

## Self-assessment by Ashley Moon

SUBMITTED ON 16 DEC 2024



### A summary about me:

I am a service designer with over a decade of multidisciplinary design experience. My career began at the Montana Department of Labor and Industry, where I discovered service design while tackling complex public service challenges. After working in design and marketing, I pursued a Master's in Integrative Design from the University of Michigan (2020), honing expertise in service design, research, and transdisciplinary collaboration. I've interned with Harmonic Design and collaborated with organizations like Immigrant Justice Lab, Fortune 500 companies, U.S. federal government, and local organizations. Now, I'm advancing service design in Montana, driving innovation and capacity-building in rural communities.

### I currently work as a/at:

Principal, Service Design Design Consultant  
A. Moon Design & Strategy LLC  
[www.ashleydmoon.com](http://www.ashleydmoon.com)

### My LinkedIn profile:

[www.linkedin.com/in/ashleydmoon/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/ashleydmoon/)

### My social media channels:

Substack: <https://ashleydmoon.substack.com/>  
IG: [https://www.instagram.com/\\_ashleydmoon\\_/](https://www.instagram.com/_ashleydmoon_/)

### My educational background:

Montana State University—Bachelor of Fine Arts, Graphic Design (2014)  
University of Michigan—Master of Integrative Design (2020)  
SDNA Masterclass Series (2024)

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

Transdisciplinary Collaboration: Bringing together diverse perspectives and disciplines to craft innovative, holistic approaches to complex challenges.

Human-Centered Design: Centering the needs, experiences, and contexts of people to create meaningful, impactful outcomes.

Equity and Access: Addressing systemic barriers and designing inclusive services that empower underserved communities to fully engage and



benefit.

Systems Thinking: Understanding interconnected systems to address root causes and assess how changes in one part impact the whole.

Humility: Meeting people where they are, embracing constraints and opportunities, and listening empathetically to design approaches that are approachable and empowering.

Visualization Methods: Using tools like journey maps and service blueprints to clarify systems, align stakeholders, and translate complexity into actionable insights.

Participatory Design: Combining facilitation and research-driven methods like empathy mapping, contextual inquiries, and co-creation workshops to engage stakeholders, uncover insights, and collaboratively design meaningful outcomes.

Finally, I always try to avoid using the word "solution"! Drawing from Rittel & Webber's theory of "wicked problems", if we actually had solutions in the world, there would be no problems.

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

Beyond some of the go-to service design books, I like to incorporate broader sources and often revisit these the most:

"Dilemmas in a General Theory of Planning" [10 Characteristics of Wicked Problems] (Rittel & Webber, 1973)

Introduces the concept of "wicked problems," shaping my approach to tackling complex challenges through iterative, adaptive methods.

"Design, When Everybody Designs" (Manzini, 2015)

Explores participatory design, emphasizing co-creation and systemic change, which aligns with my collaborative approach.

"Orchestrating Experiences" (Risdon & Quattlebaum, 2018)

Highlights mapping service ecosystems to improve user and organizational outcomes, integral to my systems-thinking practice.

"Universal Methods of Design" (Harrison & Martin, 2012)

A go-to resource with 100+ design methods, enriching my research, prototyping, and facilitation toolkit.

"Good Services" (Downe, 2020)

Provides principles for creating accessible, user-centered services, aligned with my equity-driven work.

"Convivial Toolbox" (Sanders & Stappers, 2013)

Offers participatory methods for uncovering insights, supporting my collaborative and user-focused design process.

"Beyond Sticky Notes" (McKercher, 2020)

Advocates for equity-focused co-design, reinforcing my commitment to inclusive, community-driven design.

"Emergent Strategy" (Brown, 2017)

Inspires adaptive, decentralized approaches to systems change and relationship-building.

"The Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-Making" (Sam Kaner, 2007)

Enhances facilitation skills for creating inclusive, collaborative spaces in design projects.

**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:**

Public Services (e.g., Montana Department of Labor and Industry, Montana Legislature)

Healthcare (e.g., Fortune 500 healthcare and insurance companies)

Education (e.g., MDesThesis, community engagement and design research projects)

Immigration (e.g., Immigrant Justice Lab)

Public Health (e.g., Confluence Public Health Alliance)

Small Business and Entrepreneurship (e.g., supporting local organizations and rural communities in Montana)

**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:**

Empowering patients in adopting home healthcare (June 2022 – January 2023)

I collaborated with a Fortune 500 healthcare company to improve the home healthcare experience. The project produced service blueprints, prioritized concepts, and an implementation plan, addressing patient education, training, and community building, contributing to the organization's goal of increasing home healthcare adoption and improving patient outcomes.

(<https://www.ashleydmoon.com/case-studies/empowering-patients-in-adopting-home-healthcare>)

Supporting individuals who are at risk of deportation (2020–2024)

I partnered with MIRC and US DOJ-EOIR to create 16+ dual-language guides, posters, and an updated website. By addressing multiple touchpoints—Self-Help Centers, law libraries, and digital platforms—co-design, prototyping, and testing ensured accessible, user-friendly resources that empower individuals to navigate immigration processes confidently and effectively.

(<https://www.ashleydmoon.com/case-studies/supporting-individuals-who-are-at-risk-of-deportation>)

Converging visions to strengthen public health impact (April–October 2022)

I worked with Confluence Public Health Alliance to design and facilitate a strategic planning retreat for three Montana public health organizations. Using systems thinking and co-design, we created an actionable roadmap addressing sustainability, workforce development, and membership growth. Stakeholder engagement through ecosystem mapping and workshops fostered collaboration and aligned organizational priorities.

(<https://www.ashleydmoon.com/case-studies/converging-visions-to-strengthen-ph-impact>)

Revitalizing Rodney Street (Nov 2020 – June 2023)

Partnering with The Myrna Loy and the Rodney Street neighborhood, I co-created a revitalization plan through participatory workshops, prototyping, and community-driven installations. By engaging multiple touchpoints—creative gathering spaces, public art, and infrastructure upgrades—we strengthened connections, fostered belonging, and celebrated the neighborhood's identity while promoting inclusive, sustainable growth.

(<https://www.ashleydmoon.com/case-studies/revitalizing-rodney-street>)

MDes Thesis: Integrating design and self-authorship in civic learning (March 2019 – Aug 2020)

Through a service design approach, I developed a zine-making workshop toolkit for Equitable Futures, enhancing civic learning across multiple touchpoints. Piloted in classrooms and youth forums, the toolkit empowers students to explore social injustices, connecting historical learning to their personal experiences through creative expression.

(<https://www.ashleydmoon.com/case-studies/integrating-design>)

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



### My philosophy as a trainer is:

I believe some of the most impactful learning experiences and trainings are hands-on, collaborative, and directly tied to the challenges people face every day. My goal is to create an engaging, approachable space where participants feel empowered to explore service design in ways that are both practical and meaningful.

In my sessions, I blend theory with practice to help participants connect the dots between concepts and real-world applications. Whether through journey maps, service blueprints, prototyping, or other relevant applications that speak to their world, I focus on creating opportunities to visualize, experiment, and problem-solve together. My priority is ensuring participants leave not just with knowledge, but with the confidence and ability to apply these tools in their work.

I strive to create an inclusive and supportive environment by meeting people where they are and designing activities that are approachable and accessible for everyone. I listen, adapt, and scaffold the learning process—whether it's a single session or a multi-session training—to support participants wherever they are on their journey.

Above all, I want participants to leave inspired, confident, and ready to create meaningful change. Training is about empowering others to see the systems behind the systems, uncover opportunities, and bring service design into their world in ways that feel natural and impactful. By drawing from multidisciplinary sources and making connections across fields, I aim to deepen understanding and spark new possibilities.

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

2024 has been a year of growth and adaptation, as I balanced personal well-being with building my service design consulting business in Montana—a region where service design is still a low-maturity field. This shift allowed me to engage with audiences new to service design, strengthening my ability to translate complex concepts into approachable, actionable insights.

#### Recent Educational Experiences

"Expanding Design: From Branding to Service Systems" (September 2024)

Delivered a 45-minute introduction to service design for ~20 junior-level graphic design students at Montana State University, highlighting omni-channel touchpoints and the role of brand strategy in shaping cohesive service experiences.

Mentorship Sessions for Aspiring Service Designers (Ongoing)

Provided tailored mentorship to ~5 early-career service designers, focusing on career development, skill translation, portfolio building, and practical strategies for applying service design across markets with varying levels of maturity.

#### Future Training Plans

Strategic Ecosystem Mapping for Montana Democratic Senators: A January 2025 workshop to align legislative senators and staff on ecosystem mapping and team collaboration via Miro.

Montana Nonprofit Association Trainings: Two workshops focused on streamlining services within constraints, with creative, budget-friendly approaches.

Chamber of Commerce Training: A session to introduce service design to small businesses, enhancing customer experiences and efficiency.

State Conference Workshops: Two workshops exploring service design's role in economic development and public health.

Sector-Spanning Webinars: 3-4 webinars for cross-sector professionals on improving workflows and creating inclusive, human-centered experiences.

Over the years, I've consistently infused education into my work, making service design accessible and valuable for diverse audiences. I'm excited to continue empowering others to adopt these practices in ways that create meaningful impact.



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

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
- 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
- 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
- Change management

My training participants typically have the following level of experience:

- Novice (new to service design)
- Fundamental (basic knowledge)

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

Design Council (UK): Pioneers tools like the “Double Diamond” to advance service design across industries, improving outcomes and efficiencies.

Beeck Center for Social Impact + Innovation: Applies service design to policy and systems, bridging innovation and equitable social impact.

Philadelphia Service Design Studio: Improves public services through human-centered design, fostering more equitable and user-friendly government operations.

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

Overall Methods and Tools:

Virtual Whiteboarding (Miro, Mural): Facilitates collaboration and alignment in remote or hybrid settings through activities like workflow mapping, ideation, and concept visualization.

Physical Materials: Includes markers, sticky notes, and large-format paper for hands-on activities like journey mapping and brainstorming, fostering creativity and engagement.

Worksheets: Provides structured exercises to simplify concepts like ecosystem mapping and touchpoint analysis, supporting clarity and confidence.

Presentations: Introduces key concepts, tools, and examples, building a foundation for interactive, hands-on activities.

Specific Service Design Methods and Tools:



**Ecosystem Mapping:** Helps participants visualize relationships between stakeholders, systems, and touchpoints to identify gaps and collaborative solutions.

**Assumption Jams:** Challenges assumptions about users and systems, fostering critical thinking and inclusivity.

**Journey Mapping:** Guides participants in mapping user experiences to empathize, identify pain points, and find improvement opportunities.

**Storyboarding:** Articulates service interactions through visual narratives, turning abstract ideas into actionable, user-centered solutions.

**Prototyping:** Enables quick testing and iteration, turning concepts into tangible solutions while fostering a hands-on learning approach.

**Co-Creation Workshops:** Encourages collaborative idea generation, fostering shared ownership of outcomes.

**Touchpoint Analysis:** Breaks down service interactions to identify areas for improvement and create cohesive user experiences.

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

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

1. Recognize the basics of service design and its role in improving user experiences and organizational outcomes.
2. Identify key touchpoints in a service or process and understand how they impact overall satisfaction and efficiency.
3. Map out simple service journeys to empathize with users and uncover pain points or areas for improvement.
4. Visualize workflows to see connections between different parts of a system and identify opportunities for streamlining.
5. Use basic prototyping techniques to test ideas and gather feedback quickly, challenging assumptions in a low-risk, iterative way.
6. Conduct thoughtful research by applying empathy and understanding to uncover user needs, perspectives, and barriers.
7. Collaborate effectively with diverse stakeholders to co-create solutions that are inclusive and actionable.
8. Adopt a mindset for navigating change by embracing messy, complex challenges as opportunities for reimagining possibilities.
9. Understand how small, strategic changes within a system can lead to significant improvements.
10. Build confidence in leading change by fostering creativity, adaptability, and alignment within teams or organizations.

Since I primarily work with individuals and teams with little to no prior understanding of service design, my training is designed to break down complex ideas into approachable, actionable steps. My learning engagements emphasize not only practical tools but also the mindset needed to test assumptions, conduct meaningful research, and reimagine what's possible. Participants leave ready to approach their work with curiosity, resilience, and a vision for meaningful transformation.

## **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 apply evaluation tools designed to align with the hands-on, approachable nature of my training sessions, ensuring participants with little to no prior understanding of service design gain confidence and the expected competencies and skills. These include:

**Practical Exercises:** Participants engage in visual thinking activities, which allow me to assess their understanding and ability to apply foundational concepts in real-time.

**Group Reflection and Discussions:** I facilitate guided discussions where participants share insights, articulate what they've learned, and connect the session content to their own work, helping to solidify understanding in an inclusive, collaborative environment.

**Check-Ins:** Regular check-ins throughout the session ensure participants can ask questions, clarify concepts, and receive additional guidance as they build their confidence with new tools and ideas.

**Feedback Forms:** Structured feedback forms help evaluate participants' comfort level with applying the tools and skills, while also providing insights into how they perceive the value and relevance of service design to their work.

**Follow-Up Conversations:** For teams or individuals needing additional support, I offer 1:1 follow-up conversations to address specific challenges, reinforce learning, and guide next steps in applying service design concepts.

This approach emphasizes flexibility, real-world application, and support to be able to integrate them into their unique contexts.

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



I systematically evaluate and improve my offerings based on participant feedback, ensuring that my training sessions are continuously refined to meet the needs of individuals and teams with little to no prior understanding of service design. Here are a few examples of how feedback has informed improvements:

1. Simplifying Concepts: Participants once shared that some tools, like journey mapping, felt overwhelming for beginners. In response, I broke these tools into smaller, step-by-step activities and provided more real-world examples, making the concepts easier to grasp.
2. Incorporating More Practice: Feedback indicated a desire for additional hands-on time. I restructured my sessions to include longer practice periods for visual exercises and ideation, allowing participants to build confidence through application.
3. Adapting Pace: Some participants felt the sessions moved too quickly. I implemented regular check-ins and adjusted the pacing of activities based on the group's comfort level, ensuring everyone could follow along and feel supported.
4. Adding Follow-Up Support: After hearing that participants wanted more guidance after the sessions, I introduced optional 1:1 follow-up conversations to address specific challenges and provide tailored advice for applying design approaches in their contexts.
5. Tailoring Examples: Participants from diverse sectors noted that examples from their industries helped them connect better with the material. I now research and integrate sector-specific scenarios to make the training more relatable and engaging.

By systematically collecting and acting on feedback, I've been able to create a more inclusive and accessible learning experience, ensuring participants leave with the confidence and tools needed to succeed.

**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

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

I actively support the service design community by fostering relationships with practitioners worldwide. Through my Substack newsletter and growing social media presence, I share insights to make service design more accessible and relevant. I also support events and initiatives by peers like Linn Vizard of Made Manifest, Harmonic Design, Rosenfeld Media, and U.S. government design teams. Relationships are integral to my growth as a designer and my commitment to advancing the field. In the future, I hope to contribute to SDN publications, maintain connections with my Masterclass cohort, and collaborate on regional initiatives—perhaps even launching a Montana or U.S. Northwest SDN chapter.

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

While I haven't yet published extensively, I am invested in sharing insights from my service design practice and contributing to the broader community. My Master's thesis, Integrating Design and Self-Authorship in Civic Learning, developed a participatory zine-making workshop toolkit to enhance civic education, which you can find here: [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1AzaxVL2-l\\_N0s8xJ\\_v5gq95MLOLAg-Bm/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1AzaxVL2-l_N0s8xJ_v5gq95MLOLAg-Bm/view).

Additionally, I've shared reflections on service design through my Substack newsletter, where I explore themes like systems thinking, equity, and community engagement. I'm also working on building a stronger social media presence to make service design more accessible and to educate broader audiences about its value.

In the future, I would like to explore contributing to platforms like the Touchpoint Journal and the SDN community, integrating writing and education into my practice to share knowledge, foster collaboration, and help advance the service design field.

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