

Self-assessment by Dr. Vidya Priya Rao

SUBMITTED ON 27 APR 2021



A summary about me:

Vidya Priya Rao with over 20 years of experience in the industry, helps companies harness their power of innovation and brings a unique view on how modern companies must operate. She blends in-depth real-world leadership, with teaching experience as visiting faculty in business schools, to help organisations transform their culture, business models and operations to become resilient. She uses a combination of engaging stories, evidence-based approach and practical techniques, with human-centric goals, cross-departmental collaboration and customised hands-on sessions, to achieve desired objectives. Her challenge to start-ups, small and large organisations is to question the status-quo and deeply evaluate their commitment to the consumer, to excel at digital today and thrive as digital tomorrow.

My journey as an apprentice of design is written in this blog: <https://innovationmanagement.se/2018/04/11/musings-of-an-apprentice-business-thinking-meets-design-thinking-to-create-a-design-led-company/>

I currently work as a/at:

Founder - Innovatus Marketers Touchpoint LLP, <http://marketerstouchpoint.com>

My LinkedIn profile:

www.linkedin.com/in/vidyapriyarao

My social media channels:

@vidya_priyarao;

My educational background:

B.E. Electrical, MBA and PhD in Design. I learned to apply service design principles while i was working with Siemens. I found it useful and relevant and started to teach my team to apply service design. In end 2014 started my own firm and honed my skills further. Have delivered more than 100 training sessions then and applied in multiple projects.

The following theories are the key components of my approach to service design:

A holistic approach to build an agile, innovative, resilient and customer-centric organisation. Service design is the thoughtful crafting of end-to-end experiences through a human-centered approach. Service design can transform the experience not only for the end customer but also increase efficiency, productivity, and job satisfaction for employees and partners. It accounts for all of the interactions the customer has with the brand—tangible and intangible, physical and digital. Service design focuses on the long-term relationship of the customer to the brand across all touchpoints to create a seamless, consistent, resonant, and valuable experience. Service design is the operating principle for activating a business strategy by implementing meaningful changes and transforming the organization.



These are the most relevant resources I base my work on and I recommend them as a body of knowledge in service design:

- Service Design for Business: A Practical Guide to Optimizing the Customer Experience by Ben Reason, Lavrans Løvlie, and Melvin Brand Flu-wriiten for business people in traditional companies to understand the impotance of service design. Provides a a proven, effective approach for better responding to customers' needs and demands, and provides a strategy that can be implemented immediately.
- Service Design: From Insight to Implementation by Andy Polaine, Ben Reason, and Lavrans Løvlie - The book is filled with insightful case studies cleverly walked through from a problem to its execution - filled with tips and ideas.
- An Introduction to Service Design: Designing the Invisible by Lara Penin - Use as a text book when iam teaching service design to students in bschools.
- Mapping Experiences: A Guide to Creating Value Through Journeys, Blueprints, and Diagrams by James Kalbach - In Part 1 the author explains the fundamentals of visualizing value and offer a fundamental on mapping experiences and strategic insight. Part 2 is all about a general process you can use to map customer experiences. Part 3 goes in details and offer tips and tricks on different kind of diagrams(like service blueprints, customer journey maps, Spatial Models, etc) and how to better use them.
- The Service Innovation Handbook: Action-oriented Creative Thinking Toolkit by Lucy Kimbell - Well structured information with clear instructions for using the tools.
- The Knowing-Doing Gap: How Smart Companies Turn Knowledge Into Action by Bob Sutton and Jeffrey Pfeffer - understand drivers of company action on available knowledge and ideas, and measure success to incorporate this into the design.
- Measure What Matters by John Doerr demonstrates the focus, agility, and explosive growth that OKRs have spurred at so many great organizations.
- The Laws of Simplicity by John Maeda - Provide great insights to reduce & organize to simplify an organization. Simplicity is about subtracting the obvious and adding the meaningful.
- Interviewing Users: How to Uncover Compelling Insights by Steve Portigal a good book to understand the users better.

I have X years of working experience in service design:

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My working experience in service design includes involvement in:

- Service design projects
- Service design consultancy
- Service design training

I have particular experience in the following service sectors:

Education, NGO, Retail, Fintech, Software companies, Consumer Good, SaaS Company

I have conducted X service design projects that aim at creating improvements or innovations within organisations:

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These are the service design projects I have successfully delivered:

Tarnea from May 2015 to Dec 2016. Design a cloud based platform that enable "brick-and-mortar" pharmacies to become omnichannel retailers. Integrate the Indian pharma value chain customers, retailers, distributors and manufactures. From data driven stock management, to the ability to engage customers and manage orders digitally.

Jascap from Jan 2018 to May 2018. Close the gap between donor intent and action. Differentiate from other Cancer NGO's in India. Put in place a communication strategy with donors, before, during and after fundraising. The income from fundraising has increased by 40% YoY since completion of the project.

A Marketing Automation Company from July 2019 to Present - Redesign the SaaS Company to run a successful subscription or recurring revenue business. Resulted in a shift in mindset from acquiring new customers to retaining, nurturing, and growing existing customers. Subscription revenue increased by 25% in the last 1 year. Support tickets has come down by 35% in the last 1 year.



Bluepay from June 2016 to Dec 2017. Design solution to improve online, mobile app or in the store customer experiences through innovative employee-to-consumer touch points. Identify buyer mindsets of retailers to minimise the time to close the deal.

Bayestree - from May 2019 to ongoing - Redefining customer success for enterprises, by eliminating think time from problem solving using AI and Machine Learning. Outcome 92% efficiency in no touch triaging, cut time to find information by 50%; Zero time to switch between languages.

I have provided service design training sessions and/or other educational experiences for X years:

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My philosophy as a trainer is:

In my training sessions, I spark initial interest, sustain participation by following the learner's ideas, deepen their understanding through making connection, and ensure all the brainpower and energy of the participants stays fully on the agenda. The intent is to build innovation capabilities within the group or for the company. I ensure people walk away feeling empowered by realistic next steps.

While working on service design projects, establish a clear understanding about everyone's role and gain team commitment. Ensure the group focuses on the opportunity for change to gain an honest look at "now". Provoke them to think bigger and channels their frustrations positively into imagining an ideal state to arrive at the "wow" and then arrive realistic next steps.

These are the service design training sessions and/or other educational experiences I've facilitated within the last year:

I have a business development team which reaches out to organizations to run service design workshops for their teams. I have not offered an open workshop since 2018.

<http://marketerstouchpoint.com/services/workshops/service-design-thinking-workshop-in-india/>

I mostly provide my training offerings in the following language(s):

English

I mostly provide my training offerings in the following countries/cities:

India, UAE

I cover the following topics during my training offerings:

- History of service design
- Definition of service design
- Differentiation of service design to other approaches like design thinking, service marketing and service branding
- Relationship of service design to agile, scrum and lean
- Service dominant logic
- User research/deep customer insights
- Designing and conducting co-creation workshops
- Creativity and ideation processes
- Visualisation techniques
- Facilitation skills for service design
- Prototyping of services
- Implementation of service design concepts
- Business model development
- Measuring impact of service design, relating it to Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
- Building in-house service design capabilities
- Working with complex service systems



- Exploration of systems
- Service design for cultural change
- Organisational development
- building design-led innovation culture

My training participants typically have the following level of experience:

- Novice (new to service design)
- Fundamental (basic knowledge)
- Advanced (practical application)
- Expert (recognised authority)

These are my favourite cases I use to inform participants about the impact and value of service design:

The Change Agent's Secret...Touchpoint 2011 Volume 3, No 2...Pg 28 - It highlights the need for collaboration and breaking down departmental silos. The crux is to identify significant barriers and reframe them into opportunities, and devise innovative ways to overcoming barriers can lead to lasting change.

Fusing Qualitative and Quantitative Skills in Service Design...Touchpoint 2013, Volume 5, No 1...Pg 62 - The case highlights on the important qualitative research; need to recruit the rights customers in the co-creation process, need to build direct and implicit measurement of emotions into the validation process. By comparing the existing knowledge and assumptions at the start of the project with the actual result, we can prove the added value of fusing qualitative and quantitative research in the service design approach.

Stuck in a Price War? Use Service Design to Change the Game in B2B Relations...Touchpoint 2010, Volume 2, No 2 - Highlights how Service Design has great potential for small and medium-sized companies that are stuck in a market situation where they cannot compete on price. When making a strategic shift towards services, it's essential to implement an open process where stakeholders are invited to participate.

Empowering BBVA with a 360 work experience...Touchpoint 2014, Volume 6, No 3...an excellent case study pointing out the need for employee experience and visitor experience too.

Software-as-a-Service Business Model Transformation <https://www.service-design-network.org/case-studies/software-as-a-service-business-model-transformation> ... A case study showing how to transition to a SaaS business model and the challenges they need to overcome, with a ROI, demonstrating revenue from the Subscription offering saw double digit growth. Understand the transformation will take at least a year and impact how the organisation will work.

These are the service design methods and tools that I use during my sessions:

Please Note: I select the tools depend on the session agenda. A partial list of tools is use in my session include: Persona, Empathy Map, Observation Notes, Recruiting Screening, Research Plan, Role Playing, Journey Map, Touchpoint Mapping, Experience Principles, User Scenarios, User Stories, Business Model Canvas, Offerings Map, Service Blueprint, Brainstorming, Service Safari, Concept Walkthrough, Evaluation Matrix, Service Prototype, Success Matrix, Value Proposition Canvas, Service Roadmap, Service Specifications, Synthesis Wall, Mind map, Hypothesis Generation, Tomorrow's Narratives

After successfully attending my training sessions, participants will typically be able to:

After attending my training sessions, participants will be able to:

- a) create a user/buyer persona
- b) create a customer journey
- c) create a service blueprint and identify opportunities for improvement
- d) create a business model
- e) work as a team to build on ideas and prioritize
- f) create a test plan



I apply the following evaluation tools to make sure the participants have understood the content of my sessions and gained the expected competencies and skills:

Use a variety of tools to gauge the participant takeaway - mood meter, flash question, eyes and ears, evaluation grid, reflection sessions, final evaluation using flipchart.

I systematically evaluate and improve my offerings based on feedback. These are examples of feedback that have led to improvements:

Some of the phrases that appeared among the feedback that initiated some improvements:

- I learnt a lot, but what how will you support me if i get stuck up - we offer a 45 min online Coaching session to clarify any doubts.
- Not enough time given for exercises - In the foundation workshop sessions, we inform participants that the intent is to give an overview. For a more immersive session, they can join the Advanced Workshops.
- Sometimes the discussions went too long of few topics - We ensure that the co-facilitator gives a cue to the facilitator if the discussion goes off track. In the absence of a co-facilitator, we ensure the facilitator sets a timer for every activity, so that he/she gets a reminder.

I have participated in the following service design-related activities in order to stay up to date, share my experiences with peers and receive their supervision within the last 12 months:

- SDN Global Conference
- SDN Academy Course
- SDN Chapter Activity
- Promote

I actively support the local or national service design community through:

Active promoter of SDN in India.

I have participated as a speaker in the following events:

I have spoken on diverse topics, usually in my client premises. Topics include:

- a) Protect Your Business and Accelerate Innovation in the New Normal
- b) Why you need to define innovation
- c) Kill Complexity, Embrace Simplicity
- d) Building patient-centric hospital of the future at Express Healthcare Event in 2019

Panelist - Panel Session 3:

Unleashing the Potential of New age technologies in higher education Institutions

<https://www.asmaindia.in/asma-annual-convention-2018/>

Few webinar links, where i spoke is enclosed for your reference:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1G2aQb6iifHLMwR0M1f-cQ>

I have published the following books/articles on service design and related fields:

<http://marketerstouchpoint.com/home-innovatus-marketers-touchpoint/blogs/>

<https://bankingfrontiers.com/banking-professionals-need-use-service-design-thinking-win-customers/>

https://medium.com/@vidya_priyarao/the-scale-scope-and-reach-of-service-design-thinking-66daee245274

<https://www.expresshealthcare.in/health-policies/building-patient-centric-hospital-of-future/390549/>

<https://www.service-design-network.org/community-knowledge/reap-the-rewards-of-intelligent-automation-in-energy-sector-without-injecting-risk-using-design-thinking>

https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Vidya_Priya_Rao



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