



## What Does the User Need?



### Quick Tip:

Role-playing is a great way to get process experts to think out of the box about process changes. By "walking in the shoes" of their user, they may identify data requests or process steps that are confusing.

## ***Design thinking creates a consequential improvement to user experience***

One of the most interesting business transformations I've been involved with was the implementation of HP's Human Resources (HR) Self Service, requiring substantial work in user centered design. The methods used during that multi-year program are timeless and the focus of my **User Centered Design Case Study**. This case study shares the importance of incorporating design principles into the business transformation vision, requirements gathering, implementation strategy and change management. Throughout the case study, I reference a user centered design resource, "The Design Thinking Toolbox" by Michael Lewrick, Patrick Link, and Larry Leifer; giving you access to techniques and tools that you can use.

### **Vision and Storytelling**

User centered design supports the development of user stories. Storytelling is a valuable way to establish quick alignment and commitment by providing the audience an understandable, personal experience. To promote the HR Self Service business transformation, we created a powerful visual story using a series of slides for the Current State, Best in Class Benchmarks, and Future state of the user experience we wanted to create. When developing a user story for your business transformation, it's important to keep it simple and explain:

- \* the problem you are trying to solve,
- \* how this problem could be solved using well-defined capabilities, and
- \* how it looks and feels when the problem is solved.

See the **case study** vision: HR Self Service is Easy to Find, Easy to Use, and Easy to Get Help.

### **Acknowledge the Complexity of Design**

In a large global company, embarking on user centered design means acknowledging that all users don't have the same experience. There are differences in roles and responsibilities, language and culture, work environment preference, local technologies, and unique regulatory requirements by country that lead to different policies and process steps. For HR Self Service, we engaged the HR teams managing HR processes from each geography. Workshops for each target population were structured around user centered design techniques. These workshops helped the design team:

Understand and define the existing HR processes and current problems for users using explorative interviewing techniques, role playing and by asking powerful questions.

Observe users and build various persona to reflect their user profile and process needs. A persona is a fictional but relatable character that helps the larger team come to a consistent understanding of what the users need.

Develop a solution point of view and a story for communicating the future state. By using brainstorming and “dot voting”, the team generates many solution ideas and then narrows it down to the most impactful solutions. After developing a solution point of view, they create a powerful visual story board.

Create solution prototypes and have users evaluate and refine them. User teams can be engaged to interact with the proposed solution and by applying usability testing techniques, they validate the solution and identify inefficiencies or problems.

This user centered approach focuses the team on designing more useful solutions for targeted end users. Often, the team identifies more efficient and lower cost solutions because they are solving real user problems rather than automating an ineffective current process. The **case study** provides more detail on the user centered design techniques and tools that may be used for each step.

## **Everything is a System**

A powerful part of user centered design is how it emphasizes evaluation of the end-to-end process. As a result, the design team gains greater clarity on impacted stakeholders and interdependencies, allowing them to create a more realistic implementation roadmap.

For HR Self Service, the team identified quick wins as those processes that did not have significant interdependencies with other processes or organizations. These could be tackled first. Other HR processes would require significant changes in multiple processes and/or in the way the company managed or governed content, application design and support. For these HR processes, we established better governance before implementing a new solution.

For example, when manager self service for a complex HR process was implemented, the manager would need easy to find information and step by step navigation to successfully complete the task. This type of self service resource would require strong content management technology, content control, and intuitive content scripting to be in place. If these capabilities had not been implemented first, managers would have become frustrated in navigating HR Self Service and the initiative would have failed. This is one example of many global governance modifications that were required for HR Self Service and a

design and governance framework is available in the case study.

## A Powerful User Experience

Ultimately, this HR Self Service Initiative completely changed the role of most HR representatives from supporting administrative tasks to providing HR policy and process consultation to company leaders. To succeed in this major business transformation, we needed an organization-wide effort over several years. The goal: a powerful and simple user experience where HR Self Service was Easy to Find, Easy to Use, and Easy to Get Help.

The world has come a long way in providing useful and powerful user experiences, from online shopping to apps for everything. However, every new technology and the constant evolution of business needs create the same challenge – how do you design products and services in a way that meets user needs? Then how do you help people embrace the new solutions to get maximum benefit from them? At the core of this, is the timeless concept of user centered design.

## Talk to Me!

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## Additional Resources:

Optimize your business transformation solution! "The Design Thinking Toolbox" by Michael Lewrick, Ph.D, MBA, Patrick Link, and Larry Leifer is a useful book with over 40 innovative methods to understand user needs, create solutions, and conduct user centric testing. Very much worth a read and having as a reference on your shelf.

These Innovation insights from Melissa Schilling are helpful when considering user centered design for your business transformation.

## Are you new to Project Management?

Key concepts in this newsletter relate to capturing business requirements. See PM Essentials!



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### *About Annette*

*Annette is a business transformation coach focused on creating more effective operations and greater business value. Both vision and execution are key to motivate people to transform work. She guides leaders to develop transformation vision and strategy, structure implementation projects and roadmaps, and mentor project teams to be successful. Her blog and newsletter share transformation tips, resources and best practices.*



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