

# OPEN DESIGN CARD GAME

*Number of Players: 6-18*

*Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.*

Margaret Mead

Do you think the future of the world is in your hands? We think you should! Playing this game, you are going to find a solution to a problem that the world faces now.

This game is a mix between a solution design workshop and a sci-fi story. First you will choose your own design problem, then you divide into three groups and enter the game by imagining yourself in a sci-fi setting. The game asks you to change the narrative of the problem you're addressing. If you change something now, how can the future look better as a result? To find a solution together, playing cards prompt you with new challenges, each of which brings you a step closer or further from the future you wish for. To win this game all you need to do is open your mind, imagine wildly, embrace the chaos and let the game guide you.

The narrative design of the workshop is modeled after Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey. Each participant is a hero as they tell their story while working out a solution to their shared problem. Following a narrative, the workshop game resembles a typical design process, which works because story and design draw on the same principles to create meaning. A story follows four steps: challenge, conquer, change and prevail. A design process follows four similar steps: analyze, ideate, develop, test. Bringing these together is quite unique.

Wish For The Future was developed by Reboot Stories, a creative collective that mixes storytelling, technology and design to innovate education and the way we approach problems.

## Game Instructions

*How do we make the world work for 100% of humanity  
in the shortest possible time through spontaneous cooperation  
without any ecological damage or disadvantage to anyone?  
Buckminster Fuller*

It's a bold endeavor and this game helps by facilitating some little steps that can lead to a big change. Within the next hour, you create a concept – a micro agent for change – that can be useful for you and others to reach this common goal.

### **Game objective:**

Devise a storified action map for your wish by collaborating with your peers.

### **Game win:**

There is no lone winner. You win the game collectively by satisfying 2 conditions

1. Your concept is embedded in the story you develop.
2. You record your concept/story and commit to make it happen.

### **Materials you need:**

You need space for three groups to huddle around three tables (or floor, somewhere to put the boards and cards).

If you have a white/blackboard awesome, otherwise an A3/A4/butcher paper will do.

You definitely need:

- post-its
- white or colored A5 or A4 paper
- colored pens
- optionally provide some found objects to build models of your ideas

### **Set up:**

Give each group their stack of cards, post-its, white or colored A5 or A4 paper, colored pens.

And each group needs a timer!! Your phone works for that. Make sure someone is

in charge of the timer, because your time slots need to align when the groups come together throughout the game.

### How to play:

#### *1. Choose a Wish*

Task for all: Come up with a wish for your game. To find your wish:

Pair up in teams of two or three.

Set your timer for 3 minutes.

Write down as many ideas as you can.

Set your timer to 1 minute

Choose your favourite wish of the ones in your group.

One group after the other, tell everyone your wish.

Once you have heard all wishes, tell them again and cheer on each wish. The wish with the most applause/cheering is the one you will work on today!

Tip: It helps to make the wish as narrow as possible. You can use one of the categories below as a first filter.

Categories for your wish *(use the categories to help you ideate)*

### **Urbanisation**

ie your wish is "I wish that everyone would ride their bike to work"  
then your design question is "How might we enable everyone to ride a bike to work?"

### **Humanities**

ie your wish is "I wish that we could eradicate bullying at schools"  
Then your design question is "How might we eradicate bullying behaviour in kinds?"

### **Economy**

ie your wish is "I wish that no one lived in poverty"  
Then your design question is "How might we spread tools to foster good entrepreneurship?"

### **Government**

ie your wish is "I wish that lobbying benefitted people not corporations"  
Then your design question is "How might we as people influence politicians more effectively?"

### **Health**

ie your wish is "I wish that there were fewer lifestyle diseases"  
Then your design question is "How might we encourage the food industry to produce a healthier range?"

### **Sustainability**

ie your wish is "I wish that everyone used solar power"  
Then your design question is "How might we make solar power an easier option?"

### **Culture**

ie your wish is "I wish that everyone spoke at least two languages"  
Then your design question is "How might we make learning a language easier?"

### **Education**

ie your wish is "I wish that everyone could read and write"  
Then your design question is "How might we design an app that teaches both?"

## 2. Split into Groups

Divide the players into three groups:

**Designers** – The future rests in your hands. Over the next 60 minutes you need to come up with a design solution that will grant your wish. Don't let your ideas be limited by money, let your imaginations run wild! At times you will be visited by the other groups. Be collaborative, appreciative and integrate their ideas into yours.

**Storytellers** – Over the next 60 minutes you're going to create a story with a beginning, middle and end. You will choose main characters that drive the change. There will be obstacles and supporting elements. Do not try to solve the problem with your story! Halfway through the game you will be prompted to weave the designer's solution into your story as a turning point. Be collaborative, appreciative and integrate everyone's ideas into your story.

**The Future** – You are the great grandchildren of the designers and storytellers, living many years into the future. The world around you is grim and you find a time portal that lets you communicate with the past. It is important that you tell the past what went wrong and what the bad future looks like. Another task is to help them improving history by giving hints and suggestions on the way. Your role is to give support. Be collaborative. If you see a problem, try and solve it together!

### 3. Read the story to all players (or use guided meditation):

*It's bleak. With every new day Fin finds the world drearier. The accelerated speed of life is inhumane, resources are dwindling, and regret is everyone's companion. Everyone knew it; they knew that they had to change their habits a long time ago, but not enough people did. They failed to preserve a good life because they failed to innovate for an age of depletion. Fin shivers. In a flash, he grabs a piece of paper and writes*

*Dear past,  
Please help! The future is grim, you don't know how bad it gets! Your worst nightmares have become reality. Please don't ignore the issues you see at the horizon. Do something! Because the future depends on it.  
Sincerely, the future*

*He adds "November 14, 2114" with a marker. Then he folds the paper into an airplane and sends it on a journey, out the window, into the night sky before it finally disappears out of view.*

*The paper plane descends into Hanna's lap. She looks up. The sun glares and she*

*can't see where it came from. Unfolding the paper, Hanna sees Fin's message, and the date. 100 years into the future? She looks closer. The date is changing. It's a count down. Her time is running out. Is this happening? Will life be so dire? She runs home, to the old shed, where she finds all kinds of tools and materials. Thanks to an inheritance she has the money, but she needs help: engineers, and mechanics, and marketers, policy-makers, architects, environmentalists and dreamers! She wishes she could ask what the future needs. So she jots down a note, folds it into a paper airplane and sends it off into the sky. It disappears into thin air, right in front of her eyes.*

Meditation:

*Close your eyes. Imagine you are leaving the world behind. Floating into space. You see the earth below you, so small. You look ahead and find yourself sliding through a wormhole.*

*When you emerge you can see the earth below you again. But it's not the earth you came from. It's an alternate world some time in the future.*

*You descend towards the ground.*

*Now look around. In this world no one has heard of Google. In fact no one uses smart phones the way we do.*

*Look at the people around you. How do they look? Who are they with. How do they feel? What does the world around you look like?*

*What does it smell like?*

*What do you hear?*

*How does it make you feel?*

*Look around and find a place that seems like a good inspiration to solve your design question.*

*Go there and explore.*

*Keep that feeling, in your mind remain in your location.*

*Now open your eyes, turn to your group, and take your first card.*

NOW FOLLOW THE CARDS. WHENEVER YOUR TIME RUNS OUT TAKE A NEW CARD.

# # 1

*Set your timer for 5 minutes.*

First some research. Now, quickly, go over to the storytellers and ask them questions about the problem. If you finish early go back and discuss what you have learned. When 5 minutes are up take the next card.

**To learn how to ask great questions pick up Alt Card A.**

DESIGNERS



# # 2

*Set your timer for 5 minutes.*

Now come up with a design question. If you finish early discuss what you heard from the Storytellers.

**If you need help to write a design question please pick up Alt Card B.**

DESIGNERS



# # 3

*Set your timer for 2 minutes.*

The Future will call you.  
Go meet them. Listen.

Then share your design question. Make clear that this is your shared framework. All groups have to work with it.

Go back to your spot. Take the next card.

DESIGNERS



# # 4

*Set your timer for 10 minutes.*

It's now time to let your imagination run free. Start brainstorming ideas that can help solve the problem. No idea is a bad idea at this stage. Go mad.

**If you would like some extra help pick up Alt Card C.**

DESIGNERS



## # 5

*Set your timer for 6 minutes.*

The Future Group are coming over to give you a list of stakeholders and their needs. Send them home again. Then, based on your brainstorm, come up with one idea that addresses those needs. Start fleshing out your idea.

A spy from the Future will stay behind and listen.

DESIGNERS



## # 6

*Set your timer for 7 minutes.*

The Storytellers are coming over to let you consult the paper picker about an upcoming obstacle. Make a note of the obstacle. Afterwards, tell the Storytellers your idea.

Then, by yourself, brainstorm how your design overcomes the obstacle.

DESIGNERS



## # 7

*Set your timer for 5 minutes.*

Work on your ideas. If you have too many, make decisions and focus on creating something coherent. Think about features, functions and benefits.

In order to be clear when you share your ideas later use Alt Card D as a template.

DESIGNERS



## # 8

*Set your timer for 10 minutes.*

Gather everyone for 1 or 2 minutes. Share your ideas as you outlined them on Alt Card D. Listen to everyone's questions but do not answer them. Instead, use them to refine your design while you illustrate your idea on 2 pieces of A4 paper.

**If you need help drawing please pick up Alt Card E.**

DESIGNERS





# # 9

*Set your timer for 5 minutes.*

Get up and find the Future. With one hand reach into the circle and grab someone's hand across the circle, not next to you. Then with your other hand, grab someone else's hand. You cannot let go. The storytellers unravel you. You will do what they say and move in the direction they want.

DESIGNERS



# # 10

Now share and document your solution and drawings!

Choose someone to film the following steps

1. The Future read out their first letter (go get it!)
2. The Storytellers present their story up to the obstacle.
3. The Designers share their solution.
4. The Storytellers present their end of the story.
5. The Future read out their second letter
6. Sit back, smile, and commit to what to do next.

DESIGNERS



#

DESIGNERS



#

DESIGNERS



# ALT CARD A

Start your questions with “why”, “what”, “how”, and “when” to avoid yes/no answers. Ask them what people say, what they do and think, what they see and hear, how they feel.

For example:

Why do we have a problem?

What is the greatest threat?

How exactly does it affect you?

How do you feel about the problem?

Can you tell me more about xyz?

DESIGNERS



# ALT CARD B

A design question is a concise call to action. You choose what it is and for whom!

The narrower your question, the better your results. It always asks for the “how.”

For example:

How can we [what].....

.....

for [whom, user] .....

so that [envision the improved state].....

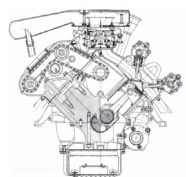
.....

DESIGNERS



# ALT CARD C

Look at one of the random images below and try to connect one or all of them to a solution.



DESIGNERS



# ALT CARD D

Any pitch follows a simple form: problem, insight, challenge, idea. Use this sentence as a short cut to share your ideas:

For [whom] ....., [describe their problem] .....

the [your invention] ..... is a [describe what it is] .....

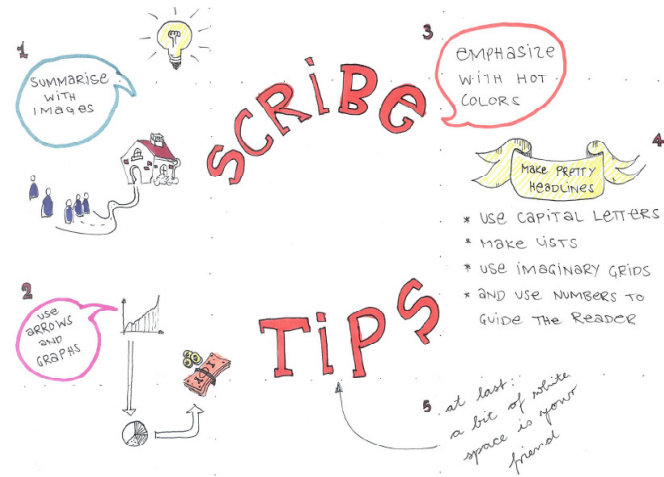
that [describe its function].....

Unlike [contrast with old system].....  
our invention is better because .....

DESIGNERS



# ALT CARD E



DESIGNERS



# ALT CARD F

DESIGNERS



# ALT CARD G

DESIGNERS



# ALT CARD H

DESIGNERS



# # 1

*Set your timer for 5 minutes.*

The Designers come to ask you questions about the problem. Please answer them as honestly as possible drawing on your own experiences or your imagination. If you finish early discuss (without the designers) what you know about writing a good story. When the 5 minutes are up take the next card.

STORYTELLERS



# # 2

*Set your timer for 5 minutes.*

**Take Alt Card A.** Using it as a guide draw a story time line on a large piece of paper. Take post-its to mark out what could happen. What you do now may change later. Do it anyway.

STORYTELLERS



# # 3

*Set your timer for 2 minutes.*

The Future will call you.  
Go meet them. Listen.

Hear the design question. Listen closely, take a note because this is the framework that all groups have to work with.

STORYTELLERS



Go back to your spot. Take the next card.

# # 4

*Set your timer for 10 minutes.*

Use what you heard. Fill out your post-its on the timeline for the hero (step 1 on your time line). What is the hero like? Draw and write around the post-its. Then, fill out post-its for the problem (step 2 on your time line). Describe the people's struggle.

STORYTELLERS



**Pick up Alt Card B for some clues.**

## # 5

*Set your timer for 6 minutes.*

Make a list of obstacles that the designers need to address. At the same time, one of you has to make a paper picker. Write numbers 1-4 on the corners. Then, choose 4 of your obstacles and write them inside.

**No idea how to make a paper picker? Take Alt Card C**

STORYTELLERS



## # 6

*Set your timer for 7 minutes.*

Go over and let the Designers choose a number on the paper picker to reveal your obstacle. Then, ask about their ideas. Then go back and write the hero's vision/goal and the obstacle into your story time line. Write and draw how people react to the obstacle. Don't try to find a solution!

**For help pick up Alt Card D**

STORYTELLERS



## # 7

*Set your timer for 5 minutes.*

Welcome the Future. Exchange what you've got. Present your story slowly, because the Future is going to draw on your time line. Improve the time line together.

When the time is up take the next card.

STORYTELLERS



## # 8

*Set your timer for 10 minutes.*

Gather everyone. Listen to the designers' idea. You have 1 minute to ask questions. Go back and incorporate their idea into the solution post-its on your story time line. Add any surprises that happen as people use the idea. Those of you who don't write, draw.

STORYTELLERS



# # 9

*Set your timer for 5 minutes.*

Wait until the Designers and the Future have turned into a human knot. Then go and unravel them. Your goal is to get everyone standing in a circle. No one can let go of the hands they hold!

Afterwards tell everyone to pick up their next card.

STORYTELLERS



# # 10

Now share and document your solution and drawings!

Choose someone to film the following steps

1. The Future read out their first letter (go get it!)
2. The Storytellers present their story up to the obstacle.
3. The Designers share their solution.
4. The Storytellers present their end of the story.
5. The Future read out their second letter
6. Sit back, smile, and commit to what to do next.

STORYTELLERS



#

STORYTELLERS

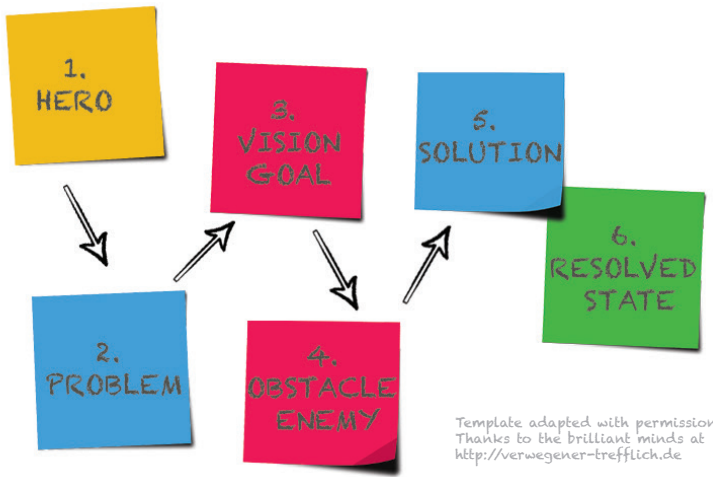


#

STORYTELLERS



# ALT CARD A



STORYTELLERS



# ALT CARD B

We want you to create a rich time line including text and images. Write your ideas on post-its (one per post-it) and place them around step 1 (relating to the hero) and step 2 (relating to the problem). Complete up to step 2 only.

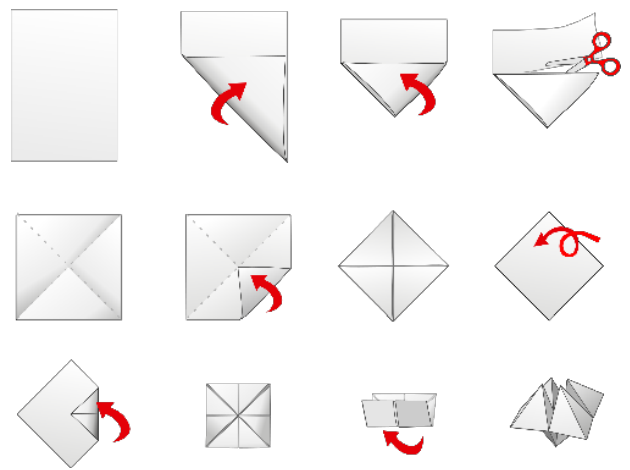
Flesh out what your characters are like. Give them a personality, some habits and a name.

Think about the problem. What are the core aspects of it? Can you distill them and tell an anecdote that explains why it is a problem? How would step 1 and 2 be told in a book or a movie?

STORYTELLERS



# ALT CARD C



STORYTELLERS



# ALT CARD D

In good stories sometimes we don't know if the hero will be able to overcome the obstacle. We are on the brink with them, wondering if they will or not. Write this dramatic tension into your story. This template may help:

Little did they know that [add obstacle] .....  
 ..... The people felt ..... by this.  
 Even [your heroes] ..... doubted their ability.  
 But surprisingly .....

STORYTELLERS



# # 1

*Set your timer for 5 minutes.*

Divide into groups of two. One asks the other “Why should this problem be solved?” Ask 5 times exactly the same question. Don’t change the question, don’t ask or say anything else. Make notes on each answer. Change roles. Repeat.

THE FUTURE



# # 2

*Set your timer for 5 minutes.*

Reflecting on your answers from before, your group task now is to write a letter from the future to the past. Tell what happens if this problem is not solved. The future can be 10 years or 100 years ahead.

THE FUTURE



**If you need help pick up Alt Card A.**

# # 3

*Set your timer for 2 minutes.*

Go somewhere central and call everyone together. Take 1 minute to read out your letter to everyone.

Afterwards, ask the Designers to tell everyone their design question. Listen! Their focus is your framework.

THE FUTURE



Then, go back to your spot, take the next card.

# # 4

*Set your timer for 10 minutes.*

Now, zoom back into the past. Think about 100% of society. Who are the people who can benefit from a solution? Define their needs.

THE FUTURE



**For more help pick up Alt Card B.**



## # 5

*Set your timer for 6 minutes.*

Go to the Designers and give them your list of stakeholders and their needs. Choose one member of your group to spy on their solution. The rest go back to your spot and brainstorm challenges and opportunities related to the problem.

**Need help? Pick up Alt Card C.**

THE FUTURE



## # 6

*Set your timer for 7 minutes.*

From stakeholders that you have identified pick two. Then, using what you know about the Designers' ideas, create a newspaper cover that tells of how these two groups feel about how the solution will effect them.

**For help pick up Alt Card D.**

THE FUTURE



## # 7

*Set your timer for 5 minutes.*

Go to the Storytellers. Share the newspaper cover you created. Draw your impressions on their time line, so their story becomes enmeshed with your ideas.

THE FUTURE



## # 8

*Set your timer for 10 minutes.*

Gather everyone. Listen to the Designers' solution. You have 1 minute to ask questions. Afterwards, go back and imagine the new future. Write another letter to the past that explains what is better or worse now. What are the things that still need improvement?

One of you can draw what the future looks like now.

THE FUTURE



# # 9

*Set your timer for 5 minutes.*

Get up and find the Designers. With one hand reach into the circle and grab someone's hand across the circle, but not next to you. Then with your other hand, grab someone else's hand. You cannot let go. The storytellers unravel you. You will do what they say and move in the direction they want.

THE FUTURE



# # 10

Now share and document your solution and drawings!

Choose someone to film the following steps

1. The Future read out their first letter (go get it!)
2. The Storytellers present their story up to the obstacle.
3. The Designers share their solution.
4. The Storytellers present their end of the story.
5. The Future read out their second letter
6. Sit back, smile, and commit to what to do next.

THE FUTURE



#

THE FUTURE



#

THE FUTURE



# ALT CARD A

To write the first letter start with “Dear people in the past” and write your stream of consciousness. It helps getting into a flow.

Write with urgency in mind. Describe what is happening in the future - be visual. Describe the problem and how it came into being. Say why you need help, but not how. Convince your reader to do something about the problem! Don't judge your words. Write from the heart.

THE FUTURE



# ALT CARD B

To discover stakeholders think of men and women, blue collar, white collar, suits and corporate, hospitality, unemployed, artists, hippies, hobos, hipsters, single parents, families, elderly, sick, those with special needs, children and all minorities.

Try to make it work for 100% of humanity without any ecological damage or disadvantage to anyone.

Remember, you are thinking about the needs of those, who experienced the struggle in the past.

THE FUTURE



# ALT CARD C

Challenges and Opportunities can be opposite sides of the same coin. Can you re-frame one of the obstacles you found and turn it into an opportunity? How can it be a positive thing?

THE FUTURE



# ALT CARD D



The media is a great way to show how people are responding to change.

Copy this template, create headlines and draw images describing how the stakeholders feel (you do not need to write the whole article).

THE FUTURE

