How to use
The Circular Value Chain Tool

The Circular Value Chain Tool is divided in different steps to guide you in the creation of circular initiatives. Additionally, three tutorials can be watched by following the links below. It is recommended to watch the tutorials before you start using the tool.

Tutorials:

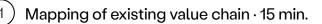## How to use the tool:

⓪ Preparations

0.1 · Focus area
Decide on your focus area - what do you want to map out?
When you narrow in your focus, it becomes easier to carry out the remaining steps as well as inviting the relevant stakeholders to the workshop.

> Example on a focus area: *It could be a chair you are selling, a specific ingredient or simply a plastic box for packaging.*

0.2 · Materials
Find a useful mapping canvas, i.e., a big cardboard, brown paper or whatever you have access to. Make sure the mapping board is big enough for the value chain to be visualized. Make sure the mapping board is big enough for the value chain to be visualized (size; 100x150cm).
Print out all materials and cut out the different pieces and question- and role cards.

① Mapping of existing value chain · 15 min.

1.1 · Events
Ask yourselves:

What's the first event that happens in the value chain?

Use the green event cards to map out all the sequences you can think of that are a part of the value chain and put them next to each other on the canvas in the right order.

Example:
– *Event 1: transport the resource by truck*
– *Event 2: filling box with candy*
– *Event 3: labeling of box*

> Tip: Remember to discuss the events, actors, and resources when you place them on the board to bring all expertise and knowledge in action.

1.2 · Actors and resources

Use the pink actor cards and the yellow resource cards and add one for each event card from the previous step. Once you have added both the actor and resource for each event, you have mapped out and visualized the value chain.

Example:
– *Actors: logistic agent, producer of the resource or waste management company*
– *Resource: candy box used in supermarket*

1.3 · Breakdowns

Use the orange cards to mark the breakdowns in the value chain, either at an actor, resource or event, where you think more knowledge is needed.

Example:
– *Event: How much energy is applied to perform the manufacturing process of the candy boxes?*
– *Actor: Is the actor willing to look into how they can source more sustainable materials?*
– *Resource: What is the exact CO2-eq footprint of the material we use? What are the alternatives with a smaller footprint? Can the material be reused or recycled?*

1.4 · Question cards

Now, you've visualized the value chain. Use the green question cards and apply them as reflections to your mapping.

Example:
– *Which actors are involved in processing the raw materials?*
– *How is the resource handled when it is disposed of?*

(2) Idea generation · 15 min.

Divide the post-its between the groups.

Spend 5 minutes on an individual silent brainstorm and generate ideas (i.e. new scenarios) for circular initiatives in the value chain. Write your ideas on post-its - one idea per post-it.

> Tip: A brainstorm on a circular initiative could e.g. be how to (directly) reuse plastic packaging buckets for shipping of other products by selling them to a plastic recycling company.

Place the purple 'Scenario' cards in the middle of the table - you can use them if you run out of inspiration and ideas for circular initiatives.

(3) Present and select · 15 min.

The next step is to present each of the scenarios to the team and to place them in the value chain. Place them where you think they belong.

Once all the ideas have been presented, you can choose to do a second round of brainstorming if you have been inspired by each other. Remember that it is a good idea to take notes if new thoughts or ideas occur.

Finally, it is about assessing which of the circular scenarios or purple event-pieces you will work on and try to realize.

Spend time discussing which ideas you want to develop further. If you find it hard to choose which idea(s) to move on with, you can use the following questions as a guide:

> – What is the time horizon for the different ideas? Are you willing to prioritize short-, medium- or long-term initiatives as an ecosystem?
>
> – How feasible are the solution(s) - e.g., what actors are available? Who is ready for collaboration and potentially changing aspects of their business model?
>
> – Where do you reckon the biggest positive impact lies? E.g., where can you see the biggest reductions in GHG emissions?
>
> – Which ideas are actively working the most on circular principles?

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When you have selected the circular initiative you would like to work on, use the purple event piece and replace it with the post-it on the value chain board.

(4) **Make an action plan · 15 min.**

Start by figuring out your roles for making the initiative a reality, and remember to delegate tasks related to the scenario. What does it take to try it in practice, and who among your stakeholders can help make it possible?

Consider any rebound effects of the new scenarios. For example, does a scenario create more transport so that you do not save any energy in the end? What other trade-off might you run into, and what assumptions do you have related to the coming initiative(s)? Remember to write this down and keep them in mind along the way.

Finally, remember to arrange a follow-up meeting where everyone reports on the tasks they have been working on.

Contact:

Do you have questions about the toolkit or would you like to book a workshop with us?

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