Self-assessment by
Oleg Koss

A summary about me:

I am a co-founder of the service design agency and SDN chapter for Ukraine.

I empower enterprises with capabilities for human-centric design and customer experience management. I also share my service design knowledge with the Ukrainian community and abroad.

I have an Executive MBA. I worked for large corporations and founded an e-commerce startup and a consultancy.

I am fluent in business and technology, but my passion is understanding people's needs. I am strong at framing the right business challenges, discovering deep insights, and finding out-of-the-box solutions to boost sales.

I love people :)

I currently work as a/at:

I am the founder of Lanka.CX – the first Ukrainian service-design consultancy
https://www.lanka.cx

My LinkedIn profile:

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

My social media channels:

https://www.facebook.com/oleg.koss.5

My educational background:

Self-education and trying new theories in practice is my preferred way of learning

Till Jaspert, Innova Partners, Barcelona introduced me to the Service Design on corporate training in 2014

I also have an Executive MBA from the IE Business School, Madrid, 2013, and
I have a Master's degree in telecommunications from Kyiv Politechnical Institute, 1999

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

➡Systemic Thinking. No service exists in a vacuum. One should understand all the relevant stakeholders: their relationships, motivations, resources, and limitations. Only then can you improve the experience of the users and other parties involved.

➡Human-centered design. Individuals, communities, and ecosystems are beneficiaries of any service. The designer should start with understanding human needs and experience gaps, design the service, and ensure it meets the needs, including unspoken ones.

➡Service-Dominant Logic. Any transaction between the people is a service. Without such a mindset, organizations launch products that waste resources and do not provide value.

➡Job To Be Done theory. Customers use services to achieve progress in their lives. By understanding what kind of progress users are trying to make, a designer can create a differentiated service to the customer's unspoken needs.

➡Behavioral science. People and not very rational in making decisions. By understanding people's behavior, we can nudge them to a better life.

➡Storytelling. Stories have incredible power in explaining new concepts, getting alignment, and building trust and empathy.

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 Global Conferences 2016-2021.
I get inspired by the keynote speakers
I discover new theories and perspectives from the presented cases
I learn new skills at interactive workshops
Most importantly, I made friends with the most talented designers across the globe

➡Change By Design (Tim Brown). My first book on design thinking. It inspired me with great examples of how design brings value to the business

➡Mapping Experiences (Jim Kalbach) and Service Startup (Tenny Pinheiro) equipped me with nice tools and practical advice

➡Service Design for Business (Ben Reason, Lavrans Lovlie, Melvin Brand Flu) helped to see the difference between designing the service and using service design as a business tool

➡Good Services (Lou Downe). An excellent checklist and a brainstorming tool for improving every service

➡SDN Touchpoint. The best source of fresh knowledge about designing services and beyond. The only problem I have is finding time to read every article :)

➡The Economist. To keep track of current trends in politics, economy, industries, and technology

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:
Banks, Insurance, Healthcare, Telecoms, Retail, Real Estate, Public Services, NGOs, E-commerce platforms, B2B distribution, Manufacturing,

Transport, and Automotive.

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:

Some examples:

2015 March - December
Kyivstar - the biggest telecom operator in Ukraine. 24M customers
Three projects:
I re-designed the customer decision journey of changing the tariff plan so that customers can compare and choose the right tariff plan. I helped to increase satisfaction and conversion rate. An average revenue per customer grew by 20%
I re-designed the approach to raise prices for the services. With colleagues, we agreed on clear rules on how to change tariffs and communicate changes. We managed to decrease the number of customer complaints by 90%
I identified and quantified 7 most significant reasons for customer requests to the contact center. We simplified our services so that customers do not need to ask for help. We reduced the volume of calls by 20%

2019 June – August
Prozorro – a public electronic procurement system in Ukraine
We aimed to increase the level of competition in public procurement. We saw an opportunity to improve the description of the tendered lots. The final solution was a process for less experienced procurement specialists to get help from the knowledge base and support from more experienced colleagues in other agencies.

2020 June - September
MDM – an international marketing and research agency for pharma
We re-designed a patient support program (PSP) for patients who have to take prescribed drugs for a prolonged period. The final solution is a chatbot that coordinates the efforts of a doctor, a patient, and a caregiver. It reminds a patient when to take pills, where to buy them, and when to visit a doctor. The service decreases the probability of emergency cases for the patients.

2021 June – December
MAIB – the biggest bank in Moldova.
We re-designed the mortgage service. We helped the bank to focus on the promising segment of young families. We changed the focus of the service from providing financial services to helping buy the first apartment. Such an approach allowed the bank to increase the potential audience of the service by 300%.

2021 July – September
Autodoc.de – one of the biggest online sellers of the car part in Europe
We researched the operations of the car service stations in Paris, France. We segmented the stations' owners and helped the Autodoc team formulate the value proposition for each segment.

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:

➡Learning by doing. Service design principles sound like common sense until you try to practice them.
In my public and corporate training, I dedicate 70% of the time to practicing the tools and methods. I give students assignments with a minimal amount of theory. After they practice new tools, we discuss how the tool works and what are the benefits and limitations.

➡Real-life challenges over superficial ones. I pick existing business challenges that are relevant to the audience. Of course, I narrow the challenge to be small enough for educational purposes. I invite problem owners to brief students and assess the final deliverables. Such an approach helps students understand service design's application to the business.

➡Mindset over tools. Service design has hundreds of methods. They are easy to use after you have embraced the core: human-centric approach, service-dominant logic, thinking in steps (journeys), and visible/under the bonnet parts of the service. In my training, I focus on a few essential tools but aim to change students' way of thinking.

➡Theory after the experience. I explain the whole design process to my students after we finish it. Such an approach is sometimes uncomfortable for participants during the training but helps build understanding by the end of the education.

➡Give plenty of room for questions. I dedicate up to 15% of the training to regular Q&A sessions. Each student also gets a 30-minute coaching session with me after the education. I encourage them to use it when they prepare for their first project.

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

2021 March and November
Two open online service courses for the participants from Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus.
8 online workshops plus coaching. 40 + 60 participants.
https://ideasfirst.info/events/service-design-practicum-2/ (in Ukrainian)

2021 July
Service design bootcamp for Beeline Kyrgyzstan
5 days
20 participants from the product, marketing, and CX teams

2021 August
Pilot service design project with the cross-functional team from DSK Bank, Bulgaria
Blended format. 10 online/offline workshops over 2 months.
10 participants from the product, sales, marketing, operations, risks, customer experience, and digital functions

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

Ukrainian, Russian, English

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

Ukraine and abroad

I cover the following topics during my training offerings:

- 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
- Prototyping of services
- Implementation of service design concepts
- Measuring impact of service design, relating it to Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
- Building in-house service design capabilities
- Service design for cultural change
- Organisational development

My training participants typically have the following level of experience:

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

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

I have experience with many industries, so I rely primarily on my own cases

I use the IDEO AMTRAK case to illustrate the importance of the customer journey and the shift from product to service logic

I share Musgrave's case to illustrate the use of service design in Retail
https://www.service-design-network.org/headlines/hellon-baby-reducing-stress-and-increasing-parent-spend-through-design

I illustrate that users typically have far less knowledge than the product owner with the Southwest Airlines case
https://www.service-design-network.org/headlines/continiuum-digital-wayfinding-design

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

➡ Express ethnography – to show participants that customers and their needs may be quite different

➡ Stakeholder map – to help the students to see the service in the broader context

➡ Customer journey map:
- To prepare for the customer interviews and observations
- To visualize the experience of the specific customers
- To design future experience

➡ Customer observation, Autoethnography, and In-depth interviews as three main research tools

➡ I developed several templates for structuring service gaps and synthesizing deep customer insights

➡ Role-playing services and concierge service for service prototyping and testing

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

➡ Frame the business challenge
➡ Prepare and conduct customer research
➡ Map as-is experience of customers
➡ Identify service gaps
➡ Synthesize customer insights
➡ Design and prototype future experience

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:

➡ I evaluate and provide instant feedback on the quality of individual assignments

➡ I run reflections to the end of each workshop, proactively seeking the gaps in understanding

➡ The students work on real-life projects, so their final presentation is an excellent way to demonstrate their learnings. The final presentation's structure forces students to reflect on the process of design as well as its outcomes

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➡ I use the final quiz to evaluate the knowledge of the less active participants

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

The students complained they did not have enough time to practice some advanced tools (content analysis, blueprint, etc). I decided to remove them from the introductory course and design a dedicated training for them.

My online course takes 8 workshops over 3 weeks. In the middle of the course, students felt lost. They were not sure how individual tools and assignments fit together. Now I remind them about the whole design process and our current position at the beginning of each workshop. At the end of the training, I remind the students about every step they have taken and how each step of the design process enables them to find an innovative solution to the old problem.

Because I provided limited instructions before each assignment, students were not sure if what they do is good enough. Now I offer them examples of deliverables prepared by their predecessors so they can see if they are on the right track.

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 National Conference
- SDN Chapter Activity

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

Posting service design cases and articles on the Facebook page of my agency: https://www.facebook.com/CustomerEXperienceDesign/ (in Ukrainian)

Running local annual service design conferences since 2018:
https://fb.me/e/15BPUuYpq (in Ukrainian)

Running an international online service design marathon in 2020 and 2021:
https://fb.me/e/2kDnx9XJ8

Running the first Global Service Jam in Dnipro:
https://fb.me/e/wEALNlqJ (in Ukrainian)

I have participated as a speaker in the following events:

The recent talks:

5th May 2022. Taking a stand for Ukraine. Online fundraising event
"Stories about the experience of a service designer in Ukraine"
https://events.humanitix.com/takingastandforukraine

4th May 2022. Online event.
"How to digitise customers who are happy without modern tech?"
https://youtu.be/OK4WkS-hkUk

3rd December 2021. Service design in Ukraine conference
"How to prepare for the future of the service design?"
https://fb.me/e/15BPUuYpq

19th November 2021. DOM.RIA. Real-estate conference

"How to stop selling and make it, so people buy from you?"

https://youtu.be/N-J9CGFpBnc (in Russian)

22nd October 2021. Wow-service, online conference

"Financial service dilemmas: banks or banking, human or digital, user-friendly or compliant"

https://youtu.be/x5eOrzn2aG8 (in Russian)

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

I post short articles on my Facebook page

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