



## HACKATHON

*“A Cultural Integration Strategy for Engaging People to Go Fast in Moving Towards Common Mindsets and Practices”*

Hackathons are short-term events at which participants work in small groups to ideate, develop and present a solution to a problem.

Source: [Design at hackathons: new opportunities for design research | Design Science | Cambridge Core](#)

### Objectives

- Create a memorable shared experience that engages people in solving cross functional challenges and acting as one team.
- Generate ideas to address gaps or discrepancies in existing cross functional processes/practices.
- Socialize mindsets key to your organization’s success and growth.

### Guiding Principles for Solving Challenges

Provide teams a list of weighted guiding principle to use for designing their solutions. These will be used to evaluate ideas generated by the groups.

For example...

Guiding Principles	Assigned Weight (1-5)
1. Scalable, consistent processes, practices, and policies that streamline our work	
2. Balance efficiency with sensitivity to the experience of our contractors, customers, and team	
3. Relationship focused (white glove service at the right time for the right reasons)	



~20 participants  
5 teams of 4 participants  
Teams tackle 3-4 challenges  
15-20 solutions generated

## Life Cycle



## Identifying Hackathon Challenges

Create a prioritized list of challenges based on process or practices.

## Format

1. Hold the Hackathon during non-working hours (for example 6:30-11:30 pm ). Ask people to make a commitment and sacrifice. Recognize their efforts in some organizational way (flexible time off for hours in Hackathon, provide dinner expense up to X amount, offer gift cards, etc...)

***Rationale:** Novelty creates memorability. A small investment of sacrifice accelerates cross functional relationships. Shared experiences especially ones with a little pressure and “discomfort” baked into them builds trust, commitment, and confidence.*

2. In advance of the session assemble people into cross functional teams (3-4 people per team).
3. Create a grab bag of “Challenges”. Teams solve as many “Challenges” as they can in the allotted time. Teams are given worksheets or templates to use in documenting their ideas.
4. Blind peer evaluation of ideas generated by measuring them against a weighted set of criteria built from the Guiding Principles (see above). For example:

### Challenge X:

Idea	Guiding Principle	A: GP Weight	B: Idea Eval. (1-5) 1=low, 5=high	Score=A*B
Idea #1	Scalable, consistent process	5	2	10
	GP2	3	4	12
	GP3	3.5	3	10.5
IDEA #1 TOTAL SCORE				32.5

You'll end up with a Score Card for each Challenge with all of the Idea scores.

**IMPORTANT:** The Blind Peer Evaluation occurs during the Hackathon. Report out of scores will be transparent and shared post session. However, expectations will be CLEARLY set that the “best scoring” idea does not mean the idea will be adopted. We'll discuss how final decisions will be made and how those decisions will be communicated. We expect there to be some low hanging fruit that “best scoring ideas” do get selected and implemented. Adopting some ideas from the Hackathon is crucial for the ultimate success of this intervention. What we include in the Grab Bag of Challenges is crucial in setting everyone up for success to create an empowering, fruitful experience.

Let us help you create a memorable storied experience to engage people in your organization. A well designed and facilitated Hackathon will accelerate trust and engagement with your people.

Reach out today to learn more: [info@gravitastransform.com](mailto:info@gravitastransform.com), 415-948-8087

