

Hacks for Setting the Conditions for Service Design

Service Design in Government Conference
March 2019

@wittster, @marieserrano_

Story Time

Taking the time to step back

We often are **caught up in our day-to-day work**, leveraging opportunities and overcoming obstacles to doing service design work as they come up.

Today we would like to take a participatory approach to reflecting on the **implementation of service design in the government**.

Thank you for joining us!



Marie Serrano
Policy Innovation Hub
Ontario Government



Linn Vizard
Independent Service
Designer



Spencer Beacock,
Independent Design
Researcher

Our agenda for the morning

1

Intro and Context Setting **~15 minutes**

2

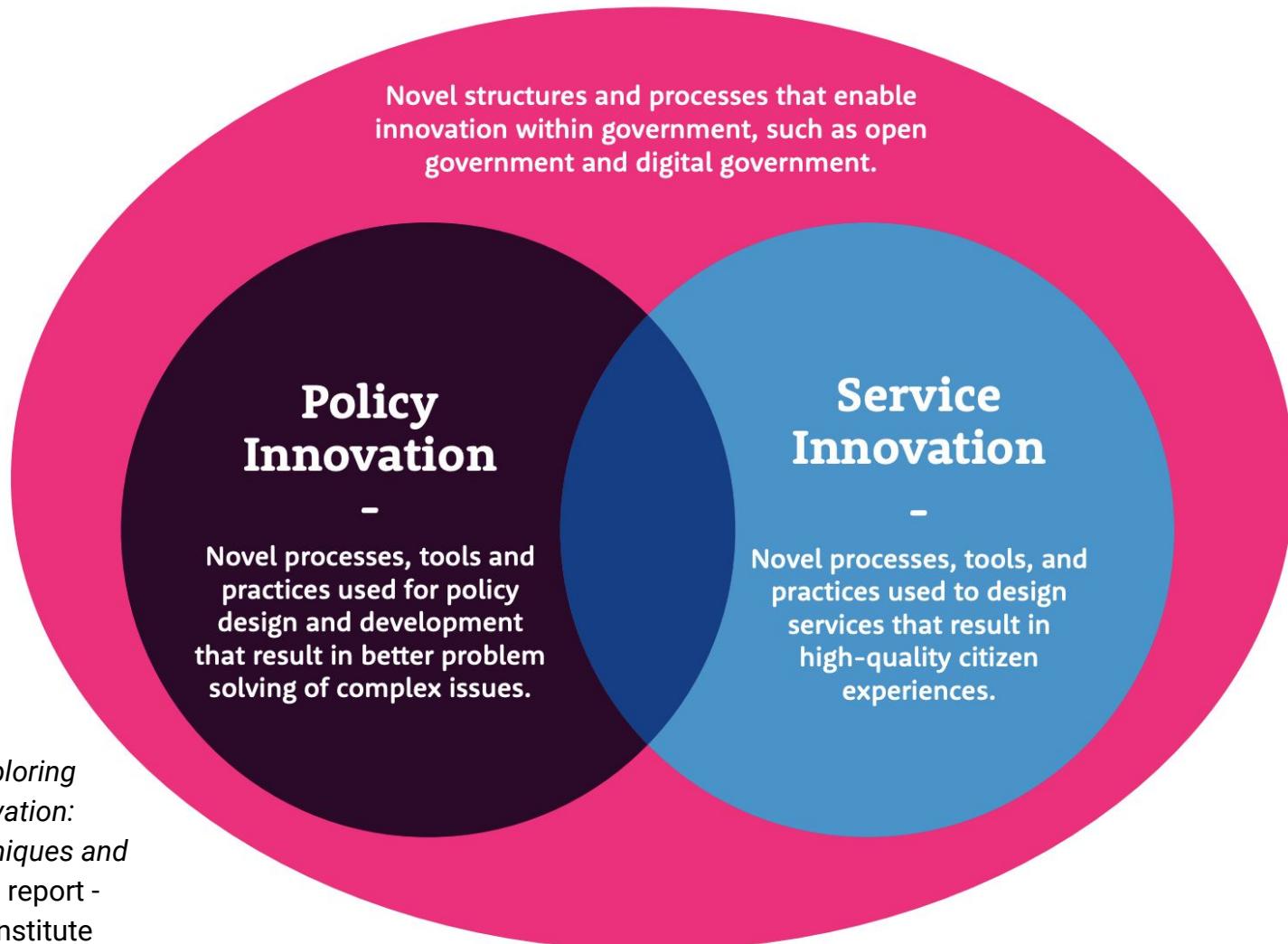
Activity: Hacking Government for Service Design **~45 minutes**

3

Post Up and Reflection **~20 minutes**

Background & Research

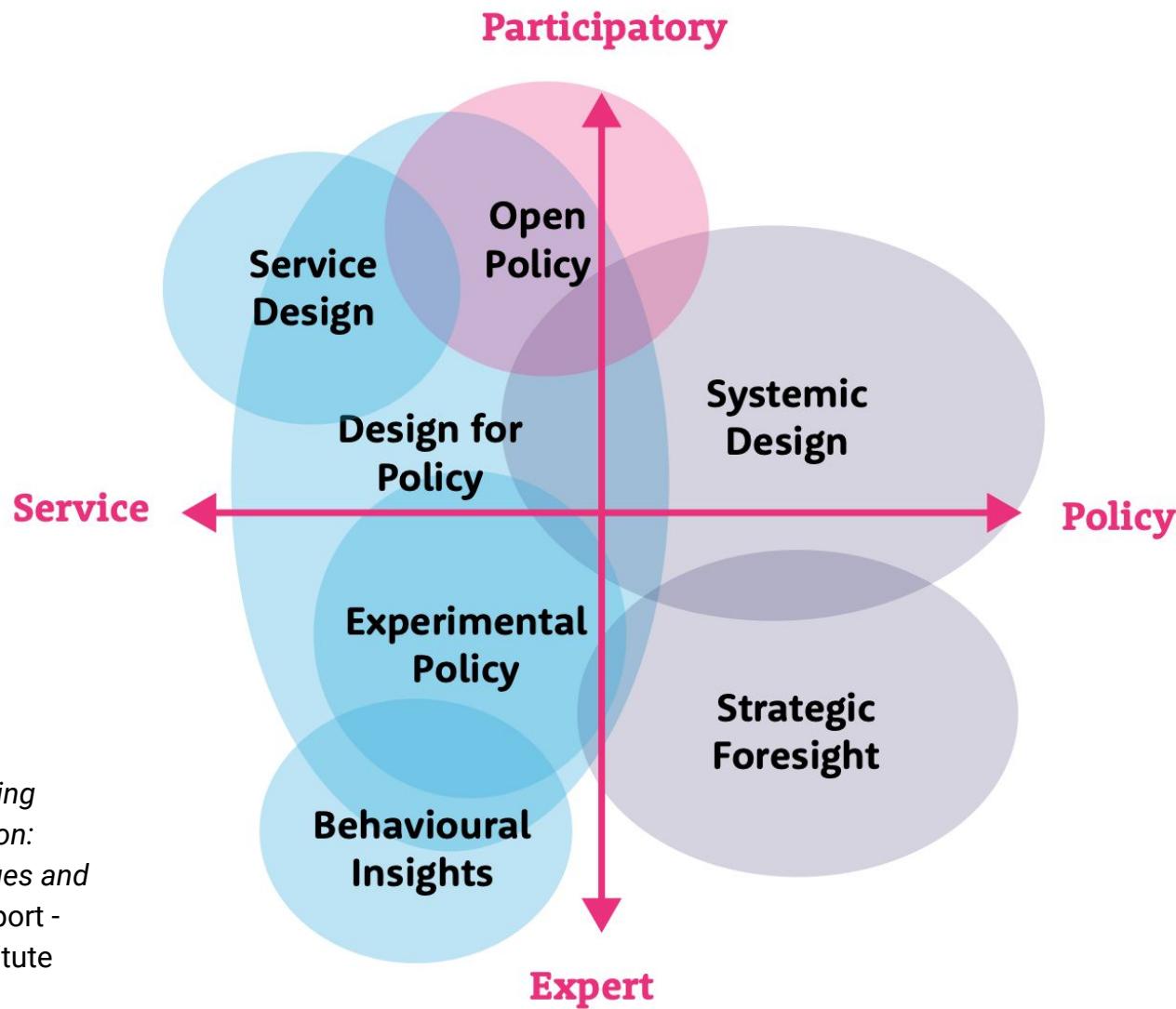
Public sector innovation



Source: Exploring
Policy Innovation:
Tools, techniques and
approaches report -
brookfield institute

@wittster, @marieserrano_

Map of approaches to public sector innovation



Source: Exploring
Policy Innovation:
Tools, techniques and
approaches report -
brookfield institute

@wittster, @marieserrano_

Service design practice in Canadian Government



Service design:

- SDGN Canada chapter founded in 2016
- No formal training available

In government:

- Service Design Canada Public Sector Advisory committee founded in 2018
- Government procures or attracts talents from the private sector
- Representation across levels of government but often tied to digital

Our research question

Given the unique barriers and constraints of a public sector context, what workarounds or hacks are people using to create the conditions for effective service design?

Our research approach

15

Interviewed 15
public servants

3

Across 3 levels of
government

6

In 6 jurisdictions
across Canada

From 346 discrete data points to today

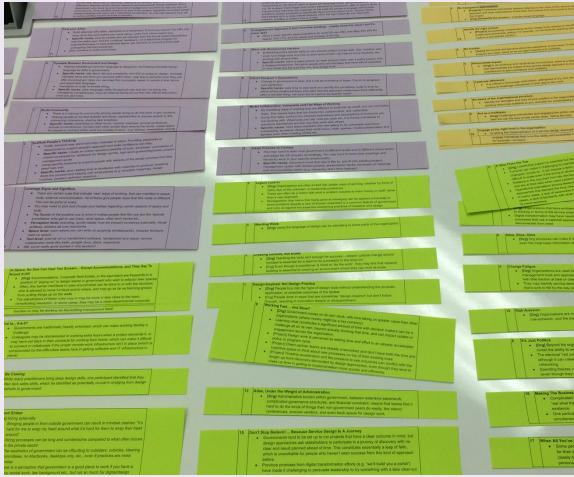
SD In Gov Interview List

Last edit was made 7 days ago by Marie Serrano

Insight

1	Topic	A	B	C	D	E	F
		Initials	Type	Maturity Level	Strata		
1	We're at a show don't tell strategy	KP	hack	high	org		
2	If we brought them to the room, "we're going to work through a process, if it works for you, great." But there's a need to show them who it complements what they do – we're doing different work but it's actually quite complementary. You're doing this stuff that's complementary and together it's a powerhouse.	KP	hack	high	org		
3	With the economists, it was going deep on the question of assumptions – what are the big meaty assumptions that you're making in your forecasts, and what they don't hold, what happens if? It's about being transparent about what are where our work ends and their work begins.	KP	condition	high	org		
4	You can't say a thing about this stuff – you have to embrace all the resources that the org brings in, in terms of data, intelligence, networks.	KP	condition	high	project		
5	The big pivot that was useful to us: we had a client based relationship, they would come to us, we would pitch a process, then do it. What has been much more useful is co-design the process and approach. At the end they understand the logic behind the outcomes, and are open to the process.	RB	barrier	high	org		
6	The "hype": some people buy into the hype of the new tools and approaches and its excitement without substance. It also leads others to get skeptical.	RB	barrier	high	project		
7	The level of adoption – People most excited to do adopt service design are too junior in the organization, and see themselves as more of a facilitator.	RB	barrier	high	org		
8	When we first started clients were asking for journey maps, personas, etc. Ministry partners were focused on the products rather than driving culture change or delivering change to existing products.	RB	barrier	high	project		
9	The "hype": some people buy into the hype of the new tools and approaches and its excitement without substance. It also leads others to get skeptical.	RB	barrier	high	org		
10	The level of adoption – People most excited to do adopt service design were too junior in the organization, and see themselves as more of a facilitator.	RB	barrier	high	org		
11	We've been trying to target the right level (not too high-not too low), we've been experimenting with manager and director level. ADM is too high.	RB	barrier	high	project		
12	All our trainings, we had a more junior crowd. We need to help them feel comfortable to do the work, and then move up to the director level, and then the manager level.	RB	barrier	high	project		
13	Perception of added inefficiency – early on I was picking up the perception from clients that we were potentially adding to much additional time or extra steps on what was a pretty hectic schedule in their mind.	RB	barrier	high	project		
14	Risk: more anxiety about what it is we have to offer and maintain firm-to-firm connections about it.	RB	barrier	high	project		

+ Interview list Synthesis [Master] Synthesis [Barriers sb] Synthesis [Hacks lv] Synthesis [conditions]

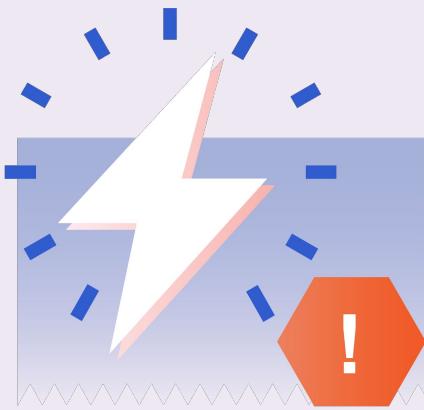


346 data points
from the
interviews

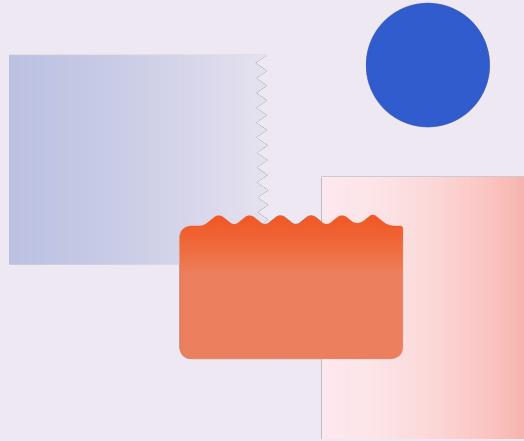
Categorized
data points and
applied lenses

Mapped links
and impacts

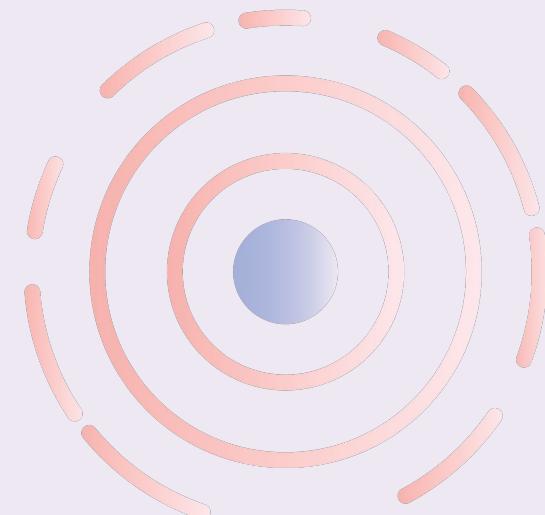
Our synthesis outputs



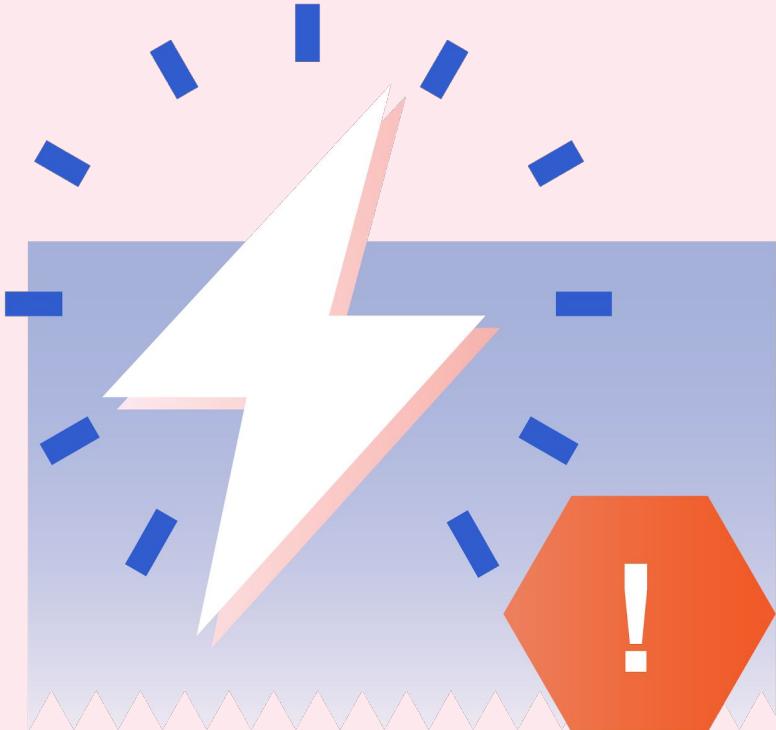
Barriers



Hacks



Signals



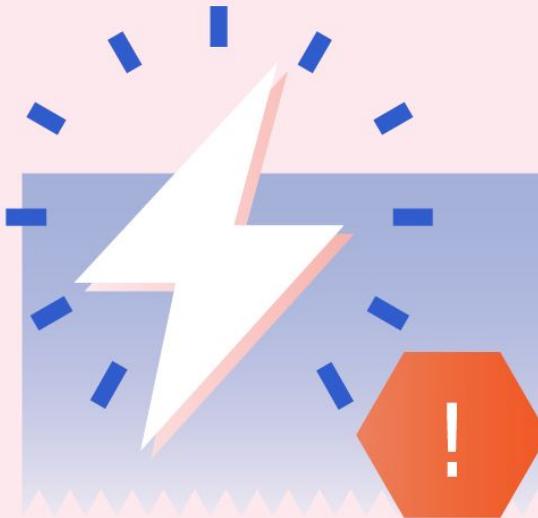
Barriers

Barriers are organizational **features** in terms of people, culture, and infrastructure **that can stand in the way of making service design work in government.**

Stand Up If...

BARRIER 2

Prime Before You Paint



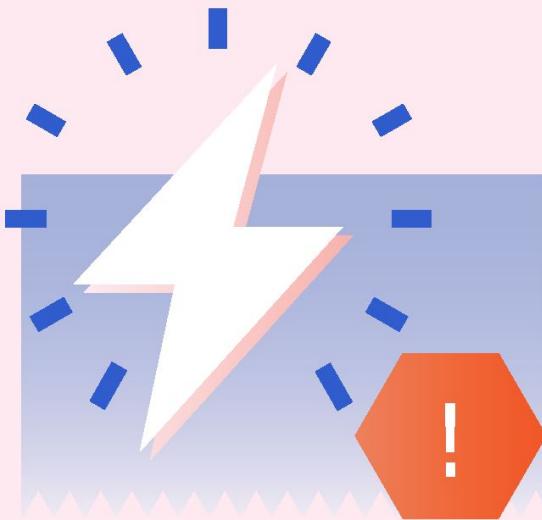
The barrier: Practitioners often find that their host organizations aren't ready for their ways of working. Culture change and education become crucial.

Potential impact: They need to spend valuable time 'merely' training their colleagues, and may not have a lot to show in terms of outcomes/impact.

"We're not here to train, we're here to do the work, but to scale we have to be able to build capacity."

BARRIER 4

Legacy Lock-In



The barrier: Organizations are often locked into certain ways of working, through force of habit, fear of the unknown, or leadership preference.

Potential impact: There can be a notion that what a problem requires is more money or staff, rather than a new approach.

"When people at the top have a way they like to work that tends to trickle down, like the 'important people' being paper based."

BARRIER 6

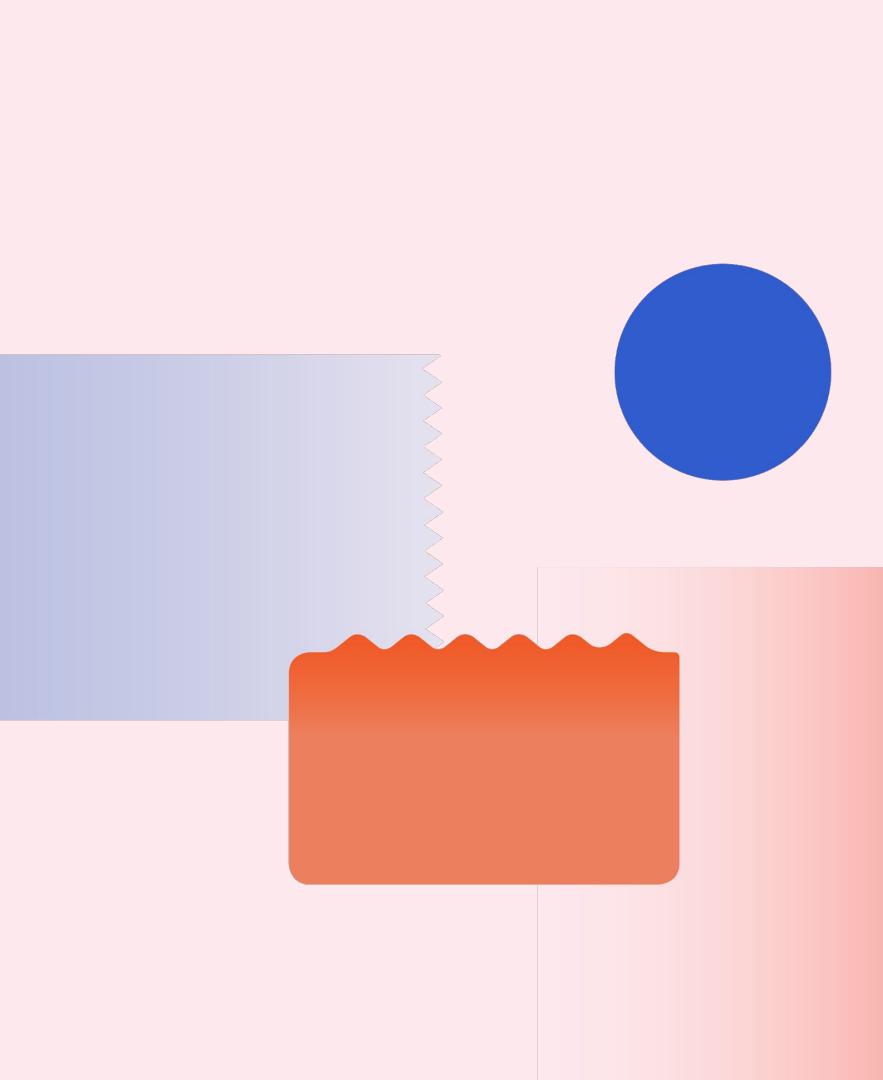
Service Design David vs. Corporate Real Estate Goliath



The barrier: Moving furniture, putting things on the walls, and even noise levels may be restricted. Facilities management may be a cross-department corporate function or even work for the building management itself (and therefore outside of government!).

Potential impact: Failing to find adequate space may make design approaches appear awkward or unpolished with stakeholders, and outside hires may be demoralized by the rigid aesthetics of government.

"We're talking now of trying to re-org the space. There are weird barriers. For the most part the problem is the building management: there are certain rules about who can move things and how they can be moved."



Hacks

Hacks are **formal and informal workarounds** for barriers that you face in your work, teams, or organizations.

"Every Friday we open the door to city staff to come in and meet us or share a problem."

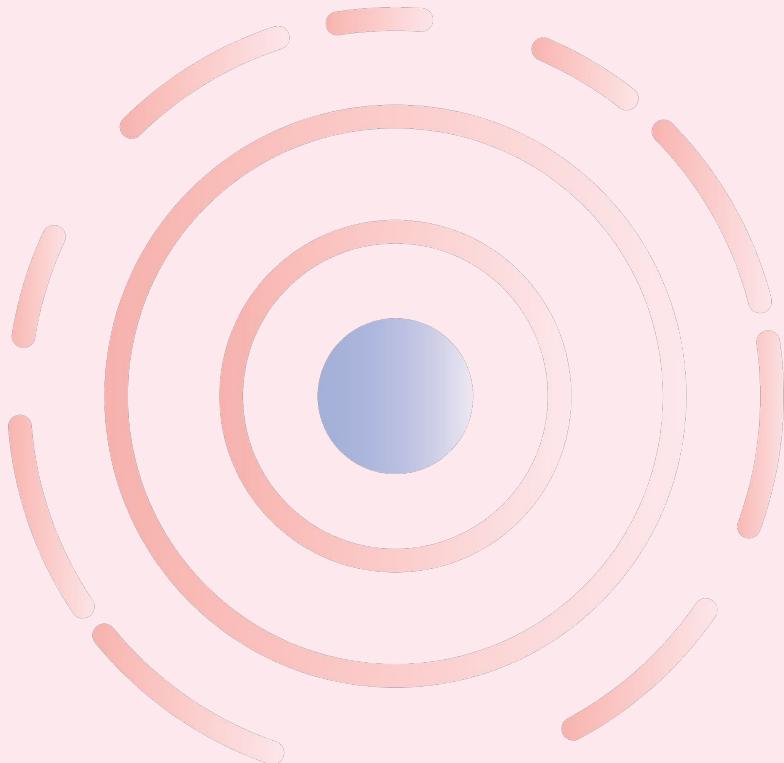
Director, Civic Innovation Lab

"Build in time for retrospectives where project partners articulate how the approach made them think differently."

**Senior Service Designer,
Provincial Government**

"We didn't have a dedicated space and weren't able to tuck things away so we had a trolley with all the key tools and materials for everyone to use (e.g., markers, sticky notes, ...)."

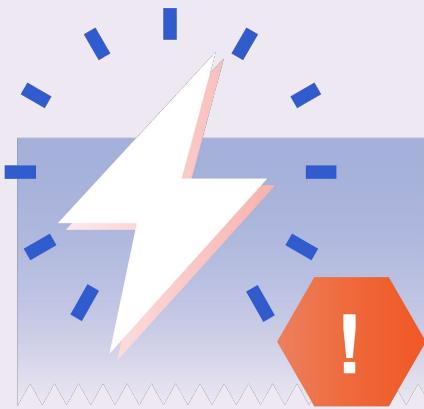
Policy Resident, Provincial Government



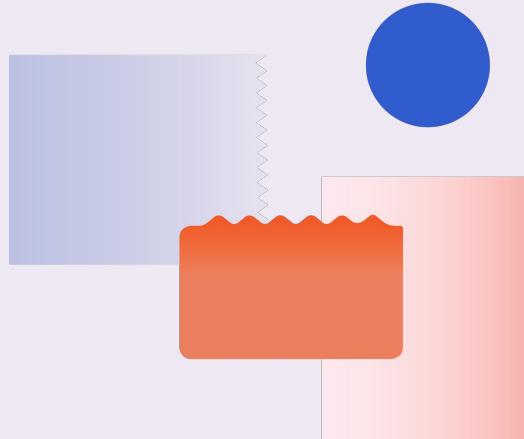
Signals

Success signals are **qualitative indicators that your hacks are working**. You might think of them as conditions for service design growth.

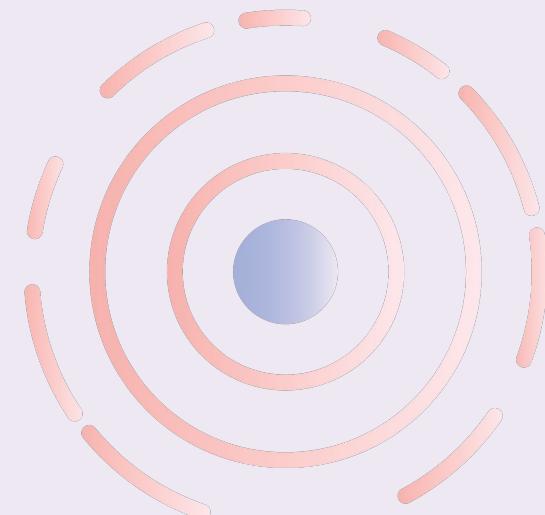
Our synthesis outputs



Barriers



Hacks



Signals

**Today, we would like you
to add to this research!**

Our vision

A collaborative library of workarounds from
public sector folks around the world.

Activity Time

Activity ground rules

1

Bring your experiences and perspectives to the table.

2

Create space for folks with all levels of experience to participate.

3

Comiserating is good, constructive ideation is better!

Meet your team!

5 minutes

Get into teams of 3-4 at your table.

Introduce yourselves.

Read your Mission card!

@wittster, @marieserrano_

Your mission

Accelerate the adoption of service design

Your goal is to accelerate the adoption of service design throughout the government. You aim to facilitate a culture change, in part by navigating the org chart and getting buy-in at the right levels. You need to find the right ways for service design to live alongside existing practices.

These are signals that you are moving in the right direction:

- An embedded approach
- Leadership advocacy
- An inclusive practice
- Organizational trailblazers
- Fostered difference
- Awareness of the organizational structure
- Internal and external alliances

Meet your barriers!

15 minutes

Draw your barriers cards.

These are barriers to your team's mission!

Discuss your personal experiences with these barriers.

BARRIER 1

Talking the Talk Without Walking the Walk



The barrier: Organizations sometimes buy into the hype of design tools without understanding them fully.

Potential impact: Work may be "design-inspired, but it can slide into innovation theatre and ultimately disappointment."

Hacks for Setting the Conditions for Service Design

You have encountered a barrier!

Create your hack!

25 minutes

Generate at least one hack per barrier.

Base hacks on your past experience/workarounds you have used. Remember to Be Specific!

Create your own hack

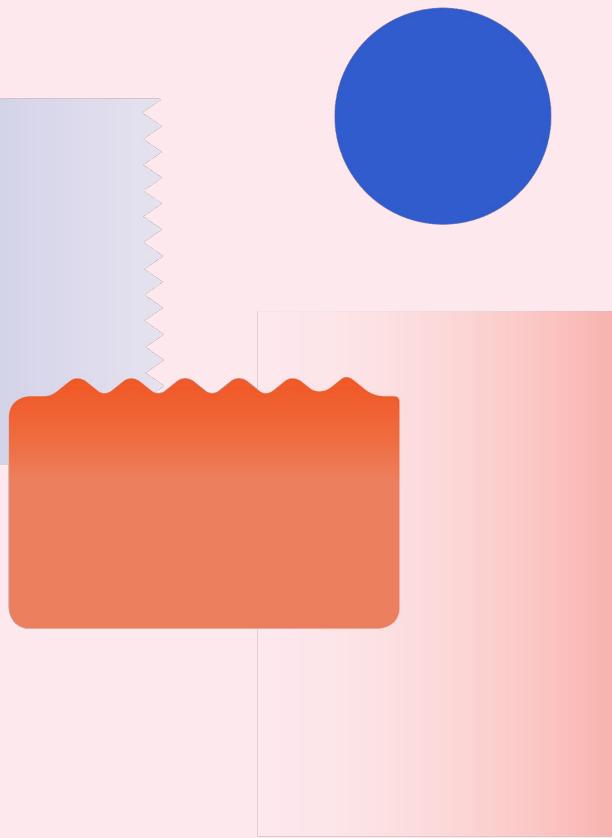
BARRIER
What barrier does your hack address?

HACK NAME
Give your hack a name.

DESCRIPTION
Describe your hack and how it works in 1-2 sentences.

VALUE
Briefly explain how the hack's value to the organization/work/team.

Hacks for Setting
the Conditions for Service Design



Key to a good hack

- **Formal and informal workarounds** for barriers that you face (i.e., strategies, solutions).
- **Granular and specific** tactics.
- Innovation that might be in the moment, but are **repeatable** and **reusable**.

Create your own hack

BARRIER

What barrier does your hack address?

Air Gapped Organizations

HACK NAME

Give your hack a name.

A community of practice

DESCRIPTION

Describe your hack and how it works in 1-2 sentences.

Build a community of practice by facilitating a space where individuals can share success stories with the wider group through a monthly cross government meetup.

VALUE

Briefly explain how the hack's value to the organization/work/team.

Reduces isolation and allows people to learn from each other and get inspired..

Create your own hack

BARRIER

What barrier does your hack address?

Service Design David vs. Corporate Real Estate Goliath

HACK NAME

Give your hack a name.

Trolley Toolkit

DESCRIPTION

Describe your hack and how it works in 1-2 sentences.

A portable trolley on wheels with all the necessary service design materials like post-its, sharpies, paper.

VALUE

Briefly explain how the hack's value to the organization/work/team.

A flexible solution for teams who may not have dedicated space or storage - can be tucked away and brought out as needed, compact use of space.

Create your hack!

25 minutes

Generate at least one hack per barrier.

Base hacks on your past experience/workarounds you have used. Remember to Be Specific!

Tip: if you need inspiration, the list of hack categories is available.

Create your own hack

BARRIER
What barrier does your hack address?
Air Gapped organizations

HACK NAME
Give your hack a name.
A community of practice

DESCRIPTION
Describe your hack and how it works in 1-2 sentences.
Build a community of practice by facilitating a space where individuals can share success stories with the wider group.

VALUE
Briefly explain how the hack's value to the organization/work/team.
Reduces isolation and allows people to learn from each other and get inspired.

Hacks for Setting
the Conditions for Service Design

Upheaval!

Open your upheaval envelope.

- Do your hacks still work?
- Can you tweak them? Do you need to generate new ones?
- Capture any thoughts or edits on post-its!

UPHEAVAL

Small team!

Your team is a team of 2: an analyst and a service designer. Your director is supportive, but does not always distinguish service design from other digital innovation approaches.

Look at your hacks, and identify if any would need to change with a reduced team.

Hacks for Setting the Conditions for Service Design

Hacks for Setting the Conditions for Service Design

There was an upheaval.

Hack collection

- Once you're done, we'll come collect your hacks.
- Don't forget to put which barrier it addresses!

The image shows a 4x3 grid of identical 'Create your own hack' cards. Each card has a light orange header and a white body. The fields are labeled as follows:

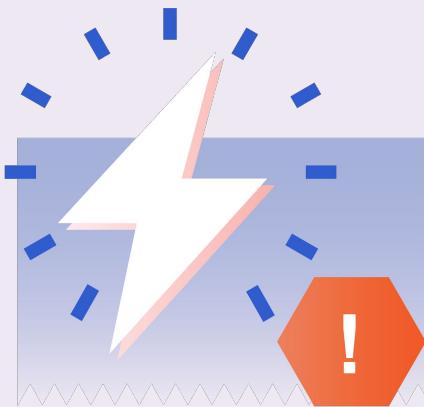
- HACK NAME:** A text input field.
- DESCRIPTION:** A text input field.
- BARRIER:** A text input field.
- VALUE:** A text input field.
- Hacks for Service Design:** A note at the bottom of each card.

The cards are arranged in a grid:

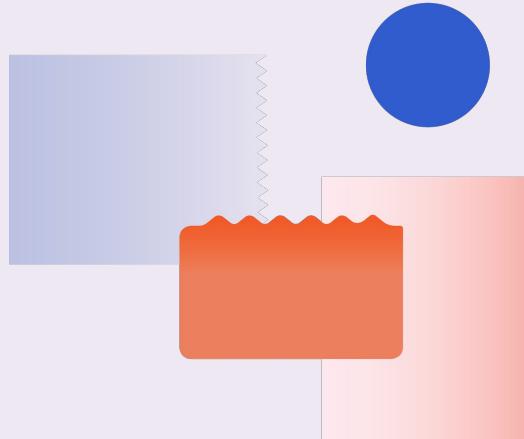
- Row 1: Card 1 (orange), Card 2 (orange), Card 3 (orange).
- Row 2: Card 4 (light pink), Card 5 (light pink), Card 6 (light pink).
- Row 3: Card 7 (orange), Card 8 (orange), Card 9 (orange).
- Row 4: Card 10 (light pink), Card 11 (light pink), Card 12 (light pink).

Reflection and Discussion

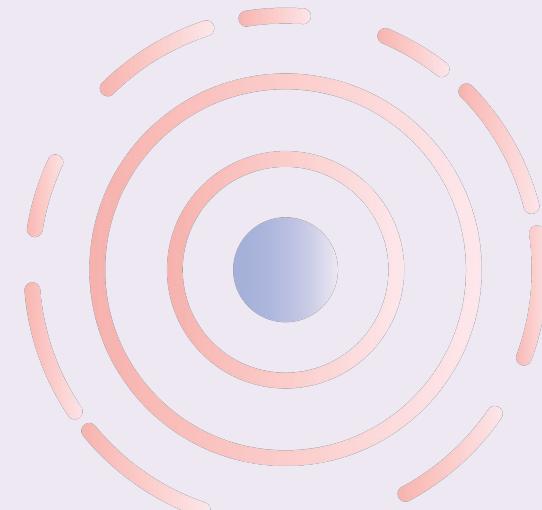
Our synthesis outputs



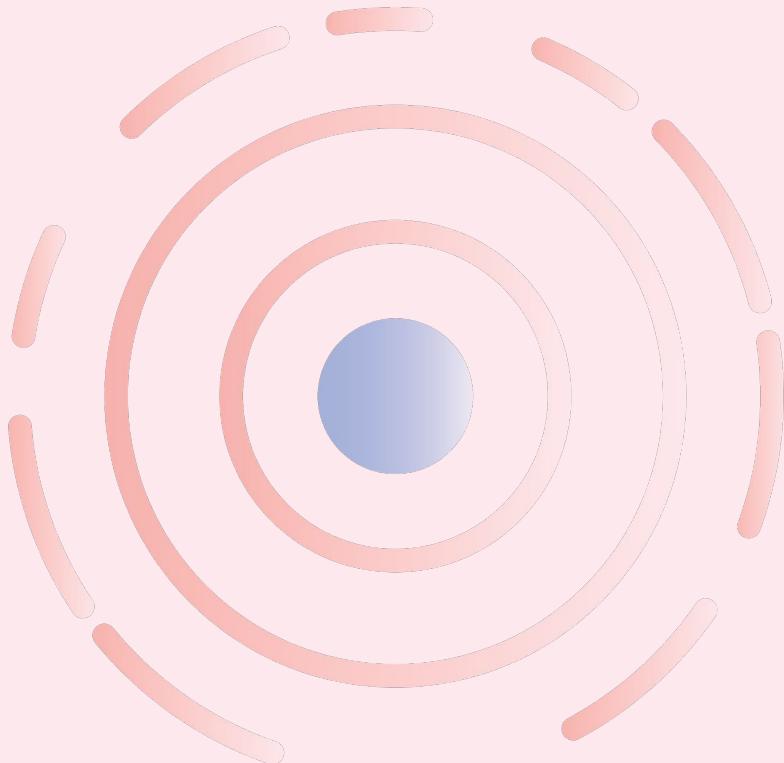
20 Barriers



~75 Hacks



15 Signals



Signals

Success signals are **qualitative indicators that your hacks are working**. You might think of them as conditions for service design growth.

Some of the signals that service design is working

Embed the Practice in the Work	Accelerate the adoption in the Organization	Establish and enable the team
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrated impact• Managerial engagement• A safe environment• Eroded silos• Evaluated opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An embedded approach• Leadership advocacy• An inclusive practice• Organizational trailblazers• Fostered difference• Awareness of the organizational structure• Internal and external alliances	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In house capacity• Humility in the practice• Dedicated physical space• A safe environment• Awareness of the organizational structure

Share Back

- **What surprised you in this session?**
- **What is your key takeaway?**
- **How do you see yourself using what you interacted with?**

Our next steps

- Compiling and **sharing back all outputs**
- Adding hacks to the 'library'
- Creating a **map** of the outputs

<http://october.systems/sdingov2019>

The screenshot shows a Google Sheets document with the following table structure:

Barrier Addressed	Hack Name	Hack Description	Hack Category
1. Barrier Addressed	Drop-in open office hours.	"Every Friday we open the door to city staff to come in and meet us or share a problem."	Build Community to Connect Champions
2. Air-Gapped Organizations	High-level guides/playbooks, Workbook for design sprints	Director, Civic Innovation Lab The BC Government has issued their downloadable, openly-available Service Design Playbook	Reduce Isolation and Expose People to Service Design
3.		"The Alberta Health Services Lab created a workbook that has all the boxes you need to fill as part of a design sprint – you still need facilitation, but it's a nice takeaway."	Find Ways to Scaffold People's Thinking and Make Design Accessible
2. Prime Before You Paint	2-hour executive coaching session		
4.			
7. No Time for Working Quickly	Translated job posts		
5. 17. Hook Line and Sinker	Project retrospective		
6.			
4. Legacy Lock-in	Show vulnerability of a team, even with collaboration and people like Assistant Deputies		
7.			
8. Never Tell Me The Odds	Design Researcher		

- PDF takeaway booklet - summary of all content from our research so far
- Collaborative 'hacks library' spreadsheet
- PDFs of barrier cards and category sheets

Your mission - should you choose to accept it!



Take a barrier card with you, and during the conference **find someone** (who was not in this session) who has experienced that barrier.

Ask them for their hacks!

Thank you to our research participants!

Dana Patton

Shannah Segal

Terry Costantino

Debra Churchill

Kim Monastyrskyj

Sameer Vasta

Chris Govias

Marlies van Dijk

Deanna Young

Keren Perla

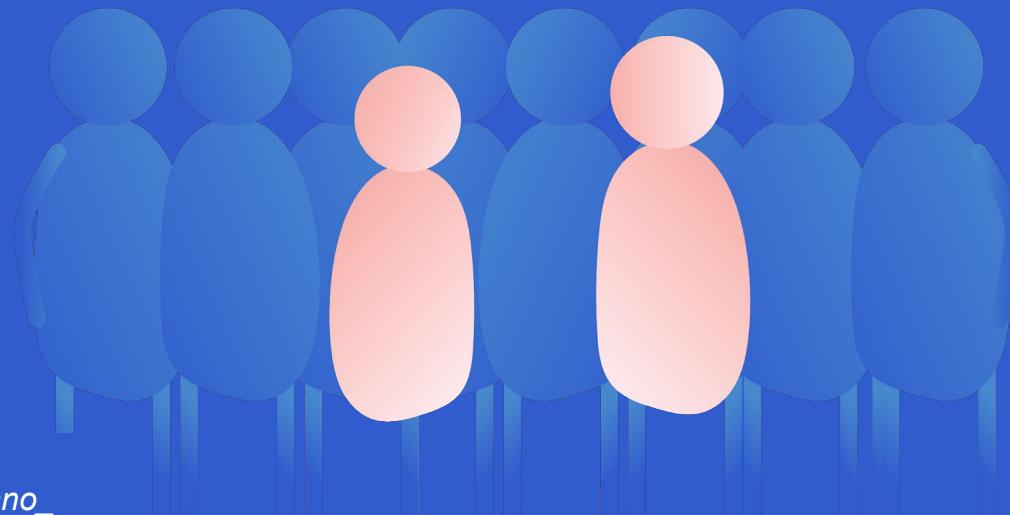
Richard Liebrecht

Paula Kwan

Ryan Hum

Ryan Boyd

Mithula Naik



Thank you!



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