



Boundaries of unfamiliar learning experiences  
in the innovation journey in business  
management education

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# Overview

Introduction and context

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Final thoughts and questions

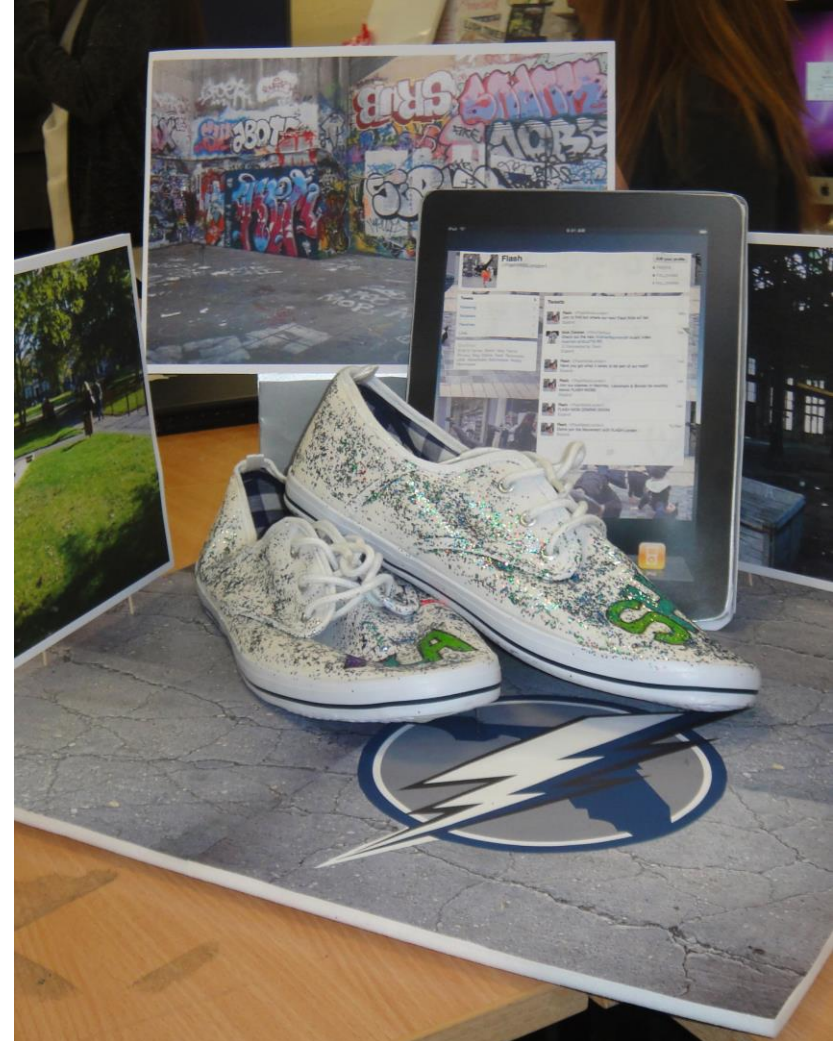
# Introduction and context

- Capacity of mock-ups to help business learners traverse disciplinary and conceptual boundaries in order to seek out innovative solutions.
- A means of mediating collaborative interaction within innovation process enabling learners to encounter the unfamiliar and incorporate it into their learning experiences.



# Learners' innovation journey

- One term-long project with four way-points
- Pedagogical approaches:
  - (1) learners given free rein to choose the customer,
  - (2) learners given a broad archetype to offer a starting point for their development
- The mock-up is a platform for
  - (1) testing new ideas,
  - (2) foster collaborative interactions,
  - (3) offer critique, and
  - (4) further dialogue on tackling the unfamiliar.



# Theoretical framing

- The four main functions that are seen as being performed by artefacts in innovation process are: (1) inspiration, (2) individual evaluation and refinement, (3) internal sharing, and (4) external alignment (Stigliani, 2008).
- Representational methods [like mock-ups], which apply manual toolkit-based modelling in a goal-oriented but playful way foster the emergence of innovation in heterogeneous groups (Schulz et al., 2015) .
- The process of design prototyping as a means of creating transformative learning environment and ‘problem-posing’ education (Friere, 1986).

# Methodological underpinning

- Participatory action research: focuses on solving a practical problem, namely helping learners to reframe the boundaries of the ‘unfamiliar’ learning experiences to create ‘new familiar’
- 134 learners
- Learners were in their final year of undergraduate study on a BA (Hons) Global Management degree
- Early 20s and represented a wide selection of cultural, social and national backgrounds
- The data was collected from three stages of mock-up development: its creation, its evaluation and post-mock-up reflection.

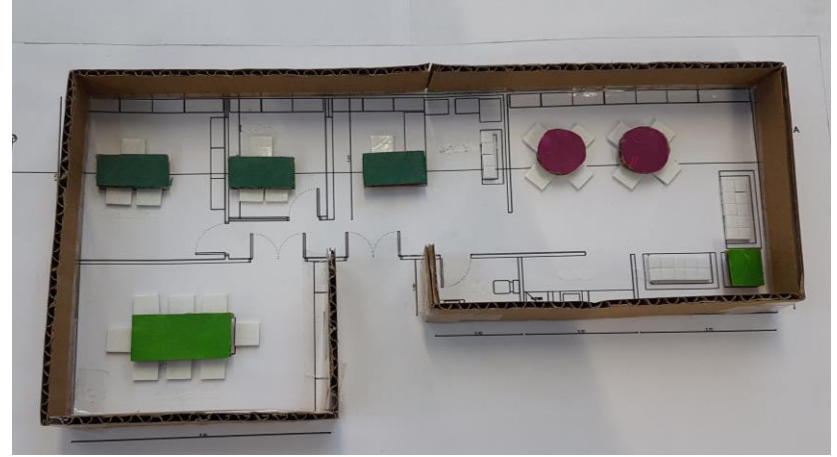
# Reframing the 'unfamiliar' into the 'new familiar'

- The value of the tactile experience of making as the framing mechanism for the collaborative endeavour;
- The capacity for facilitating, through a common goal, the management of internal team relations and interactions;
- The capacity for externalising and framing the emotional investment of the learners in the collaborative process.



# Impacting the innovation process

- New insights enabling learners to expand their knowledge by **doing**
- The process of embodiment enables members of the team to see their ideas externalised and shared
- The creation of the mock-up is a triggering point in the change from information gathering to content production





# Mediating team dynamics

The mock-up has a role surfacing and externalising issues around:

- Team dynamics and size
- Reassignment of the roles of responsibility
- Personal motivation
- Need for external intervention



# Establishing emotional connections

Emotional responses can include:

- Pleasure at being able to create something
- An acknowledgement of fun and play
- Frustration when things do not go according to plan
- Concern whether the work 'will be good enough'
- Disappointment when the feedback offers too critical a view.
- ***A sense of enthusiasm and 'we are all in it together'***



# Coping mechanisms for the 'unfamiliar'

- The team has to be willing to make the mock-up a central goal of their collaboration
- The making 'from scratch' of the mock-ups enables learners to cope with the unfamiliar and its boundaries
- 'New familiar' environments still often emerge from *new understandings of the familiar aspects* of the unfamiliar context learners encounter



# Reframing the boundaries

In time the learners recognise:

- Their newly found ability to solve innovation problems
- Feel empowered
- Generate knowledge
- Happily occupy a new familiar environment to deepen and broaden the subject in practice and theory.

# Conclusions

- The process of making sense of the unfamiliar and re-creating it into the 'new familiar' takes place at metacognitive level
- It enables learners to fast-track their self-motivation and self-belief as active contributors in collaborative teams
- It equips them with adaptability and resilience to cope with the uncertainty of such cross-disciplinary collaborative environments

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Thank you and any questions?

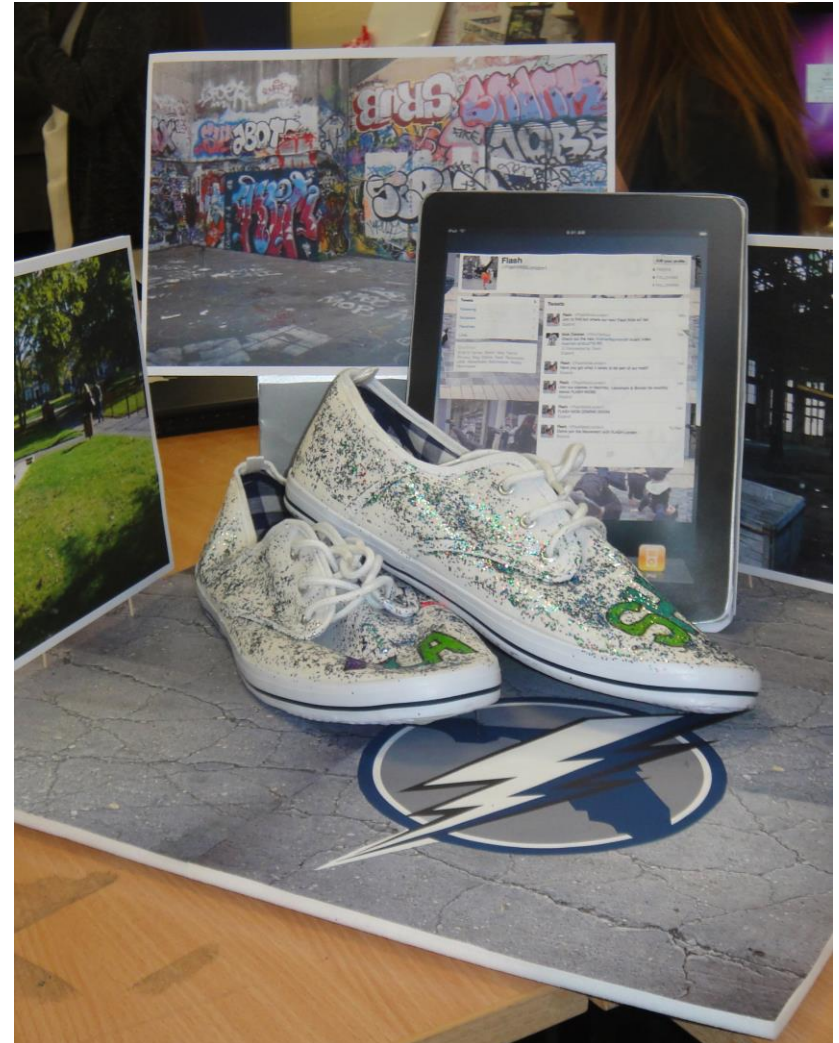
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# References

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# Excitement of making and mediation of interactions

- allow groups to coalesce around a shared idea of the offering, externalising the individuals' views and combining into a consensual one
- the mock-up as an artefact imbued with meaning and representation of a common goal can be a very useful way to separate the personalities from the objective of the process to remind learners about the shared and collaborative nature of the experience



- learners mediate their own