FolksLab

Toolkit

"The people's laboratory"

Generating creative solutions quickly when you need to get your improvement project going

#FolksLab

DIGITAL TOOLKIT:
Running a FolksLab

What is a FolksLab?

A FolksLab, or people's laboratory, is a creative design and problem-solving technique that aims to identify new solutions to existing challenges.

Often we look at challenges from our own personal point of view. But if we look at generating solutions in more creative ways it can assist us to create new ideas and solutions.

A creative group approach offers us a new perspective to a situation when we think we have exhausted all the possibilities.

The idea behind FolksLab workshops is that 'the sum of the expertise of the people in the audience is greater than the sum of the expertise of the people on the stage'.

Therefore, there are no presentations or formal input in a FolksLab workshop. Rather, there will be a guided process to enable you to have the best possible conversation with people who share similar interests and a curiosity to solve a problem.

This allows people across different organisations, job roles and those without a work-based role to engage in finding a solution more easily, overcoming barriers like organisation or role-specific vocabulary or acronyms.

A FolksLab seeks to bring different approaches to problem-solving and sharing, providing a creative opportunity for participants to:

1. Discuss topics that they are passionate about
2. Share their learning and to learn from others

3. Generate some new improvement ideas and visual representations
4. Prototype a design that they can take back to their own organisation to improve health and care for local people.

The purpose of the FolksLab is to give participants space to share and understand a problem, generate multiple ideas to solve the problem and undertake a rapid prototype design, build and feedback exercise using a range of creative materials supplied.

Building a 3D prototype helps groups to picture the solution they are designing, overcome misconceptions to ensure everyone has the same vision of the solution, and gives the rest of the groups something tangible to engage with and feed back on.

What can a FolksLab be used for?

There are a number of ways that you can use the FolksLab approach to help you with your transformational change including:

1. As a problem solving tool
2. To generate ideas to solve a recurring problem
3. To promote new ways of thinking about solutions generation
4. As a tool to help teams overcome barriers
5. To help you take another direction and generate ideas when you are stuck
6. To get projects off the ground quickly
7. To overcome vocabulary variations in multidisciplinary project teams.

An outline of the FolksLab process

FolksLab is a rapid ideation and design process designed to generate lots of ideas then condense down to one potential solution to quickly build upon.

Starting in pairs the process builds the group size until all participants are involved together.

Stage A - Discover
Working in pairs, participants take time to explain, understand and define the problem they are trying to solve and define a problem statement.

Stage B - Ideate
Participants are asked to generate several possible alternatives to resolve the problem. The ideas are shared and a single solution, per table, decided on.

Stage C - Prototype and test
Using modelling materials provided, participants work together to build a 3D model representation of the solution. The idea and solution are then shared with another table and positive and constructive feedback given.

What do I need to run a FolksLab?

Workshop Leader
To make the workshop successful, you will need to appoint a workshop leader on the day to run the FolksLab workshop. A good choice for a workshop leader would be an experienced facilitator, an improvement leader or a change agent as they will have developed the skills around managing workshops.

Venue
You will need to book a suitable venue, large enough to allow the number of invited participants invited to move around cabaret style tables easily.

Theme
You will need to tell participants the subject of the FolksLab you are running. You may be addressing a single issue, have a number of themes running concurrently or be leaving it open for all participants to bring their own problem with them.

Toolkit
We have assembled a toolkit containing all the resources and information you need to run a local FolksLab:

1. Learning objectives
2. Marketing materials
3. List of suggested creative materials to use
4. PowerPoint presentation and facilitator guide
5. Participation worksheet
6. Evaluation template
7. Next steps
8. Accreditation.

This toolkit will give you all the knowledge and resources required to run your own local FolksLab. For a full copy of the toolkit zip file, please email england.si-mooc@nhs.net

1. Learning objectives
By the end of the session participants will have:
1. Generated lots of creative solutions for an identified improvement problem
2. Created a high-level prototype for one solution
3. Received feedback from others on their prototype
4. Given feedback to other on their prototype
5. Considered the next steps from their learning.

2. Marketing materials
To help you advertise or construct invites to your event you can use and modify the supplied template.

1. Open the document 'FolksLab Toolkit Promotion postcard.ppt' supplied on request
2. Add your event details
3. Save as a PDF
4. Print or email to potential participants.

3. Promoting
Let us know when your event is and we will help promote it, just email us at england.si-mooc@nhs.net

You can also use the hashtag #FolksLab to promote your event via Twitter.

4. List of suggested creative materials to use
In order for participants to create their prototypes you will need to provide some creative materials for them to use. You can use anything you have to hand, but the toolkit includes a list of items a useful collection might include.

5. PowerPoint presentation
A presentation you can use during the day including PowerPoint timings is included in the toolkit 'FolksLab Toolkit Presentation.ppt'. This covers an introduction to the day and the philosophy, it also guides participants through the process from start to finish.

6. Facilitator guide
The PowerPoint presentation includes all the notes you will need to help you understand and run your event.

7. Participation worksheet
Print out a copy of the worksheet 'FolksLab Toolkit Participants Worksheet.ppt' for each participant. They will complete them on the day.

8. Evaluation template
We have created a draft survey or feedback sheet you can use to get feedback about your day from your participants.

9. Next steps
It is a good idea to think in advance how you will progress after the event. What will happen to the prototypes? How will you take the ideas forward? How will you share progress with the participants later on? You can then share your plans with participants before they finish.

10. Accreditation
Participants of your local FolksLab session can be awarded one Continuing Professional Development (CPD) point for each hour they participate in the FolksLab workshop. CPD points are a way for professionals to demonstrate that they are continuing to develop and enhance their abilities.

This session has been evaluated by The CPD Certification Service, the leading independent CPD accreditation institution operating across industry sectors.

To receive a CPD Certificate for each of your participants the facilitator should:

1. Complete and return the CPD Application Form 'FolksLab Toolkit CPD Application Form.doc'
2. Send the CPD application form and a copy of all participants' evaluation sheets to england.si-mooc@nhs.net

Request full toolkit
To receive a copy of the full toolkit with the following attachments:

1. Learning objectives
2. Marketing materials
3. List of suggested creative materials to use
4. PowerPoint presentation & facilitator guide
5. Participation worksheet
6. Evaluation template
7. CPD accreditation application form

Please email england.si-mooc@nhs.net

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Appendix A: FolksLab in practice
Here are some examples of previous FolksLabs in action:

Twitter Storifies:
https://storify.com/CherylAGuest/folkslab-2015

https://storify.com/CherylAGuest/folkslab

https://storify.com/CherylAGuest/folkslab2015-quality2015-23-04-2015

https://storify.com/CherylAGuest/folkslab-session-at-quality-day-3-24-0

Appendix B: Further reading
If you would like to know more about Tom Kelly and the IDEO approach to human-centred design you can find more information on their websites:

http://www.ideo.org/tools

https://dschool.stanford.edu/resources