

Self-assessment by Marika Alhonen

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I currently work as a/at:

Senior Lecturer (Service Design, Sales and Marketing) and LAB8 Service Design Lead with Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences

This work includes teaching and developing new approaches within the areas of Service Design, Sales and Marketing. I make use of both coaching and service design as I coach teams of students in their project work and support their learning and professional growth.

I actively lead and take part in Haaga-Helia's development projects in the areas of service business and education. As a trained business coach, I do trainings on how to use coaching tools to support learning. As the LAB8 Service Design Lead, I co-ordinate the service design activities and take part in commercial activities.

www.haaga-helia.fi

www.lab8.fi

My LinkedIn profile:

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/marikaalhonen/>

My social media channels:

<https://twitter.com/MarikaAlhonen>

My educational background:

M.Sc. (Economics and Business Administration) from The Swedish School of Economics in Helsinki, Finland.

Certified Business Coach from the Neuroleadership Institute.

Vocational Teacher training, Haaga-Helia School of Vocational Teacher training unit, Helsinki Finland

- Service development roles in companies for 15 years
- Service design trainer since 2013
- Service design projects since 2012

My educational background is based on a degree in business studies, topped with insights about human behaviour and pedagogics and my whole professional career has been related to services. At the Swedish school of Economics I studied services marketing and management with professor Christian Grönroos and before joining Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences I worked with service development and training in different roles. Services is one of the strategic competence areas in Haaga-Helia and there are many opportunities of doing research, joining projects and providing trainings in the area.



I started learning service design in 2012 through a HH led initiative, where local businesses were offered service design workshops and projects. It was a true learning in action-process and together with Ms Sirpa Lassila we were able to implement and try out what we had learned immediately. Since then I have actively taken part in the local service design community's activities and trainings, applied service design in my own work and done service design projects and trainings for local businesses and for Haaga-Helia. In Haaga-Helia we have created a service experience lab, LAB8, to co-ordinate all activities related to service experiences. With LAB8 I am taking part in commercial and RDI activities and co-ordinating a large network of service design enthusiasts. Together with Mr Teemu Moilanen, Head of RDI and LAB8, we are working on an initiative to make service design the predominant development approach in Haaga-Helia.

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

Service dominant logic (Vargo & Lusch, 2004)
 Customer dominant logic (Heinonen & Strandvik, 2010)
 Design thinking and innovation (Liedka, 2014)
 Double diamond service design process, UK Design council
 Experience designer competences: empathy, curiosity, sense making, volition, wowness
 Convergent-divergent thinking of a creative process
 Co-creation
 Experiential learning cycle (Kolb, 1984)

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

1. LAB8 Toolkit for service design (<https://www.lab8.fi/tool-factory/>)
 Haaga-Helia's own collection of service design tools for all the phases of service design, easy to download and apply to project work and workshops.
2. Stanford dschool design resources (<https://dschool.stanford.edu/resources/get-started-with-design>)
 A very hands-on collection of tools and methods put together by the service design professionals at Stanford dschool, that can be used in workshop facilitation and also given to project teams to support their own work.
3. Koivisto, Säynäjäkangas, Forsberg. 2019. Palvelumuotoilun businesskirja
 The most recent Finnish service design book, co-written by well-known Mikko Koivisto, full of practical examples and cases.
4. Kelley. D & Kelley.T 2013. Creative Confidence
 A classical book on the creative mindset needed in service design, written by the Ideo founders. Includes practical tips that can be used in workshops and projects.
5. Stickdorn. M & al. 2018. This is Service Design Doing
 This book, together with the previous book This is Service Design Thinking, provides a thorough library on the tools and methods needed in all the phases of the service design process.

I have X years of working experience in service design:

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I have particular experience in the following service sectors:

Retail, hospitality, education

These are the service design projects I have successfully delivered:

I have been involved in over 50 service design projects for client companies, either as a team leader, team member or team coach. Below are some examples:



SOK Hotel and restaurant chain management & Sokos Hotel Original Vaakuna. 01-06/2020 Transforming hospitality operator through service design. Facilitating workshops and coaching project teams. <https://www.service-design-network.org/case-studies/transforming-hospitality-operator-through-service-design>

Haaga-Helia Educational Renewal: 08/2019-05/2020: Facilitation of co-creation workshops for Haaga-Helia staff and other stakeholders.

Fonecta Ltd: 01-08/2018. Provider of BtoB digital services. Facilitating a process where the product owners learned service design skills and applied it on their own projects. The aim was to create a new development culture where testing of new ideas is encouraged. Workshop facilitation and coaching project teams.

Helsinki Missio: 08-12/2018. Non-governmental organisation for social services. Developing new services. Coaching the work of 5 student teams. As a result two prototypes were taken to further testing.

Kannonnokka: 01-05/2017. Event venue. Developing new services for business customers. Coaching the work of 5 student teams. As a result the communication channels were developed.

Haaga-Helia Porvoo Campus Curriculum renewal: 01-12/2016. Gathering and synthesizing customer understanding (interviews, probes, co-creation workshops, customer personas) to support the creation of a new curriculum for all programmes on Porvoo campus.

Future workspaces with YIT and Valtimo-house: 01-08/2015. Construction company and housing development. Gathering customer understanding (interviews of several targets groups, diaries, observation) to facilitate the ideation and testing of future workspaces and related services.

Ensto Ltd recruitment process: 09-12/2013. Electrical manufacturer. Gathering customer understanding (interviews, online ethnography) amongst future employees (technical students) to facilitate the renewal of the recruitment process.

Sokos Porvoo: 01-05/2013. Department store. "Learning how to gather and make use of real custom insights". Gathering customer understanding (interviews, observations, service safaris), facilitating co-creation workshops with the personnel and customers. Testing of service prototypes based on the needs of two customer personas in real business environment.

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:

Service design is a holistic development approach and a mindset, which can transform the way we work. Service design provides us with a fantastic collection of tools and a process that supports any project. My role as a service design trainer is to be a facilitator of learning and change. I make use of both coaching and facilitation skills and tools to help my students get a personal learning experience of service design. I think that any learning has to actually feel like something to make an impact on the person's thinking and behaviour.

To really learn service design, you have to try it out yourself, ideally on a real-life project together with others. This is why I always have plenty of practical application and involve business projects in my service design sessions and programs. The diversity of the participants is another core element in learning service design, let it be university students from different programmes or corporate people from different roles. As a facilitator I try to make sure that the conditions for good co-creation are in place.

What makes service design different from a more traditional approach is the focus on empathising with the users and the quick and iterative testing of ideas. Both are easy to read about but harder to truly integrate. The biggest ahaa-moments often arise when, based on a personal experience, the participants see the benefits and value of empathy and iteration.

Corporate service design trainings aim at transforming the development approach in the organisation. The adoption of service design is



initiated by individuals who act as change agents. University students bring a new approach to their future workplace and the persons who attend corporate trainings bring the new approach to their teams and projects. Our roles as service design trainers is to help these change agents to succeed.

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

1. Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences & LAB8: Service Design training (staff training), 2 months, 3 workshop days, + coaching of project teams, 16 persons
2. Haaga-Helia: Experience Designer specialisation (Bachelor studies), 4 months, 30 ects, 20 students from 7 different study programmes
3. Helsinki chamber of commerce: the Basics of Service Design, (commercial training), 1-day workshop, 15 persons from different organisations (<https://www.koulutus.fi/koulutukset/kauppakamarin-koulutus/palvelumuotoilun-perusteet-haltuun-1405529>)
4. Haaga-Helia, Laurea and Metropolia universities of applied sciences, the Basics of Service Design, (staff training), 1-day workshop, 25 persons
5. Sokos Hotel Original Vaakuna service design transformation programme, (commercial training), 4+1 workshop days, coaching of project teams, 22 persons
6. Copenhagen Business Academy, Estonia Business School, Haaga-Helia: Nordic Ideation Camp, Tallinn, (Bachelor studies), 5+5 days, 5 ects, 60 students from 3 different universities in Finland, Estonia and Denmark
7. Haaga-Helia, Innovativt entreprenörskap (Innovative entrepreneurship), (Bachelor studies) 5 ects, 4 months, 25 students studying visual marketing
8. Fonecta Ltd, Service design recap to support the new team, (commercial training), 1 day, 10 persons
9. Haaga-Helia, Design Sprint, (Bachelor studies), 5 ects, 5-days + coaching of project teams, 2nd year students from 5 different programmes at Porvoo Campus, 100 persons
10. Haaga-Helia, Designing Services advanced course, Bachelor studies, 5 ects, 4 months, students from different programmes, 15 persons
11. Haaga-Helia, various 2 hour workshops "Service design Method shower" for Bachelor students in Business, Tourism and Aviation programmes on Porvoo Campus, 150 persons
12. Haaga-Helia, Learning coach, staff training, 3 workshop days, 15 persons
13. Myski-project, Oulu. Entre-coach, 3 workshops virtually, 20 persons from different organisation
14. Regular teaching work based on a service design approach and making use of service design tools.

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

Finnish, English, Swedish

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

Finland, Helsinki, Porvoo

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
- Creativity and ideation processes
- Visualisation techniques
- Prototyping of services
- Implementation of service design concepts
- Business model development
- Measuring impact of service design, relating it to Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
- 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:

1. Hive Helsinki: (<https://kuudes.com/work/hive/>) Service Design agency Kuudes in Helsinki has created a thorough and well visualised case about their work with pioneering coding school Hive Helsinki. The case serves well as an introduction to service design and illustrates clearly the work done in the different phases.
2. MoneyThink Mobile (<https://www.designkit.org/case-studies/3>) Ideo has analysed their work with the Moneythink project thoroughly and added it as one of the Design Kit case studies. It is interesting and relevant for students and visualises the tools and methods used in the different phases of the service design process.
3. People's Pharmacy (<https://www.service-design-network.org/case-studies/hellon-peoples-pharmacy>) This service design award finalist from 2017 is a very thoroughly documented case study, which illustrates the business need and value of service design very clearly. This case works well also with business clients.
4. Mandatum Life and Service Design 2.0 (<https://www.service-design-network.org/community-knowledge/the-evidence-of-design-20-an-impactful-service-identity-designed-with-ai>) A well documented case study that brings up interesting aspects of making use of artificial learning in service design to analyse dig data and how to measure the results through NPS.
5. SOK & Sokos Hotel Original Vaakuna (<https://www.service-design-network.org/case-studies/transforming-hospitality-operator-through-service-design>). This case study I have taken part in myself and have an insider's view on. It brings up what is needed to transform the development approach in an organisation and is especially useful when working with companies with similar transformation goals.

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

- Some visualisation of the core elements of service design
- A service design process, typically the Double Diamond process.
- Different methods for empathising: interviews, observation, probes, customer stories, nethnography
- Tools for making sense of data: Affinity diagram, empathy map, customer persona, customer journey, point-of-view statement
- Tools for ideation and selection: brainstorming, lotus blossom, extremes, opposites, selection criteria, voting
- Tools for prototyping: legos, paper and glue, storyboards, drama, digital tools
- Tools for concept development: Value proposition and business model canvas, service blueprint
- Some suitable case study relevant to the participants background

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

- Apply the service design process and/or some tools in their own work.
- Facilitate co-creation sessions.
- Gather customer understanding and visualise it.
- Ideate solutions and organise ideation sessions.
- Test and prototype new service ideas with users.
- Identify development challenges for service design projects and get help when needed.
- Act as change agents in their own organisations.

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:

In longer processes where the participants work on actual service design projects, I use presentations, client materials and concept descriptions to evaluate the learning outcomes. In university courses, I also ask the participants to write a reflective report and give each other peer-



feedback. I also discuss with the project partners and ask them for feedback on the process.

In a shorter session I typically evaluate the learning through the outputs produced during the workshop. In the end of the session, I facilitate an evaluation discussion often supported by some digital tool. In commercial trainings we send out a feedback survey to the participants.

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

Request for more service design case studies. I nowadays make more use of recent cases to help the participants understand how the service design process was applied and how the different tools were used. It is also of interest to see the results of the service design process and the business impact it had.

More time to try out the different service design tools. I have learned to cut down on the number of tools I introduce and instead let the participants get a deeper experience of using a certain tool. This way they will feel more confident in applying that tool in their own job. For more advanced participants I also allow them to find and choose the tools they use.

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
- LAB8 service design network

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

LAB8 service design network- a network of service design researchers, practitioners and trainers with different backgrounds employed by Haaga-Helia that regularly meets up to discuss current topics, share own projects and experiences. LAB8 wants to provide these service design enthusiasts peer support and opportunities to grow their skills and competences. This is the network of change agents within Haaga-Helia and an important part of the work to make service design the predominant development paradigm. I co-ordinate the activities of this network, participate in most of the activities and mentor the younger service designers.

To stay up to date with the field I follow the discussion in groups on LinkedIn and Facebook and read blogs published by service design agencies and follow service designers on Twitter.

I have participated as a speaker in the following events:

XES (Helsinki Entrepreneurship Society) 24.9.2019. Coaching skills for entrepreneurs.
Haaga-Helia International staff week, Porvoo, 5.4.2017. Service Excellence in Customer Encounters.
Haaga-Helia International Staff week, Porvoo, 20.4.2016. Service design through inquiry learning.
Startup School, Helsinki, 25.2.2015. Service Design for Startups.
SDN Global Conference, Stockholm, 6.10.2014. Members' Day workshop. Getting started with Service Design.
Culture for everybody- project, Espoo, 6.4.2014. Service Design as a development method.
International student conference, Helsinki, 16.3.2014: What is service design?
Copenhagen Business Academy; Lyngby, 15.2.2014. What is service design?
Encounters conference, Porvoo, 19.3.2013. Challenge your conventions!
Porvoo City development unit, 20.5.2012. Service design in city development.

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

1. Podcast on Service Design in eSignals: <https://esignals.fi/2019/12/18/signaaleja-podcast-osa-8-palvelumuotoilu/#8de45c99>
2. Article on Service Design in eSignals: <https://esignals.fi/2019/03/21/palvelumuotoilun-pehmeat-taidot-ovat-tarkeit-myos-tulevaisuudessa/#8de45c99>
3. Chapter in book about research on the pedagogical approach in a service design specialisation (The Experience Designer): Alanko-Turunen, M. & Alhonen, M. To be published in 2020. "Ketä tässä oikein pitää miellyttää?" –paikan neuvottelua työelämäpedagogisessa kokemusmuotoilijan opintokokonaisuudessa. Teoksessa K. Mäki (toim.) Oppiva asiantuntija vai asiantuntijaksi opiskeleva?, Helsinki: Haaga-



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