

Building a **decision-making** **culture** through design research

UX STRAT June 2024





Why decision-making is more important than ever



Design as a superpower for better decision-making



Sharing how we made this work at IKEA



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Digital



The world around us is changing



The introduction of AI



**Moving from micro
to macro**

Product design to strategic design

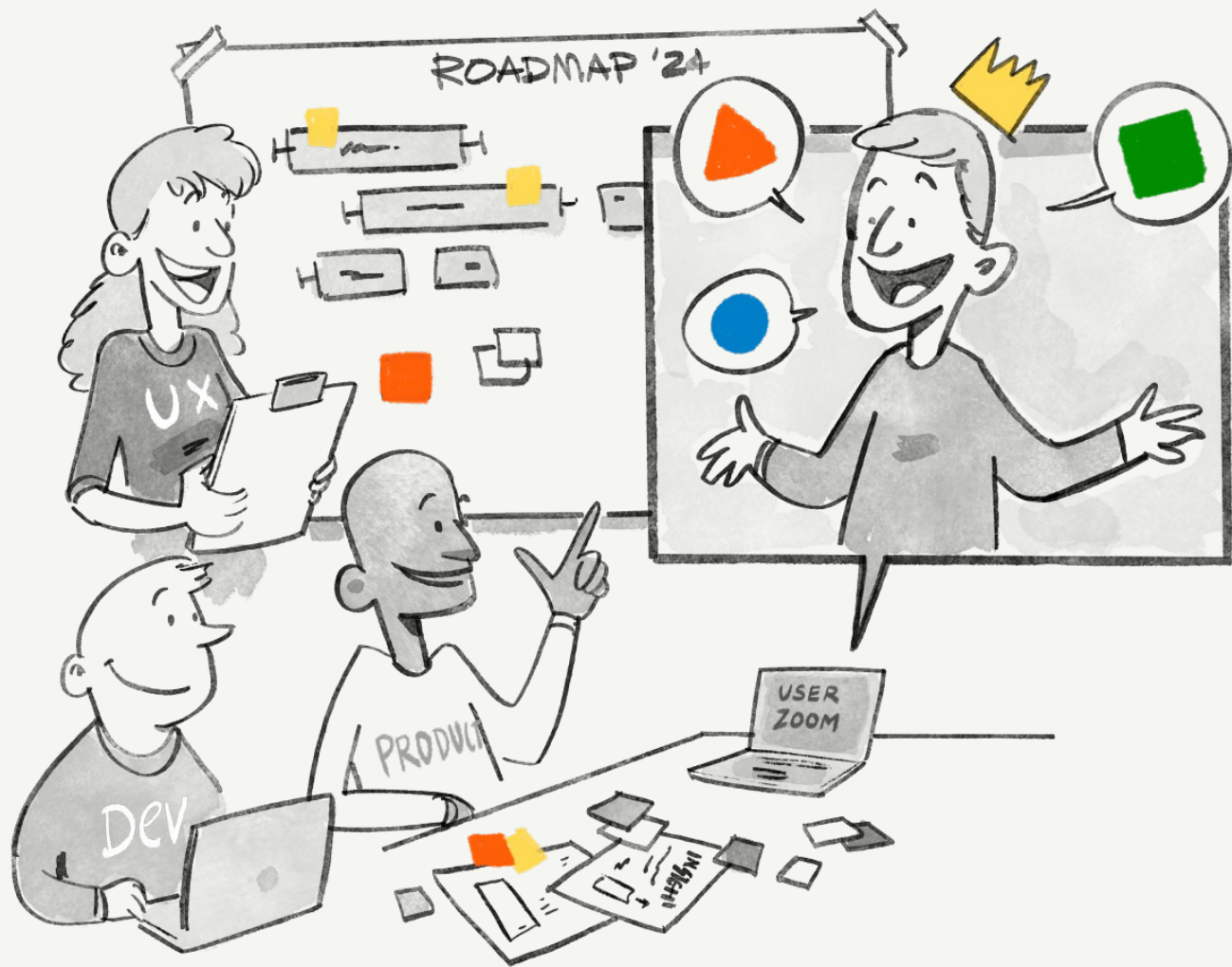
Why focus on
decision-making?

Effective (design)
leadership is about
**making effective
decisions**

Decision making is about delivering
intended outcomes and impact

While management is about decision making,
half of the decisions made by managers within
organizations **ultimately fail**.

(Ireland & Miller, 2004; Nutt, 2002; Nutt, 1999)



**Siloed
decisions**

**Decision
paralysis**

Gut feel

How do we maintain quality work & team health with fewer resources and greater pressures?

How should our customers experience our loyalty program on the app?

How should our digital experiences work in different countries with varying expectations?

Good news!

Designers & researchers
are enablers of decision-
making

1. Framing
2. Engaging
3. Committing

1. Framing

Making the unstructured structured

1. Framing

Agreeing upon the decision
and what's needed to be
done

2. Engaging

Building shared
understanding

2. Engaging

Gathering the right data,
stakeholder input, and
avoiding bias

3. Committing

Embracing small bets

3. Committing

Empowering those who
need to implement the
decision

How we made
this work this at
IKEA

Rethinking our value as design research

Large scope, spread across the org



Siloed decisions

Unclear what we focus on and how we should work



Decision paralysis

**Siloed decisions on what
research should focus on**



**Researchers being unsure of
their role and contribution**



**How should we
operate?**



**How should we grow
and mature?**



**What is our proposition
as an Experience Design
Research team?**



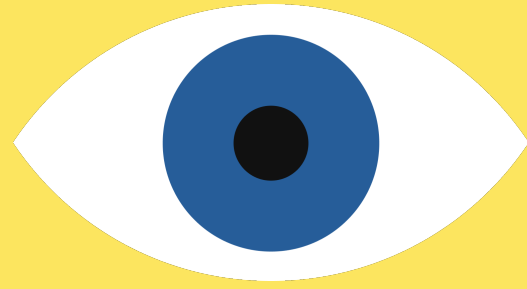
Framing

Making the unstructured
structured

XD Research Blueprint

Define a framework that gives the team direction and purpose, and the steps needed to realize our ambition

3 components



Vision

A high-level articulation of the role, value and purpose we aspire to



Stepladder

A maturity stepladder to help us align around the broad movements that will move us towards our XDR 2.0 proposition



FY24 Strategies and Activations

Opportunities for us to validate and activate the stepladder

IKEA Vision: To create a better everyday life for the many people

Experience Design Research Role

FY24 Strategies		Strategy #1			Strategy #2			Strategy #3		
Maturity Stepladder	Later	Step 3			Step 3			Step 3		
	Next	Step 2			Step 2			Step 2		
	Now	Step 1			Step 1			Step 1		
FY24 Activation Experiments		Experiment # 1	Experiment # 2	Experiment # 3	Experiment # 4	Experiment # 5	Experiment # 6	Experiment # 7	Experiment # 8	

To create a better everyday life for the many people

We turn the **needs and hopes** of **the many** into evidence-based, **human** and **actionable** insights, to increase our **pace** towards the relevant products and services of tomorrow.

To create a better everyday life for the many people

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FY24 Strategies		Enable the creation of holistic views
Maturity Stepladder	Later	Holistic views informing value chains and highlighting knowledge gaps
	Next	Creating horizontal shared knowledge across domains and insight functions
	Now	Vertical prioritization and insight sharing

To create a better everyday life for the many people

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FY24 Activation Experiments		Data & analytics partnerships	Rolling research program



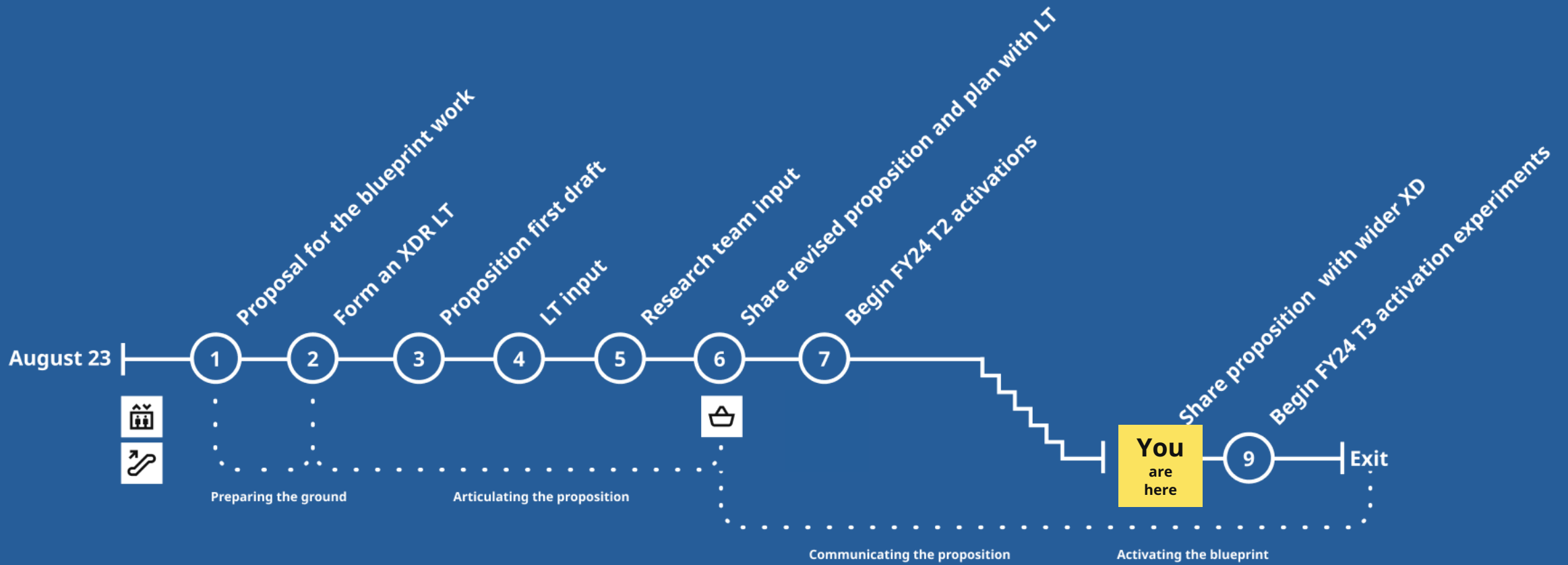
Why did this work?

- Gives clear structure on the direction and scope of the team
- Focus on the 'so what' and the 'now what'
- Framework to help us prioritise initiatives/requests
- Gives clarity on what we will and what we will NOT do



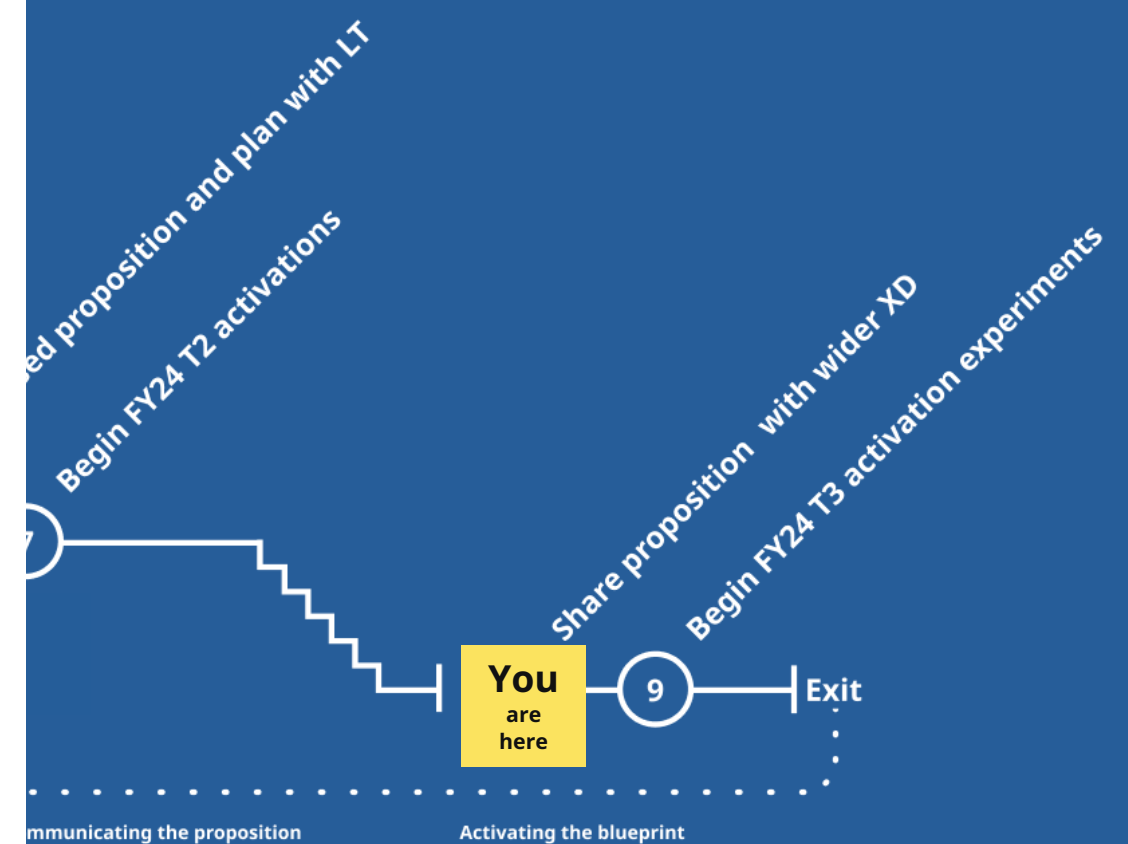
Engaging

Building shared
understanding



Gathering input & sharing understanding

- Reading up on what's happening in the field
- Held several input sessions with stakeholder groups
- Gathering opinions separately and asynchronously, and used these sessions to discuss the differences
- Repeated this for different stakeholder groups
- Not a consensus-based decision process, but gathering input





Why did this work?

- Made sure everyone's voices are heard, even if they are not the final decision-maker
- Gathering input separately avoids biases and people telling you what they think you want to hear
- Sharing back as we went through the process to build shared understanding



Committing

Embracing small bets

To create a better everyday life for the many people

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Activation experiments

- Objective
- Plan, deliverables and timeline
- Success measures and stage gates
- Next phase of scaling
- Clearly defined roles

<u>Timescale</u>	We aim to deliver this piece of the 'data & analytics collaboration' within one Tertial (T2). <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Team creation (Jan)2. Research phase: example collection. (3,4 sessions in Feb)3. Consolidation phase (iteratively throughout March)4. Sharing (April)5. Activation (April)
Success measures and stage gates	Continue <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Interest and engagement from both XDR teams as Data & Analytics teams</i>• <i>Proactive suggestions on how to extend the collaboration</i>• <i>More mixed-method research delivered</i> Pivot <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Data & Analytic team does not engage</i>• <i>Engagement from XDR remains reactive, no application of the insights in day2day work.</i> Stop <ul style="list-style-type: none">• XDR + D&A teams <u>disengage</u>.
Next phase of scaling (if successful)	Further expand the collaboration between Data & XDR. Identify what values the disciplines can bring to each other. Encourage wide application of the framework amongst XDR

Screenshot from success measure 'D&A Partnership'



Why did this work?

- Calling it "*experiments*" helps, allows leaders to get buy-in without too much investment
- Allows us to work iteratively, test and pivot if needed
- Clear criteria, agreed upon beforehand, for how we might change behaviour depending on the results

Now what?

Clear alignment on why and how we work

Alignment on our vision, goals and scope

Shared understanding among our stakeholders

Agreement to try new things quickly

Use the design skillset to support decision-making

- Clear problem framing
- Research & facilitation
- Working iteratively

Shifts bring new
opportunities and help
us **rethink** who we are

Thank you!

