

# Testing service concepts.

## SERVICE STAGING & ROLE PLAYING

Service Staging and Service Roleplaying are used to develop and test service concepts. The reality-based testing of the service process enables the parties to better position themselves in a 'near real' service delivery situation and to test their situation through role play.

Service Staging and Role Playing are a kind of theatre rehearsal of the service in near 'real life' surroundings.

Service staging and service role-playing employ theatrical techniques to physically act out the service experience and find opportunities to improve it. Encouraging employees to play the role of the customer and vice versa can elicit emotional insights to which are important in designing services. Applying these methods to an experience design project can help stakeholders to develop a stronger empathy with the target audience and potentially result in a more complete adoption of the proposed solution.

Service Roleplaying is often conducted as a final step before launching the service on the market. By the time you use roleplaying, it's quite likely that you will have already checked for any service inconsistencies and breakdowns, tested the prototype in the real environment and examined the impact of external factors on its delivery.

In a Service Roleplaying exercise, teams will explore, reflect and implement new ideas and work through all the documentation generated while fine-tune all the service deliverables. This process is often used as the last stage prior to full launch, to train the service provider and their staff. In adopting this approach, the design team can be sure it will work well, in delivery.

### How to perform Service Staging

The starting point for a Service Staging & Role Playing process is to develop a visual representation of your service environment, which should also include relevant props. which everyone can orientate around. Initially, the project team should present a service scene to be analysed. For a larger project, several scenes by different actors could be played to identify and analyse several interpretations and viewpoints. The number of actors depends on the complexity of the scene to be played.

It is then customary to play the scene out in more detail, with the remaining team members observing, analysing and commenting on the course of action. The individual contributions should be recorded in writing. This process is often repeated to make suggestions for further improvements. The facilitator can also stop the role play by means of a fictional "remote control" to enable the design team to comment on any issues they see.

Depending on the scope and focus of the staging exercise, team members can be both actors and observers.

