Putting Instructional Design in the Hands of End Users

A Case Study in User-Design at the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

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What is User-Design?

User-design empowers front line users to design their own systems and innovations.

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User-Design Works Best When:

- Expertise is not accepted by users
- User resistance to innovations exists
- Problems and issues are systemic
- Leadership supports a user-design approach
- Users are ready to assume design responsibility

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Advantages and Challenges

Promotes faster adoption and diffusion

Encourages continuous improvement

Provides interesting opportunities for users

Promotes holistic and systemic change

May reduce costs

Process may be disorderly and take longer to complete

User-design skills are required

Bad ideas or unworkable designs may result
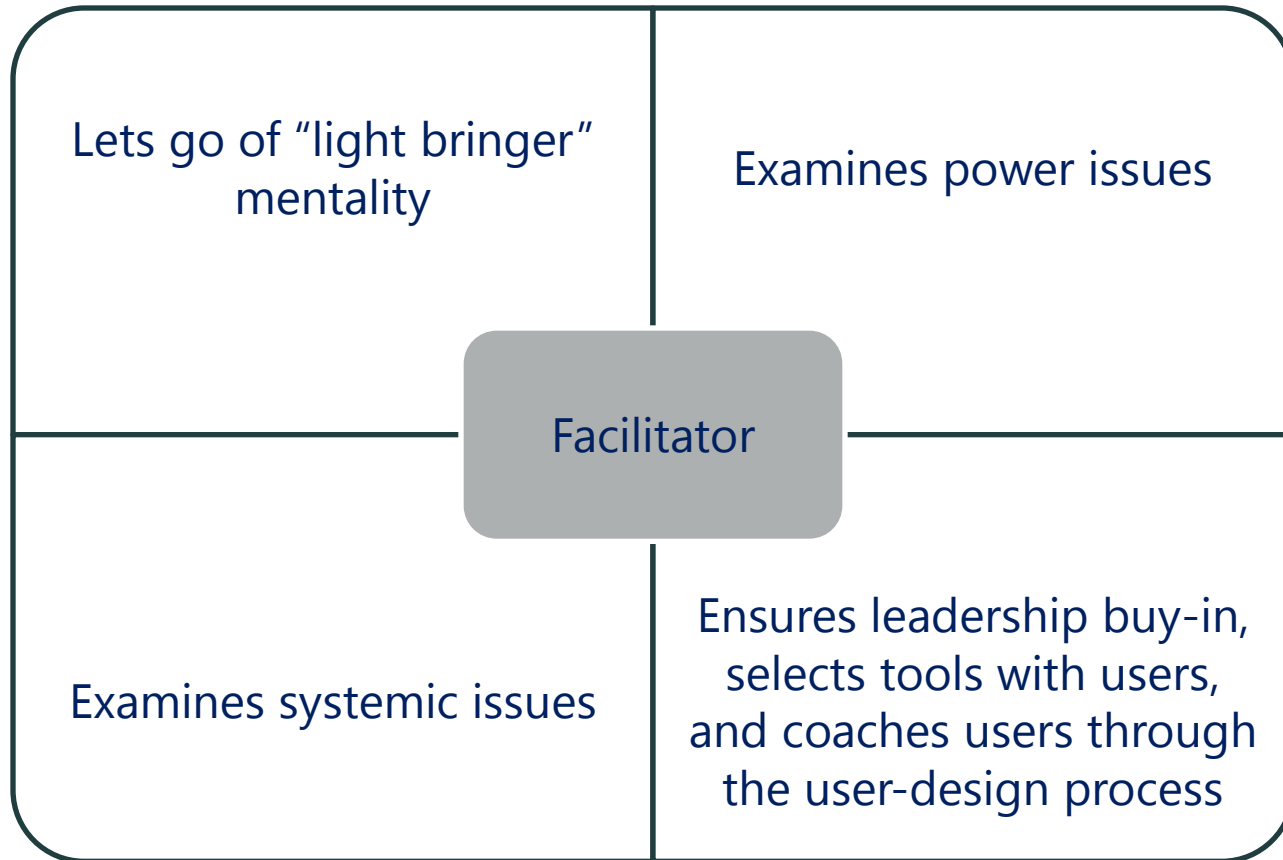
User-Design vs. User-Centered Design

User-Centered Design

- User feedback and expertise is solicited
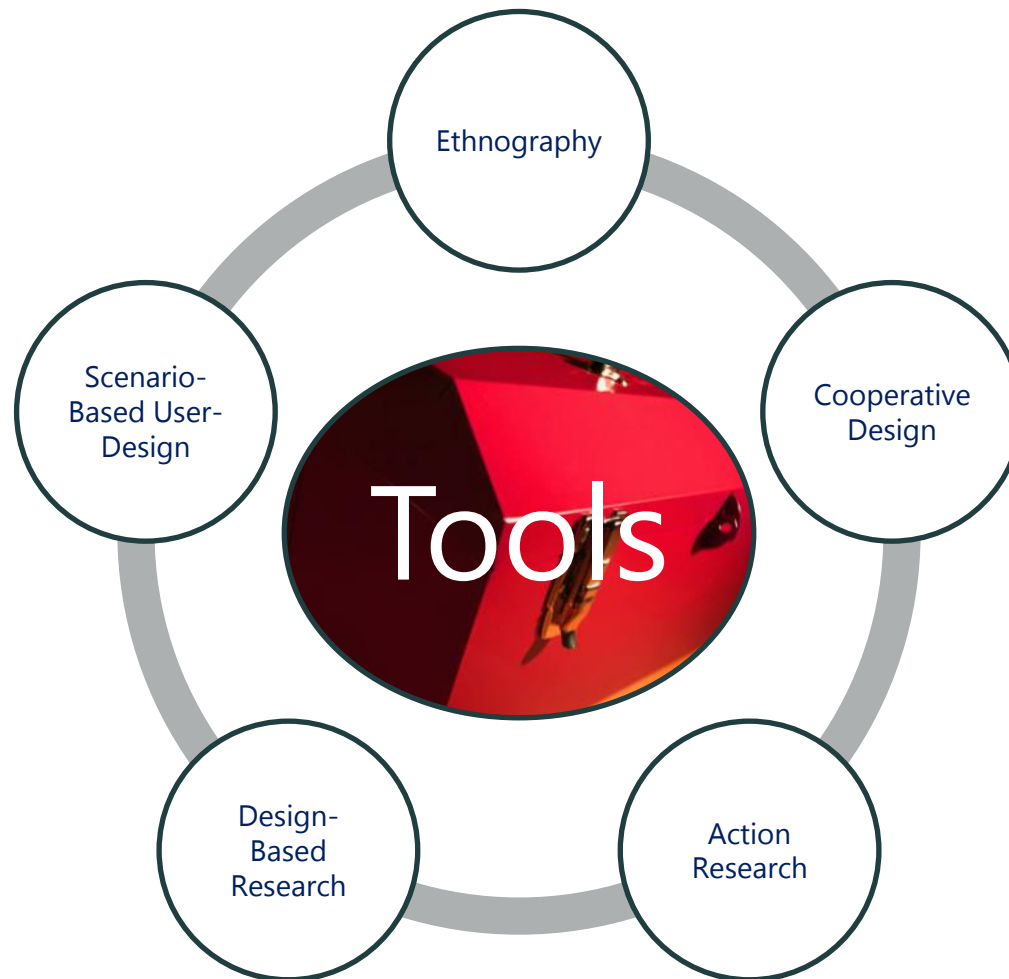- Decisions on design are left to expert designers

User-Design

- Users drive the design process and make critical decisions
- Users negotiate design with organizational leaders and designers

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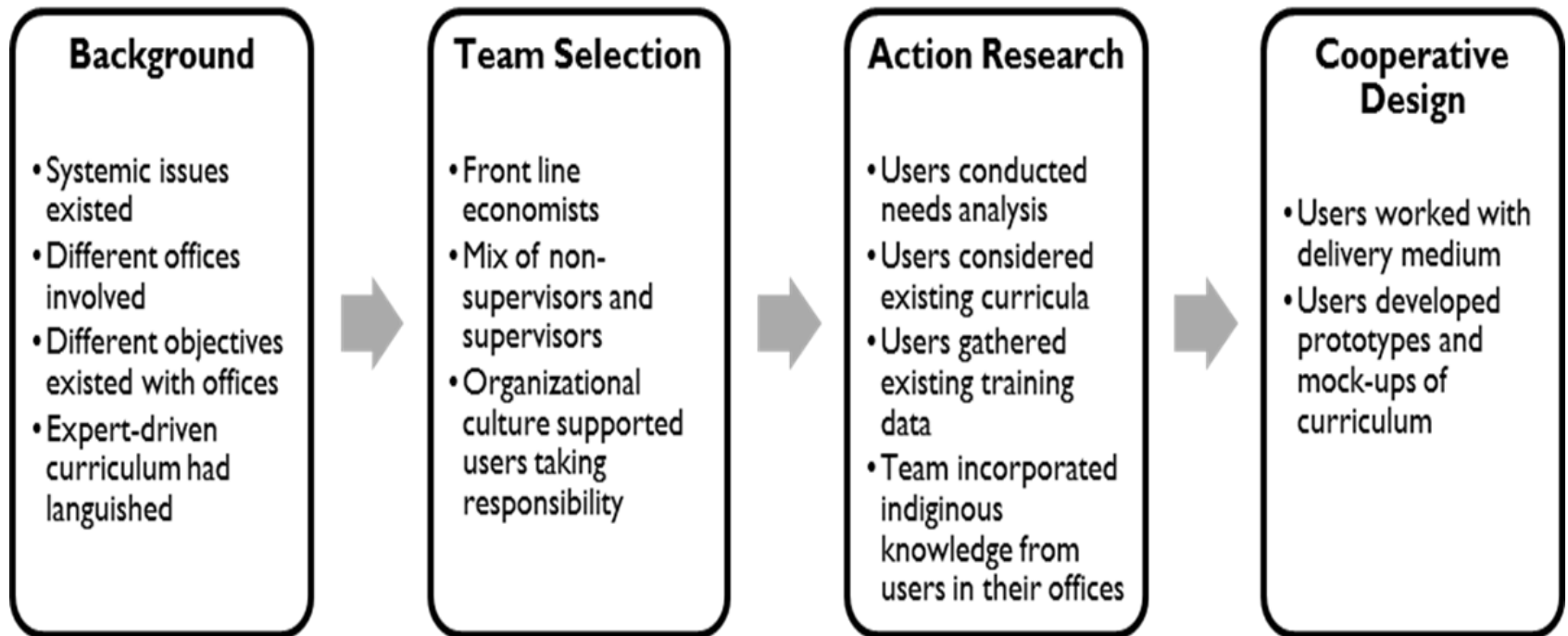# Facilitating User-Design

Lets go of "light bringer" mentality

Examines power issues

Facilitator

Examines systemic issues

Ensures leadership buy-in, selects tools with users, and coaches users through the user-design process

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User-Design Tools

Case Study: Curriculum Design

Background

- Systemic issues existed
- Different offices involved
- Different objectives existed with offices
- Expert-driven curriculum had languished

Team Selection

- Front line economists
- Mix of non-supervisors and supervisors
- Organizational culture supported users taking responsibility

Action Research

- Users conducted needs analysis
- Users considered existing curricula
- Users gathered existing training data
- Team incorporated indiginous knowledge from users in their offices

Cooperative Design

- Users worked with delivery medium
- Users developed prototypes and mock-ups of curriculum

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Thank you!

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