DIGITAL SOCIAL IMPACT

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Five Whys

Description

Five Whys

The five whys method can be used to either locate the basic grounds for a problem or to find the different reasons for the same problem.

Course Configurator > Step 1: Design

Best used for

Problem solving/brainstorming. Root Cause Analysis. Idea/solution validation.

Time to introduce this activity in lecture / Time to run this activity

15-15 min / 30 min

In the context of Digital Social Impact courses and learning activities

The initial challenge proposed by the partner or seen by the users can be a symptom to a deeper issue. It helps to try to get really to the root cause. For this, the Five Whys are a proven method.

Main Target Group

Students with partner / users

Potential tools for digitising this activity

Could be down via an online call/breakout rooms

Additional Resources

Five Whys Activity approach as profiled by the University of Copenhagen

Learn more about Five Whys Activity approach from

Step by Step – Two ways to use the five whys

1 In the first version, the intention behind the Five Whys is to find underlying reasons. Ask: “Why did this problem occur?” When you have an answer, then ask: “Why is this the case” and repeat the procedure until you have asked ‘Why’ five times. The answer to the fifth ‘why’ is probably the underlying reason. The following example is commonly given to discover the root cause of a car that will not start. So, “The Car Will Not Start” is the initial problem, which is written at the top. From there, the person using the 5 whys would ask these types of questions:

Why Won’t the Car Start? – Answer: The battery is dead
Why is the Battery Dead? – Answer: The alternator is not working properly
Why isn’t the alternator working? – Answer: The serpentine belt has broken
Why did the serpentine belt break? – Answer: It was not replaced when worn
Why wasn’t it replaced? – Answer: The owner did not follow the recommended service schedule

2 In the second version, one also asks the question ‘Why’ five times, but this time, you are looking for varying reasons to a problem.

Problem: We have a loss in profits – why?
Because too few customers visit our shop – why?
Because a competitor has opened a shop down the road – why?
Because we have stopped advertising – why?
Because we don’t have enough staff to provide good service – why?
Because our selection is too narrow.

Plus Minus Interesting

Description

Plus Minus Interesting

The Plus Minus Interesting (PMI) template is one of the simplest retrospective formats available. It simply asks your team to evaluate and sort their thoughts into positive, negative and interesting points.

Course Configurator > Step 2: Deliver

Best used for

Retrospect on ideas with focus on strengths and weaknesses. Creating spaces for open dialogue in teams.

Time to introduce this activity in lecture / Time to run this activity

5 min / 30 min

In the context of Digital Social Impact courses and learning activities

Retrospectives give room to think through several improvement ideas and pick one that all team members are committed too. Sometimes the increased understanding between team members – knowing what makes the others 'tick' – is already a great leap forward and builds trust.

Main Target Group

Student groups

Potential tools for digitising this activity

Could be down via an online call/breakout rooms and online tools like Mural, Padlet or Conceptboard

Additional Resources

Learn more about the PMI Activity approach

PMI Template from Conceptboard

Step by Step

1 PMI can be a useful tool for beginning the retrospective or unsticking the group when discussion has gotten bogged down. (Example: “Let’s do a quick PMI on this.”) It is best done ina group setting so step 1 is to gather the student group.

2 The activity is short – it was designed to last only three minutes.

Students answer via post its “What are the positive things about this idea?” (1 minute timers is set)

3 Next, students answer via post its “What are the positive things about this idea?” (1 minute timers is set)

4 Lastly, students answer via post its “What was interesting about this idea?”

The answers are then reviewed, openly discussed and group consensus found.

Outcomes Harvesting

Description

OUTCOMES HARVESTING

Outcome Harvesting collects (“harvests”) evidence of what has changed (“outcomes”) and, then, working backwards, determines whether and how an intervention has contributed to these changes.

Course Configurator > Step 3: Reflect

Best used for

Reflecting on Impact and project implementation

In the context of Digital Social Impact courses and learning activities

Outcome Harvesting has proven to be especially useful in complex situations when it is not possible to define concretely most of what an intervention aims to achieve. This makes it especially relevant in the context of Digital Social Impact courses, projects and initiatives where it can be hard to anticipates the full extent of the social impact until the reflection phase.

Outcome Harvesting does not measure progress towards predetermined objectives or outcomes, but rather, collects evidence of what has changed and, then, working backwards, determines whether and how an intervention contributed to these changes. The outcome(s) can be positive or negative, intended or unintended, direct or indirect, but the connection between the intervention and the outcomes should be plausible.

Main Target Group

Students with facilitator/outcomes harvester

Potential tools for digitising this activity

Additional Resources

Outcomes Harvesting as profiled by the Better Evaluations

Step by Step

1 **Design the Outcome Harvest**: The first step is to agree what information is to be collected and from whom. At a minimum, this involves obtaining information about the changes in social actors and how the intervention influenced them.

2 **Review documentation and draft outcome descriptions.** Review reports and project work documents etc. to identify potential outcomes (i.e., changes in individuals, groups, communities, organisations or institutions) and what the intervention did to contribute to them.

3 **Formulate outcome descriptions.** Engage directly with all stakeholders involved to review the outcome descriptions based on the document review, and to identify and formulate additional outcomes.

4 **Substantiate**: Review the final outcomes and select those to be verified in order to increase the accuracy and credibility of the findings. Obtain the views of one or more individuals who are independent of the intervention (third party) but knowledgeable about one or more of the outcomes and the student's contribution.

5 **Analyse and interpret**: Classify all outcomes, often in consultation with the stakeholders. The classifications may be related to the objectives and strategies of either the implementer of the intervention (i.e. students) or other stakeholders, such as the social partners.

6 **Support use of findings**: Propose issues for discussion grounded in the evidence-based answers to the harvesting questions. Facilitate further discussions with social partners, which may include how they can make use of the findings.