Prototyping for leaders

Great leaders get ideas out of their head and into the world. Give it a shot.

1. A problem I'm trying to solve right now:
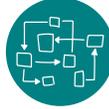*e.g., I'm trying to get my team to work better together.*

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2. To solve this problem, I am going to prototype:
e.g., A space where my team can collaborate in new ways.

- ☐ a story
- ☐ a product
- ☐ a space
- ☐ a brand
- ☐ a feature
- ☐ a value
- ☐ a system
- ☐ a service
- ☐ a behavior
- ☐ an experience
- ☐ a ritual
- ☐ a process

3. Choose a prototyping method:

Create a storyboard
Map the key moments of your idea as a journey—featuring a customer, employee, executive, or other stakeholder.
Helps leaders: Identify gaps and opportunities in an experience.

Map connections
Plot out all of the component parts and people in your idea, and how they relate.
Helps leaders: Understand dependencies in a complex system.

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Diagram it
Visualize the flow of activity or information through all the phases of your idea, taking the entire system into account.
Helps leaders: See friction, unforeseen connections, and areas for improvement.

Write a narrative
Tell the story of your idea using a customer, teammate, or employee as the hero.
Helps leaders: Explore what success looks like and practice building belief in an idea.

Sketch it
Capture the essence of your idea visually. Be as literal or abstract as you like.
Helps leaders: Flesh out complex and intangible ideas, so others can get on board.

Do quick math
Make some quick-and-dirty calculations for the ballpark financials of your idea.
Helps leaders: Understand inputs and outputs, and plan for financial implications.

4. Unfold this booklet and use the space inside to start prototyping. And remember:

- Keep your prototype rough, cheap, and fast.
- Stay true to your intent, but flexible about ideas.
- Share with your team early and often.
- Use feedback to iterate, iterate, iterate.
- Embrace mistakes... That's the point!

SYPartners