Delivering a CU SPRINT: What to Expect

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Background:

The five-day CU SPRINT is a rapid prototyping exercise based on the Google Ventures (GV) Sprint methodology. The five-day CU SPRINT is designed specifically for accelerated design, development, and viability testing of Higher Education degree programs. Starting with the ideal graduate and working backwards, by the end of the process the course development approval and review (CDAR) paperwork should be complete, with the design 'tested' by current students and key stakeholders.

What's Needed From You:

The purpose of the SPRINT is to rapidly develop your ideas. This means each participant must to be willing to follow a common set of guidelines designed to make the process as efficient and effective as possible. As the facilitator, it is your role to make sure these rules are followed.

- **Willingness to compromise**. There will be spaces in which participants disagree with some of the ideas proposed. We encourage them to argue their point, however compromise will usually be inevitable at some point in the process.

- **Attendance**. The SPRINT runs over five solid days. Each section focuses on a different element and in order to get the most out of the process participants need to be involved in all sections.

- **Focus** - Focus on the problem in hand and remove any distractions from the space. This includes a no email rule, and if you must make a phone call leave the space to do so. SPRINT is a compressed problem solving model, and relies on a laser focus by all participating.

- **Time** - The five-day process is challenging and tiring. Ensure participants have time to unwind and clear their minds at the end of each day.

- **Contribution** - All ideas are equal. Regardless of hierarchy in the workplace, SPRINT is about teasing out the best ideas from all involved. If someone has a good idea, encourage them to share

it. Bringing different perspectives from different levels of responsibility is core to ensuring an end product which works for all involved.

- **Don't be Precious** - If ideas are suggested which will take longer to explore, note them down and come back to them later. The SPRINT is about the creation of a Minimum Viable Product (MVP). Time is of the essence, and as such there won't be time to deep-dive every idea discussed.

Overview:

The five-days of the CU SPRINT each focus on a different element of the course design process. Combined, these elements form the basis of a well-constructed course which will work for all stakeholders involved in its management, marketing, administration and delivery.

Day One: Mapping Monday

Day one focuses on exploring the product the course team wish to produce. They will work backwards from the end goal, breaking down the reasons why they currently do things the way they do. They will then start mapping their ideas into a visual diagram, creating an initial structure to their course design ideas. As facilitator, you need to guide and encourage them whilst ensuring focus is not lost. The biggest risk the team face is loosing track of the end goal. Quick decisions and iterative ideas development are key to the success of the entire process. At this point, as the facilitator you need to collect a list of people to test the product at the end of the process and start scheduling some user testing sessions for Friday. Try to draw on a pool of people across disciplines and expertise. For example, a combination of academic staff, librarians, learning technologists and others. At this point, you can also contact students the course team wish to be involved. The broader the range perspectives the more valuable the process will be.

Day Two: Development Tuesday

Day two builds on the initial ideas developed the previous day. The structure will become more complex, mapping additional details as the day progresses. This is an opportunity for the course team to collectively design key elements of the curriculum, from modules, to themes, to assessment types. Emphasize the importance of collective working - all ideas are equal at this point. It is important for the entire course team to be involved in the design, as through collective design of the product, those teaching on the program will feel empowered to own the topics deployed.

Day Three: Prototyping Wednesday

Day three explores the market viability of the course. Collectively, the team will create a mock website or prospectus, in the process considering what the unique selling point of their product is and how they can communicate it to prospective students. They will also start working on the course documentation paperwork, producing the introduction and ethos based on the last few days work. You will need a computer at this point. Using software such as Adobe XD, mock up the website content in real-time as the course team develop it. This is not about producing a website, but about producing the content which might be used to

market the course to students. Your role is to provide the platform in which they can rapidly re-design their thoughts as the conversations progress. Encourage the course team to think like students, removing as much academic language as possible. This is about ensuring the product is accessible and understood by the target audience.

Day Four: Type-up Thursday

Day four is centered around the formal documentation required for course approval. In real time, you'll help the course team to collaboratively fill out the documentation, referring back to their initial ideas and the visual diagrams around the room. This is about communicating the ethos of the ideas to both the University and the wider public. Encourage the course team to look back at what they have designed over the past few days and draw this into the documentation. Become the critical friend who keeps referring back to the idea graduate, and ask the team how their decisions shape that individual.

Day Five: Testing Friday

Day five user-tests the product developed over the last week. Stakeholders from a range of backgrounds and experiences will pick apart your course design. Don't be disheartened by this. It's better to build in the feed-forward this provides to ensure the course design is solid and relevant when it goes to market.

Additional Support:

If you would like additional support, or to discuss how the CU SPRINT process might work for you, then you can get in touch with the Disruptive Media Learning Lab by email or telephone. We also recommend visiting the **Google Ventures Sprint website** and **buying the sprint book**!

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