

Role playing

The team, and sometimes users, act out a situation with simple or cardboard objects to imagine how a product or service would work.

In Spanish

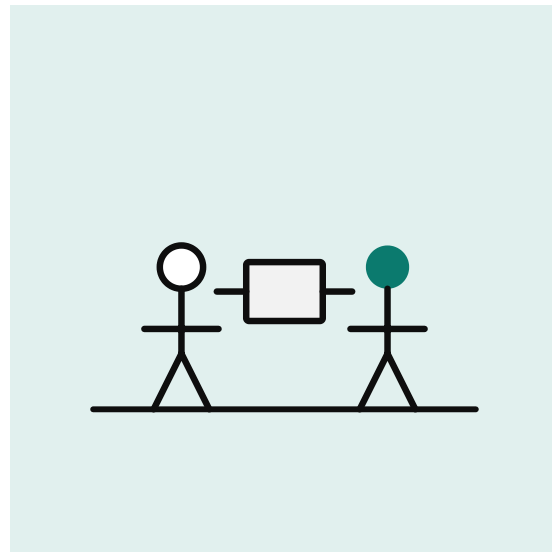
Juego de roles

Origin

Several antecedents; among them, Buchenau and Fulton Suri (2000) and Iacucci, Kuutti and Ranta (2000)

Output

Acted-out situations that show how an idea would work



What it's for

It helps you imagine a service that doesn't exist yet: acting it out brings up problems a diagram doesn't show.

Key elements

A concrete situation

Who, where and what happens.

Simple objects

A piece of cardboard can be the future device.

Repeat and change

Act out several versions.

How it's done

1



Prepare the scene and the roles.

2



Act out the situation with the imagined object.

3



Discuss what worked and what didn't.

Applications in design

✓ When to use it

For services where people, place and timing matter.

✗ Avoid

Turning it into theater without a design question.

👁 Don't fall for it

Write down what comes up while acting: it is quickly forgotten.

Connections

Related to

■ Bodystorming

■ Participatory design

■ Wizard of Oz

■ Prototyping

■ Experience prototyping

■ Desktop walkthrough

■ Design speed dating

■ Storyboard

Authors and works

2000

Giulio Iacucci, Kari Kuutti and Mervi Ranta

Used role playing with toys and acted-out scenes to come up with mobile services together with users.

Sources

Original sources

- Iacucci, G., Kuutti, K., & Ranta, M. (2000). On the move with a magic thing: Role playing in concept design of mobile services and devices. In Proceedings of DIS 2000. ACM. [View source \(https://doi.org/10.1145/347642.347715\)](https://doi.org/10.1145/347642.347715)
- Buchenaus, M., & Fulton Suri, J. (2000). Experience prototyping. In Proceedings of the 3rd Conference on Designing Interactive Systems (DIS '00) (pp. 424–433). ACM. [View source \(https://doi.org/10.1145/347642.347802\)](https://doi.org/10.1145/347642.347802)

Last reviewed: October 25, 2026

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