Self-assessment by
Kiran Carpenter

A summary about me:

I'm a Service Design Lead and Strategic Foresight Practitioner with over a decade of experience reimagining services and ecosystems across public services, health, and hospitality. I specialize in applying futures thinking, anticipation, and systemic design to drive complex business transformation. I craft experiences that deliver mutual value to customers, employees, and organizations by aligning people, processes, systems, and data. Passionate about tackling ambiguity and shaping future-ready services, I use co-creation, inclusive research, and design to build sustainable solutions. I thrive on advancing service design's role in creating resilience, impact, and innovation at scale.

I currently work as a/at:

Experience Strategist (Service Design Lead), Slalom
https://slalom.com/us/en

My LinkedIn profile:

https://www.linkedin.com/in/kirancarpenter/

My social media channels:

n/a

My educational background:

Master of Science, Futures and Strategic Foresight, University of Houston, TX
Master of Arts, Graphic Design, Boston University, MA
Bachelor of Arts, Creative Arts Major, Cultural Studies Minor

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

1. Human-Centered and Trauma-Informed Design
I believe services should be designed with empathy and a deep understanding of human needs and experiences. I am learning to integrate trauma-aware principles and methods into my work. This will ensure that services are inclusive, accessible, and sensitive to the diverse lived realities and historical and collective trauma within our systems and interactions.

2. Systems Thinking, Design and Causal Layered Analysis (CLA)
I see services as part of larger, interconnected ecosystems influenced by deeper social, cultural, and systemic forces. Systems thinking and design help me map complexity and identify leverage points. At the same time, Sohail Inayatullah's Causal Layered Analysis (CLA) allows me to uncover and reframe underlying narratives aligned with mental models.

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3. Foresight and Anticipatory Design

Designing for the future requires anticipating change and being aware of the near—and long-term impact of what we create today. I use horizon scanning and scenario planning tools to identify emerging trends and disruptions, as well as many other tools for analyzing issues and their impact and designing futures. This helps me shape services that meet current needs and adapt proactively, creating seamless, resilient experiences over time.

4. Transition Design and Designing for Change

Transition design focuses on long-term systems-level change to address complex, interdependent challenges. I design with the future in mind, crafting services that facilitate sustainable transitions by aligning social, technological, and environmental shifts. By consciously designing for change, I believe we can help organizations and communities navigate transformation, ensuring services evolve in ethical, inclusive, and regenerative ways.

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

I've found these books invaluable resources in my practice.

Core Service Design Texts

These foundational books form the backbone of my service design practice, offering essential principles and methodologies:

"This is Service Design Thinking" by Marc Stickdorn and Jakob Schneider

"This Is Service Design Doing" by Marc Stickdorn, Markus Hormess, et al.

"Service Design: From Insight to Implementation" by Andy Polaine, Lavrans Løvlie, and Ben Reason

"Good Services" by Lou Downe

"Designing the Invisible" by Katrine Rau

"Orchestrating Experiences" by Chris Risdon and Patrick Quattlebaum

Advanced Service Design

"The Service Organization" by Kate Tarling

"Strategic Design: 8 Essential Practices Every Strategic Designer Must Master" by Peter Jones

"Design Journeys Through Complex Systems: Practice Tools for Systemic Design" by Peter Jones and Kristel Van Ael

Systems Thinking

These resources have transformed my approach to complex problems, helping me see broader connections and design more impactful and sustainable solutions:

"Closing the Loop: Systems Thinking for Designers" by Sheryl Cababa (I love this one)

"Thinking in Systems: A Primer" by Donella H. Meadows

"Systems Thinking for Social Change" by David Peter Stroh

Specialized Applications

When applying service design in specific contexts, these books offer invaluable domain-specific insights:

"Designing with and within Public Organizations" by André Schaminée

"Trauma-Informed Content Design" by Melissa Eggleston

"Designed with Care" by Rachel Edwards

"Human-Centered Design in Healthcare" by Kathleen Harder and Liz Boehm

"Service Design and Service Thinking in Healthcare and Hospital Management," edited by Mario A. Pfannstiel and Christoph Rasche

I have X years of working experience in service design:

8

My working experience in service design includes involvement in:

- Service design projects
- Service design consultancy

I have particular experience in the following service sectors:
Public Services, Healthcare, Hospitality, Financial Services & Insurance

I have conducted X service design projects that aim at creating improvements or innovations within organisations:
10

These are the service design projects I have successfully delivered:
n/a

I have provided service design training sessions and/or other educational experiences for X years:
1

My philosophy as a trainer is:
Successful training and educational experiences start with planning and designing an environment where people feel safe, curious, and excited to learn. I want participants to walk away with new tools and the confidence and energy to keep exploring long after the session ends.

I focus on designing and facilitating sessions to be inclusive and trauma-aware by recognizing that everyone learns differently and brings unique experiences to the room. I try to create space for all voices, pace things to meet diverse needs and ensure people feel heard and respected. Small things – like offering multiple ways to engage or encouraging reflection – can make a big difference.
I believe learning by doing is essential. Service design is hands-on by nature, so my sessions are interactive – full of co-creation, prototyping, and real-world exercises. I love seeing that "aha" moment when someone connects a concept to their work. Tailoring activities to their context can help bridge theory and practice, making the learning stick.

Preparation and next steps are equally important as what happens in the session. I ensure participants know what to expect, that I'm ready for their learning needs, and that they have the resources and clarity to continue applying what they've learned. Providing follow-up materials, practical frameworks, and suggestions for further exploration helps sustain momentum beyond the session.
Learning should also be a bit playful and engaging. I'm not comedic, but setting the stage for interaction and creativity is important. When people are having fun, they're more open, collaborative, and willing to take risks – which is where the real growth happens.

I love learning and hope to inspire that excitement in others. I know the session was a success if I can help someone feel more confident and curious about continuing their learning journey.
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These are the service design training sessions and/or other educational experiences I've facilitated within the last year:
Advance Service Design Master Class Session (Internal Training at Employer)
Co-created and facilitated an introduction to advanced concepts like system thinking, future thinking, and sustainable design with two other colleagues. Presented the session 2x as a capstone to the master class series. 20+ participants each time

Intro to Service Design (Internal Education Session)
Co-facilitated training with another designer for local market to introduce service design to non-designers.

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

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

United States (Virtual)

I cover the following topics during my training offerings:

- Definition of service design
- Differentiation of service design to other approaches like design thinking, service marketing and service branding

My training participants typically have the following level of experience:

- Novice (new to service design)

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

n/a

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

n/a

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

n/a

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:

n/a

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

n/a

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 Masterclass
- SDN Academy Course

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

n/a

I have participated as a speaker in the following events:

n/a

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

n/a

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