A Beyond Flipped Guide to the 'How Might We' / 'Dot Mapping' Exercise

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Background:

The Dot Mapping exercise was developed by Google Ventures (GV) out of the **GV design sprint**. The design sprint is a rapid prototyping methodology that phases a conceptual idea, through iterative development, and on to prototyped testing; reducing time-to-market whilst increasing efficiency and effectiveness. The **Coventry University** SPRINT (CU SPRINT) is a variation on this theme, with a focus on Higher Education. More information on the CU SPRINT can be found by visiting **flipped.coventry.ac.uk/sprint**. Beyond Flipped is a programme of activity within the **Disruptive Media Learning Lab** (DMLL) at Coventry University.

How to:

For this exercise you will need:

- Post it Notes (regular sized yellow)
- Pens (small nibbed)
- Red dot sticker sheets (one per participant)
- Green dot sticker sheets (one per participant)

Step One: Explain the Process

As with any new process employed, it is important to clearly explain both process, value proposition. You should briefly explain the background to the SPRINT process, exploring examples of its deployment, before explaining the intended purpose of the Dot Mapping exercise.

Step Two: Preparation

Participants should each take a wad of post-it notes (other brands are available) and a pen. At this stage do not hand out the dot stickers. Set a question/problem to answer. One example of a question might be 'what activities could we employ to maximise student engagement?'. This is a flexible exercise, and your problem/question can fit any topic up for discussion.

Step Three: Mind Shower

Participants have a set amount of time to write down possible solutions/answers on their post-it notes. There is only one rule - each post-it note must contain only one solution/answer. For example, one answer to the question 'what activities could we employ to maximise student engagement?' might be 'LEGO Serious Play in Seminar Groups'. Participants should continue to write down their thoughts (one post-it per thought) until the time runs out.

Step Four: Sticking and Grouping

Once the time is up, participants stick their post-it notes to an empty wall. As a collective, they should then group the post-it notes into themes. Example themes for the engagement question might be; activity-based learning, game-based learning, assessment types, online resources, etc.

Step Four: Dot Mapping (Voting for the Best)

Once grouped, each participant is given five green dot stickers. These are your voting mechanisms. The participants take time to read all post-it notes and use their green dots to vote on their favourite answers to the problem/question. The only rule here is that each participant can only put one dot on each post-it. If someone else has voted for a post-it you can always add another vote. This should provide you an overview of the ideas to focus on moving forwards.

Step Five: Dot Mapping (Ideas Kill Switch)

Repeat step four, but this time give each participant one red dot sticker. The exercise remains the same, but this time participants will use their individual dot to vote against any ideas they deem inappropriate or unrealistic.

At the end of the exercise you will have a list of ideas/answers on which to focus. Don't delete the *killed* ideas because a bad idea today can be a good idea tomorrow.

Examples:

Example One: Assessment Design

You bring the course team together to look at formative assessment types within a specific course or module. You can use the exercise to rapidly prototype assessment types which might be applicable to your subject/problem domain. Each participant develops a number of possible assessments before the whole team come back together to vote on ideas to become viable assessments.

Example Two: Problem Solving

As a staff member, you might give your students a problem to consider. The problem can be discipline specific, but as an example I will use 'How would you maintain law and order on a Martian Colony?'. You can use the exercise to facilitate solution generation.

Contact:

If you require assistance in the development of a crazy eights exercise to suit a given problem domain, you can always get in touch. Please e-mail DMLL at **dmll@coventry.ac.uk** or contact **Dr Alan Richards**, **Oliver Wood,** or **Alex Masters** for assistance. Don't forget, you can also check out the Beyond Flipped website at **flipped.coventry.ac.uk** or see what else the DMLL is up to at **dmll.org.uk**.