

 SERVICE DESIGN

# TUTORIAL 5

The silent game – a game on collaboration in design

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# WORKING TOGETHER IN DESIGN

- » Design is rarely done individually
- » Working together in design involves cooperation and collaboration in various moments
- » Design entails compromise but not decision by consensus
  
- » ... but it hard to grasp without trying!



# LET'S DO INSTEAD OF TALK!

... and let us be silent!



Shhhhh by Sarah: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/dm-set/3750788554>



# THE SILENT GAME

- » The aim of the game is to allow reflection on cooperation and collaboration in design by examining **design strategies and tactics** when you are designing together
- » The game is carried out in silence to bring focus to the act of moving design material in a shared design space as a form of language
- » The game is useful for design students as well as practitioners and non-designers.



Psst! The silent game was introduced by Habraken et. al. (1987) with a modification by Iversen and Buur (2000)



## 3 PLAYERS, A DESIGN SPACE, DESIGN MATERIAL, AND A SET OF RULES

Note: if you are not able to do the exercise in class, check the last slide!





# PLAYERS

- Player 1 acts as **Lead Designer**, with the assignment of starting the design.
  - Player 2 acts as **Assistant Designer** and tries to understand and build upon the lead designer's plan.
  - Player 3 acts as **Observer** and record with notes all movements, trying to make interpretations as to what is happening.
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- ➔ **Make groups of 3**
  - ➔ **Decide in this group who is taking which role and wear a post-it with your role written on it**
  - ➔ **Each group takes one A3 paper and a bag of legos**



## DESIGN SPACE AND MATERIAL

- Arrange to sit so that the Lead designer and the Assistant designer are facing one another. The Observer stays at the side.
- Place 1 A3 paper sheet on the table between the Lead designer and the Assistant designer
- Take a bag of provided design material (i.e. the legos)
- The Observer should use their own laptop / phone or a piece of paper + pen to take notes (you will need to type them and upload them to Moodle, so keep this in mind)
- The Observer needs to use a timer (e.g. in your phone)



# FACILITATORS

- » Main facilitator: Joanna 😊 → gives general instructions + check that nobody speaks
- » Co-facilitators: the Observers → check timing in their group + that all rules are respected





# RULES

- » The whole game is done in COMPLETE SILENCE – no one is allowed to talk or make any sound!
- » Players are not allowed to write any text!
- » The players are allowed to use ONLY the design material provided by the facilitator
- » All the moves the players do have to take place **inside** the Design Space of this game, i.e. the piece of A3 paper
- » Players can't change the position of the pieces they have placed on the A3 after they have placed them there
- » Players can't move other players' pieces



# INSTRUCTIONS

1. The Lead Designer is given 1 minute to think of a strategy (the observer times this!)
2. The game starts by the Lead designer placing 2-3 building blocks inside the "design space" represented by the white paper located in-between the 2 designers. (The observer starts the time-taking for 15 minutes).
3. The Assistant Designer follows by placing 2 pieces on the design space, trying to understand the plan of the Lead designer and following it.
4. In the next movements only 2 pieces can be placed in the design space at a time, alternating between the Lead Designer and Assistant Designer.
5. Previous piece movements can't be reverted nor fixed by any of the players
6. The observer stops the game after no more progress is made or after 15 minutes (whichever comes first)



## DE-BRIEF

- » First the Observer starts by telling their account of the story
- » Then, the Assistant Designer gives their account
- » Finally, the Lead Designer is the last one to talk and gives their account



## REFLECTIONS

- » Did the game and how it unfolded remind you of real-world situations in design or other kinds of collaborations: roles, project constraints, design moves, negotiation strategies, rules to follow, and the inner logic of turn-taking?
- » Did you identify moments of cooperation and/or collaboration? (remember last week's lecture)
- » Where compromises made? Which ones and when?
- » Did it matter that the aim of the design was not stated in any way at the beginning of the game (as the Lead Designer was not allowed to say it in words nor write it down)?
- » Based on your experience in this game, do you think it is possible to enter a mode of design cooperation or collaboration, even though you do not know - or agree upon - the goal?
- » Is following the Lead Designer the most constructive strategy? If yes, when & why? If no, when & why?
- » Is it important to have a Lead Designer? Are others always to be considered Assistants? What other term would you use for designers working together?
- » Through this game, what did you learn about yourself as a designer working with others?



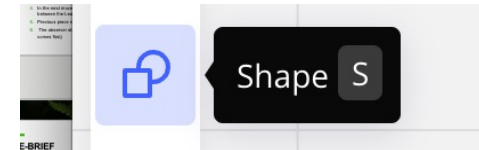
## SUBMIT TO MOODLE AS ONE PDF

- » Take pictures of your design and submit it with 1-2 paragraph text about your role in the game and your personal key take-aways for this exercise.
- » Everything goes in the same PDF to Moodle
- » **Everybody submits individually** – your personal key take aways can't be the same as your group partners! You each write your own.
- » Remember to write **your name and your role in the game** as well as mentioning **the names of your 2 other colleagues and what role they played in the game.**



## SILENT GAME ONLINE

- » Find a group of 3-4 students to do the exercise together
- » You will need a Miro board and an online voice chat – you need to do the exercise together at the same time: you use one Miro board and you are in the same chat
- » Follow the same instructions as the physical game, but instead of physical design material you will use Miro's Shapes. One shape is one building block.



- » The Observer (if you are a group of 4, you can have 2 observers) is the one who will act as only facilitator: making sure the players respect the rules and instructions (especially the silence!). The Observer will time the activities as per the slides.
- » You need between 1,5 and 2 hours for the whole exercise

