

DESIGN

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INSPIRING NEW

Possibilities

YOUNG
PEOPLE
WORK



AISAH NASEEM,
JUNIOR INNOVATION CONSULTANT,
IBM,
LONDON.

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The virtual work experience toolkit is based on 6 key principles:



1. Live experience led by facilitators not just an online learning platform



2. Bite-sized and varied sessions



3. Using **virtual collaboration tools and technology** to replicate the working environment



4. Market relevant skills and employability based work experiences



5. Blended format of varied **interactive** skilling sessions and guided **independent** activities



6. Dialogue and discourse through facilitation, digital **interaction and mentorship**

DESIGNING A PROGRAMME

When designing a programme it is key to research the needs of your users to ensure applicability. Programme design should be dependent upon this research.

RESEARCH

- Evaluate previous work experience programmes and internal material to identify areas to leverage
- Review external sources
- Conduct User Research
 - Surveys, focus groups, 1:1s
 - Areas of research: technology & tools, preferred programme structures, topic interests, preferred delivery methods etc.

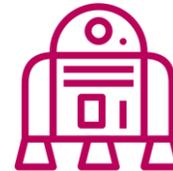


PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

- Programme duration
- Session duration
- Time of day
- Rest breaks
- Offline vs. online working
- No. of attendees

TECHNOLOGY & TOOLS

- Hardware requirements to participate e.g. laptops vs. smartphones
- Connectivity requirements to participate e.g. Wi-Fi dongles
- Virtual tools and software to support delivery and the complexity of their set-up

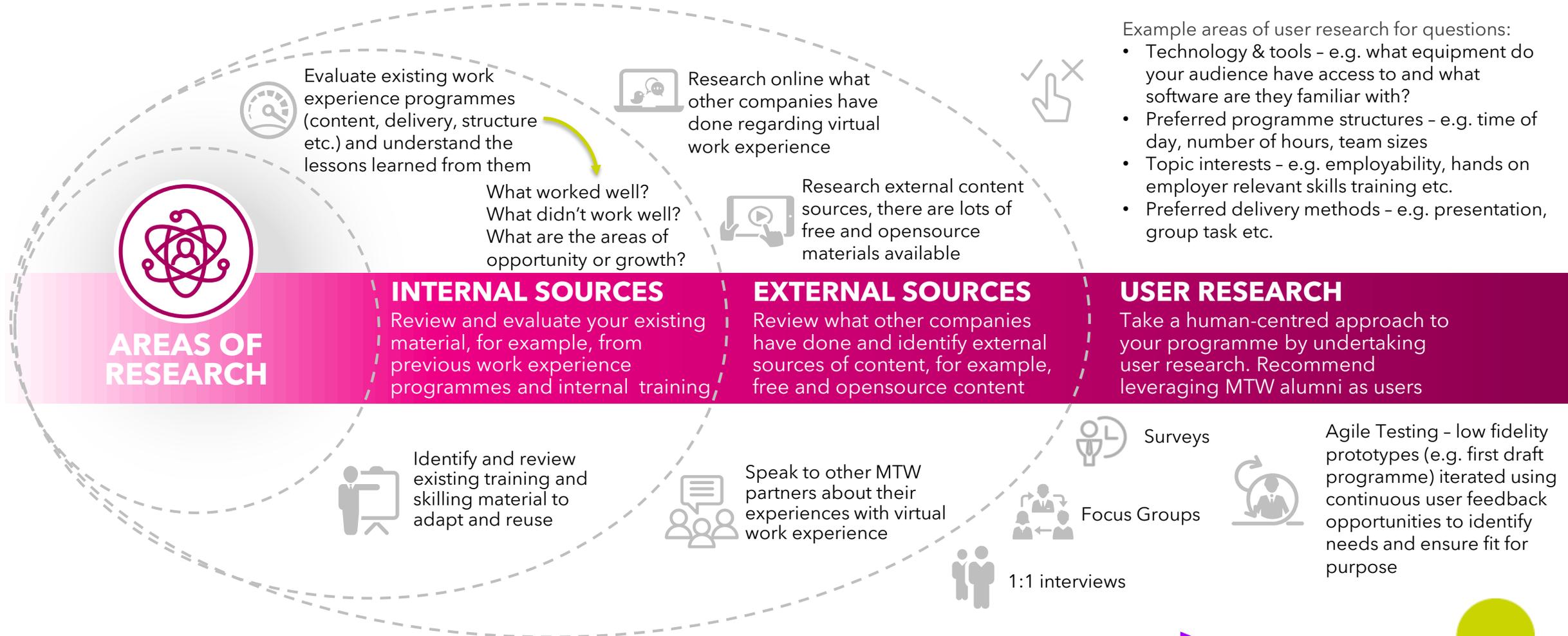


PROGRAMME OUTLINE

- Combine considerations about objectives, topics to be covered, previous work experience programmes, user research, facilitator knowledge & availability, technology restrictions etc. to [create an outline for the programme](#) with session information for each part of the programme

RESEARCH

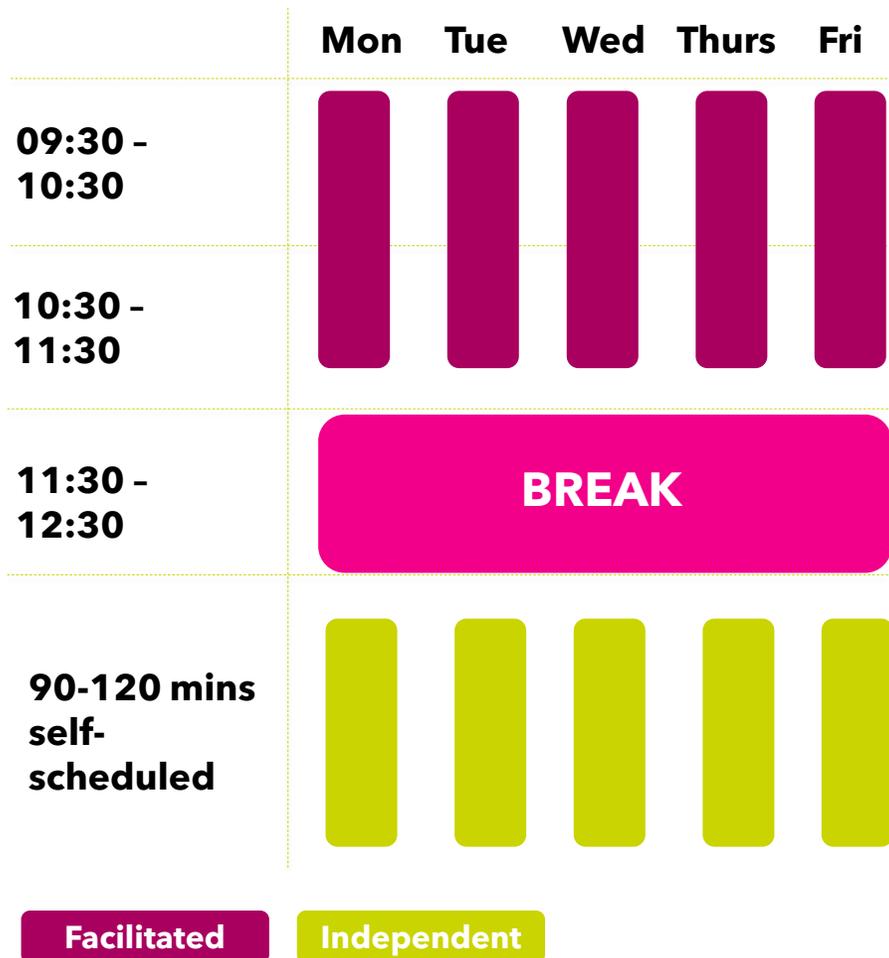
Research will help to ensure your virtual work experience programme is relevant, human-centred and innovative.



- Example areas of user research for questions:
- Technology & tools - e.g. what equipment do your audience have access to and what software are they familiar with?
 - Preferred programme structures - e.g. time of day, number of hours, team sizes
 - Topic interests - e.g. employability, hands on employer relevant skills training etc.
 - Preferred delivery methods - e.g. presentation, group task etc.

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

Consider the following factors when structuring the programme, bearing in mind the virtual set up and the audience:



1. Programme Duration

5 consecutive days is short enough to maintain engagement and ensure participant retention whilst providing sufficient time for meaningful experience (see example), 2 weeks may require further engagement strategies or an alternative structure could be 1 day a week over a longer period.

2. Session Duration

90-120 minutes of multiple shorter facilitated sessions will keep participants engaged and allow meaningful content to be covered. Consider whether you run these sessions as a block (see example) or a mixed schedule combining online and offline throughout the programme

3. Time of Day

Young people are often more energised and focused in the morning, but too early may result in reduced attendance. Facilitator availability may also determine timing.

4. Rest Break

Encourage attendees to take regular breaks, suggested at least every 2 hours, to help replenish their energy and concentration levels.

5. Offline working

Offline working enables the young people to complete tasks around their own schedules (see example). Multiple short 30-45 minute tasks provides flexibility.

6. Attendees

Consider how many young people can take part before the quality of delivery through a virtual tool is compromised, 10 - 20 is recommended for an interactive programme.

N.B.: Real timetable example available in [Appendix 5: Case Study: Accenture's Pilot](#)

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EQUIPMENT & DIGITAL TOOLS

Hosting a work experience programme virtually could lead to digital exclusion, therefore identifying equipment requirements and digital tools to potentially be used in the programme is key.



Hardware Considerations

- Participants may need to be provided with hardware to enable the same starting position, as some young people may not own equipment or their equipment may be outdated
- Your organisation may choose to 'gift' hardware or lend it
- Most appropriate devices will depend on the programme requirements
- It is important to consider the software you will be utilising when selecting a device i.e. compatibility



Connectivity Considerations

- Key requirement for a new virtual programme is the ability for participants to connect to the internet
- Many participants may have home broadband, but it may not be suitable to support the level of online participation required (i.e. insufficient speed etc.)
- A survey could identify those with connectivity issues
- To ensure a fair opportunity to participate, all participants could be provided with the same connectivity e.g. a Wi-Fi dongle



Software Considerations

- A variety of software will be required by participants - ranging from communication tools to feedback and polling
- Consider both free and paid for options - some software requires large licencing costs
- You can make use of free trials and free, limited, versions of software e.g. MS Teams, Zoom etc.

N.B.: Follow the title hyperlinks for more detail on each section.