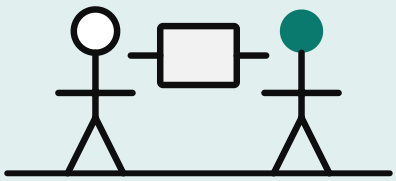
Method

Role playing

The team, and sometimes users, act out a situation with simple or cardboard objects to imagine how a product or service would work.



In Spanish

Juego de roles

Origin

Several antecedents; among them, Buchenau and Fulton Suri (2000) and Iacucci, Kuutti and Ranta (2000)

Output

Acted-out situations that show how an idea would work

What it's for

It helps you imagine a service that doesn't exist yet: acting it out brings up problems a diagram doesn't show.

Key elements

A concrete situation

Who, where and what happens.

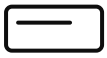
Simple objects

A piece of cardboard can be the future device.

Repeat and change

Act out several versions.

How it's done

1 

Prepare the scene and the roles.

2 

Act out the situation with the imagined object.

3 

Discuss what worked and what didn't.

Applications in design

When to use it

For services where people, place and timing matter.

Avoid

Turning it into theater without a design question.

Don't fall for it

Write down what comes up while acting: it is quickly forgotten.

Connections

Used by

- Conversational design
- Service design
- Environmental graphic design

Related to

- Bodystorming
- Participatory design
- Wizard of Oz
- Prototyping
- Experience prototyping
- Desktop walkthrough
- Design speed dating
- Storyboard

Authors and works

2000	**Giulio Iacucci, Kari Kuutti and Mervi Ranta**	Used role playing with toys and acted-out scenes to come up with mobile services together with users.

Sources

Original sources

- Iacucci, G., Kuutti, K., & Ranta, M. (2000). On the move with a magic thing: Role playing in concept design of mobile services and devices. In Proceedings of DIS 2000. ACM. View source (https://doi.org/10.1145/347642.347715)
- Buchenau, M., & Fulton Suri, J. (2000). Experience prototyping. In Proceedings of the 3rd Conference on Designing Interactive Systems (DIS '00) (pp. 424–433). ACM. View source (https://doi.org/10.1145/347642.347802)

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