Strengthening the effectiveness of organizational coaching service

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Opinnäytetyön tarkoitus on täydentää yksilöiden valmentamiseen ja valmennuskäytäntöön painottunutta kirjallisuutta ja tuottaa näkökulmia organisaatiovalmennuspalvelun tehostamiseen. Palvelun tehokkuus määriteltiin muotoiluajattelua mukaillen ihmiskeskeisen muotoilun näkökulmien, toivottavuuden, toteutettavuuden ja kannattavuuden yhdistelmäksi (Brown 2008; Brown & Wyatt 2010; IDEO 2015). Tavoitteena on tunnistaa tehokkuuteen vaikuttavia tekijöitä kustakin näkökulmasta sekä löytää keinoja vahvistaa niitä käytännössä. Tehtävä on eksploratiivinen ja perustuu sekä teoreettiseen tutkimukseen että käytännön kokemukseen ja havaintoihin palvelumuotoiluprosessista, joka toteutettiin pienen organisaatioiden systeemistä muutosta tukevan valmennusyrityksen palvelun tehostamiseksi.

Muotoiluajattelun näkökulmien syventämiseksi organisaatiovalmennuksen käytännön kontekstissa niiden rinnalla sovellettiin asiakaskeskeisen arvonluonnin periaatteita (Heinonen & al. 2010). Siinä missä muotoiluajattelu auttaa yhdistämään asiakkaan ja palvelutuottajan näkökulmat, asiakaskeskeinen logiikka kuvaa palvelua osana asiakasorganisaation dynamiikkaa ja jatkuvaa arkea. Teoreettiseen tarkasteluun näkökulmien yhdistäminen tuotti listan konkreettisia kysymyksiä, jotka ohjasivat edelleen täydentävien lähestymistapojen valintaa. Tuloksena syntyi kokonaisvaltainen ja teoreettisia näkökulmia yhdistävä (mm. ajattelun vinoumat päätöksenteossa, asiakastyytyväisyys ja ilahduttavat palvelukokemukset, organisatorinen muutos ja oppiminen sekä tuottajan dynaamiset kyvykkyydet) viitekehys, jota voi hyödyntää organisaatiovalmennuspalvelun tehokkuuden arvioimisessa ja kehittämisessä.

Valmennusyrityksen palvelumuotoiluprosessissa designajattelun ja asiakaskeskeisen logiikan yhdistäminen auttoi erittelemään ja linjaamaan tehtävää työtä haastattelujen suunnittelusta ja toteuttamisesta analyysiin ja kehittämisvaiheeseen saakka. Kokonaisuutena prosessi mukaili Nesslerin (2016a; 2016b) versioimaa tuplatimanttimallia. Prosessin tutkimusvaiheessa sovellettiin aineistolähtöistä monitapaustutkimusmenetelmää (Eisenhardt 1989; 2021). Sen kohteeksi valikoitui kolme eri asiakkailla toteutettua palveluprosessia. Tapauskohtaisia yhteistyö- ja vaikuttavuuspolkuja ja niitä yhdistäviä ja erottavia malleja analysoimalla löydettiin asiakkaaseen, palvelutuottajaan ja yhteistyöhön liittyviä, tehokkuuteen vaikuttavia tekijöitä ja määriteltiin kuusi osa-aluetta niiden kehittämiseksi. Osa-alueista kolme valittiin kohteeksi prosessissa, jossa hyödynnettiin palvelumuotoilun menetelmiä ja työkaluja, tapaustutkimuksen tuloksia ja valikoitua teoreettisia näkökulmia. Aidoissa asiakastilanteissa testatut käytännön ratkaisut vastasivat pääosin niille asetettuja tavoitteita ja arvioitiin siten palvelun tehokkuutta edistäviksi.

Itsenäisinä kokonaisuuksina toteutettujen teoreettisen tarkastelun ja käytännön prosessin tulokset ovat toisiaan tukevia ja täydentäviä ja niitä yhdistäen voidaankin luoda uusi, yhdistetty viitekehys organisaatiovalmennuspalvelun tehostamisen tueksi: teoria lisää ymmärrystä valmennuksen onnistumisen edellytyksistä asiakasorganisaatioissa ja käytäntö havainnollistaa muotoiluajattelun näkökulmien toteutumista todellisuudessa sekä tarjoaa konkreettisia osa-alueita niiden kehittämiseksi. Molemmissa korostuu kokonaisvaltainen, näkökulmia yhdistävä lähestymistapa: yhden osa-alueen kehittäminen voi edistää muita alueita ja tekijöitä, mutta on haastavaa ilman muiden alueiden ja tekijöiden huomioimista.

Asiasanat: organisaatiovalmennus, palvelumuotoilu, ihmiskeskeinen muotoilu,

asiakaskeskeinen arvontuotanto, monitapaustutkimus

Laurea University of Applied Sciences **Abstract**

Degree Programme in Service Innovation and Design

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Strengthening The Effectiveness of Organizational Coaching Service

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The purpose of this thesis is to complement coaching literature that is currently focused on individual coaching and coaching practice and provide viewpoints for strengthening the effectiveness of organizational coaching service. Service effectiveness is defined from a design thinking viewpoint as the intersection of the desirability, feasibility, and viability perspectives of human-centered design (Brown 2008; Brown & Wyatt 2010; IDEO 2015). The aim is to identify factors that constitute effectiveness from each perspective and find ways for strengthening such effectiveness in practice. The task is explorative and relies on a theoretical examination and on the experience and discoveries from a service design process realized for enhancing the service of a small and young coaching business of two entrepreneurs who established their firm to support systemic change in organizations.

Both in the theoretical examination and in the service design process, the principles of customer-dominant logic (Heinonen & al. 2010) were applied to deepen and develop the design perspectives in the context of organizational coaching service. Whereas the design approach integrates both provider and client views in the process, customer-dominant logic describes service in the context of client organizations' dynamics and ongoing life. In the theoretical exploration this integration resulted in a list of practical questions guiding the search for complementing literature from each design perspective. As an outcome, a holistic and integrative framework combining multiple theoretical approaches (judgement in decision making, customer satisfaction and delight, organizational learning and change and dynamic capabilities) was created for understanding organizational coaching effectiveness in practice.

In the design process the integration of design and customer-dominant logic perspectives helped structure and frame the work from interviews and data gathering to analysis and development phases. Overall, the service design process followed the double diamond model by Nessler (2016a: 2016b) while multiple case study method (Eisenhardt 1989; 2021) was applied to conduct research on three client cases. Through case-specific collaboration journey and impact path analyses and identified cross-case patterns, the research revealed client-related, provider-related, and collaboration-related factors of effectiveness and six opportunity areas for their development. Three areas were chosen as the target for the present development process that utilized service design methods and tools, case study insights, and selected theoretical viewpoints as inspiration. The produced practical solutions were tested with clients and were proved for the most part to meet the set goals and to be beneficial in strengthening the effectiveness of the entrepreneurs' service.

Although the two lines of exploration were realized as separate entities, their results are both consistent and complementary. Thus a new combined framework is suggested for strengthening the effectiveness of organizational coaching service. Whereas the theory provides deep understanding on the conditions within client organizations, the practice extends the design perspectives into organizational reality and suggests concrete steps for their development. Both emphasize a holistic and integrative approach: while developing one area can enhance factors in other areas, it can be challenging to develop only one without considering other areas.

Keywords: organizational coaching, design thinking, human-centered design, customer-dominant logic, multiple case-study research

Contents

1 Introduction

This thesis started as a design project for tackling the everyday worries, needs, and wishes of two coaching service entrepreneurs but grew into a larger, explorative research task as the scale, nature and general relevance of the current challenge started to unravel. Coaching industry is one of the fastest growing business sectors in the world (Willis 2021). According to the International Coaching Federations' global survey estimates from 2019, the number of coaching practitioners has increased by 33 per cent from 2015, amounting to 71 000 professionals worldwide, out of which about 20 400 works in Western Europe. Globally the annual growth rate of the total revenue in the industry has exceeded 5 per cent from 2015 to 2019. (International Coaching Federation & PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP 2020, 7-8, 12-13; IBISWorld according to Ută 2021). Coaching is thus a substantial source of livelihood for a continuously growing number of people.

Although in Western Europe the industry seems to lag from the global growth average in total revenue (only 2 per cent in all from 2015 to 2019 according to International Coaching Federation & PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP 2020, 13), the overall significance of coaching is undeniable. The global pandemic only appears to have accelerated the universal reliance on coaching in professional and organizational development (Arruda 2022; Hudson 2022), and also in Finland the awareness of and participation in coaching has increased significantly during the last 15 years (International Coaching Federation & PricewaterhouseCoopers 2022). Coaching is increasingly perceived as an essential contribution to the success of organizations that should be a commodity available for all instead of an exclusive service only for top leaders (Willis 2021). Supposedly, in terms of organizational competitiveness and the constant need for change and adaptation to the surrounding world, the dependence on coaching is only accumulating in the future.

At the same time, the growing number of clients, rising awareness, and increasing competition in the field generate new kind of pressures for coaching practitioners. Coaches are expected to provide greater value with new and innovative solutions for more and more clients but with lowering service costs (Ută 2021; Bhatnagar 2021; Hudson 2022), which undoubtedly calls for improved effectiveness in the service. Yet, there's a widely acknowledged lack of academic research on the effectiveness of coaching, and multiple researchers have suggested new perspectives for its development (e.g. Maltbia & al. 2014, 162; Jones & al. 2016; Bhatnagar 2021; Gan, Chong, Yuen, Yen Teoh & Rahman 2020). In addition, despite the growing reliance on coaching in the development and success of organizations, literature provides little knowledge on the coaching of organizations, defined here as organizational coaching, and practically no research on its effectiveness in promoting organizational change. Furthermore, coaching literature is largely focused on developing coaching as a practice, not service. The emphasis is thus on what happens during coaching and less attention is paid on the process and events leading to or following coaching. While this perspective was too narrow to cover the needs and worries of the present design partner, it also fails to meet the increasing expectations for the development of the overall coaching business. (See Chapters 1.2 & 1.3.)

In this thesis work we will thus try to fill in the coaching literature gap and provide complementary viewpoints for strengthening the effectiveness of organizational coaching service. The task is an explorative one and relies both on the examination of potential theoretical perspectives as well as on the experience and discoveries from the present design process. The research questions are provided in the end of this introductory chapter with an overview on the thesis structure. Before that, we will still briefly introduce the design challenge and context that inspired this work, outline the specifications for organizational coaching service, and describe the approach adopted here for developing its effectiveness.

1.1 Design challenge and context

Planning for the present design process with two coaching entrepreneurs started in Spring 2020. The entrepreneurs had established their business only two years before with a mission to enhance continuous renewal in organizations and, with a steadily growing clientele, had just begun to develop new coaching service packages to make their offering clearer to their clients and their own sales and service processes more efficient. They offer consulting, training, and coaching services to support change processes within clients varying from different sized private companies to public and third sector organizations. The entrepreneurs themselves identify their business simply as coaching service, but to distinguish it from the more individually focused forms of coaching and to highlight its specific orientation towards pursuing broad, systemic changes in organization, it is here defined as organizational coaching service (see Chapter 1.2).

The newly developed service packages (called here service packages A, B and C) were all designed to provide a different sized coaching process (in terms of length and depth) to support clients at different stages of organizational change. Although the entrepreneurs were driven by their genuine desire to help client organizations change and become successful businesses and work communities, they had multiple questions and concerns related to the realization of the new coaching packages and the sustainability of their own business. As a small and relatively new coaching business, their success was simultaneously bound by their personal use of time and dependent on their achievements and credibility as professionals providing real value for their clients.

Consequently, the entrepreneurs were for example worried about their possibilities to anticipate the amount and quality of work needed for enhancing change within each individual client organization already while drafting service proposals. Related to this, they were also concerned for their clients' ability to identify true service needs in accomplishing their goals and thus to make the right and adequate package choices. In addition, while the entrepreneurs were hoping for ways to avoid unproductive and unpaid work, they were simultaneously questioning their overall chances for smoothing their own business processes. Despite these challenges however, their ultimate goal was always to ensure service success with expected change impact within their clients.

On the large, the challenge was about strengthening the effectiveness of their service. The question was however, how to develop a service whose success, both in the level of its means and potential effects, is so clearly dependent on individual client organizations from the choices made in first negotiations to the steps taken during the process, and changes adopted after service for its implementation. What are the underlying factors that should be considered while developing service effectiveness in a way that would cover the entire process? How to smooth business processes if the service has to be separately negotiated and planned for the needs of each different client? How to ensure service impact if the pursued change depends not only on top leader choices but also on behavior and actions of individual people in different parts and levels of the organization? The challenge appeared rather daunting in the beginning, and the coaching literature provided no answers or help. As it will be described in Chapter 3, the development process relied thus on design perspectives, approaches and tools utilizing the empirical data, experiences, and understanding gained from real service processes the entrepreneurs had realized with their clients.

Meanwhile, a couple of remarks regarding the entire research and thesis report. First, whereas the definitions for organizational coaching service and its effectiveness provided in the next two introductory chapters apply also on the realized design challenge and context, the theoretical investigation reported in Chapter 2 is its own entity of which the results are discussed and combined with the discoveries and experience from the present design process only in the end of this report. The thesis structure is explained further in Chapter 1.4. Second, for the privacy and protection of their clients, the present design partner is only referred to anonymously as the provider or the entrepreneurs. This is justified by the small size and young business age of the partner, which increases the identifiability of their clients and the vulnerability of their own business. The issues discussed regarding their service processes are partly delicate and could potentially cause problems for each client's internal or external development goals if discussed in public. And finally third, term client is here used purposefully to highlight the continuous collaboration aiming for long-term solutions instead of quick and casual transactions with customers (for example Kolman 2021; Riserbato 2021). More importantly though, it also denotes the wider client organization instead of only individual people. The word customer can nevertheless also come up here and there especially in the theoretical part of this report due to its frequent use in the literature.

1.2 Organizational coaching service

Here, organizational coaching refers to a development practice aiming at “fostering positive, systemic transformation within organizations” as it is defined by David (2021). Organizational coaching if often related to better realizing of strategic objectives, strengthening leadership, and nurturing cultural change (David 2021). This comes close to the concept of systemic coaching by Hsia, Molvik & Lambie (2012, 47) who describe it an organizational development tool where coaching offered to the “key influential leaders throughout organization” can increase their impact during change processes. For them, systemic coaching represents an extension for the more traditional approach called executive coaching (Hsia & al. 2012, 47). Here we nevertheless use the term organizational coaching, as the term systemic coaching can also refer to an analytical coaching method of considering an individual coachee’s development in relation to his/her working context (e.g. Bhatnagar 2021).

In literature, organizational coaching is frequently associated with executive or leadership coaching without making any clear distinction between the two approaches (e.g. Ciporen 2015; Maltbia, Marsick & Ghosh 2014; Bianco-Mathis, Roman & Nabors 2008). Maltbia & al. (2014, 165) for example describe executive and organizational coaching as “coaching for executives with organizational goals”. David however explains the difference by stating that

> [In organizational coaching, the] broader organizational needs are placed front and center, and the coaching is used to scale-up change across the enterprise. While there is overlap, this broader focus is on contrast to executive or leadership coaching which targets the individual’s development needs and more typically comprises standalone engagements. (David 2021.)

Also Hsia & al. (2012, 47) differentiate their systemic coaching from other coaching approaches by it assuming an organizational development focus instead of settling with individual ones.

As Maltbia & al. (2014, 163) point out, the notion of coaching varies from one practitioner and researcher to another. The International Coaching Federation that aims to developing and representing the coaching industry in all its spheres, defines coaching as

> […] partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential” (International Coaching Federation 2021a).

While this generalist definition certainly applies also to organizational coaching in its emphasis on partnerships, process, and creativeness, here the focus is on the objectives and progress of the organization and the individual clients’ (the coachees’) development process is harnessed only for that end. Another common view on coaching is to highlight it as a practice of not giving advice or telling what to do but helping clients find their own paths and strategies for change by the means of asking the right kind of questions, actively listening, and motivating (Williams 2006, Coaching tools and their ethical application). Also this principle holds true in organizational coaching as it is understood here, but again within the broader framework of organizational needs.

Coaching is typically referred to as a one-to-one relation between a coach and a coachee (e.g. Jones, Woods & Guillaume 2011) even though it can be realized in either individual or group processes (Maltbia & al. 2014, 165). Although in Hsia's & al. (2012) approach organizational level change is enhanced by empowering pivotal leaders throughout the organization instead of focusing only on the few members of top management, their view still seems to be on individual, one-to-one coaching processes. Bianco-Mathis & al. (2008, Chapter 2) nevertheless point out how in organizational coaching the target group can vary from individual leaders, boards of directors and executive teams to managers, teams and taskforces, and eventually cover the entire organization. As change in an organizational level presupposes also shared, interpersonal learning and common development within and between groups (e.g. Bogenrieder 2002; Brix 2017; Schirmer & Geithner 2018) and systemic transformation for it to happen in all corners of the organization (Connolly 2017; Clarke & Crane 2018), the enlarged target group is well justified in terms of the applied organizational coaching perspective.

To elaborate the essence of organizational coaching a little bit further, it needs to be differentiated from other common practices aiming at organizational development. In coaching, the distinction is previously made to other helping roles and activities such as therapy, mentoring, consulting, training, and facilitation (see Bianco-Mathis & al. 2008, Chapter 1; Maltbia & al. 2014, 165-167; Ciporen 2015, 8-10). However, as the focus in both therapy and mentoring is notably on individual progress with goals related to personal mental healing or career development instead of organizational goals (see Maltbia & al. 2014, 166), only consulting, training and facilitation remain as evident alternatives to promote organizational development from the perspective of this study. Their main differences with coaching are summarized in Table 1 in five different dimensions. The first four dimensions (focus of work, relationship, emotions, and process) are borrowed from Williams (2006, Important distinctions), and further applied by Maltbia & al. (2014, 166) who also added facilitation to the list of comparable practices. Here, the perspective of roles was included as a supplementary dimension of difference to clarify what kind of responsibilities both the provider and the client has in the relationship and in terms of the expected outcomes. Outside coaching literature, Kaner's (2014) views were used to deepen the view on facilitation.

Development practice	Coaching	Consulting	Training	Facilitation
Focus of work	Development towards a desired future	Identifying and solving problems	Learning new generic skills	To ease a process of joint decision making or learning
Relationship	Equal partnership, co-creation of answers	Problem based expert-client relation	Expert helping and teaching the less experienced	Facilitator an impartial process-expert supporting the client creating answers
Emotions	Considered natural, subject of normalization	Mostly disregarded, if not informational	Integrated to support and challenge	Relieved for less uncertainty, nurtured for shared understanding
Process	Identifying and turning challenges into victories	Diagnosing problems and providing solutions based on data and information	Addressing clients' needs in acquiring new skills, starting from their current level, measuring progress	Designing and suggesting process and interventions based on the goals and needs of the client
Roles	Coach standing by and supporting clients in their own thinking and process Clients accountable for their own change	Consultant gathers and analyses information, and advices the client Client provides information, accountable for realizing solutions	Trainer provides knowledge and shares meaning, guides learning Client accountable for the effort of learning	Facilitator remains neutral in terms of the subject, leading the process and helping in integrating perspectives and moving forward Client accountable for the subject and related decisions

Table 1: Coaching compared to other practices of organizational development (Adapted from Bianco-Mathis & al. 2008, Chapter 1; Maltbia & al. 2014, 166; Williams 2006, Important Distictions; also Kaner 2014, Chapters 1-2 for the part of facilitation).

In the context of this work, the most important distinctions are related to the relationship, roles and respective responsibilities of the coach and his/her client. Whereas in coaching the relationship is an equal partnership promoting the client's development, in consulting and in training the consult or instructor is an expert on the subject matter and has the power and the ability to tell how things are, and advice the client in their doing. In facilitation, the client is the expert on the subject, but the facilitator knows how the client can overcome unsolved questions or differences of opinion or and reach joint decisions. In coaching and in facilitation, clients find the answers and make decisions for themselves, and the coach's or the facilitator's responsibility is in building and supporting the right kind of process for the clients' needs. As to the difference between coaching and facilitation, the former is focused on supporting development towards a desired future, the latter on reaching conclusions and making decisions for specific questions often concerning that future. (Bianco-Mathis & al. 2008, Chapter 1; Kaner 2014, Chapters 1-2; Maltbia & al. 2014, 166; Williams 2006, Important Distinctions.)

While there are differences, there are also many similarities. For one, all these practices are used for promoting a positive change through learning and new understanding, where the client eventually is responsible for making the change come true. It is also good to recognize that there is as much variation between individual practitioners as there is between different development practices (Maltbia & al. 2014, 165), and that in real-world development processes coaching is often integrated and complemented with other approaches (see Bianco-Mathis & al. 2008, Chapter 1). Moreover, as the thematic focus within coaching can vary according to the needs and goals of the client from developing the coachees' knowledge, skills, or job performance to realizing their change objectives or agenda (see Maltbia & al. 2014, 172-173; Ciporen 2015, 9-10; Witherspoon & White 1996), any real differences between coaching and other development practices may sometimes be hard to see.

The blurring of boundaries has been denoted a challenge for both theory building and development of coaching discipline and practice, and for the expertise and awareness of potential clients purchasing coaching as a service (Maltbia & al. 2014; Ciporen 2015, 8). In organizational coaching processes aiming at broad systemic change and with target groups ranging from individual leaders and executive teams or task forces to cover the entire organization (Bianco-Mathis & al. 2008, Chapter 2), a complex combination of different development practices and coaching perspectives is almost inevitable. Before the seemingly unrealistic goal of drawing any precise and widely agreed lines between different types of coaching and other practices organizational development, Maltbia & al. (2014, 167) suggest taking a broader view and moving the attention further to the overall preconditions for learning and change within client organizations, that is, realizing the expected outcomes of the service.

Here, we follow the idea of Maltbia & al. (2014) and concentrate on the question of conditions for effectiveness in organizational coaching. However, instead of focusing on the preconditions of learning during the organizational coaching process, and coaching as a practice, we take a step back and aim at developing organizational coaching as a service. This means that the attention is not specifically on specific coaching methods, practices or even principles but on coaching as a service process, from the first contact and negotiations to the point where the process has ended, and the customer should be enjoying the results. This wider approach serves the need to consider the clients' experience in the haze of diverse and blurred approaches and possibilities to foster organizational development and offers thus the providers of organizational coaching also insights to develop their own business.

1.3 Effectiveness of organizational coaching

As it was stated in the beginning, despite the growing reliance on coaching in promoting organizational development, several authors report constant lack of academic literature and research on the effectiveness, both the prerequisites for and potential impact of coaching (e.g., Maltbia & al. 2014, 162; Ciporen 2015,11; Jones & al. 2016, 249-250; Bhatnagar 2021, 3; Gan & al. 2020, 3). There are also worries related to the descriptive practice literature overtaking evidence-based empirical research and undermining the overall credibility of coaching as a profession (Ciporen 2015, 11; Gan & al. 2020, 3) and statements of a growing need of providing new innovations and higher value to an increasing number of customers (Bhatnagar 2021, 2). In response to the apparent demand, the same authors have conducted research for example on

- the effects of different techniques and features applied in coaching to the outcomes of the process (meta-analysis by Jones & al. 2016),
- the different definitions and related core-competencies necessary for coaching professionals in successful coaching relations (theoretical study by Maltbia & al. 2014),
- the framework for understanding the coachees' working context in designing effective coaching (systemic ecosystem view and action research by Bhatnagar 2021), and
- the significance of predetermined factors (coach and coachee related attributes, coaching relationship, and organizational support) in coaching effectiveness by the experience of the coachee (survey research with close-ended questions by Gan & al. 2020).

Although all these contributions certainly are valuable in developing the coaching practice, they do not provide adequate answers for exploring effectiveness from the organizational coaching service perspective adopted in this work. To explain this a bit further, the extant research is still too restricted to the viewpoint of an individual coachee and fails to consider the client's group or organizational level needs and development processes, that is, the paths for any systemic transformation. In addition, as it is concentrated on the relation between the coach and the coachee, it mostly misses the experience of the coachee as an active agent trying to implement changes with and in relation to his/her working context, the very system organizational coaching is aimed at transforming. Finally, current research is very much limited to exploring the most favorable coaching processes, techniques, and features for its development as a practice and thus overlooking all other relevant phases and features that may have an impact on its overall effectiveness and constitute coaching as a service.

In service development, by the way paved by marketing and management research and the upraise of service-dominant logic interpreting service first and foremost as a value co-creation process between users and providers, design thinking has gained a growing ground during the last few decades. As opposed to traditional marketing and management views on service development focusing mainly on the delivery and consumption phases in the process (analogical to the current state of research on coaching effectiveness), design approach has offered a holistic perspective to understand the customer's or client's role together with the wider relations and interactions forming the systemic context for service. (Lusch & Vargo 2014; Foglieni, Villari & Maffei 2017, 11-13.)

At the same time, organizations from various sectors have increasingly started to deploy design methods to unravel complex problems or to adopt design thinking as a guiding principle and mindset in enhancing their overall innovative and competitive capacity. The managerial interest in design thinking lays in its potential for deeper understanding and ability to create systemic solutions that not only serve the customers' needs but may also transform their life and change the way the providers themselves operate. (Brown 2008; Brown & Wyatt 2010; Carlgren, Rauth & Elmquist 2016.) Taking account of the wider service context together with the clients' role in the value creation process, and with its ability to address complexity, design thinking may thus offer a new and fruitful approach also for the research and development of the effectiveness of organizational coaching service.

First launched by IDEO and its founders and drawing on the working methods of traditional design professionals such as product designers and architects, design thinking is an integrative approach for solving problems that involve human-centered activities and require systemic solutions (Brown 2008, 86; Brown & Wyatt 2010, 32-33; Carlgren & al. 2016, 38). Compared to current coaching literature that focuses on the characteristics of the coach and the coachee, their relationship, and overall organizational support as the main factors for coaching effectiveness (Gan & al. 2020, 3), design thinking offers a wider approach. It guides to first explore the needs of the people using the service, then to address the infrastructure fulfilling those needs (Brown & Wyatt 2010, 32). By combining the clients' needs and wishes (desirability) with the capabilities and possibilities of the infrastructure (feasibility), and with the overall sustainability of the provider's activities (viability), design thinking allows an integrated, systemic view on the problem and enables lasting solutions that create value both for the service producers and their clients (Brown 2008, 86; Fenn & Hobbs 2017, 518-520).

From the organizational coaching service viewpoint, adopting design thinking with its perspectives of desirability, feasibility, and viability as a starting point in research has many advantages. First, focus on client needs sets a concrete and primary measure for identifying coaching effectiveness instead of drawing assumptions from a theoretical framework to define the goals for the service (as in e.g. Jones & al. 2016). Second, attention on the capabilities of the infrastructure in fulfilling those goals already raises the level of investigation above individual characteristics and interpersonal relationships. And third, integrating the provider sustainability as an important determinant to the equation not only reminds of the two-way and co-creative nature of value creation in service relationships (e.g. Lusch & Vargo 2014), but directs also to search for explanations and solutions that are appropriate for both parties. Overall, compared to the extant research on the effectiveness of coaching, the systemic and integrative approach of design thinking outlines a larger space both for identifying all potential problems and for creating solutions that may hold even within the complex systemic conditions of organizational transformation (see Carlgren & al. 2016, 47; Fenn & Hobbs 2017, 520).

The effectiveness of organizational coaching is thus defined here as the intersection of desirability, feasibility, and viability, the three balancing perspectives for sustainable solutions, and following the way they are presented in the IDEO model for human-centered design (IDEO 2015, 14). This choice is also supported by the fact that all the questions, worries, needs, and wishes presented by the two entrepreneurs as their brief for the present design process fall neatly into three matching categories. For example, the desirability perspective covers the questions related to their clients' needs and making the right choices vis-à-vis their service offering. The feasibility perspective includes the themes related to anticipating the amount and quality of work needed for creating value, the expected outcomes and enhancing impact within each individual client organization despite their distinct challenges and objectives. Finally, the viability perspective encompasses the worries of ensuring sustainable business and wishes of streamlining the entrepreneurs' own service processes and avoiding any unproductive work. In conclusion, the three perspectives of effective organizational coaching are described in Figure 1.

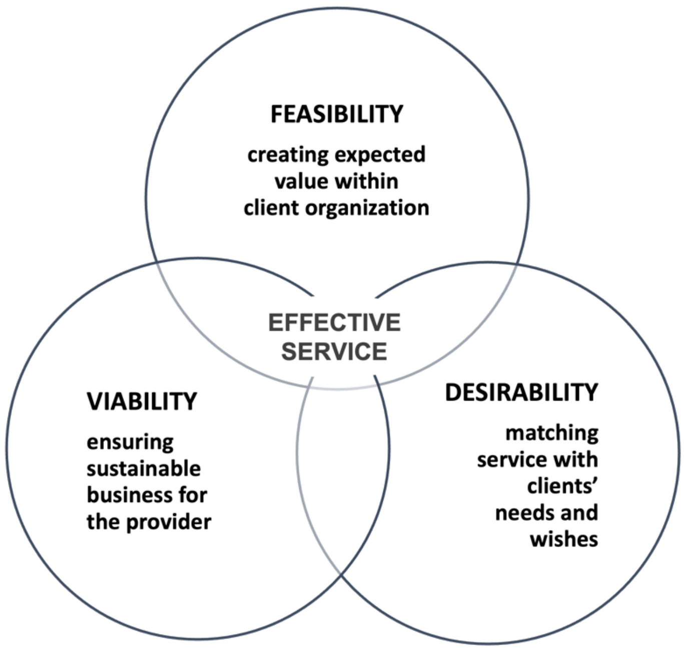


Figure 1: Effectiveness of organizational coaching as the intersection of desirability, feasibility, and viability perspectives (adapted from IDEO 2015, 14).

1.4 Research questions and structure of the thesis

The purpose of this thesis work is to fill in the gap discovered in coaching literature for strengthening the effectiveness of organizational coaching service. Applying design thinking approach, the effectiveness of organizational coaching service was defined as the intersection of the three perspectives of human-centered design (see above). Consequently, the aim here is first to identify factors that, from the integrated perspectives of desirability, feasibility, and viability, constitute the effectiveness of organizational coaching service and second, to find ways for strengthening such effectiveness in practice. Targeted to an unresearched field the task is explorative and relies both on a theoretical examination and on the realization and discoveries of the present design process, and is divided in three research questions:

1. Based on literature, what kind of factors constitute the effectiveness of organizational coaching service and what kind of a framework can be built to support its development?
2. Based on real organizational coaching service processes, what are the factors that constitute the effectiveness of organizational coaching service?
3. How can the identified factors be developed to strengthen the effectiveness of organizational coaching service in practice?

This thesis report is structured in four main chapters. While this introductory chapter (Chapter 1) has presented the foundation both for the theoretical and empirical parts of the research, the research questions listed above are studied and answered to in the last three chapters in the following way.

- Chapter 2 describes the theoretical exploration constructed according to the three design perspectives of human centered design, desirability, feasibility, and viability (Chapters 2.1-2.3). It relies mainly on complementing research literature beside the few viewpoints gained from coaching literature. The chapter provides answers mainly to the first research question but includes insights also for the third one. The resulting theoretical framework is illustrated and explained in Chapter 2.4.
- Chapter 3 describes the present design process from the methodological choices (Chapter 3.1) and the realization and results of the multiple case study (Chapter 3.2) to the development and delivery of the solutions (Chapter 3.3) and assessment of its results from the design partner’s viewpoint (Chapter 3.3.3). Chapter 3 provides the answers to the second research question (Chapter 3.2) and from an empirical viewpoint some insights also to the third research question (Chapter 3.3).
- Chapter 4 is the concluding chapter. It first reviews the answers gained from theory and practice to all three research questions (Chapter 4.1), discusses the main theoretical and empirical results together and suggests a new, integrated framework for strengthening the effectiveness of organizational coaching service as a combined answer for the third research question (Chapter 4.2). Finally, it the chapter reflects the research from a case study viewpoint (Chapter 4.3.1) as well as from a service design viewpoint (4.3.2) and brings up some the possibilities for improvement and further research.

2 Theoretical framework

Design thinking is brought forward as an effective approach in organizational and business development by highlighting its ability to take account of human factors, the life, desires, needs and behavior of people, often neglected and run over by more technical and economic issues (see Brown 2008, 86; Brown & Wyatt 2010, 32-33; Fenn & Hobbs 2017, 520). Although the strength of design thinking is widely considered to found on its integrative and balancing strategy in solving complicated and multidimensional problems, related literature offers then very little tools to process the questions of feasibility and viability alongside desirability (Carlgren & al. 2016, 52), and only few viewpoints on how to balance between these three perspectives (e.g., Fenn & Hobbs 2017).

In addition, within the sphere of systemic organizational transformation that organizational coaching is aimed at enhancing, there may be specificities to customer needs, nature of infrastructure and sustainability of the provider that require deeper comprehension before any balancing is conceivable. Therefore, in order to apply design thinking and the integration of desirability, feasibility, and viability on strengthening the effectiveness of organizational coaching service, further elaboration is needed to understand the theoretical constituents of effectiveness from each perspective.

Despite their limited scope of investigation in terms of organizational coaching service, research on coaching effectiveness points to the significance of customer understanding, the coach’s familiarity with the coachee’s context and the coachee’s own role in the process. For example, Ciporen (2015, 12-13) notes that besides a somewhat simplifying interpretation of learning processes, coaching can well be questioned for its insufficient account of the coachee’s situational and structural factors in change processes. The meta-analysis by Jones & al. (2016) showed, to the researchers’ slight surprise, that internal coaches realize higher effectiveness compared to their external counterparts. In their view, the difference may arise from the internal coaches’ inevitably superior knowledge on potential barriers and cultural characteristics in the coachees’ organization (Jones & al. 2016, 269). Lastly, Gan & al. (2020) found out that positive features related to coachee and coachee’s organization (e.g. goal-orientation, commitment, and support) are far more significant than any coach-centric characteristic, such as personality or even credibility and skills in terms of coaching effectiveness and coachees reaching their development goals. However, good relationship between the coach and the coachee was proved to enhance the effectiveness of coaching, which implies the necessity of the coach to be able to build trust and understand the coachee (Gan & al. 2020, 13).

In respect of the acknowledged need for deeper customer or client understanding and the present goal to strengthen the effectiveness of organizational coaching throughout the service, customer-dominant logic appears an advantageous standpoint to elaborate on the design thinking perspectives. Customer-dominant logic (CD logic) is a service-related theory and approach by Kristina Heinonen, Tore Strandvik, Karl-Jacob Mickelsson, Bo Edvardsson, Erik Sundström & Per Andersson (2010) that provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the customer and its undeniable role in value creation. It reflects the value creation process within an extended timeframe that takes account of the customer as an active agent with a past, a present and a future and an ability to construct its own paths and experiences in relation to its goals. Furthermore, customer-dominant logic offers valuable viewpoints to the relational dynamics that are in effect within organizations and thus ways to understand the constituents of systemic transformation, the overall aim of organizational coaching. (Heinonen & al. 2010.) As such, customer-dominant logic is in line with and complements to the design thinking approach’s focus on human activities and the need to consider systemic relations within the context of the service.

As opposed to service-dominant logic, its precedent in describing service as a value co-creation process by Lusch & Vargo (2014), customer-dominant logic emphasizes service as a process controlled by the customer instead of the provider. Customer-dominant logic describes the customer as the owner of the value creation process who ultimately also defines the way the provider may or may not participate, and not the other way around as in service-dominant logic. Customer-dominant logic then brings the customer to the fore, and takes a broad view on the client organization, its context and activities as also defining the actions and possibilities of the provider in producing the service. (Heinonen & al. 2010.) Viewing the customer or the client priority as a determinant for all value-creation throughout the service process is relevant not only from the desirability but especially from the feasibility and viability viewpoints of design thinking. This relevance takes shape in the five challenges defined by Heinonen & al. (2010) that customer-dominant logic portrays for service providers, for the management, development, and marketing of their services and in relation to their ability to control co-creation processes, value emergence and overall service experience within the client organization. Table 2 describes these five challenges and their relation to the perspectives of design thinking. The relation and each challenge’s relevance are illustrated by questions that are both inspired by the practical business challenges behind the current design task and arise from the three perspectives in terms of the effectiveness of organizational coaching service (see also Heinonen & al. 2010, 544).

Challenge	Description	Primary relation to design thinking	Questions in terms of effectiveness
Service co-creation			
Involvement	The client determines the possibilities and ways the service provider can get involved in the clients' activities in the first place.	Viability Viability	How can the provider enhance its own sustainable processes and business if it must adapt its service to the individual needs, wishes and will of each client? How can the provider maximize its involvement?
Control	The provider's ability to control service co-creation processes is limited mainly to its own actions and outcomes of its internal activities.	Viability Feasibility Feasibility	How can the provider anticipate, plan, and prepare for the needed effort to create the expected value and impact without control on the service co-creation process? What in the client's context should the provider be aware of to successfully manage the service co-creation process? How can the provider by its own actions support positive outcomes also from the clients' part?
Value emergence			
Visibility	Value emerges over time, embedded within the client organization's diverse processes and activities (value-in-context) and may remain invisible to the provider.	Feasibility Feasibility	What processes, practices and features in the clients' context affect its long-term value emergence? How can the provider, by its own actions, enhance value emergence within the client organization?
Customer / service experience			
Character	The overall service experience evolves and is interpreted (and re-interpreted) in relational, mental, social, and emotional contexts and everyday processes between people, and along mundane activities within the client organization.	Desirability Desirability	What affects the way the client experiences the service and interprets its value over time? How can the provider improve service experience and valuation over time?
Scope	The clients deliberately organize, purchase and search for service experiences that they weigh to serve their own intentions and tasks in relation to their past experiences, other ongoing activities and service relations, and future goals and tasks.	Desirability Desirability Desirability	What affects the way the client experiences and interprets the value of the service offering? What makes the client want to involve the provider in its activities? How can the provider improve the client's experience and interpretation?

Table 2: The five challenges by customer-dominant logic and their relation to the perspectives of design thinking (challenge descriptions and some questions adapted from Heinonen & al. 2010, 537-545).

It is evident that the relation between the challenges from customer-dominant logic and the perspectives of design thinking is not clear-cut and each challenge can have some significance from all three perspectives. Here the focus is nevertheless on the most apparent connections and arising questions. As the table shows, the arising questions for organizational coaching effectiveness are also partly overlapping from one design thinking perspective to another. This follows the logic and definition of the effectiveness of organizational coaching service realizing only by integrating and balancing the three perspectives. Figure 2 summarizes the integrated questions and their position within the equation of customer-dominant logic challenges, design thinking perspectives and overall effectiveness of organizational coaching service. In the next three subsections, we will explore these questions further by drawing on the details of customer-dominant logic and looking for answers from both organizational coaching, organizational development, and service literature. For overall clarity and despite of all overlapping details, this examination is structured under the perspectives of desirability, feasibility and viability and guided by their respective effectiveness questions listed in Table 2. This is also to keep in mind the three perspectives' equal importance and the need for balancing in strengthening the effectiveness of organizational coaching service.

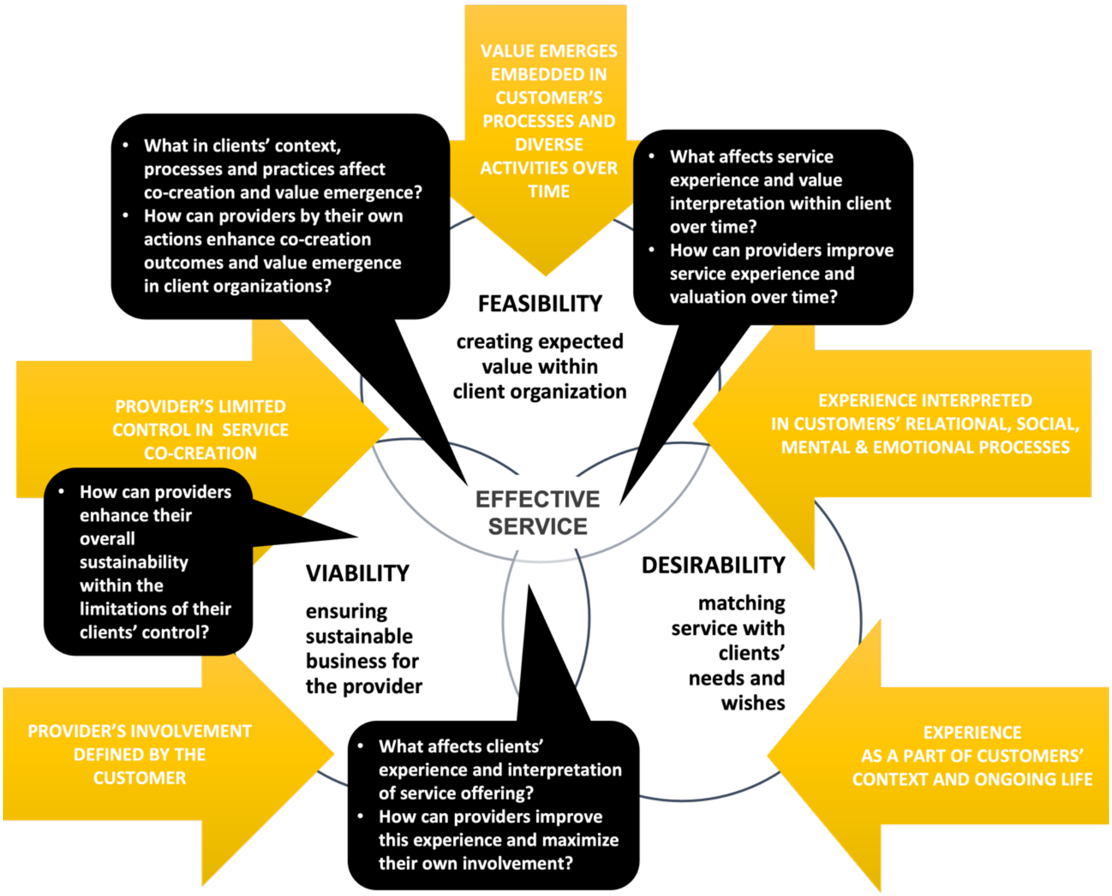


Figure 2: The five challenges by customer-dominant logic and arising development questions in relation to the effectiveness of organizational coaching service.

2.1 Desirability – matching services with customer needs & wishes

Here we will further explore the effectiveness of organizational coaching service from a desirability viewpoint and search for appropriate theoretical insights to understand what affects the way clients experience and interpret the value of a service, and how are providers to improve that experience in order to match their service with clients' needs and wishes. Our exploration is guided by the challenges and questions raised by customer-dominant logic relevant to the desirability perspective. After their short presentation, we will first examine the contributions of coaching literature and then move on to behavioral decision research, customer satisfaction and delight for complementing insights to the subject. Finally, the results of this exploration are summarized in one table beside the original challenges and questions raised by customer-dominant logic.

2.1.1 The effects of the nature of customer experience

From the desirability perspective, the most relevant challenges by customer-dominant logic appear the ones related to customer experience before, during and after the service. In customer-dominant logic, the customer's experience is affected by not only the actions and offering of the provider but also by its own history and past experiences and by its projected future, tasks, and goals. In addition, the experience the customer gains from a service is not limited to the moments of co-creation with the provider but encompasses the phases of planning the purchase (comparing possibilities and evaluating providers) and looking back on and evaluating the process afterwards. This extends the *scope of customer experience* well beyond the traditional timeframe of service presented in literature and concentrating mostly on the explicit and immediate interaction phases between the client and the provider. (Heinonen & al. 2010, 534, 540-542.) Unquestionably, the wider scope of experience also stretches the boundaries of research usual in current literature on the effectiveness of coaching (see Chapter 1.3).

Besides the extended scope of experience, customer-dominant logic takes account of the social, emotional, and relational dynamics between people, their individual experiences and interpretations as the constructs of customer experience in organizations. Through everyday life and mundane activities, all ongoing processes within a client organization affect the experience regardless of their relation to the current process. (Heinonen & al. 2010, 535, 541-542.) Heinonen & al. (2010) note that besides pure perception, experience consists of an innate reflection where the customer distinguishes how it all relates to him/herself and the prevailing context:

> With different emotions, thoughts and activities, the customer experiences a different process, outcome, and context (Heinonen & al. 2010, 542).

Through social forces and past experiences affecting the reflection of new ones, the experience (both collective and individual) of the current service within client organization is subject to continuous re-interpretation and change long after the very interaction with the provider. Hence, the *character of customer experience* is multifold and for the most part out of the provider's managerial reach, where the "intended experience may not always be equivalent to the realized experience of the customer" (Heinonen & al. 2010, 540-542). Yet the long-term value (value-in-use) of the service for the client is dependent on this experience, and the client organization's ability to integrate the outcomes in its activities (Heinonen & al. 2010, 543).

Overall, customer-dominant logic highlights the customer, or the client organization, as an active agent who deliberately evaluates the available offering in the market and chooses the services that are expected create the right kind of experiences and value for its own goals, and, for a large part, is responsible for those expectations to realize (Heinonen & al. 2010). Acknowledging the extended scope and multifold character of customer experience is particularly relevant in organizational coaching where the client aims for systemic organizational changes that will arguably fully realize only on the long run after the service and through the collaboration and relational dynamics of multiple actors. Judging a service's probability to bring about change and evaluating and capitalizing on its outcomes is hardly purely systematic and rational. How does the client experience and interpret the value of a service, first its offering before the service, then interaction and co-creation activities during the service, and finally respective outcomes and impact after the service, undoubtedly are critical questions for organizational coaches who want to develop both the desirability and effectiveness of their service.

According to Heinonen & al. (2010, 534) the attention here should be not on the provider's offering or service processes as such but on their relation to the client and ability to support its goals, tasks and ongoing activities. This is consistent with the notion of desirability in design thinking but gives a wider and deeper framework for understanding the experience from a client's viewpoint. We will next explore what effects a client's experience and interpretation of the service, and how can a provider improve that experience in this wider framework of a client organization and its ongoing life.

2.1.2 Viewpoints from organizational coaching literature

Supporting clients in their own development processes is in the core of organizational coaching (see Chapter 1.2). However, whether and how the client's own history, attitude and understanding gained for example in past service encounters affect the way it experiences and values the current organizational coaching service is hard to anticipate and plan for, particularly at the start of any new service relation as the framework for interpretation is individual and varies from one client to another. In the coaching literature the focus is, in the haze of various practitioners, blurring concepts and boundaries of different approaches in organizational development, on the clients' awareness and expertise in buying the right kind of services (Chapter 1.2; Maltbia & al. 2014; Ciporen 2015, 8). One solution has been to strengthen the professionalization of the field by creating diverse credentialing systems by professional associations and training organizations and modeling the core-competences a proficient coach is assumed to possess (see e.g. Maltbia & al. 2014, 169-171; International

Coaching Federation 2021b). Furthermore, the International Coaching Federation has taken to regularly conduct a global consumer awareness study to evaluate how widely coaching is recognized as a practice, what purposes it is purchased for and what is the significance of professional membership or certification and credentials in choosing a coach (see International Coaching Federation & PricewaterhouseCoopers 2021; International Coaching Federation & PwC International Survey Unit 2010).

Although the consumer awareness study already from 2010 point to the significance of certificates as a standard expectation by potential coaching clients regardless of their prior awareness and experience of coaching, it also showed how less than a half of actual clients had certainty over their coach's qualification by professional associations (International Coaching Federation & PwC International Survey Unit 2010). Moreover, as Gan & al. (2020, 12-15) found out in their research, purely coach-centric constructs (personality, credibility and skills) may turn out less significant in terms of coaching success than any client-centric attributes at least in situations where all available coaches possess a certain competence level, and their qualification is taken for granted by the clients. Hence, from a desirability perspective, professional qualification may be a prerequisite for a successful and effective coaching service but offers little tools for a provider to develop the service in relation to the client's goals, tasks, and activities, or to positively differentiate from other available providers and options in the market.

As to the client-related attributes, Gan & al. (2020) showed that organizational support (demonstrated e.g. with positive attitude and adequate investment of resources), and appropriate individual characteristics of each coachee (e.g. motivation, confidence and engagement with the process) are the two most important factors in enhancing coaching effectiveness. However, whereas both factors emphasize the need for desirability of a service and follow the premises of customer-dominant logic in highlighting the client's role in value creation, they do not really add to the understanding of how to build on them in strengthening the effectiveness of organizational coaching. Maltbia & al. (2014, 172) stress the need for a coach to understand and define his/her role and goals of a specific coaching process in relation to the coachee's needs, current situation and respective strategic context. For that end and following the classification by Witherspoon & White (1996), they differentiate four distinct roles for (executive) coaching with recommendations of duration and contents for the structure, focus and overall effectiveness of the process (Maltbia & al. 2014, 173).

Whether the focus and role of coaching is on boosting knowledge and skills, performance, professional development, or the realization of a broader strategic agenda of a coachee, is valuable information for both parties throughout the coaching relation (Maltbia & al. 2014, 173). Mutual understanding and engagement to the process certainly helps in building the trust and positive connection – the quality relationship between a coach and a coachee that Gan & al. (2020, 9, 13) found to be the third critical success factor for the effectiveness of coaching. How exactly, in the customer's experience and interpretation, is the desirability and value of a service construed, and how can a provider improve this experience are crucial questions that nevertheless remain unanswered. Complementing insights related to customer experience are needed especially in the planning phase, before the actual service interaction and at the very start of building the good and effective coaching relationship. Next, we will explore some additional theoretical viewpoints outside organizational coaching to be better acquainted with the building blocks for a desirable and valuable service in the experience and interpretation of a client organization.

2.1.3 Identifying biases in judgement and decision-making

Although customer-dominant logic presents the customer in control of the service process and as an agent deliberately arranging experiences that best suit its own goals, it does not assume this act to be rational. On the contrary, Heinonen & al. (2010, 541) highlight customer experience as innately subjective, emotional, and dependent on the affecting frame of interpretation within the customer's prevailing context. Furthermore, in an organizational context, the extended scope and multifold character of experience creates obvious challenges for properly predicting and controlling the outcomes and value of any chosen service (see Heinonen & al. 2010, 540-542; Bazerman & Moore 2013, 5). Despite any time and effort invested for example in choosing the most appropriate service provider to support the systemic change process in an organization, there are always challenges regarding both the availability of critical pieces of information as well as the ability to process it in an objective and effective manner. Behavioral decision research is focused on the limitations and biases of human judgement and sheds thus some valuable light on the experience and interpretation of service value within client organizations.

Making rational choices would entail perfect and explicit understanding of the problem (the client's goal and tasks) and the criteria for appropriate solutions (the targeted experiences), thorough familiarity with and rating of all available alternatives (market offering and potential value of each option), and finally objective calculations to make the optimal decision (the appropriate involvement of the chosen provider). Due to human limits in information processing, textbook rationality is time-consuming, often inefficient, and for most of the time even impossible. It is a widely accepted fact that people rarely are capable of watertight reasoning at least in decisions that steer their daily behavior. (Bazerman & Moore 2013, 2-4.) Instead, we are likely to rely on intuitive, fast, emotional, and automatic thinking that requires less effort and often happens without further acknowledgement. This so-called System 1 (or Automatic System) thinking is based on cognitive shortcuts like association, gut feeling and thumb rules, which are helpful in everyday small decisions such as picking a lunch meal or selecting clothes for work. In any larger life-changing individual or strategic organizational choices, they can however cause far-reaching and unwanted consequences. (Kahneman 2011; Bazerman & Moore 2013, 5-6.)

The problem is that System 1 thinking with its simplifying strategies tends to be in effect even when the attempt is to apply more conscious and reflective System 2 (alternatively Reflective System) thinking and draw informed and rational conclusions. For example, gaps in the information or complexity to the issue may entice individuals, intentionally or not, to fill in or bypass them by applying System 1 shortcuts. (Kahneman 2011.) An occurrence that undeniably is present with any client trying to choose the most effective service to support the realization of systemic organizational change processes. In addition, we as individuals have challenges in observing our environment correctly due to e.g. the functioning of human vision and ability of mind to steer focus. Hence, we may for example see and interpret things differently to their true being and miss or ignore important details and information that are available outside our immediate attention. (Thaler & Sunstein 2009; Bazerman & Moore 2013, Chapter 4; Kahneman 2011.) Together with the cognitive shortcuts and simplifying rules of intuitive System 1 processing, these characteristics create biases to our thinking that may lead us astray from what would be best for our own good or wishes.

System 1 cognitive shortcuts and phenomena arising from the functioning of human mind and senses are called heuristics. Depending on the author, the list of and relation between identified heuristics and biases is somewhat different. For example whereas Kahneman & Tevrsky (1974, according to Thaler & Sunstein 2009, 23) listed anchoring as one of the heuristics guiding our thinking, Bazerman & Moore (2013, 58) describe it as one of the biases consequent on the confirmation heuristic. Some authors only make lists of tendencies relevant to their subject without differentiating between the two (see e.g. Liedtka 2014, 930-931; Fehr-Duda & Fehr 2016). In addition, the research on behavioral perspectives in decision-making in different contexts is constantly generating new insights, and the labeling and definition of many biases seems to vary from one source to another. However, in trying to understand how to develop the desirability of organizational coaching service, it is not as important to form a perfect list of heuristics and emanating biases as to understand that this phenomenon exists and influences the way people in a client organization experience the service, interpret its benefits, and make related decisions. Here are some examples of common heuristics and related biases that may be relevant in the context of organizational coaching service (see Bazerman & Moore 2013; Kahneman 2011; Liedtka 2015; Thaler & Sunstein 2009):

- *Availability heuristic:* Estimation of probability and frequency of events is based on information that is readily available, effortless to remember, or easy to imagine. Vivid, emotional, and specific events are easier to picture and retrieve from memory and have more impact on evaluations than insignificant ones. Present-day worries and benefits are more motivating than long-term undefined threats or possibilities of the future.

- *Representativeness heuristic:* Making broad and simple generalizations over few similar characteristics of things, events, and people. Creating categorizations and making assumptions of prospects and causalities based on only few conjunctive details. Underestimating the role of chance and coincidence. Expecting the future to follow current course of events.
- *Confirmation heuristic:* Ignoring the existence of multiple viewpoints to complicated issues with tendency to seek for data that confirms the preliminary (favored) understanding or hypothesis. Conflicting information is easily overlooked or questioned, and confidence on one's own understanding and abilities stays strong. Any initial information or starting point forms an anchor for comparison and adjustment for subsequent evaluations or opinions.
- *Affect heuristic:* Decisions are based on evaluations fueled by emotions instead of conscious thinking and reasoning. Interpretation of facts is consistent with and adapts to the impression of and emotional reaction to the object or issue that is being evaluated. Changes in the intensity of general emotional state can also alter the evaluations made at different times.

In the client organizations' experience, interpretation, and decisions these biases can manifest themselves in a variety of ways as on all occasions involving human activities. There may be for example reliance on familiar and safe course of events and preference of incremental development steps or internal ideas over totally novel ones coming from outside. At the same time, learning from past decisions through objective reflection can be challenging, and failure to acknowledge the deficits in knowledge base is common. Lack of interest towards unknown facts and tendency to overrate own abilities and role in positive events may be usual. Planning own future actions and expectations of effectiveness are easily based on optimistic and rosy prospects. The client's focus on current endeavors may prevent it from recognizing alternative paths or perceiving significant information outside respective conception of the world. (See for example Liedtka 2015; Thaler & Sunstein 2009; Bazerman & Moore 2013.)

As Heinonen & al. (2010) have noted, the clients' experience and interpretation of a service's value is affected by the past, and the potential performance of a provider may be judged by arbitrary categorizations and comparisons with unrelated earlier encounters. First impressions matter, and for example any initial and concrete offer set a stage for bargaining that can be hard to recompose afterwards (Bazerman & Moore 2013, 179-187). In addition, personally or emotionally provoking and appealing experiences may have more impact on the interpretation of service value instead of seemingly trivial or insignificant ones. Prevailing emotional state or mood of a client may base on irrelevant events and insignificant memories recalled by some minor detail in the conversation, but still sway the judgement of a service's value and risks in one way or another. (Kahneman 2011, 140-141; Liedtka 2015, 931.)

Whereas these few examples cover only a small fraction of all the potential effects of human biases in the experience and interpretation of service value in client organizations, they do demonstrate how easily and far off human judgement can get from the so-called rational decision-making. While challenging and supporting the client's own thinking and development process is the essence of organizational coaching and the coach's professional competence (see Chapter 1.3), how can the coach as a service provider enhance fertile discussions with the client right from the start of their relationship? How can the provider avoid most of the pitfalls of losing the client's trust in the service at their first encounter? How can the provider support the client in making the right kind of decisions for its own goals and future?

2.1.4 Facilitating client's decisions

Answering these questions requires attention to the details that provide the context for the client's interpretation, choices and decision-making, the choice architecture, as Thaler & Sunstein (2009) label it: What are the alternatives, how are they defined and presented, by whom, to whom and in what order? Where is the focus, how are things proportioned and what is the needed effort? What are the expected consequences, benefits, and risks, and when and how will they realize? (See examples from different fields: Sanders, Briscese, Gallagher, Gyani, Hanes, Kirkman & Service 2021; Fehr-Duda & Fehr 2016; Tannenbaum, Fox & Rogers 2017; Benscheidt & Carpenter 2020.) Thaler & Sunstein (2009, 3) highlight that in all moments of choice this architecture exists and affects the client irrespective of the consciousness of its design. As they say, "everything matters" because small details have the power of "focusing the attention of users in a particular direction" (Thaler & Sunstein 2009, 3). Modifying these details to steer the client's attention to help them reflect or choose alternatives according to their true goals and objectives instead of biased, System 1 first impressions, cognitive shortcuts, and thumb rules, is called nudging (Thaler & Sunstein 2009).

For Thaler & Sunstein (2009), to nudge is to practice libertarian paternalism (either in public policy or private business settings), where the word 'libertarian' refers to leaving the freedom of choice to the client, and 'paternalism' to aiming at decisions that are for the client's own, embraced good (or for the larger good of the society). Accordingly, nudges must be easily and effortlessly avoidable, and thus not force or forbid any choices, or considerably change the client's economic motives. Furthermore, libertarian paternalism entails predictability, awareness on the ways the nudge will affect behavior. Of course, choice architectures can be modified also against these conditions (think of common marketing or sales tricks), but then it is no longer about libertarian paternalism or nudging (Thaler &

Sunstein 2009, 5-6.) To differentiate nudging from manipulation and enhance ethicality in its application, Hansen & Jespersen (2013) highlight the significance of transparency, an additional condition for libertarian paternalism first recognized by Thaler & Sunstein (2009, 246-249). In their view, transparency of nudging should be defined epistemically and evaluated by the extent to which the person who is being nudged can “reasonably be expected” to recognize and understand both the objective and the means to affect his/her behavior and choices (Hansen & Jespersen 2013, 17).

Hansen & Jespersen (2013) analyze the significance of transparency in relation to the cognitive system the nudge is aimed at affecting: automatic behavior (System 1 thinking), or reflective choices (System 2 thinking). Although choosing a service to support systemic organizational transformation is most probably affected by the System 1 cognitive shortcuts and interpretations, it is justifiable to assume that it is a decision that comprehensively engages also reflective, System 2 thinking and choices. In Hansen & Jespersen’s (2013) description, using non-transparent nudges to sway decisions that engage System 2 thinking is the most manipulative form as it not only is hard to avoid and thus questionable as a nudge, but (unlike in manipulating automatic behavior) also leaves the responsibility of a reflective choice to the person who only technically made it. In their view, manipulation of a seemingly conscious choice even with the best of intentions is devious and should thus be avoided. (Hansen & Jespersen 2013, 25-27.)

Transparent nudging of reflective, System 2 thinking and choices works the other way around with an aim to encourage conscious decisions towards what is best for one’s own interest (or the society’s interest at large). According to Hansen & Jespersen (2013), this so-called “facilitation of consistent choice” is the most loyal form to the original definition of nudging by Thaler & Sunstein (2009), since with epistemically recognizable means and goals taken into consideration as a part of a reflective decision-making process it truly enables the possibility to choose or act also otherwise and is thus the easiest form to avoid. (Hansen & Jespersen 2013, 23-24).

Good service relationships are built on mutual honesty and conscious, well-informed choices by the client, whereas any misleading or manipulative attempts by the provider would work against the principles of the coaching profession (see Chapter 1.2), and eventually the provider’s own business. Facilitating consistent decisions within client organizations by manifestly steering their attention to what is relevant, to their own true goals and preferences, available alternatives, and related consequences (see Hansen & Jespersen 2013, 24) nevertheless works for the best of the client and, as a visible, recognizable, and honest effort, probably also for the good of the potential service relation. As a result, the aim is to keep in mind the overall significance of details, the promising potential of transparent nudges (together with the need to avoid manipulative ones) and intentionally design choice architecture that support the clients' consideration and awareness of the real context for their decisions instead of relying on past experiences, quick assumptions, or cognitive short-cuts.

2.1.5 Ensuring sustainable experience for long-term commitment

Optimizing choice architecture to support clients' conscious service choices and build solid foundations for the relationship nevertheless does not guarantee positive and value-generating customer experience throughout the service. As described earlier, customer-dominant logic explains how customer experience of a service evolves continuously over time through organizational dynamics between individuals, their personal perceptions, and interpretations in relation to their past experiences and other ongoing processes and is, for a large part considered beyond service provider's influence. Yet the long-term value generation and the client organization's ability to make use of service outcomes is dependent on this very experience. (Heinonen & al. 2010, 535, 541-543.) As a target of incessant evaluation and under constant reinterpretation of service, how can then the provider of organizational coaching ensure the client organization and its individual members sustainable customer experience and commit them to the change process over the course of the service process, during and even after the actual interactive relationship?

In their article on customer delight Parasuraman, Ball, Aksoy, Keiningham & Zaki (2020) explore what kind of qualities in a service experience are to foster long-term commitment and fidelity among customers. They ground on the view that it takes more than satisfaction for a service to gain specific, long-lasting relevance in a customer's life – expectations need to be exceeded and customers feel delight for a significant experience (Parasuraman & al. 2020.) While there is an ongoing debate over the essence of delight, and whether and how it differs from for example extreme satisfaction (see Parasuraman & al. 2020), the so-called Kano model by Noriaki Kano and his research team explained already in 1984 how fulfilling the customer's basic quality expectations or needs does not lead to satisfaction yet is necessary as to avoid dissatisfaction (defining thus a certain must-be level for the service). Instead, unexpected features in a service may be attractive and extensively increase satisfaction (or delight) if they manage to tap into new, earlier uncovered needs with customers. In addition, providers can enhance their customers' overall experience by constantly improving their performance within current offering. In the Kano model mastering of all three domains (avoiding dissatisfaction by complying to basic expectations, attracting with new features, and constantly improving performance) is expected. (Shahin, Pourhamidi, Antony & Huyn Park 2013; Madzík 2018.)

There is ample later research on the Kano model as well as on the constituents of delight with no concrete agreement on the features in a service (or service offering) that would generate loyalty or long-long term commitment from customers. The challenge with attracting customers by fulfilling newly discovered needs is the tendency of newness to fade and convert into standard expectation that must be met to protect customers from excess disappointment (Shahin & al. 2013; Madzík 2018). Parasuraman & al. (2020) wanted to elaborate the contemplation of delight further from recent thinking, beyond the notions of newness or surprise, or the pleasure of extreme satisfaction. Their research identified six individual features that can influence perceptions, generate delight, and thus pave the way for lasting relationships, which are (Parasuraman & al. 2020, 8-14):

- *Emotions*: Possibility to experience positively appraised emotional states, altering from high and intensive moments like excitement to calmer phases such as feeling appreciated without excluding mixed states involving for example sadness
- *Social interaction:* Quality of interpersonal interaction, be it direct or indirect, with or between service providers, other customers and/or actors
- *Problem-solving:* Meeting functional service objectives, attending individual needs or solving abrupt challenges or at least an apparent attempt to do so
- *Sensory engagement:* Visual, auditory, tactile, gustatory or olfactive stimuli through aroused feelings and/or memories
- *Timing*: Synchronizing service with customers' individual rhythm and temporal requirements, varying from swift and smooth to slow and focused
- *Sense of control:* Customers' agency or control in tailoring the service, its process and outcomes, or active involvement in mutual value-creation process

According to Parasuraman & al. (2020), the identified features can function in various altering combinations, and most often act as a source of customer delight in constellations of three or more features. One single feature is unlikely to bring about the effect alone. The essence of delight is thus not formative in a way that it could be determined or measured by the existence of certain features. On the contrary, delight can be generated and experienced in multiple ways, which makes it also hard to anticipate. The authors note nevertheless that positive emotions, social interaction and effective problem-solving seem to form the most common triangle among potential constellations of delight. This does not however mean that the other three features (sensory engagement, timing, or sense of control) could not prove to be essential as a source of delight for some services. (Parasuraman & al. 2020, 15-17.) In terms of customer-dominant logic and its emphasis on the customers' role in the lead of a service process (see Heinonen & al. 2010), it would be surprising if for example total absence of clients' sense of control would not diminish their experience of delight at least in services associated with as important goals as organizational change.

Moreover, although the nature of significant delight generating positive emotions is likely to differ from one service or industry to another, the research by Parasuraman & al (2020, 19) demonstrates how the range of potentially meaningful positive emotions can cover a whole wider spectrum of shades and states than generally assumed extreme and intense experiences of surprise or joy. In addition, delight was discovered above all an interpersonal and shared experience where other people's reactions and behavior affect personal perceptions (Parasuraman & al. 2020, 12,17). Parasuraman's & al. (2020) advice for service managers to appreciate the complexity and contextuality of customer experience and take a holistic approach in developing them makes perfect sense also with the learnings from customer-dominant logic and both *the* widened *scope* and the relational and dynamic *character of customer experience* as a social, emotional, and contextual process of interpretation within client organizations (see Heinonen & al. 2010). Similarly, the Kano model's recipe for enhancing customer experience and increasing satisfaction by avoiding disappointments, offering attractive solutions for new needs, and constantly improving performance (Shahin & al. 2013; Madzík 2018), is well in accordance with the service dominant-logic's notion of customers looking for best possible solutions to fulfill their long-term needs and goals (see Heinonen & al. 2010).

While the relevance of these multifold insights to the current design challenge remains to be further explored in the forthcoming case study of concrete service processes (Chapter 3), the discussed literature offers broad understanding to the potential constituents of customer experience in enhancing organizational coaching effectiveness from a desirability viewpoint. Table 3 summarizes this contribution by listing the main perspectives gained from the literature in relation to the challenges of customer experience and consequent questions raised by customer-dominant logic.

Challenge	**Description**	**Primary relation to design thinking**	**Questions in terms of effectiveness**	**Perspectives from the literature**
Customer experience				
Scope	The clients deliberately organize, purchase and search for service experiences that they weigh to serve their own intentions and tasks in relation to their past experiences, other ongoing activities and service relations, and future goals and tasks.	Desirability	What affects the way the client experiences and interprets the value of the service offering?	Client's awareness and understanding of service offering vis-à-vis its needs. System 1 biases aside system 2 reflection.
		Desirability	What makes the client want to involve the provider in its activities?	Positive impressions, credibility and mutual understanding on the role and possibilities of coaching in terms of the requirements of the expected change.
		Desirability	How can the provider improve the client's experience and interpretation?	Minding the choice architecture and facilitating the client's conscious choices, i.e. using transparent nudges for reflective choices.

Challenge	Description	Primary relation to design thinking	Questions in terms of effectiveness	Perspectives from the literature
Customer experience				
Character	The overall service experience evolves and is interpreted (and reinterpreted) in relational, mental, social, and emotional contexts and everyday processes between people, and along mundane activities within the client organization.	Desirability Desirability	What affects the way the client experiences the service and interprets its value over time? How can the provider improve service experience and valuation over time?	Overall satisfaction with fulfilled new needs and basic expectations. Delight generating experiences. Taking a holistic approach by avoiding disappointments, uncovering, and tapping on new needs and improving performance. Appreciating the multiple features, complexity and contextuality of delightful experience.

Table 3: Main perspectives from the literature to the challenges of customer experience in enhancing service effectiveness from a desirability viewpoint.

2.2 Feasibility – enhancing value creation

In this chapter we will examine the effectiveness of organizational coaching service from a feasibility viewpoint. The aim is to enlighten both client organization features and potential provider actions that may influence their joint co-creation processes and outcomes as well as the long-term value emergence of the service. Again, the starting point in this examination is the challenges and questions raised by customer-dominant logic relevant to the perspective. After a review on the contributions of coaching literature, we will investigate the nature and prerequisites of systemic change and familiarize with the structures and relations enhancing organizational learning. Next, we will also explore the conditions that are considered to enhance absorptive capacity in organizations. Lastly, the main insights of this chapter are compiled to a summarizing table with the original challenges and questions raised by customer-dominant logic.

2.2.1 The effects of limited control and lacking visibility

From the feasibility perspective, a service provider’s limited control and lacking visibility over client organization and its evolving internal processes seem the most essential challenges raised by customer-dominant logic. These challenges contest the providers’ possibilities to successfully manage their service process. As described earlier, customer-dominant logic appreciates the client as an active agent constructing its own path and experiences, and as a self-determining, dynamic organization with its distinct internal, mental, emotional, and relational processes afar from the provider’s view and reach. The client organization, with its individual members, may be involved in manifold simultaneous processes, activities, tasks, and events demanding their attention, affecting their interpretation, and changing their priorities and behavior in relation to a specific service. Therefore, service providers can never truly count on their clients engaging, deciding, reacting, or experiencing as they themselves have planned, advised, or expected these to do. Controlling the clients' actions in co-creation processes would entitle controlling their minds. Mastering only its own actions and mostly hoping for the best for the part of the client, the provider has only *limited control in* their mutual *co-creation of service*, the very process that is supposed to bring value to the client. (Heinonen & al. 2010.) The challenge is easy to visualize especially in the sphere of organizational coaching and systemic change processes aiming to affect and requiring engagement at all levels of the client organization.

The provider should nevertheless be able to bring about expected value and impact to its client or else the service relationship is likely to fall short. According to Heinonen & al. (2010) from the client's viewpoint

> […] service contains three types of elements: outcomes of the service providers' internal activities, co-creation processes and their outcome elements, and process and outcome elements of the customer's own activities (Heinonen & al. 2010, 537).

The question is, how can a service provider by its own actions support first positive co-creation outcomes for the part of the client (decisions, reactions, interpretations, and experiences) and finally positive outcomes from the client's own, independent, and ongoing activities for the service process to produce intended value. As Heinonen & al. (2010, 538) point out, a co-creation process does not automatically lead to the creation of value. The authors suggest a "structural fit between a service and a customer's life", a focus on customers' intentions and on the way they use services for their own goals (Heinonen & al. 2010, 533-535). The problem here is that "the client" defining the initial intentions, purpose and specific goals for the coaching process and making the decisions to purchase the service inevitably represents only limited perspective to the organization, be it top-management or some other party with decision power. As Heinonen & al. (2010) state, service value is interpreted and evolves in a dynamic intersubjective and collective context, where

> […] collective social forces often have a dominant role, but individual needs, preferences, habits and values play an important part in both service co-creation and value assessment (Heinonen & al. 2010, 540).

From the customer-dominant viewpoint, value (intended or not) of a service emerges over time after and beyond the mere co-creation process, through the experience and interpretations of individual members, groups, and teams in an organization and in relation to other processes, activities, and services in the past, in the present, and in the future. The service is embedded in and at the mercy of the organization's continuing life where its *emerging value* can remain *invisible to the provider*. Value-in-use is for a large part value-in-context where experience and value of a service can be renegotiated and reinterpreted in various mental and emotional processes, and the context itself is constantly changing through new and multiplying experiences. (Heinonen & al. 2010.) The question is how a service provider can support its client's "ongoing activity and experience structures" (Heinonen & al. 2010, 543) in a way that their co-creation process will generate expected outcomes and eventually long-term value and impact to the client. Customer-dominant logic highlights the need for service providers to deepen and widen their perspective to their client's context, beyond their mutual, immediate activities and joint experiences, to the related external and subsequent client activities and their results amid accumulating experiences (Heinonen & al. 2010).

In relation to design thinking and feasibility perspective, customer-dominant logic not only emphasizes the necessity to address the service infrastructure and its functionality in generating expected value in any given client context (see Brown & Wyatt 2010, 32) but additionally urges to explore how well the available means (capabilities, approaches, tools, and resources) adapt to work for the service goal in dynamic and changing settings. In coaching it is inherent to live along and adjust to the coachee's process, to work together for the client to reach its goal. Yet again, if we take the step back from the coaching process and consider organizational coaching as a service, what in the client's context should the provider be aware of to successfully manage the service co-creation process from the first negotiations onward? In the sphere of organizational coaching, what processes, practices and features in the clients' context affect co-creation outcomes and long-term value emergence, that is the realization of a positive and systemic organizational transformation? And finally, how can the coaching provider, by its own actions, enhance both positive service outcomes and long-term value emergence within the client organization even without control and proper sight on their effects?

2.2.2 Viewpoints from organizational coaching literature

As it was described earlier, coaching literature points to the significance of customer understanding, to coaches' familiarity with their coachees' context, and to the situational and structural factors for the expected learning and change processes as key prerequisites for successful coaching. Still, much of the research is focused on either proving the general effectiveness of coaching or the overall functionality of different coaching approaches and practices by measuring them against some predetermined theoretical model of expected individual or organizational learning, development, or performance results (Jones & al. 2016; Zuñiga-Collazos, Castillo-Palacio, Montaña-Narváez & Castillo-Arévalo 2020.) Albeit being justified for the quantitative settings and validating purposes of each study, theoretical models with fixed variables tend to overlook the situational and structural factors and contexts, the very perspective the coaching research is craving for. Also, as identified in the previous chapters, much effort is devoted to defining the core-competences and developing practices of coaching (see e.g. Jones & al. 2016; Maltbia & al. 2014; International Coaching

Federation 2021b, also Chapter 2). While this is beneficial for the professionalization of the coaching field, it represents a provider-dominant approach with a focus on the activities and characteristics of a coach and provides thus little tools for developing services and solving feasibility challenges from a customer-dominant viewpoint (see Heinonen & al. 2010).

There are however a few studies that touch upon client-related attributes and their impact and consequences on coaching. For example the aforementioned research by Gan & al. (2020) acknowledged how the client organization's support and the coachee's personal motivation are the two most significant constructs of coaching effectiveness in terms of predetermined objectives such as learning, behavioral change, facilitated transition, improved performance or coach's acting as a sounding board. Organizational support is characterized to manifest as positive and open culture favoring learning and development, and as commitment, adequate time and financial resources allocated from the top management. The managerial support should be visible and openly demonstrated to the rest of the organization in order to raise awareness and strengthen positive attitude towards the coachee's process and potential outcomes. Supportive organizational stance can correspondingly increase a coachee's own motivation and engagement towards personal development shown for example as his/her proactiveness, goal orientation and feedback receptiveness. According to Gan's & al. (2020) a coach's main means of influence is to build a good and functioning relationship with the coachee enhancing their mutual understanding, trust, and open and honest communication, which was the third most significant factor in coaching success. (Gan & al. 2020, 12-13.)

Gan & al. (2020) research is focused on one-to-one executive coaching aiming at a coachee's individual professional development, which is a narrow perspective for the purposes of this study. Hsia's & al. (2012) take a slightly wider approach in their article considering systemic coaching as an efficient way to enhance organizational development goals. Their main statement is that organization level results can be reached best when the coaching effort is targeted to all key leaders throughout organization. Then the individual leaders' competences to deal with challenging and ambiguous circumstances related to change are leveraged simultaneously and personal coaching goals aligned to enhance mutual organizational objectives. According to the authors, key factors behind any effects of coaching on an organizational level are related to the potential interdependence of roles between different leaders and their individual motivation and readiness for personal development. Intertwined, these two factors can either boost or hamper the joint impact of individual coaching processes and are to be taken into consideration in identifying pivotal leaders and deciding whose coaching would bring the most powerful effects. (Hsia & al. 2012, 48-49.)

Bhatnagar (2021) further widens the view by considering client context as an ecosystem and an interplay between every coachees' personal qualities and style (intrapersonal level), the qualities and style of their (leader) peers and manager (dyadic level), and the surrounding culture (organizational level). For effective coaching, instead of focusing only on each coachees' individual traits and personally conceived ability to convert their strengths into work performance, a coach should gather comparative survey knowledge on all three levels and use it to enhance the coachees' and their managers' mutual understanding on their reciprocal effects in the organization. When each coachees' personal qualities are discussed both in individual and joint group sessions for all coachees and their managers, it raises the awareness of everyone's strengths and increases their common ability to use those strengths for the benefit of the organization. (Bhatnagar 2021.)

Whereas the focus of these studies is restricted solely to the internal context of a coachee's organization, Fatien Diochon & Nizet (2019) include the client's external context to their examination. They suggest that one way to increase both internal and external context sensitivity across organizations is to broaden the structural scope of leadership development programs (including coaching programs) towards more decentralized and less formalized forms. Centralization in program-related decision making and formalization in coaching-related execution allows a small group of people usually in the top of organizational hierarchy to decide who gets to be coached, for what ends, for how long, by whom and in what way, and to interpret, overlook and instrumentalize context factors in favor to their own interests. By contrast, distributing decision power to the lower levels of hierarchy and leaving appropriate room for adjustment within each coaching process would enable better consideration of different situational circumstances with specific needs, challenges and experiences and thus enhance the overall organizational fit and finally also coaching effectiveness. (Fatien Diochon & Nizet 2019.)

Despite the emerging attention towards organization-level development goals and dynamic, interrelated context features as key determinants of the effectiveness of coaching, the challenge with current coaching research is the persistent, embedded stance to perceive change mainly through the development and performance of individuals instead of dealing with collective competences, collaborative processes, or systemic transition (see also Fatien Diochon & Nizet 2019). However, developing the feasibility of organizational coaching service aiming for positive systemic transformation within client organizations unquestionably requires comprehension of also group and organization level aspects. For the purposes of this study, to better understand the prerequisites and contextual features affecting systemic change in varying client situations as well as to identify organizational coaches' possibilities to enhance value creation and impact of their service, we will next explore theoretical contributions related to systemic organizational change.

2.2.3 Understanding systemic organizational change

Describing a change or transformation systemic is quite common across a wide variety of disciplines. Yet any compact or generalizable elaborations on its meaning are hard to find. Based on a cross-disciplinary literature review, Clarke & Crane (2018, 308) define systemic change as “the result of actions that lead to a significant alteration within a system, potentially leading to substantial impacts”, where the system can be of any, defined scale. Connolly (2017) rephrases change to be systemic when it reaches “all or most parts of a system, thus affecting the general behavior of the entire system”. He also remarks how it is intrinsic for people to rather concentrate and act on individual parts or perspectives of a system than on the system connecting those parts, which is why the definition of the system itself comprehensively affects the accomplishment of a desired change. Sandaker (2009, 278) reminds that a systems perspective ultimately entails consideration of not only the system and its individual parts but also of the environment with which the system interacts thus highlighting its organic nature. Hence, within an organizational context, systemic change refers to a significant change with possible substantial impacts affecting all or most parts and perspectives of an organization also including its interactions with the environment.

As to the research on organizational change, Schirmer & Geithner (2018, 10) reprimand the usual normative and managerialist approach and common lack of understanding of the multilateral connections and mutual influence between different levels of an organization. From a systemic perspective, change can be largely pursued by the initiatives of individual, grass roots level actors and have major organizational effects. The authors highlight the polyphonic nature of change, where conflicting voices do not necessarily represent the good agents and bad resisters of change but rather generate multiple and rich interpretations of the needs for change in the unique situations and challenges organizations and their individual parts face in relation to their environment. In congruence with the principles of customer-dominant logic, Schirmer & Geithner (2018, 12) describe how change stems from “the lived experience and situation-specific knowledge of actors”, the observed contradictions and adaptation between local activity systems (i.e. organizations or part of organizations working towards their objectives) and their environment in terms of for example appropriate goals, available instruments and methods, or collaboration with other activity systems. (Schirmer & Geithner 2018.)

According to Schirmer & Geithner (2018), organization-level change is based on expansive learning across boundaries as the local resolutions for adaptation (e.g. new objectives, methods or tools, or division of labor) spread between interacting activity systems subsequently and potentially causing further contradictions. Expansion depends on the possibilities for interaction and activity across internal and external borders within an organization. Ultimately, learning can be either obstructed or encouraged by the exertion of episodic or systemic power. There are four forms of power that can be used to control both the interaction (participation, inclusion and sharing) and the activity (interpretation, adaptation, and change) of individual people or groups of people. Episodic power is exerted in direct actions between people in the forms of coercion and manipulation whereas systemic power is structural and embedded in the culture and knowledge base of an organization. Systemic power does not depend on individual people but rather affects through invisible forms such as domination and subjectification. (Schirmer & Geithner 2018.) Here are some examples of the potential manifestations and effects of each form of power (Schirmer & Geithner 2018, 14-15):

- *Coercion or expression of strength and power* is observable especially in conflict situations where one person or group makes other persons or groups act against their own will or for example decides on their inclusion or exclusion to a discussion.
- *Manipulation* is related to the ability of one person or group to pass their perspectives and interpretations as the prevalent ones to important discussions and agendas.
- *Domination* is the function of (accepted) social mechanisms that homogenizes people's thinking and valuations and can be demonstrated for example as an absence of conflicts and lacking polyphonic voices.
- *Subjectification* is the self-disciplinary result of people assuming the role and identity they are assigned to through the structures, or control, evaluation and career systems of an organization.

Each form of power can be used in either productive or restrictive ways. Schirmer & Geithner (2018, 16) however suggest that the since episodic forms (coercion and manipulation) generally increase people's capacity to act and promote change even against opposite opinions, these are more likely to promote expansive learning than the systemic forms that usually create and maintain stability within systems. It is nevertheless obvious that also coercion or manipulation can be used to smother contradicting viewpoints or to suppress change efforts that are against someone's personal or group interest. Also Brix (2017, 119) observed in his case research, that the influence of the prevailing organizational knowledge (the institutionalized collective and cultural knowledge in an organization, one manifestation of systemic power) on the valuations and perceptions of the group of people participating in an organizational change effort steadily fades over the time and along the progress of the project and is simultaneously replaced with new ways of thinking. The effects of these four forms of power are thus not definitive but rather relational and depend on the way they are used, for what ends and in what situation.

Additionally, although Brix (2017) stresses that it takes top management support and approval for a change to be organizational, he notes that notwithstanding their specifications the objectives and meaning of a change process will get renegotiated by the people involved at the lower levels. Also, if the interpretations of the specific change objectives are not aligned across organization, the results tend to differ from the original and intended ones. (Brix 2017, 120, 122.) This all highlights the emergent and unfolding nature of change that Schirmer & Geithner (2018) describe from a systemic perspective. Individual groups and people may not only affect organizational change by using mainly episodic power but also enable it through their interaction and agency when not restricted by the forms of especially systemic power. Nonetheless, it is noteworthy that esteemed leaders can, by their own behavior and concrete example, to some extent also alter the dominating interpretations and valuations as well as the assumed roles and identities and thus enhance overall commitment to the pursued change within their organization (see Lucas & Kline 2008, 284).

Systemic organizational change is thus a multifold and dynamic process stemming from the observed need for change in any part and at any level of the organization. In cases of purchasing organizational coaching service, the client most probably already has some defined and managerially approved objectives and expectations for the forthcoming change. From the organizational coaching effectiveness, long-term value emergence and feasibility perspective it is nevertheless to service providers' interest to value the unfolding and fundamentally polyphonic nature of change and to acknowledge the multilateral and relational effects of the uses and structures of power potentially working for or against change at all levels of their client organization. Instead of relying on some universal and abstract models it is also advisable to appreciate the every-day experience, context-specific knowledge and learning of the organization itself as the main driver for its change (see Schirmer & Geithner 2018). Despite their ordinary references to learning Schirmer & Geithner (2018) do not really explain how people learn in an organization and how does learning forward change across organizational boundaries. Therefore we will next explore the research on organizational learning and on its prerequisites a little bit further.

2.2.4 Elaborating organizational learning

All organizational change requires learning and the application or creation of new knowledge (e.g. Brix 2017). What then is organizational learning and under what kind of conditions is it most likely to happen in addition to the power aspects discussed above? Bogenrieder (2002) defines organizational learning as a social-relational cognitive activity where the primary entity for learning is a group of people (two persons at its minimum) instead of an individual, the usual starting point in the theorizations on organizational learning. 'Social-relational' refers to the way learning depends on interacting people and their mutual relationship and 'cognitive' to the creation of new knowledge. In other words, interacting people, their relationship and their relative cognitions set the conditions for their common learning. According to Bogenrieder (2002), for any organizational learning to happen, two or more interacting people need to have cognitive conflicts (different kind of knowledge, understandings, or interpretations) in relation to each other, and a relationship that first allows the recognition of those conflicts and second encourages their resolution. Common learning, that is the resolution of conflicts, occurs either through accommodation or transgression. (Bogenrieder 2002.)

Accommodation means that one or more persons of a group adapts to the knowledge, understanding or interpretation provided by another or others, whereas in transgression members of a group reconcile a solution that is equally new to everyone. In either case, the conclusion is mutually accepted by all involved and the learning that happens is already organizational (Bogenrieder 2002, 199.) This perspective accentuates the difference between organizational change and learning: whereas change can be promoted by uses of power like coercion and manipulation, learning is inherently voluntary and cannot be forced (compare with Schirmer & Geithner 2018). Correspondingly, organizational learning is not defined to presuppose any explicit approval by the top management (compare Brix 2017). Instead, as the resolution of a cognitive conflict necessitates mutual approval, the created solution is at the same time a manifestation of both common learning and shared agreement between all people involved. In Bogenrieder’s (2002, 199) socio-cognitive view, there are thus two prerequisites for learning in organizations: adequate cognitive diversity to create conflicts and appropriate relationships to support their reconciliation.

In general, cognitive conflicts can be acknowledged and considered worth solving only in relationships that are deemed valuable and where disagreements would pose practical problems (Bogenrieder 2002, 201). Learning in organizations is usually practice-based and embedded in work activities and relationships (Fenwick 2008). However, the appropriateness of a relationship depends also on the nature of the cognitive conflict at hand. The more there is uncertainty and need for resolution in terms of goals, differing views related for example on major strategic questions or on the purposes of the group, the more there is need for strong structural embeddedness, shared values and norms or trusting, personal and affective relations between people. If the question and differing views are related mainly on technical issues, for example on how to reach a fixed and shared goal, the experienced uncertainty is easier to bear. Then also trustworthiness can be evaluated based on more instrumental and formal relationships or professional competencies and their value to the resolution of the current question. According to Bogenrieder (2002, 207), solving technical conflicts may nevertheless involve uncertainties and thorough negotiations related to the framing of the shared goal and its definition in terms of the specific problems requiring common answers. Such circumstances call for relatively strong relationships where interaction and mutual understanding is adequate also for the purposes of tacit knowledge sharing. (Bogenrieder 2002.)

In the context of systemic change that was identified as significant organizational change with substantial impact on almost all parts of an organization, it is reasonable to assume people to experience uncertainties and need for reaching understanding over questions related to both larger goals and the very purposes of change as well as to technical issues and proper ways to accomplish those goals. There is thus need for certain amount of trust, shared values and norms, mutual understanding, and interaction between people to create enough commonality across organization for the social resolution of arising cognitive conflicts. At the same time, for those cognitive conflicts to arise, and any learning to happen, there is need for cognitive diversity. Using the words from Nooteboom (2000), commonality enables the exploitation, but diversity is necessary for the exploration of new knowledge (according to Bogenrieder 2002, 199-200), which resembles the view from Schirmer & Geithner (2018) where unrestricted interaction on one hand and free agency and ability to mend contradictions on the other are both essential for expansive learning and change in an organization.

Diversity in an organization depends on the likelihood for its members to interact and create connections with new people in and outside their organization, on the sparsity of organizational networks as Bogenrieder (2002) formulates. In newly established connections the chances for common values, trust, and motivation for solving the conflicts are however far lower than in established or strongly embedded relationships (Bogenrieder 2002). This creates a tension that was observed also in the research by Lucas & Kline (2008) on the effects of culture and group dynamics on organizational learning: strong group boundaries and group identity can build commonality and ability to learn within the group and, simultaneously, avert group members from creating relations and solving conflicts with people in other groups. Also Schirmer & Geithner (2018) acknowledged the counter-effective dynamics between unlimited interaction and free agency mediated mainly through preventive and enabling uses of power.

Although lacking resources, competencies or time can also form limitations for an organization to solve socio-cognitive conflicts, Bogenrieder (2002, 205) notes that cognitive diversity is the primary prerequisite for its learning. In a coaching process, the very role of a service provider is to bring in and activate cognitive diversity by “partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process” (International Coaching Federation 2021a; Chapter 1.2). However, to generate organizational learning in terms of exploiting new knowledge or resolving uncertainties and adapting to conflicts, the quality of relations between not only the service provider and its client but also between individual members and groups within a client organization become an issue. From the feasibility viewpoint, the challenge for an organizational coach is simultaneously to consider and develop those relationships to support both conflict resolution and knowledge sharing under major goal and technical uncertainties in client organizations. Following customer-dominant logic, whereas all these relationships are affected by individual past experiences and the history of a client, certain amount of trust, mutual values, norms and understanding is necessary for the current co-creation process to produce positive outcomes despite any prevailing circumstances. In addition, for those outcomes to spread across other client activities or the long-term impact (expected systemic organizational change) to eventually emerge, the relationships should also be strong enough to support the client organization's learning also in future uncertainties beyond a service provider's reach and after the present service.

Bogenrieder's (2002) systemic view on organizational learning considers sparse networks, unlimited interaction, and cognitive diversity as a main source for acquiring new knowledge. Organizational change and learning can be nevertheless viewed also from an innovation perspective where the organization's ability to actively seek and deploy new knowledge outside the organization, from e.g. research, competitors, clients, or service providers is a significant factor (Schmidt 2010; Chuang, Chen & Lin 2016). In the context of organizational coaching, the client organizations' ability to use external knowledge comes into play already at the time of purchase, when the client is only considering its options in its unique and goal-oriented path. However, as an organizational coach's task is to challenge and bring new perspectives to a client's thinking, the client organization's absorptive capacity may affect the overall success of a coaching process. We will thus briefly also explore research on these conditions.

2.2.5 Considering the conditions for absorptive capacity

Absorptive capacity can be defined as an organisation's ability to acquire, identify, evaluate, assimilate, and apply new tacit and explicit knowledge for its own purposes (Stelmaszczyk 2020, 8; Edmonstone 2018, 437; Chuang & al. 2016, 1444), where organizational learning can be understood as the process to transfer that knowledge within an organization or to integrate and apply new conflicting knowledge through accommodation or transgression (Chuang & al. 2016; Bogenrieder 2002). Positive learning orientation manifested in an organization by peoples' commitment and open-mindedness is also found to enhance its absorptive capacity (Stelmaszczyk 2020). Admittedly, the two concepts are largely overlapping, yet both are considered to essentially affect an organization's success (Chuang & al. 2016). Here we will nevertheless try to focus on the conditions of absorptive capacity that are not directly related to organizational learning but rather map the abilities that contemplate those views and the discussion presented above.

An organization's ability to acquire external knowledge depends on the quality and amount of its external connections, networks, alliances, and personal relationships (see for example Chuang & al. 2016; Edmonstone 2018). For example tacit knowledge acquisition requires much closer and active relations than the use of explicit knowledge. Yet, the accessibility and use of also explicit knowledge varies according to how familiar it is compared to the current knowledge base of an organization. Knowledge from and related to an organization’s own field is easier to evaluate and assume than knowledge from other fields, and for example scientific knowledge may require some translation to ease its application across organization. (Schmidt 2010; Abbariki, Snell & Easterby-Smith 2017; Edmonstone 2018; Stelmaszczyk 2020.) In an organizational coaching process it is to the coach to enhance co-creation circumstances to favor common knowledge sharing, evaluation and understanding. Also all knowledge provided by the coach, for example new perspectives to a client’s situation, should be tailored and modified to best support its easy assimilation. (See for example International Coaching Federation 2021b.)

A lot of absorptive capacity is nevertheless shaped by experience and commitment, how accustomed and motivated the organization and its individual members are to seeking, evaluating and adopting external knowledge (Stelmaszczyk 2020, 8; Schmidt 2010). This may be related to environmental factors, and whether the organization operates in a dynamic sector with fast changes and varying challenges, or in a more stable and static sector where standardized work processes, routines and everyday solutions apply. In the former it is natural to collaborate and seek for knowledge across internal and external borders whereas in the latter individuals are well of working even by themselves. (Edmonstone 2018; Abbariki & al. 2017.) Additionally, internal features, such as clearly communicated and widely shared strategies stressing continuous improvement, or active stimulation to innovation and knowledge sharing with established purposeful structures and practices can be significant constructs for absorptive capacity. Overall long-term R&D engagement, prior knowledge base and level of education in an organization also have positive effects especially in relation to explicit knowledge absorption. (Edmonstone 2018; Schmidt 2010.)

All-in-all, an organization’s absorptive capacity is based on the experience, abilities and skills of its employees. That is why positive social dynamics and culture, where everyone can create informal connections, share knowledge, and engage in innovation activities at all levels of the organization, seems to work better in leveraging organizational absorptive capacity than some centrally led formal effort to transfer knowledge. (Schmidt 2010.) For example Abbariki & al. (2017) found centralized technological learning solutions to be even counter effective as decreasing the employees’ inherent willingness and effort to tacit knowledge sharing. Still, it is widely agreed that leaders and managers, if any individual people, have power to affect how well organizational conditions, strategies, incentives, and possibilities are to support the common engagement, interaction, knowledge acquisition, learning and sharing among employees (see for example Abbariki & al. 2017; Belkhama & Wafa 2014; also Bligh, Kohles & Yan 2018). In addition, leadership style has been showed specifically to influence on learning and change in organizations, with transformational leadership (communicating goals and values, encouraging problem solving and broadening awareness through example and role modelling) having the most positive impact (Bligh & al. 2018; Flores, Zheng, Rau & Thomas 2012; Lucas & Kline 2008).

Leadership undeniably has a key role in any process for systemic organizational change. It is nevertheless far from being the only perspective to the success of organizational coaching processes. Rather, there are several interrelated social forces that, together with the internal and external structural factors affect to a client organization's unfolding change and should be taken into consideration by a coaching provider aiming for effective service under the constraints of its limited control in service co-creation and lacking visibility to value emergence. Table 4 summarizes the main perspectives from the above exploration in relation to the control and visibility challenges and consequent feasibility questions raised by customer-dominant logic.

Challenge	Description	Primary relation to design thinking	Questions in terms of effectiveness	Perspectives from the literature
Service co-creation				
Control	The provider's ability to control service co-creation processes is limited mainly to its own actions and outcomes of its internal activities.	Feasibility	What in the client's context should the provider be aware of to successfully manage the service co-creation process?	Explicit organizational support. Systemic and periodic forms of power. Quality of internal and external relations. Cognitive diversity and commonality. Commitment to and experience of common learning.
		Feasibility	How can the provider by its own actions support positive outcomes also from the clients' part?	Ensuring adequate resources & support. Fostering positive relations, inclusion, participation, and decentralized decisions, identifying key people. Tailoring knowledge for client context.
Value emergence				
Visibility	Value emerges over time, embedded within the client organization's diverse processes and activities (value-in-context) and may remain invisible to the provider.	Feasibility	What processes, practices and features in the clients' context affect its long-term value emergence?	Amount of trust, shared values, and norms. Possibilities for interaction, sharing, and participation. Leadership styles.
		Feasibility	How can the provider, by its own actions, enhance value emergence within the client organization?	Ensuring alignment of objectives and goals. Creating positive circumstances for knowledge sharing and common learning experiences. Increasing shared understanding of change.

Table 4: Main perspectives from the literature to the challenges of control and visibility in enhancing service effectiveness from a feasibility viewpoint.

2.3 Viability – ensuring sustainable business

In this chapter the focus is on the effectiveness of organizational coaching service from a viability perspective with a purpose to unravel how providers can enhance the sustainability of their business despite the limitations and challenges portrayed by customer dominant-logic. As in the previous chapters, these viability challenges and related questions form the basis for further theoretical exploration. From an overview of coaching literature this search proceeds to dynamic capabilities approach and to studying the ways providers can develop their internal capabilities and resources, and eventually enhance their long-term competitive advantage. We will conclude by gathering the key insights in one table together with the initial challenges and questions.

2.3.1 The effects of client-dependent involvement and limited control

By now it is a well pronounced fact that service processes take shape through the synergy of both provider and client interpretations, valuations, choices, and actions, where the client nevertheless has the determinant role. In the light of emergent and relational organizational processes it is relevant to suspect if anyone can control how they eventually turn out. From a service provider's business sustainability and viability viewpoint, the challenges raised by customer dominant logic are the provider's *client-dependent involvement* and *limited control* in service co-creation processes with its clients. As it has been already repeatedly stated, in customer dominant logic it is the client who decides whether and how a particular provider may or may not get involved in its processes, and not the other way round. It is the client who evaluates and chooses which services from the available market offering are to support its future path and goals. (See Heinonen & al. 2010.)

The question of involvement is hence largely overlapping with the overall desirability of a service, and the challenges and literature perspectives related to the scope and character of customer experience discussed in Chapter 2.1. Yet, from the current viability perspective the focus is on the provider's internal processes and overall business with the question of how to enhance their sustainability when the service must always be adapted to the individual needs, wishes and will of each client. Given the altering client circumstances with potential parallel service producers and rivals, how can a provider sharpen its own processes and offering to maximize its involvement in varying client processes and thus the overall success of its own business?

Again, Heinonen & al. (2010, 538) advice providers to strive "to understand customers lives, including context, activities and experiences performing different tasks and how the service supports customers' life." Yet this does not really solve the problem of combining long-term process and business development to the winning devotion of customizing service with each unique client. In addition, as each unique service co-creation process, its resultant outcomes and especially its ability to generate long-term value and impact within client organization are, to say the least, beyond full control (see Heinonen & al. 2010), how can a provider anticipate, plan, and prepare for the effort needed in each client case in such way that ensures both the sustainability of its own business and the delivery of the promised results. As it was described in earlier chapters, clients may have other ongoing processes, equally devoted service providers and competing goals that may take their mind off or otherwise affect the current process (see Chapter 2.2.1). All-in-all, early-stage planning is a vital phase to all service providers who want to increase their sales with competitive offers that both cover their own expenses and generate profit yet enable positive service experiences convincing clients to buy services and involve providers in their processes also in the future.

In organizational coaching services basing largely on coaches' personal expertise and presence and struggling for systemic changes in client organizations, developing effectiveness from a business sustainability view can be challenging. In a knowledge and time-intensive service, dealing with multiple simultaneous uncertainties and interrelated factors, it can be hard to align processes, increase returns or to safeguard business for the twists emerging in individual client organizations. Still, as noted, organizational coaching literature offers little perspectives on how to develop coaching service or business to best support its core function, the coaching practice.

2.3.2 Viewpoints from organizational coaching literature

In coaching literature the focus is largely on the overall credibility and professionalization of the practice. As described earlier in relation to the desirability and feasibility themes in this work, there is a lot of research and effort targeted to the recognition of core competencies and development of training and credentialing systems (e.g. Maltbia & al. 2014) as well as to proving the overall benefits of coaching (e.g. Jones & al. 2016). Partnering with clients and understanding their situation and context are stressed as main prerequisites for success, whereas means offered for their accomplishment remain mostly on the level of personal qualities and behavior of a coach (e.g. Gan & al. 2020; International Coaching Federation 2021b) or come to play only after the coaching agreement has been concluded as a part of the coaching process itself (such as the comparative survey suggested by Bhatnagar 2021). Furthermore, International Coaching Federation (2021b) highlight in its listing for core competencies the importance of following the code and guidelines of ethics, clearly communicating the role and distinctions of coaching in comparison to other practices and establishing a proper agreement stating common general conditions and rules for coaching. Instead, definition for example of concrete coaching goals, their follow-up and holding clients accountable for their own change are incorporated as expectations to the coach in managing the coaching process (International Coaching Federation 2021b).

Most measures suggested for coaches' success are then either related to the coaching practice or professional coaching competences, and relatively little attention is dedicated to the coaches' ability to develop their service as a business. There are nonetheless regular market studies with country-specific comparisons (International Coaching Federation & PricewaterhouseCoopers 2017; 2021; 2022) as well as agreement templates, marketing material and even coaching scripts (see e.g. iPEC 2022) available for registered and certified coaches, which may be of help especially in the start of a new coaching business or in understanding the wider market context. These are nevertheless unlikely to have major significance in the long run and can hardly constitute the cornerstones for developing the sustainability of a competitive business. In fact, the very idea of ready-made common plans and generic material is rather contrary to the customer-dominant logic highlighting the need of a service provider to adapt its services to the ongoing life and processes of each and unique client (see Heinonen & al. 2010).

Grant (2012) nevertheless takes one step down and away from the general effectiveness and coaching practice approaches by considering the tools a coaching provider can use to verify the value of his/her service in individual client cases. He notes how calculating financial return on coaching investment (ROI) in client organizations can appear as undeniable and tempting but is in fact both an inadequate and misleading metric. First, it is hard to differentiate causal effects of individual learning and behavioral change on financial benefits usually resulting from various actions and multiple factors in and outside client organization. Second, there can be unidentified costs that are indirectly related to or inflicted by the coaching process. (Grant 2012.) From all we have learned on the relational dynamics and the emergent nature of value and change in organizations, this makes perfect sense. Finally and most importantly, taking a too strict focus on achieving financial gains can cause undue pressure and steer the attention away from other, more probable, and positive outcomes and goals of coaching such as wellbeing and engagement at work (Grant 2012), let alone shared goals, common learning or boosting steps towards a larger, systemic organizational change. As a solution for better evaluation, Grant (2012) suggests the application of a well-being and engagement framework.

According to Grant (2012) the suggested framework would help both recognize individual coachees' needs and track their progress in a coaching process in terms of their personal well-being and engagement in work. Moreover, cumulative individual reports would also provide organization level understanding to guide the overall focus and follow the advancement and results of coaching. From both individual and organizational perspectives the best conditions for success reside in an ideal "flourishing" state with simultaneous high levels of employee well-being and engagement manifested for example as positive internal relations and sense of meaning and relevance. In an "acquiescent" state people may feel good about themselves but are somewhat disengaged from their own work or their employer's goals. Although this kind of a situation be satisfactory for a certain period, eventually there's a risk of mental decline towards a "languishing" state where personal well-being at work is decreasingly low. People and organizations may also find themselves in a languishing state if the well-being experience is initially low despite any concurrent signs of positive work engagement. Following Grant (2012), it is quite common that people and organizations function and perform relatively well albeit their long-term malaise which makes the situation also harder to grasp and mend. (Grant 2012, 79-80.)

Although Grant's (2012) well-being and engagement framework offers a promising human-centered approach for the evaluation of coaching also allowing the recognition of relational social and mental factors in a client organization, it is built on the premises of individual coaching and provides only implicit tools for tracing dynamic group processes or the advancement of larger, systemic organizational change. Still, this deficiency might be fixed by choosing the right questions for the appropriate alignment and sought-after manifestation of the well-being and engagement dimensions, as Grant (2012, 81-82) himself gives only recommendations for suitable questionnaires amongst the established and potential metrics. However, as this approach does not enlighten how the results of any evaluation method would help the provider of a coaching service to develop the sustainability of his/her own continuous processes and business, we will explore further theoretical viewpoints to better understand the possibilities and significance of providers' own choices and actions in enhancing the effectiveness of their service.

2.3.3 Outlining dynamic capabilities in organizational coaching services

The so-called resource-based view approaches the competitiveness of a firm primarily as a question of its internal organization and resources instead of focusing on external issues such as strategic positioning in the prevailing markets (Eisenhardt & Martin 2000, 1105). Especially in the light of customer-dominant logic it is evident though how service providers' interaction with and understanding of the external world is essential in their ability to best serve their clients within the clients' own context. From the current viability viewpoint, it is then reasonable to study how service providers can adapt and develop their own, internal processes and resources in relation to the surrounding world, that is the overall markets, needs and competition as well as the specific service goals and wishes, emergent processes and unique and changing circumstances with each individual client. A firm's ability to sustainably respond to the varying and evolving requirements of the surrounding world (and eventually also change the world) by developing both its resources or assets and the use of those resources and assets is denoted as its dynamic capability (Eisenhardt & Martin 2000; Teece 2007). Dynamic capabilities perspective is an extension to the resource-based view on the competitiveness of a firm (Eisenhardt & Martin 2000, 1105) and might thus help us also understand the processes and mechanisms through which organizational coaches' personal and professional competencies highlighted in the coaching literature could be turned into a successful and efficient service.

Eisenhardt & Martin (2000) describe dynamic capabilities as identifiable organizational processes such as product development, strategic decision making or alliancing focusing on the integration, reconfiguration, allocation, gaining and acquisition or rejection of resources or combinations of resources. The key resources vary from field to another and may be for example physical (high quality equipment or facilities), human (knowledge, skills, and expertise) organizational (practices, internal cooperative abilities). Depending on the nature and function of the organization and its markets, primary dynamic capabilities may be related to the ability to create and maintain complicated, analytical processes with detailed routines relying mostly on existing tacit and explicit knowledge and resulting in predictable outcomes, or to the ability to implement simple, experiential, and flexible processes relying on newly created knowledge and resulting in unpredictable but adjustable outcomes. (Eisenhardt & Martin 2000, 1106-1107.) Based both on the viability challenges raised by customer-dominant logic (providers' client-dependent involvement and limited control in co-creation) and the time and knowledge-intensiveness of organizational coaching services, it seems reasonable to characterize their providers' main dynamic capabilities as relating to:

- strengthening coaching competences and effective practices highlighted in the coaching literature but embroidered here with the capacity to understand and adapt to the varying complicated, organic, and relational organizational contexts,
- developing service offering that is competitive in relation to the growing and evolving markets but adaptable to the unique needs and circumstances of each client, and
- anticipating specific client needs in organically changing contexts for efficient and proportionate resource allocation and success in each coaching case.

Irrespective of the volatility of the coaching market, the unique and changing client situations with requirements for coaches "dancing in the moment" (International Coaching Federation 2021b, 2) call for simple and swift processes to create new solutions and reconfigure resources in oncoming situations alongside the ability to evaluate and develop most effective practices, suitable approaches, and functional resource configurations in an analytical and systematical way. Due to the provider's limited control, emergent nature of value and change and the relational and contextual organizational dynamics enlightened by customer-dominant logic, the results of any concrete organizational coaching process are to some extent always unpredictable. Yet for coaching providers to possess and develop professional competence, they need to have some understanding of the probable outcomes and consequences of their own choices and actions with a client. Also Eisenhardt & Martin (2000, 1106) note how dynamic capabilities are, at the same time, needed both for the use and development of current resources to improve long-term competitiveness and for the creation and exploitation of new resources to enable short-term competitive advantage. This logic is very similar to the Kano model discussed in Chapter 2.1 and stressing the providers' ability to enhance their customers’ experience simultaneously by improving their current service performance and discovering new ways of serving also novel and uncovered needs.

However, although dynamic capabilities are essential in their propensity to enhance the overall competitiveness of a firm, they alone are insufficient to guarantee any sustainable advantage. The sustainability of a firm lays both on the quality of its key resources and its ability to use and develop those resources, that is, its processes that define as dynamic capabilities (Eisenhardt & Martin 2000, 1110; also Teece 2007). To put it in the context of organizational coaching service, the success of a provider depends on its competences in coaching and on its expertise in understanding organizational context, dynamics, and processes as well as on its capabilities to use, develop and bring forward these assets in a competitive, effective, and efficient way. As repeatedly noted, there is a lot of research and information focusing on the identification and description on the core competencies and best practices of coaching. Organizational realm, the interrelated conditions and emergent processes for value creation and change have been explored in the two previous chapters of this work (Chapters 2.1 & 2.2). By contrast, capabilities related to developing and managing a successful coaching business remains largely untouched. Therefore we will next explore how coaching providers can develop and learn dynamic capabilities, and how these capabilities can function for the improved development and use of their key resources, their time, coaching competence, and organizational expertise.

2.3.4 Developing dynamic capabilities

Whereas Eisenhardt & Martin (2000) claim that dynamic capabilities are to a large extent detectable and adoptable from one firm to another and thus source for only temporary advantage in competition, Teece (2007) takes a different stand. Although he admits that organizational processes, systems and structures, the unique ways to manage and develop the use of resources, can eventually disperse across firms like any other innovations, they themselves are a subject to continuous renewal and should be considered only as microfoundations for the deeper and more fundamental, higher order dynamic capabilities in the endeavor of a firm to maintain and develop its competitive advantage in the changing world (Teece 2007). These higher order capabilities ought to be collective by nature and represent a firm’s ability to sense change, seize opportunities and transform as an organization (Schoemaker, Heaton & Teece 2018, 16). Unlike their microfoundations in the concrete and identifiable processes of a firm to manage and develop resources, higher order dynamic capabilities can be quite undetectable and hard to imitate (Teece 2007; Schoemaker & al. 2018). How can a firm then develop dynamic capabilities if they cannot be learned by the example of others?

Irrespective of the level of examination, dynamic capabilities are about a firm's ability to thrive and adapt to the changes of the surrounding world. The question is, as Schoemaker & al. (2018) point out, how do the capabilities embedded in organizational practice (the microfoundations) and the higher order collective capabilities (sensing, seizing, and transforming) eventually relate to each other in a firm striving to develop its overall dynamic capability. Hermano & Martin-Cruz (2020) approach the question from the perspective of a project-based firm (PBF), a situation that might match the one of coaching providers hoping to adapt their service to the unique contexts and ongoing life of their individual clients while continuously developing their service and functioning for their long-term success. In Hermano & Martin-Cruz's (2020,1) view:

> PBFs constitute an ideal organizational form to compete in industries where uncertainty, product complexity, and environmental changes are pervasive elements.

Their definition of a project-based firm extends beyond the ordinary descriptions of a firm implementing projects to serve their clients, develop their own functioning or to structure their organization and grounds on the idea of a firm actively developing and utilizing its dynamic project and organizational capabilities (Hermano & Martin-Cruz 2020, 2-3).

In Hermano & Martin-Cruz's (2020) theoretical framework project-based practices and processes of a firm both embed and allow the development of project dynamic capabilities and further enable the construction of also broader organizational dynamic capabilities. In order to enhance its long-term success, a firm should establish structures and processes that encourage common learning both within and between individual projects as well as at the wider organizational level and across overall objectives, strategies and operation. In practice this means that the experience and insights from individual projects can be used, tested, or further developed in other projects when they are compliant with or considered to promote the long-term purpose and goals of the firm. (Hermano & Martin-Cruz 2020.) In organizational coaching services this could entail for example new kind of practices and processes in different phases of the service, new coaching solutions and tools, different and wider approaches, or better understanding in terms of the client organization and its context. In addition, new and cumulative understanding gained from various projects such as spotting changes and opportunities in the market, in clients' needs, in rival offering or in the general operational context should eventually affect the firm's strategic choices like services offering, target markets, organization, operations and overall functioning, which in turn affect the processes and practices in all forthcoming projects (Hermano & Martin-Cruz 2020).

According to Hermano & Martin-Cruz (2020) In a project-based firm project dynamic capabilities and organizational dynamic capabilities are thus actively and consciously developed in an interactive and integrative manner between daily project-led and bottom-up processes on one hand and strategic business-led and top-down processes on the other. For this kind of continuous development cycle to realize, and the firm to be able to sustainably adapt to the varying client contexts and evolution of the surrounding world, the practices and processes in both project and organization levels should systematically manifest and strengthen all three categories of dynamic capabilities (Hermano & Martin-Cruz 2020, 5-8; also Teece 2007; Teece 2009; Schoemaker & al. 2018):

- Sensing by scanning, tracking, filtering, and assessing the environment for changes, opportunities, risks, and threats, and by interpreting and understanding how these affect the firm's own choices and actions, be it within individual client projects or in the wider operational and business context.
- Seizing by planning and deciding whether and how to respond to the observed changes, opportunities, risks, and threats by altering the firm's actions and choices within individual projects, common project practices and processes, or in its overall business, strategy, and organization.
- Transforming by implementing those plans and decisions and realizing required changes in the firm's project or business level strategies, organization, processes, practices, and activities.

For the evolving project capability and understanding to enhance overall dynamic capability of a firm, the sensing practices at the organizational level need to involve the scanning and assessment of also project level learnings and experience in addition to the continuous analysis of the wider external operational context. Systematic and thought-out information gathering, decision making and documentation practices as a part of project management processes serve the knowledge and decisions also at the organizational level. Correspondingly, strong organizational capabilities are to increase project level capabilities and possibilities for success through collective wisdom and for example well-informed options for potential policies and action plans in varying and changing client contexts. (See Hermano & Martin-Cruz 2020.) Figure 3 illustrates the framework for developing dynamic capabilities through the interconnections of project and organization level sensing, seizing, and transforming practices. The examples of respective practices are adapted to the context of this work.

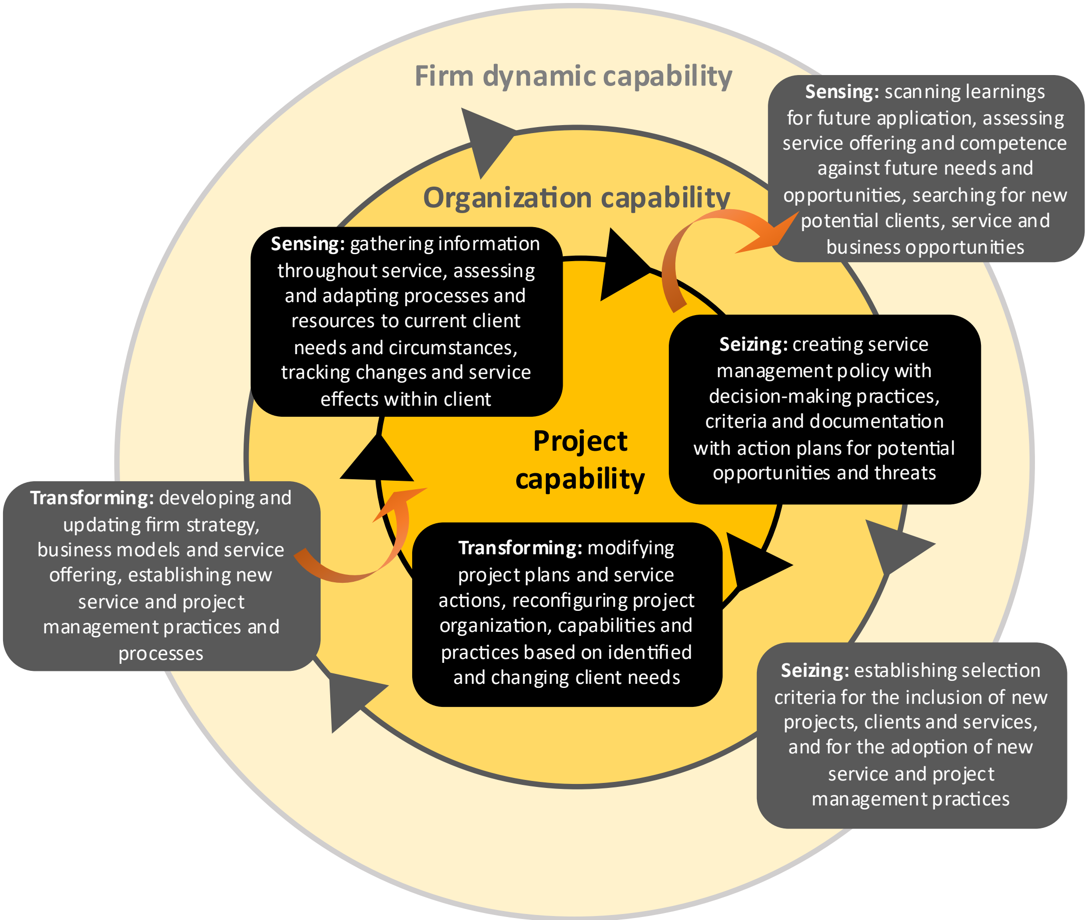


Figure 3: Framework for developing dynamic capabilities with examples of project and organization level sensing, seizing, and transforming practices (adapted from Hermano & Martin-Cruz 2020, 4-8).

However, irrespective of the specifics of sensing, seizing and transformation practices of any given service provider, the viability challenges raised by customer-dominant logic seem to emphasize their importance. In the varying and organically changing client contexts with the client dominating the service providers' overall involvement and limiting its service control, maintaining explicit and systematic sensing, seizing, and transforming practices appear as the only way to bring structure and stability to the development of the providers own business without restricting the much-needed flexibility and ability to adjust to the clients' ongoing life. In addition, as customer-dominant logic highlights how service is co-created with the client and the provider can only control its own part in the process, many of the project level plans, actions and choices are at best results of tight collaboration. There, the provider's ability to scan the environment and gather information throughout service processes (e.g. with tools such the well-being and engagement framework by Grant 2012), suggest cultivated decision criteria and provide verified options and action plans may also strengthen its possibilities to eventually affect its clients' choices and guide joint processes towards expected outcomes of the service. This notion is similar with the principle of facilitating client's conscious choices with transparent nudging (see Chapter 2.1). Open information sharing can help the client make knowledgeable choices in favor of its own goals.

While much of coaching effectiveness may depend on the motivation and support with each coachee and be affected by the complicated relational, social, and emotional processes within and in the context of each client organization, the sustainability, competitiveness, and success of a coaching service is solely the provider's own responsibility. Although from the viewpoint of coaching practice the success of a coach resides mostly with his/her personal qualities, capabilities and behavior during coaching process and sessions, from the wider perspective of coaching service, building systematic practices and processes to uphold constant sensing, seizing and transforming activity in the middle of and despite varying client cases and changing environment can help build dynamic capabilities and support both the long-term sustainability of the providers business as well as short-term coaching success with each client. At the same time, continuous development through interconnected practices between project and organizational level may even strengthen the very competence of an organizational coach through cumulative knowledge and understanding of different client contexts, their needs, evolving processes and experience of the effectiveness of alternative coaching practices. Table 5 recaps the perspectives gained from the literature to the challenges of client-dependent involvement and limited control and the subsequent questions in enhancing service effectiveness from a viability viewpoint.

Challenge	Description	Primary relation to design thinking	Questions in terms of effectiveness	Perspectives from the literature
Co-creation				
Involvement	The client determines the possibilities and ways the service provider can get involved in the clients' activities in the first place.	Viability	How can the provider enhance its own sustainable processes and business if it must adapt its service to the individual needs, wishes and will of each client?	Creating systemized and interconnected sensing, seizing, and transforming practices and processes in and between project and organizational levels.
		Viability	How can the provider maximize its involvement?	Sensing and seizing changes in market and specific client needs. Transforming services, practices, organization, and project-related plans and offers accordingly. Gathering, sharing, and assessing information with the client to support its decisions.
Control	The provider's ability to control service co-creation processes is limited mainly to its own actions and outcomes of its internal activities.	Viability	How can the provider anticipate, plan and prepare for the needed effort to create the expected value and impact without control on the service co-creation process?	Sensing and seizing the learnings and experience from past projects, creating project practices to assess the opportunities, threats and needs with each client and transforming service offers, processes and resources accordingly.

Table 5: Main perspectives from the literature to the challenges of client-dependent involvement and limited control in enhancing service effectiveness from a viability viewpoint.

2.4 Theoretical framework wrap-up

The purpose of this chapter has been to explore theoretical and literature viewpoints to the effectiveness of organizational coaching service and build a framework to support such development work also in practice. Effectiveness of a service was defined as the intersection and balance between desirability, feasibility, and viability perspectives of design thinking (see Chapter 1.3, Figure 1). While our theoretical exploration was structured according to these perspectives, it is noteworthy that the resulting framework is integrative and the questions as well as their answers placed in the intersections of each parallel perspective combine viewpoints from both sides. This is to say that whereas the posed questions with their answers are relevant from more than one design perspective, each perspective is the inspiration of and provides answers for more than one question. This is the very idea and, at the same time, challenge of balancing the three perspectives of an effective service.

Customer-dominant logic by Heinonen & al. (2010) was applied as a starting point as to deepen our view on client and client's role and elaborate on the design perspectives in the context of organizational coaching. The challenges and practical questions raised by customer-dominant logic then guided the search for further theoretical approaches within each design perspective. The logic and inference chains are also described in respective chapters. Some choices between viability and feasibility perspectives may nevertheless seem ambiguous, as the applied theorizations all contemplate an organization's capacity to change and renew itself. Here, the divide is based both on the relation between the client and the provider and their different standing in terms of expected development and change in the context of a coaching service and process. In an organizational coaching relationship, the client may be pursuing any kind of systemic change, and a neutral learning approach works best in considering the factors enabling or hindering its development. Also, as the provider's task in a coaching relationship is to help the client change, the client's absorptive capacity, its ability to make use of new knowledge, becomes relevant to the efficiency of coaching from the feasibility perspective.

Instead, for the provider to succeed in individual coaching tasks and in business (to develop the effectiveness of its service from a viability perspective), it must be able to adapt to the varying and evolving client needs as well as to the transformation of the surrounding world, which already largely defines the way the provider should be able to change, to a point that underscores dynamic capabilities. This is not to claim that dynamic capabilities would not be valuable to the client or learning and absorptive capacity would not help the coaching provider to succeed, quite the contrary. However, exploring dynamic capabilities of a client would not help the coaching provider in developing the effectiveness of its own service, if not the very goal of their coaching relation is to develop the clients' ability to change in relation to the external world.

In the end, all three design perspectives integrate in the center of the framework, and from a provider point of view, the dynamic capabilities approach could also be placed there as a conclusive answer for ensuring success. However, from a service effectiveness viewpoint, providers' dynamic capabilities represent only one aspect to the challenge, and such emphasis could easily undermine the balance between client and provider interests. Figure 4 compiles our main theoretical insights gained from the literature and portrays the framework for developing the effectiveness of organizational coaching from desirability, feasibility, and viability perspectives.

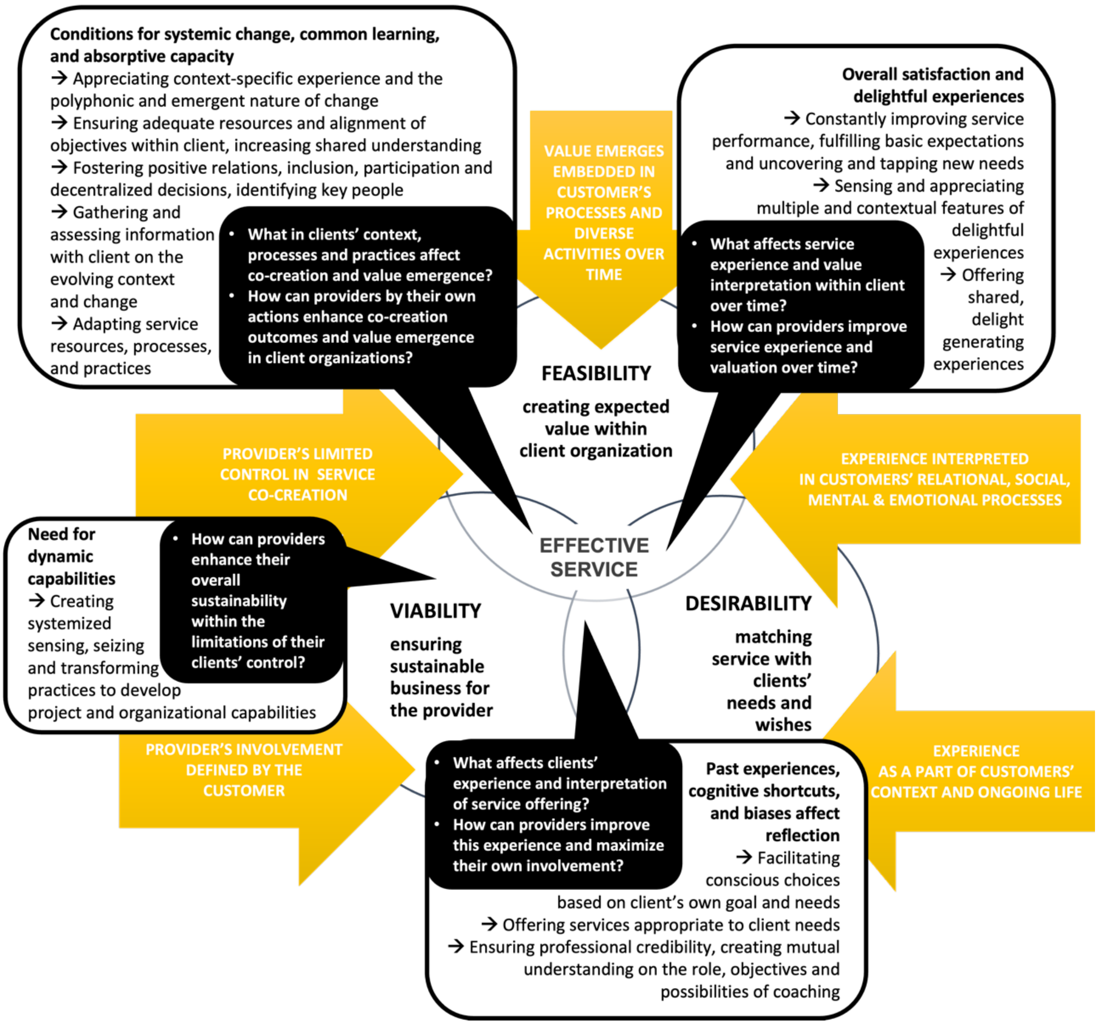


Figure 4: The framework for developing the effectiveness of organizational coaching service.

Next, we will turn to our empirical line of investigation and focus on describing the research and development conducted in the real project for strengthening the effectiveness of organizational coaching services of the current design partner, the two entrepreneurs. The theoretical framework presented here will be discussed again while concluding the results of this thesis work in Chapter 4.

3 Design process and methods

In the following, we will take a plunge to the current design challenge and process. The purpose of this description is to study, based on real processes, what kind of factors constitute the effectiveness of organizational coaching service, and how can they be developed in practice. The chapter proceeds from enlightening the methodological basis and choices guiding the process to the description of the research and development phases and ends with a summary of the results of this project.

3.1 Methodological basis

In this work we have adopted a multi-view approach. The original development challenge is about integrating the interests and perspectives of service providers and their clients and improving the effectiveness of the service to the benefit of both parties. The general aim of an organizational coaching service is to support systemic organizational transformation within client which highlights the need to understand clients’ context and life in a way that exceeds the usual one-to-one coaching relation familiar from most coaching literature. At the same time, as coaching is in its essence defined as partnering and co-creation, the providers’ own ways of operating and abilities to deliver expected results through collaboration deserve a closer look. (See Chapters 1.2 & 1.3.) In this rather complex initial setting, design thinking approach with the three integrative perspectives of human-centered design (IDEO 2015; Brown 2008; Brown & Wyatt 2010) was considered as an applicable and holistic enough basis to outline the overall development work for enhancing the effectiveness of organizational coaching service (Chapter 1.3; Figure 1). Additionally, customer-dominant logic (Heinonen & al. 2010; Chapter 2) was adopted as a loose theoretical frame for deepening the clients’ view in a process that was conducted in close partnership with the provider.

As in our theoretical exploration, design thinking approach with its integration of desirability, feasibility, and viability perspectives, accompanied with principles from customer-dominant logic, provides only the starting point and the larger frame of reference, and there are more detailed methodological choices to be made to support the development and design work in practice. First there’s a need to conceive the concrete aspects of the development work, plan the relevant stages and steps and thus identify an appropriate model for the design process, and second, a need to comprehend proper ways to gather and analyze empirical data from the real-life processes and thus justify a suitable methodology to guide the research phase. Lastly, after explaining and presenting these choices, we will provide an overview on the current design process with an approximate schedule and respective stages.

3.1.1 Service design and the revamped double diamond

Since this study’s focus is on service development, it seems only logical to apply views, methods, and processes from the cross-disciplinary field of service design. However, as Stickdorn & Schneider (2012) point out, there is not one agreed definition of service design, but multiple state-of-the-art descriptions demonstrating the constant development that is going on in its research and practice. Nor is the distinction between design thinking and service design always clear or discussed even in academic elaborations but rather put aside with a notion of service design as an application of design thinking to the development of services (see for example Brown 2008; Andreassen, Kristensson, Lervik-Olsen, Parasuraman, McColl-Kennedy, Edvardsson & Colurcio 2016; Yu 2017; Sangiorgi, Patricio & Zurlo 2018). This is even though service design has been acknowledged a discipline of its own with roots and growing literature stemming from the research and practice of service marketing, management, and innovation (see Andreassen & al. 2016; Yu 2017; Foglieni & al. 2017, 11-13, 17) and with an apparent influence also on design thinking especially by its greater focus on customer and user empathy (Carlgren & al. 2016, 51).

While Stickdorn & Schneider (2012) choose to desist from drawing any strict outlines to define service design or to differentiate it from design thinking, they have picked five common characteristics they find essential throughout different attempts to define service design. These are 1) user-centeredness; empathizing with the customer's experience as a service user, 2) co-creativeness; involving all stakeholders in the process, 3) sequencing; understanding and illustrating service as a series of connected activities, 4) evidencing; concretizing service and its value with perceptible physical artefacts, actions, or documents, and 5) taking a holistic approach; contemplating the entire context and aspects to the service (Stickdorn & Schneider 2012, 34-45). These are well in line with the design thinking approach that has been chosen as the starting point to this work, but already concretize what is relevant in conducting the development work in practice. Still, the three perspectives of design thinking as a large frame of reference functions as a valuable reminder of the different stakeholders, their interests and possibilities that need to be balanced and integrated in the service.

As to the difference between service design and design thinking, van Oeveren (2022) provides one perspective. He depicts service design as "the practical and creative application of design tools and methods with a goal to develop or improve services" but also highlights how service designers have a "service-oriented view of the world, where all interactions between a brand and a user are regarded as services" (van Oeveren 2022). In his view, service design distinguishes in relation to design thinking in its overarching specialization and orientation to service beyond the simple idea of applying design thinking to the development of services. Whereas design thinking is more like a mindset and a process that can be applied by anyone who wants to solve complex problems, service design is the expertise and practice of designers with extensive and detailed methods and tools representing the world and its way of functioning comprehensively through the logic of service (van Oeveren 2022). Without taking any stand on the needed level of expertise, assuming a cross-cutting service orientation with the application of appropriate and sophisticated methods and tools actualizing that orientation in practice, seem the most distinctive features of service design.

There is an ample offering of service design processes which are mainly based on the models of a design thinking process, according to Yu (2017) specifically on the renowned double diamond model created by the British Design Council originally in 2003 (Technology Strategy Board & Design Council 2015; Ball 2019). While the Design Council's (2019) own version has evolved into a “framework for innovation”, any major difference between service design on one hand and design thinking process models on the other is still hard to detect at least by an overview. The variations (if eventually any) seem to appear in the specific tools and methods suggested for service design (see for example Technology Strategy Board & Design Council 2015). While this is still vague and the borders between service design and design thinking seemingly flexible, it is consistent with van Oeveren’s (2022) notion of design thinking providing the mental approach and overall process on complex problems and service design offering a dedicated service-oriented view, tools, and methods on the world irrespective of the design target.

Regarding different available process models (either labelled as service design or design models), Stickdorn & Schneider (2012,126) remark how all of them, despite their different wordings and labels or the varying number of phases, represent a uniform line of thinking. Also Yu (2017) shows how the different stages of four selected models, including the iterative process by Stickdorn & Schneider (2012), are quite comparable to the ones defined in the original double diamond when evaluated by their contents. In the haze of available models and varying concepts, it can nevertheless be difficult to eventually grasp, what really is relevant to remember and consider in managing a design project, especially with the rather challenging task of taking a holistic approach by simultaneously incorporating all aspects and stakeholders of a service and mastering and iterating the process and outcomes both in details and within the wider picture (see Stickdorn & Schneider 2012, 44-45, 124-127). Nessler (2016a; 2016b) has tried to overcome this challenge by integrating two major process models, the human-centered design process from IDEO (2015) and the design bootleg process by the Stanford University dSchool (2018), with the original double diamond by Design Council (Technology Strategy Board & Design Council 2015). The resulting and so-called revamped double diamond (Nessler 2016b) appears thus a workable model also for the current challenge.

Whatever the model, it should not be considered as an indispensable or normative way of tackling design tasks. For example Carlgren & al. (2016) describe how the nature and practice of design processes and application of design thinking varies largely from one context to another. Also Stickdorn & Schneider (2012) note that “the very first step of a service design process is to design the process itself” according to not only the service and context but also each real project and available resources (Stickdorn & Schneider 2012, 126-127). One particular benefit of Nessler’s revamped double diamond (2016a; 2016b) is its apparent flexibility. It is structured in four layers each representing a different level of precision. In the simplest, it depicts the design process as a path from point A and not knowing what could be to point B and knowing what should be. The second layer consisting only of the two diamonds recaps the main principles of design: first making sure the design effort is targeted on right things and then designing those things right. The third layer brings forward the four activities of design familiar from the original double diamond and associates them with the phases adapted from human-centered design (IDEO 2015) and design thinking bootleg (dSchool 2018). The fourth layer is the most comprehensive one and provides specific key words and detailed inspiration for planning the individual steps of the process. (Nessler 2016b.)

Although the revamped double diamond thus indicates the much-needed adaptability and allows each design process to be planned within the terms and conditions of each situation, in the current design process we ended up following it quite carefully. Figure 5 illustrates the revamped double diamond with black-colored areas displaying the extent of the process with applied phases and steps taken in this work. This means that the present results were prototyped, tested, and iterated but their further development was agreed to be best realized as part of the daily practice of the two entrepreneurs. This will be clarified more in detail as part of the forthcoming chapters focusing on the description of our service design process in practice with each of its phases, individual steps, methods, and tools (see Chapters 3.2 & 3.3

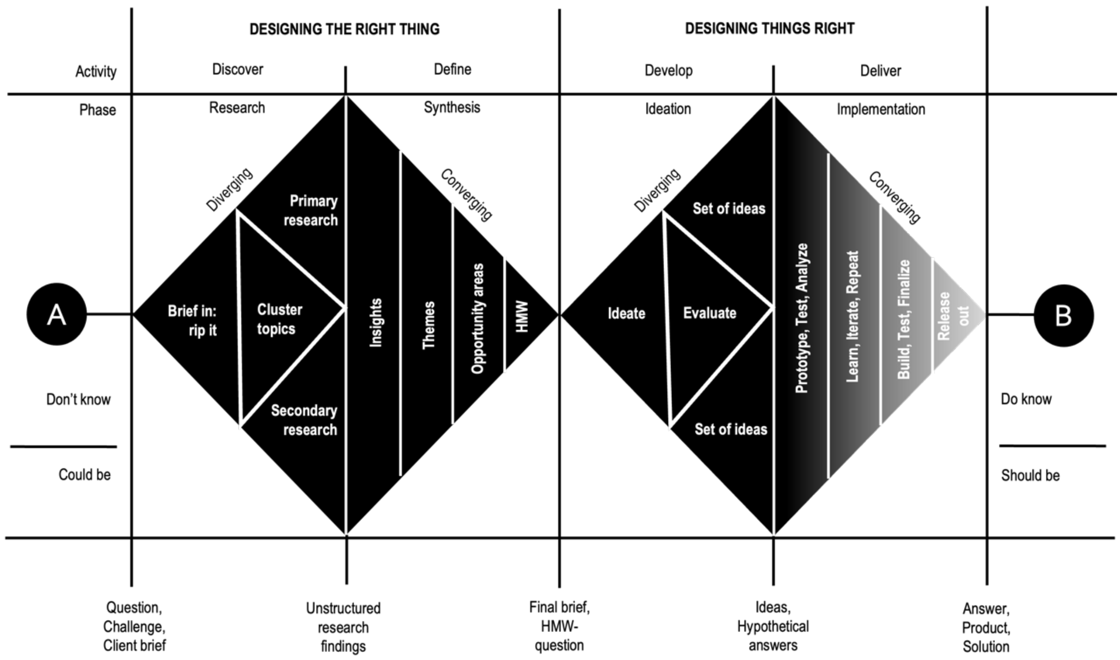


Figure 5: The revamped double diamond (Nessler 2016a; 2016b).

3.1.2 Multiple case study research method

The present design challenge consists of developing the effectiveness of a coaching service where the service offering is structured in three different service packages. Therefore, to be able to study the factors that constitute the effectiveness of the entrepreneurs' service in real processes, we need to consider client experience (desirability), value generation (feasibility), and the providers' sustainable business (viability) in the context of each of these packages. This increases the complexity of the already multifold research setting in this work. Case study is a research method designed for understanding complicated social phenomena such as human behavior and relations or organizational change and processes holistically and within real-life contexts and circumstances (Yin 2009,4). Kathleen Eisenhardt (1989; 2021) has further advanced the case study methodology for the purposes and challenge of developing new theories and understanding in unexplored subject areas without the convenience of relying on extensive prior literature. Although the purpose here as such is not to create new theories, developing the effectiveness of organizational coaching service is an unexplored thematic perspective that, despite the many linkages built in Chapter 2, has no pertinent earlier research to ground the current work. The multiple case study method by Eisenhardt (1989) appears thus a reasonable approach to conduct primary research also in the present design process.

Eisenhardt has explained and discussed this theory building multiple case method (also called 'the Eisenhardt method') mainly in two articles, in an initial descriptive article from 1989 and in a reflective article from 2021. While her work largely founds on earlier methodological case study elaborations, there are also fundamental differences that crystallize first in an extensive reliance on empirical data and analysis in building new theories and understanding, and second, in the application of multiple case studies and specifically cross-case analyses for that end. (Eisenhardt 1989; 2021.) Although the ideal is thus to start the examination without claiming any prior hypotheses besides defining a research topic, identifying some introductory theoretical variables is recommended as to properly plan and manage the needed data and its analysis (Eisenhardt 1989, 536). Compared with the revamped double diamond design process this equals with the clustering topics phase (Nessler 2016a; 2016b; Figure 5). Also the case selection should base on theoretical grounds and to the extent it represents the phenomenon that is being researched. Adequate similarities and differences between individual cases are to enrich and strengthen the understanding gained from research. (Eisenhardt 1989, 536-537.)

Here, the three studied cases (cases A, B & C) were hand-picked with the two entrepreneurs from past organizational coaching processes they had realized with their clients, and to correspond as well as possible each of their new service packages (packages A, B & C). Hence, although the cases differ in process length and contents as well as the client organizations' size and field, they were all based on an identifiable organizational change objective. (See further descriptions in Chapter 3.2.) In addition, defining service effectiveness as the intersection of the three design perspectives (Chapter 1.3) as well as applying customer-dominant logic (Chapter 2) as a loose frame for data gathering and analysis served as the early theoretical guidelines for the current case study. At this point, no further theoretical examination was conducted until finalizing the empirical analysis. In relation to the revamped double-diamond illustrated above (Figure 5), this means that except for the initial clustering of the research topics phase, the discovery and define phases of the present design process relied heavily on the primary research data. Instead, theoretical viewpoints were applied in the development phase and will be referred to while describing the process as well as discussing the overall research conclusions in the end of this report.

Triangulation of data, methods, and investigators is largely advised in case studies for increasing the richness and integrity of the insights and conclusions from case studies (Yin 2009, Eisenhardt 1989) as it is in service design (Stickdorn, Hormess, Lawrence & Schneider 2018, 107-110). This research is based on qualitative data gathered mainly by interviewing both either of the two entrepreneurs (preliminary interviews) and one client representative (case interviews) for each case. Whereas both quantitative and qualitative data can be valuable and most often complementary, especially qualitative data can enhance understanding about clients' motivations and needs as well as underlying relations between events (Stickdorn & al. 2018, 50; Eisenhardt 1989). In addition to interviews, case-specific supportive documents as well as client organizations' websites were used to check and verify details and complement descriptions (the complete list of data sources in Appendix 1). To supplement the lack of multiple investigators, the case-specific descriptions were validated with respective client representatives, and the overall research insights discussed with the two entrepreneurs as to create shared understanding of the opportunity areas and to reflect them with their prior experiences.

In multiple case studies aiming at new understanding, data analysis is conducted in four iterative phases. First, preliminary analysis already during data gathering enables the elaboration and retargeting of further collection based on new perceptions and emerging insights. Second, all cases are studied and described individually to better control the data and, more importantly, to familiarize with the unique within-case observations and dynamics before reaching into any generalized conclusions. The third phase is about searching for cross-case patterns from various perspectives for example by analyzing similarities and differences, creating categories or dimensions, or scrutinizing data by its source. Finally, the created frames, constructs and theoretical insights are tested and revised against individual evidence from each case and, in theory-building research, eventually also discussed and compared with prior literature to elaborate further explanations. (Eisenhardt 1989, 538-543.)

Here, the preliminary interviews with the entrepreneurs served in creating an overall view and a basic timeline for each service process (drawn in Miro collaboration platform with the interviewee) that was complemented after the interview with the information from case-specific service documents. The illustrated process timelines were used as boundary objects (see Stickdorn & al. 2018, 43) in subsequent case interviews to enable better focus on most relevant questions and on the clients' own experience in the process (see examples of Miro boards in Figure 7). The methods and approaches used in within-case and cross-case analyzes will be described with their results in the forthcoming chapters. As mentioned earlier, in the present case study research the goal is not to build new theories but to identify factors of effectiveness in real organizational coaching service processes and to define the potential opportunity areas for the current design partner. The case multiple case study insights will be nevertheless reflected with the theoretical ones gained from the literature as part of the conclusions in Chapter 4.

Figure 6 provides an overview on the current research process integrating the relevant steps and perspectives both from the multiple case study method described above and the revamped double diamond design process presented in the previous chapter. It also shows how the process description in the following chapters is structured under two main themes in accordance with the revamped double diamond: designing the right thing and designing things right, in other words, discovering and defining the opportunity areas, and developing and delivering the solutions. There is however one minor exception in comparison to the arrangement of the design process by Nessler (2016a; 2016b). Here, the within-case analyses are entirely considered as part of the discovery phase despite of all the insights they provide to the development work. This is because from a multiple case study perspective the within-case analysis phase still diverges the number of potential answers while converging and thus defining proceeds only along the steps of cross-case analysis (see Eisenhardt 1989).

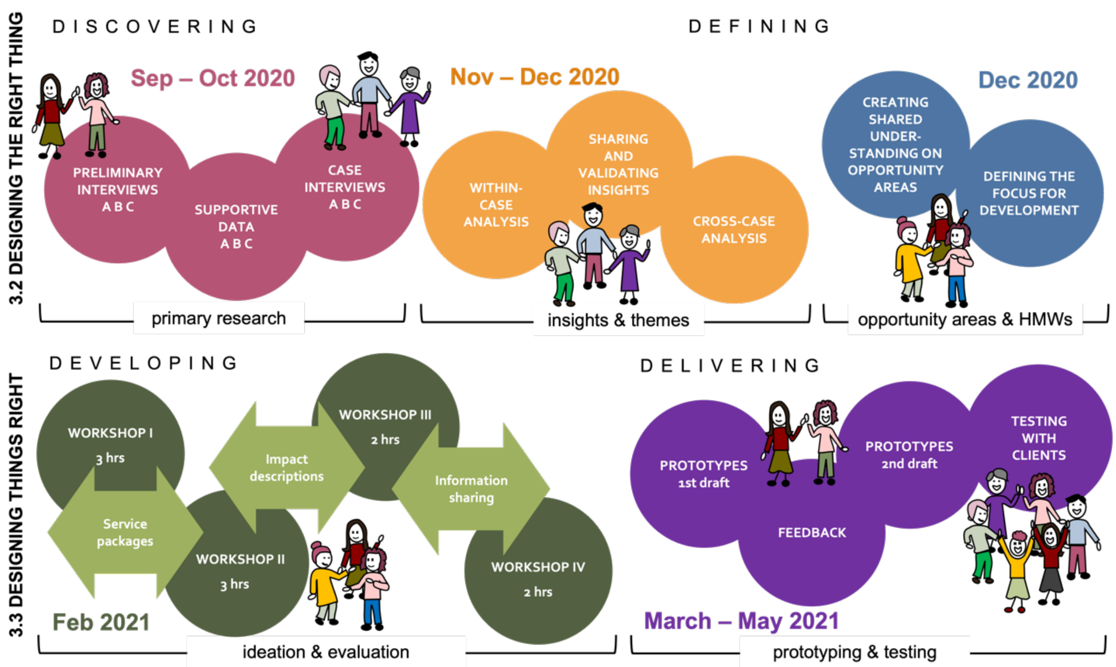


Figure 6: Overview on the current design process.

3.2 Designing the right thing

As promised above, this chapter takes us through the empirical research process from data collection and analysis to identifying opportunity areas and defining the development focus to take on in the next phases of the process. The purpose is to enlighten the way this process was conducted and the type and nature of results it produced, not to describe each case with their related organizations, processes, and prevailing circumstances in every context-specific detail. The objective is to give an overview that both allows further discussion on the chosen methods and perspectives and justifies the comparison to the theoretical framework created in Chapter 2. The chapter is divided in three, in discovering case-specific insights on the factors of effectiveness in organizational coaching service, in defining cross-case themes and patterns revealing current opportunity areas, and in summarizing the overall study results.

3.2.1 Discovering case-specific insights

Overview on cases

The three cases studied in this work were chosen from the past organizational coaching service processes the two entrepreneurs had realized with their clients within one and a half years' time preceding the present research. The cases selection was based both on the clients' own agreement to participate the study and on their representativeness of the three alternative service packages the entrepreneurs had created to ease the selling and purchasing of their services. Table 6 provides an overview of the packages and their respective cases. The descriptive names above each package and corresponding case are working titles that were used during the design process to ease the discussions with the entrepreneurs.

Service/ case	**Description**	**Approximate length of the process**
Package A: The wake-up call		
Service A	Short coaching process to help clients define common change objectives by challenging their presuppositions and beliefs and building shared understanding in the organization.	Few weeks
Case A	Coaching process for the executive team in a middle-sized and family-owned manufacturing company based in Finland. The coaching goal was to improve the team's internal collaboration and strategic leadership as to strengthen the company's future success and capabilities in developing business in the right direction.	Coaching process • 2-3 weeks Service process • Around 1 year Case study timeline • Beginning of 2018 – October 2020
Package B: Setting direction		
Service B	Medium-length coaching process to help clients plan and initiate their change process by identifying required steps and resources and assigning needed roles and responsibilities within the organization. Includes package A for defining change goals to a needed extent.	Few months

Service/ case	Description	Approximate length of the process
Case B	Coaching process for a Finnish national interest and development organization in collaboration with its central association that was, by the lead of their new CEO, taking steps to promote the new customer centric strategy and self-managing culture throughout the organization in a changing field and under budgetary constraints. Coaching evolved in two subsequent and separately negotiated processes: from change management coaching for all managers and supervisors in regional centers to team coaching for the central association. Individual projects and negotiations ongoing with some of the regional centers, but the focus here is on processes organized with the central association.	Coaching processes • Change management coaching for supervisors: 1 month • Team coaching for central association: 9 months (global pandemic delayed the process) Service process • 1 year 4 months Case study timeline • March 2019 – October 2020
Package C: Facilitating change		
Service C	Long coaching process to help clients implement change, realize the defined goals and steps by helping them develop and adopt new practices, skills, and activities. Includes package A for defining change goals and package B for planning the change process to a needed extent.	Several months – 1 year or longer
Case C	Coaching process for an educational organization that had been merged from two separate organizations a couple of years earlier. The overall aim within client was to unite the organization to strive for a common goal with new and shared practices. Coaching evolved in two subsequent and separately negotiated processes, concentrating first on the functioning and collaboration of a merged and dispersed executive team and second on the creation of a commonly shared strategy that would steer development and actions in a new and unified direction. In addition to the executive team, all supervisors and the members of the board were involved in the strategy process. At the time of research there were ongoing discussions on further collaboration and coaching.	Coaching processes • Executive team coaching 2: months • Strategy process: 1 month Service process • 6 months (and ongoing) Case study timeline • Beginning of 2020 – October 2020

Table 6: Organizational coaching service packages and respective cases in the study.

The table shows how the realized processes vary in terms of their content and length. It also shows how especially cases B and C are not any complete matches to the service packages they are representing in this study. One might even ask what differentiates the two in terms of their correspondence to the service packages B and C. This is all down to two facts. First, the entrepreneurs had established their consultancy only two years before the current design project and the service packages even later, and none of the studied processes were originally offered or structured according to the current packages. Second, even with existing service packages, all processes are adapted to the specific needs and possibilities of each different client and are the result of active interaction and iterative negotiations. In consequence, choosing the closest possible cases in terms of approximate service contents and process length was considered to sufficiently represent their current offering. As to the difference between cases B and C, in the entrepreneurs' own experience, case C dealing with internal challenges of a newly merged organization, was the second-best representative for service package C since their first choice had not responded to the interview request.

Looking at the length of different processes it is also remarkable how coaching really is only one phase in the service process and confining the research only to that period in a service relationship would essentially narrow the development perspective and insights on effectiveness as anticipated in Chapter 1.3. Although any definite starting or ending points are hard to pinpoint, ‘coaching process’ in the table refers to a period from the entrepreneurs and clients starting their common planning to the last identified coaching related meeting or discussion, and ‘service process’ to a period from the start of the negotiations to the latest direct contact between parties before the interviews. Case study timelines start from the very first contact made between entrepreneurs and their client and end to the moment of conducting case interviews but including also some anticipated forthcoming steps in the nearest future of each client. It is also noteworthy that cases B and C both consist of two subsequent and separately negotiated and purchased coaching processes. According to Eisenhardt (2021, 153) these embedded cases within a larger case can be treated as separate units of analysis which increases the possibilities for gaining insights and create understanding across cases.

Data collection

The primary research data collection phase took place from September to October in 2020. As mentioned earlier, the data for the three selected cases was collected mainly by interviewing first one of the entrepreneurs and then one client representative for each case. These are referred to as preliminary interviews and case interviews respectively. Although all three interviewed client representatives belong to the top management of their organization (CEO in cases A and B, and vice rector in case C), inviting them was based on their active role both in the service process and collaboration with the entrepreneurs and as agents pursuing the desired change in their own organization. They were thus each considered the one person in their organization having the most comprehensive overview, understanding and knowledge of the realized process.

Despite these obvious similarities and in the benefit of the current research construct (see Eisenhardt 1989, 536-537), the client representatives’ positions differed significantly in their possibilities to make and implement organization-wide decisions. Whereas the CEO in case A is in the lead of a middle-sized line organization owned by his own family, the CEO in case B has direct power only within the central association that provides services to the regional centers which are autonomous in their individual choices and management (Case interview A 2020; Case interview B 2020). In addition, the vice rector in case C is largely dependent on the actions of the CEO who as a superior is making all large purchase decisions for example regarding the current service but is somewhat less motivated in pursuing the needed change than the interviewee (Case interview C 2020).

After agreeing to the interview, the client representatives were asked to confirm by email their acceptance and understanding of a research release stating the purpose of the interview, their rights and consents as interviewees and the rights and obligations of the researcher in handling and using the collected data which they all did without further questions (the release in Finnish in Appendix 2). Although the release was originally created on ethical grounds and out of responsibility to the interviewees and their organizations (see Portigal 2013, 45), this small step also outlined concrete frames for the use of research data and seemed thus to ease the start of the interviews. The interviewees were nevertheless asked to inform if they would want any part of the discussion be excluded from direct quoting.

The semi-structured interviews, each lasting approximately 1,5-3 hours with the entrepreneurs and 1,5 hours with clients, were all conducted and recorded using Microsoft Teams. The themes and questions of the interview were aimed to cover both the extended timeline perspective from customer-dominant logic (Heinonen & al. 2010) and the desirability, feasibility, and viability perspectives from design thinking (IDEO 2015). Still, the overarching goal was to take a conversational approach to the interview and allow natural transitions from one theme to another according to the interviewees own story and experience. Therefore the interview forms were structured in a single page layout with color-framed themes perceivable to the interviewer at one glance (interview forms available in Finnish in Appendices 3 & 4). The questions listed in the interview forms were used flexibly based both on their relevance with each case and on the flow of the discussion. As such, despite their relatively short length, the interviews conducted in this study can be described as in-depth interviews where the role of interviewees resembles the one of informants who can “propose her or his own insights to certain occurrences” which may be used “as the basis for further inquiry” (Yin 2009, 106-107).

As briefly noted earlier, the online collaboration platform Miro was used in the interviews to draw the timeline and, by using color-coded sticky-notes, to map all joint events (email and phone discussions, online and face to face meetings, workshops, training, and coaching sessions), the entrepreneurs’ actions, the client’s actions (both including also significant internal events), and relevant documents for each process. The preliminary interviews with the entrepreneurs provided an overview of each case before interviewing clients and enabled thus both better use of time and focus on clients’ own experience in the process. The process timeline was also complemented and checked with the information from the service documents received from the entrepreneurs with the clients’ permission. These supportive documents included for example service offers, process plans, material created for coaching, workshop and training sessions, complementary guides for further development and summary documents with concluding plans, interpretations and agreements resulting from each process (complete list of case-specific data sources is available in Appendix 1).

In the case interviews the client representatives were asked to elaborate the details and overall proceeding of the process from their own perspective and enlighten their organizations' relevant internal actions, events and discussions along the collaboration starting from their initial needs' recognition for organizational change and external service to their experience of the value of the current service and their plans of implementing and promoting change. In addition, the client interviewees charted their step-by-step experience of the effectiveness of the service on an emotional journey map (see for example Stickdorn & al. 2018, 44-47) by placing dots accordingly on a scale ranging from 'not useful/effective' to 'useful/effective'. All interviews were transcribed on a word-level accuracy, and the quotes with client interviewees pondering and explaining their response were copied to the boards beside the scale after the interview. Figure 7 with exemplary images from case B Miro boards gives an indicative idea of the evolution of the process timeline created in and complemented after preliminary and case interviews (deliberately leaving the details invisible).

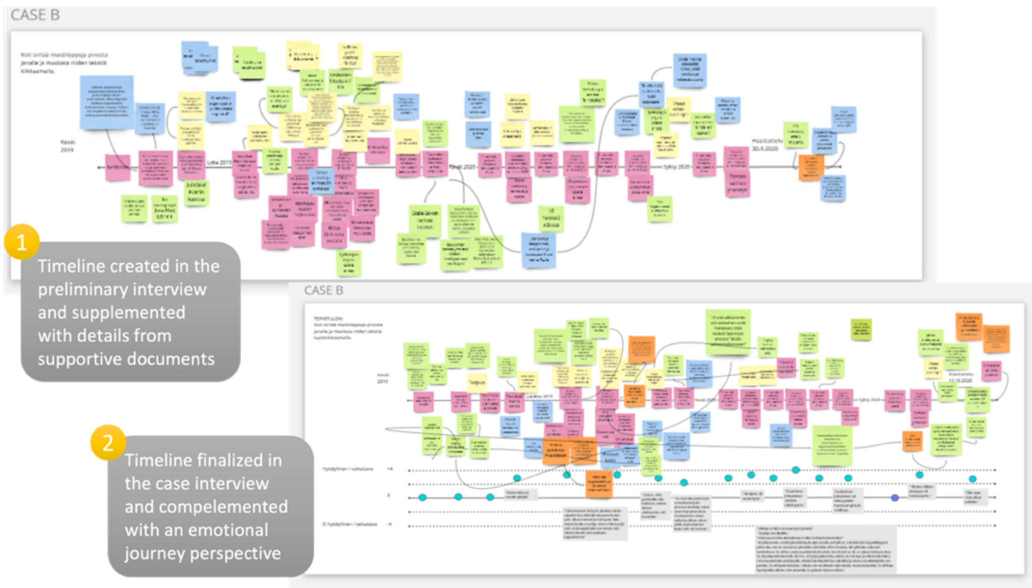


Figure 7: An example of the evolution of process timelines mapped in and after case B interviews. Images exported from Miro.

Within-case analysis: collaboration journeys

The data analysis took about three weeks in November and December in 2020. Following Eisenhardt's (1989) advice, the analysis was started by describing and examining each case individually to gain understanding of the factors of effectiveness in the context each service process with different goals, challenges, service contents and organizational dynamics. Basing on the process timelines drawn in the interviews, each process was first described as a collaboration journey, an adaptation of the more traditional customer journey usually highlighting the clients' side and experience in the process (for example Stickdorn & al. 2018, 44-47). This solution was to better understand both the client's and the entrepreneurs' sides in the evolving collaboration, see the connections between individual events and actions, and consider feasibility and viability perspectives beside desirability perspective. Compared to service blueprints usually targeted to the analysis of a service system from a provider point of view, a collaboration journey perspective was deemed more suited for appreciating both parties' experience and individual pains and gains along the service process (see for example Heinonen & al. 2010, 532; Stickdorn & al. 2018, 52-57). Figure 8 provides an example of a finalized collaboration journey with the legend and first part of the journey visualization for case A.

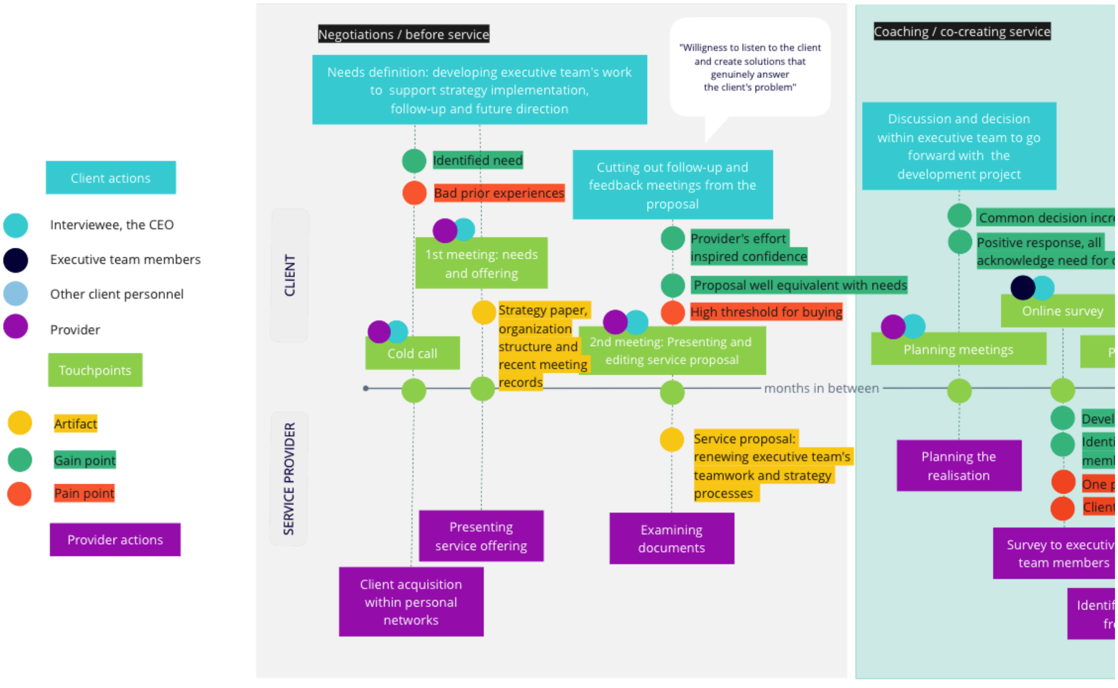


Figure 8: An example of a collaboration journey with the legend and first part of the journey visualization for case A. An image exported from Miro.

As it is observable from Figure 8, in addition to the relevant client and provider actions, their common events (touchpoints), and identified pains and gains for both parties, the collaboration journeys illuminate all relevant participants and shared documents (artifacts) in the process. Quotes from case interviews enlighten the client representatives' primary experience from each stage of the process. Moreover, apart from what is visible in Figure 8, collaboration journeys differentiate three kinds of phases in each process loosely following the idea of an extended timeline from customer-dominant logic (Heinonen & al. 2010): *negotiations/before service*, *coaching/co-creating service*, and *implementation/follow-up* after service. There, client history is included in the *before service* phase and client future in the *follow-up* phase, while *co-creation* also covers the steps of common planning if they are separable from negotiations. In the following, we will shortly discuss the main insights gained from each phase.

The service negotiations were opened at the entrepreneurs' own initiative in cases A and B, and at the client's initiative in case C. Whereas case B was based on a simple cold call by a commissioned sales representative, the CEO in client A was an old acquaintance of one of the entrepreneurs. In the beginning of their business, the entrepreneurs were actively searching for potential clients by using their own personal and professional networks, and case A was one of the first service processes of their newly established coaching firm. In case C the client organization's chief development officer (not the interviewed vice rector) had become aware of the entrepreneurs' expertise in self-managing culture and practices and thus contacted them directly with an interest to purchase coaching in support of the forthcoming efforts for developing new processes and culture in the merged organization. In all three cases the original service proposal drafted by the entrepreneurs was nevertheless renegotiated and bargained by the client in terms of the coaching service length and contents.

As it can be perceived from Figure 8 above in case A the interviewed CEO described their threshold for a service purchase to be high partly due to bad prior experiences with external consultancies, which was one of the reasons prolonging the negotiations process also with the current service (Case interview A 2020). As it nevertheless turned out later in the design process, the entrepreneurs were unaware of the client's past experiences as one of the potential reasons behind their prolonged service negotiations. The former acquaintanceship with the provider nevertheless encouraged the CEO to agree on a meeting in the first place. In addition, the CEO wanted to involve the entire executive team in making a joint decision whether to purchase the proposed and iterated coaching service. This was to enhance the executives' commitment to a process targeted to improving the team's own functioning and internal collaboration. (Case interview A 2020).

Figure 9 with the general view on the collaboration journeys of cases B and C demonstrates how the negotiation (light grey areas) and coaching (light turquoise areas) phases recur twice as the collaboration in both cases evolved in two subsequent coaching processes. It is also remarkable that both in case B and case C, the first coaching process is perceivably shorter than the second one. This illustrates the fact that in either case the client wanted to put the coaching service to a test before committing the organization to any further collaboration. In case B this was an indication of the collegial deliberation of the CEO and his/her team under the budgetary constraints within a changing field whereas in case C this was the way to proceed despite the hesitance and bargaining of the CEO superior to the interviewed vice rector. (Case interview B 2020; Case interview C 2020.)

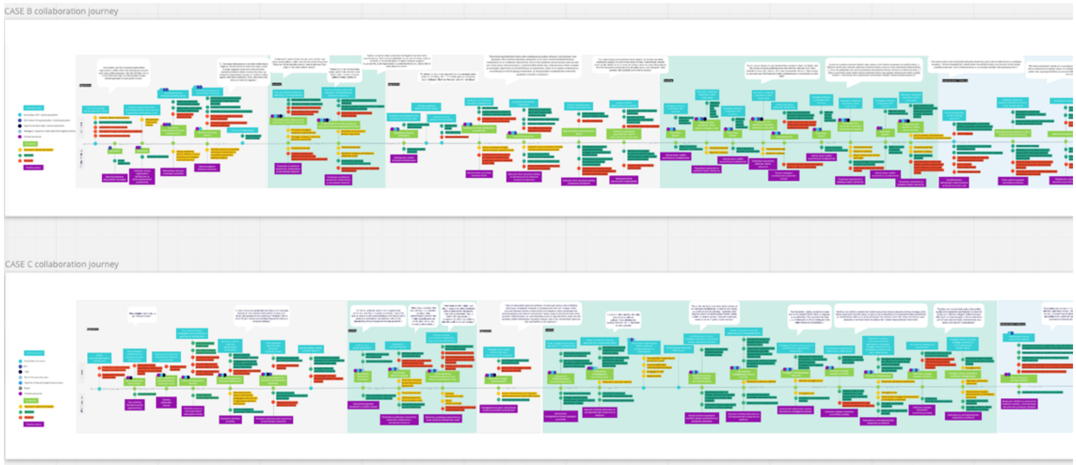


Figure 9: General view on the collaboration journeys of cases B and C. An image exported from Miro.

Figure 10 enlightens the first negotiations phase in case C in more detail. It shows how internal hesitance, dispersed views and ongoing changes within the merged client organization affect the negotiations and reduces an initially extensive service proposal to only a one-day coaching session purchased for the executive team despite the client’s own initiative to start the process. Although the collaboration continued immediately with a separately and even smoothly negotiated, remarkably longer strategy process, the effects of a rather hasty executive team coaching were still visible at the time of the interview and a constant source of frustration to the interviewed vice rector. (Case interview C 2020; Preliminary interview C 2020.)

Despite their alike active bargaining, in case B client organization the situation was quite opposite. There the new CEO and his/her closest colleagues in the central association were determined in defining the needed steps and deciding where the use of an external service would be most profitable. Beside the central association’s need to slightly cut down expenses, their main challenges were related to engaging the autonomous regional centers similarly to the desired change and convincing also them to take the forwarding actions. Nonetheless, in their second negotiations phase the case B client wanted to restrict the coaching service contents and the provider’s role in the change process and cut out parts from the proposal the entrepreneurs themselves considered essential in ensuring long-term change in the entire organization. (Case interview B 2020; Preliminary interview B 2020.) Figure 11 captures the collaboration journey for the second negotiations phase in case B.

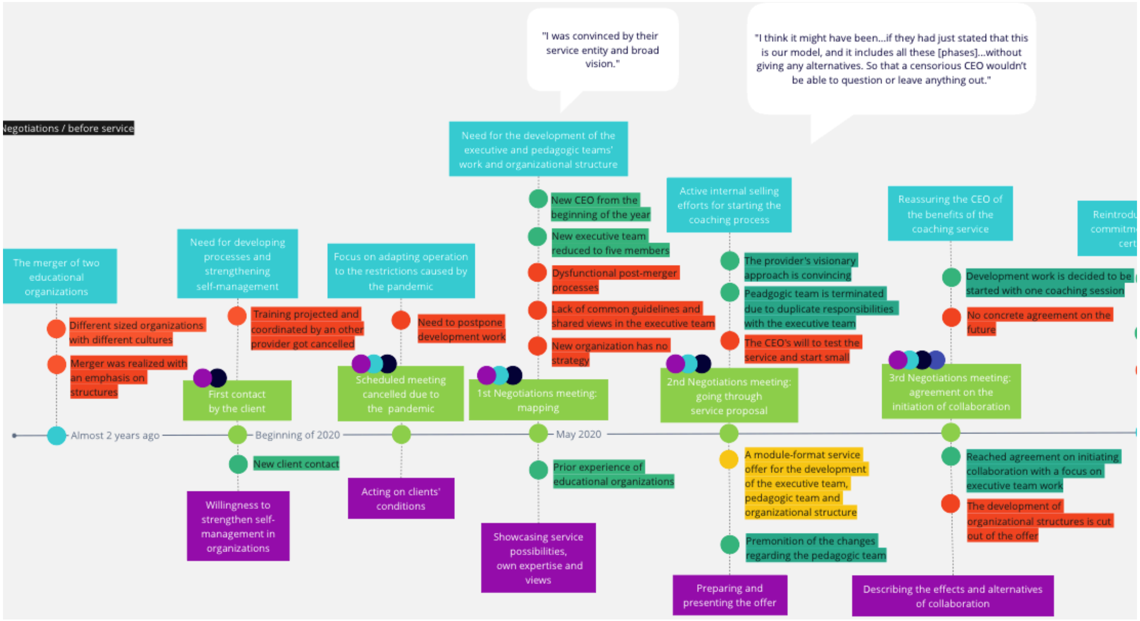


Figure 10: The first negotiations phase in case C. An image exported from Miro.

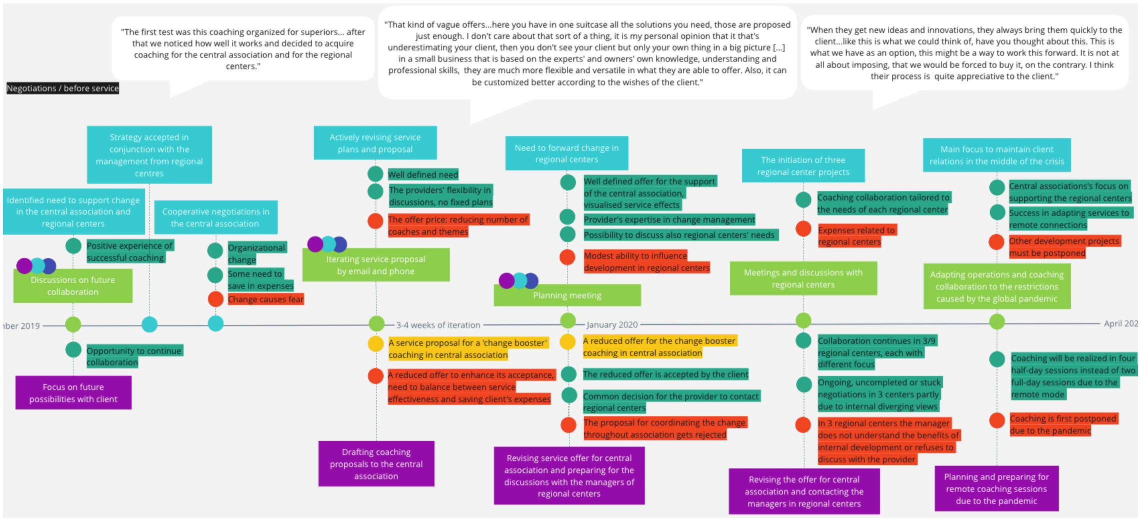


Figure 11: The second negotiations phase in case B. An image exported from Miro.

In the end, all interviewed client representatives emphasized the significance of the first encounters and the negotiations phase in general. There they thanked for the entrepreneurs' flexibility and willingness to listen to the client as well as their effort and perceivable devotion to the client's cause beside their professional conviction from the very beginning of their discussions. Instead of lecturing about some latest trend in the management field (that was considered the typical approach of far too many consultancies), the entrepreneurs expressed genuine concern over their clients' situation and aimed at creating timely solutions to answer their needs. (Case interview A 2020; Case interview B 2020; Case interview C 2020.) Then again in case C the interviewee struggling with the internal impediments to the desired change pondered if the compromise was reached at the expense of the desired service impact (Case interview C 2020, translated from Finnish):

> I think it might have been…if they had just stated that this is our model, and it includes all these [phases]…without giving any alternatives. So that a censorious CEO wouldn't be able to question or leave anything out.

Although the entrepreneurs' coaching service offers were iterated and revised in all cases, even repeatedly in case B, the offer materials were considered clear, informative, and well in line of what had been discussed (Case interview A 2020; Case interview B 2020; Case interview C 2020).

For the entrepreneurs themselves their willingness to negotiate and iterate service offers as well as coaching plans during the co-creation of an already agreed service is a natural way of ensuring service compatibility with their clients' needs. At the same time, it is a subject of efficiency, and one of the very purposes of developing service packages was to smooth their planning and improve the accuracy of their first proposals. (Preliminary interview B 2020). From a client perspective the possibility to influence service offers and coaching plans is appreciated as increasing their own sense of control which was clearly stated for example by the CEO interviewed in case B (Case interview B 2020, translated from Finnish):

> It's a quite good and necessary thing, also allowing the client… perhaps a false sense of controlling this process on some level. Although, of course in practice, any professional provider can make offers that are tactically and technically structured.

Despite the client representative's benevolent and general allusion to negotiation tactics, the entrepreneurs' primary concern was to avoid proposing too ambitious development entities and thus frightening some of their clients off the negotiation table (Preliminary interview B 2020).

In either case, a client's sense of control, constant interaction and close collaboration seem to be valuable features throughout organizational coaching service. Figure 12 with the excerpt of the coaching/co-creating service phase from the collaboration journey illustrated for case B displays how each coaching session is regularly preceded by a joint planning meeting. Together with the observations described above, it demonstrates how the co-creation of organizational coaching consists of also other and equally meaningful actions and service features beside the actual coaching sessions and coaching competence that need to be considered in developing the effectiveness of the service.

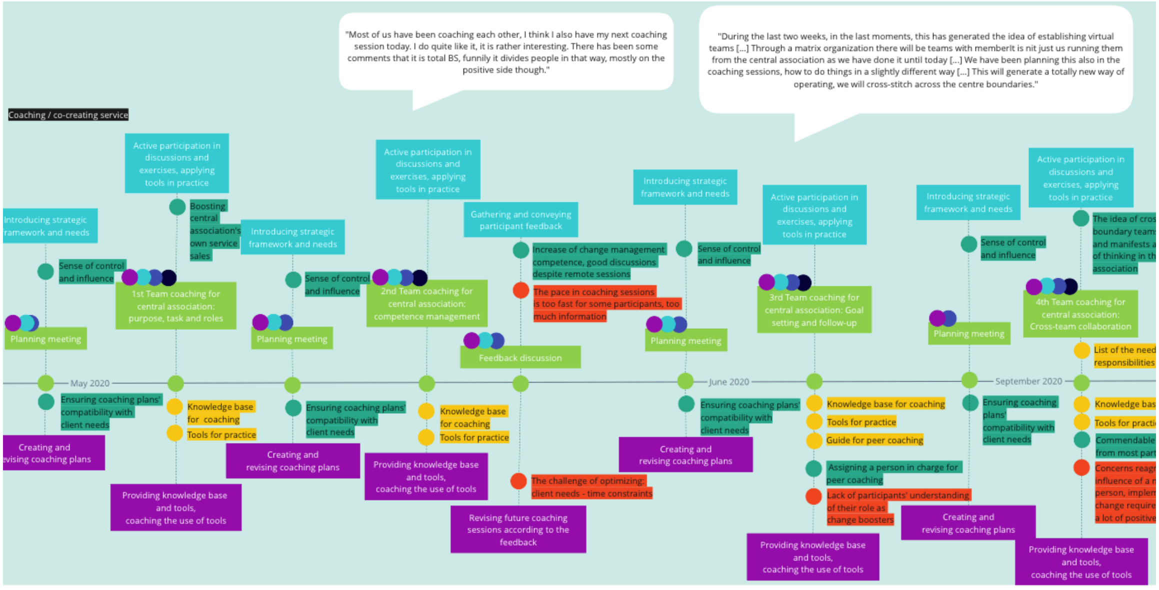


Figure 12: The coaching/co-creating service phase in case B. An image exported from Miro.

Furthermore, as it was discussed in the introductory part of this work, organizational coaching may often integrate various organizational development methods besides coaching (see Chapter 1.2). Although the point here is not to evaluate the effectiveness of the used coaching methods but to develop organizational coaching as a service, it can be stated that also the current processes include facilitation and training aside coaching based on each client's needs. Also surveys and interviews were used to both gather information in support of the entrepreneurs' own planning and individual coachees' preparing themselves for the forthcoming coaching sessions. For the entrepreneurs these steps represented an important means to gain deeper understanding on each situation, engage each coachee individually to the process, and use the valuable and often scarce common time in coaching as effectively as possible. (Preliminary interview A 2020; Preliminary interview B 2020; Preliminary interview C 2020.) From a client perspective the significance of these stages may nevertheless example harder to see, and for example in case A the CEO wanted to change the proposed interviews into a survey with an expectation of a lowered service price (Case interview A 2020; Preliminary interview A 2020).

As to the individual coaching sessions and processes withing each service process, the interviewed client representatives expressed satisfaction to the entrepreneurs' coaching, expertise, and overall way of working. In the words of the case A client CEO (Case interview A 2020, translated from Finnish):

> It was all very down to earth and concrete, that's what makes it so meaningful. […] The workshops were truly participatory. That was a positive experience.

Although the success was partly considered as resulting from active common planning prior to coaching (Case interview A 2020; Case interview B 2020), also the few defects were mostly thought to be down to the clients own bargaining, lack of commitment, or rush in the process (Case interview B 2020; Case interview C 2020). On the other hand, especially the interviewed CEO in case B pointed out how some of the coaching sessions were too packed with new information and how half of the participants did not quite conceive the purpose of peer coaching that the entrepreneurs guided them to continue independently after the coaching process. (Case interview B 2020). Although both examples are related to the cuts made in original service offers, the question remains why the entrepreneurs wanted to squeeze all original themes and items also in the reduced service offer even with less time to be used in the process. The interviewed entrepreneur explained this with their urge to give best possible support for each client despite of the purchased service entity. In the end, they were constantly balancing between the best possible service impact and saving on the costs for their client. (Preliminary interview B 2020.)

Not all negotiations processes were about clients bargaining on the service contents. In case C the second coaching process for strategy development was implemented according to the first and largest service option offered by the entrepreneurs. This proposal was in fact constructed in three different sized packages, an adapted, early version of the current ABC alternatives. Here the entrepreneurs managed to convince the client representatives of the benefits of enlarging the target group participating the process from top management and superiors responsible for pedagogic processes to include also those responsible for support services. (Preliminary interview C 2020.) Although the entrepreneurs would have preferred stretching the coverage to all employees, according to the interviewed vice rector the strategy process was already considered an undeniable success in the organization, and would ease the forthcoming efforts in managing the merged organization towards shared goals (Case interview C 2020, translated from Finnish):

> We have now, for the next five years, a true, real, and serious strategy to which the entire management is committed and that is already evoking positive feelings throughout our staff.

Case C is thus another example of the significance of inclusion and participation as an enabler for commitment and change aside the joint purchase choice made by the executive team in Case A.

The purpose of the implementation/follow up phase illustrations in each collaboration journey was to map each clients' concrete actions, experience, and plans in promoting their change after the service. None of the cases included distinct implementation phase support or coaching service from the entrepreneurs, yet all demonstrated distinct effects and forward steps to the desired direction. Figure 13 shows the implementation/follow up phase from the collaboration journey for case A. Despite the relatively short coaching process, the client's actions after the service seemed to have reached a new, more concrete, and goal-oriented direction through four defined key projects. The CEO also reported his/her own changed attitude towards external services and learnings related to the possibilities of engaging people. The client nevertheless also had some concerns related to their success in implementing their plans and strategic direction. (Case interview A 2020). In the negotiations phase before coaching the client him/herself had refused the follow-up coaching meetings proposed by the provider. (Preliminary interview A 2020).

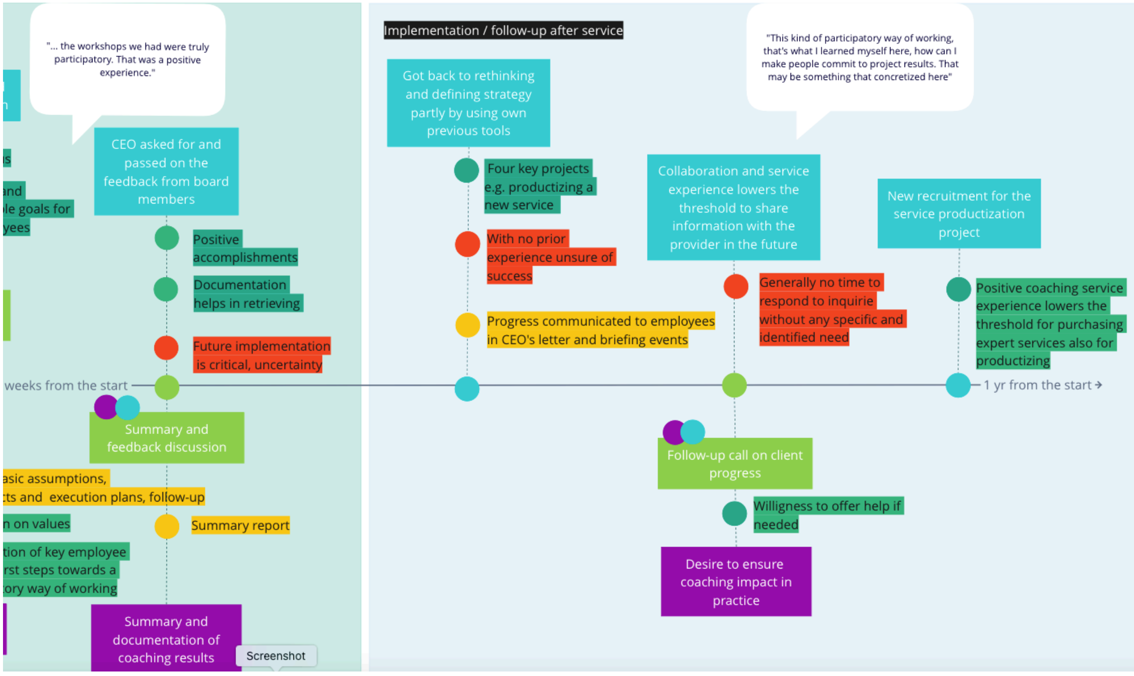


Figure 13: The implementation/follow up phase from the collaboration journey illustrated for case A. An image exported from Miro.

In case B the change process continued with an outsourced training program for superiors that was coordinated by another provider but, on the client's wish and to ensure some continuity between different processes, employed also one of the current entrepreneurs as a change management expert. In addition, some projects and negotiations with the entrepreneurs were still ongoing in regional centers. All-in-all, the CEO felt that their collaboration with the entrepreneurs had significantly boosted the change process in the entire association. Further coaching service acquisition from the entrepreneurs in support of implementation was nevertheless left for future consideration and evaluation of needs based on current progress. (Case interview B 2020.) From the entrepreneurs' viewpoint, there was still a lot to be done for the cultural change to become a reality, and although they were content with of being able to participate the process even in a minor role, handing the control over to another service provider was also a subject of slight frustration (Preliminary interview B 2020). The implementation/follow-up phase from the case B collaboration journey is available in Figure 14.

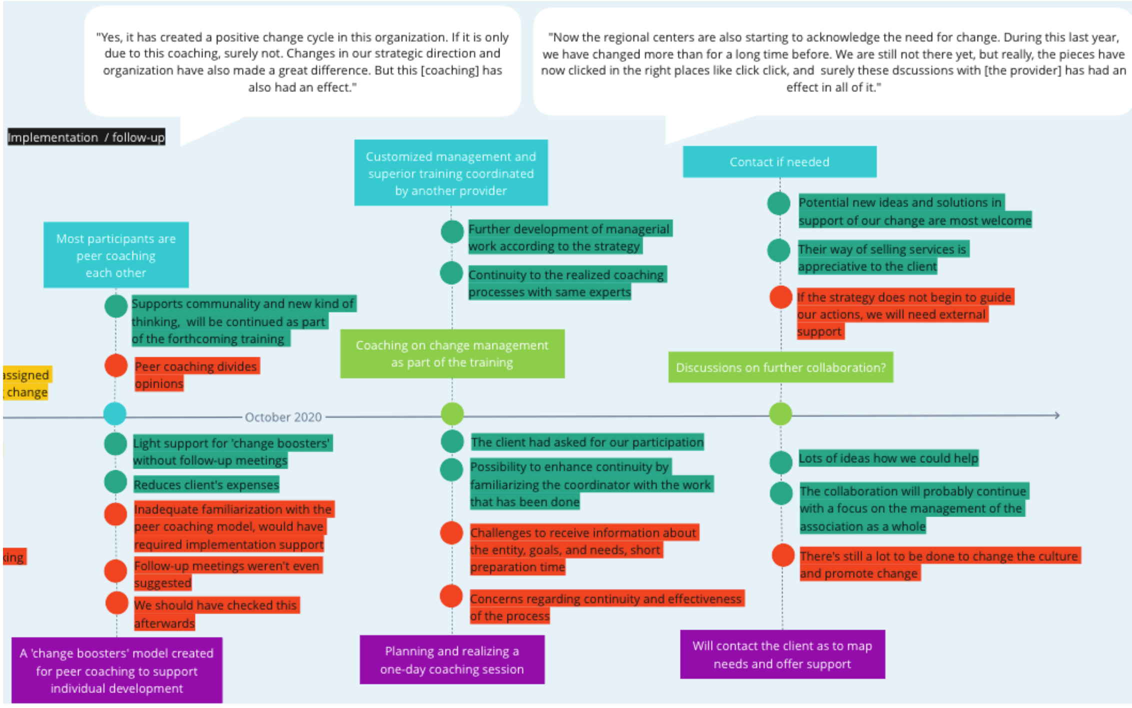


Figure 14: The implementation/follow up phase from the collaboration journey illustrated for case B. An image exported from Miro.

In case C, despite the praised success in the strategy process, at the time of the interview the dispersed executive team was, according to the vice rector, regressing to its old disputes and dysfunctionalities and in need for further support. The executive team's coaching in the beginning of the collaboration was first bargained by the hesitant CEO and then cut short by the more urgent strategy process forced by the newly established and streamlined organizational planning cycle. Regardless of the acknowledged positive service experience with the entrepreneurs, internal negotiations on future development work and conflicting views on the need and benefits of external support were still obstructing the discussions regarding further collaboration with the coaching provider. (Case interview B 2020; Case interview C 2020). As in all studied cases, the entrepreneurs had the inclination and preparedness to check the client also after finalizing the agreed service and discuss all emerging needs and provide further customized solutions.

Whereas these examples bring forward the influence of client's organizational context, past experiences, internal dynamics, and current situation (discussed in Chapter 2), they also highlight the impact of first negotiations on the entire process, and the need of the provider to gain trust by enabling positive experiences and problem-solving with client-specific solutions. They also demonstrate how the service is constructed of also other and equally important actions and features beside coaching that may have even greater significance in terms of effectiveness than for example coaching competence and methods highlighted in the coaching literature. However, in this study there is no question about the provider's expertise in organizational coaching, nor it is the focus of our examination. Having stated that, the essence of organizational coaching is clearly about partnering with the client and "dancing in the moment" (International Coaching Federation 2021b, 2) also in terms of the entire service process from early negotiations to implementation and checking the client for after-service developments and further needs of support. All-in-all, from the clients' viewpoint, when asked directly, the one major factor affecting service effectiveness is the start of the relationship as it sets the direction for the entire process (Case interview A 2020; Case interview B 2020; Case interview C 2020).

Within-case analysis: impact paths

As to deepen the understanding on the effectiveness of organizational coaching service beyond evolving collaborations, there was a need to investigate related factors also from another perspective. An impact path analysis is a method for identifying and concretizing different factors and their relations underlying any service effects and was considered a suitable approach for broadening the view on effectiveness factors also in this research. It is a way to demonstrate any path from the starting point and early steps to their results, further effects, and overall impact. Impact paths can be used either for upfront planning or post evaluation purposes and visualized in various alternative ways. (See Heliskoski, Humala, Kopola, Tonteri & Tykkyläinen 2018.) For conducting an impact path analysis for the three service processes studied here, preliminary interview and case interview data was first themed and compared similarly within each case. This was done by color coding relevant excerpts in each transcribed interview and then juxtaposing and compressing those client and provider views into few shared key points in a Microsoft Excel sheet dedicated for each case. An example of such an Excel sheet with the themes marked on top of it is available in Figure 15. Again, the aim is not to show the details of the interviews but to give an idea of their thematic comparison.

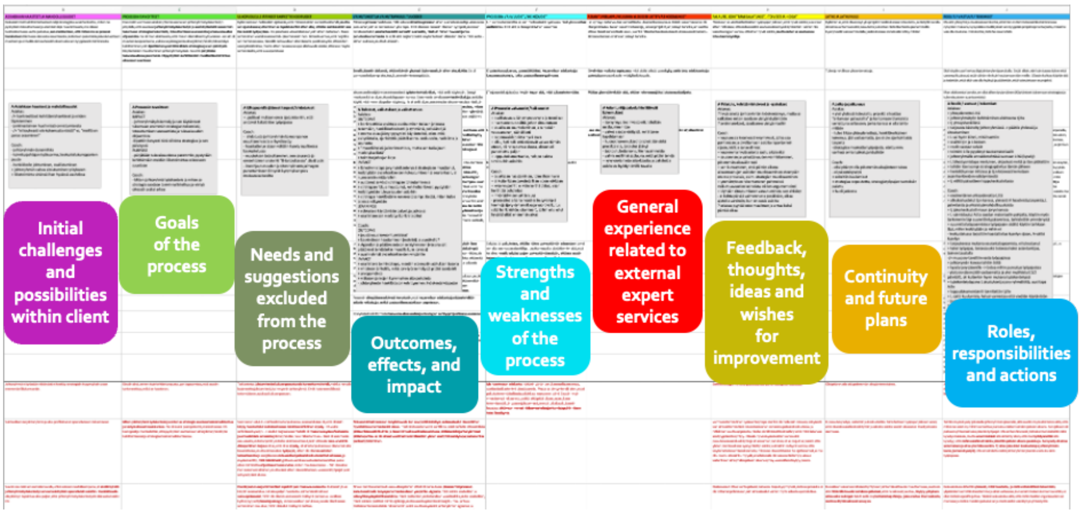


Figure 15: An exemplary image of a Microsoft Excel sheet for a within-case interview data comparison. The themes marked on top of the image were used similarly for each case.

This comparison was only an intermediate phase in identifying within-case factors of effectiveness and did not reveal for example any major worrisome discrepancies in the entrepreneurs' and their clients' views on the realized processes. It nevertheless enlarged the understanding from a factual process description to both sides' perceptions and assessments on the initial setting and goals, the realization and effectiveness of the service process, possibilities for improvement, and continuity in terms of the client's change and the service relationship. As such it not only served as the key step in identifying the impact paths but also supported the forthcoming cross-case analysis and making the final conclusions regarding potential areas of development in the three service packages of the current design partner (see Chapter 3.2.2).

For the impact path analyses we used an adapted version of the so-called iooi method, where the letters stand for input, output, outcome, and impact (Heliskoski & al. 2018, 5). With an intention to broaden the perspective and better take account of each case-specific and unique client context and use the original wider organizational change objective as a measure for service impact, two layers were added to the model: *Activities* as describing the concrete steps taken in the process and as a replacement for *inputs* which now indicate the initial setting and conditions, strengths and challenges prior to the service, and *purpose* to define the overall development goal underlying the needs of each client organization. Figure 16 portrays an exemplary impact path with the visualization created for case A. As the focus in this research is the examination of realized processes instead of planning new ones, the analysis proceeded from inputs and outputs to outcomes and not vice versa (Heliskoski & al. 2018, 5). It is however noteworthy that an impact path can sometimes proceed to the opposite direction when for example an output of one activity inspires additional activities.

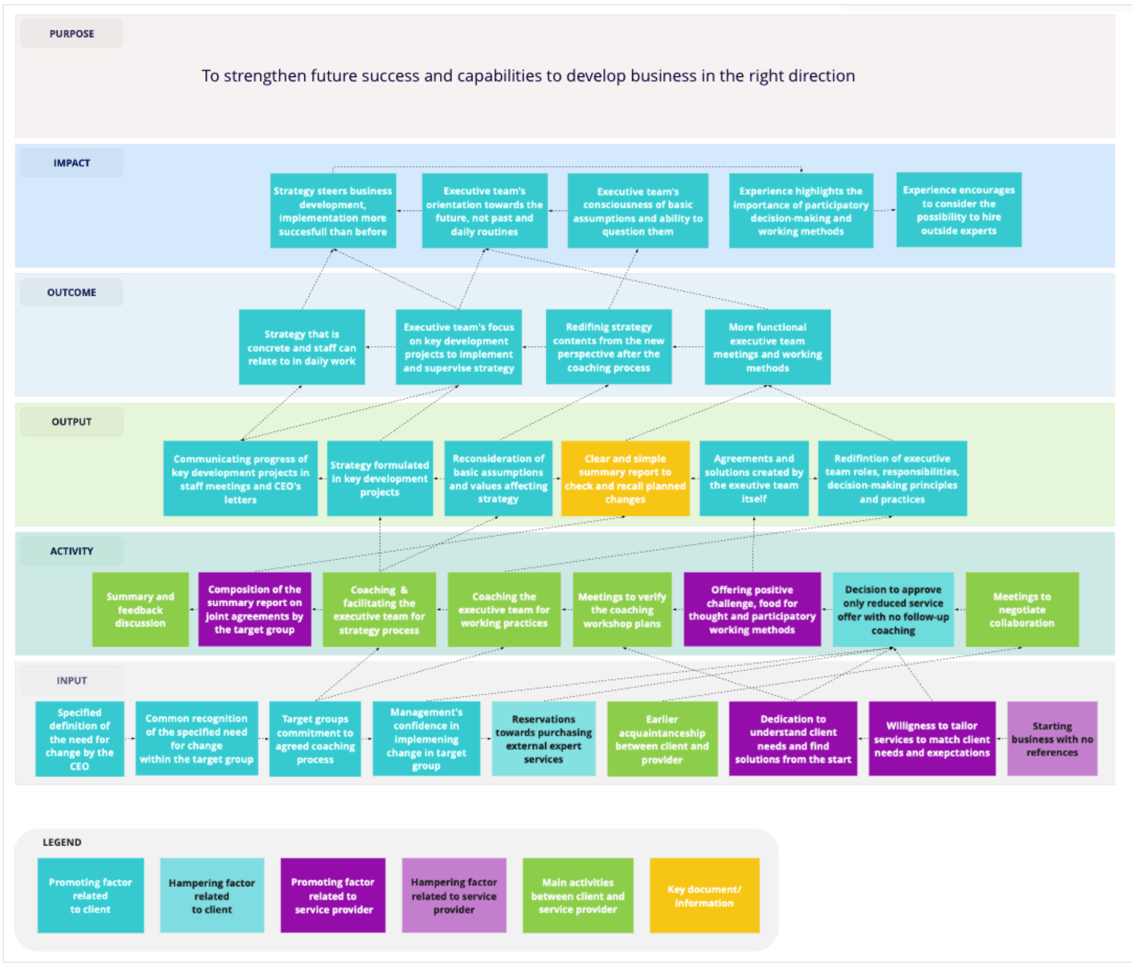


Figure 16: An exemplary impact path visualization from case A. An image exported from Miro.

The impact path in Figure 16 enlightens the basic logic behind the analysis. Turquoise-colored boxes refer to client related features and actions and purple-colored ones to provider related features and actions. White text in a box describes factors that promote the desired service effects and change in a client organization while black text is to describe the hampering ones. Green boxes indicate joint actions and yellow ones point to relevant documents and information shared or created during each process. Dotted arrow lines demonstrate the underlying relations and direction of influence between different features, actions, and documents. The idea was to conceive the client’s and the provider’s roles equally in the process and perceive the which features and actions with each side, in addition to joint actions and meetings, affect the gained outcomes and eventually impact in each process. The aim was also to take into consideration the principles of customer dominant logic (Heinonen & al. 2010), and the need to look beyond direct interaction between the service provider and the client, into customers’ independent processes and practices within a timeframe exceeding the service.

Figure 17 provides an overview of both case B and case C impact paths. Compared to these, much longer and wider processes, and albeit their undistinguishable details in the figure, the impact path for case A in Figure 16 seems rather straightforward in the actual service actions' influence on the outcomes of the process. In case A the only client action in the *activity* level is the decision to approve the reduced service offer and all internal development actions occur only after the end of the short coaching process whereas especially in case C the client's own efforts in promoting common practices are very much intertwined with and affect the service process. Also in case B, the client's transformation towards a customer-oriented culture had already been initiated by creating a new strategy and plans for a compatible organizational structure, and the two coaching processes were acquired to boost that development. It is nevertheless noteworthy that in all cases the client's relative role increases when moving upward in impact path from activities and outputs to outcomes and impact, which reflects the very notion of value emerging after the service in a client's context as it is highlighted in customer-dominant logic (Heinonen & al. 2010; Chapter 2.2).

While none of the projected transformation processes came complete within the studied case timeline, the interviewed client representatives' own expectations towards coaching service's impact were well accomplished. This was down to few things perceivable also in the impact paths that are based for a large part on client interviews. First, the interviewees all saw the significance of also their organizations' own challenges, actions, and choices in the process, that was considered above all as an interactive collaboration instead of a purchased service. Second, they conceived the change as a journey that would yet require many more steps and further commitment in the future until reaching their ultimate goals. And third, they weighed the current service results in relation to these notions above and assessed them to be concrete forward-moving steps for and within their organization in terms of the desired transformation. (Case interview A 2020; Case interview B 2020; Case interview C 2020.) The CEO from case B association crystallizes this common line of thinking (Case interview B 2020, translated from Finnish):

> We wanted this change to be promoted from within the organization, it is the only way to make it last. If someone from outside comes and says that this is how it must be done, it just won't be accepted. To really make the change permanent, it just requires a certain amount [of effort].

Overall, the impact path analyses highlighted the matter of continuity in realizing organizational transformations. Making people realize any new direction, role, practice, or tools, requires shared and long-term commitment to change behavior and learn new things (see Chapter 2.2). From the studied cases it can be learned that this kind of commitment can be either endogenous and based on common will and aligned understanding, or exogenous and based on concrete, defined steps, followed-up plans, and active management. On one hand, for example the CEO in case A emphasized how the participatory way of working increased

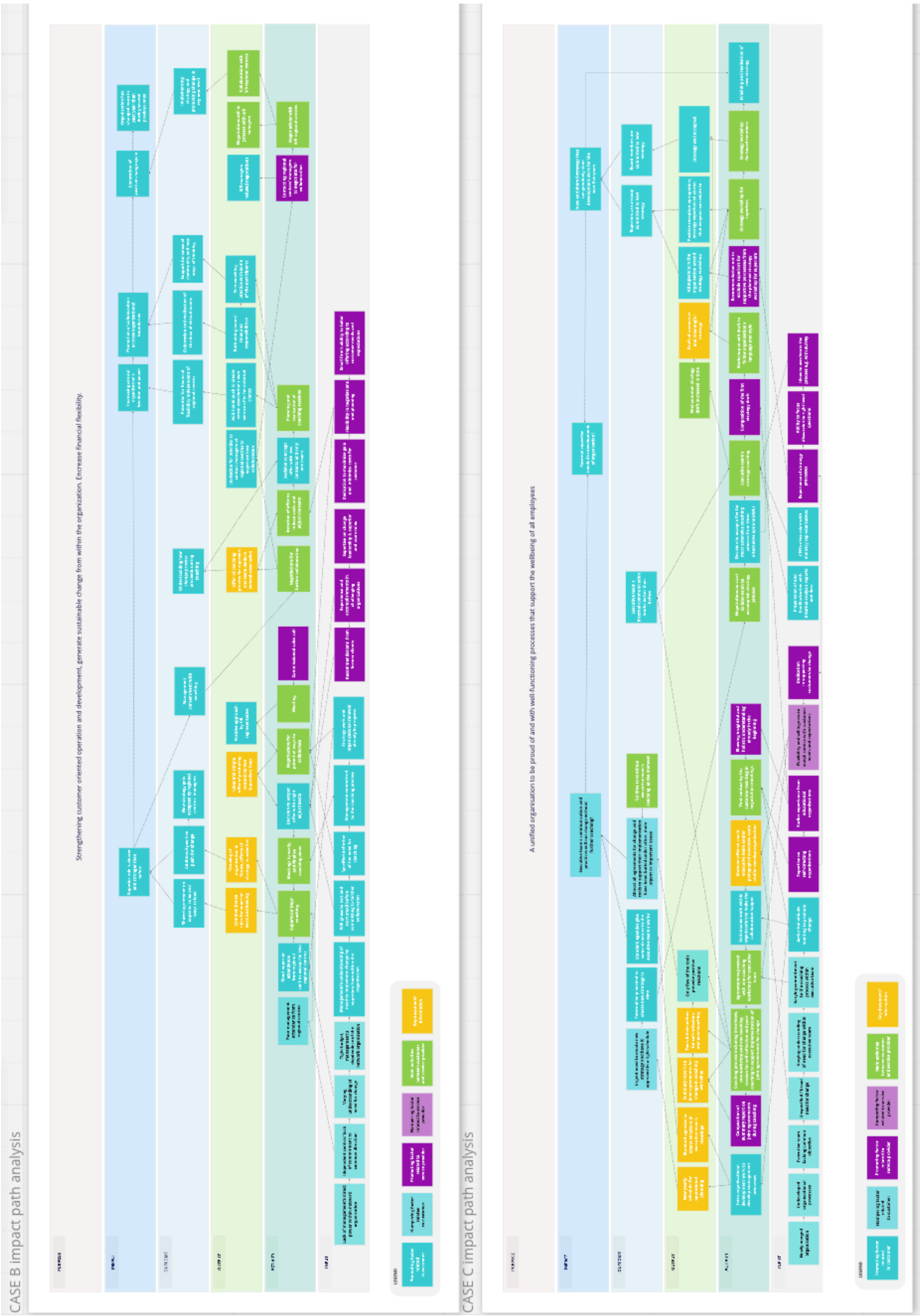


Figure 17: Impact paths created for cases B and C. An image exported from Miro.

his/her executive team's engagement to promoting the agreed new principles in their executive work alongside the newly defined key development projects that would steer their operation to the desired direction also in practice (Case interview A 2020). On the other hand, in case C the vice rector described how their executive team that was lacking joint views, did not adopt the new offered tools and developed practices, and was eventually regressing to old habits after their coaching, would have needed a longer process to strengthen their mutual understanding or someone active and influential to push them forward (Case interview C 2020).

Furthermore, the CEO in case B was very determined and active in enhancing the association's transformation but also procured supplementary training as to support and further break in the needed changes in the organization. In addition, the regional centers' own development projects and collaboration with the current provider were actively encouraged and supported by the CEO to extend the needed change throughout the organization. (Case interview B 2020.) All interviewed client representatives also pointed out the significance of documentation, clear reports summarizing the main contents and results of coaching can serve as an important recap and support in self-managed implementation (Case interview A 2020; Case interview B 2020; Case interview C 2020). From the designer viewpoint it is however somewhat surprising that the entrepreneurs did not tend to gather any formal feedback on the service or change implementation later after the realized process nor directly from all individual coachees.

Finally, also the impact path analyses point to the early conditions and start of the relationship as the basis of the effectiveness for entire organizational coaching service process. There, both client-related and provider-related features apply and define their joint ability to build an appropriate coaching process through active and open interaction. For example in case A the CEO saw the entrepreneurs' dedication and flexibility in finding suitable solutions for their company as a decisive feature leading to the realization of the process in the first place, yet the client's own reservations against external services made them bargain over the service contents. The executive team's initial engagement in the decision and aligned understanding of the need for change nevertheless supported the promotion of the team's change despite the relatively short coaching process. However, as it turned out and was described in the collaboration journey for case A, the CEO expressed some uncertainties regarding the long-term change implementation in their future operations and within the entire organization. (Case interview A 2020.)

Similarly, in case B the entrepreneurs' devotion and flexibility were considered essential features in starting the collaboration, yet there the interviewed CEO also highlighted their expertise and prior experience in change management as significant promoting factors. The entrepreneurs' ability to demonstrate the impacts of the forthcoming coaching process (for example in the service offer) was convincing, too. Instead, the client's own budgetary constraints and dispersed organization structure were experienced as hampering factors, whereas the CEO's and his/her team's own determination, understanding and active role in organizational change seemed to support both their collaboration with the entrepreneurs and the effectiveness of their mutual, interactive process. And, as it was already described in the reflection related to collaboration journeys, the possibility to build confidence by starting small and testing the collaboration was a key condition for any further and larger collaboration in the association (Case interview B 2020.)

As noted earlier, and unlike in the other two cases, in case C the entrepreneurs' willingness to compromise was considered also a risk in terms of service effectiveness, although it was their strategy for gaining an agreement and initiate the collaboration despite the doubts and hesitance of the CEO. Although the resulting coaching process was too short to mend the issues within the dispersed executive team, the positive collaboration experience eventually led to the coaching agreement for a broader and longer strategy process. Here, engaging all superiors throughout the organization to the process was assessed key factor enabling its success. Furthermore, the entrepreneurs' visionary approach stemming from and demonstrating their expertise and experience in organizational change processes as well as educational context throughout the process was judged central from the effectiveness viewpoint. The executive team's unaligned commitment to and understanding of the needs of the merged organization nevertheless left the responsibility of implementation with only few active persons and was regarded a permanent challenge for the continuity of any further organizational change. (Case interview C 2020.)

In the entrepreneur's own experience, to be able to create appropriate and appealing service proposals, the key is to gain enough and right kind of information on the client's context and situation preferably already during the first negotiations. For the planning of successful processes, understanding internal dynamics, challenges and for example individual positions on coaching was also considered essential information that nevertheless was usually entirely exposed only during coaching. In the entrepreneurs' view, their client's conceiving their organization's current standing, acknowledging its needs, and grasping the benefits of an external service in relation to the desired change, is also vital for their mutual and fertile collaboration. (Preliminary interview A 2020; Preliminary interview B 2020; Preliminary interview C 2020.) However, as it was discovered in studying the three cases, all this can be complicated if there are for example diverging views, overlapping processes, resource constraints, or burden from past experiences (every-day features of an organizational reality familiar from e.g. customer-dominant logic) that obstruct the client representatives' ability to entirely manage their change or engage with the current process.

Next, we will turn to identifying common patterns, explanations, and thematic connections between individual cases in their cross-case analysis (Eisenhardt 1989). At this point, to complement the lack of multiple investigators in this research and strengthen the overall results (see Chapter 3.1.2), the case-specific descriptions, i.e. the illustrated collaboration journeys and impact path analyses, were nevertheless validated by email with respective interviewed client representatives. They all confirmed the descriptions without any adjustments to correspond their conception of the past collaboration with the entrepreneurs and to also capture well the overall situation in their own organization. The descriptions were also discussed with the two entrepreneurs in a workshop dedicated for mutual sharing and understanding on the research results as well as agreeing on the future development focus which will also be described more in detail in the following chapter.

3.2.2 Defining cross-case themes and opportunity areas

Cross-case analysis

The main principle in a multiple case-study aiming for new kind of understanding is to rely mostly on empirical data and especially on cross-case analyses. The investigation of cross-case themes and patterns is best to be realized by applying multiple perspectives and techniques for the reliability of the research. It is possible to examine data by data source, analyze similarities and differences, or to create categories and dimensions. (Eisenhardt 1989; 2021.) Here, four different approaches were used. First, the preliminary and case interview data that was already themed, compared and compressed into few, shared key points within each case, was now compiled together and compared across cases as to support further analysis and cross-check the insights arising from within-case analyses. The applied themes are thus the same as in within case analysis and visible in Figure 15 in the previous chapter.

Second, the case-specific insights of the factors of effectiveness were summarized and themed to those related to the provider, to the client, and to their mutual collaboration in building an appropriate coaching process and listed in a fourfold table illustrated in Figure 18. There are both promoting (+) and hampering (-) factors related either to the provider (purple box), client (turquoise box), or their collaboration and mutual process (green box). The listed factors feature both similarities and differences between cases representing thus either the same or different sides of the coin, that is, factors of effectiveness of organizational coaching service, and are present at least in two of the cases. Different factors are often also interrelated, and a positive effect of one factor can be dependent on the presence of another factor, or vice versa. Especially the quality and presence of effectiveness factors in the parties' mutual process is largely dependent on the factors that are in effect with each side. from the very beginning of their collaboration.

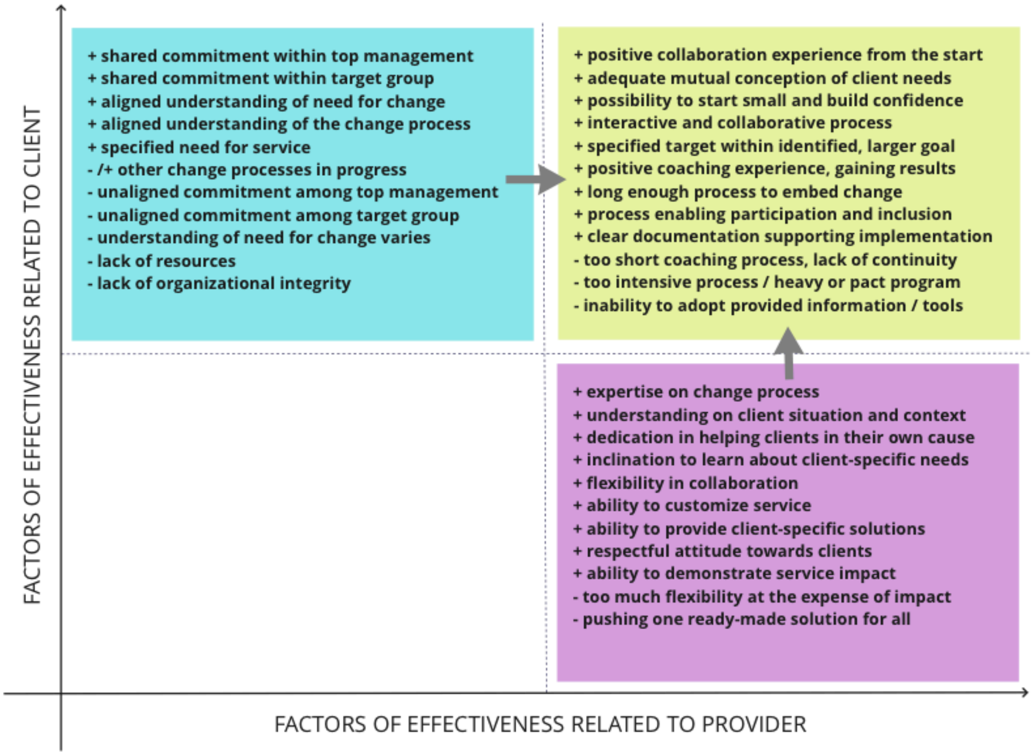


Figure 18: Summary of provider-related, client-related, and collaboration-related promoting and hampering factors of effectiveness in organizational coaching service.

For example, having a positive start for the collaboration was deemed mostly to be due to the provider's dedication and flexibility in helping their clients. Although there were also remarks regarding the potential downsides of a provider yielding to the client's hesitance at the expense of service impact in early meetings, positive collaboration experience seemed to outweigh even suboptimal negotiation results along a growing a relationship. In addition, shared commitment and aligned understanding of the needed change within top management of the client were positively present in cases A and B and, whereas in case C the obvious lack of these was hampering the entire process. In cases A and B there was a specified and agreed need for service within a well-identified larger goal, whereas in case C there was trouble in defining the service need due to the unaligned top management. Either way, with a specified need it seems more likely to gain positive coaching results. On the other hand, although in case C the executive team's coaching process was partly cut short due to other, overlapping projects, ongoing internal change processes may also be in support of the coaching process and the effective implementation of change, depending on their timing, purpose, and overall circumstances within client organization.

The third cross-case perspective applied here was based on the initial observation regarding client-related factors in the summary table above. As it was described in Chapter 2, provider-related features are easily highlighted as a prerequisite for successful services. Yet based on customer-dominant logic (Heinonen & al. 2010) and the case-specific analyses described above, it is evident that the quality of collaboration as well as the final design of the coaching process depends as much on the client as it does on the provider. Furthermore, client-related features define both the restrictions and the needs for the agreed coaching process, and the provider's task is to create solutions that optimize their clients' possibilities. Therefore, as to better understand these connections, the realized coaching processes were categorized according to two most significant dimensions affecting potential transformation and effectiveness of the organizational coaching service within each client: the client's initial organizational alignment in relation to the desired change and the top management's assessed ability to succeed in its implementation (see Figure 19).

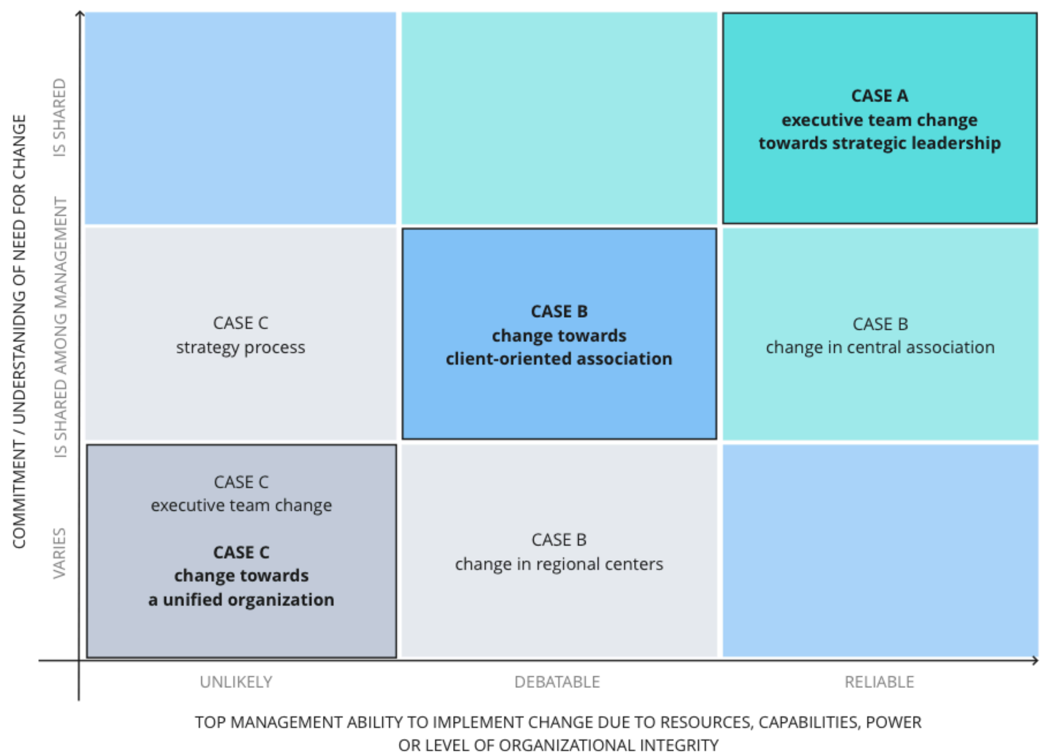


Figure 19: Categorization of coaching processes in relation to two most significant client-related dimensional factors of effectiveness in organizational coaching service.

The categorization of these different sized cases shows how the client's need for external support decreases from the bottom left corner to the top right corner as the internal alignment in commitment to and understanding of the need for change and the top management ability to implement change increases. This is not to claim that the CEO in case A company would be more apt in change management than his/her colleagues in case B and case C organizations, the question is also about the extent of the desired change, available resources, power structures, and organizational integrity. In case A the current change goal was to primarily affect the executive team, while in cases B and C the desired change targets both organizations in their whole. Although in case B the management team in the central association has shared views on their change and their ability to implement change within their own unit relatively reliable, the association's structural compound with autonomous regional centers is likely to pose challenges for further change. Instead, case C emphasizes the fact that until reaching shared commitment and understanding regarding change at least within the executive management, there is little chance of implementing any real change in the rest of the organization. In addition, case C is an example of a situation where busy schedules, overlapping processes and lack of resources can be solved with the help of an external service provider.

The two separate and subsequent coaching processes embedded in cases B and C were included in the categorization alongside larger case entities to further test and strengthen the conclusions (see Eisenhardt 2021, 153). Although the current, studied coaching processes are not identical matches with the service packages researched and developed in this work (see Table 6 in Chapter 3.2.1) their relative extent seems proportioned enough especially if we consider the interviewed client representatives' assessment of their organization's ability to successfully continue the change process without external help. Thus, it is justified to suggest, that the client-related factors of effectiveness described above could be used as a dimensional framework in defining the extent of service that is required with each individual client for the organizational coaching to be effective and create the expected value. This view is also in accordance with the feasibility perspectives discussed in our theoretical examination in Chapter 2.2 and summarized in the framework in Figure 4. In the categorization in Figure 19, the black bordered boxes would correspond the main line of recommendation for a suitable service package in each situation (turquoise for package A, blue for package B and grey for package C), while light tinted boxes would represent the more optional service choices with each client.

The fourth cross-case approach applied in this analysis was the screening of the opportunity areas for strengthening the effectiveness of the service of the current design partner, the two entrepreneurs. This work started already during the transcription of the interviews by making notes of all challenges, possibilities, strengths, deficiencies, and ideas for improvement mentioned by the client representatives or the two entrepreneurs themselves. Each mention or reference was written down on a digital sticky note on a board in Miro collaboration platform. The sticky notes were color-coded as to be able to separate client and provider views, then clustered into topics, themed, and organized around the three design perspectives, i.e. desirability, feasibility, and viability. At this point, some designer reflections and thoughts were added to each topic on their own color-coded notes. An overview image on the resulting Miro board with initial insights clustered into six opportunity areas is available in Figure 20. The opportunity area themes (formulated as How might we? -questions) are added on top of the image, while more detailed descriptions of them are provided in Table 7 in the next chapter focused on reflecting the case study results.

Figure 20: Initial insights clustered into opportunity areas for strengthening the effectiveness of the current organizational coaching service. Image exported from Miro.

As it was advised by Eisenhardt (1989, 538-543) the cross-case analysis results (summaries of client-related, provider-related, and collaboration-related factors of effectiveness, the case categorization according to the dimensional, client-related factors of effectiveness, and the identified potential opportunity areas for strengthening the service effectiveness) were next validated by checking their fit with each individual case, and double-checked with the compiled and themed interview key points. No inconsistencies were found and for example all discovered opportunity areas could have been applied in each case at least on a thematic level.

Creating shared understanding and defining opportunity areas

Finally, the analysis results were discussed and elaborated with the entrepreneurs in an online information sharing workshop in December 2020 to create common understanding on the identified opportunity areas as the basis for the forthcoming design work. In the workshop the entrepreneurs were asked to reflect and comment on case-specific collaboration journeys and impact path analyses and enrich the discovered insights, factors of effectiveness, and opportunity areas with their own experience from not only the studied three coaching cases but also from their other previous client processes. However, no significant modifications or additions were made to the within-case descriptions, cross-case results, or to the overall conclusions regarding potential opportunity areas. Instead, the entrepreneurs were impressed and rather surprised by the apparent effectiveness and impacts of the described processes brought forward by the case-specific collaboration journey and impact path analyses. Also, cross-case summaries, categorizations, and identified opportunity areas made all sense to them, and did not require any further deliberations.

In the end of the workshop, as it would not have been convenient to focus on all six development themes simultaneously, the opportunity areas were prioritized in a simple, two-dimensional decision matrix by assessing their potential from the entrepreneurs' own business sustainability and the client impact viewpoints as equal measures (see Stickdorn, Lawrence, Hormess & Schneider 2018, 142-144). As a result, three areas were chosen as the main themes and focus for the forthcoming ideations workshops. The decision matrix from the online workshop is included in Figure 21 with the opportunity area descriptions (formulated as How might we? -questions) added on top, and the areas chosen as future targets framed with black borders.

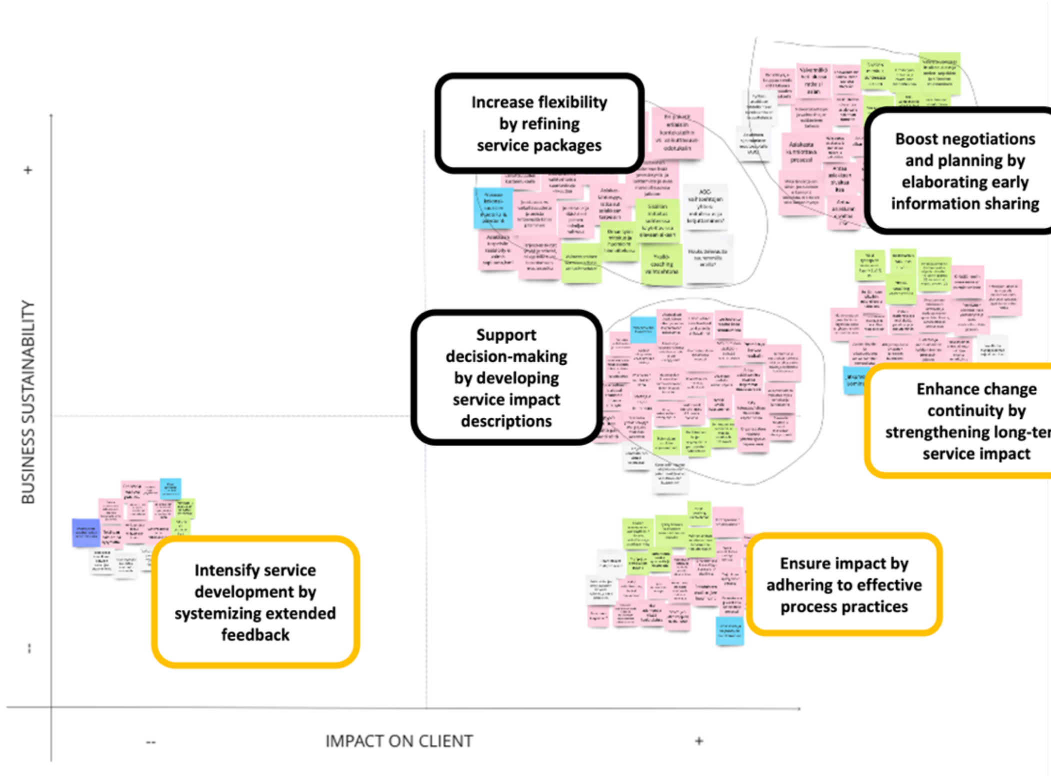


Figure 21: The decision matrix with the opportunity area descriptions added on top and those chosen as future targets framed with black borders. Image exported from Miro.

Although all opportunity areas were thoroughly discussed while positioning them on the matrix in relation to the two dimensions, the final choices for future development targets were quite straightforward. First, boosting negotiations and planning by elaborating early information sharing was valued as the most beneficial area both from the entrepreneurs' own and the clients' viewpoints. Second, increasing (provider's) flexibility by refining service packages and supporting (clients') decision-making by developing service impact description were considered to form an intact entity where one area should be developed while contemplating also the other. Third, while enhancing change continuity by strengthening long-term service impact was believed to be a relatively advantageous development target from both evaluated perspectives, the entrepreneurs felt that it could be worked on as part of forthcoming service processes. In fact, in the entrepreneurs' consideration, all suggested opportunity areas would eventually be worth developing, but the selected themes were the ones where external support and adopting a design perspective were needed the most. However, looking back to the case study results highlighting the significance of early phases in any service collaboration, it is easy to notice how the chosen areas were the ones targeted most directly at enhancing service effectiveness in those very phases.

Thus, the final three opportunity areas described as How might we? -questions and guiding the forthcoming development work are:

- How might we boost negotiations and planning by elaborating early information sharing?
- How might we increase flexibility by refining service packages?
- How might we support decision-making by developing service impact descriptions?

Before diving into details of the design process for developing and delivering potential solutions to these chosen questions, we will briefly summarize and discuss the overall results of the conducted multiple case study.

3.2.3 Summary and reflection of the case study results

As it was described above, following the advice from Eisenhardt (1989; 2021) and for the reliability of the research, the cross-case patterns were derived by applying different techniques and perspectives in analyzing the data. Therefore also the outcomes, the identified factors of effectiveness (described in Figures 18 & 19) and the clustered opportunity areas (Figure 20), may seem somewhat separate. In addition, for the reader to better understand the forthcoming process description in Chapter 3.3, the objectives embedded within each clustered opportunity area deserve a closer look. Thus, we will here briefly discuss the discovered factors of effectiveness, describe the objectives embedded in each opportunity area based on their initial grouped insights, and also study the connections between the six opportunity areas and factors of effectiveness.

First, it can be stated how the insights gained from the case study relate to the theoretical premises chosen to frame the case study. For example, they clearly demonstrate the aspects of customer-dominant logic and the way the provider needs to understand their clients' past, present, and future and adapt to their organizational context, processes, and choices throughout the service process from the early negotiations to the implementation and after service phases. In addition, the cases show how the perspectives of desirability, feasibility and viability thematically expand to a variety of intertwined variables when contemplated in an organizational reality. Thus, although the factors of effectiveness were here categorized and titled simply as related either to the provider, to the client, or to their mutual collaboration, their relation to the three design perspectives is quite apparent: whereas provider-related factors describe the constituents of business sustainability and thus viability, client-related factors explain the conditions behind client's needs and wishes for service desirability, and collaboration-related factors enlighten the prerequisites for creating value within client and hence also for service feasibility.

Second, as it was described above, the opportunity areas were grouped and themed around the three design perspectives of desirability, feasibility, and viability (Figure 20). Their organization and positioning thus reflect the aspects in service effectiveness their development is primarily expected to enhance on a general level (i.e. matching service with client needs and wishes, creating expected value within client organization, and ensuring sustainable business for the provider, see e.g. Chapter 1.3). So, each opportunity area could be expected to promote those very factors of effectiveness that are related to their respective design perspectives, that is, to desirability, feasibility, or viability. However, to study and compare these relations more in detail, Table 7 compiles the six opportunity areas and their embedded objectives, defines their expected, primary development aspects in service effectiveness, and explores their connections with the factors of effectiveness identified in the case study.

Opportunity area objectives: How might we?	Primary development aspect in service effectiveness	Potential connections with factors of effectiveness
Increase flexibility by refining service packages		
Refine service packages to enable better flow and compatibility between and customization within different sized service processes to support and easily adapt to growing collaboration.	Desirability/Feasibility	Client-related (desirability): • Providing and defining service according to the level of commitment/understanding and top management ability to implement change Provider-related (viability): • Enhancing flexibility in collaboration and customization of service, not pushing one ready-made solution for all • Avoiding too much flexibility at the expense of impact Collaboration-related (feasibility): • Enhancing possibility to start small and build confidence, positive collaboration experience from the start • Avoiding too intensive processes
Support decision-making by developing service impact descriptions		
Sharpen the impact description of service packages in relation to desired change and needed efforts to strengthen clients' understanding of their alternatives and thus enhance appropriate service choices.	Desirability	Client-related (desirability): • Enhancing shared commitment and aligned understanding within client • Help in specifying need for service Provider-related (viability): • Demonstrating service impact, expertise on change process and understanding on client situation • Avoiding flexibility at the expense of impact Collaboration-related (feasibility): • Creating mutual conception of client needs and specifying target within identified larger goal • Avoiding too short coaching processes
Ensure impact by adhering to effective process practices		
Standardize and adhere to effective process practices and principles that are identified to best support service and coaching value and systemic change within client.	Feasibility	Client-related (desirability): • Enhancing shared commitment and aligned understanding, strengthening organizational integrity Provider-related (viability): • Demonstrating expertise on change process and understanding on client situation and context • Avoiding flexibility at the expense of impact Collaboration-related (feasibility): • Applying identified effective practices, e.g. ensuring interactive and collaborative process, specifying targets, enabling participation and inclusion • Avoiding too short or too intensive processes/heavy or pact programs, and inability to adopt provided information and tools • Ensuring positive coaching experience, gaining results
Enhance change continuity by strengthening long-term service impact		
Strengthen and create service practices and artifacts that stretch service experience beyond coaching collaboration and support long-term common learning, responsibility for and commitment to implementing change.	Feasibility	Client-related (desirability): • Enhancing shared commitment and aligned understanding, strengthening top management ability to implement change Provider-related (viability): • Demonstrating expertise on change process and dedication in helping client in their own cause Collaboration-related (feasibility): • Applying identified effective process practices, e.g. ensuring interactive and collaborative process, enabling participation and inclusion, providing clear documentation • Decreasing the effects of a too short coaching process, avoiding lack of continuity • Enhancing the adoption of provided information and tools
Boost negotiations and planning by elaborating early information sharing		
Enhance mutual identification of client needs and possibilities by ensuring adequate and efficient information sharing in early negotiations to enhance clients' appropriate service	Viability/Feasibility	Client-related (desirability): • Identifying level of commitment and understanding and top management ability to implement change • Helping specify need for service • Identifying other processes in progress, available resources, and level of organizational integrity Provider-related (viability): • Enhancing understanding of client situation and context, helping clients in their own cause, learning about client-

Opportunity area objectives: How might we?	Primary development aspect in service effectiveness	Potential connections with factors of effectiveness
choices and providers' accurate planning.		specific needs, customizing service, and providing client-specific solutions • Showing respectful attitude towards clients Collaboration-related (feasibility): • Promoting positive collaboration experience from the start, ensuring interaction and collaboration • Gaining adequate mutual conception of client needs, specifying target within identified, larger goal • Avoiding too short processes
Intensify service development by systemizing extended feedback		
Establish consistent practices for gathering extended feedback wider within client organizations and later after the service process to enhance and demonstrate service impact and effectiveness.	Viability	Client-related (desirability): • Providing information to support shared commitment and aligned understanding within client • Learn about further client-related factors of effectiveness Provider-related (viability): • Develop and demonstrate expertise on change process and understanding of client situation and context • Enhancing ability to customize service, provide client-specific solutions, and demonstrate service impact • Avoiding too much flexibility at the expanse of impact Collaboration-related (feasibility): • Identifying effective process practices • Promoting mutual conception of client needs • Enhancing participation and inclusion

Table 7: The six opportunity areas, their embedded objectives, primary design aspects, and potential connections with the factors of effectiveness.

The table is neither exhaustive nor complete, and the described connections are at this point mostly hypothetical. Yet it shows how the opportunity areas overlap in their connections with different factors of effectiveness and clearly reach beyond the primary aspect they are expected to enhance based on their original clustering and organization around design perspectives: there are effectiveness factors related to other areas they either promote or need to be considered in their development. In addition, regardless of the emphasis put on the early collaboration phases in the case study, all six opportunity areas seem equally relevant by their multiple number of connections with different factors of effectiveness. In this light, also the present design partner's prioritization and focus on areas targeted at early collaboration only suggests a likely starting point to an ongoing development process, where the other areas are easier to work on along new client processes once the collaboration has been successfully initiated.

Eventually, both the interconnected nature and overall balance between the six opportunity areas as well as the three kinds of factors of effectiveness are a logical continuum to their linkages with desirability, feasibility, and viability perspectives which by thought are all needed in effectuating an effective service. Keeping this in mind, we will now continue with the realization of the present design process and focus next on the development of the three areas chosen as targets.

3.3 Designing things right

In this chapter we will dive into the present design process in the three chosen opportunity areas from ideation, evaluation, and development of potential solutions to prototyping, testing, and iterating results. The goal is to give an overview of the process and the type of accomplished results by explaining primary choices and applied approaches, methods and tools while reserving the final, detailed deliverables for the exclusive use of the current design partner. The chapter is structured in three subchapters, first describing the development work conducted in workshops, second the delivery of results through prototyping and testing, and third summarizing and reflecting the results. Figure 22 provides a reminder of the schedule, phases, and steps of the current process for designing thigs right.

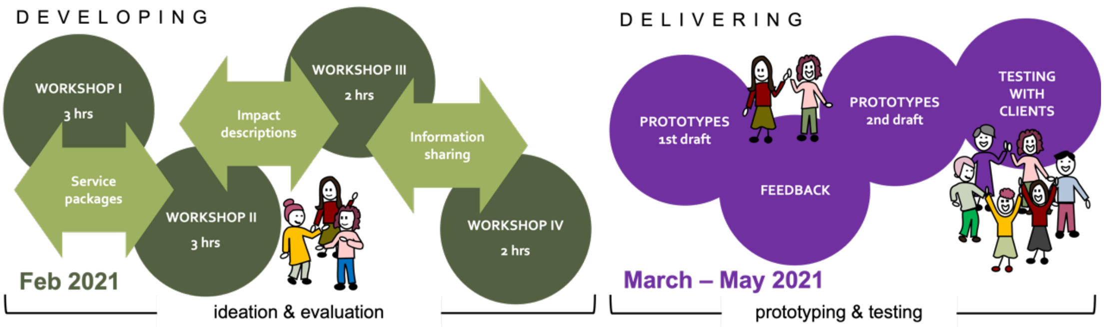


Figure 22: The schedule, phases, and steps of the process for designing things right.

3.3.1 Developing potential solutions

Overview of the development workshops

The development phase of the current design process was conducted in four subsequent workshops facilitated by the designer (the thesis author) and organized within four weeks' time in February 2021. Although the entrepreneurs were recommended to invite some of their clients participate the workshops and thus co-create as viable solutions as possible from the very beginning of the development work (see Stickdorn & Schneider 2012, 38-39 for service design characteristics), they felt that their company was too small of an agent to bother the busy CEOs and mangers of their current client organizations. It was then agreed to compensate the absence of their main stakeholders in the workshops by highlighting the role of clients later in the testing phase, but all initial solutions were thus ideated and created in tight collaboration of only three people: the designer and the two entrepreneurs.

Despite the global pandemic and all restrictions in force at the time of the development phase, thanks to such limited number of participants, all four workshops were managed to organize face-to-face. However, as the situation might have changed in a very short notice, the workshops were constantly planned, and their phases and outcomes updated on a Miro board to be prepared for any potential sudden shifts into online meetings. Figure 23 shows an outline of the Miro board used for workshops. Although many of the ideation and evaluation phases were eventually worked on paper, most images of the workshop are exported from Miro due to the anonymity principle followed in this work. All contents on Miro boards are nevertheless copied even in the tiniest detail from the material created in the workshops.

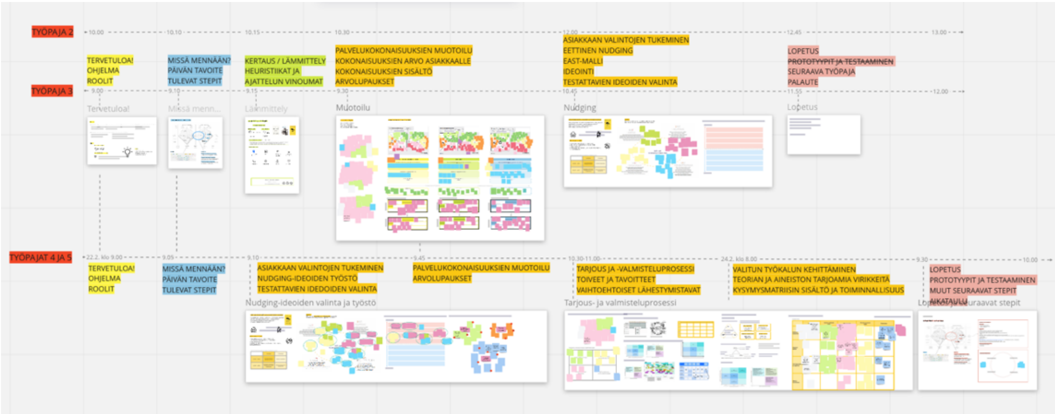


Figure 23: An outline of the Miro board for the development phase workshops.

As it was described earlier, the final three opportunity areas chosen as development targets and questions guiding the current work were defined as follows:

- How might we boost negotiations and planning by elaborating early information sharing?
- How might we increase flexibility by refining service packages?
- How might we support decision-making by developing service impact descriptions?

The development process flowed from one workshop to another with the thematic focus shifting in the middle of and not between meetings in the way and order described in Figure 24. This allowed the continuous adjustment of facilitation plans according to the direction the work was going. The final tools, approaches and methods applied for each theme across workshops are listed in the figure. Although this kind of thematic flow was thus beneficial in the end, it was not the original intention but rather a reaction to the observed and (to a relatively experienced facilitator) surprising time management challenges: with such a small number of participants each workshop phase seemed to take a lot more time than expected. Understandably, the entrepreneurs took the development tasks related to their own business very seriously and wanted to thoroughly discuss and agree on each question and theme. In the end, the fourth workshop was added to the original plan of organizing only three meetings. Still, the entrepreneurs were very devoted to developing their service and flexible in finding the needed time for all four workshops each lasting from two to three hours.

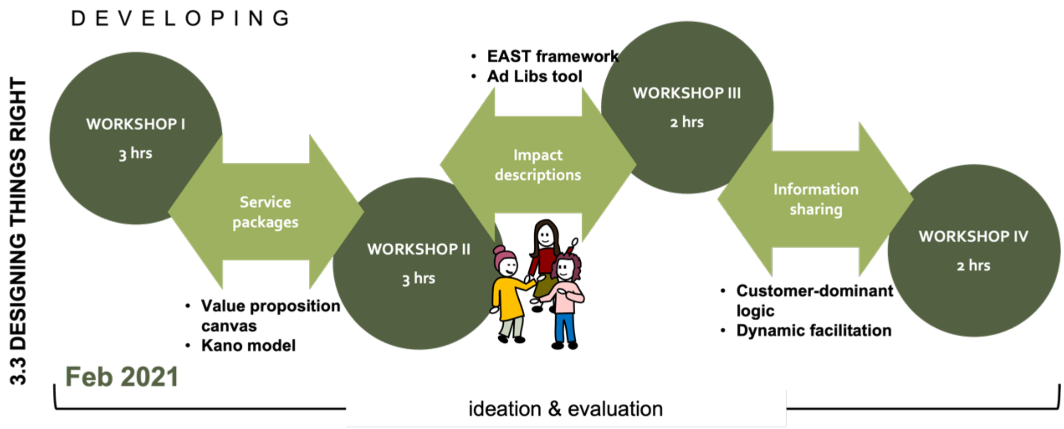


Figure 24: The development process and thematic focus across workshops with applied tools, methods, and approaches.

Refining service packages

The development process started with refining the service packages as it was considered the most laborious development target to finalize and a prerequisite for describing service impact. The aim was, as defined in Table 7, to increase flexibility by enabling better flow and compatibility between and customization within different sized coaching processes to support and easily adapt to growing collaboration. In the first workshop, after a short introduction to and positioning of the present task in relation to the design process, the entrepreneurs were briefed with the main ideas and perspectives from the research on biases and judgement in decision making (see Chapter 2.1.3) to prepare and widen their own thinking for the following design phases.

The actual development work started by mapping their clients' needs and the entrepreneurs' matching, valuable service offering on a value proposition canvas tool (Osterwalder, Pigneur, Smith & Bernarda 2014) separately for all three service packages A, B, and C (see Figure 25). The views were based both on the insights gained from the case research but also on their own, wider experience. The client-related dimensional factors of effectiveness identified as the most significant ones in the categorization of the examined, realized coaching processes (see Figure 19 in Chapter 3.2.2) were copied on canvases as to ensure the integration of the case study results on descriptive and differentiating aspects for each service package into the development process.

The overall aim of this phase was to discern and elucidate the individual purpose and value of each different service package as well as help identify their most essential contents. Value proposition canvas tool suited well the current design process built on the premises of customer-dominant logic (Heinonen & al. 2010; Chapter 2) as it directs the providers' attention to the client’s own larger goals and tasks and consider service value in relation to their potential pains and gains in realizing them (see Osterwalder & al. 2014).

Figure 25: Clients’ needs and valuable service offering mapped on value proposition canvases (Osterwalder & al. 2014) separately for service packages A, B, and C. Images exported from Miro. (Free value proposition canvas templates downloaded from Strategyzer.com).

After this preliminary mapping, the main contents for every service package were refined to meet both the need for their mutual compatibility in growing service relationships and customization within each package for different client needs and preferences. The work was initiated in the first and finalized in the second workshop. From the entrepreneurs’ perspective, the goal was to reduce the amount of excess planning needed for tailoring the coaching process individually for every new client. Refining service packages from their compatibility viewpoint was based on insights mapped on value proposition canvases, case study results on effective process practices as well as the entrepreneurs’ own experience. At this point, the service packages were also labelled with descriptive key words such as wakening/defining for package A, launching for package B, and operationalizing for package C, which helped in positioning them in relation to the clients’ own change process. The main idea within and between service packages remained thus the same as in the initial ones developed by the entrepreneurs (see Table 6 in Chapter 3.2.1). Some overlaps were nevertheless removed, and packages were structured to provide more clear alternatives for clients hesitating their decisions. Figure 26 shows the overview on the service package refining phase in Miro.

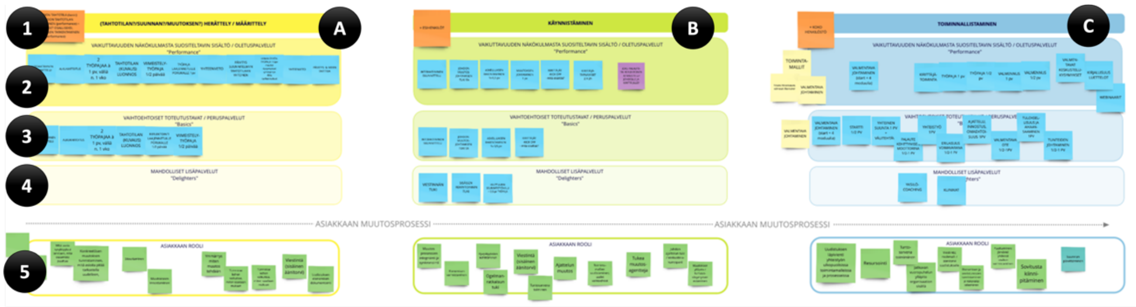


Figure 26: Service package refining phase. Explanations: The service packages (A), (B), and (C). Labelling key word for the package (1), performance level service (2), basic level service (3), delighter level service (4), and client's role in the process (5). Image exported from Miro.

For more efficient customization, there was a need to design alternative service levels for different client needs and preferences. The aim was also to help the entrepreneurs stick to process features that have been identified as necessary in terms of service impact and even despite intensive bargaining and negotiations with some clients. Here, the Kano model by Noriaki Kano and his team (Shahin & al. 2013; Madzík 2018; Chapter 2.1.5) was used as an inspiration and the service packages' contents were described in three different levels: 1) the recommended *performance level* where the offered service is optimized to fulfill all general and acknowledged organizational coaching needs, but also constantly developed in execution to keep the clients satisfied, 2) the cut-down *basic level*, where the service is bargained to meet only yet always the minimum requirements in terms of coaching impact and aimed thus at avoiding any dissatisfaction within client, and 3) the supplementary *delighter level* where the service is stretched to please clients who want to invest in additional support services and tools and thus ease their own role in the process. Delighter level can also be used as a space to offer experimental features and solutions for newly discovered client needs as to continuously improve performance, increase client satisfaction and overall attraction of the organizational coaching service. (See Shahin & al. 2013; Madzík 2018; Chapter 2.1.5; also Stickdorn & al. 2018, 174-175.)

Although this development phase was about refining not designing service packages, the entrepreneurs experienced it very rewarding especially due to the approach provided by the Kano model. Combined with the case study insights compiled in value proposition canvases and used as a reference in structuring the service contents, the basic idea and three levels behind the original model helped them crystallize and analyze their own thinking and experience of what is essential in each of their service package (see Shahin & al. 2013; Madzík 2018). Lastly, also the clients' own role and main duties in pursuing their organizations' change process was outlined in relation to each of the three alternative service package contents to further clarify the differences and support the following impact description tasks in the present development process.

Developing impact descriptions

The last half of the second and most of the third workshop were devoted to developing the impact description of the three service packages. As defined in Table 7, the objective was to describe service impact in relation to desired change and needed efforts to strengthen the clients' understanding of their alternatives and thus enhance accurate service choices. This development phase was based primarily on the recommended, performance level of service contents within each package from the preceding phase. Again, after a short introduction to the development task and a quick run-through of the initial perspectives clustered behind the original opportunity area, the entrepreneurs were briefed about the main ideas and criteria of nudging both from general and ethical viewpoints to explain the principle of facilitating clients' conscious choices (see Thaler & Sunstein 2009; Hansen & Jespersen 2013; Chapter 2.1.4). However, to relieve the relatively challenging objective to develop effective yet ethical ways to describe service (the latter was also a concern for the entrepreneurs themselves) in only a few hours' time, the so-called EAST framework from The Behavioural Insights Team (2014) was applied as a guiding inspiration.

The EAST framework is created to facilitate the application of behavioral insights and nudging in public policy and services development efforts for helping people make the right choices either for their own or common interest. In the framework the letter E stands for easiness and for example removing all cognitive or physical barriers from the service and making choices, A for attractiveness and for example highlighting the personal appeal of the service and meaning of the made choices, S for social relations and for example understanding the significance of social interaction and positive examples, and T for timing and for example considering short- and long-term effects on decision-making. (See The Behavioural Insights Team 2014.)

As to help their fast adoption for the current development task, each perspective was concretized with auxiliary questions derived from the framework report and adapted to the current service context. After presenting the questions and discussing the perspectives, brainwriting method (e.g. Stickdorn & al. 2018, 180) was used to produce multiple ideas just within a few minutes separately for each perspective and by writing only one idea on one sticky-note. In-between of the second and third workshops the created ideas were grouped into development areas by the designer, and then prioritized together in the beginning third workshop by using the idea hitlist tool from Mindshake (2018). Figure 27 demonstrates the workshop phases for ideating effective ways to describe service impact and facilitate clients' decisions.

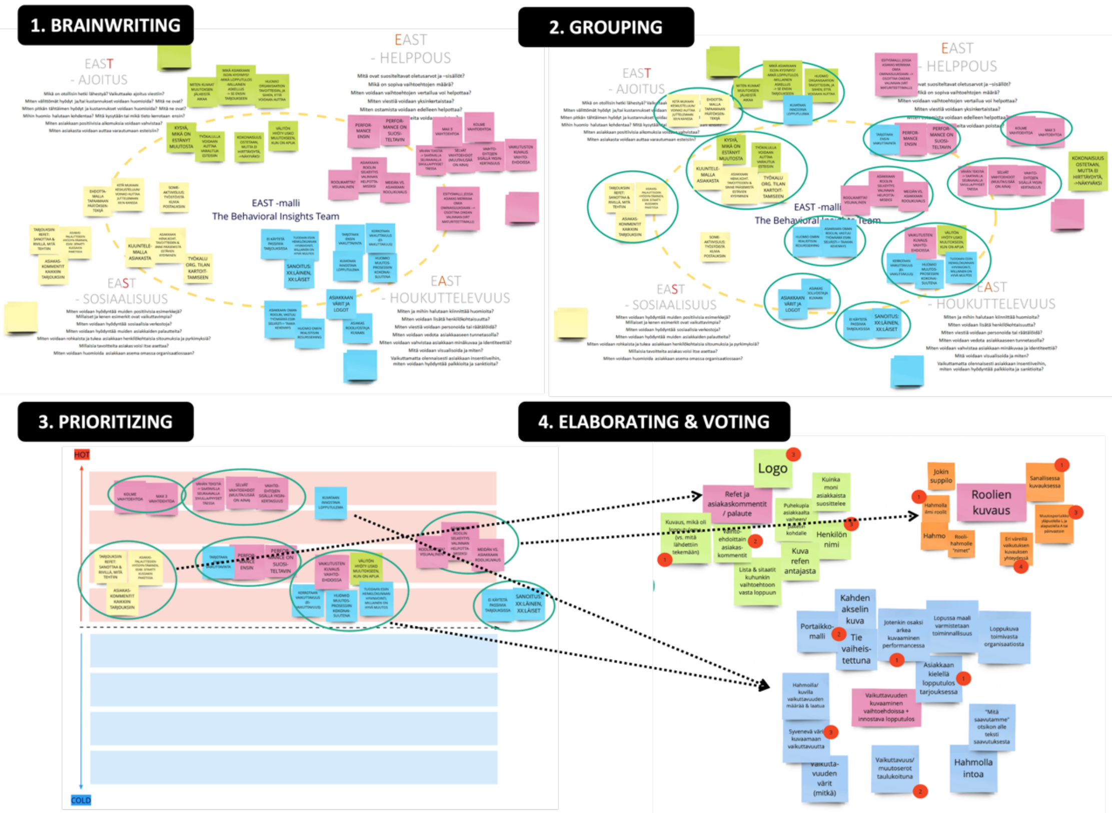


Figure 27: The workshop phases for ideating effective ways to describe service impact and facilitate clients' decisions. Images exported from Miro.

Altogether eight of the total 15 potential development areas (such as keeping the package options and their narratives simple, enhancing personal appeal by addressing clients by their name and by avoiding passive verbs, and emphasizing the recommended, performance service level by presenting it first within each package), were assessed promising and worth employing as part of the entrepreneurs' service descriptions and proposal. Others (such as enhancing understanding about clients' goals, needs and obstacles, promoting discussions within client organization) were considered more related to improving information sharing in early negotiations, that is, to the next opportunity area of the chosen development targets in the present design process, or otherwise less relevant in terms of the current task.

Furthermore, three of the now prioritized areas still needed additional elaboration as to turn them into concrete and applicable ideas. For these (i.e. integrating appealing client references and feedback, highlighting positive impact and outcomes, and demonstrating needed efforts and client and provider roles in every alternative service package), another brainwriting session was organized to quickly create advanced ideas individually for each development area. Lastly, the produced ideas were ranked by voting for the best ones within each area. As a result of this development phase, the following list was to guide the creation of service descriptions in the forthcoming prototyping phase:

- Enhancing easiness of decision making
  - By offering three clear service options with short and simple descriptions
  - By emphasizing the performance service level by presenting it first
  - By illustrating the phases and needed efforts of change as stairs
- Strengthening attractiveness and personal appeal
  - By trying to describe the service as part of the client's ongoing life
  - By addressing clients by their (organizations') name
  - By using active verbs and familiar wording instead of passive forms or bureaucratic language
- Using the benefit of social networks
  - By including client references and feedback separately for each service
  - By highlighting their outcome instead of goal
  - By using the respective client organization's logo and representative's name for credibility
- Lessening the effects of timing by highlighting positive impact and outcomes
  - By using visual effects such as colors, human figures, forms, or tables to demonstrate the impact and potential of different service options
  - By pointing to the inspiring future state with an achieved change goal
  - By demonstrating the needed efforts and client and provider roles

Lastly, the ideation for more effective service impact descriptions was completed by drafting apposite, potential value propositions the refined service packages. Here, the so-called ad-libs tool and advice from Osterwalder & al. (2014) was applied to quickly create alternative phrases for the prototyping phase. The ad-libs tool is a simple way to describe service value by just filling in the empty spaces (in square brackets) in a fixed form proposition as follows (Osterwalder & al. 2014, 82-83):

> Our [products and services] help(s) [customer segment] who want to [jobs to be done] by [your own verb (e.g., reducing, avoiding)] and [your own verb (e.g., increasing, enabling)].

The entrepreneurs were first asked to individually fill in the blanks in an ad-libs template for each service package by picking their favorite phrases and words from value proposition canvases created earlier. From these multiple options, the most illustrative ones were then chosen together as to be used in the forthcoming value proposition sentences. At this stage, the entrepreneurs also ideated new descriptive names for their new service packages. Figure 28 shows the filled-in ad-libs templates from this two-phased drafting of value propositions.

The realization of impact description ideas developed in the workshop is presented in the following chapter on the delivery phase, that is prototyping and testing.

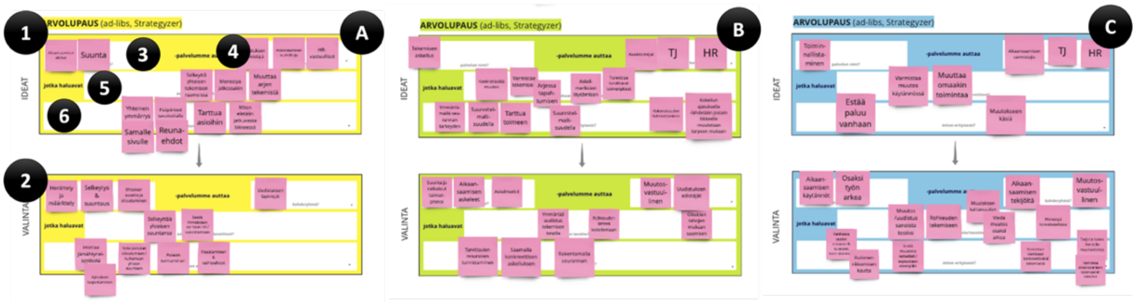


Figure 28: The filled in ad-libs templates from the two-phased drafting of value propositions for the three (A, B, C) service packages. Explanations: Compiled individual suggestions for wording (1), choices made together (2), ideated service package names (3), definition for customer segment (4), jobs to be done by the client (5), and verbs to describe how service will help the client (6). Images exported from Miro.

Elaborating information sharing

In the end of the third workshop it was eventually time to focus on solving the third development target, that is boosting the negotiations and planning phase by elaborating early information sharing with clients. The goal here (as described in Table 7) was to enhance mutual identification of client needs and possibilities by ensuring adequate and efficient information sharing already in early negotiations to enhance both clients' appropriate service choices and entrepreneurs' accurate planning. In the workshop, the entrepreneurs were suggested three alternative ways to approach the challenge: First option was to create a question matrix that would help them gain broad understanding of the clients' context and ongoing activities within an extended timeframe, both highlighted in customer-dominant logic (Heinonen & al. 2010). The second one, based on the case research insights and identified client-related factors of effectiveness (Figures 18 and 19 in Chapter 3.2.2), was to develop a sort of a maturity grid (for maturity grids see i.e. Mullaly 2014; Backlund, Chronéer & Sundqvist 2015) to enhance the evaluation of client's needs and capabilities within the change process. Finally the third suggestion, based on service design methodology and potentially relying on case-specific collaboration journey descriptions (Chapter 3.2.1), was to construct a service blueprint to support the entrepreneurs' own systematic implementation of the newly refined service packages and help them remember all relevant information and resources needed at each step of the service process (see about service blueprints and their use in implementing service Stickdorn & al. 2018, 54-57, 277).

After a brief demonstration of the probable tools resulting from each approach (a question matrix, a maturity grid, and package-related service blueprints), and a short discussion on their potential benefits and shortcomings, the entrepreneurs decided the question matrix approach would best serve their needs and further strengthen their dialogue with their clients. This choice was supported also by the case research results pointing to the importance of an appreciative interaction and positive collaboration experience from the very start of the service relation (see Chapter 3.2.2).

The composition of the question matrix was the left to the fourth workshop thus leaving the designer-facilitator some time to plan and prepare the work. Again, in the beginning of the workshop, the case study results regarding client-related factors of service effectiveness were reviewed as to remind of those need-to-know aspects in client organizations in planning the service. The entrepreneurs were also briefed with some theoretical viewpoints, such as the dynamic capabilities (e.g. Teece 2007), organizational learning (e.g. Bogenrieder 2002), and absorptive capacity perspectives (e.g. Schmidt 2010) to inspire the development of significant questions and noteworthy details. The question matrix itself was constructed by integrating the timeframe familiar from customer-dominant logic and extended to cover the client’s life from past experiences to future goals and plans (Heinonen & al. 2010) with four thematic perspectives used in a facilitation method called dynamic facilitation (Dynamic Facilitation Associates 2021).

Dynamic facilitation and its four thematic perspectives (identified concerns, perceived facts, recognized problems, and potential solutions) are based on a decision-making process called choice-creating. Due to its’ allowing and appreciative approach to peoples’ individual experience and in addition to points and official data and stated goals, it is considered to empower participants, create trust, and support democratic and equal discussions even on challenging and controversial issues. (Dynamic Facilitation Associates 2021.) Here, the approach was assumed to help dive deep into customers’ context and actions even during short first discussions and negotiations and still support the appreciative interaction and positive experience highlighted by the case-study clients. The dynamic facilitation approach was well familiar to the entrepreneurs and a method they had often been using in their coaching sessions. They nevertheless wondered why they had never come to think to apply it already in the first meetings with their clients as the idea now seemed so obvious and natural.

To generate contents into the resulting twenty matrix slots, the entrepreneurs first listed all the questions, details, and pieces of information regarding a potential client that, in their own experience and based on the insights gained from the case research, would be valuable in planning the forthcoming collaboration and coaching service, and help consider the amount of work and resources needed in a successful process. Next, all created questions and listed aspects of information (each written on separate sticky notes) were placed on the matrix and appropriate slots based on their corresponding time and contents perspectives. Lastly, overlapping questions were removed and gaps filled in in a joint discussion and reflection of the theoretical perspectives presented in the beginning of the workshop. The resulting draft of the question matrix for improved information sharing in the early negotiations and planning phases is available in Figure 29. The current development work was finalized with quick notes regarding the layout and functionalities of the matrix that would support its use in real life situations. For one, the matrix was hoped to be printable and second, there should be some possibility to write notes on it. The design of the final and tested matrix prototype is presented in the following chapter.

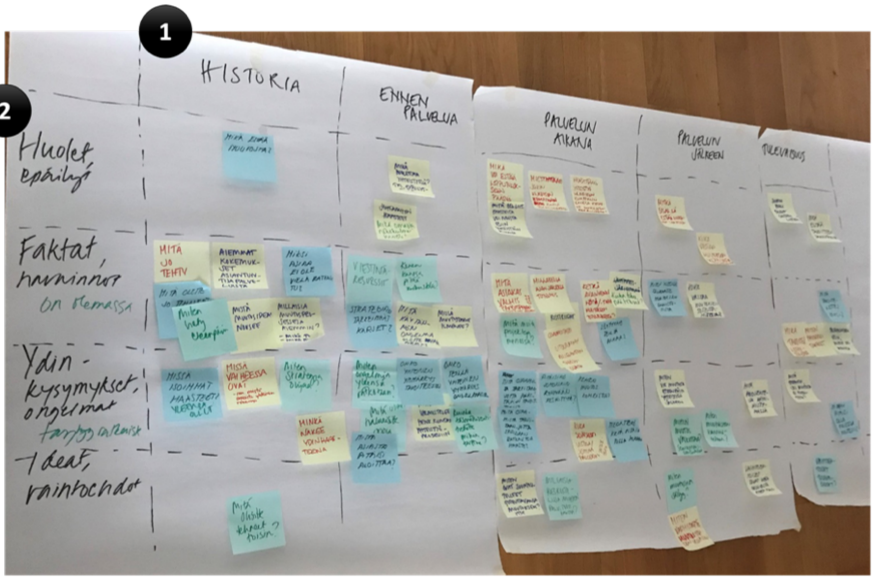


Figure 29: The draft of the question matrix for improved information sharing in the early negotiations and planning phases. Explanations for the used dimensions: (1) The extended timeframe adopted from customer-dominant logic and covering the past, before service, during service, after service and future perspectives from a client's viewpoint (Heinonen & al. 2010), and (2) the four perspectives from dynamic facilitation and choice-creating process, i.e. concerns, facts, problems, and solutions (Dynamic Facilitation Associates 2021).

3.3.2 Delivering through prototyping & testing

In the current design process the delivering phase was mainly limited to prototyping and testing of the design ideas developed in the workshops. Only one round of iteration was included in this phase as the entrepreneurs took strong ownership of the results and their development already during testing and right after receiving the second drafts of the prototypes from the designer. Still the entire phase lasted two and a half months from the beginning of March to mid-May. From this time, the prototyping phase took roughly two weeks (as the second drafts were delivered in mid-March), and testing phase about two months ending with the final reflective discussion with the designer and the entrepreneurs in mid-May. The delivering phase with its main steps and tools and methods applied for prototyping and testing are summarized in Figure 30. These will all be explained next in more detail.

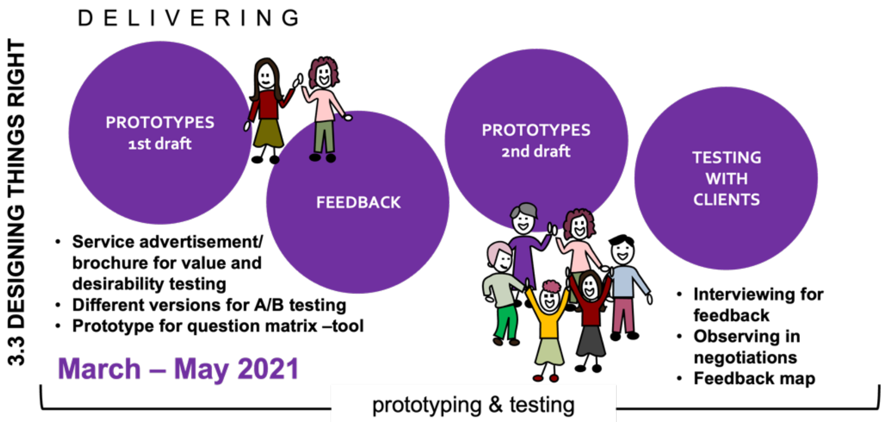


Figure 30: The delivering phase with the steps and applied tools and methods for prototyping and testing.

Prototyping

The development work conducted in the workshops resulted in two kinds of prototypes. First, the refined service packages and ideas to develop service impact description were prototyped in a form of a service advertisement or brochure as to test how their use affect the negotiations and the clients' experience of the value and desirability of the entrepreneurs' service (Stickdorn & al. 2018, 237; Bland, Osterwalder, Smith & Papadakos 2020, 194-196). For increased credibility of the results, the intention was to test the refined service packages and their impact descriptions in authentic negotiations (Bland & al. 2020), which thus required the prototypes to be of high-level fidelity to real service presentation material (Stickdorn & al. 2018, 65-66). Instead, to see how the refined service packages work in real service processes and how they support and adapt to growing collaborations, would have required longer-term observation, which was not possible in the timeframe of the current design project. As for boosting information sharing during early negotiations, the prototype was based on the simple idea of a printable question matrix that would also be tested in real client meetings. The question matrix was nevertheless intended only for the eyes of the entrepreneurs themselves, and therefore the appearance of the prototype was of less importance.

The service advertisement/brochure prototype was created as a set of power point slides because that was the form the entrepreneurs has been using for presenting their services. The first drafts were all based on the ideas and results created in the workshop but still included several variations for the impact description allowing to see how the ideas inspired by the EAST framework would work in practice. The entrepreneurs were also given three options for each service package to choose their favorite wording for the final value proposition sentences. The presentation included a front slide illustrating service impact by integrating all three alternative service packages as a part of the clients' change and goals and demonstrating both parties' roles and efforts in the process. The following explanatory slides were focused on describing the contents and potential impact of each refined service package in alternative performance and basic levels with respective client references and recommendations. The last two slides provided information on pricing and available additional (delighter level) services suggested for each service package. Figure 31 provides the alternative first draft versions for the front slide illustrating service impact, Figure 32 the service package slides, and Figure 33 the information slides on pricing and additional services from the first draft for the service advertisement prototype. All logos, provider and client names are removed for anonymity's sake. The color scheme in the slides was adopted from the entrepreneurs own graphic design used for example in their webpages.

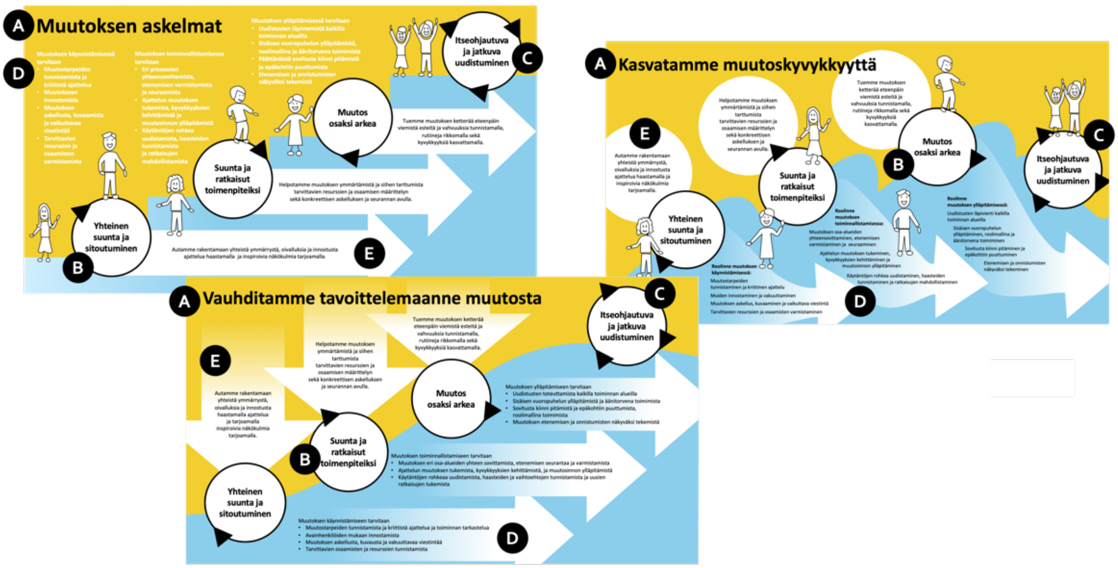


Figure 31: The alternative first draft versions of the front slide for service impact illustrations from the service advertisement prototype. Explanations: (A) Alternative headline slogans, (B) new service names, (C) inspiring future state with an achieved change goal, (D) client role in advancing change, and (E) provider role and value of the service.

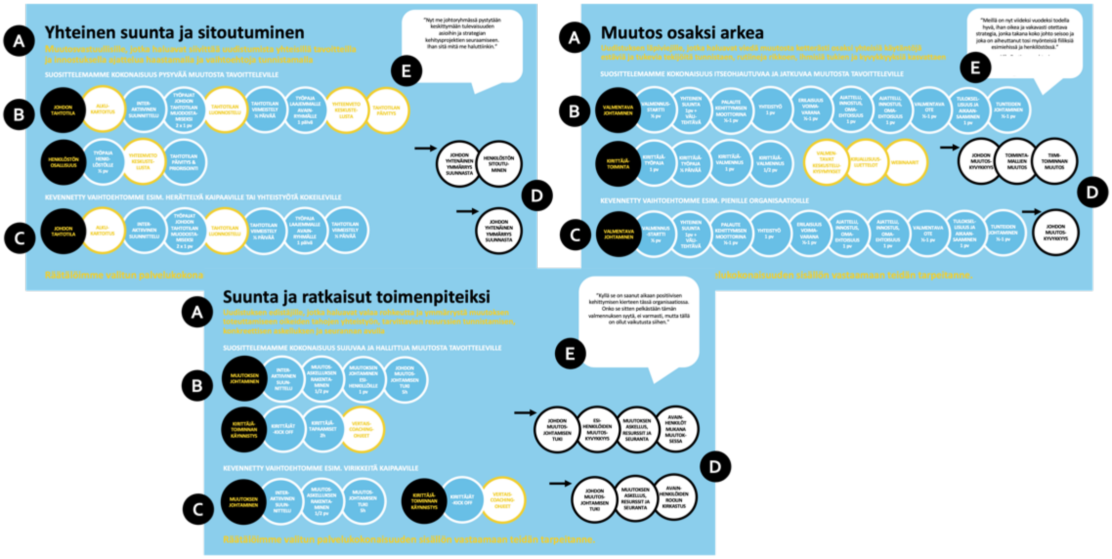


Figure 32: Service package slides from the first draft for the service advertisement prototype. Explanations: (A) Name of the service package and the chosen value proposition sentence, (B) contents of performance level service (recommended version), (C) contents of basic level service (lightened version), (D) impacts of alternative service levels, (E) client reference with name, logo (both removed) and a quotation highlighting outcomes.

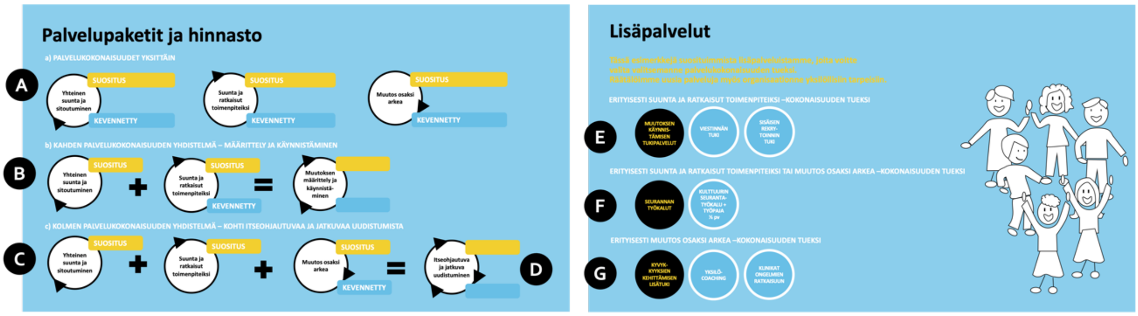
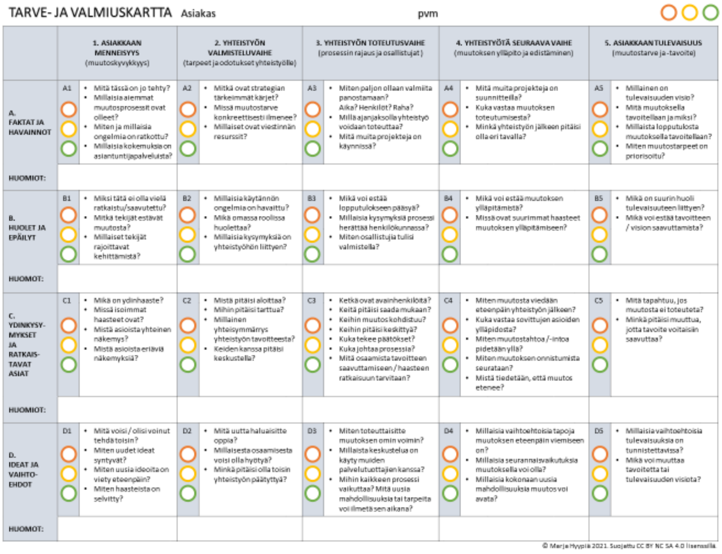


Figure 33: Information slides on pricing and available additional services. Explanations: (A) price for service package A, i.e. service options separately, (B) price for service package B, i.e. combination of the first two service options, (C) price for service option C, i.e. combination of all three service options, (D) prices for the recommended performance (yellow) and the lightened basic (blue) level service contents, (E-G) additional services suggested for each service package.

As mentioned earlier, the draft prototype for the question matrix tool was a relatively simple realization of the ideas and results developed in the fourth workshop. Only a traffic lights system for rapid analyses and a letter/number coding for supplementary notes were added to the design with an intention to enhance effective use of the tool. Also some of the questions were repositioned in the matrix from one slot to another. The draft prototype of the question matrix tool for elaborated information sharing in early negotiations is available in Figure 34.



TARVE- JA VALMIUSKARTTA Asiakas pvm

	1. ASIAKKAAN MENNEISYYS (muutoskyvykkyys)	2. YHTEISTYÖN VALMISTELUVAIHE (tarpeet ja odotukset yhteistyölle)	3. YHTEISTYÖN TOTEUTUSVAIHE (prosessin rajaus ja osallistujat)	4. YHTEISTYÖTÄ SEURAAVA VAIHE (muutoksen ylläpito ja edistäminen)	5. ASIAKKAAN TULEVAISUUS (muutostarve ja -tavoite)
A. FAKTAT JA HAVAINNOT	A1 • Mitä tässä on jo tehty? • Millaisia aiemmat muutosprosessit ovat olleet? • Miten ja millaisia ongelmia on ratkottu? • Millaisia kokemuksia on asiantuntijapalveluista?	A2 • Mitkä ovat strategian tärkeimmät kärjet? • Missä muutostarve konkreettisesti ilmenee? • Millaiset ovat viestinnän resurssit?	A3 • Miten paljon ollaan valmiita panostamaan? Aika? Henkilöt? Raha? • Millä ajanjaksolla yhteistyö voidaan toteuttaa? • Mitä muita projekteja on käynnissä?	A4 • Mitä muita projekteja on suunnitteilla? • Kuka vastaa muutoksen toteutumisesta? • Minkä yhteistyön jälkeen pitäisi olla eri tavalla?	A5 • Millainen on tulevaisuuden visio? • Mitä muutoksella tavoitellaan ja miksi? • Millaista lopputulosta muutoksella tavoitellaan? • Miten muutostarpeet on priorisoitu?
HUOMIOT:					
B. HUOLET JA EPÄILYT	B1 • Miksi tätä ei olla vielä ratkaistu/saavutettu? • Mitkä tekijät estävät muutosta? • Millaiset tekijät rajoittavat kehittämistä?	B2 • Millaisia käytännön ongelmia on havaittu? • Mikä omassa roolissa huolettaa? • Millaisia kysymyksiä on yhteistyöhön liittyen?	B3 • Mikä voi estää lopputulokseen pääsyä? • Millaisia kysymyksiä prosessi herättää henkilökunnassa? • Miten osallistujia tulisi valmistella?	B4 • Mikä voi estää muutoksen ylläpitämistä? • Missä ovat suurimmat haasteet muutoksen ylläpitämiseen?	B5 • Mikä on suurin huoli tulevaisuuteen liittyen? • Mikä voi estää tavoitteen / vision saavuttamista?
HUOMOT:					
C. YDINKYSY-MYKSET JA RATKAIS-TAVAT ASIAT	C1 • Mikä on ydinhaaste? • Missä isoimmat haasteet ovat? • Mistä asioista yhteinen näkemys? • Mistä asioista eriäviä näkemyksiä?	C2 • Mistä pitäisi aloittaa? • Mihin pitäisi tarttua? • Millainen yhteisymmärrys yhteistyön tavoitteesta? • Keiden kanssa pitäisi keskustella?	C3 • Ketkä ovat avainhenkilöitä? • Keitä pitäisi saada mukaan? • Keihin muutos kohdistuu? • Keihin pitäisi keskittyä? • Kuka tekee päätökset? • Kuka johtaa prosessia? • Mitä osaamista tavoitteen saavuttamiseen / haasteen ratkaisuun tarvitaan?	C4 • Miten muutosta viedään eteenpäin yhteistyön jälkeen? • Kuka vastaa sovittujen asioiden ylläpidosta? • Miten muutostahtoa /-intoa pidetään yllä? • Miten muutoksen onnistumista seurataan? • Mistä tiedetään, että muutos etenee?	C5 • Mitä tapahtuu, jos muutosta ei toteuteta? • Minkä pitäisi muuttua, jotta tavoite voitaisiin saavuttaa?
HUOMIOT:					
D. IDEAT JA VAIHTO-EHDOT	D1 • Mitä voisi / olisi voinut tehdä toisin? • Miten uudet ideat syntyvät? • Miten uusia ideoita on viety eteenpäin? • Miten haasteista on selvitty?	D2 • Mitä uutta haluaisitte oppia? • Millaisesta osaamisesta voisi olla hyötyä? • Minkä pitäisi olla toisin yhteistyön päätyttyä?	D3 • Miten toteuttaisitte muutoksen omin voimin? • Millaista keskustelua on käyty muiden palvelutuottajien kanssa? • Mihin kaikkeen prosessi vaikuttaa? Mitä uusia mahdollisuuksia tai tarpeita voi ilmetä sen aikana?	D4 • Millaisia vaihtoehtoisia tapoja muutoksen eteenpäin viemiseen on? • Millaisia seurannaisvaikutuksia muutoksella voi olla? • Millaisia kokonaan uusia mahdollisuuksia muutos voi avata?	D5 • Millaisia vaihtoehtoisia tulevaisuuksia on tunnistettavissa? • Mikä voi muuttaa tavoitetta tai tulevaisuuden visiota?
HUOMOT:					

Figure 34: The draft prototype of the question matrix tool for elaborated information sharing in early negotiations.

The first prototype drafts (sent to the entrepreneurs a few days earlier) were discussed in a feedback meeting between the designer and the entrepreneurs. The drafts were assessed for example for their clarity and informativity (there was a need to reduce the amount of text), use of colors (the color scheme turned out to be challenging in terms of readability), and representativeness of the entrepreneurs' own style and work as coaches (the human figures gave a positive and approachable impression while the waves as a background shape seemed to refer to a somewhat questionable and unwanted laissez-fair way of thinking).

For the second draft of the service presentation the front slide for service impact illustration was combined from two original versions with some changes in colors, amount of text and wording. This front slide still had A and B versions allowing the entrepreneurs test if alternative layouts regarding the client role in the process (described above or below the steps) would eventually make any difference. For the service package and additional services slides, a few swaps were made in colors to enhance the visibility of texts with some minor corrections in the contents. At this point, pricing slide remained as it was first, but a contact information slide was added to the second draft material. The question matrix prototype was left without changes but was now protected with a free creative commons license (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0) enabling the designer to retain full rights to apply the tool in her future projects but still allowing the entrepreneurs free to use and develop it in support of their service negotiations (see Creative Commons 2021). The two versions of a front slide for the second service presentation draft are available in Figure 35, and the second drafts for service package and additional service slides in Figure 36. Again, all client and provider logos and names are removed to ensure anonymity.

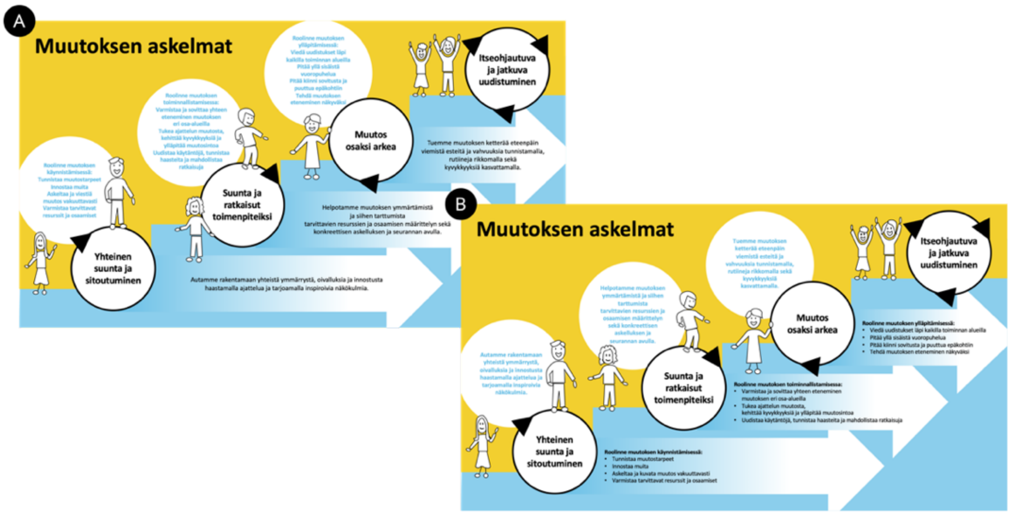


Figure 35: The two versions of a front slide for the second service presentation draft. Versions with client role described (A) above and (B) below the steps.

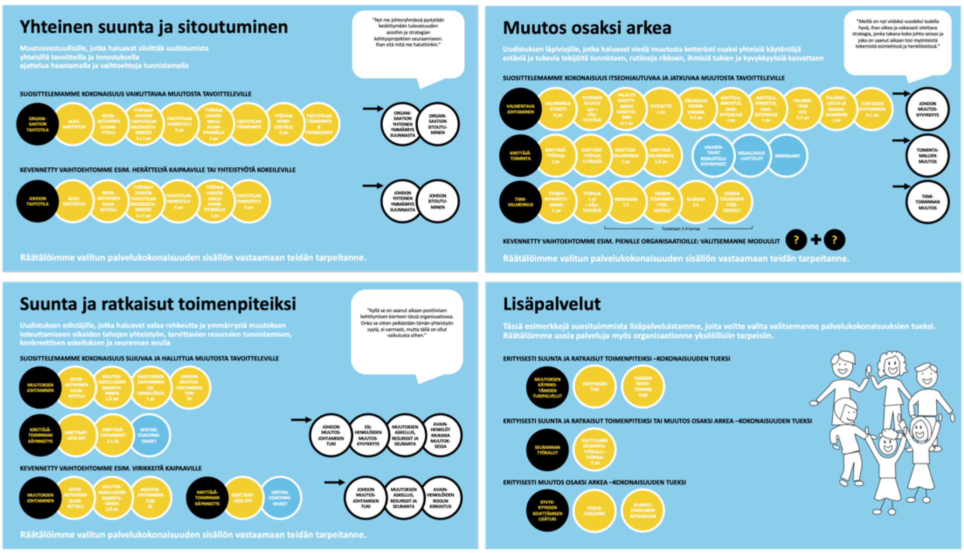


Figure 36: The second drafts for service package and additional services slides.

Testing

The original plan was to test both the service presentation material and the question matrix tool only in authentic negotiations to get the most reliable feedback (Bland & al. 2020). However, it turned out that the entrepreneurs had cut down their new client acquisition and had only one or two forthcoming meetings set with potential clients during the planned testing period. It was then agreed then that they would compensate the gap by interviewing existing clients and collect as much feedback as was possible during the following four weeks. The benefit was that interviews would allow them to ask direct feedback and apply A/B or split testing to identify client preferences regarding the A and B versions for the front slide service impact description (Osterwalder & al. 2014, 230). Also options for online testing were discussed as to measure potential clients' interest for their service packages for example in number of contact requests (see Bland & al. 2020). At this point the entrepreneurs nevertheless considered these approaches too laborious and uncertain as they had not yet adopted any strategies or practices for online marketing.

To keep record of the testing situations and carefully collect all potentially valuable insights regarding the use and functioning of the prototypes, the entrepreneurs were provided with a feedback map template, an adapted version of the one developed by Mindshake (2018). The template included auxiliary questions and perspectives for both observing client reactions and reflecting the entrepreneurs' own experiences in authentic negotiations as well as for interviewing clients after negotiations or in prearranged feedback meetings (see the adapted feedback map template in Figure 37). In addition, the entrepreneurs received general guidelines for testing with for example a recommendation to have one of them take notes while the other one is negotiating and presenting their services. The main principle was nevertheless to meet and discuss with clients as they usually do to evaluate how those really are affected by using the prototypes (Stickdorn & al. 2018, 223). Also, 5-6 testing situations per prototype was considered sufficient for exposing potential defects and dysfunctionalities in the prototypes (see Nielsen 2000).

Figure 37: Feedback map template adapted from Mindshake (2018). Explanations: (A) auxiliary questions for observing in authentic negotiations, (B) auxiliary questions for interviewing client or reflecting experiences after negotiations, (C) client's perspective, (D) entrepreneurs' perspective, and (E) the tested prototype.

Eventually the testing phase was prolonged up to two months and the final feedback meeting postponed from April to mid-May 2021. For that meeting organized online, the feedback map template and prototypes were copied on a Miro board to ease and structure the discussion on general learnings and overall testing experiences as well as detailed features of the prototypes. The Miro board from the final feedback meeting is in Figure 38. Thanks to the extended testing period, the entrepreneurs had finally managed to test the prototypes in altogether 15 authentic client meetings, most of which with new clients. In addition, the service presentation material including both A and B versions for front slide had been tested in two interviews. Furthermore, they had received some spontaneous positive feedback from existing clients regarding their renewed presentation design used also in service offers. The entrepreneurs had been managing the testing situations individually since that is their usual way of dealing and negotiating with clients. Therefore, most reported observations were based on their reminiscence and reflection of the testing situations in the final feedback meeting instead of systematically gathered notes.

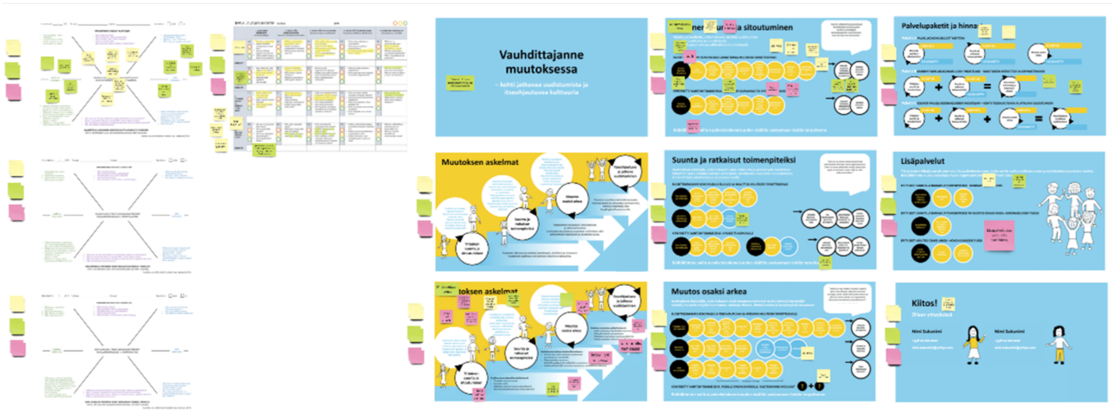


Figure 38: The Miro board from the final feedback meeting.

Testing results

As a general observation the entrepreneurs stated that both the service presentation material and the question matrix tool cohere well with their style and usual way of working. It had felt very easy and natural for them for example to explain their services and discuss with clients by using only the front slide (illustrating potential service impact as part of the client’s change process) of the presentation material. There had been only one client the entrepreneurs had not dared to send the material without first removing the figures from the contact information slide. Also the question matrix was experienced as an effortless and helpful tool worth using especially in every new client meeting. It worked as a checklist for the most important questions before drawing up service offers and added structure to the early discussions. One of the entrepreneurs had been printing the tool for meetings, highlighting the key questions, and had already created a routine order for asking the questions to lead the conversations.

From the entrepreneurs' perspective and compared to their usual operation mode, there were nevertheless some incompatible features as well. Regarding for example the question matrix tool, the entrepreneurs had not been using the traffic lights system for rapid analysis, nor the letter/number coding for supplementary notes, and the space for notes on the matrix was considered rather limited. The entrepreneurs also thought that number of questions could be pruned and wondered if they should have different versions for negotiation and planning phases. At this point they wanted to leave the matrix without changes, but there is clearly still some room for further testing and development in terms of details.

More importantly and regarding the service presentation or advertisement prototype aimed by the designer at supporting early negotiations, it turned out that in negotiations the entrepreneurs would be using only the front slide of the material, and almost never show clients either the service package, additional service, or pricing information slides. These they would use only as part of their service offer, as in their experience, the contents of the offered service package and thus also the price is practically always tailored separately to each client. Instead, the entrepreneurs had been using these slides as templates for offers and actively editing their contents (and layout) according to the needs of each client case. They also found that the new service packages and the prototype's presentation design was clear and compact and thus helped in explaining their offering in a consistent and understandable way.

Moreover, with certain (delighter level) services listed now as additional services, it had been easier for the entrepreneurs to price and offer these as something extra instead of providing them as part of their benevolent and good service. Compared to the initial setting, and the entrepreneurs' worries of repeatedly ending up doing things for free, this small advance may thus be one noteworthy step towards strengthening the sustainability of their business. Eventually, it was concluded that whereas it would be almost impossible to standardize their services on a process level within alternative packages, the process succeeded in standardizing their services between packages, which in the entrepreneurs' opinion had already significantly crystallized their own understanding of their service.

Observing their clients' reactions and behavior in authentic meetings, the entrepreneurs had noticed that the front slide illustration of service impact as part of the clients' own change clearly helped these identify their current stage and needs regarding their process and goals. The material had also received feedback for its freshness and clarity, and as one that differentiates the entrepreneurs from other providers and is easy to remember also afterwards. In addition, one of the entrepreneurs' thought that the atmosphere in client negotiations had now changed more positive by the effect of the new presentation material and especially its' front slide. As to the versions A and B for the front slide of the service presentation material, the interviewed two clients' preference was unanimously on the B version where the client role is described in arrows below the steps. This layout gave a positive impression of the client organization as the basis for the process and as an active agent who makes the choices. In the interviews it had been also stated that the steps as the background shape nicely concretized the process and needed actions for change. As a suggestion for improvement, one of the interviewees had noted that there was still a lot of text, and it could be reduced for better clarity. Additionally, the entrepreneurs had found some inconsistencies regarding the descriptions of clients' role in relation to their service and had already been refining the texts by themselves.

Furthermore, based on the entrepreneurs' observations and experience from client meetings, the question matrix tool created focus to the discussions as the questions helped clients concretize their goals and challenges on a practical level, and thus identify core issues and priorities for their mutual process. The entrepreneurs found that the questions and perspectives of the matrix encouraged people reflect their needs and situation on a deeper level and guided the entrepreneurs themselves ask enlightening questions that they would not otherwise have come to think of asking. However, concluding any boosting effects of the question matrix tool on the negotiations and planning in practice would require further testing and ability to analyze long-term connections between these early phases, the realized service processes, and their results. The same holds true for analyzing whether the improved impact description truly helps clients make appropriate service choices, and if the refined service packages can eventually create flow in real collaboration processes. Table 8 lists the testing results and feedback separately for the service presentation material, its front slide, service package and pricing slides, and the question matrix tool, and provides conclusions regarding the development targets these prototypes were aimed at solving.

Tested prototype	Original development target	Testing results and feedback	Conclusions
Service advertisement/brochure prototype			
Front slide, A/B versions   	Support decision-making by developing service impact descriptions: Sharpen the impact description of service packages in relation to desired change and needed efforts to strengthen clients' understanding of their alternatives and thus enhance appropriate service choices.	• Suits the entrepreneurs' style and way of working • Helps in explaining the service and supports discussions with clients • Fresh and clear design, differentiates the entrepreneurs from other providers and is easy to remember • Concretizes change process and needed actions • Helps clients identify current stage and needs regarding their process and goals • Version B gives better impression of the client organization as the basis of the process and as an active agent making the choices	Meets the target of supporting decision-making and strengthening clients' understanding of their alternatives. Effects on clients' appropriate service choices require further testing. Room for reducing and refining text.

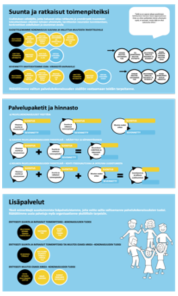
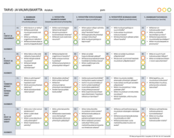
Tested prototype	Original development target	Testing results and feedback	Conclusions
Service advertisement/brochure prototype			
		• May enhance positive atmosphere in negotiations • Amount of text could be reduced • Some inconsistencies to refine in the texts on client role in relation to services	
Service package + information slides on pricing and additional services 	Increase flexibility by refining service packages: Refine service packages to enable better flow and compatibility between and customization within different sized service processes to support and easily adapt to growing collaboration.	• Content requires client-specific tailoring, thus not used in first negotiations but as editable templates for service offers, flexibility within packages is still based on client-specific tailoring • Clear and compact service package design helps in explaining offering in a consistent and understandable way • Listing additional services separately makes it easier to denote these as something extra • Standardizes service between but not within service packages • Crystallizes entrepreneurs' own understanding of their service • Clients may expect more specific pricing information in service offers	Meets the target of enabling better compatibility between service packages but partly fails in enabling the service level customization within packages. Analyzing the effects on collaboration flow in practice would require longer testing period. Crystallizes the entrepreneurs' own understanding and may enhance the sustainability of their business. Room for redesigning the pricing information slide for the purpose of client-specific service offers.
Tool prototype			
Question matrix 	Boost negotiations and planning by elaborating early information sharing: Enhance mutual identification of client needs and possibilities by ensuring adequate and efficient information sharing in early negotiations to enhance clients' appropriate service choices and entrepreneurs' accurate planning.	• Helps clients concretize their goals and challenges and reflect needs and situation on a deeper level • Creates structure and focus to discussions and identify core issues and priorities for collaboration • Works as a checklist for important questions before drawing up offers • Number of questions could be pruned • There could be different versions for different stages of collaboration • Traffic lights system and letter/number coding were not yet used • There could be more space for notes	Meets the target of elaborating early information sharing and enhancing mutual identification of client needs and possibilities. Seems to boost negotiations and planning but analyzing true effects requires further testing. Room for further testing and development in the details of content and layout.

Table 8: Testing results and feedback for the prototypes and conclusions regarding their original development target.

As mentioned earlier, the original plan was to have another round of iteration in the design process and develop the prototypes further based on the feedback from the testing phase. However, as it was stated earlier and described above, the experienced the design results as their own from the beginning and started to develop the prototypes already while testing them. It was thus unanimously agreed that the entrepreneurs would continue the work and develop the service presentation material and the question matrix tool as a part of their ongoing client processes. Despite the noted few incompatibilities and the designers' lack of understanding of the entrepreneurs' negotiation practices, this only strengthens the view of a successful design process that generated results that met most of the set development targets and suit well to the design partner's individual style and own way of working – that is the ongoing life of the client. Hence, we will next briefly reflect the realization of the described design process and evaluate its' outcomes and impact from the entrepreneurs' viewpoint before moving on to summarizing the results of the entire thesis study.

3.3.3 Summary and reflection of the design process and results

The present design challenge originated from the two coaching entrepreneurs' worries, needs, and wishes regarding the effectiveness of their own, recently started business and newly created service packages. The entrepreneurs were driven by their genuine desire to help different kinds of organizations thrive as both businesses and work communities, and for that end, to support these in undertaking whatever needed changes. However, as was described in the introduction of this thesis report, the entrepreneurs had questions and concerns related to their clients identifying their true needs and making the right service package choices, to their own ability to anticipate the needed work for expected value, outcomes, and impact with each client, and to overall possibilities of streamlining their own processes and avoiding unproductive (and unpaid) work.

As to take a step back from specific issues arising mainly from the entrepreneurs' own business perspective, and to integrate their clients' view in the forthcoming process, the principles of design thinking and especially human-centered design were adopted to frame and guide the current work (IDEO 2015). In addition for being targeted at accomplishing sustainable solutions both from the client and provider viewpoints (Brown 2008; Brown & Wyatt 2010), implementation of human-centered design to the present challenge was justified by the apparent match between the entrepreneurs' original needs and the three perspectives to be applied in this integrative approach (see Chapter 1.3). The design challenge was thus defined as such overall effectiveness of the coaching service that would meet the requirements and identified needs both from the desirability, feasibility, and viability perspectives. In addition, the principles of customer-dominant logic (Heinonen & al. 2010) were adopted as a loose theoretical frame to better conceive the clients' organizational view and context in examining and developing the service.

The integrative approach of three design perspectives allowed to better examine and develop the entrepreneurs' service as a business instead of only focusing on the details of organizational coaching practice, and thus provide some novel insights beside the very core of their own everyday expertise to build on in developing their service processes. Further, the theorizations and explanations provided by customer-dominant logic (Heinonen & al. 2010) helped in understanding their clients' role and stance in organizational coaching processes and guided to broaden and deepen the perspectives to the clients' ongoing life and organizational context already in the case research and data collection phase. Together with the chosen case analysis methods (collaboration journey and impact path analyses) both these approaches thus placed the entrepreneurs' service and client processes into a wider context of collaboration where both parties have their own history and affecting experiences, present needs, and possibilities, as well as future goals and interests. In the final feedback meeting of the present design project, the entrepreneurs noted how they had learned something new about their own service in every workshop along the process and had now developed a stronger and clearer understanding of their own service business.

The multiple case study research method (Eisenhardt 1989; 2021) with the specific three cases (despite their only partial match with the represented service packages, see Chapter 3.2.1) already seemed to serve well the present cause and provide versatile and adequate information for valuable service improvements. Still, especially from an organizational coaching effectiveness viewpoint, even longer case study timelines as well as broader involvement of the personnel of the studied client organizations might have provided even deeper and brighter insights considering the organizational everyday realm with its relational social and emotional dynamics. In addition, whereas the present design project was structured quite faithfully according to the idea, main phases, and steps of the so-called revamped double diamond process model (Nessler 2016a; 2016b), adopted multiple useful tools and approaches familiar from service design, and got inspiration also from certain additional theoretical approaches, compared to the essential common characteristics of service design listed by Stickdorn & Schneider (2012, 34-35), lack of co-creativeness can be denoted as its worst failing. With more intensive client engagement throughout the design process and especially in the development phase, and by taking even better advantage of utilizing clients' viewpoints, the project might have resulted in some truly innovative outcomes from the entrepreneurs' viewpoint. (See Chapter 3.1.1.)

This project was nevertheless realized within the possibilities, resources, and schedules of two busy entrepreneurs and a thesis worker (the designer), and was, despite the few listed deficits, still an extensive design process with a holistic approach to strengthening the effectiveness of the entrepreneurs' organizational coaching service. Along the roughly ten months' time, the entrepreneurs gained deeper understanding of their collaboration journeys with clients, its different stages, value of their own practices, and especially of their clients' experience and viewpoint in the service process. They also gained new knowledge regarding the outcomes and wider impact of their service and service packages within client organizations. They were also able to crystallize their views about the factors that affect and define the results and success of their coaching collaboration with clients. And finally, they got six new, integrated perspectives (opportunity areas) into developing their coaching service in the level of service contents and service description (desirability), in the level of process and practices (feasibility), and in the level of their own business development (viability). (See Chapter 3.2.)

Three of the identified opportunity areas were chosen as the final targets of the present design process. These resulted in refined service packages with an aim of increasing the flow and compatibility between and customizability within service processes, in developed impact description of their service and the refined packages with an aim to strengthen their clients' understanding of alternatives and thus enhance their choices, and in a question matrix tool with an aim to boost early information sharing and mutual recognition of client needs. As it was described in the previous chapter, despite some room for further development in terms of details and the acknowledged need for supplementary testing for some deeper effects within the chosen three development targets, overall the realized process and its outcomes can be stated to have generated a positive impact on the entrepreneurs' service and have enhanced the set goals for strengthening its effectiveness. (See Chapters 3.3.1 & 3.3.2.)

Also, although the testing phase revealed that the alternative service levels created within each refined package as well as their description in the service advertisement prototype did not entirely match the entrepreneurs' business reality and could not be utilized as such in any authentic negotiations, this worked more as a reminder for the designer to pay additional attention to the design partners' everyday practice than as a sign of a failure in the process. As noted in the workshops' description, the entrepreneurs experienced the level-based processing of their service very rewarding as it helped them crystallize the essential in each of their service package (Chapter 3.3.1). Furthermore, the new presentation design applied in the prototype was stated to help the entrepreneurs themselves explain their offering in a consistent and understandable way. All-in-all, the realized design process undeniably has strengthened the entrepreneurs' own understanding which can lead both to (while there are also signs of) more efficient businesses processes and increased mutual understanding in negotiations with clients.

4 Thesis results and conclusions

The purpose of this thesis work is to complement coaching literature that is focused mainly on individual coaching and coaching practice and thus provide viewpoints for strengthening the effectiveness of organizational coaching service. Organizational coaching was differentiated from other forms of coaching by its focus on organizational systemic change instead of personal development goals and targets of a coachee. This is decisive as it brings organization and group level challenges and dynamics to the fore and center in the quest of coaching results. Examining organizational coaching as a service instead of a practice, widened the perspective from a coaching process to include also other phases, steps and actions constituting coaching collaboration between a provider and a client. Furthermore, outlining the effectiveness of coaching through the principles of design thinking and as the intersection of desirability, feasibility, and viability perspectives of human-centered design (IDEO 2015) signified taking a holistic approach both in the theoretical and empirical lines of examination and integrating client and provider views, interests and needs in the challenge.

In this last chapter we will first recapitulate the results of these examinations in relation to the research questions posed in the introduction. Then we will discuss the relation of the results gained from the two lines of examination and conclude the main outcomes of this thesis. Lastly, we will assess the made choices and realization of the entire work from ethical and reliability viewpoints and finally suggest some improvements and topics for further research.

4.1 Review of the results

As it was already reminded, the overall purpose of this work is to provide perspectives for strengthening the effectiveness of organizational coaching service through the holistic approach and perspectives of human-centered design. For that goal, the aim was thus first to identify the factors that, from the integrated perspectives of desirability, feasibility, and viability, constitute the effectiveness of organizational coaching service and second, to find ways for strengthening such effectiveness in practice. To clarify the process and guide the work, these tasks were divided in three research questions:

1. Based on literature, what kind of factors constitute the effectiveness of organizational coaching service and what kind of a framework can be built to support its development?
2. Based on real organizational coaching service processes, what kind of factors constitute the effectiveness of organizational coaching service?
3. How can the identified factors be developed to strengthen the effectiveness of organizational coaching service in practice?

Whereas the first question is clearly related to the theoretical line of examination, and the second to the empirical one, the third question was touched upon in both lines but taken further in the empirical examination along the real development process for the current design challenge. However, at a more general level the answer to the third question lays in between the two lines and is derivable only from the combination and through a dialogue of the theoretical and empirical results in the next chapter. This is in nevertheless an explorative study where the intention is not to give definite answers as such but to provide relevant perspectives and themes for further development and theory building in an unresearched field. (See Chapter 3.1.2; Eisenhardt 1989; 2021.)

The theoretical examination was built on the integration of design thinking (Brown 2008; Brown & Wyatt 2010) and customer-dominant logic (Heinonen & al. 2010) perspectives. While the application of the desirability, feasibility, and viability viewpoints (IDEO 2015) widened the approach to include both provider and client interests and needs in the study, the five challenges raised by customer-dominant logic demonstrated the need to deepen and widen these views and helped in elaborating on them in the context of organizational coaching service. This integration of perspectives and study of their relations resulted in a list of practical questions (Table 2) and a summary figure of their connections (Figure 2), that both guided the further search for enlightening theoretical perspectives related to each design viewpoint. Although at this point it was already obvious that the questions and challenges raised by customer-dominant logic were overlapping and often relevant from more than one design perspective, for the sake of clarity the investigation was structured according to the most apparent connections and separately under thematic headlines of desirability, feasibility, and viability. (See Chapter 2.)

The main insights gained from the literature for the challenges of customer-dominant logic within each design perspective were summarized in a table in the end of each respective chapter (Tables 3, 4 & 5). These tables thus provide theoretically elaborated answers about the factors constituting the effectiveness of organizational coaching service (Research question 1) as well as about developing those factors (Research question 3), which were then all pulled together in a framework figure combining and summarizing now the main perspectives from both design thinking and customer-dominant logic as well as the main insights gained from additional theoretical literature and approaches (Figure 4). The resulting figure suggests a full theoretical framework for examining and developing the effectiveness of organizational coaching service. It provides a holistic approach combining client and provider related views and factors of effectiveness (Research question 1) and cues for their development for the provider (Research question 3). The framework is also integrative, meaning that its perspectives are all interconnected and mutually affected by each other which needs to be taken into consideration when applying it in practice. (See Chapter 2.4.)

Our empirical line of investigation was conducted as a service design project for two entrepreneurs hoping to develop the effectiveness of their coaching service structured in three alternative service packages. Again, design thinking with the perspectives of human-centered design (IDEO 2015; Brown 2008; Brown & Wyatt 2010) and principles of customer-dominant logic (Heinonen & al. 2010) were adopted as the basic frames for the research to both enhance the integration of the entrepreneurs' and the clients' views in the process and broaden and deepen their understanding already in the data gathering and analysis phases. The examination was constructed as a multiple case study research where, following the ideas and description of Eisenhardt (1989; 2021), no further theoretical premises were taken, or approaches studied until finalizing the empirical analysis. In the context of the so-called revamped double-diamond process model (Nessler 2016a; 2016b) that was used in planning the current design project, this indicated extensive reliance on the primary research data in discovery and define phases of the project. (See Chapter 3.1.)

The multiple case study consisted of the research of three prior service processes the entrepreneurs had realized with their clients. The study resulted in case-specific collaboration journey and impact path descriptions as well as in cross-case summaries about factors of effectiveness in organizational coaching service and conclusions regarding opportunity areas for developing those factors. From the thesis' and research questions' viewpoint, the most essential outcomes are the provider-related, client-related, and collaboration-related promoting and hampering factors of effectiveness summarized in Figure 18 and elaborated on the clients' part in Figure 19 (Research question 2), and the identified opportunity areas for their development described in Figure 20 (Research question 3), which were then summarized and studied in Table 7. It was stated that while the six opportunity areas are linked to and the identified factors of effectiveness thematically expand the three integrated design perspectives, they are all correspondingly interconnected in a way, where developing one area can simultaneously enhance and depend on factors related to other areas (Research question 3). It was also noted that, despite the choices made in the present process, and the emphasis put on the early collaboration phases in the case study, all six opportunity areas eventually seem equally relevant just by looking at their multiple connections with different factors of effectiveness or original linkages with the three design perspectives (See Chapter 3.2.)

In the current design process, three opportunity areas were prioritized as targets for the development and delivery phases based on the evaluation of their potential benefits, the entrepreneurs' assessment of their need for external resources, and perceived connections and dependences between prioritized areas. (Chapter 3.2.2.) In the light of the opportunity areas' equally stated relevance, the present design partner's focus on early collaboration phases only suggests a likely starting point to an ongoing development process, where the other areas are easier to work on along new client processes once they have been successfully negotiated (Chapter 3.2.3). The development of the chosen areas relied on selected service design methods and tools, on relevant results of the preceding case research, and on associated theoretical perspectives included in the theoretical framework. The realized process provided thus some methodological examples for developing the effectiveness of organizational coaching services in practice and in these three particular areas, although it was already acknowledged that better client engagement especially in the development phase might have led to some more innovative results from the entrepreneurs' viewpoint (Research question 3). (See Chapter 3.3.)

From the third research question's viewpoint more noteworthy is nevertheless the way the case research insights were applied across perspectives and opportunity areas (for example views regarding process effectiveness and collaboration were reflected while refining service packages, and client-related factors in developing the question matrix for elaborated early information sharing) highlighting thus again the interconnected nature of identified opportunity areas and their underlying factors of effectiveness. In addition, although the applied theoretical perspectives were used here only as an inspiration, their benefits in guiding and framing the work were undeniable and already gives reason to believe, that there is potential in applying the theoretical framework for strengthening the effectiveness of organizational coaching service also in future projects. Furthermore, positive results from the delivery phase mostly pointing to achieved objectives and effective solutions within each set target (Table 8) provides additional support both for the applicability of the framework and for the overall design approach adopted in the project. (See Chapter 3.3.) The dialogue and connections between the present theory and practice will nevertheless be discussed further in the following chapter.

4.2 Conclusions

In order to properly answer to the third research question about developing the identified factors of effectiveness on a more general level and meet the purpose and aim of this thesis beyond the current design context, we still need to discuss the empirical and theoretical results together (see Eisenhardt 1989, 538-543; Chapter 3.1.2). It has become clear, that the both lines of investigation were built on the premises of design thinking and perspectives of human-centered design on one hand, and on the principles and challenges of customer-dominant logic on the other. Their integration had undeniable advantages in theory and in practice: while the application of design perspectives helped in taking a holistic view on the effectiveness of a service and integrate both client and provider views into its development, customer-dominant logic helped in adding depth and breadth to those perspectives in the context and realm of client organizations, their ongoing life, and aimed change.

Whereas further theoretical research thus brought forward behavioral perspectives and biases in decision-making, satisfaction and delightful experiences in long-term commitment, and conditions for systemic change, common learning, and absorptive capacity as significant factors within client organizations to be considered in developing the effectiveness of organizational coaching service, it also highlighted the provider's dynamic capabilities as the way forward in managing sustainable business. As for the real service processes, their multiple case study expanded the three design perspectives into client-related, provider-related, and collaboration-related factors that explain and enlighten the constituents of service effectiveness within organizational context and reality and additionally revealed six opportunity areas for the provider for their development. But how do the theoretical and empirical views interact, and what kind of a development approach can be created by their combination?

In addition to their theoretical-methodological premises, there are multiple perspectives and insights in common for the present theory and practice. For example, need for organizational alignment, shared goals, and inclusion as well as appreciation for client's sense of control and context-specific knowledge are common themes regarding change and success in client organizations. Similarly, the influence of past experiences, first impressions, and mutual understanding on purchase decisions is apparent in both lines of research. Furthermore, a provider's need to constantly adapt to and learn from client-specific situations is as evident in practice as it is in theory. Fulfilling service performance, ability to help solve problems and build positive joint experiences are representative examples from both perspectives for provider features fostering long-term commitment towards and desirability of organizational coaching within client organization. Moreover, proficiency in demonstrating professional expertise while facilitating clients' shared choices appears equally beneficial from literature and practice viewpoints for providers hoping to enhance their business.

Yet, the two lines of research are also complementary: Whereas the literature provides deep understanding regarding the conditions for successful organizational coaching within client organizations arising from the past, present, and the future, the multiple case study enlightens the service process view and stages of a growing coaching collaboration between the client and the provider. So, although the theory offers thorough and holistic views on the needs of client organizations to consider in organizational coaching services, the practice indicates concrete features and areas to focus on in their development and, by highlighting the early phases of a service collaboration, even suggests a starting point for that endeavor. Furthermore, whereas the current development project provides an example of applying service design approach, methods, and tools on strengthening the effectiveness on organizational coaching service from the scratch, some elements from the theory were already successfully used as an inspiration and thus tentatively tested in this work.

In sum, the theory and practice described here seem both consistent and complementary in a way that gives grounds to suggest, based on these two lines of investigation, a new combined approach and framework for developing the effectiveness of organizational coaching services illustrated in Figure 39. Although the present opportunity areas with their underlying factors of effectiveness are outlined by studying only three client cases and service processes of our current design partner, their compatibility with theoretical perspectives allows us to expect some wider applicability within organizational coaching services in general (see Eisenhardt 1989, 544-545). Despite some differences in their formulation and phrasing, the opportunity areas thus seem to provide fit answers to the original questions posed in the framework (Figure 4) and to work now as action points for organizational coaching providers hoping to strengthen the effectiveness of their service. At the same time, as stated earlier, the factors of effectiveness identified in the case study thematically expand the theoretical design perspectives and thus also elaborate their integrated definition for the effectiveness of organizational coaching service. And, looking at the equation from the theoretical viewpoint, the original framework applies as an explanation for the identified opportunity areas and the expanded design perspectives and also serves as guidance and inspiration for their development.

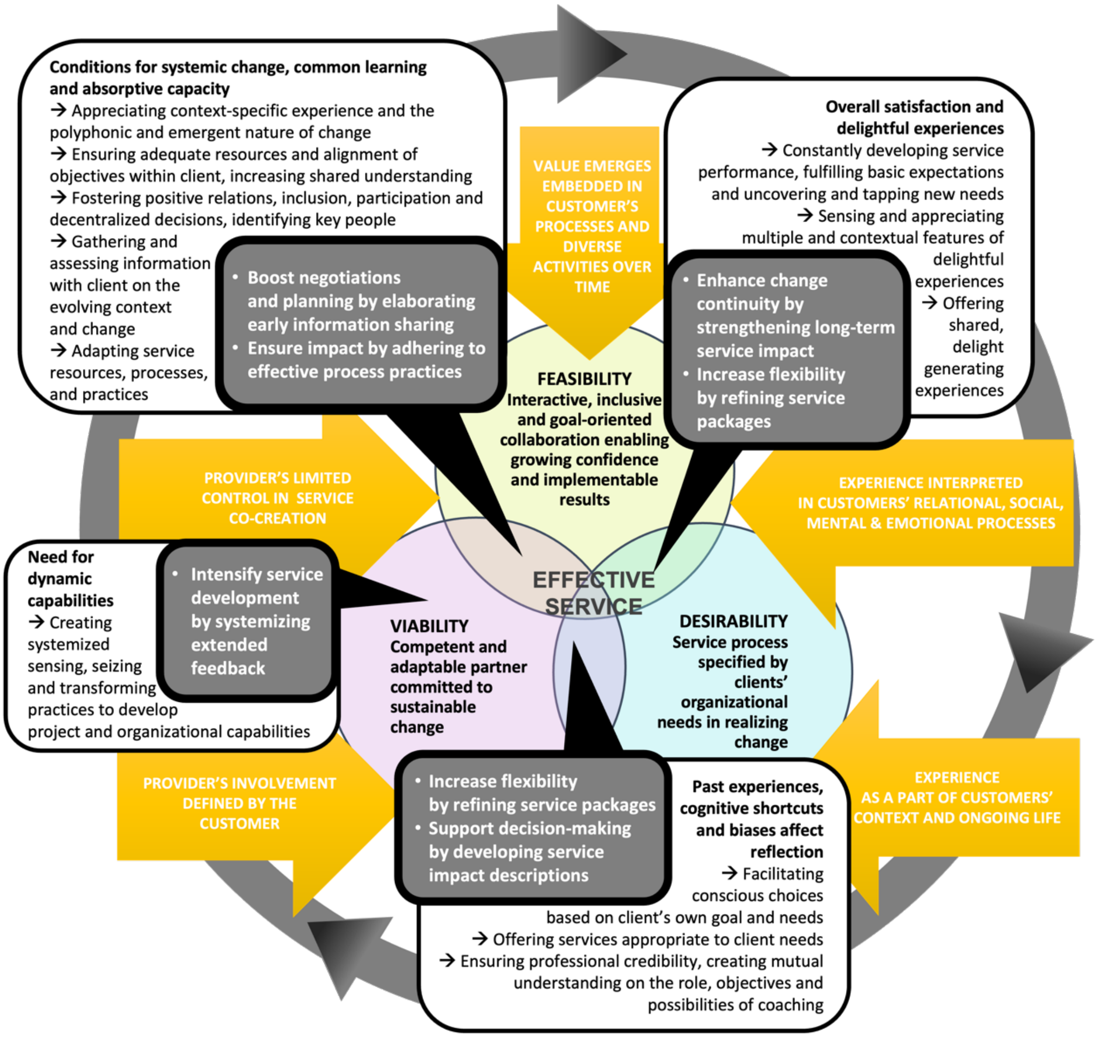


Figure 39: The combined framework for developing the effectiveness of organizational coaching service.

Any definite conclusions regarding the wider applicability of the suggested framework and the details of the current case study results within organizational coaching services require broader testing and are still subject to further elaboration. For example, the present design process was focused on only three of the potential six opportunity areas and the testing for those areas still leaved some open questions regarding the long-term impacts of the created solutions. In addition, in another context, and depending on the maturity of the coaching providers’ business, the opportunity areas might take other forms and specifications. Also a longer case study period and a broader research data (gathering data longer after realized coaching processes and from a wider group of people within the client organization) might reveal more specific factors and areas for developing the effectiveness of organizational coaching service. On a minor detail, the opportunity areas (or action points) are now positioned to replace the original questions they are most perceptibly linked to by the present theory and practice, but their overlapping connections with different aspects of service effectiveness (Table 7) leave room for multiple interpretations.

Overall, at this stage it can be agreed that the effectiveness of organizational coaching service necessitates a holistic approach where the development of one area inevitably involves consideration and progress in others. The arrow circle outlining the framework symbolizes this integrated nature of its different aspects highlighted both in theory and practice. Whereas service design methodology is here demonstrated a logical and constructive basis for developing also organizational coaching services in practice, it is clear, that the process and applied tools need to be adjusted according to each case, design partner, context, and areas chosen as the target. From a larger perspective it is also evident that the basic framing and research setting adopted in this thesis, holistic design thinking approach with the principles of customer-dominant logic as its foundation, and organizational coaching service instead of practice as its core, has widened the view from traditional coaching literature to better serve the needs of coaching providers hoping to enhance their support for systemic transformation within client organizations.

4.3 Reflection of the research

Although the original research setting of this thesis was justified by the context and nature of organizational coaching service, it resulted in a relatively complex and broad perspective that has been demanding to carry along throughout the work. Simultaneously, for the reliability and further discussion of the results, there is a need to give a transparent and consistent description of the process and underlying logic both for theory and practice (see for example Yin 2009). For these reasons, the report is rather long and quite detailed. Still, there are additional theoretical perspectives and alternative methodological choices that could have improved this research.

As regards to the theoretical framework, literature on customer experience management (e.g. Ponsignon, Klaus & Maull 2015) or relationship management (e.g. Gebert, Malte & Lutz 2003; Deszczynski & Beręsewicz 2021) might have increased the understanding on growing service collaboration and relations studied in practice. Also, maturity models regarding continuous improvement (Backlund & al. 2015) or new service development (Jin, Chai & Tan 2014) that were studied as alternative and complementing approaches for the eventually adopted dynamic capabilities view, might have provided structured views to the provider’s service development. These views were nevertheless ruled out from the study either due to necessary delimitations or chosen perspectives´ better fit with the present context. The reader can however evaluate the appropriateness of these decisions based on the description of the theoretical examination in Chapter 2. However the most noteworthy points for development can be found by evaluating the work from the case research and design process viewpoints.

4.3.1 Case study perspective

Although this research is exploratory and thus aimed at creating new understanding instead of new theories, its focus is on unexplored research areas which justifies the adoption of multiple case study as its primary research method (see Chapter 3.1.2). The method was largely realized by applying the advice from Eisenhardt (1989; 2021). Still, to evaluate its validity and reliability from a more general perspective, we will here briefly consider the suggestions from Yin (2009, 40-45), who divides the case study criteria as related either to construct validity, internal validity, external validity, or reliability.

For construct validity, and the need to use multiple sources of evidence (Yin 2009, 41-42; 114-118) the biggest limitation of the study is the already mentioned narrow representation of client organization and their ongoing life. Although data was gathered both from the client and provider views and backed by available case-specific service documents, broader inclusion of the client personnel as well as longer case study timelines would have opened deeper views into the studied organizations and their ongoing processes. Yet, to increase overall validity of the results, the case-specific descriptions were reviewed by the client representatives and the cross-case summaries discussed with the coaching provider. While the entire case study report, against Yin’s (2009) recommendation, was not submitted to the interviewees for their comments and approval, the process is described in such detail that, within the limits of ensuring the anonymity of the case study organizations, hopefully allows the reader to follow and evaluate its chain of evidence by themself (Yin 2009, 41-42; 122-124; 182-184).

Although this is research is exploratory and, according to Yin (2009, 42-43), the criteria for internal validity do not necessarily apply, they largely match with the key principles of multiple case study research (see Eisenhardt 1989; 2021 or Chapter 3.1.2) and can thus help evaluate the present study. For example, ingredients of internal validity such as pattern matching and explanation building are familiar techniques also in the multiple case method aimed at increasing understanding in an unexplored area. However, unlike in Yin’s (2009) description, these patterns and explanations are not based on prior predictions or theoretical hypotheses but first discovered across and then tested within individual cases, and only further explained with the help of existing theory and research (Eisenhardt 1989; 2021).

Here, the discovered factors of effectiveness and areas for their development are patterns derived through the similarities, differences, and categories between cases, tested within individual cases (Chapter 3.2.2), and finally examined for their mutual connections across design perspectives (Chapter 3.2.3). Additionally, the collaboration journey and impact path analyses applied in the description of individual cases are examples of logic models Yin (2009, 149-154) brings forward as a technique demonstrating relations between different events and thus strengthening the internal validity of a case study. Lastly, the case study results were discussed with theory (Chapter 4.2), which, in Yin's (2009, 43-44) assessment is a measure for external validity and analytical generalizability of the research. So, as the results are both consistent and complementing with the studied theory, the multiple case study alone does not provide externally exhaustive explanations for the effectiveness of organizational coaching service but offers some internally valid and externally potential constituents worth further testing in practice.

In terms of internal validity, addressing alternative explanations (i.e. checking for such factors or opportunity areas that would not have any relation to the studied effectiveness and would be mutually exclusive with the identified ones) is the only technique that was not even loosely applied in this study. First, it would have been challenging as the chosen method is specifically not based on the formation of preliminary and opponent theoretical propositions that could have been tested for that purpose, and second, it is rather the subject for further research aimed at testing and elaborating the suggested factors and opportunity areas in different kinds of organizational coaching contexts and service processes. (Yin 2009, 139-141; Eisenhardt 1989, 536.) However, the present research adopted a holistic design thinking approach with three integrated perspectives where the very idea is to gain an all-embracing understanding over complex situations (Brown 2008; Brown & Wyatt 2010). In addition, both promoting and hampering factors were considered as part of coaching service effectiveness from corresponding client, provider, and collaboration perspectives (Chapters 3.2.2 & 3.2.3). Hence, there should not be any major thematic gaps in the case study results beside the already anticipated specifications and adjustments arising from a deeper and more long-term view into client organizations or from the development work needed for another provider. Overall, as noted in conclusions, expanding the external validity of the results of this study still entails further case replication and testing in practice (Yin 2009, 43-44).

For the reliability of a case study research, it is essential that another researcher could, by following a case study protocol, perform the same data collection and analysis procedures and arrive at same conclusions (Yin 2009, 45, 79-91). Although this research as a single investigator study did not include any specific protocol in writing, all its crucial elements from case study questions and interview practices to data management principles and applied analysis methods and tools are all described and available in this report. However, for the privacy and protection of the studied organizations and their individual representatives, creation of an open case database for the use of other researchers and as the evidence of the present research's reliability was not possible (see Yin 2009, 118-122). For the same reason, case-specific data and analysis details are mostly hidden or intentionally unreadable also in this report. This is justified first by the small size and young age of the business of the present design partner, which makes their service vulnerable and clients recognizable. Second, the issues discussed within each unique case were partly delicate and could potentially also cause problems for each organization's internal or external development goals if discussed in public. Therefore, the reliability of this study is a compromise between providing openly available and evaluable details and honoring the anonymity of the research subjects.

4.3.2 Service design perspective

Assessing this work as a service design process is slightly different. As it was described in Chapter 3.1.1, there is no agreement on the definition of service design, but an evolving understanding constructed through theory and practice (Stickdorn & Schneider 2012). Whereas van Oeveren (2022) highlights service designers' ability to examine and develop whatever target through the logic of service, Stickdorn & Schneider (2012, 34-45) list user-centeredness, co-creativeness, sequencing, evidencing, and taking a holistic approach as essential characteristics in common to the altering definitions. From a process perspective however, a general observation is the necessity to adapt the service design work to the specific needs and possibilities of each context (Stickdorn & Schneider 2012; Carlgren & al. 2016). Partly due to this apparent need for flexibility, the present process was designed by following the main phases and steps of the so-called revamped double diamond model by Nessler (2016a; 2016b). This is already described in detail in Chapter 3. Thus, we will here reflect the realized process first in relation to the universal features defining service design and second to the conditions and possibilities set by the present service and design partner. In the end we will also discuss a few lessons learned from the process and suggest themes for further research.

As it has been repeatedly noted, the present service design process was theoretically grounded on two approaches: design thinking with the three integrated design perspectives of human-centered design (Brown 2008; Brown & Wyatt 2010; IDEO 2015) and the principles of customer-dominant logic (Heinonen & al. 2010). These two approaches framed the work throughout the process from designing interviews, describing cases, and analyzing results to developing solutions. Whereas the integrated design perspectives helped examine service processes and value from all relevant angles and thus take and maintain a holistic approach, customer dominant logic not only guided to study the different sequences and connecting events in a service process but also extended that view to cover the phases and events before and beyond direct co-creation or even collaboration. In addition, customer-dominant logic encouraged to consider all provider actions, collaboration events or documents through a service logic where the service experience and value are assessed from a wider user perspective including the client organization and its ongoing life. Thus, not only does the combination of these theoretical framings help in meeting service design qualifications but also take them further by extending their perspective. (See Chapter 3; Stickdorn & Schneider 2012, 34-45; van Oeveren 2022.)

Notwithstanding the above, and analogously to earlier observations, empathy to client experience and thus user-centeredness could have been strengthened by including the organizations wider to the research phase also in practice (see Chapter 3.2; Stickdorn & Schneider 2012, 36-37). This would have nevertheless needed a considerable amount of additional time used in a thesis project that was already a relatively extensive one, as for example only one additional interview per case would have been problematic to target in a way that would bring reliable results with true benefits while surveys would have required case-specific questions and design. Moreover, as noted before, engaging clients also in the development phase and thus increasing the co-creativeness of the process would have enabled better use of client perspective and might have led to some unexpected solutions. The decision to exclude clients from the co-creative workshops was nevertheless one made and justified by the design partner and was partly compensated in the testing phase focusing on real clients and using prototypes also in authentic client meetings. (See Chapter 3.3; Stickdorn & Schneider 2012, 38-39.)

As for evidencing, the one characteristic in Stickdorn & Schneider's (2012) list that has not yet been discussed, physical artefacts, actions, and documents that somehow concretize service value and impact, were knowingly studied, and considered in various phases of the process. For example in the discovery phase service documents were deliberately discussed in the interviews, used as support material, and pointed for their role both in collaboration journey and impact path analyses. In addition, these analysis methods specifically helped in identifying (i.e. evidencing) the effects of particular events and actions. Furthermore, the created solutions and their prototypes were largely targeted to demonstrating service value to the client, either with specific questions, illustrations highlighting impact, or thought-out value propositions. Finally, evidencing was adopted as one principle guiding the testing phase concretized in the guidelines and questions designed to support the entrepreneurs' observations on the effects of using prototypes in authentic situations. (See Chapters 3.2 & 3.3; Stickdorn & Schneider 2012, 42-43.)

Overall, despite the few compromises, the realized process seems to meet the general expectations for service design. Yet the true value and quality of the process can only be evaluated in relation to the original design challenge and context. The original design task was conceived as a true challenge due to the target services' embeddedness in client organizations' context and processes: how to develop a service of which both the means and effects are dependent on the choices, actions, and processes of individual client organizations. In addition, the design partners', the two entrepreneurs', own needs and wishes were numerous and included the development of three different service packages. However, the integrated design thinking and customer-dominant logic perspectives were decisive approaches especially from this practical viewpoint as the former helped in creating structure to the questions and still cover both client and provider views in the process, while the latter increased the necessary understanding in outlining and analyzing service a as part of the clients' ongoing life. Both these approaches then guided the process and tools choices from data gathering to analysis phases whereas the latter had an apparent impact also on development work and final solutions beside service design methods and tools. (See Chapters 1.1-1.3 & Chapter 3.)

The design partner's small size and young business age had an effect on some choices and possibilities along the design process. For instance, the decision to leave clients out from the development process was related to the entrepreneurs' own experience of them being a too small agent to bother busy clients with their own service development. Instead, they themselves were remarkably motivated to use several hours for information sharing and development workshops as well as feedback and testing meetings despite the lengthened process and their own busy schedules. Such engagement is hardly self-evident and probably related to their status as entrepreneurs developing the effectiveness of their own business. Moreover, the solutions were targeted to fit their working practices and for example online versions were ruled out in the testing phase as too laborious and uncertain without prior experience and established strategies in online marketing.

Additionally, the entrepreneurs' experience and way of thinking had identifiable effects on the made choices. The entire design process was very constructive and interactive, which was extremely beneficial for the still unexperienced designer, but also followed the design partner's own philosophy in all service collaboration. Furthermore, the development process relied, in addition to the case study results, on many theoretical aspects used as inspiration, which might have not been as easy and successful with a significantly larger number of workshop participants with different kinds of backgrounds or in a less conversational atmosphere. Without both entrepreneurs' prior experience and interest in reflecting large amounts of knowledge in a short period of time, integrating additional perspectives to the work might have been more confusing than useful. Also, the entrepreneurs' shared the designer's aspiration to build ethical solutions for their clients' benefit in identifying service needs and possibilities while avoiding the risks of manipulating choices. As a result, the created service presentation material and question matrix tool reflected well their own working style and the spirit in their service. (See Chapter 3.3.)

In the end, the most significant measure for the design process' success are its benefits and ability to answer to its original purpose. As it was described in Chapters 3.3.2 and 3.3.3, despite some uncertainties regarding the long-term impacts as well as needs to refine some details in the prototypes, the realized project has most likely enhanced most of the entrepreneurs' goals. On the whole, this was a major success and a learning point convincing the designer of the possibilities of service design in solving also such a challenging and complex task as strengthening the effectiveness of organizational coaching service. Still, there are a few other lessons to take on from this process.

First, the noted incompatibilities of the created service package descriptions and fixed alternative service levels with entrepreneurs' business reality highlighted the need of a designer to pay careful attention also to her own clients' (the design partner) ongoing life beside the life of the clients the service is developed for. Second, and related to the first, the integrated desirability, feasibility, and viability perspectives as well as the principles of customer-dominant logic should be kept in mind also in relation to the design partner while planning the design process. Third, strong interaction and open communication with the design partner throughout the process are to enhance these aspirations. And fourth, although the time management challenges in the development workshops were probably related both to the small number of participants as well as the entrepreneur's devotion in developing their own service, there is no doubt that forthcoming design workshops should be scheduled with such affecting features in mind.

As for future development subjects for service design methodology, the designer is looking for more effective ways of sharing the research insights with other people participating the process and thus help them empathize with their client. Despite the separate information sharing workshop dedicated for that purpose and persistent attempts to integrate main results into different stages and tasks in the development work, it was obvious that the participants' attention can easily drift towards emphasizing their personal experience and understanding of the situation. Of course, engaging clients directly to the development work would help balance the challenge, yet is not always possible. For the present design target and research theme, strengthening the effectiveness of organizational coaching in practice, all three opportunity areas that were ruled out from this particular process are certainly promising and deserve a closer look (see Chapter 3.2.3). They are all mostly related to strengthening the long-term impacts and success of organizational coaching service and their development could therefore substantially contribute to the sustainability of both the service provider and its client.

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Unpublished

Case interview A 2020. An interview with the CEO of client company in Microsoft Teams 6 October 2020.

Case interview B 2020. An interview with the CEO of the client association in Microsoft Teams 12 October 2020.

Case interview C 2020. An interview with the vice rector of the client organization in Microsoft Teams 29 October 2020.

Preliminary interview A 2020. An interview with X of the coaching entrepreneurs in Microsoft Teams 28 September 2020.

Preliminary interview B 2020. An interview with Y of the coaching entrepreneurs in Microsoft Teams 30 September 2020.

Preliminary interview C 2020. An interview with X of the coaching entrepreneurs in Microsoft Teams 7 October 2020.

Figures

Tables

Appendices

Appendix 1: Case research data sources

Data type	Details
Case A	
Interviews conducted in Microsoft Teams	• Preliminary interview A with X of the coaching entrepreneurs 28 September 2020. • Case interview A with the CEO of the client company 6 October 2020.
Online	• Company website
Service documents	• Coaching service proposal. Power Point document. Received 28 September 2020. • Survey questions for executive team members. Word document. Received 28 September 2020. • Developing the executive teamwork, coaching material for 13-14 June 2019. Power Point document. Received 13 November 2020. • Developing the strategy work, coaching material for 13-14 June 2019. Power Point document. Received 13 November 2020. • Developing the executive team, group exercises material. Power Point slides. Received 13 November 2020. • Developing the strategy work, group exercises material. Power Point document. Received 13 November 2020. • Developing the executive team and strategy work, workshop outcomes. Power Point document. Received 7 October 2020.
Case B	
Interviews in Microsoft Teams	• Preliminary interview B with Y of the coaching entrepreneurs 30 September 2020. • Case interview B with the CEO of the client association 12 October 2020
Online	• Association website
Service documents	• Preliminary coaching service proposal with a coaching plan for the superiors in the regional centers and central association 30-31 October 2019. Word document 17 September 2019. Received 30 October 2020. • Updated coaching service proposal with a coaching plan for the superiors in the regional centers and central association 30-31 October 2019. Word document 7 October 2019. Received 30 October 2020. • Change towards renewing and responsible functioning. Updated coaching plan for the superiors in the regional centers and central association 30-31 October 2019. Word document 7 October. Received 30 October 2020. • Change towards renewing and responsible functioning. Final coaching plan for the superiors in the regional centers and central association 30-31 October 2019. Word document 18 October. Received 30 October 2020. • Change towards renewing and responsible functioning. Requirements for leadership. Coaching material for the superiors in the regional centers and central association 30 October 2019. Power Point document. • Change towards renewing and responsible functioning. Coaching material for the superiors in the regional centers and central

	association 30-31 October 2019. Power Point document. Received 30 October 2020. • Change towards renewing and responsible functioning. Requirements for leadership. Coaching material for the superiors in the regional centers and central association 30 October 2019. Power Point document. Received 30 October 2020. • Change towards renewing and responsible functioning. Requirements for leadership. Group exercises for the superiors in the regional centers and central association 30 October 2019. Power Point document. Received 30 October 2020. • Change towards renewing and responsible functioning. Coaching for the superiors in the regional centers and central association 30-31 October 2019, workshop outcomes. Power Point document. Received 30 October 2020. • Change towards renewing and responsible functioning. Practices and tools for superiors. Support material for coaching. Power Point document. Received 30 October 2020. • Change towards renewing and responsible functioning. A Follow-up coaching service proposal for the association. Power Point document. Received 30 October 2020. • Change towards renewing and responsible functioning. A Follow-up coaching service proposal for the central association. Power Point document. Received 30 October 2020. • Change towards renewing and responsible functioning. An updated follow-up coaching service proposal for the central association. Power Point document. Received 30 October 2020. • Cross-team collaboration. Coaching material for the central association team and superiors. Power Point document. Received 30 October 2020. • Competency management tools and templates. Support material for central association team and superiors' coaching. Power Point document. Received 30 October 2020. • Defining team purpose, tasks, and roles in support of the strategy, tools, and templates. Support material for central association team and superiors' coaching. Power Point document. Received 30 October 2020. • Team purpose, tasks, and roles. Coaching material for the central association team and superiors. Power Point document. Received 30 October 2020. • Goals setting and follow-up. Coaching material for the central association team and superiors. Power Point document. Received 2 November 2020. • Competency management in every-day work. Coaching material for the central association team and superiors. Power Point document. Received 30 October 2020.
Case C	
Interviews in Microsoft Teams	• Preliminary interview C with X of the coaching entrepreneurs 7 October 2020. • Case interview C with the vice rector of the client organization 29 October 2020.
Online	• Organization website

Service documents	• Original coaching service proposal for strengthening self-direction in the organization. Power Point document. Received 16 November 2020. • Developing the management teamwork. Coaching material for 14 August 2020. Power Point document. Received 16 November 2020. • Developing the management teamwork. Group exercises for 14 August 2020. Power Point document. Received 16 November 2020. • Developing the management teamwork – efficiency. Coaching material for 14 September 2020. Received 16 November 2020. • Coaching service proposal with three alternative processes for strategy work. Power Point document. Received 16 November 2020. • Strategy work. Coaching material for the management team 31 August 2020. Power Point document. Received 16 November 2020. • Strategy draft materials from 31 August coaching. Power Point document. Received 16 November 2020. • Updating the strategy. Management team coaching materials and outcomes from 10 September 2020. Received 16 November 2020. • Strategy 2021-2025 draft proposal. Power Point document. Received 16 November 2020. • Strategy work. Coaching material for superiors 15 September 2020. Power Point document. Received 16 November 2020.

Appendix 2: The research release (in Finnish)

Haastattelutietojen hyödyntäminen ja aineiston käsittely

Haastattelulla tuotetaan tietoa X Oy:n palveluprosessien ja palvelujen vaikuttavuuden asiakaslähtöiseen kehittämiseen. Kehittämistyö ja siihen liittyvä raportti toteutetaan opinnäytetyönä Laurea ammattikorkeakoulun palvelumuotoilun maisteriohjelmaan. Opinnäytetyö on julkinen, mutta kaikkien mukana olevien yritysten ja organisaatioiden sekä haastateltavien tiedot salataan ja analyysi ja kuvaukset laaditaan niin, etteivät ne ole ulkopuolisten tunnistettavissa. Ulkopuolisilla tarkoitetaan tässä muita kuin haastattelijaa, haastateltavan edustamassa organisaatiossa tai X Oy:ssa toimivia henkilöitä. Raportti on englanninkielinen.

Haastatteluaineistoa käsitellään ja hyödynnetään luottamuksellisesti:

- Haastattelut nauhoitetaan ja litteroidaan
- Tallenteet ja tiedostot ovat vain haastattelijan käytössä, eikä niitä jaeta muille
- Tallenteissa ja tiedostoissa haastateltavat yksilöidään vain kirjain- ja numerotunnistein
- Aineistoa hyödynnetään vain tähän tutkimukseen
- Haastattelutallenteet ja –tiedostot hävitetään työn valmistuttua, kuukauden sisällä työn hyväksymisestä
- Mahdollinen muu hyödynnettävä organisaation materiaali on yhtä lailla luottamuksellista ja sitä käsitellään haastatteluaineistojen tavoin

- Haastattelujen (ja muun materiaalin) analyysin tuottamaa tietoa hyödynnetään työpajoissa X Oy:n kanssa palveluprosessien ja palvelujen kehittämiseen
- Haastatteluista voidaan lainata sitaatteja raporttiin englanniksi käännettynä analyysin, tulkintojen ja ratkaisujen havainnollistamiseksi
- Lainaukset valitaan niin, ettei haastateltava tai organisaatio ole tunnistettavissa ulkopuolisille

Olen lukenut ja hyväksyn yllä kuvatut tavat hyödyntää ja käsitellä haastattelun tietoja ja -aineistoja kehittämistyössä ja sitä kuvaavassa opinnäytetyössä.
--> Kuittaathan vastaamalla tähän sähköpostiviestiin, kiitos!

Appendix 3: Form for preliminary interviews (in Finnish)

CASE **A B C**

PALVELUKOKONAISUUS (5)
Millainen palvelukokonaisuus asiakkaalla toteutettiin?

ASIAKASORGANISAATIO (5)
Mitä tiedettiin asiakkaasta etukäteen?
Asiakkaan keskeiset haasteet ja mahdollisuudet?
- Miten tunnistettiin / saatiin tietää?

Millaiseen tarpeeseen haluttiin vastata?
- Miksi?
- Millaisella osaamisella ja palvelulla erityisesti?

YHTEISTYÖPROSESSI (40)

Mitä tapahtui yhteistyön aikana? Mistä yhteisistä tekemisistä / tapahtumista rakentui?
- Milloin nämä olivat?
- Mikä näiden tarkoitus oli?
- Mitä näissä tapahtui?
- Kuka osallistui?
- Mitä niistä syntyi? Mitä niissä tuotettiin?

Mitä itse teitte näiden välillä?

Mitä näiden välillä oletettiin tapahtuvan asiakasorganisaation sisällä?
- Miten työskentely jatkui?
- Miten piti valmistautua tulevaan?

Millaisia ohjeita tai tukea annettiin?
Miten sujui?
- Haasteet? Mistä johtuivat?
- Miten tulivat ilmi?
- Miten niihin reagoitiin? Mitä apua tarjottiin?

Miten prosessia muokattiin matkan varrella?
- Miksi? Millaisen tiedon perusteella?
- Millä tavalla auttoi?

Olennainen materiaali, aineisto tai dokumentointi prosessin aikana?
- Missä vaiheessa ja miksi?
- Asiakkaalta saatu? Jäikö jotain uupumaan?
- Yhdessä tuotettu?
- Itse tuotettu?

Kuinka yhteistyö alkoi?
Milloin ja miten päädyitte yhteistyöhön?
- Kuka otti yhteyttä ja kehen?
- Mitä neuvottelujen aikana tapahtui?
- Kuinka kauan kesti?

ALKU?

aika?

aika?

LOPPU?

Kuinka ja mihin prosessi päättyi?
- Miten vedettiin yhteen? Millaista palautetta kerättiin?
- Mitä johtopäätöksiä tehtiin? Miten?
- Mitä sovittiin jatkosta?
- Miten asiakkaan jatkotyötä tuettiin?

TAVOITTEET JA ODOTUKSET (10)
Mitkä olivat asiakkaan tavoitteet ja odotukset?
- Millä tavalla niitä selvitettiin?

Miten päädyttiin tähän yhteistyökokonaisuuteen?
- Valitun kokonaisuuden vastaavuus asiakkaan tavoitteisiin ja tarpeeseen? Mitä rajattiin ulkopuolelle? Miksi?
- Mitä vaihtoehtoja tarjositte? Niiden erot suhteessa tavoitteeseen?

Miten varmistettiin oikea suunta prosessin aikana?
Miten ja milloin ymmärrys asiakkaan tarpeesta muuttui prosessin aikana?
- Miten siihen reagoitiin?
- Muut muutokset prosessin aikana?
- Miten näihin varauduttiin?

Yhteistyölle asetetut konkreettiset yhteiset tavoitteet?
- Miten toteutumista seurattiin?

Muut, omat odotukset ja tavoitteet yhteistyölle?

ROOLIT JA VASTUUT (10)
Millaiset odotukset asiakkaalla?
- Asiakkaan ennakkokäsitys tekemisistä ja vastuista? Omalta osaltaan ja teidän osalta?
- Miten vastasi teidän käsitystä ja sovittua kokonaisuutta?
- Miten selkeytettiin/päästiin yhteisymmärrykseen?

Kuinka roolien ja vastuiden jako toimi yhteistyön aikana?
- Korjaustoimenpiteet?

Asiakkaan resursoinnin riittävyys?
- Ajallisesti, henkilöiden, osaamisen ja toimintojen näkökulmasta?
- Miten ohjeistettiin?

Osallistujien valmistautuminen?
- Kuinka toimi?
- Tiedotus organisaatiossa?
- Haasteet?

ARVO JA OPIT (10)
Näkemys koko yhteistyöstä jälkikäteen?
- Millaista arvoa tuotettiin asiakkaalle?
- Asiakkaan palaute?

Asiakkaan vastaanottokyky?
- Asiakkaan haasteet ja vahvuudet hyödyntämisessä?

Omat hyödyt ja opit tuleviin asiakkuuksiin?
- Mikä toimi? Mitä muuttaisitte?
- Mitä lisää omaan osaamiseen?
- Konkreettiset keinot hyödyntää jatkossa?

LOPUKSI (5) Mitä muuta haluaisitte tuoda esiin?
Saatavilla oleva materiaali?

Appendix 4: Form for case interviews (in Finnish)

CASE
HAASTATTELU ☐
A B C

HAASTATELTAVA
Rooli / tehtävä organisaatiossa?
Rooli yhteistyöprosessissa?

ORGANISAATIO (5)
Toiminnan keskeiset haasteet ja mahdollisuudet?
Kehittämistavoitteet?
- Mihin niistä on tartuttu ja mihin ei? Miksi?

Miten muuttunut viimeisen viiden vuoden aikana? Miten ei ole muuttunut?
- Miten muutos on saatu aikaan? Mikä on estänyt?

KOKEMUS ULKOPUOLISISTA ASIANTUNTIJAPALVELUISTA (5)
Mitä palveluja ja millä toiminnan alueilla? Satunnaisesti / pitkäjänteisesti?
Ostamisen haasteet? Mikä helpottaa sitä omassa tai tuottajan toiminnassa?
Millaista arvoa tuottanut? Miten vaikuttanut organisaation toimintaan? Osaamiseen? Kehittymiseen?
- Mikä on edistänyt? Mikä ollut esteenä?

Esimerkkejä hyvistä palveluista ja käytännöistä? Asiantuntijapalvelu parhaimmillaan? Ideaali?

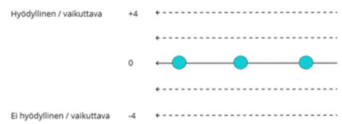
YHTEISTYÖPROSESSI (40)

Mitä tapahtui yhteistyön aikana? Mitä keskeisiä yhteisiä tekemisiä / tapahtumia?
- Mitä näissä konkreettisesti tapahtui?
  Mitä niistä syntyi? Mitä niissä tuotettiin? Mitä opittiin?

Mitä näiden välillä tapahtui organisaation sisällä?
- Miten työskentely jatkui? Mikä muuttui
  Mitä päätettiin, muutettiin, kokeiltiin linjattiin?
- Mikä tuki tätä? Palvelutuottajan vaikutus?
  Ohjeet, materiaalit?
- Mitä ei tapahtunut? Miten olisi voinut tukea?

Millainen materiaali, aineisto tai dokumentointi oli hyödyllistä tai olennaista?
- Missä vaiheessa? Millä tavalla?
- Miten hyödynnettiin?
- Mitä puuttui? Mistä olisi ollut hyötyä?

Kuinka yhteistyö alkoi?
Milloin ja miten päädyitte yhteistyöhön?
- Kuka otti yhteyttä ja kehen?
- Mitä neuvottelujen aikana tapahtui?



Yhteistyön hyödyllisyyden kokemus sen eri vaiheissa?
- Mitkä vaiheet hyödyllisiä tai vaikuttavia? Mikä innosti? Miksi ja millä tavalla?
- Mikä vaikutti vähemmän hyödylliseltä tai vaikuttavalta? Miksi? Miten olisi voinut parantaa?
- Koitko jonkun vaiheen täysin hyödyttömäksi, millä tavalla?

Kuinka yhteistyö loppui?
- Miten vedettiin yhteen?
- Mitä johtopäätöksiä tehtiin? Miten?
- Mitä sovittiin jatkosta?
- Mitä olisi toivonut lisäksi?
- Millaista yhteydenpitoa toivoisit yhteistyön päätyttyä?

TAVOITTEET JA ODOTUKSET (10)
Yhteistyön taustalla oleva tarve ja tavoite?
- Kuinka hyvin tavoite saatiin määriteltyä? Itse? Yhdessä? Mikä olisi voinut auttaa?
- Miten muuttui yhteistyön suunnittelun aikana?

Valintaperusteet sovitulle yhteistyökokonaisuudelle?
- Valitun kokonaisuuden vastaavuus omiin tavoitteisiin ja tarpeeseen?
- Tarjotut vaihtoehdot? Niiden erot suhteessa tavoitteeseen?
- Asiantuntijoiden lähestymistavan suhde omiin tavoitteisiin? Rajaus ja fokus?

Yhteistyölle asetetut konkreettiset tavoitteet?
- Miten toteutumista seurattiin?

Muut odotukset yhteistyölle?
- Millaisia vaikutuksia hyötyjä? Millä osa-alueilla tai missä toimintatavoissa?
- Miten otettiin vastaan organisaatiossa?

Mahdolliset muutokset suunnitelmiin matkan varrella? Miksi?
Mielipide tarjousasiakirjoista? Mikä hyvää? Kehitettävää?
- Hinnoittelun ja sen perusteet? Selkeys?
- Kokonaisuuden selkeys verrattuna todellisuuteen?

ROOLIT JA VASTUUT (10)
Käsitys ja mielikuva tulevista tekemisistä ja vastuista yhteistyön alussa?
- Oman organisaation tekemiset ja vastuut?
- Palvelutuottajien tekemiset ja vastuut?
- Miten ne vastasivat odotuksianne yhteistyöstä?
- Yllätykset prosessin aikana?

Oman toiminnan resursointi?
- Ajallisesti, henkilöiden, osaamisen ja toimintojen näkökulmasta?
- Millaisen tiedon perusteella?
- Ohjeet ja neuvot palvelutuottajalta?
- Kuinka riittävää?

Osallistujien valmistautuminen?
- Tiedotus organisaatiossa? Ohjeet?
- Millaista tukea/apua palvelutuottajalta?

ARVO JA OPIT (10)
Näkemys koko yhteistyöstä jälkikäteen?
- Kuvaus esim. kollegalle toisessa yrityksessä?

Palvelutuottajien asiantuntemus ja palvelu?
- Ymmärrys tarpeista? Kyky vastata niihin?
- Kyky muuttaa toimintaa tarvittaessa?
- Vinkit parantamiseen?

Yhteistyöprosessin arvo /merkitys organisaatiolle?
- Miten näkyy konkreettisesti tänä päivänä?
- Miten auttaa vastaamaan haasteisiin tai mahdollisuuksiin?
- Mistä tietää että auttaa?
- Mistä tietää ettei auta?
- Mikä mielestänne selittää parhaiten?

Merkittävin oppi tuleviin yhteistyöprosesseihin?
- Mitä edelleen samalla tavalla? Mitä muuttaisi?
- Miten on jatkettu tai jatketaan tästä eteenpäin?

LOPUKSI (5) Mitä muuta haluaisitte tuoda esiin?
Ketä muuta olisi hyvä haastatella?
Mitä organisaation materiaalia kehittämisen tueksi?

Marja Hypiä 2020