One toolkit
Eight exercises

THE
DIGITAL
ETHICS
COMPASS

Dansk
Design Center

HOW DO YOU USE THE **DIGITAL ETHICS COMPASS**?

The Digital Ethics Compass is a toolkit that helps organisations incorporate ethical thinking into their digital product development.

It consists of a series of exercises to be done in a specific order and some preparation beforehand. We recommend doing all of the exercises, but you can also choose to do individual ones according to your need and time.

This document contains a step-by-step guide for each exercise alongside a list of materials needed. We also recommend pens and post-its for all participants.

Time consumption

You should set aside at least half a day for the Digital Ethics Compass, but you can also spend significantly longer. Time spent depends on the complexity of the solution you have chosen to work on and how thoroughly you wish to work. Remember to take into account extra time for the preparation of materials. We recommend using the Digital Ethics Compass regularly. Try to make it a fixed part of your digital product development.

Deltagere

The Digital Ethics Compass is for all the people within the company who are a part of the product and business development. It can be designers, UX designers, product managers, business developers, data scientists, programmers, etc. To complete the Digital Ethics Compass, you should be a group of 2-20 employees. If you are more than five participating, you should split into smaller groups. It works best to have a moderator who can control the process, time and exercises. Therefore, this playbook is primarily intended for the moderator.

PREPARE

This phase aims to equip participants to talk about digital design ethics. We recommend that all participants watch the three videos and read the two articles on the topic. Finally, a product or part of a product is selected to work with throughout the workshop.

Video: **01, 02 & 03**
Articles: **01 & 02**

Exercise 01
Your solution

EXPLORE

In this phase, the participants are taken through a series of exercises to help them explore the chosen product through design ethics glasses. The outcome of this phase is that participants gain new insights about the selected product.

Exercise 02
The Ethics Navigator

Exercise 03
20 questions from ethicsprofessor

Exercise 04
New erspectives

Bonus exercise 05
Provocatype

IDENTIFY

In this phase, participants reflect upon the previous exercises to formulate ethical concerns. The concerns are then analysed using knowledge cards, and participants begin to develop initial ideas for improvement.

Exercise 06
Worrystorm

Exercise 07
Diagnosis

ACTION

The purpose of this exercise is to move from loose ideas to concrete actions and delegation of responsibilities. That is, to put words into action.

Exercise 08
Put words into action

THE **DIGITAL** ETHICS COMPASS

CONTENTS

20-30 min

Preparation

Ethics and digital design ethics can be abstract concepts. It can be challenging to understand the relevance of talking about responsibility, manipulation, inequality, good and evil when one has other important things to do in a busy everyday life. Therefore, we recommend that all participants prepare a little before completing the exercises in the Digital Ethics Compass. The preparation is about understanding the relevance of ethics and understanding the fundamental ethical concepts within digital design.

Read: Two articles on ethics and design ethics, which are part of the material in this package.
Watch: Three videos about the ethics compass

Preparation for the moderator:
If you are the moderator of a Digital Ethics Compass workshop, you must prepare thoroughly. As a minimum, you should do the following:

• Read the entire ethics navigator. You should have a reasonable understanding of the circle contents and have read all the knowledge cards.
• Read this entire manual.
• You must set the right team for the workshop. That is a team where everyone is engaged in digital design or product development through their work. And you should know all of the participants and what they are working on.

If you want to prepare even more thoroughly, you can do the following:

Read the books:
• Future Ethics by Cennydd Bowles
• Weapons of Math Destruction by Cathy O'Neil
• DataEthics - The New Competitive Advantage by Gry Hasselbalch and Pernille Tranberg

Watch the films:
• The Social Dilemma (Netflix)
• Coded Bias (Netflix)

20-30 min

Your solution

The Digital Ethics Compass is to be used either with a specific digital solution or a chosen part of a digital solution. Therefore, your first assignment is to agree upon what solution you will be working on in the following exercises. You need to shortly describe your solution to ensure all participants are on the same page. If you are a moderator, you can make sure that this has already been done before the participants meet.

How-to

1. Together with your colleagues, choose which one of your digital solutions or part of a digital solution that you would like to use as a starting point.
2. Read the questions from "Your solution."
3. Write five sentences about your chosen digital solution. What problem is it solving? How is it solving this problem? Who is the user?
4. Share with the rest of the participants.

Materials

Pdf-file: 01_Your_solution_A4

30-60 min

The Ethics Navigator

The core of the Digital Ethics Compass is the Ethics Navigator, which is a circular model that contains five ethical principles and 24 specific ethical areas of attention. The Ethics Navigator consists of both the circular model, which provides a quick overview of ethical challenges. And the 29 knowledge cards elaborate on the challenges with concrete recommendations for ethical actions and examples from the real world.

The participants must understand the Ethics Navigator, its contents, and its connection to the knowledge cards. Therefore, we recommend the following exercise, which introduces the Ethics Navigator.

Introduction to the Ethics Navigator
(This introduction should be guided by a moderator who knows the Ethics Navigator. If you are a moderator, you should read the entire Ethics Navigator, including the 29 knowledge cards associated with the model).

Begin in the centre: Ask the participants what it means to put the person in the centre. Then ask them what it means when you do NOT put the person at the centre. Have some examples ready yourself, but ask the participants to think of digital solutions where the human being is not in the centre.

The orange ring: The four ethical principles are not simple guidelines that one can follow. They all contain a built-in conflict to which there are no unambiguous answers. For example, one of the principles states that one "must give users control." But a lot of digital design is all about automating and streamlining processes, which means that you take control from the users and move the control over to the digital solution. But when does the loss of control become an ethical problem, where one no longer acts in the users' best interest but instead makes them helpless and alienated? These are difficult questions, and participants must discuss all four principles thoroughly.

02

30-60 min

Ask the participants what is meant by, for example, "Avoid manipulating"? Also, ask them when manipulation is a good thing and when manipulation becomes problematic. Ask them again to think of concrete examples of the four ethical principles.

Data, automation, and behavioural design: Ask participants to read the text about data. Then ask them to read the seven questions in the outer ring and choose one relevant to their digital solution or that otherwise catches their attention. Once all the participants have selected a question, they draw the accompanying knowledge card and read it to themselves.

Then ask the participants to explain the ethical issue to the other participants. As far as possible, they should like to put it into perspective for their digital solution.

Repeat the same process for "automation" and "behavioral design."

Materials

Pdf-file: 00_Ethics_Navigator_A1

02

15-60 min

20 questions
from the ethics professor

It can be tricky to talk about ethics when you are not used to it. Therefore, we will begin with this warm-up exercise where you are going to train your abilities to see your digital solution in a new light.

We have designed 20 question cards to place on the table with the text facing down. Take turns in turning over the cards and reading the questions aloud. Discuss the answer together. Does it spark any thoughts? A discussion? Are you inspired to see your digital solution in a new way? If a question is irrelevant for you or the chosen digital solution, pick a new card.

Continue this exercise for at least 15 minutes. Should you have more time or perhaps want to use it as a fresh input for the Friday bar, you can easily spend an hour here.

How-to

1.   Place the cards on the table with the text facing down.
2.   Take turns in flipping over a card and reading the question aloud. Discuss the answer.
3.   Use post-its for note-taking if any of the questions spark thoughts around your digital solution.
4.   Continue for at least 15 minutes. Make sure everyone in the group gets the chance to flip over a card.

Materials

Pdf-file: 03_20_questions_from_ethicsprofessor_A4
Pens
Post-its

03

45-90 min

New perspectives
An ethics game that brings in the perspectives of the outside world

Now we're going to get more serious. You will train your ability to see your digital solution from different and unusual perspectives and see how your digital product (possibly) can do more harm than good. It might sound dense, but it is an entertaining exercise.

How-to

1. Hand out a game board to each participant along with post-its and a pen for notes.
2. Place a set of cards and a stakeholder board by every group.
3. Begin the game!

Step 01: Stakeholders
Think about all the people who, in one way or another, are affected by your solution. Not just your target audience or core users, but also people who perhaps do not use your product at all but are still affected by it in other ways. It can be employees, investors, family or friends of the users, etc.

We have divided stakeholders into three types:
1. Direct stakeholders who are directly affected by your digital solution
2. Indirect stakeholders who are not actual users but in one way or another are affected by your solution
3. Excluded stakeholders who are all the people that cannot use your solution for various reasons

Map out as many different stakeholders you can think of within the three types on the stakeholder cards. Write one stakeholder per card.

04

45-90 min

Step O2: Draw cards
All participants will now draw three cards: a stakeholder card, a rating card, and a principle card.
For example, one participant could draw the following three cards:

1.   Stakeholder: Loan applicant
2.   Rating: Very angry
3.   Principle: Give users control

This participant will now imagine a situation where he/she is a loan applicant who has used the digital solution (say, a loan application app). The loan applicant has had a bad experience because the app doesn't give the user enough control over the application process.

Step O3: Write a review
Every participant will now spend 3-5 minutes writing a review describing this experience with the digital solution. Go crazy. It's encouraged to make the reviews funny and personal.

Step O4: Discuss
Read the reviews aloud. Discuss the different stakeholder experiences and note on the post-its any thoughts related to the digital solution. You will probably notice how the negative reviews contribute to discovering ethical blind spots and challenges where the positive reviews help find new opportunities to improve the solution.

Step O5: Train and repeat
Repeat steps 2-4 a few times, depending on how much time you have. The aim is to go into every nook and cranny of your digital solution and realize new and unforeseen ethical problems and opportunities. If you get to a point where nothing new is coming up, move on to the next exercise.

Materials

Pdf-file: 04_New_perspectives_cards_A4 (One set of cards per group)
Pdf-file: 04_New_perspectives_stakeholders_A3 (One stakeholder-board per group)
Pdf-file: 04_New_perspectives_gameboard_A3 (One gameboard per participant)
Pens
Post-its

04

30-60 min

Bonus exercise
Provocatype

This exercise is a bit more creative and is, therefore, aimed at the participants who work with design thinking and prototyping. The purpose of this exercise is to design an unethical and irresponsible version of your solution, which then can provide new perspectives on your existing solution. This exercise supplements the previous one. It also contributes to an even deeper understanding of the ethical challenges in your digital solution. If you approach this exercise with creativity and humor, it can be very entertaining.

Because this is a bonus exercise, skip it in case of a lack of time.

How-to

Begin with designing a new version of your digital solution as unethical and irresponsible as possible. It should, however, still be usable and demanded by users. In other words, imagine a solution where there are no ethical constraints or limitations. You can exaggerate and make it as absurd as possible. The intention is not for it to be published or produced. It is simply a thought experiment that allows for new perspectives on your existing solution.

1. Describe the solution (3-5 sentences), and draw it, if you want.
2. Now reflect together upon why the solution is unethical. Who is it harming, why? Write your thoughts on the template.
3. Reflect together on which part of your existing solution has inspired you in the development of the provocatype? Write your thoughts on the template.
4. Lastly, reflect together on whether your existing solution could develop into your provocatype (even if just a little bit)? How and why? Write your thoughts on the template.

Materials

PDF-file: 05_Provocatype_A3
Pens

05

15-30 min

Worrystorm

The previous exercises have most likely sparked some thoughts by now. If you listen closely, you have probably begun to hear a bell ringing somewhere in your mind. This bell is a good sign. It means that you have started to see your digital solution in a new light. You are thinking of the various stakeholders, are open to the ethical dilemmas, and are considering future consequences. All these considerations create big and small concerns - and that is good! Now we will collect and concretize these concerns.

How-to

1.   Make sure all participants have post-its and a pen.
2.   Each participant will look through their notes and reflect on the exercises. Write down your concerns on the post-its. Write one per post-it.
3.   Present and share them within the group.
4.   Look through your post-its and see if you can cluster them into larger groups.
5.   Give a title to the different groups that cover the theme of concerns within the group. In the next exercises, you will use these groups of concerns to find solutions to your design challenges.

Materiales
Pens
Post-its

06

30-60 min

Diagnosis

In this exercise, you will go from concerns to a concrete understanding of which ethical challenges there are in your digital solution. And you will begin to develop the first ideas for improvement.

How-to

1. Choose the most critical group of concerns. That is the group of concerns that is most urgent or where the ethical challenges are severe.
2. Move all post-its to the blue diagnostic sheet and write the overall title for these concerns on the sheet.
3. Now you need to use the Ethics Navigator again. You must each study the Ethics Navigator and find ethical challenges in the Ethics Navigator that match your concerns. Write the challenge number in one of the three boxes: automation, behavioural design or data. Keep going until you can find no more matching challenges.
4. Now you need to use the knowledge cards. First, find the knowledge cards that are related to the numbers you have selected. Read the text on the front of the knowledge card aloud and discuss whether the knowledge card is relevant to your concern. If not, put the knowledge card back into the pile.
5. Now you have a bunch of knowledge cards that are relevant to your concern. Turn over each knowledge card and read the recommendations with the good and the bad example. Discuss the content and write down thoughts and ideas that arise along the way.
6. Now write each one of your ideas for concrete actions that can solve your ethical challenge. It has to be brainstormed, so don't be limited by what is difficult or impossible. Just write it all down on post-its and place them on the white box at the bottom. When you can not think of more actions, you move on to the next exercise.

Materialer

Pdf-file: 00_Ethics_Navigator_A1
Pdf-filen: 07_Diagnosis_A3
Pens
Post-its

07

30-60 min

Put words into **action**

Now it's time to step back into the world of possibility. The purpose of this exercise is to move from loose ideas to concrete actions and delegation of responsibilities.

How-to

1. Grab the post-its you just wrote. Choose the first one and discuss the action. Is it realistic? How would that be done in practice? In which part of the organization lies the responsibility? Which people would be responsible for this action?
2. If you agree that it is an action that you want to pursue, move it to the sheet "Put words into action". Here you must assess whether the activity falls into one of the four categories:

    Organisation:
    An action that requires organizational change (example: We need to hire more women in our data science department)

    Business model:
    An action that requires a change in the business model (example: We do not have to ask for people's credit cards when they try our subscription)

    Legal:
    An action that requires a change in rules or guidelines (example: We must make it very clear in our terms of use that our users own their data)

    Design and technology:
    An action that requires changing interface design or back-end technology (example: We do not have to start the next episode of a TV series automatically)

08

30-60 min

3. Finally, discuss who in the organization is responsible for the various actions. Write down the names of these people. Save the action sheet and take it home, and hang it on the wall (if you like).
4. You are now done finding solutions to your first concern. Your task now is to complete the same exercise for all the groups of concerns you have identified. You can do this immediately, but it can also be a process that can extend over many days or weeks. It depends on the number of concerns and on how thoroughly you go about it.

MaterialS

Pdf-files: 08_Words_into_action_A3
Pdf filen: 00_Ethics_Navigator_A1
Pdf-filen: Knowledgecards_A4
Pens
Post-its

08