal course of action regarding the legal framework to be applied by all that are on the onset of developing a cooperative business.

There are countries where there are no or hardly any specific laws and regulations regarding cooperatives and where the particular characters of cooperatives are not taken into consideration. Other countries have specific law and regulations that can also be seen to favour cooperatives in a number of ways and further support the creation of new cooperatives.[2] So you need to keep in mind that the way you choose to structure the cooperative dictates the legal framework that applies to the cooperative and it is also dictated by the country the cooperative will be based in.

Therefore, the important steps to take are first of all to have clarification of the legal framework and tax regimes so that the foundation stones are in place and you can structure and build the cooperative from there on. Refer to your mentor, but also the resources available in your national cooperative organisations, local and government support for new businesses to get the needed insight and overview of the framework you will be working within.

When starting a cooperative business you also need to adhere to your country's non-organisational law, such as:

"…labour law, competition law, accounting/prudential standards, book-keeping rules, auditing and bankruptcy rules, and other legally relevant acts, like for example administrative acts, court decisions, jurisprudence, cooperative bylaws/statutes."[3]

Thus it is not only cooperative laws that you need to take into consideration and all of this that comes along with starting a new business can to some be a bit daunting but it does not need to be. You just need to know where you can go to get help and advice and your national cooperative organisations are there to help you on your way.

How to set up a cooperative business

Governance

Cooperatives exist in all parts of the economy: from healthcare to housing, farms to pharmacies, supermarkets to sports clubs, IT to bakeries and so on. They range in size from micro-enterprises to large international organisations. Effective governance of the cooperative is imperative to the business as it influences how decisions are made, ensures the overall direction, how power is distributed and how the management and board are accountable to the members of the cooperative.

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[2] Doing Co-operative Business Report, Hans Groeneveld, p. 20 (https://ica.coop/sites/default/files/publication-files/ica-doing-co-operative-business-1184669165.pdf)

[3] Doing Co-operative Business Report, Hans Groeneveld, p. 21

As it has such great significance and can mean the difference between success and failure, it is important that you spend some time to consider the internal business processes so that you have this complete and agreed in your governing document. The document should clearly define how your business organisation is structured and how it is to operate.

The roles of the general assembly, board of directors, management, employees/members in this set-up should be thoroughly discussed and agreed to ensure you are on the right track towards good governance:

"Good governance is critical to the success of any enterprise and is particularly important in an enterprise which is owned by a large number of people. It is vital to balance the needs and aspirations of all members in a way that also allows the membership to participate in the decision-making process. It is also vital that the organisation is legally compliant and financially sound, and that this occurs by design and not by accident."[4]

You can read more on governance and the importance of good governance especially related to cooperatives, get a detailed overview of the role and responsibilities of the governing body and much more in these two guides published by Co-operatives UK:

1) "Simply Governance: A comprehensive guide to understanding the systems and processes concerned with the running of a sustainable enterprise, Co-operatives UK, 2011
2) "Simply Start-up: A guide to the process of starting a Co-operative or Community Enterprise, Co-operatives UK, 2011.

Activity: Governance challenges and solutions
Good governance and the values and principles should be central to everything the cooperative does. Although all cooperatives follow the same values and principles, cooperatives face different governance challenges depending on their sector and size. In this activity you will read several examples of governance challenges and solutions see Handout 16. ● Read through each of the points thoroughly. ● List any other solutions you think may help to overcome the challenges.

[4] Simply Governance: A comprehensive guide to understanding the systems and processes concerned with the running of a sustainable, Co-operatives UK, 2011, p. 12

Other business models

Key differences between cooperatives and other business models[5]

There are several differences between cooperatives and other business models. For example there are differences in ownership. Traditional businesses focus the power of ownership in a single individual or sometimes a small group of partners. Cooperative member-owners share equally in control of the organisation. They meet regularly to analyse operations reports and elect members from among themselves to a board that may hire administrators to tend to day-to-day operations.

In a traditional business a single person can seize control of a stock-issuing company by buying a majority of shares, thus gaining superior voting power. With a cooperative, no member can buy or control the share of another. Each member has equal voting power and decisions must be made in conjunction with the wishes of the majority. Power truly rests in the hands of the lowest common denominator – the member.

Most traditional businesses operate with the primary goal of turning a profit to a single person or a group of shareholders. A cooperative offers benefits to members that go beyond that. By pooling their money and/or resources, a group of like-minded individuals can form a cooperative that offers higher quality products at lower prices. Furthermore, a cooperative allows individuals to have a direct say in business operations, something often lacking in traditional businesses in general.

[5] Parts of the following 7 sections have been published in "Ready, Steady, Coop! A practical guide on how to support the start-up of new cooperatives", CoopStarter, 2015.
http://starter.coop/content/uploads/2018/06/CoopStarter_EN.pdf

	Trade unions	*Cooperatives*	*Investor owned businesses*
Purpose	Representing and defending member needs in workplace and sometimes more widely.	Meeting needs of members: economic, social, and cultural.	To generate profit for shareholders.
How is it run?	Usually democratic, one member one vote. May have elected committee.	Management answers to board of democratically elected members, on one member one vote principle. Non-transferable shares.	Board answerable to shareholders. Votes determined by size of shareholding. Transferable shares.
Ownership	Owned by the members.	Owned by the members.	Publically traded shares. Price can fluctuate.
Where do profits go?	Do not generate much income beyond members' contributions (no profit).	Reinvested in cooperative or community, and/or member dividend, based on trade with and via the cooperative.	To shareholders and invested in business.
Income	Membership fees	Charges for goods and services.	Charges for goods and services.

The cooperative members' nature

The nature of the members can vary across a wide range and depends on their role. There are thus various types of cooperatives. For example, a worker cooperative suits a cooperative where staff owns the cooperative. Or, a consumer cooperative means that users or consumers of the business decide main orientations. Thirdly, a cooperative may include staff, beneficiaries, public authorities, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) and/or other (youth) organisations. This is normally defined as a multi-stakeholder cooperative. Members' nature will determine who holds the power of decision-making and control of the cooperative.[6]

[6] Ready, Steady, Coop! A practical guide on how to support the start-up of new cooperatives, CoopStarter, 2015

Financial model

In cooperatives, unlike other forms of business, the financial year results of the joined enterprises are distributed to the members depending on the amount of their transactions with the cooperative in terms of products, services or even the work that they have contributed, and not related to the capital (or time and resources) that they invested for the creation of that business. At the same time, part of the yearly profits are placed in a common fund to cover member's common needs with an emphasis on matters of continuous cooperative education and cooperation between cooperatives at local, national and international level. This of course depends on how the cooperative is structured and how the distribution of profit and surplus is agreed in the bylaws.

Understanding the surplus of a cooperative

Generally, the distribution of a cooperative's surplus is determined in the bylaws/statutes. Surplus is determined at the close of a cooperative's fiscal year or as prescribed in its bylaws. A cooperative's surplus is not profit in the usual sense of the word. As far as the coop is concerned, this excess payment or surplus is considered as having been returned to the members if the surplus is distributed in the following manner. First priority goes generally to the reserve fund. The reserve fund is meant to stabilise cooperative operations and may be used only for investments allowed by the code. Second priority goes to education and training. Third priority is, for example, an optional fund, a land and building fund, community development fund and any other necessary funds. In many cooperatives, after all these have been allocated, the remainder is available to the general membership in the form of interest on their investment and patronage refund. Nevertheless, interest on share capital should exceed the normal rate of return on investment.

Business plan

The business plan is a tool, used to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of an entrepreneurial project. Each business plan is like a handbook or guide of the enterprise or of the business idea and it should be constantly modified, updated and verified by each entrepreneur, since it is usually a plan based on statistical or estimated data. This data can also be supported by a feasibility study, which is then used to draft the business plan. Several different business plan forms are available; there is not a unique model. Generally, two areas are identified within a business plan; the first part descriptive and the second with economic and financial data.

Beside the presentation of the business idea and its goals, the descriptive part includes all the information concerning the entrepreneurial view the project is based on, details on the market of reference, the targeted customers, information on the offered product or service, the strategic and operational plan, the staff involved, the promotion and marketing strategy, and a SWOT analysis.

The economic/financial part covers the areas of investment and balance sheet analysis, including, in particular, information on expenses, profit and loss, a financial plan and cash flow.

Cooperative organisations, other already established cooperatives and business consultancies will be able to provide you with different business plan models and help you implement the chosen model. On The Hive you can also find useful resources, materials and templates to help you through the process and finalise your initial business plan. The tools used to shape and finalise a business plan will be presented in the 'Guidebook for ambassadors'.

Now, how can a business idea be turned into a viable business? This step includes aspects that complement the long-term business prospect, such as market research, budgeting and members' identity.

The market survey

Once you have an idea for a cooperative whether it be a shop, café, consultancy, educational services, or other, it is important at this stage to get an in-depth understanding of the future customers' feelings and preferences in order to determine which products and services the cooperative should offer and how the cooperative should market these products and services. It's important to compare the idea with existing businesses in the area. Engaging with the community in which the business is embedded, is fundamental. An idea could be to organise a survey among potential beneficiaries, customers or clients.

Activity: Developing a marketing plan
Once the market research has been carried out, a marketing plan can then be developed, detailing what activities should be carried out during each month or each quarter of the year, under each of the following headings outlined in Handout 17.

You could also try to test your idea on a crowdfunding platform. Crowdfunding platforms can be a great way to launch a business idea, to get in contact with possible customers and members and of course a way to get funding. There are many crowdfunding platforms that can be useful to have a closer look at when you want to start a business. Examples are:

- Indiegogo.com
- Kickstarter.com
- GoFundMe.com
- Booomerang.dk

The budget

Capital needed for cooperatives in the start-up phase vary according to different national laws and types of activities. Cooperatives require some level of member financing usually in the form of cooperative shares. In addition, cooperatives may need additional financing in the start-up phase. Loans can come from funds for social economy, cooperative or commercial banks or may come from specific cooperative financial institutions, which are generally managed by cooperative federations. Other sources may be public programmes.

If you are thinking about crowdfunding, you can find more on this in the publication: “Ready, steady, coop! A practical guide on how to support the start-up of new cooperatives”.[7]

Support structure and network

National and local business advisers or consultancies can be a great resource and help you start and grow your business with specialist help. They can help you develop your business idea and structure and provide you with the needed information and advice on how you start and register a business correctly and fulfil the legal obligations in the given country.

However, as you are starting a cooperative business it is important that you also involve the specialists from your national cooperative organisation/s as they will be your source of advice, guidance, tools, techniques and education in your process of building and actualising your cooperative business.

As you are about to start a cooperative, it is essential to incorporate the cooperative values and principles that are the cornerstone of the cooperative business model. Take advantage of offers of mentoring, training and start-up support if you have the option, such as the mentoring scheme offered through the Coopstarter 2 project. Cooperative organisations and other already established cooperatives can guide you on cooperative governance which is not something a normal business advisor will typically have knowledge of.

The last step includes official registration according to national law. The newly registered cooperative may consider becoming a member of a cooperative federation from which you may receive advisory support that goes beyond the start-up stage. With the right guidance you will soon have your cooperative registered and up and running.

Starting a cooperative business is not something which is done overnight. But once you have the legal framework, governance structure, business plan and financing in place then you are ready to launch your cooperative business and become part of a historic and at the same time innovation way of running successful and sustainable businesses.

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[7] Ready, Steady, Coop! A practical guide on how to support the start-up of new cooperatives, CoopStarter, 2015

Our best advice when you have decided that a cooperative is the right solution for your business idea is that you use your network to gain insight and learn from others, so that you have an overview of the needs before you come up with the solutions.

(7) RESOURCES - HANDOUTS TO SUPPORT THE LEARNING MATERIALS

Handout 1 - Honey and Mumford's learning styles questionnaire (LSQ)

This questionnaire is designed to find out your preferred learning style(s). Over the years you have probably developed learning 'habits' that help you benefit more from some experiences than from others. Since you are probably unaware of this, this questionnaire will help you pinpoint your learning preference so that you are in a better position to select learning experiences that suit your style.

There is no time limit to this questionnaire but it will probably take you 10–15 minutes. The accuracy of the results depends on how honest you can be. There are no right or wrong answers.

If you agree more than you disagree with a statement put a tick (√) by it. If you disagree more than you agree, put a cross (x) by it. Be sure to mark each item with either a tick or a cross. At the end of the questionnaire you will see how to score and interpret your results.

	Statement	© Honey and Mumford	√/x
1	I have strong beliefs about what is right and wrong, good and bad.		
2	I often act without considering the possible consequences.		
3	I tend to solve problems using a step-by-step approach.		
4	I believe that formal procedures and policies restrict people.		
5	I have a reputation for saying what I think, simply and directly.		
6	I often find that actions based on feelings are as sound as those based on careful thought and analysis.		
7	I like the sort of work where I have time for thorough preparation and implementation.		
8	I regularly question people about their basic assumptions.		
9	What matters most is whether something works in practice.		
10	I actively seek out new experiences.		
11	When I hear about a new idea or approach, I immediately start working out how to apply it in practice.		
12	I am keen on self-discipline such as watching my diet, taking regular exercise, sticking to a fixed routine, etc.		

13	I take pride in doing a thorough job.	
14	I get on best with logical, analytical people and less well with spontaneous 'irrational' people.	
15	I take care over the interpretation of data available to me and avoid jumping to conclusions.	
16	I like to reach a decision carefully after weighing up many alternatives.	
17	I am attracted more to novel, unusual ideas than to practical ones.	
18	I don't like disorganised things and prefer to fit things into a coherent pattern.	
19	I accept and stick to laid down procedures and policies so long as I regard them as an efficient way of getting the job done.	
20	I like to relate my actions to a general principle.	
21	In discussions I like to get straight to the point.	
22	I tend to have distant, rather formal relationships with people at work.	
23	I thrive on the challenge of tackling something new and different.	
24	I enjoy fun-loving spontaneous people.	
25	I pay meticulous attention to detail before coming to a conclusion.	
26	I find it difficult to produce ideas on impulse.	
27	I believe in coming to the point immediately.	
28	I am careful not to jump to conclusions too quickly.	
29	I prefer to have as many sources of information as possible – the more data to think over the better.	
30	Flippant people who don't take things seriously enough usually irritate me.	
31	I listen to other people's points of view before putting my own forward.	
32	I tend to be open about how I am feeling.	
33	In discussions I enjoy watching the manoeuvrings of the other learners.	
34	I prefer to respond to events on a spontaneous, flexible basis rather than plan things out in advance.	

35	I tend to be attracted to techniques such as analysis, flow charts, contingency planning, etc.	
36	It worries me if I have to rush out a piece of work to meet a deadline.	
37	I tend to judge people's ideas on their practical merits.	
38	Quiet, thoughtful people tend to make me feel uneasy.	
39	I often get irritated by people who want to rush things.	
40	It is more important to enjoy the present moment than to think about the past or the future.	
41	I think that decisions based on a thorough analysis of all the information are sounder than those based on intuition.	
42	I tend to be a perfectionist.	
43	In discussions I usually produce lots of spontaneous ideas.	
44	In meetings I put forward practical realistic ideas.	
45	More often than not, rules are there to be broken.	
46	I prefer to stand back from a situation and consider all the perspectives.	
47	I can often see inconsistencies and weaknesses in other people's arguments.	
48	On balance, I talk more than listen.	
49	I can often see better, more practical ways to get things done.	
50	I think written reports should be short and to the point.	
51	I believe that rational, logical thinking should win the day.	
52	I tend to discuss specific things with people rather than engaging in social discussions.	
53	I like people who approach things realistically, rather than theoretically.	
54	In discussions, I get impatient with irrelevancies and digressions.	
55	If I have a report to write I tend to produce lots of drafts before settling on the final version.	
56	I am keen to try things out to see if they work in practice.	

57	I am keen to reach answers via a logical approach.	
58	I enjoy being the one that talks a lot.	
59	In discussions I often find I am the realist, keeping people to the point and avoiding wild speculations.	
60	I like to ponder many alternatives before making up my mind.	
61	In discussions with people I often find I am the most dispassionate and objective.	
62	In discussions I am more likely to adopt a 'low profile' than to take the lead and do most of the talking.	
63	I like to be able to relate current actions to a longer term, bigger picture.	
64	When things go wrong, I am happy to shrug it off and put it down to experience.	
65	I tend to reject wild, spontaneous ideas as being impractical.	
66	It is best to think carefully before taking action.	
67	On balance I do the listening rather than the talking.	
68	I tend to be tough on people who find it difficult to adopt a logical approach.	
69	Most times, I believe the end justifies the means.	
70	I don't mind hurting people's feelings so long as the job gets done.	
71	I find the formality of having specific objectives and plans stifling.	
72	I am usually one of the people who puts life into a party.	
73	I do whatever is expected to get the job done.	
74	I quickly get bored with methodical, detailed work.	
75	I am keen on exploring the basic assumptions, principles and theories underpinning things and events.	
76	I am always interested to find out what people think.	
77	I like meetings to be run on methodical lines, sticking to laid down agenda, etc.	
78	I steer clear of subjective or ambiguous topics.	

79	I enjoy the drama and excitement of a crisis situation.	
80	People often find me insensitive to their feelings.	

Learning styles results
Circle on the list below, the items you ticked. You score one point for each statement you ticked (√). There are no points for statements you crossed (x). Add up the points in each column and record these in the TOTALS boxes.

	2	7	1	5
	4	13	3	9
	6	15	8	11
	10	16	12	19
	17	23	14	21
	24	25	18	27
	28	29	20	35
	32	31	22	37
	34	33	26	44
	38	36	30	49
	40	39	42	50
	43	41	47	53
	45	46	51	54
	48	52	57	56
	58	55	61	59
	64	60	63	65
	71	62	68	69
	72	66	75	70
	74	67	77	73
	79	76	78	80
Totals				
	Activist	Reflector	Theorist	Pragmatist

Honey and Mumford learning styles - descriptions

Activists – "I'll try anything"

Activists involve themselves fully and without bias in new experiences. They enjoy the here and now and are happy to be dominated by immediate experiences. They are open-minded, not sceptical and this tends to make them enthusiastic about anything new. Their philosophy is 'I'll try anything once'. They tend to act first and consider the consequences afterwards. Their days are filled with activity. They tackle problems by brainstorming. As soon as the excitement from one activity has died down, they are busy looking for the next. They tend to thrive on the challenge of new experiences but are bored with implementation and longer-term consolidation. They are gregarious people constantly involving themselves with others but, in doing so, they seek to centre all activities around themselves.

Reflectors – "I'd like to think about it"

Reflectors like to stand back to ponder experiences and observe them from many different perspectives. They collect data, both first hand and from others, and prefer to think about it thoroughly before coming to any conclusion. The thorough collection and analysis of data about experiences and events is what counts, so they tend to postpone reaching definitive conclusions for as long as possible. Their philosophy is to be cautious. They are thoughtful people who like to consider all possible angles and implications before making a move. They prefer to take a back seat in meetings and discussions. They enjoy observing other people in action. They listen to others and get the drift of the discussion before making their own points. They tend to adopt a low profile and have a slightly distant, tolerant, unruffled air about them. When they act it is part of a wider picture which includes the past as well as the present and others' observations, as well as their own.

Theorists – "How does this fit in with that?"

Theorists adapt and integrate observations into complex but logically sound theories. They assimilate disparate facts into coherent theories. They tend to be perfectionists who won't rest easy until things are tidy and fit into a rational scheme. They like to analyse and synthesise. They are keen on basic assumptions, principles, theories, models and systems thinking. Their philosophy prizes rationality and logic. If it is logical, it is good. Questions they frequently ask are: 'Does it make sense?', 'How does this fit with that?', 'What are the basic assumptions?'. They tend to be detached, analytical and dedicated to rational objectivity rather than anything subjective and ambiguous. Their approach to problems is consistently logical. This is their 'mental' set, and they rigidly reject anything that doesn't fit with it. They prefer to maximise certainty and feel uncomfortable with subjective judgments, lateral thinking and anything flippant.

Pragmatists – “How can I apply this?”

Pragmatists are keen on trying out new ideas, theories and techniques to see if they work in practice. They positively search out new ideas and take the first opportunity to experiment with applications. They are the sort of people who return from courses full of new ideas that they want to try out in practice. They like to get on with things and act quickly and confidently on ideas that attract them. They tend to be impatient with ruminating and open-ended discussions. They are essentially practical, down to earth people who like making practical decisions and solving problems. They respond to problems and opportunities ‘as a challenge’. Their philosophy is ‘there is always a better way’ and ‘if it works, it is good’.

Handout 2 - Training Methods Factsheet

The way in which you deliver your training event is key. Having planned and prepared, it is vital that you make sure that you do all you can to deliver an effective session to your learners. You all deserve it. Here are some useful tips and hints when delivering:

- Speak clearly. Don't shout or whisper – judge the acoustics of the room.
- Don't rush, or talk too slowly. Be natural – although not conversational.
- Deliberately pause at key points – this has the effect of emphasising the importance of a particular point you are making. It also gives learners thinking time.
- Avoid jokes – always disastrous unless you are a natural
- Make your presentation sections interesting by varying your speed and the pitch of voice
- Use your hands to emphasise points but don't indulge in too much hand waving. People can, over time, develop irritating habits. Ask colleagues occasionally what they think of your style.
- Look at the audience as much as possible, but don't fix on an individual - it can be intimidating. Pitch your presentation towards the back of the audience, especially in larger rooms.
- Don't face the display screen behind you and talk in to it, as your voice may be muffled and will not project to your audience.
- Avoid standing in a position where you obscure the screen. In fact, positively check for anyone in the audience who may be disadvantaged and try to accommodate them.
- Use a laser pointer on the screen if you can, rather than pointing with your finger (and arm) to avoid projecting your shadow and obscuring the content of the slide.
- Avoid moving about too much. Pacing up and down can unnerve the audience, although some animation is desirable.
- Keep an eye on the audience's body language. Know when to stop and also when to cut out a piece of the presentation.

Visual aids significantly improve the interest and help people to learn. However, they must be relevant to what you want to say. A careless design or use of a slide can simply get in the way of the presentation. What you use depends on the type of session you are giving. Here are some possibilities:

- Computer projection (PowerPoint, applications such as Excel, etc)
- Video and film

- Real objects - either handled from the speaker's bench or passed around
- Flip chart or whiteboard - possibly used as a 'scratch-pad' to expand on a point or jot down key points from discussions.

Keep it simple though - a complex set of hardware can result in confusion for speaker and audience. Make sure you know in advance how to operate the equipment and also when you want particular displays to appear. Sometimes a technician will operate the equipment. Arrange beforehand, what is to happen and when and what signals you will use. Edit your slides as carefully as your talk - if a slide is superfluous then leave it out. If you need to use a slide twice, duplicate it. And always check your slides - for typographical errors, consistency of fonts and layout.

Slides should contain the minimum information necessary. To do otherwise risks making the slide unreadable or will divert your audience's attention so that they spend time reading the slide rather than listening to you.

Use colour on your slides but avoid orange and yellow which do not show up very well when projected. For text only, white or yellow on blue is pleasant to look at and easy to read.

Room lighting should be considered. Too much light near the screen will make it difficult to see the detail. On the other hand, a completely darkened room can send the audience to sleep. Try to avoid having to keep switching lights on and off, but if you do have to do this, know where the light switches are and how to use them.

Have fun!

Handout 3 - The 'jigsaw' method

Each learner is required to research one section of the material and then teach it to the other members of the group. Like a jigsaw puzzle, each piece or section is put together at the end and only then does the entire picture make sense.

In this method, a typical group size is 4 to 5 people. A common use is for learning through a project or research. Each member of the group is responsible for researching certain parts of the overall project. When they are finished with their individual piece of research, they report what they have learned to the other members of their group. When all members have reported back, the group have a completed picture. Jigsaw activities are specifically designed so that the only access any member has to all the information is through the work of other members. Listening to other members of the group is therefore important.

Benefits of jigsaw method include:

- Efficient way to learn
- People learn how to socialise, solve problems and handle conflict
- People learn to cooperate with others which helps in many aspects of life.

Handout 4 - The World Café

"The World Café is built on the assumption that people already have within them the knowledge and creativity to confront even the most difficult challenges; that the answers we need are available to us; and that we are wiser together than we are alone."

www.theworldcafe.com

World Café at a glance:

- seat four (five max) people at small café style tables or in conversation clusters
- set up progressive (at least three) rounds of conversations, approximately 20 minutes each
- engage questions or issues that genuinely matter to your colleagues, members or the community
- encourage participants to write, doodle and draw key ideas on their table cloths (and or note key ideas on large index cards or placemats in the centre of the table).
- upon completing the initial round of conversations, you may ask one person to remain at the table as the 'table host' for the next round, while the others serve as travellers or 'ambassadors of meaning'. The travellers carry key ideas, themes and questions into their new conversations, while the table hosts welcome a new set of travellers.
- by providing opportunities for participants to move in several rounds of conversation, ideas, questions, and themes begin to link and connect. At the end of the second or third round, all the tables or conversation clusters in the room will be cross-pollinated with insights from prior conversations.
- in the last round of conversation, participants can return to their first table to synthesise their discoveries, or they may continue travelling to new tables.
- you may use the same question for one or more rounds of conversation, or you may pose different questions in each round to build on and help deepen the exploration.
- After at least three rounds of conversation, initiate a period of sharing discoveries and insights in the whole group conversation. It is in these town meeting-style conversations that patterns can be identified, collective knowledge grows, and possibilities for action emerge.

Once you know what you want to achieve and the amount of time you have to work with, you can decide the appropriate number and length of conversation rounds, the most effective use of questions and the most interesting ways to connect and cross-pollinate ideas.

Handout 5 - Personal action plan

Reflect upon the session you have just attended and note down what you have learnt. Consider how you will apply this concept or skill in a practical setting.

Name: **Date:**

What did I learn?	*How can I apply this?*	*What support and resources will I need?*	*How will I measure success?*	*Target date for completion or review?*

Handout 6 - Clarify your aims

1. Write down
    - what, personally, you really want to do through the project?
    - what is important for you in the project?

      Focus on:
        - your goals through the project
        - the target(s) you want to focus on
        - the needs/problems you want to solve
        - your expectations concerning the team of cooperators and the way the cooperative will work

2. Write down
    - the way that you don't want the project to work
    - all the things you want to avoid
    - transform these negative statements (such as "I want to avoid people not taking an active role") into solutions (such as "I will encourage people to actively take part in designing the project")

3. Try to find and draw a picture/a symbol that represents the whole information.

Handout 7 - Responding to need

Sketch a proto-persona

- identify who and where the target audience is?
- what are their needs and their problems (pain points)?
- how do they behave?

By being empathetic with the users of your product, you'll understand and support their needs and therefore design a product that it's more in tune with them and corresponds better to their expectations.

1 Sketch & name	2 Behavioral demographic information
3 Pain points & needs	4 Potential solutions

Handout 8 - Visioning exercise

- Choose an image/metaphor that illustrates the situation, problem, or project. For example: a boat in a storm that is taking on water, with no captain, sharks swimming all around, with only two sailors on board. This should be a quick activity – don't waste too much time thinking up a complicated scenario.

- Transpose this image into the future, how would it be in an ideal world. For example: the boat is repaired and super equipped, it has enough crew members, the captain is at the helm and the sky is clear.

- Identify the obstacles or issues that prevent the current situation from advancing to the desired situation.

- Select 2 elements (2 obstacles or 2 issues or 1 obstacle and 1 issue) and put them in order of priority.

- Translate the elements selected as priorities into concrete actions. For example: several people identified the lack of money and poor communication, so work on these two elements.

- The goal is to translate the next steps or steps to be taken to get closer to the dream situation (metaphor, image in the future) into concrete actions. The proposal answers the following questions: Who will do what, when, how, why?

Handout 9 - Giving feedback

Split into groups of 3 (split into A, B & C)
Goal: to improve participants' ability to give positive and constructive feedback.
A = speaker
B = listener
C = time keeper and referee

- A has to sell a product/concept to B.
- B is actively listening. At the end of 3 minutes, they may ask A to reword some parts of the presentation.
- After 3 minutes, B feeds back to A on their presentation. Was B convinced by the pitch? Are they going to buy the product/concept? Why?
- C oversees the whole process. They encourage B to focus on the positive aspects of the presentation and suggest one or two ways to improve.

Handout 10 - Organising a cooperative hackathon

1. Figure out what you want

Sit down and think about what you want to accomplish with your hackathon. Set goals and pick a theme. A themed hackathon usually focuses on a particular problem such as food sustainability or migration. Themed hackathons are usually able to attract subject matter experts and relevant organisations.

2. Plan it

Once you know what you want to get out of the event, you'll need to set a few days aside and develop an event plan. You can run workshops to introduce participants to the subject of the hackathon or to teach them particular technical skills. Ideally, workshops should be as interactive as it is possible to make them. Find a venue to host your event and reserve the date. Choose the date of your event carefully. Avoid the summer, holidays, and other major events in your area. Weekends are hard for people who are attending in a professional capacity. Weeknights are hard for parents. Professional venues charge quite a bit of money, so you will need to find something that fits your budget. It might be a good idea to look for a free space with good wifi such as your local library or a friend's company.

Again, it's a good idea to set 'ground rules' for the work everyone is doing together that are mutually decided, and enforced, by the group and can be used to create a supportive and respectful space for group work to take place. You could look at attracting sponsors to help you cover the costs. Sponsors will give you something, such as cash, space, food, t-shirts, with the expectation that they get something in return for their support. They might be recruiting and want to scout out your attendees, or they might be marketing a product that they want to promote. Think about what you're willing to give sponsors in return for their support.

3. Build a team

Identify project leaders and meet with them to:

- guide them on how to make progress on their projects
- identify how they can take on newcomers
- identify what sort of help their project needs

Find workshop leaders
Choose your workshop leaders carefully. Ideally the leaders have run the same workshop before so they have a good idea of how it works. You should try to make sure your leaders represent the diversity of people you want to see present at your event. Having leaders from a range of backgrounds will help to engage particular groups within the community.

Find helpers

These people can assist with such activities as running the registration table and welcoming attendees who are arriving at the venue. You might also consider identifying volunteers to help with taking photographs, managing social media and documenting what happens at the event so you can communicate further with the community after it's over.

4. Register participants

Determine your maximum capacity for effective working. For a free event, it's likely that about 65% of those who register will actually show up. This number is very consistently seen across events. So cap registration at below 150% of your actual maximum capacity, but ensure that this does not breach the capacity of your venue.

Devise a registration form for people who are interested in attending your event. You can use this form to gather information about participants. The more information you can gather ahead of time the easier it will be to plan the event. You can start to think about who will be working on what as soon as registrations start coming in. Try to imagine which areas each participant will be involved with at the event based on whatever information you know about them.

5. Set up channels of communication

Set up channels of digital communication for your participants keep in touch before, during and after the event. You could set up a chat room (such as Slack), a social media channel, a hashtag on Twitter or a Facebook group, a shared document space (such as Google Docs or Dropbox) or an email list (such as a Google Group).

Think about how you will tell your story. Part of your event's lasting impact is dictated by how people remember it. A hashtag for the event can boost the visibility of your event and keep all commentary on it in one place. Also, think about how to take photos of your hackathon that tell its story.

6. Highlights

Welcoming session

Start with a brief session welcoming everyone and laying out the day. You should introduce yourself, thank the venue and sponsors, explain the history and purpose of the event, mention the ground rules, explain logistics and encourage people to take and share session notes and to record progress on projects. In a small event (up to about 30 people), you can have all of the participants introduce themselves.

Do something to relax the situation like an icebreaker (some examples included in Section 2) to encourage team spirit and help the participants get to know each other.

During the day

Your job as organiser is to help participants contribute to the best of their ability. Go around checking that every project is going smoothly. See if anyone needs anything or can't decide what they should work on.

Make sure all the sessions stick to your event plan and keep to time. Alert everyone when it's time for lunch and give one hour's notice before the wrap-up session. Leading up to wrap-up, make sure there are people involved in each project who are prepared to give an outline of what they've been working on. Ideally, you should ask them to record their progress on social media.

Make sure you have someone overseeing each workshop. Make sure that workshops stay on schedule, that participants understand the leader and that they can hear the leader from the back of the room. Make sure you're on hand to help in the event of any technology issues.

Wrap-up

The wrap-up session gives everyone a chance to hear what other people have worked on during the day. For a small group, ask volunteers to report what they accomplished and what they learned. Make sure everyone speaking gets a round of applause.

7. Debrief

- Write down everything that went right so you can repeat it next time.
- Write down everything that went wrong so you can avoid it next time.
- Calculate how much the event cost, in total and per participant.
- Survey the attendees about what they liked and didn't like.
- Blog about the event.

Handout 11 - Active listening exercise

Split into groups of 3 (split into A, B & C) .

Goal: to improve active listening skills. In order to collaborate efficiently, you need to create trust between a group of people. This can be facilitated by effective and empathetic communication methods such as active listening.

A = speaker
B = listener
C = time keeper and referee

- A gives a 3-4 minute presentation on a particular subject, such as a project they're involved with.
- B listens in silence, listening attentively to what is being said and demonstrating their listening to the talker by their behaviour. B cannot take notes and cannot ask questions.
- C observes A and B to make sure B follows instructions. C may take notes.
- When time is up, B summarises the whole of A's presentation.
- A gives feedback to B about how accurate their summary was.
- C asks B to describe how the process felt for them.
- C asks A to review how well B demonstrated active listening behaviours.
- The group can take it in turns so that each person has a chance to perform each role.

Handout 12 - Decision-making exercise

Goal: to help participants get to grips with consensus decision-making.

- Imagine a scenario in which your participants have to tackle a particular problem. Example: a team must find a solution to accommodate two new workers in their organisation despite the premises being full.

- Each participant gives at least one concrete proposal in 1 sentence to the rest of the participants.

- Write the proposals down on a flip chart and ask each participant to choose the suggestion they think is best placed to solve the problem by marking next to their selection with an X.

- The facilitator adds up the number of votes for each proposal and reads this list out to the participants. The one which received the most votes is the 'winner'.

- The facilitator invites all of the participants who didn't vote for the 'winning' proposal to speak and the group tries to incorporate their views into the proposal based on the latter 3 of the following consensus positions:
    - Active agreement (the 'winners')
    - Agreement with reservations/conditions
    - Non-support, but not blocking as can live with decision
    - Block

  Each person is asked whether they can accept the majority decision or whether they wish to block the decision.

- Everyone is given the opportunity to express any conditions that would allow them to follow the majority decision. The proposal may be withdrawn for further development and presented again to reach a formal consensus.

Handout 13 - Icebreaker: People bingo

This is a great ice breaker as it's easy to do, fun and gets people moving around. An additional bonus is that it helps everyone get to know each other better. See below for an example - ***you can adapt your bingo card questions to suit your participants/context and make it as short or long as you like to fill the time available by just adding/cutting boxes.***

Find someone who:				
Rides a bike	Plays a musical instrument	Has been on TV/radio	Owns a dog	Speaks more than one language
Was in a school play	Is vegetarian	Is left handed	Has ridden a horse	Drinks coffee rather than tea
Is addicted to chocolate	Has lied about their age	Is a morning person	Is good at DIY	Likes wearing bright colours
Can use a sewing machine	Owns a cat	Has lived abroad	Likes peanut butter	Has worked in a café or bar

To Play: give each participant a people bingo card and a pen. Tell people how much time they have to get all of the answers (or you may get them to complete a line across or down) and encourage people to circulate, introduce themselves and find people who match the descriptions in each of the boxes on the card. Ask them to write that person's name in the correct box – you may or may not allow people to use the same people for multiple answers. As soon as the game is over, get people to feedback what the most surprising thing was (for example, it may be that no one has ridden horse).

Handout 14 - Icebreaker/energiser: two truths and a lie

This is a fun icebreaker that gets people making up tall stories that may or may not be believable and other people guessing what's true and what's not. Sometimes, the closer a lie is to the truth the harder it is to detect, so it can also be quite a tactical game to play! For example:

- I had a dog called Leo
- My favourite colour is yellow
- I have ridden an elephant

To Play: give each participant a small card/post-it and a pen and tell them how long they have to complete the task. Encourage them to write down two things about themselves that are true and one that is a lie – in no particular order. Once everyone has done this, get a volunteer (or yourself) to start reporting back what is on your card. Then discuss with the group which you think is the lie out of the three statements. Once the rest of the group has made their guess, ask the person to reveal which statement was the lie. Take it in turns to go around the room so that everybody reveals their statements.

Handout 15 - Additional tools to support DISCOVER, DEFINE, DEVELOP, DELIVER

For DISCOVER, also consider these tools:

Interview
https://innovationenglish.sites.ku.dk/metode/the-qualitative-interview/
Cluster analysis
https://innovationenglish.sites.ku.dk/metode/cluster-analysis/
Etnoraid
https://innovationenglish.sites.ku.dk/metode/etnoraid/

For DEFINE, also consider these tools:

Challenge map
https://innovationenglish.sites.ku.dk/metode/challenge-map/
Actantial model
https://innovationenglish.sites.ku.dk/metode/the-actant-model/

For DEVELOP, also consider these tools:

Obstructions
https://innovationenglish.sites.ku.dk/metode/obstructions/
Innovation matrix
https://innovationenglish.sites.ku.dk/metode/innovation-matrix/
Journaling
https://innovationenglish.sites.ku.dk/metode/journaling/
Confusion tolerance
https://innovationenglish.sites.ku.dk/metode/confusion-tolerance/

For DELIVER, also consider these tools:

Prototype process
https://innovationenglish.sites.ku.dk/metode/planning-of-prototype-testing/
User journey
https://innovationenglish.sites.ku.dk/metode/user-journey/
Participant observation
https://innovationenglish.sites.ku.dk/metode/observatio

Handout 16 - Governance challenges and solutions

It is important for cooperatives to be aware of the possibility of governance problems arising, so that they can put appropriate procedures in place to prevent them from happening. Here are eleven common governance challenges for cooperatives – along with practical solutions for each one:

Mistakes at start-up

Challenge: In the excitement of creating the organisation, mistakes can be made during the start-up of a cooperative, such as lack of sufficient planning or an unclear vision. Cooperatives that rush their start-up process and do not involve potential members in the process are more likely to fail.
Solution: Cooperatives need to have an effect-operive strategy from the start. They need to ask themselves, like "What do we want to achieve?" and "Where does the organisation want to be in 10 years' time?", so that they are prepared for every eventuality at the very start. They must involve all potential members so that they then own the decisions, and take advice from similar organisations on how best to start up the business.

Inflexible structures and systems

Challenge: Organisations often begin with inappropriate structures which limit what they can do and may not fit in with the aims and aspirations of the members. Even when the structures are appropriate, there are often misconceptions among members or managers as to what the structure is.
Solution: The key to finding an appropriate democratic structure is ensuring that there is a good start-up process. Cooperatives should also learn from others by taking advice and learning from the mistakes of other cooperative organisations. They can also take advantage of the overarching rules for different cooperative models which outline how a certain cooperative model's structure should be organised.

Poor clarity of roles

Challenge: In cooperatives, due to the relative complexity of the democratic structure and the number of different roles that are needed, there is sometimes a lack of clarity regarding what each role is expected to do, and this can lead to bad organisation and ineffective teamwork. As many cooperatives are non-hierarchical with responsibility being shared, there can be a tendency for some individuals to fail to take any responsibility as they know others will take up the slack.
Solution: Even more so than in other businesses, cooperative societies have many different roles, from members to managers, the Board of Directors to the Chief Executive, and they must work together to ensure the success of the business. Everybody needs to be clear

about their role, and to achieve clarity, cooperatives need role descriptions that are appropriate and easy to understand. There should be a thorough induction of newly joined members, which provides an ideal opportunity for role review. Role clarity can also be achieved by a culture of transparency.

Difficulty recruiting to governing body

Challenge: Sometimes not enough people want to join the governing body which can lead to poor performance and a lack of faith in the cooperative. This problem is directly linked to the problem of ineffective meetings, as people are less likely to want to take part in the democratic process if the meetings are ineffective.
Solution: Cooperatives need to invite potential candidates to meetings, make governing meetings open to all members and make sure the timing and venue of meetings are correct. This will ensure that all potential members of the governing body feel welcomed into the cooperative democratic structure and are therefore more likely to join the governing body. They should also provide adequate training for new and potential members of the governing body so that people are confident in their role and are not faced with surprises later on down the line.

Poor accountability to stakeholders

Challenge: When the governing body does not represent the membership effectively it can result in an 'us' and 'them' scenario where there is a division between the governing body and its members.
Solution: In order to ensure effective representation of membership and positive communication between the governing body and the members, cooperatives must ensure their governing documents are easy to understand so that everyone is aware of the rules, guidelines and structures in place within the cooperative.

Poorly performing governing body

Challenge: There is always a risk that certain members of the governing body do not perform effectively due to lack of training or skills, or a misunderstanding of their role in the cooperative. This can lead to a breakdown in general performance and organisation and can have a knock-on effect on more members of the governing body, as well as disengaging the members of the cooperative.
Solution: Cooperatives should have regular skills audits of the governing body to ensure they are performing to a high standard, and organise training for the team so they are constantly reminded of their role and continually improving their skills. Cooperatives should have thorough induction and training of new members, managers and Directors and make sure that all jobs have clear job descriptions so people know what is expected of them.

Poor membership participation

Challenge: As members are the backbone of any cooperative, poor membership participation is a serious problem in any cooperative society. If the members are not engaging in the cooperative, then members stop being at the heart of the cooperative and that puts the cooperative values and principles into question.
Solution: The key to solving this problem is to look at why there is poor membership participation. Perhaps the cooperative is demonstrating poor performance which is consequently disengaging its members, or perhaps the members only joined initially for the benefits of being a member and were never planning on contributing as a member. Once the reasons behind the poor participation have been highlighted, then the cooperative can begin to find a solution. A good idea would be to focus on improving the members meetings by making them more attractive and easier to attend, so that members feel a part of the daily goings on in the cooperative.

Ineffective meetings

Challenge: Like any business, regular meetings are extremely important in ensuring good governance. In many ways they are even more important in cooperatives due to the large variety of different positions held by the people who must attend the meetings, especially the members. If the meetings are ineffective (i.e. decisions are not being made, people are left feeling unclear about what is being discussed, general feeling of confusion, irregular times and venues etc) then people may stop attending them regularly which will lead to an even graver problem.
Solution: There are many ways to ensure the cooperative meetings are effective. Cooperatives should make sure that the agenda is circulated prior to the meeting so that everyone is aware of what is going to be discussed. Similarly, minutes should be circulated immediately afterwards so that people can consolidate what they have talked about in the meeting. There are also many exciting alternative decision-making processes such as consensus which could help meetings run in a more effective way.

Mission drift

Challenge: This happens when a cooperative's objectives become different to the original mission, and therefore the raison d'etre of the cooperative changes. This can create a sense of failure or confusion in the cooperative.
Solution: The governing document that has been written to outline exactly what the cooperative's aims and objectives are and how it will achieve them should be written clearly and should be widely circulated so that all members are aware of the society's mission. Members need to be well-informed and there should be good general communication between different roles in the cooperative, with audits and reviews involving the whole organisation. This way everyone will be aware of the mission and will know how to go about achieving it.

Founder syndrome

Challenge: This is when a member of the organisation, due to being part of the cooperative for a long time, expects to have undue power or influence. This is not always this person's fault – it could be due to new members not wanting to get involved and therefore one person taking on too much responsibility.
Solution: The roles in the cooperative need to be clearly defined so that everybody knows what their responsibilities are as well as the limits to these responsibilities. This way all members of the organisation will play their part which should prevent one person from acquiring too much power or influence. The democratic structure needs to be open so that everybody understands all of the roles and can communicate freely with one another. The cooperative could also implement time limits on certain positions to ensure that nobody is in a certain role for too long, and there should be effective succession planning so that roles are handed over smoothly and supportively.

Poorly handled conflict

Challenge: Conflicts often occur in cooperatives just like in any other organisation. When there is a disagreement between certain people involved in the cooperative, these disagreements can escalate and cause rifts within the organisation. When these conflicts are poorly handled, the problem gets even worse and can create further conflicts.
Solution: The fact that there are conflicts in an organisation is not necessarily always a bad thing. Conflicts can be a positive force for change – if someone is speaking out against something they do not agree with and challenging the way something is done, this could lead to a positive outcome. The key is in the handling of the conflict. People in the cooperative need to deal with any conflicts calmly and diplomatically, mediating between those involved and trying to resolve the conflict as smoothly as possible, so that it can have a positive rather than negative outcome.

Handout 17 - Template marketing plan

Use the following template to structure your marketing plan, it will help you to understand future customers' preferences and clarify the how the products and services the cooperative offers should be marketed.

- **Product**: to have a clear message about what product/service needed by the buyer and to provide this according to the demands/needs of the buyer
- **Price**: to offer the product/service at a price that is according to current demand and supply on the market, that is acceptable to the buyer and covers the costs of production
- **Promotion**: to promote the product in the market by using various promotional methods (sales offers, marketing materials etc.) and to negotiate with buyers on price, quantities, packaging, delivery time, delivery place, who is responsible for transport and payment conditions
- **Place**: to understand where your marketplace is situated and to respond to demand from customers as to where your product/service needs to be available
- **Cost**: to be able to produce the product/service at a price that is acceptable for the customer, taking into account input costs, production costs, labour, packaging, transport etc., and to calculate the exact production costs per unit
- **Customer**: to study the behaviour of competitors and customers (buyers) and their needs, the market and its changes