

## Extraordinary performances don't just happen. They are designed.



### WHAT IS A DESIGN LAB?

A design lab includes a set of interactive strategy sessions led by a senior member of our team. Design labs allow you and your staff the opportunity to imagine new possibilities and to think critically about the pathways leading to those new possibilities.

Design labs produce the blueprints for new destinations. They are ideal for teams, departments, and entire business units who want to strategize, but don't want to embark on a comprehensive strategic planning process.

A design lab is part of the broader approach we use that is called design thinking—a methodology that embraces a creative search for an improved or more ideal solution to a given process or problem. It is an approach used by a number of leading organizations in the public and private sectors, such as Stanford University, Google, GE Healthcare, Procter & Gamble, and Philips Electronics.

Our design labs incorporate many of the core elements of the design thinking methodology, including:

- A systems view of the environment. We are interested in helping you understand the structure that shapes the attitudes and behaviors of key individuals, groups, and organizations in your environment.
- A deep dive into the perspective of your target, be that your customers, your partners, or key members of your own team.
- Multiple phases of discovery—starting with inspiration and moving from there to ideation and implementation.

### THE EXPERIENCE

There are a number of things that make the *Symphonic Design Lab* process different and better than traditional team retreats and planning meetings.

Users tell us that our *Design Labs* are:

- **More fun** because they are interactive, innovative, and force participants to think differently.
- **More focused** because they systematically help you exclude things that are less important and highlight things that are important.
- **More strategic** because they never stray from the pursuit of the ideal and they align every decision to that ideal.

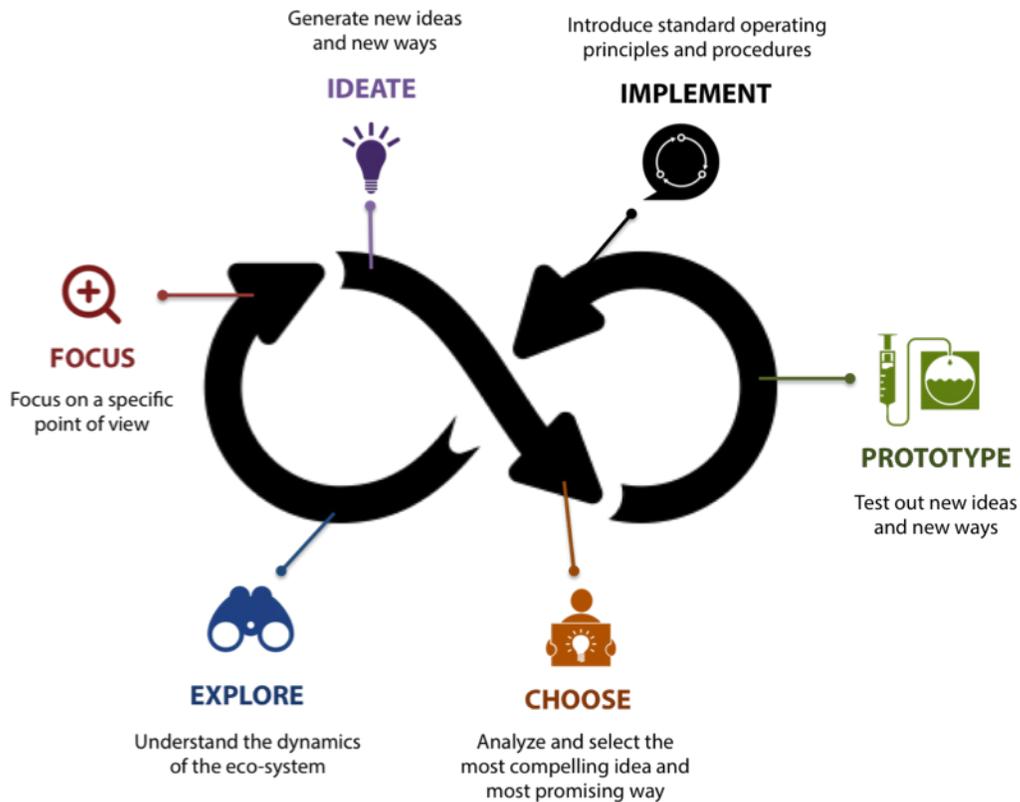
### OPTIONS

There are a number of practical options available to make the *Symphonic Design Lab* process suitable for your budget, time-frame, and environment.

The *Design Lab* process can be:

- Tailored for 1-day, 2-day, or extended versions.
- Restricted to individuals from a single team or to include groups from different departments, divisions, business units, or even organizations.
- Held at interesting spaces that stimulate creativity and allow participants to focus with minimal distraction.

## The Design Lab Process



### Stage 1—Explore

The first stage in every design lab begins with exploration. We use a variety of techniques to understand the dynamics present in your ecosystem, such as observation, self-assessment, and in-depth interviews. The purpose of the exploration stage is to identify the elements in your ecosystem that have a significant influence on attitudes, behaviors, and relationships. It is an exploration of the context in which your challenge or opportunity presents itself.

### Stage 2—Focus

The second stage in the design lab process requires intense focus on one specific perspective or vantage point in your ecosystem. We will help you choose wisely because the problem or the challenge can often look quite different depending on who you are and the vantage point from which you form your perspective.

There are a variety of vantage points that may require focus, such as that of your key employees, or your most important

constituents/customers. As part of this effort, we will help you gain an in-depth understanding of how the various interactions and behaviors influence the experience, and even the mindset, of this particular group. The goal in this stage of the process is to understand the problem from the eyes of your target group.

### Stage 3—Ideate

The third stage in the process is a bit more creative and requires you to design a better experience for your target group. We will help you answer a number of important questions, such as:

- “What does better look like?”
- “What are the most critical touch points that determine the outcome or experience of the target group?”
- “What, in the environment, prevents your target group from enjoying a better outcome or experience?”
- “What would you need to alter or to change in the current environment to create a more ideal experience for this group?”

### 2—Symphonic Design Labs

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The purpose of the third stage is to come up with ideas—practical, as well as aspirational—that might contribute to the construction of a better outcome or better experience for your target group.

### Stage 4—Choose

One of the most important decisions you will have to make comes in stage four. In the fourth stage, we help you identify and prioritize the ideas that have the greatest likelihood of making a positive impact on the resolution of the problem. In most situations, you won't be able to control everything you want to control in the environment, so it's important to choose the "interventions" that have the greatest chance of making a positive difference. We refer to the ideas generated in stage three as interventions, but they can and should include a wide variety of things—from newly designed tools and objects to a new process or standard operating procedures.

The following are among the questions we will help you answer in stage four:

- "Which ideas might have the biggest impact on our resolution of the problem?"
- "What will it take to implement each of these ideas?"
- "Do we have the capacity and capability to implement those ideas?"
- "How might we bundle our ideas so that we make incremental progress over time?"

### Stage 5—Prototype

In stage five, we develop a prototype—which is simply a prioritized list of the ideas (interventions) identified in the previous stage. The objective in stage five is to develop a model (i.e., a prototype) of your first set of interventions. The model may simply be a visual sketch or it might include an itemized to-do list. The key in stage five is to develop a model you can test. The goal is to be able to assess the performance and the impact of the model and to do this you will need to know which key performance indicators you will track and will evaluate. You also will need to be able to test the model under a variety of situations and environments. We will help you do this.

### Stage 6—Implement

In the sixth and final stage of the design lab process, we will choose the best performing models and we will move toward a more wide spread implementation.

### Design Lab Deliverables

Every design lab includes the following deliverables:

- A statement of the problem or challenge (through a combination of interviews, focus groups, observation, and surveys)
- Research and exploration; an in-depth look into the environment (i.e., ecosystem) in which the problem or challenge presents itself
- A preliminary sketch of the ideal state; an articulation of how things might look when the problem or challenge disappears or is resolved
- A search for the design features that are necessary to eliminate the problem or the challenge
- A blueprint that describes how to implement those design elements under a wide variety of situations and circumstances

