DEVELOPMENT OF POLISH-GERMAN CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION
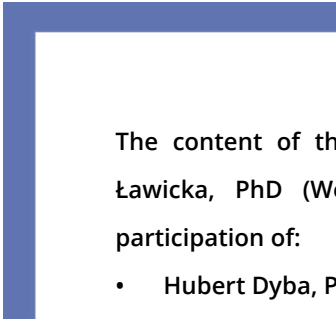
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WISSENSCHAFTS + TECHNOLOGIEPARK NORD° OST
WITENO

Interreg
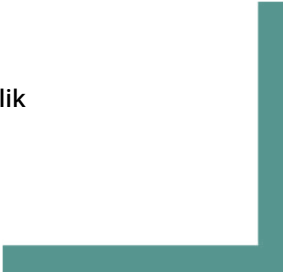Mecklenburg-Vorpommern/Brandenburg/Polska   EUROPEAN UNION

The project "Development of Polish-German cross-border cooperation" was carried out by the West Pomeranian ICT Cluster Association in partnership with WITENO GmbH (Science & Technology Park in Greifswald).

The content of the e-book was developed by Magdalena Ławicka, PhD (West Pomeranian ICT Cluster) with the participation of:

- Hubert Dyba, PhD,
- Ewelina Gnatkowska (AHK Poland),
- Rafał Malujda (Malujda Law & Patent Office),
- Aleksandra Piasecka,
- Alexander Schwock (WITENO GmbH).

The e-book and graphic design: Szymon Pawlik

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Dear Sir / Dear Madam,

We invite you to read this e-book, which is the result of joint Polish-German project work. The project **"Development of Polish-German cross-border cooperation"** was carried out by the West Pomeranian ICT Cluster Association (Stowarzyszenie Klaster ICT Pomorze Zachodnie) in partnership with WITENO GmbH (Science & Technology Park in Greifswald). As the West Pomeranian ICT Cluster, we work to develop member companies and the IT industry in the West Pomeranian region. Our association includes over 80 ICT companies from the West Pomerania Province. We support our member companies in business development, as well as in foreign expansion.

Now, we want to **increase our cooperation with organizations and companies on the German side**. Implementation of the project allowed us to develop a cross-border cooperation based on the formula of online meetings, which is convenient and safe in pandemic times. We organized a series of meetings both with employers' organizations and enterprises operating in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern / Brandenburg / Poland in this area and developing modern technologies. **A total of over 100 people participated in these online meetings**. The formula and subject matter of the meetings allowed getting to know the organization and the cooperation environment. It was an opportunity to exchange knowledge in the field of:

Magdalena Ławicka

- initiating contacts with Polish and German partners,
- possible establishing and running a business on both sides of the border,
- effective communication with a partner on the other side of the border, and
- designing cross-border services.

In the e-book, you will find **essential conclusions from the meetings and content-related workshops** and contact details with institutions that help establish relations and develop Polish-German cooperation.

A solid dose of knowledge awaits you!

At the same time, we invite you to contact the IT Cluster. We support companies in establishing business contacts, promoting their brands, and jointly building the IT industry in our region.

We wish you a pleasant reading!

Magdalena Ławicka, PhD
Chief Operating Officer
West Pomeranian ICT Cluster
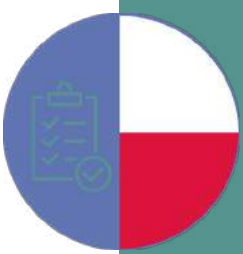
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The West Pomeranian ICT Cluster is the organization to **facilitate business relations** between ICT companies, educational entities and the local government in the West Pomeranian region. **The ICT Cluster helps companies acquire knowledge and expand business contacts**. Our members are active in various sectors of the ICT industry, offering different competencies: ICT consulting, Custom software development, Multimedia, VR and AR technology, Cybersecurity. The full list of Cluster Member Expertise is at the end of the e-book.

Some of our companies are active on the German market, so the added value of the project was to transfer the good practice coming from our medium-sized and big companies, which have already had some German experience. We also support them in creating opportunities to exchange business contacts and cooperate with others. This is why we initiate the project: "Development of Polish-German cross-border cooperation". Implementation of the project allowed us to develop a cross-border cooperation based on the formula of online meetings, which is convenient and safe in pandemic times.

The ICT Cluster invites you to cooperate!
If you want to establish cooperation with an IT company in Poland or start collaborating with a partner on the German market – **please contact us**.

WITENO

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17489 Greifswald
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WITENO is a Science & Technology Park as the interface between science and business. We are offering our customers a flexible portfolio comprising of infrastructure, services, and consulting. Whether they are starting up, if they are young entrepreneurs or manage an established SME, we can tailor our offers to precisely meet their individual needs. At its core, you will find high-quality infrastructure with modern offices, labs and production facilities complemented by all-around carefree service packages. **We provide the start-ups and entrepreneurs with assistance for business development and innovation processes**. In addition, we assist you with our expertise in acquiring public funding as a complementary part of business financing. You can make use of our attractive meeting and seminar facilities to present products, services, and technologies to your clients. We happily assist you in organizing workshops or conventions.

Our premises cover a total area of 10.800 sq. m with 2 buildings that have been in existence for 20 years with a special focus on life sciences and various technologies. 2 additional centers are currently under construction: a digital innovation center (DIZ), including co-working space (5.200 sq. m) and a center for bioeconomy and plasma technologies (5.300 sq. m). Both of these centers will play a substantial role in supporting regional development in context of digitalization as well as circular bioeconomic orientation of the economy.

Alexander Schwock

WITENO is at the beginning of building up its digital service and infrastructure offerings. In this context, we are building one of 6 Digital Innovation Centers in MV to establish a crucial platform for establishing digital offerings, creating a corresponding community, developing digital formats and tools and a wide variety of innovative instruments and event formats. As with the other project partners, this takes place in rural areas with relative proximity to the metropolises of Berlin, Hamburg and Szczecin. Due to the closeness to the Polish border, one strategic focus is the long-term cross-border cooperation, especially with the Szczecin Metropolitan Region. Therefore, **we are cooperating with the IT Cluster (Szczecin) to build up a sustainable cooperation network**. To accomplish this, we started the project "Polish-German Cooperation for Digital Networking in Coronavirus Pandemic Time" together in 2021. This project is financially supported by the Interreg VA Mecklenburg-Vorpommern / Brandenburg / Poland program.
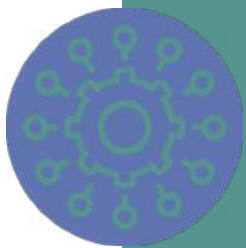
ORGANISATIONS SUPPORTING POLISH-GERMAN COOPERATION

AHK | ARMS | CIG | Dom Gospodarki | FEG | Innovation meBEST

The Polish-German Chamber of Industry and Commerce (AHK Poland)

ul. Grunwaldzka 19
60-782 Poznań
poznan@ahk.pl
www.ahk.pl

The Polish-German Chamber of Industry and Commerce (AHK Poland) has been representing the interests of Polish and German companies in both neighbouring countries for over 25 years.

As the official representative of the German economy, we represent over 5,500 companies with German capital in Poland. At the same time, we are a recognised partner for 2,000 Polish companies operating in Germany, which have created over 20,000 jobs there. AHK Poland is thus the largest Polish-German network of business entities.

Our work is based on three pillars:
- professional and comprehensive service for companies in the field of entering the market and their further expansion,
- developing and sharing a network of business contacts, organising over 100 events annually,
- representing the interests of member companies in contacts with politicians and the administration.

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71-441 Szczecin
sekretariat@arms-szczecin.eu
www.arms-szczecin.eu

Towards the creation of attractive, fully functional business environment, with continuing support towards its growth, the City of Szczecin established the Szczecin Metropolis Development Agency (ARMS), which focuses on the provision of an effective, local investor support system. ARMS is responsible for:

- support in the location of real estate which is appropriate for development according to the needs of investments and investors,
- piloting of document flow concerning investment procedures,
- support in the search for future staff and workforce,
- cooperation (substantively and operationally) with numerous governmental agencies and private businesses,
- stimulation of the local business environment development processes,
- organization of events; such as conferences, trade fairs, industry workshops; local, as well as international, which offer the opportunity to exchange knowledge, experience, as well as obtain new business contacts and initiate new projects.

pl. Hołdu Pruskiego 9
70-550 Szczecin
cig@wzp.pl
www.cig.wzp.pl

The Centre for Economic Initiatives of the West Pomeranian Province Marshal's Office is a regional partner of the Polish Investment and Trade Agency (PAIH). It provides professional, free-of-charge assistance to entrepreneurs at all stages of the investment process, as well as supports companies in planning their export activities. We provide:

- assistance to foreign investors,
- information on investment areas, conditions for starting a business, legal regulations, incentives etc,
- participation in economic missions, trade fairs, study visits, B2B meetings,
- databases of business partners,
- support for start-up initiatives,
- cooperation with universities,
- strengthening collaboration between science & business.

Dom Gospodarki – Haus der Wirtschaft (House of Economy)

ul. Marii Skłodowskiej-Curie 7
71-332 Szczecin
kontakt@dg.szczecin.pl
www.dg.szczecin.pl

The House of Commerce and Industry (Haus der Wirtschaft) in Szczecin is an office established by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Neubrandenburg. The Chamber, together with other project partners from Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, coordinates the work of the House of Commerce and Industry. The goal of our activity is to support Polish-German economic cooperation. The offer of the office includes:

- Assistance in searching for cooperation partners (running the Polish-German Cooperation Exchange) – publication of advertisements in Polish and German media on the border between the two countries.
- Information / advice on:
  - » business contacts and establishing companies,
  - » fair events,
  - » determinants of business activity,
  - » assistance in establishing contacts with authorities, institutions, specialists in given industries.
- Organisation of Polish-German thematic and industry events.

Förder- und Entwicklungsgesellschaftft Vorpommern-Greifswald mbH

Am Schlachthof 6
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vanhoefen@feg-vorpommern.de
www.feg-vorpommern.de

We are an association that works towards economic support and development of the Vorpommern District – Greifswald and border areas. We work on behalf of 7 German municipalities and the Vorpommern-Greifswald District. We have direct contacts with company owners and German entrepreneurs. Due to this fact, we are interested in the expansion and cross-border contacts with Polish entrepreneurs and offices, so that mutual cooperation in border areas, both on the German and Polish side, has the best opportunities for development.

ICU Investor Center Uckermark – Innovation Campus meBEST

Berliner Str. 52e
16303 Schwedt/Oder
info@ic-uckermark.de
www.ic-uckermark.de

The ICU Investor Center Uckermark GmbH is the Department for Business Development for the Uckermark District and is happy to assist you in finding the right location and the right partners for your investment in our region. Uckermark is a district in the north-east of the State of Brandenburg. It is on the border with Poland between Germany's Capital City of Berlin and the port city of Stettin (Szczecin) in Poland. Alongside industry, skilled crafts, agriculture and tourism, you will also find a multitude of service providers such as engineering offices, maintenance and construction companies for all the requirements of your planned investment, as well as business contacts you may require later.

LEGAL ASPECTS OF DOING BUSINESS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE BORDER

Author: Rafal Malujda, attorney–at–law and patent attorney from malujda.pl

Rafał Malujda

Legal advisor and patent attorney. Specialist in IT, new technologies, and cross-border activities in Germany runs the malujda.pl law office in Poland and Germany. A member of the working group within the Team for Innovative Marine Technologies and the legal framework for Industry 4.0. at the Ministry of Development, as well as a Member of the Board of the Klaster IT. Graduate from postgraduate studies in international commercial law and international company management at the University of Rostock and an English law course at the University of Cambridge.

Rafał Malujda specializes in intellectual property law, new technologies law, and personal data protection law. In his practice, special care is given to the support for cloud projects, including data processing of public medical or financial services, software licensing (including open source), and drafting contracts for projects implemented in the agile methodologies. Advisor for entrepreneurs from Poland who wish to run business in Germany, as well as investors from Germany who wish to run business in Poland.

In cross-border cooperation, which will take place online as well, it is also essential to bear in mind the relevant legal issues, in particular:

- Contractual rules of cooperation with the partner / managing employees. It is worthwhile to determine how we will communicate and give binding instructions in the project, store materials and results of works, and make acceptances. We also need to remember about the form of online activities performed so that they are legally effective. In case we exchange e-mails, we have everything documented, and **it shall be binding, but if we need a written signature form, it might not be enough, and we need, for instance, to have a qualified electronic signature**.

- Security – working in the cloud brings advantages but also challenges from the legal side. The tools we choose must guarantee confidentiality and compliance with regulations on personal data processing (GDPR) and appropriately protect us from the technical side. **IMPORTANT! We must analyze the terms and conditions (Terms & Conditions, Privacy Policy) in this respect**.

CROSS BORDER PRESENCE AND TAXES

Self-employed persons and professionals or legal persons operating in one Member State may carry out an economic activity stably and continuously in another Member State or offer and provide their services in the other Member States temporarily while remaining in their country of origin.

Freedom of establishment and freedom to provide services under Articles 26 (internal market), 49 to 55 (establishment) and 56 to 62 (services) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union are therefore the **"lifeblood" of the European Union**. This means that also a company operating in the border region shall pick out which way to choose. It might be the form of a branch or subsidiary – a decision to be taken should arise from cost analysis, especially in the tax area. This decision may be influenced by tax issues in terms of taxation of the entity itself and its employees. In the latter respect, it should also be taken into account where a given employee lives (works) for more than 183 days.

Practical Tips: (1) when localizing business in Germany, it is good to check company's name at the local Chamber of Industry and Commerce, **(2)** in case of executing the freedom of establishment or provision of services – verification if a VAT number is required shall be done both in Germany and Poland.

CONTRACT PERFORMANCE SECURITY (PAYMENT)

Non-payment or non-performance of a contract at the start of a business is one of the risks that a company must consider when working with foreign partners. It is hard to negotiate substantial collateral at the beginning of a business relationship, but it is worth considering, especially the following possibilities:

- payment in advance (retainer),
- reservation of copyright / intellectual property rights only upon receipt of payment (especially in case of IT implementation contracts),
- notarized statement on submission to enforcement,
- corporate guarantee or bank / insurance guarantee for large-scale contracts.

ABOUT US:

malujda.pl is a truly international and boutique law and patent office, with 6 permanent associates and 2 counsels and offices in Poland and Germany. We are legal counsels for companies, especially from Germany, Poland and Scandinavia. **Our Focus**: IT industry / new technologies, doing business in EU countries, intellectual property protection, cooperation between science and business. **Our Mission**: legal rules shall catalyze the business of our Clients.
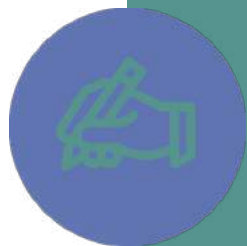
BUSINESS IN GERMANY – INTERCULTURAL DIFFERENCE

Author: Ewelina Gnatkowska, Head of the Regional Office in Poznań

Ewelina Gnatkowska

A Scandinavian studies specialist by education, a marketer by profession, a graduate of the Jagiellonian University, and a Riksföreningen Sverigekontakt scholarship holder. For 12 years, she was involved in marketing and sales on foreign markets, in companies such as Barlinek S.A., Foodcare Sp.z o.o. or Marmite S.A. She participated in projects related to introducing brands to export markets, increasing sales processes, customer service, and logistics efficiency. She was responsible for implementing communication strategies with both business clients and investors.

Currently, at the Polish-German Chamber of Industry and Commerce (AHK Polska), she works to develop Polish-German economic relations. She helps companies to make contacts, organises numerous conferences and networking meetings. She shares her knowledge during various presentations and panel discussions, which she also moderates. With the help of the Chamber's experts, she makes it easier for companies to start in the partner country, helps in solving legal and tax problems, and provides market analyses.

SCORING WITH PUNCTUALITY

Positive stereotype in Poland about Germans: They are punctual and deliver topics on time. Indeed, deadlines in Germany are very important and are rather not negotiable. Better to be ten to fifteen minutes early for an appointment than five minutes too late. Deliveries should be made "on time" at all costs, otherwise you will quickly lose the chance for further orders. And if it is really impossible to avoid being late, it is worth informing your business partner in advance.

DO NOT TAKE IT PERSONALLY

Contrary to Poland, in Germany private issues and small talk still play a minor role in business life. Often, you go straight to the heart of the matter, even though the relationship remains formal. The German partners usually argue very objectively and directly. Criticism should not be interpreted as an attack directed at a specific person. It is usually meant to indicate that an even better solution can be found together. The bottom line: make sure you are well prepared and know the facts.

SIEZEN AND DUZEN

The Germans pay attention to manners and formalities. In business life they usually refer to "Sie" (Mr / Ms) and combine it with a surname, such as Frau Hoffmann or Herr Mayer, and never with a name such as "Frau Anna" (Ms Anna). This is a mistake. In German, unlike in Polish, the combination of "Sie" with the first name does not work. So if a German calls us by our first name, it usually means that he is leaving the business area. So be careful in offering "Du".

A FIRM HANDSHAKE ALWAYS IN PLACE

Germans are generally more distant in their business relations than Poles. Kisses and hugs are unusual. No matter if male or female: A firm greeting handshake is never a mistake. You should look your interlocutor in the eye. Start the greeting with the most important person. Women should not be surprised that the Germans will not hold the door open for them or give them chairs. These gallant manners are somewhat obsolete, despite the fact that they are appreciated by many German business women.

CASH RULES

While Poland is considered one of the pioneers in the field of cashless payment transactions, Germany has a long way to go. Never assume that shops and restaurants will accept credit cards. In a small bakery, such a payment is practically unthinkable. Often, stores accept card payments from a certain minimum amount. Mobile payments are still the exception.

ONLINE WORKSHOP:
EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION – HOW TO TRANSFER INFORMATION ACROSS BORDERS

Author: Aleksandra Piasecka, Manager of many cross-border projects

Aleksandra Piasecka

A political scientist by education, specialising in European Union integration; for many years living in the borderland and researching all aspects of interculturalism in practice. Professionally for many years associated with the City Hall in Szczecin, acting as the Mayor's Representative for international affairs, currently involved in the Welcome Center Stettiner Haff project. For years initiating cross-border cooperation. Manager of cross-border projects of a social, linguistic and economic nature.

**TIPS ON HOW TO EFFECTIVELY INITIATE AND DEVELOP CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION**

Raising awareness of cultural differences is one of the challenges of contemporary entrepreneurship. It is impossible to build an international or cross-border business without understanding the language of a neighbour or cooperator. And I do not mean the language itself, but an understanding of each other. Recognising the basic cultural differences that determine the communication process is crucial for the efficient and effective development of your company's relationship. Understanding, respect and dialogue are the key words for building relationships. What the Germans call thriftiness at home may be called stinginess by Poles. What Poles call flexibility and creative improvisation for Germans will mean chaos. Assessing the same characteristics depends on your point of view and perspective. We are very different, but knowing a few points that we will always remember, we have a chance to build relationships successfully.

TIPS FOR POLISH CONTRACTORS:

- Prepare for the first meeting in terms of substance. The German partner will expect more details than you think!
- Remember the name of your German partner, mention it several times during the conversation, look into the eyes.
- If you improvise, make your partner think this is part of your strategy.
- Do not deviate from the established assumptions, do not change them at the last minute, think before setting them, it will be hard to make significant changes afterwards.
- Remember that if you assume that for you the determination that there is still time to complete the task is 2-3 months, then for your partner it probably means 4-9 months (2 or 3 times longer).

TIPS FOR GERMAN CONTRACTORS:

- Do not be surprised if someone asks you about your family, is not nosy, he / she wants to show interest in you.
- Give yourself a moment for a run-up, do not take out all your binders in the first 15 minutes of the meeting.
- Poles are not as direct as Germans, take 80% of the spoken content as binding.
- Do not expect your Polish partner to prepare the protocol as you would like it to be. Remember that verbal arrangements are recognised in Poland as well.
- Remember that if you assume that for you the determination that there is still time to complete the task is 4-9 months, then for your partner it probably means 2-3 months (2 or 3 times less).
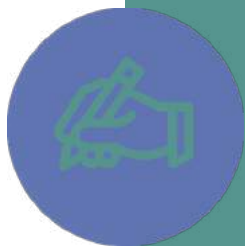
DESIGNING CROSS-BORDER SERVICES

Author: Hubert Dyba, Innovation trainer and consultant at startupdoctor.pl

Hubert Dyba, PhD

A trainer and innovation consultant. He gained experience as a specialist at the Regional Innovation Centre for Technology Transfer at West Pomeranian University of Technology (ZUT) in Szczecin, then as the Director of the Creative Industries Centre at the Szczecin Art Academy. He researches in the field of innovative business models. He is an expert of the European Commission in the field of Human Centred Design. As a scholarship holder of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, as part of the Top 500 Innovators programme, he acquired knowledge about innovation and design thinking at Stanford University in the USA. He is a member of the team awarded with the Enterprise Europe Network Best Practices Award for the development and implementation of a new service based on the Human Centred Design methodology.

Service design is a process where designers create solutions and experiences for customers and any service providers involved. Service Design helps create new or improve existing services to make them more valuable for clients and more beneficial for organizations. In the service design process, you use a specific approach along with dedicated tools and methods. Those are presented in this ebook.

SERVICE DESIGN PRINCIPLES:

- Human-centred. The process starts with an understanding of the people using a service, their needs, current pains, and aspirations. The process also ends with people who are the ultimate source for the assessment of the final solution,

- Co-created. Service designers work together with each other and various stakeholders and are inspired by what others are doing,

- Sequential. Each service is a set of actions that may be presented on a timeline. Good design will achieve the balance between those actions and find the rhythm that will be optimal for the user,

- Evidencing. Service in it's nature is intangible. It is also consumed at the time of delivery. To create a complete experience, designers enrich service with tangible addons,

- Holistic. Services are always delivered in a specific context, including space, time, people. This all creates the final experience, so it has to be taken into consideration at a design stage.

Many times, when facing a new service design challenge, designers have to deal with so-called „wicked problems". A problem is „wicked" when:

- There is no definitive formulation for the problem,

- A problem has no stopping rule,

- The solution for the problem is not right or wrong, but useful or not useful,

- The problem is essentially novel and unique.

Many challenges regarding society, like poverty, education or healthcare, will have a wicked problem. Apart from strictly technical issues, many challenges in the business environment will also present „wicked" roots. That's why the scope or outcome of a design project is often difficult to define at its beginning. Unlike in a typical engineering project, instead of proven data and facts, the designer needs to rely on blurry concepts, fragmented data and assumptions. Using a proven framework for advancing design projects, along with right tools and methods is a way to change unknows into knowns and assumptions into proven facts.

In order to proceed with a service design project, one of approaches is to use Double Diamond process (name coined by Design Council).
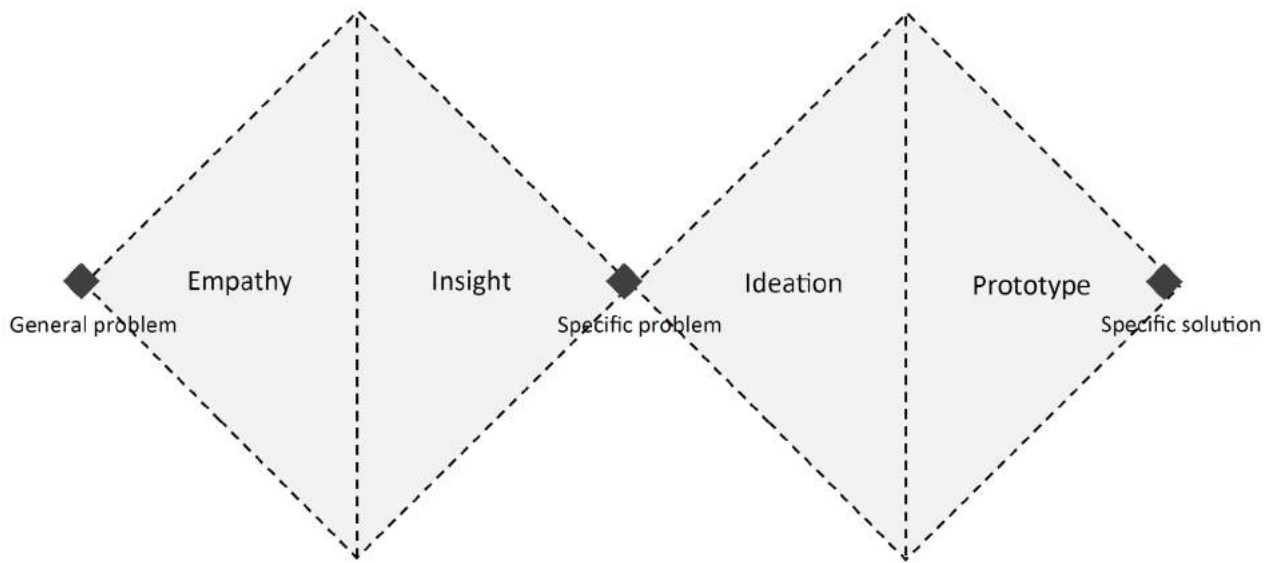
Source: based on Double Diamond by Design Council

EMPATHY STAGE

Empathy is an ability to understand someone else's viewpoint – trying to see what he sees, feels or experience. It is an attempt to walk in someone's shoes to get a deeper understanding of his emotional or physical needs. Empathetic research, which is a first step in the design process, helps to learn more about the motivations and emotions of the user, which is crucial for creating a solution that will bring a unique value to the user.

EMPATHY METHOD: BEGINNER'S MINDSET

Your prior experiences, perceptions, assumptions, misconceptions or stereotypes can restrict the amount of empathy you can build. There are few rules for a beginner's mindset:
•   Don't judge – your goal is to learn and discover, not to make judgements,
•   Question everything – especially things you think you already know,
•   Be truly curious – it helps in discovering not evident aspects of the user's experience,
•   Find patterns – interviews often allow observing common themes,
•   Listen – empathy is the time of learning, not selling or giving advice.

EMPATHY METHOD: USER INTERVIEW

You want to understand a person's thoughts, emotions, and motivations to determine how to innovate for him or her. What you need to take into consideration:

• Ask „why" – even if you know the answer. Sometimes it will surprise you,

• Avoid „usually" – response framed as "usually" will be a generalization or cliché,

• Encourage stories – a story told by the user will give you a better idea of how the user sees the world around him,

• Look for nonverbal cues – everyone's body is sending signals that are another source of information,

• Don't suggest answers – it will influence users to tell what they think you want to hear,

• Don't ask yes/no questions – answering that kind of questions requires few words, and you want the user to reveal more than that,

• Make sure you're prepared to capture – interview in pairs so that one person may be taking notes.

EMPATHY METHOD: EXTEREME USERS

Designers draw inspiration from users' workarounds. Extreme users have needs amplified and workarounds more notable.

• Determine who is „extreme" – analyze what the characteristic that you want to focus on is. Next, define what "regular" evidence is and what would be called extraordinary evidence,

• Engage – interview extreme user as every other person,

• Look for „extreme" in all other users – look for inspirations in extreme users. What extreme's workarounds could be implemented in a "regular" group?

EMPATHY TOOL: USER JOURNEY MAP

User journey maps are used to map the experience of a user related to a specific service. It includes all the activities that the user conducts along with corresponding channels (like company website, mobile app, phone call, in-person visit in store etc.). Journey also identifies emotional journey, all ups and downs, which serves as a diagnostic for service improvements.

		Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
User tasks					
Channels					
Gains	☺				
Pains	☹				

A customer journey map aims to develop a good understanding of the user's experience over time and show that in a deliverable that everyone in the organization can appreciate.

EMPATHY TOOL: EMPATHY MAP CANVAS

An empathy map is a simple tool that helps to capture knowledge about the target user. The empathy map includes 7 fields:

• Who is the user – for whom are we designing? What is his role or position?

• What does the user need to do – what are his jobs to be done? What is the desired outcome?

• What does he see – what is happening in the user's environment, market, neighbourhood?

• What does he say – what specific quotes from the interview did we capture?

• What does he do – what was observed? What nonverbal cues did the user show?

• What does he hear – what his friends, colleagues or family is saying?

• What are his thoughts – especially the current pains and what gains the user is hoping for?
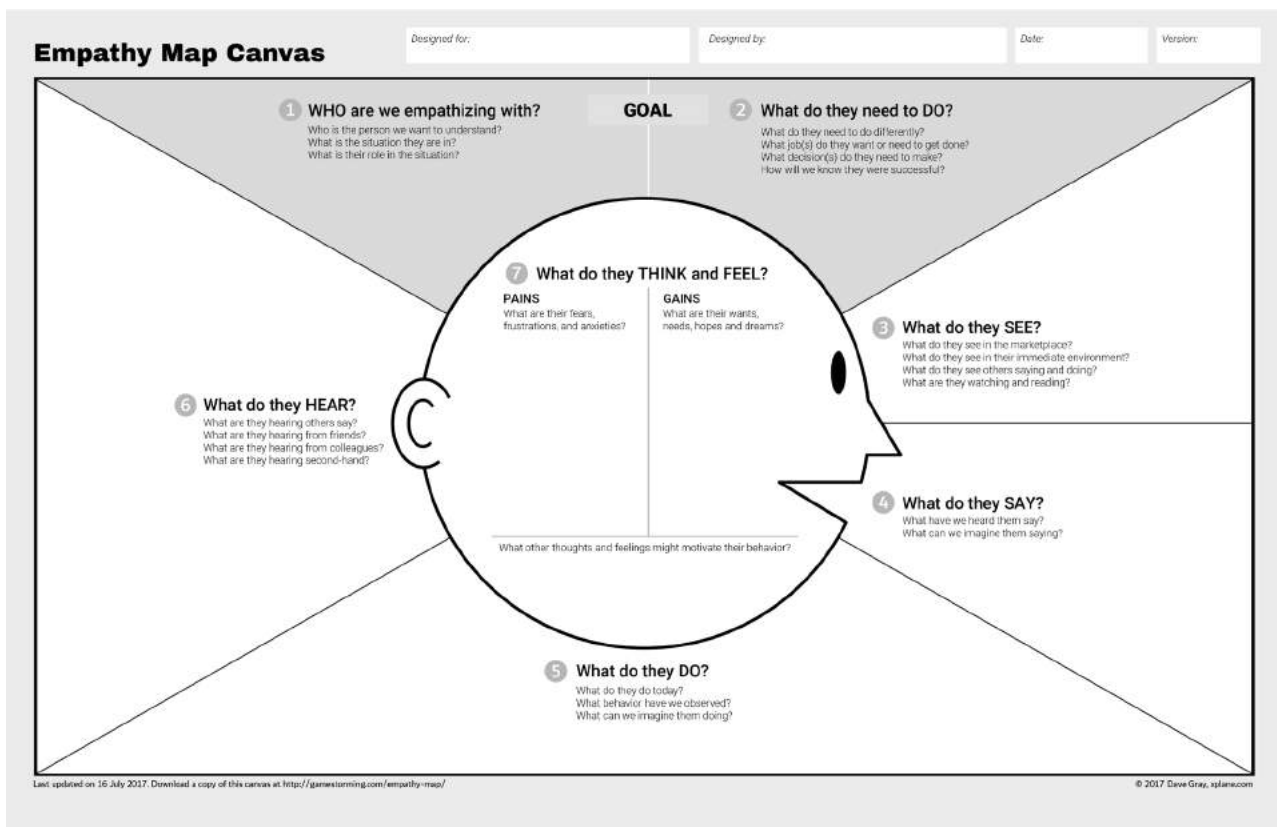
Source: www.xplane.com

Empathy maps are the most valuable at starting the design process as part of empathy and before ideation. The mapping process can help to synthesize research observations and reveal more in-depth insights into a user's needs.

EMPATHY TOOL: PERSONA

A persona is a composite representation of target user behaviours, needs, goals, and it helps you understand the target group. It stops you from generalizing all users into one category and believing that everyone has the same needs or goals.

	Demographics Name, age, city	**Background** What's the occupation of the persona? Responsibilities? What are the roles of this persona?
Picture or drawing of the Persona	**Personality** What is the persona's attitude? Enthusiastic? Sceptic? Hard-working? Open-minded?	**Emotions** What feeling or emotions this persona shows?
	Needs What are the needs of this persona relevant for a design project?	**Situations** What are the situations relevant to outlined needs? How does the persona now solve the needs?

Source: elaborated by Hubert Dyba

In some projects, you may come up with several personas. In that case, you need to decide which will be the core one to optimize the service for a specific target group.

INSIGHT STAGE

In the Insight stage, you synthesize all the data gathered during Empathy. In this stage, you define the main problems that you have identified up to this point. The outcome of this stage is a problem framed in a human-centred manner.

INSIGHTS TOOL: STAKEHOLDER MAP

The stakeholder map is a representation of all the stakeholder involved in a project. It clarifies roles and relationships between actors in the design area.

The stakeholder map helps to understand who is involved in a project and how people, organizations or systems are connected. The stakeholder map also allows you to zoom in and focus on specific relations and zoom out to spot opportunities or risk that were previously missed.

DEFINITION TOOL: POINT-OF-VIEW

A point-of-view (POV) is your reframing of a design challenge into an actionable problem statement that will allow you to ideate in a directed manner.

_____ needs a way to _____,
target user   need

because _____
insight
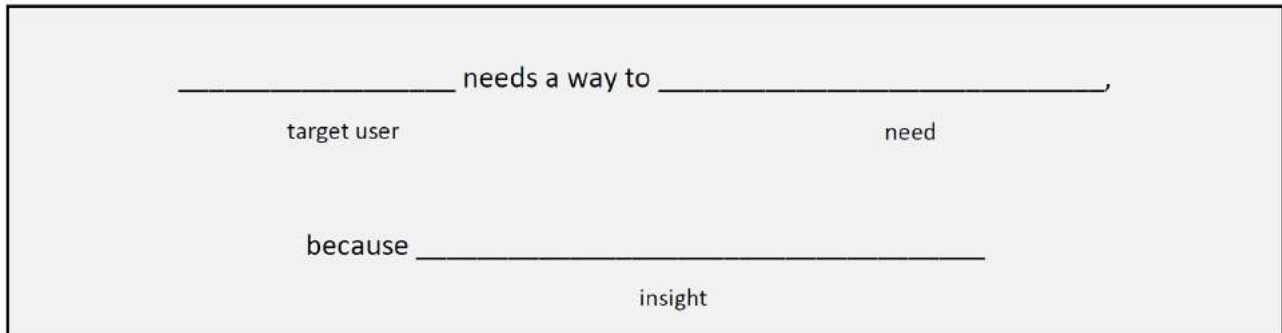
Source: elaborated by Hubert Dyba

While defining the challenge, pay attention to the right scope of your framing. For example, older people need a way to feel better would be too broad to conduct a directed search, while a woman in her 60s needs a new book to read is too narrow and doesn't leave room for the creative process. The right balance could look like a woman in her 60s needs a way to spend more time outdoor because an active relaxation with peers makes her feel better.

IDEATION STAGE

The right diamond is about giving different answers to the clearly defined problem, looking for inspiration and co-designing with various stakeholders.

IDEATION METHOD: BRAINSTORM

Brainstorming intends to leverage the group's collective thinking by engaging with each other, listening, and building on other ideas. There are few rules for conducting a good brainstorming session:
- Go for quantity – quality will come,
- Headlines – don't elaborate at this stage; use keywords instead,
- Build on ideas of others – „yes, and" wins over „no, but",
- Encourage wild ideas – it may inspire others to come up with reasonable ones,
- Stay on topic – keep the focus on the challenge,
- Be visual – it's a proven way to ignite creativity,
- Defer judgement – remember that the goal of this step is to generate, not to evaluate.

IDEATION METHOD: HOW MIGHT WE...

HMWs statements are short questions that launch brainstorms. HMWs derive from your point-of-view statement as starting points for ideation. You can create HMW questions in several ways:

• Amplify the good,

• Remove the bad,

• Explore the opposite,

• Question an assumption.

PROTOTYPE STAGE

The prototype stage involves prototyping and testing various solutions at a limited scale, dismissing those that fail validation with users and improving those that deliver positive feedback.

PROTOTYPING TOOL: SERVICE BLUEPRINT

A service blueprint is a diagram that displays the entire process of delivering a service by listing all the actions that happen at each stage, performed by all involved actors.

Time measurement	
Physical evidence	
Customer actions	
line of interaction	
Service employees	
Digital devices	
line of visibility	
Backstage actions	

Source: elaborated by Hubert Dyba

You start building the service blueprint by listing all the actors involved in the service process on a vertical axis and the steps required to deliver the service on the horizontal axis. The resulting table represents the flow of actions that each actor needs to perform along with the service, highlighting the user's activities (above the line of visibility) and the ones that happen in the back-office (below the line of visibility). A ready service blueprint allows you to check if all client actions are supported by relevant frontend employees actions and supporting backstage activities.

PROTOTYPING METHOD: INVESTIGATIVE REHEARSAL

In this method, you can deeply understand and explore behaviours and processes through theatrical playing the designed service. With theatrical rehearsals, you can clarify details of the service, like space, language and accompanying emotions:

- Prepare a scene to explore, for this; you can use a future-state user journey map,
- Repeat playing the set until there is a deeper understanding of all dynamics,
- Use self-observation and participant observation to gather research data that will guide you in the next iteration.

TESTING METHOD: I LIKE, I WISH, WHAT IF

As a designer, you need feedback, particularly during design work. Feedback works best with I-statements, so instead of saying Your prototype hasn't articulated the value proposition clearly, rather say I'm not sure what the value proposition for this prototype. In this method, use the template:

- I like – to highlight what, in my opinion, works in the prototype,
- I wish – to suggest improvements,
- What if – to signal new idea or direction for further exploration.

IMPLEMENTING THE PROCESS

An exemplary process could start with desk research and customer interviews. Then, with data gathered, a client journey could be built together with a customer empathy map. Later, at a co-creative workshop with stakeholders, a stakeholder map could be worked out, and client journey and empathy maps validated. Based on that, a PoV would be crafted and followed by a creative session, aiming at generating ideas for solutions. When the most promising solution is chosen, designers could arrange an investigative rehearsal to dive deeper into the client's experience and based on that, a service blueprint would be prepared. With these outcomes, the first small-scale test of service could be conducted to gather feedback. This feedback would serve as fuel for the second iteration of the development cycle.

A Polish-German border area creates an excellent opportunity to conduct fully-fledged service design projects. The ongoing integration of people from both sides of the border reflect new challenges, e.g., cross-border inhabitation, employee mobility, education, healthcare, business cooperation, and many more. Such initiatives would also include various stakeholders – private persons, companies, universities, local governments, NGOs, etc. This gives space for experimenting with new solutions that will create value by solving identified needs. Cross-border service designers may also take advantage of all innovation and business hubs that may facilitate communication between cross-border stakeholders. Developing innovation ecosystems that overgrow state borders give us, as designers, possibilities that have never been as reachable as are now.

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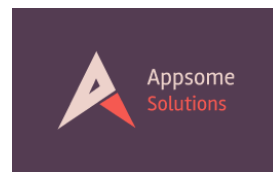
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