



Digital Services Design Playbook

*Delivering integrated,
client-centric digital
services*



What is a playbook?

Play · book: 'plā,boŏk/ noun

A book containing a sports team's strategies and plays, especially in football.

In the **service design space**, playbooks outline strategies to deliver well-designed digital services



ISED's Digital Services Design Playbook is a set of **principles and practices**, driven by client-centric thinking, that guide the end-to-end design and/or re-design of government services in the digital channel.


Intended to **help managers and employees responsible for digital service design**.

Why a Playbook?

- **Improve client satisfaction by:**
 - Helping managers and employees develop and deliver simplified and convenient services based on user needs and designed for the digital channel
- **Create departmental efficiencies by:**
 - Providing tools and resources to support the application of a consistent approach to developing digital services
 - Promoting organizational behaviours related to re-using, improving and sharing lessons learned and technology solutions

Introducing the Digital Services Design Playbook

[Home](#)[Think](#)[Plan](#)[Do](#)[Assess](#)



Digital Services Design Playbook

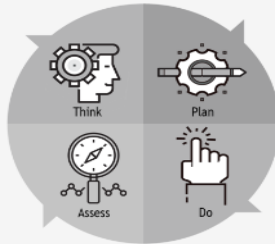
Step by Step Digital Services Design for ISED Business Lines

[About the playbook](#)

[What is Service Design](#)


[General design principles](#)

Digital design phases




The diagram illustrates the four digital design phases in a circular arrangement. Each phase is represented by an icon and a label: 'Think' (a head with a gear), 'Plan' (a gear with an arrow), 'Do' (a hand clicking a button), and 'Assess' (a clock face).


ISED's digital transformation progress



Service standards met



Client satisfaction



Digital uptake

Join the discussion

Have questions or suggestions to improve the playbook? Let us know through our GIC connex group! [GIC](#)

Guiding Principles to Service Design

General design principles



Services designed with clients, for client needs

Ensure user-centric approaches to service design, involving clients in the service design process where possible.



Do the hard work to make it easy

Services must be designed from the "outside in". Government must make the effort so that clients can complete services easily.



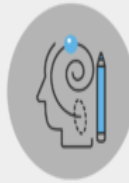
A consistent client experience when using services is key

Offer a consistent client experience so that services are predictable for clients, regardless of the service they access.



Digital by design, optimized for mobile

Ensure that services are designed for the mobile digital channel first, and then adapted to other service channels. Refer to the related technical standard.



Iterate. Then iterate again for ongoing service improvement

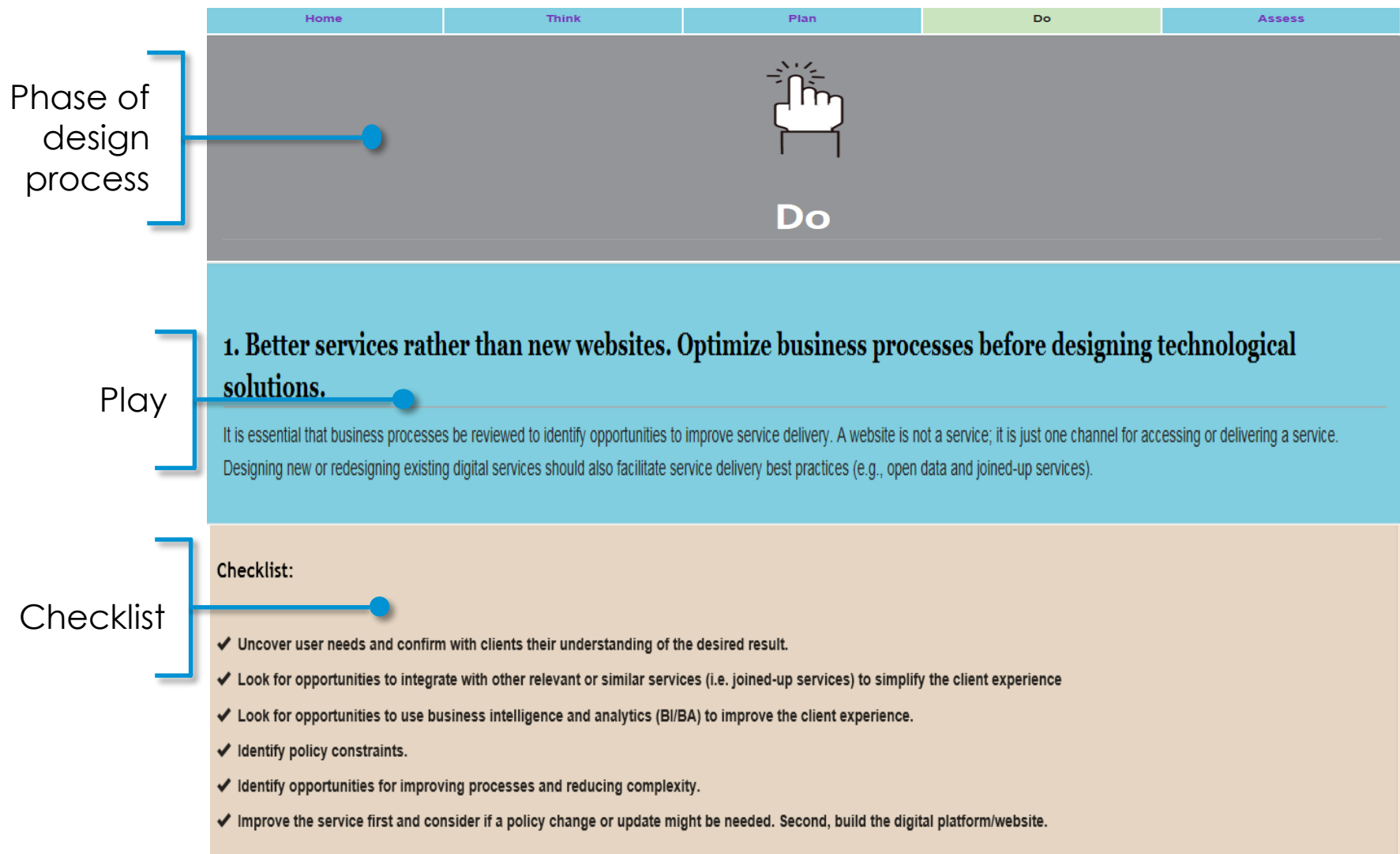
Start small and build upon successes.



Data and code is default to open

Data and code is shared so that clients can extract/create value.

Section Structure



Section Structure (continued)

Key Questions

Decision Making Questions:

- Has client feedback been solicited and have you incorporated client feedback in the service design/redesign?
- What service delivery models have been adopted elsewhere?
- What are the opportunities for efficiencies and improvement?
- Have new or revised IM/IT approaches been considered?
- Have you tested prototypes with clients before launching the new website?

Resources

Resources:

- *Understanding the problem is key to fixing it* [↗](#)
- *Six Sigma - An Overview* [↗](#)

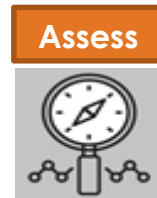
Content Summary: The “Plays”

- ✓ Understand client needs
- ✓ Let data lead



- ✓ Develop a project plan
- ✓ Establish a multidisciplinary team
- ✓ Comply with Government of Canada acts, policies, standards and directives

- ✓ Review and improve services continually
- ✓ Test the service
- ✓ Measure performance and evaluate
- ✓ Manage a product, not a project



- ✓ Develop better services, rather than new websites
- ✓ Reuse, improve and share technological solutions where appropriate
- ✓ Apply agile principles and be iterative
- ✓ Share best practices

Development of the Playbook

Conducted environmental scan of other playbooks (provinces, international)

1

Think

Decided on incremental, iterative approach to development

Consulting with potential users to gather feedback and making iterative improvements

4

Assess

Established a Tiger Team of individuals involved in service design from the department and GC

2

Plan

Developed a scope and project plan

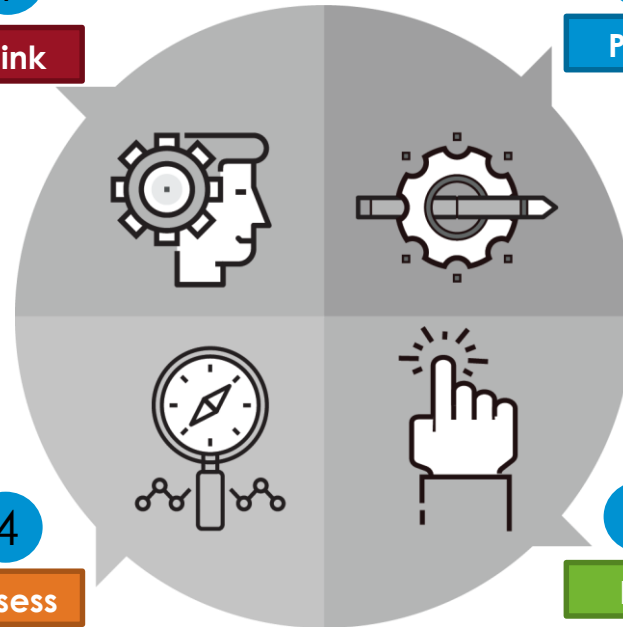
Used GCpedia and GCconnex platforms: working out loud!

3

Do

Used an iterative approach

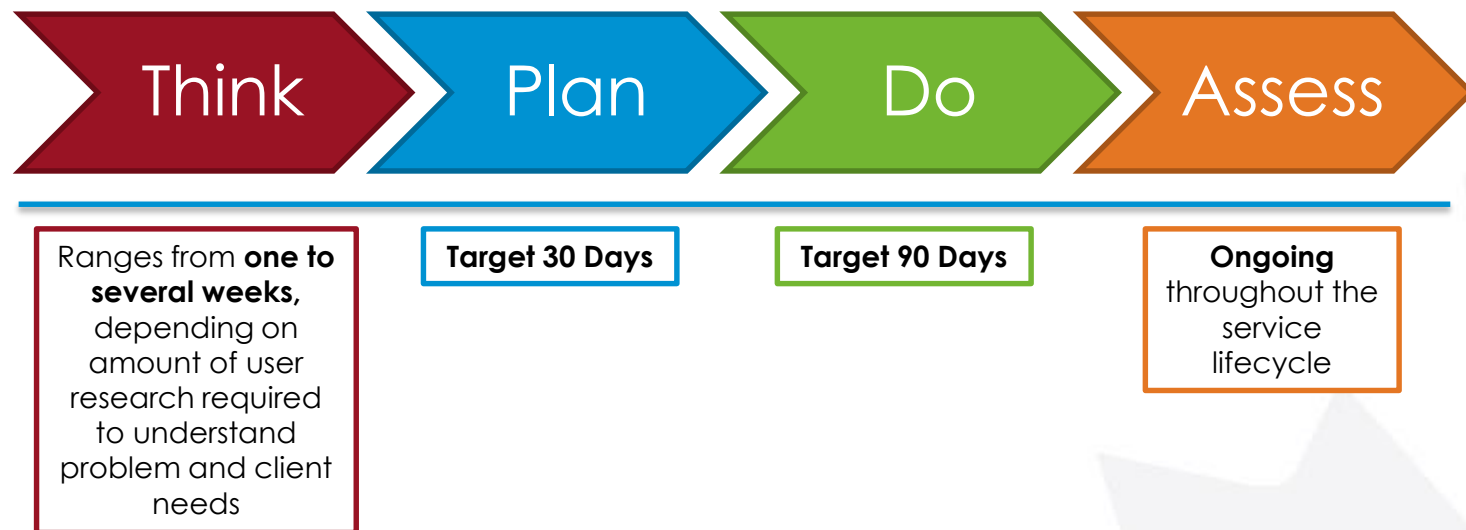
Shared best practices with OGDs



The Playbook will be constantly updated with users to remain relevant

Playbook in Action: Grants and Contributions

- **Problem Statement:** Portfolio-wide reporting on Grants and Contributions (Gs&Cs) is burdensome for ISED and the application process is not streamlined for clients.



Playbook in Action: Grants & Contributions

Think

• **PLAY 1: Understand Client Needs**

- Perform user research to better understand how Gs&Cs are accessed (e.g., by mail or online)
- Conduct environmental scan of Gs&Cs programs
- Identify departmental needs (e.g., reporting on Gs&Cs)
- Separate the problem from the symptoms

PLAY 2: Let Data Lead

- Review evidence to determine opportunities for improvement
- Identify and measure key service attributes (e.g., % applications that can be submitted online)

Plan

• **Play 1: Develop Project Plan**

- Apply insights from the Think phase to inform scope of the pilot
- Identify resources, approval process, key deliverables and timelines
- Prepare to work with agile methods

• **Play 2: Establish multidisciplinary team**

- Clearly define roles and responsibilities: project manager, service owners, user research, web content publisher, business analysis, etc.

• **Play 3: Comply with GC standards and directives**

- Know the GC standards related to the pilot (e.g., accessibility, web usability, privacy, official languages, etc.)

In advance of project

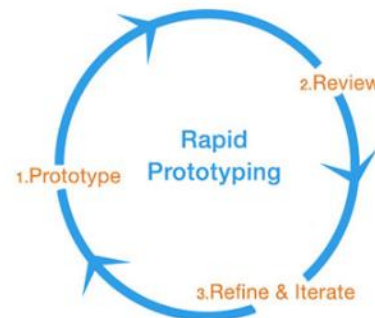
30 days

Identify best practices & lessons learned

Playbook in Action: Grants and Contributions

Do

- **Play 1: Develop better services, rather than new websites**
 - Identify policy changes needed to make the service better
 - Identify solutions to issues
- **Play 2: Reuse, improve and share technology solutions**
 - Consider open data and using open code
 - Use device-agnostic and modular technology (e.g., when building apps to access Gs&Cs applications from a mobile device)
- **Play 3: Apply agile principles and be iterative**
 - Conduct usability testing with clients and service lines prior to pilot launch
 - Launch pilot
- **Play 4: Share best practices**
 - Identify lessons learned and share with RDAs and within ISED



Target: 90 days

Identify best practices & lessons learned

Playbook in Action: Grants and Contributions

Assess

Ongoing

- **Play 1: Review and improve services continually**
 - Collect client feedback to inform opportunities to improve the pilot
 - Consider opportunities to join-up with other departments that have Gs&Cs
 - Continuously improve and iterate
- **Play 2: Test the service**
 - Test new iterations of the service before launching
 - Conduct various types of testing
- **Play 3: Measure performance and evaluate**
 - Use metrics that matter to the client to determine if pilot meets client and department needs
 - Report regularly and share findings with clients and across the department
- **Play 4: Manage a product, not just a project**
 - Have a plan to make regular service improvements

Identify best practices & lessons learned

Next Steps

- The Digital Services Design Playbook is a **continuous work in progress**
 - We will **improve the playbook** by implementing feedback received from
 - Collaborative tools (GCconnex Group / GCpedia)
 - Regular design sessions in ISED's Service Design Lab
 - We will **test the playbook** with service designers
 - During service design or redesigning processes
 - We will **promote and share the playbook** with colleagues within the department and across jurisdictions
 - Seeking to leverage best practices from other government departments and jurisdictions

Discussion

- Is this something that can be used to design joined-up services with jurisdictions?
- Are there any Playbooks or related tools to support the design of digital services in your jurisdiction?

Annex: Examples of Digital and Design Playbooks

International

Country	# of Design Standards / Plays	Status
UK Government Digital Services	10	In use and Mandatory
Australia Digital Transformation Agency	13	In use and Mandatory
US Digital Services	13	In use and non-Mandatory
New York City	12	In use
US Veteran's Affairs	9	In use

Canadian (federal and provincial)

Department	# of Design Standards / Plays	Status
British Columbia	5	In use
Ontario	To be confirmed	In development
Agriculture	To be confirmed	In development
ESDC	To be confirmed	In development

Other Playbooks (not necessarily related to digital service design)

Privy Council Office

Digital Communications Playbook

Public Sector Service Delivery Council

Behavioural Insights (nudge) Playbook

Direct Diplomacy

Citizen Campaigns Playbook