Carnegie Mellon University
integrated innovation institute

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Blueprinting Service Blueprints

A method for Taming Complexity, Building Alignment, and Finding Innovation Opportunities

Susanna Zlotnikov, 2023

Susanna Zlotnikov

Program Director, iii Online
Assistant Teaching Professor

- Design practitioner specializing in research and service design

- Background in designing within healthcare, specifically radiology and critical care

- Currently, teach graduate level courses focused on service and experience design
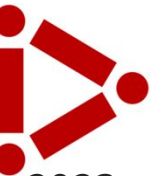
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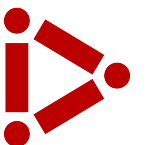
Goals for today's talk

- **Introduce a new visualization tool**

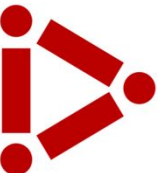- **Cross-share ideas**

- **Spark curiosity**
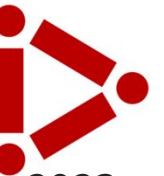
Let's Define

Wait? What is Service Design?

"Service design improves the experiences of both the user and employee by **designing, aligning, and optimizing** an organization's operations to better support customer journeys."

— Nielsen-Norman Group

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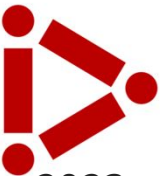
...and what's a service blueprint?

- service blueprints are an **internal artifact** that communicates how an **existing** service or a **proposed** service unfolds

- service blueprints show **duration**, connection between **elements**, and **layers** of processes and **interaction**

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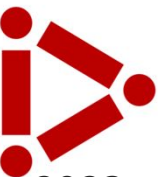
Is this framework only for building services?

- **No!**

  You can use this for **processes, workflows, user journeys**
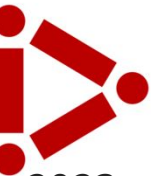
What do service blueprints look like?
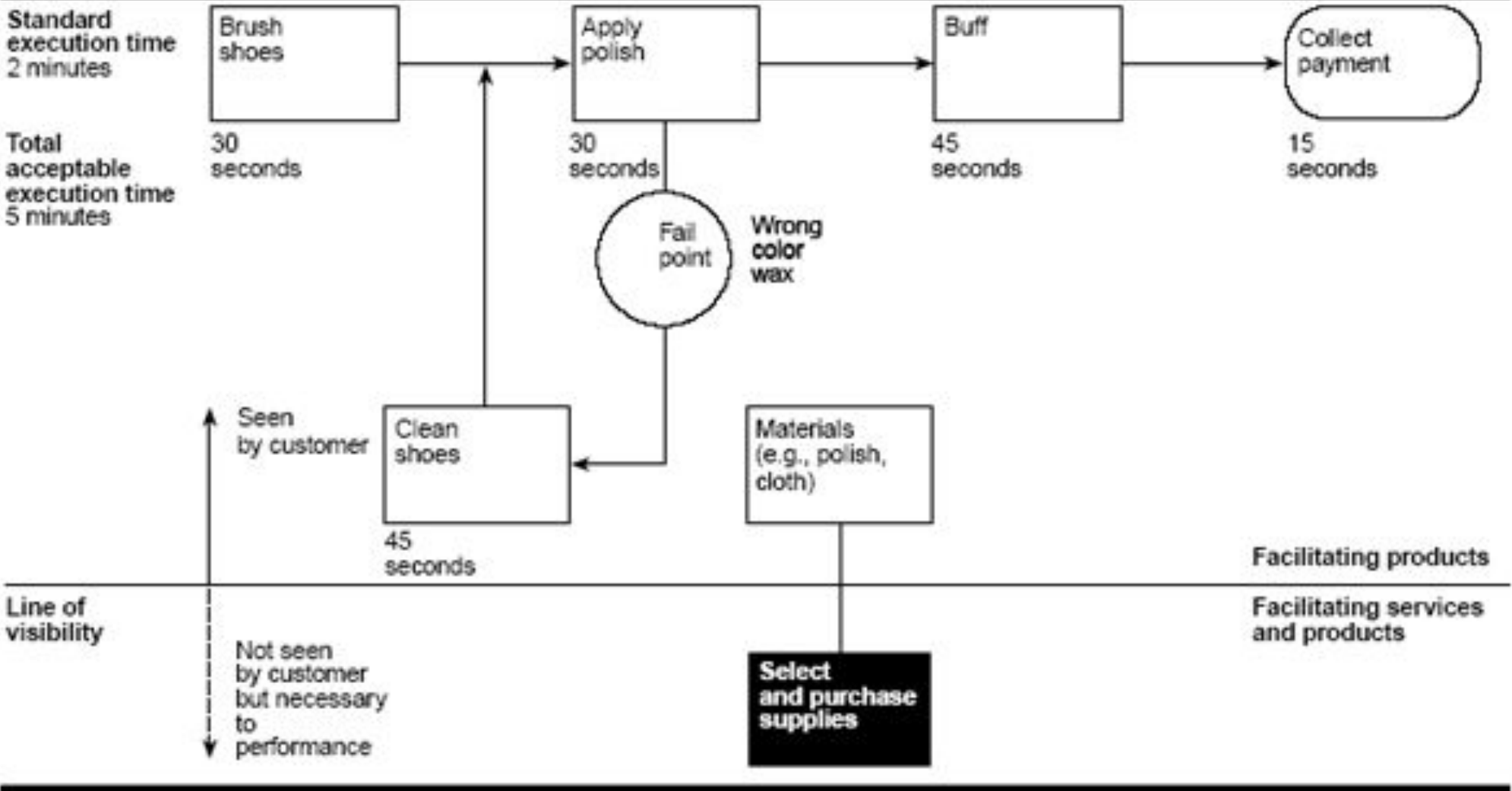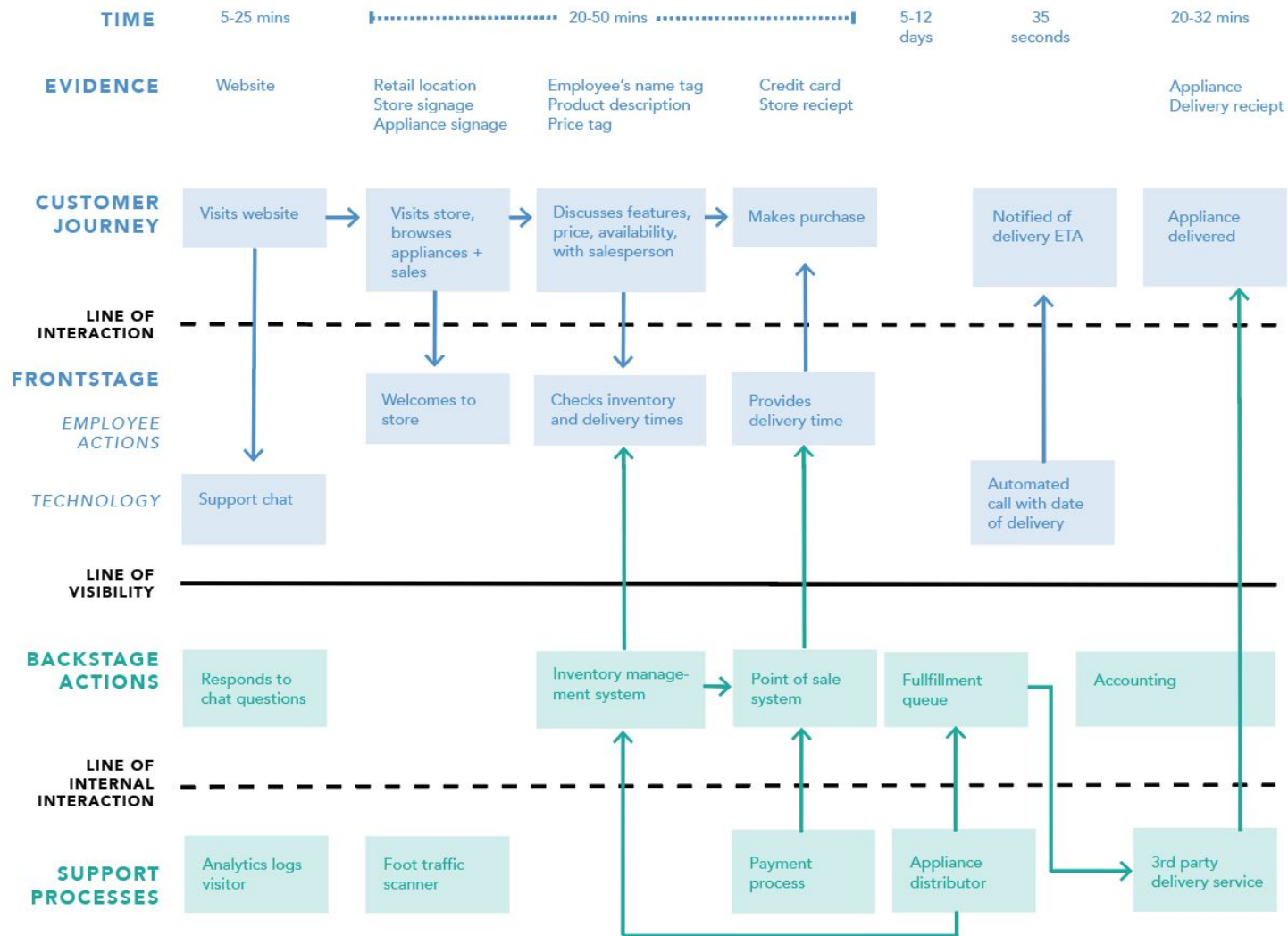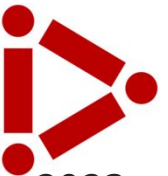
Exhibit I   Blueprint for a Corner Shoeshine

Image source: https://hbr.org/1984/01/designing-services-that-deliver

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image source:
https://www.nngroup.com/articles/service-blueprints-definition/

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image source: https://www.lucidchart.com/blog/what-is-a-service-blueprint

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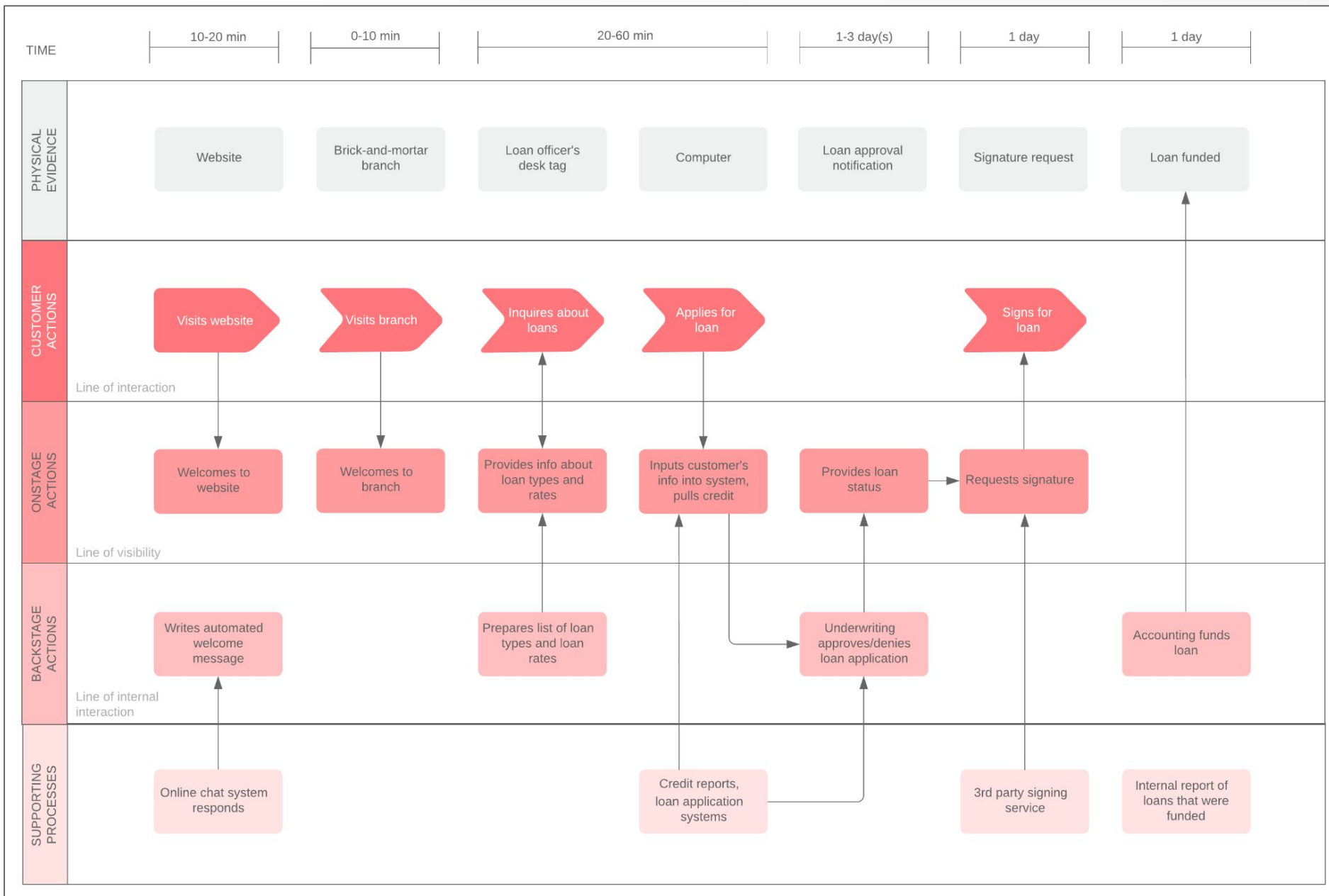
Let's look at the key elements

Let's look at the key elements

"name of the service"

time (duration)	
evidence (physical and/or digital)	
customer action	
line of interaction	· ·
employee action	
front end tech	
line of visibility	————————————————————
Backstage actions	
Support Processes	

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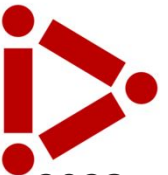
'name of the service'

"name of the service"

time (duration)
evidence (physical and/or digital)
customer action

line of interaction · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·

employee action
front end tech

line of visibility ─────────────

Backstage actions

when we give a name, essentially we are scoping the content for the problem we're trying to solve

" shopping journey"

vs.

"customer searches for particular item in-store"

time (duration)

how long a step in the service takes

tips:

- **you don't need concrete times for everything; ranges are fine too**

- **measure time for particular parts of the service where it matters most towards customer experience and successful service delivery**

(Diagram boxes, top to bottom: time (duration) [highlighted], evidence (physical and/or digital), customer action, line of interaction, employee action, front end tech, line of visibility, Backstage actions, Support Processes)
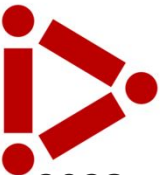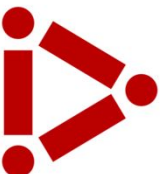
evidence (physical and/or digital)

a notable artifact in during a step of the service

ex: mobile order pickup counter at Starbucks

tip:

- **when services unfold mostly in a digital space, take screenshots of where in the digital experience a step takes place**

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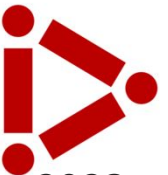
customer action

what the person you're designing for does at a given step of the service

ex: customer searches through starbucks menu

tips:

- think of customer as the person in focus. you can replace 'customer' with target user, end user, employee

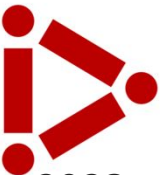- even though it's not the first row; consider starting with spelling out the actions.

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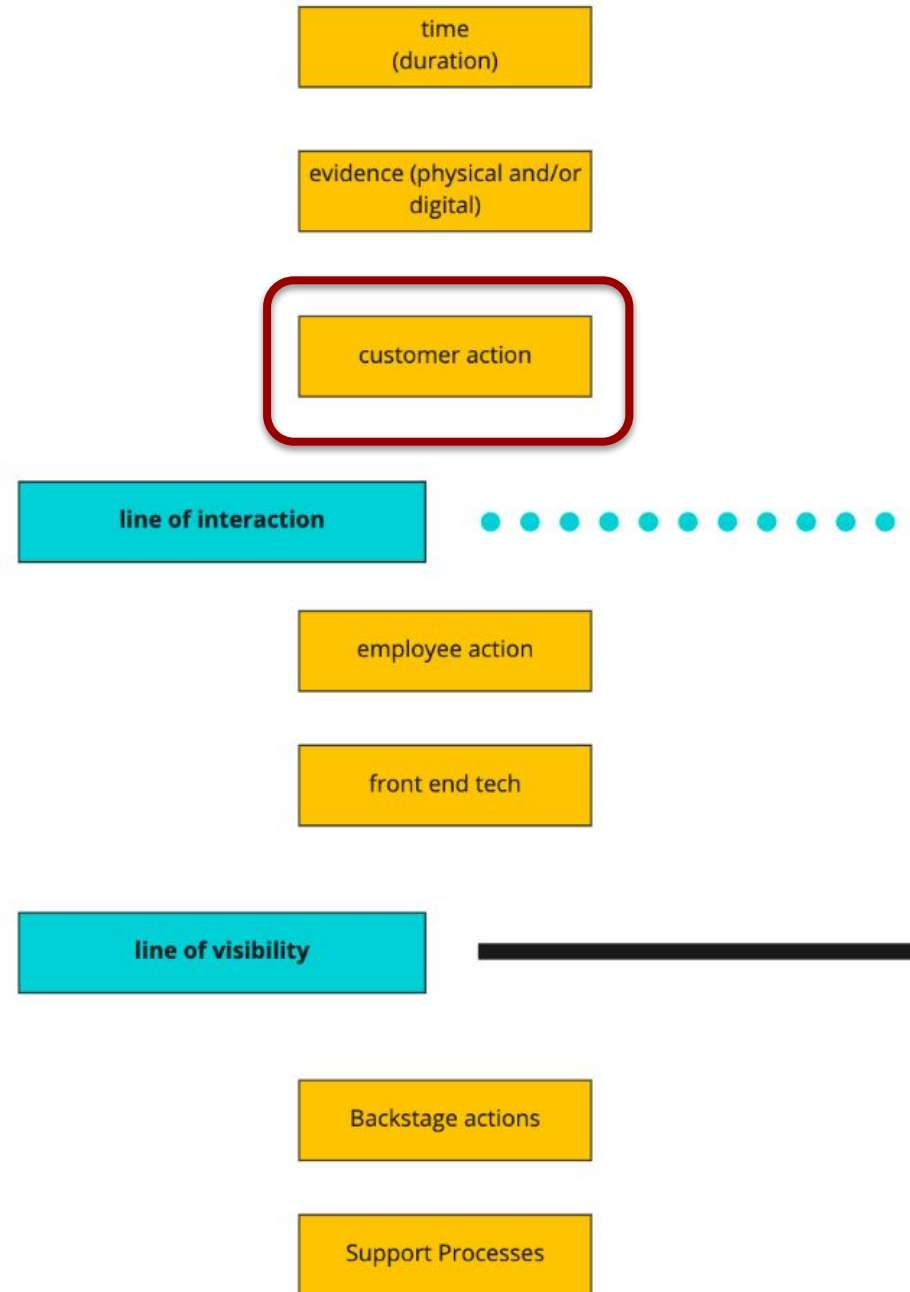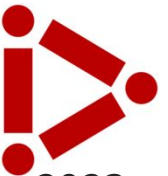
line of interaction

separates customer action from enterprise employee/tech action

interactions that occur are known as the moment of truth

tip:

- **problems and opportunities may occur here, below the line or a mix of both**

line of interaction

separates customer and enterprise employee/tech

interactions that occur are known as the moment of truth

tip:

- **problems and opportunities may occur here, below the line or a mix of both**

The diagram shows vertically stacked boxes:
- time (duration)
- evidence (physical and/or digital)
- customer action
- **line of interaction**
- employee action
- front end tech
- line of visibility
- Backstage actions
- Support Processes
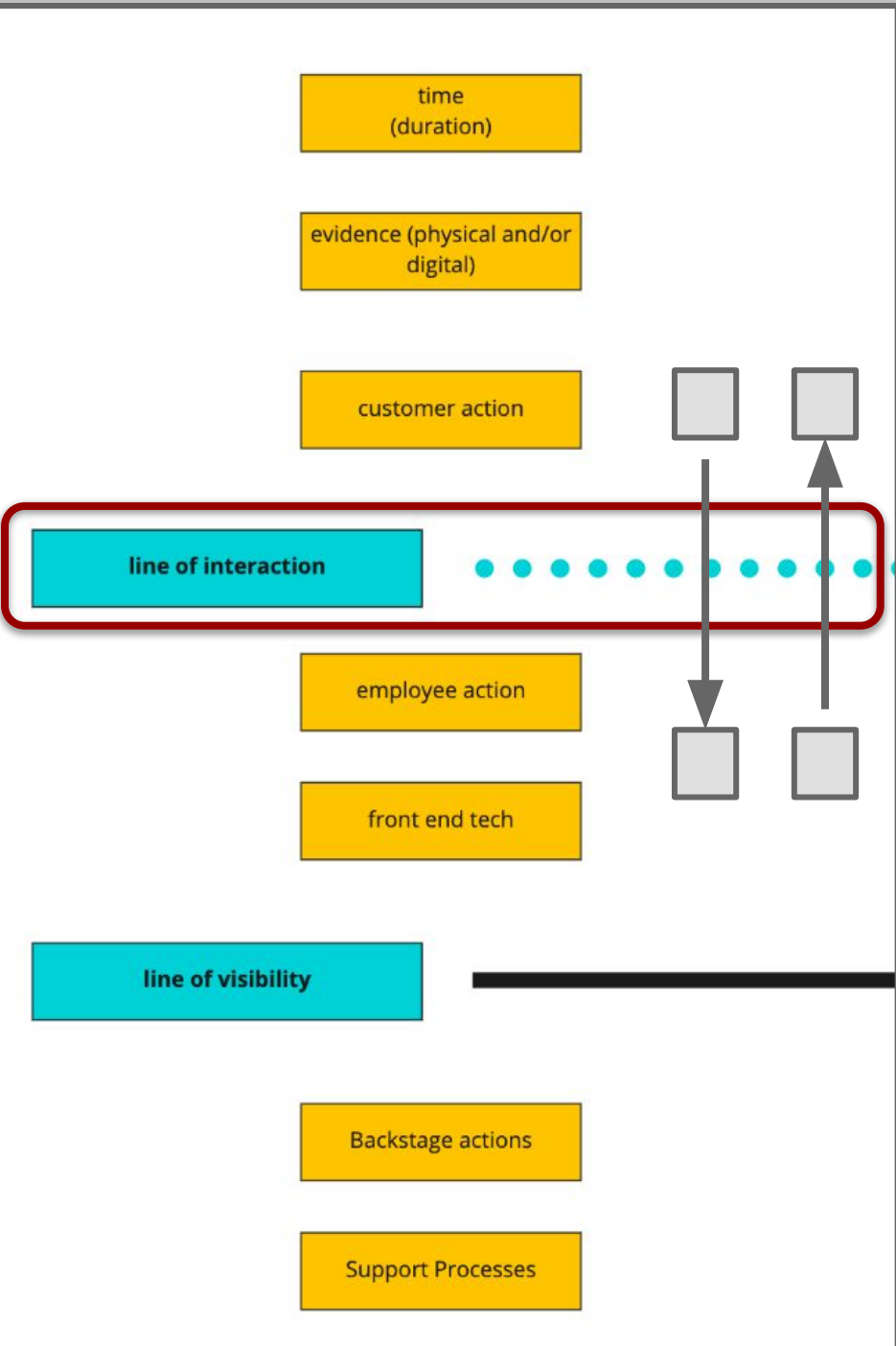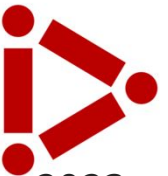
employee action / front-end tech

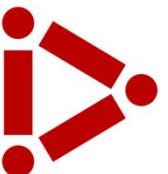**items listed in these rows happen in view or directly with the customer**

ex: barista taking a customer's drink order

this portion of the service is known as front stage

tip:

- **although you might deem it 'self-service' interactions that occur between a user and front end tech can be mapped here if interactions robust**

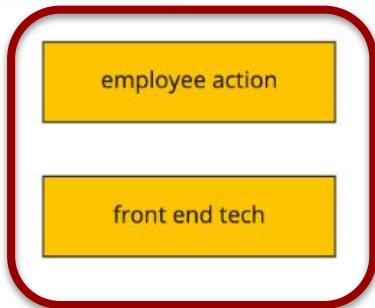**ex: virtual AI powered customer support agent**
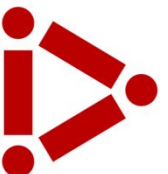
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line of visibility

this separates service elements seen by the customer from elements that are not intended to be seen by the customer

ex: employee goes to the store room to retrieve an item

tip:

- **an innovation opportunity may lie in what you put above and below the line of visibility**

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support processes

processes, protocols, or systems used to successfully implement part of all of a service

ex: data governance protocols

tip:

- this may be the primary focus of your blueprint; use the rest of the blueprint to understand ripple effects and impact of your decisions

arrows of causality

The diagram shows a service blueprint structure with the following labeled rows:
- time (duration)
- evidence (physical and/or digital)
- customer action
- line of interaction
- employee action
- front end tech
- line of visibility
- Backstage actions
- Support Processes
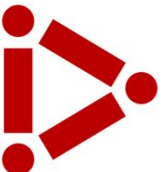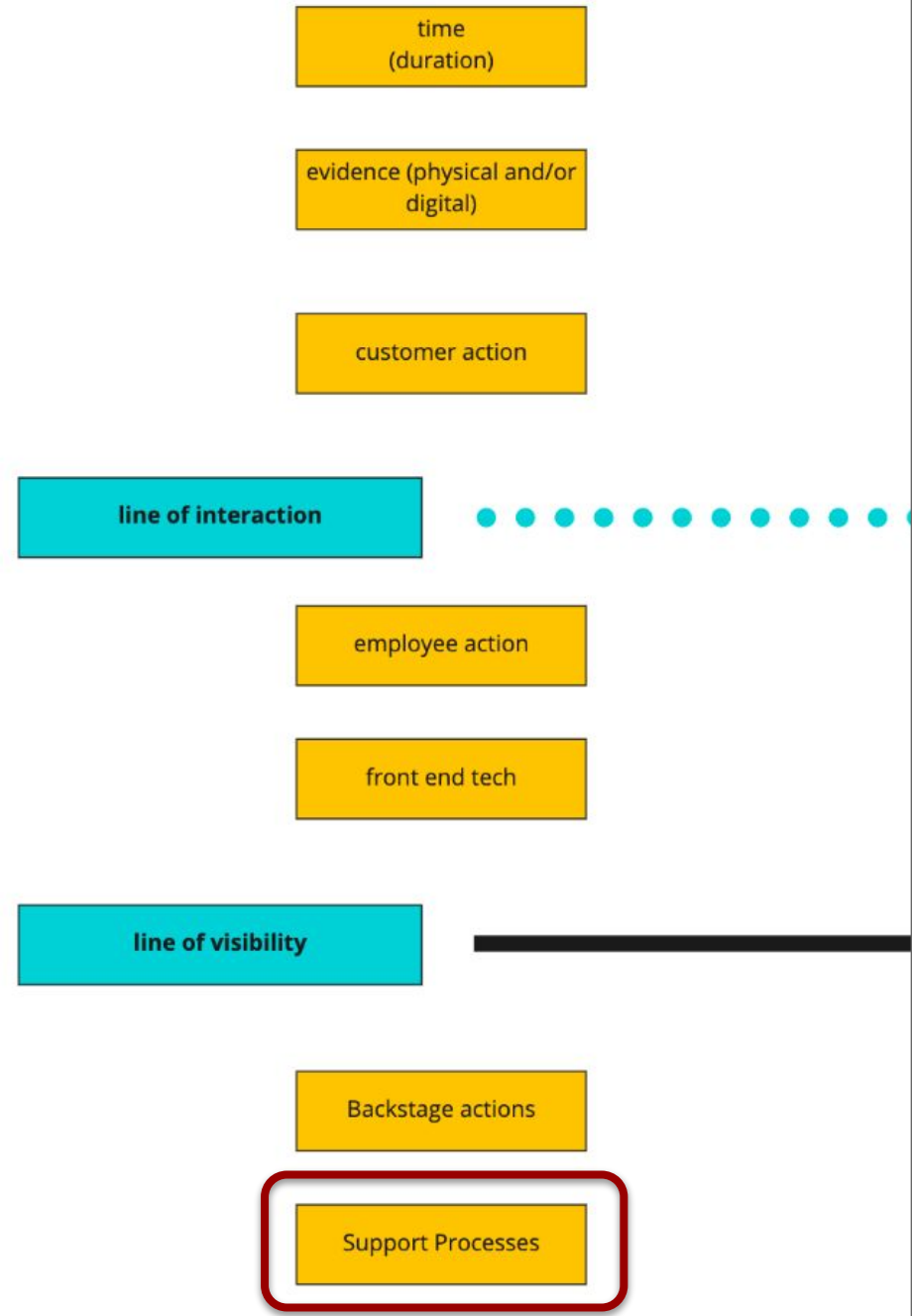
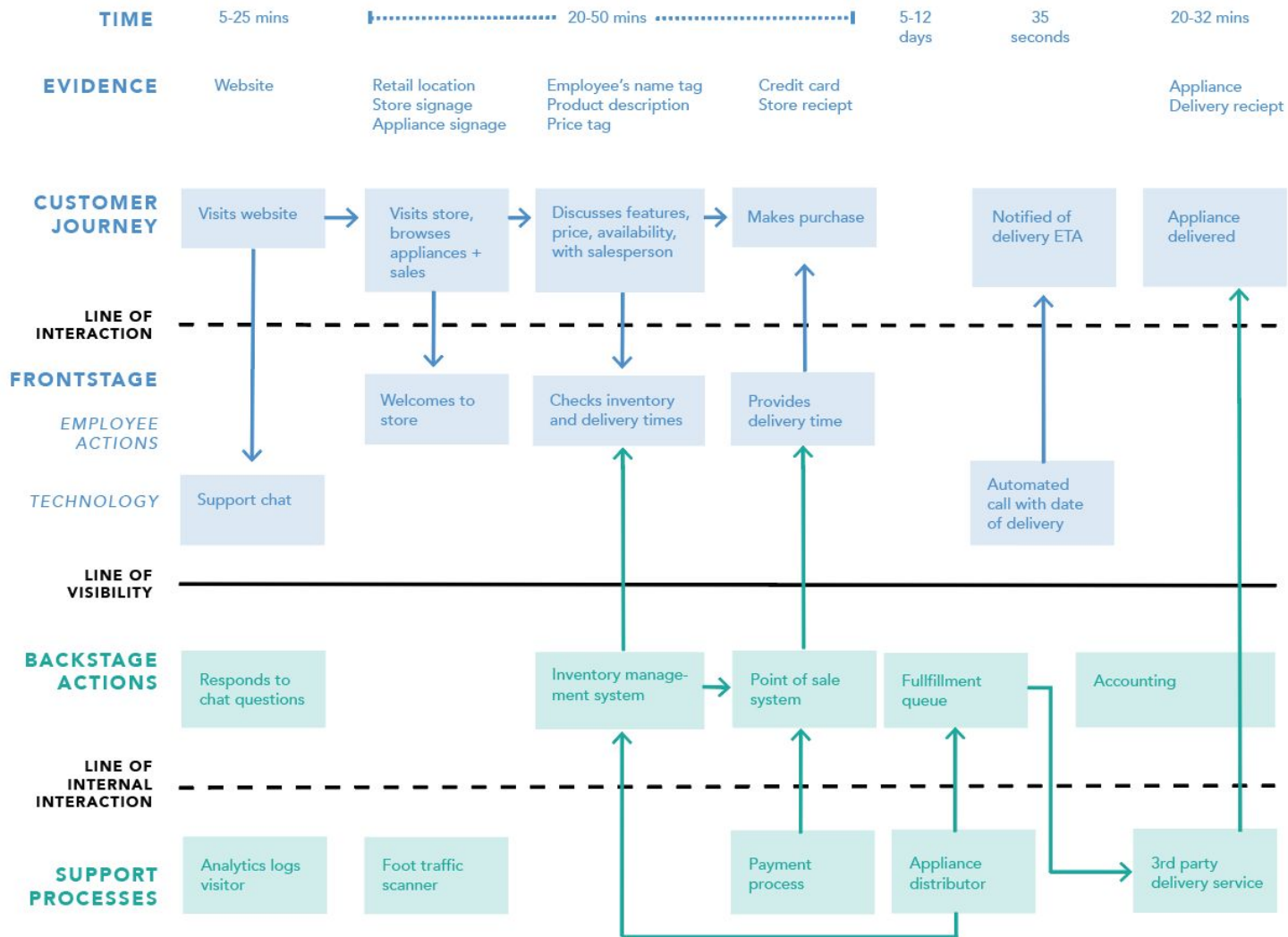**this shows connection between components of the blueprint**

ex: customer places order in app —->order signals order data to be sent to store —--> employee fulfills order —-> customer picks up order

tip:

- **think about what triggers a particular point of the process**
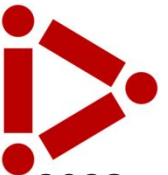
Susanna Zlotnikov, 2023
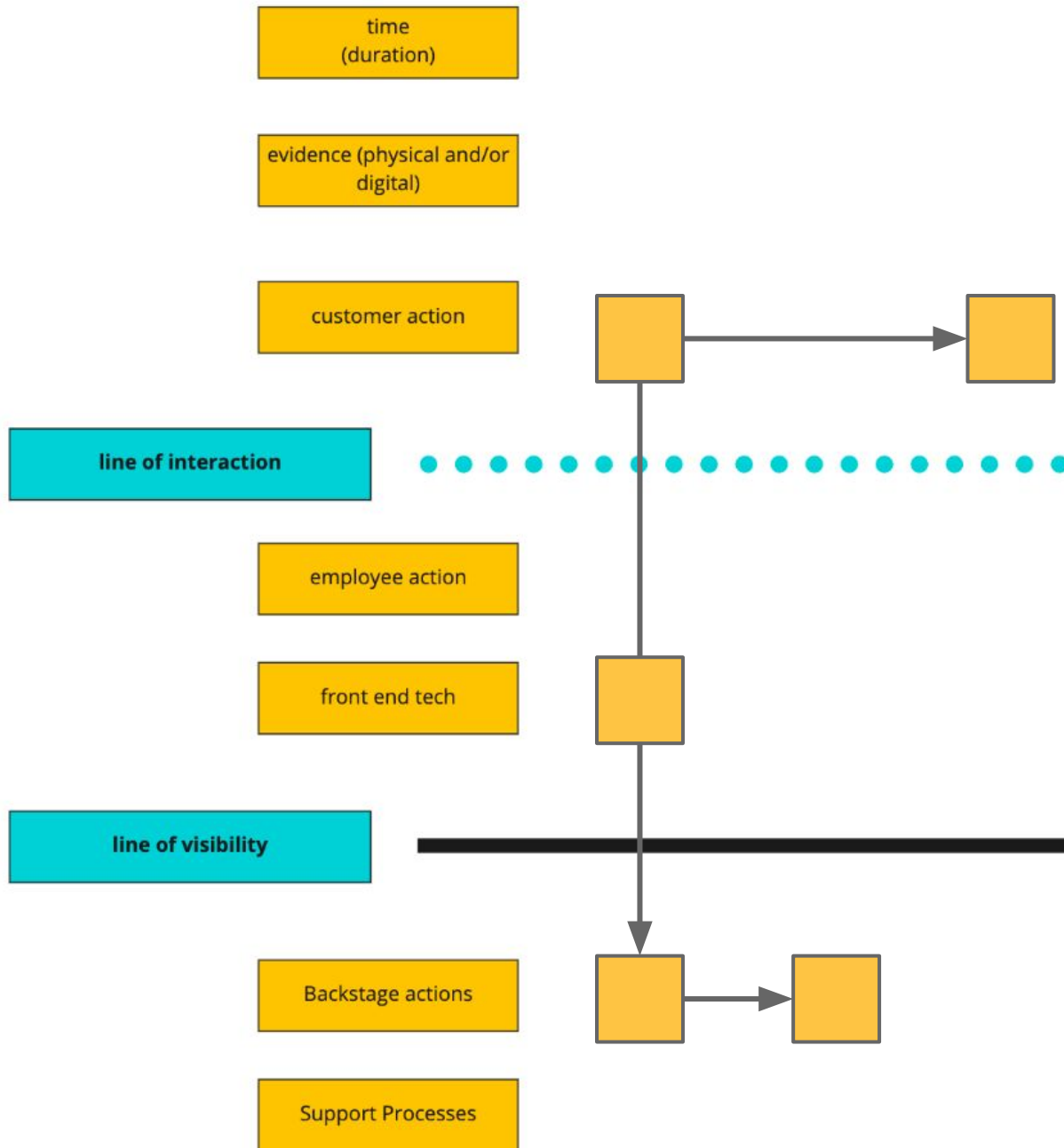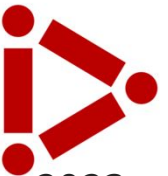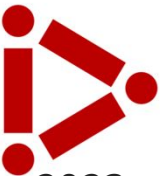
SERVICE BLUEPRINT *Example*

- **pro-tip:**

  it's not just you...these arrows make the blueprint hard to read! that's why you should be mindful with how you share this and with who.

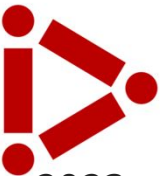Susanna Zlotnikov, 2023

How do I do this?

How do you assemble a service blueprint

- utilize a facilitator (someone with knowledge of what a service blueprint is)

- scope the topic down to something manageable;

- review existing research and data and ahead of time or plan the session to include info exchange

- this not a one-person job

- utilize actual whiteboard or virtual whiteboard software

- this will take several rounds: you'll rarely get it right on the first try

- embrace the conversation and take notes; capture unknowns/ points of disagreement
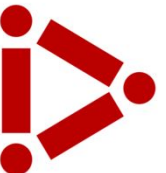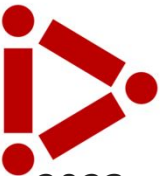
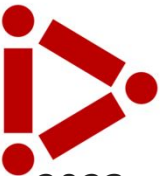# Let's give it a quick try!

Let's give it a quick try!

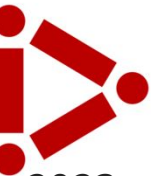really look at the photo; think about what needs to happen to make this happen.

Let's give it a quick try!

- time
- evidence
- customer action
- employee action/front end tech
- backstage stage action
- support processes

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What's the value?

Service Blueprinting helps teams by...

- creating a space to sketch / document; **capture ideas on 'paper'**

- balancing technical and user-centric aspects of a service in **one conversation**

- uncovering unknowns; **checks your assumptions**

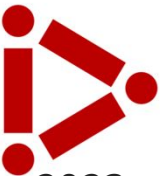- **incorporates environmental factors** that could lead to gotchas
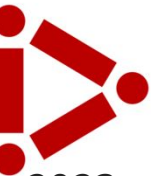
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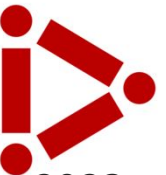
Some examples scenarios

- data flow between radiology and emergency room physicians / day shift| night shift | academic |non-academic

- mapping new workflow of medical scribes with AI transcription software.

- planning intake experience for new students

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Thank you

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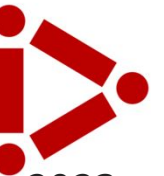
Q & A

Further Reading

- Hormess, M., Lawrence, A., & Schneider, J., Stickdorm, M. (2018). *This is Service Design Doing: Applying Service Design Thinking in the Real World: a Practitioner's Handbook*. O'Reilly Media, Inc

- Løvlie, L., Polaine, A., & Reason, B. (2013). *Service design: From insight to implementation*. Rosenfeld

- Risdon, C., & Quattlebaum, P. (2018). *Orchestrating experiences: Collaborative design for complexity*. Rosenfeld

- Shostack, L. (1984). Designing services that deliver. *Harvard Business Review*, *62*(1), pp. 133–139.

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