Hackathon

Over the last four weeks, you discovered different aspects of the tech world. You completed solo

and group projects, and you developed foundational skills in different disciplines.

Now... what would happen if we combined all your new skills into one great week-long group

sprint?

… Wanna try?!

Let’s do this, Hackathon style - one week to bring a project to life!

The Hackathon

A Hackathon is an intensive sprint to "hack" an idea. You start with an idea that has a lot of

potential, you explore it and test it to see if it has a shot at becoming an actual, valuable project.

So the goal is not to build an actual product - you won’t produce a functional app that works - but

to give life to an idea by making it concrete via a website that describes the product, possibly with

mock-ups, a promotional video, etc. This will allow you to test how receptive the public is to your

idea.

The ideal way to set up a Hackathon team is to have professionals from different backgrounds.

Thus each one brings a different point of view on the same subject, and the project is enriched

thanks to these different views and expertises. It also allows you to move quickly on several

aspects (marketing, design, website...) to present a successful idea at the end of Hackathon.

And so on this last mission, the highlight of the bootcamp, you will slip into the shoes of

specialized experts!

You'll form teams, and each of you will choose a role that you'll play (like a pro!) all along the

Hackathon.

Four roles are to be divided between team members:

- digital marketer

- SEO consultant

- designer

- developer

See the detailed job descriptions for details of each role.

If your group is made of more than 4 people, several people will play the same role. In any case,

to give your project a chance to be completed at the end, each of the roles must be filled at least

once.

A fifth role will be assumed by one of you, in addition to your normal role: the role of project

manager. (see appendix)

Deciding on who will be project manager is not easy. Don't do it for the ego strokes, but rather

discuss amongst yourselves who has the time, the listening skills and the rigour to take on this

extra role. And whatever the choice of group, remember that the project manager has an extra

task that is not easy, so be cooperative and make sure to support him/her!

The starting idea

A Hackathon is usually launched around a particular theme, from which each team will

identify a particular problem and work on an innovative idea to solve it.

The theme chosen for our Hackathon is "Tech For Good". It's a theme that is dear to the

heart of INCO Academy - because true technological innovation is all about serving the

common good!

To facilitate the innovation process, which can be a bit daunting, we have pre-selected an

idea for you:

● The idea is to develop an application that brings together organisations in need of

volunteers, and people who want to get involved but don't know what to do.

=> Many people are willing to give their time to help their community, but do not know

how to do it. The application could help them identify where there are needs and how

to fill them.

You will develop this idea during the Hackathon.

The goal is to imagine the features of the application, and then create a showcase site to

promote your application.

You won't code the application itself, but you will present it as if it already exists in order to

test its potential with the public. So don't worry about the feasibility of your ideas, just think

about what could be useful to the users of your application!

Feel free to add to your showcase site models, drawings, videos or presentation images...

you are only limited by your creativity (and time - you only have a week 😅).

Note that the Hackathon is above all an exercise in creativity. Don't stress about having the

right answer or anticipating the best possible features for your application - that's not the

point!

Innovating is not about having the "right" answer right from the start, but about daring to take

risks by developing new ideas and testing them quickly.

So don't be afraid to come up with ideas that are a bit crazy and ambitious, as long as they

meet the needs of the market!

The steps of the Hackathon

1. Teams start up : Idea selection, role allocation and initial

conversation (during the workshop)

The very first step is to set up the team project.

Together you will agree on each other's role, and have a substantial discussion to facilitate

teamwork.

By exposing your working styles, strengths and weaknesses, and obstacles to teamwork,

you will facilitate empathy between teammates and limit misunderstandings. It will also help

you choose the right project manager.

Discuss as a group on the basis of the following questions:

Working styles

● Are you extroverted or introverted?

(extroverted people get a lot of energy from their interactions with others, while introverted

people "recharge" when they are alone - we can be a bit of both, but we tend to have a

dominant preference)

● Do you prefer to structure everything or to handle details as you go along?

● Do you prefer to work late or do you work better in the morning?

Strengths and weaknesses (technical/non-technical skills)

● What are your strengths?

● What are your weaknesses?

Individual Preferences

● Do you have any personal commitments outside of the project that will affect your

availability for the project?

● Do you have any pet peeves when it comes to working in a team? Things that

frustrate you?

● What do you like when you work with other people?

● What do you hope to get out of this project?

2. Development of the idea (group session)

So you have a starting idea. Now we're going to have to dig deeper into that idea and

imagine concretely what kind of product could emerge from that idea.

This phase is a phase of pure creativity. Imagine how users could use your application. How

would they use it? What problems would the application solve for them? What features

would they need?

Making assumptions about all these questions will help you come up with a first list of

functionalities for your application.

From this list of functionalities, you will be able to start your communication plan: market

research, branding, website....

These functionalities will of course evolve according to the market feedback! That's the point

of testing an idea during a Hackathon: in a few days you present a coherent idea, and the

feedback you receive from potential users helps you improve and refine it.

3. Branding (group session)

Before each of you goes on to tackle the tasks you are responsible for, there is one step left

to do with the entire team: the development of your brand.

What image do you want to convey to your audience? What kind of people do you want to

attract and how do you want to be perceived? What makes you different from other projects

with the same idea?

Agreeing on a brand image is essential - without it you (and especially the designer) won't be

able to create a coherent and striking communication.

4. Build of the website

Now it's time to move on to the execution phase, and build your project from scratch!

Each of you has different responsibilities, but that doesn't mean that you are not committed

to each other's work. For example, the digital marketer is "in charge" on marketing

questions, but she needs the help of others to collect testimonials quickly!

Similarly, the designer is "responsible” for the design, but if he gets feedback from the whole

team on his moodboard, he will be better able to produce a design that really fits the brand.

So you have to take responsibility for yourself, but also be aware of the responsibilities of

others and be able to give them a hand when they need it.

Throughout the bootcamp you have been practicing giving feedback to each other - it's time

to put this into practice systematically! Keep each other moving forward, give constructive

feedback, this is the best way to achieve a rich and well mastered product by the end of the

Hackathon.

5. Pitch your idea (during the workshop)

The climax of your Hackathon is the pitch!

You will "pitch" your project orally for 3 minutes, during the last workshop.

The purpose of the pitch is to convince people of the potential of your application by showing

them that your idea is coherent and mature. Show the functionalities of your application and your

site, explain your choices and how you have used the feedback from the market research to

refine your offer, convince your audience of your idea... in short, show that you are a committed

team that has explored an idea to its maximum!

Note:You have to work on your pitch! Don't do it at the last minute! A good methodology is to do

your pitch seriously every day; either by recording it or by doing it to friends. Collect feedback

and see how you can improve it the next day. After a few days your pitch will become more

structured, and it will really make an impression when you present it with the website.