

Product / Service Development DESIGN & EXPORT GUIDELINES

Design guidelines Aija Freimane

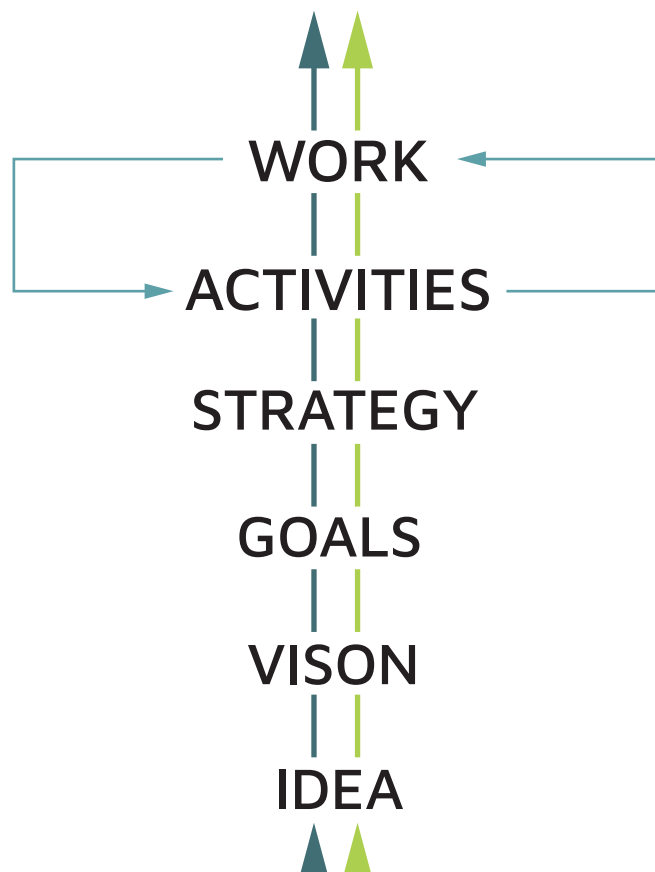
Export guidelines Gateway & Partners

Design and export guidelines are created within the project "Innovation and export of wood and furniture in Võru County and Vidzeme Planning Region", to help to understand product or service development processes to increase the value of your company. Design maturity guidelines are based on cognition of practices and theories of divergent design contexts (e.g., designing for older users vs. for younger users, product longevity and used resources, user experience and inclusiveness). Export guidelines will help you to ensure your company grows within your capability.

WHY the company? **WHERE** do you and your company want to go? **HOW** to get there?

Design strategy is an action plan (guidelines) to use design in all processes to create benefits and value for the company, its employees, product or service users and partners, and the planet.

Export strategy: when the first export deals are done, it might feel that the hardest is already done, but it is important to remember that it takes years to build presence in a market and credibility to the product, as well as, it can take only few days to lose it all. Results can be achieved if company works with the vision and long-term goals in mind for the particular market or region.



DESIGN GUIDELINES - design process

Design makes things better for people as target-oriented and systematic activity that results in tangible and intangible values in physical, service, and digital settings.

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Develop phase involves product or service development methods to improve, finalize and deliver WHAT, HOW and FOR WHOM. It is iteration of product and services development as a method to grow and become more mature or advanced. Develop phase deals with product or service implementation, elaboration and delivery.

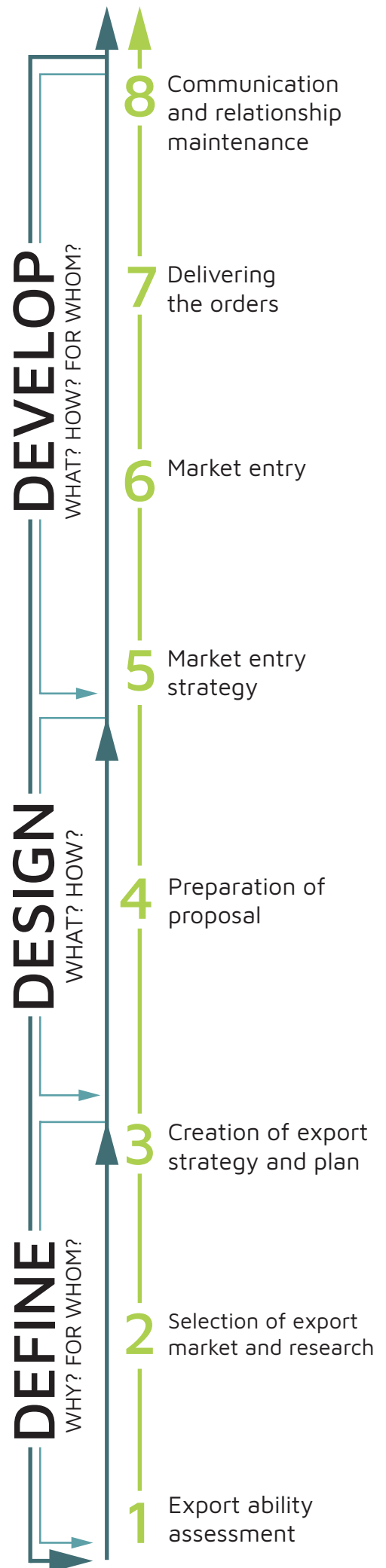
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Design phase is an active, hands-on phase to iterate WHAT and HOW by working out possible solutions, combining ideas with information obtained from the research and selecting a preferred solution through drawing, construction, prototyping and testing phases.

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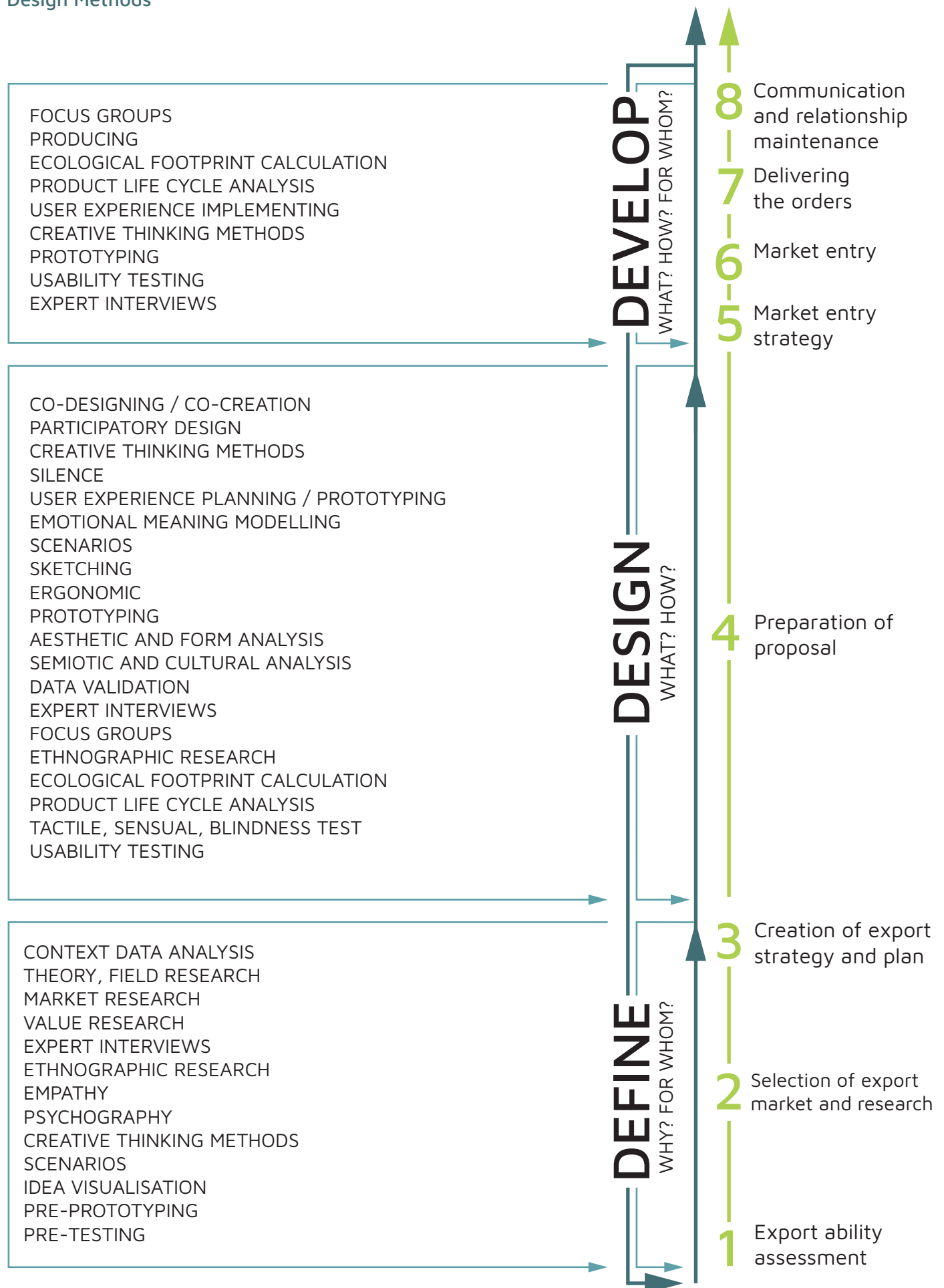
Define phase is design pre-research of local - global situation as context and data, user behaviour and needs analysis is performed, to define the niche of the product or service. The process addresses WHY and FOR WHOM to design and answers what problem or challenge is faced.

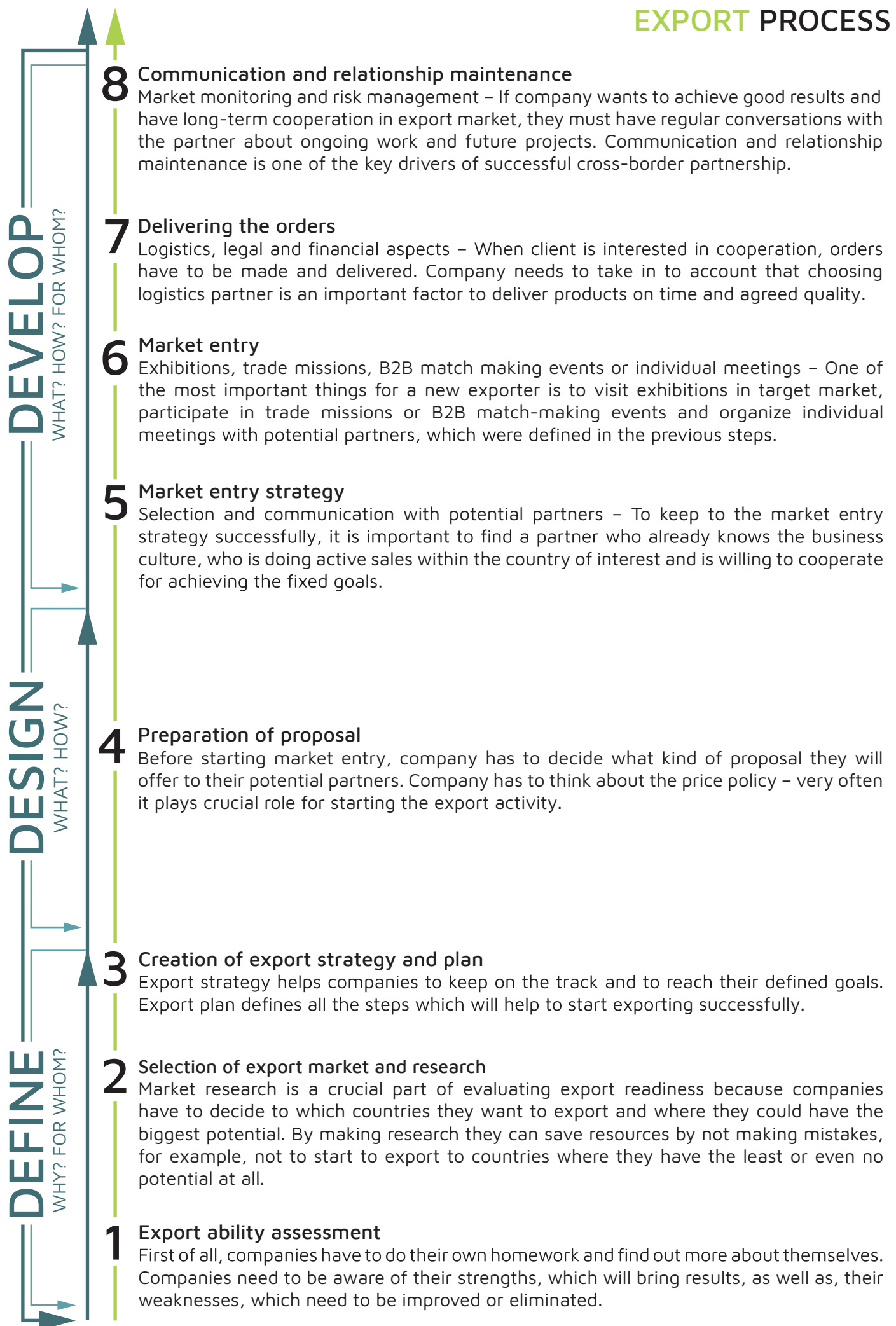
Write a brief, a short statement that gives the general outline of the problem to be solved or a challenge to be addressed by product or service development. A brief includes a detailed description of what the design must achieve and what limitations will affect the final solution.



DESIGN GUIDELINES - design process

Design Methods





DESIGN MATURITY SELF-ASSESSMENT

	Yes (2 points)	In process (1 points)	No (0 points)
Product or service development			
Have you analysed local / global statistics, data and trends?	☐	☐	☐
Have you analysed user behaviour as ethnographic research?	☐	☐	☐
Have you performed market research and export ability analysis?	☐	☐	☐
Have you addressed socio – cultural analysis of end-user / partner?	☐	☐	☐
Have you analysed if the selected solution leads to the best experience for end-user / partner?	☐	☐	☐
Does the solution address the unarticulated need of the end-user / partner?	☐	☐	☐
Have you addressed universal design principles in product – service design process?	☐	☐	☐
Have you considered task success and errors of the product – service?	☐	☐	☐
Have you considered the best production process for the problem / solution?	☐	☐	☐
Have you minimised the consumption of resources in the design process?	☐	☐	☐
Have you addressed product longevity?	☐	☐	☐
Have you involved user testing and customer feedback methods in the design and development process?	☐	☐	☐
Have you measured product – service ecological footprint?	☐	☐	☐
Have you calculated the product price and value as impact of sustainable consumption and production ?	☐	☐	☐
Do you address customer satisfaction as a quality management system?	☐	☐	☐
Design maturity			
Design functionality and aesthetics in product – service development are performed by anyone in the company		☐	☐
Design as styling, form-giving and graphic design in product – service development is performed by a professional designer or any other profession		☐	☐
Design redesign or adaptation of existing product – service is performed by a professional designer or any other profession		☐	☐
Design solution is driven by the problem and the users and requires the involvement of a wide variety of skills and capacities: process and materials technicians, marketing experts and administrative staff		☐	☐
The design is represented in company's owners/management daily activities on a strategic level to develop the business concept		☐	☐

Total:

EXPORT READINESS CHECKLIST

	Yes (2 points)	In process (1 points)	No (0 points)
The offer			
Product is suitable for export	☐	☐	☐
The product is suitable for the target market	☐	☐	☐
Price for a product in export market is calculated	☐	☐	☐
Sufficient production capacity gained	☐	☐	☐
Export strategy and plan			
Export goals are set	☐	☐	☐
Planned certain activities for entering the new market	☐	☐	☐
Defined strategic export markets	☐	☐	☐
Available financial resources for entering a new market	☐	☐	☐
Export brand and marketing			
Website in English	☐	☐	☐
Company presentation	☐	☐	☐
Brief digital information material about the company	☐	☐	☐
Product catalogue	☐	☐	☐
Business cards	☐	☐	☐
Exhibition stand, marketing materials	☐	☐	☐
Export resources and financing			
Experience in export client attraction	☐	☐	☐
Good foreign language skills	☐	☐	☐
Experience in sales	☐	☐	☐
Goal oriented sales staff	☐	☐	☐
Export driven sales staff	☐	☐	☐
Active interest by sales staff in new markets	☐	☐	☐

Total:

DESIGN MATURITY SELF-ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Please choose the right recommendations corresponding to the checklist score.

I DESIGN AWARE

Description	You are conscious of divergent design contexts; practice design either as a method, strategy or innovation to address end-user needs and global challenges as a company's growth.
Characteristics	-Use of diverse design research methods. -Global context and challenges are analysed. -Products are user-centred and tested. -Inclusiveness is addressed in product / service development. -Sustainability and responsibility of used resources are addressed. -Design is addressed in the company's owners/management level.
Recommendations	-Continuous use of design research and practice methods. -Monitor design pre-research. -Continue to explore design as define, design, develop process.

II DESIGN RELEVANT

Description	Design is relevant in the company however applied narrowly as a style or form giving. Design development is performed by a professional designer or any other profession.
Characteristics	-Design as style and form. -End-user needs should be presented in product – service development. -User satisfaction and global challenges need to be analysed. -Products have weak user-centred approach. -Weak user tests. -Awareness of sustainability and responsibility of used resources should be raised.
Recommendations	-Explore design research and practice methods -Raise competences and awareness of product – service user aspects in design process -Aware the impact of the global context -Design competences should be presented in management, company's owner level

III NO DESIGN

Description	Design is an invisible in product / service development. Company's product – service does not differ from competitors. Product – service development does not include user-centred approach and responsibility of used resources.
Characteristics	-Weak design in the company. -Human – user centred approach plays no role in the company. -Product – service does not differ from competitors. -Design process is not addressed.
Recommendations	-To discover design as a method for developing your company -General education on design and design professional skills are needed.

EXPORT CHECKLIST RESULTS

Please choose the right recommendations corresponding to the checklist score.

I EXPORT READY

Description	The company has everything to be successful, but additional sales channels are needed to access foreign markets.
Characteristics	-Proven export record – already exports -Products in line with international standards – has international certificates -Developed corporate marketing – developed brand -Website in English -Existing export manager -Clear Export Plan
Recommendations	-Support export promotion activities -Training for sales and export managers -Market overviews & information gathering and analysis -Education about market expectations, industry innovations, product development, taste, packaging and shelf life peculiarities

II ONE STEP TO EXPORT - EXPORT CLOSE

Description	This company has developed its offering and already works in export; however, it does not have developed corporate marketing tools and do not have export manager.
Characteristics	-Website is not in English -Corporate image is not developed to standards -No Export Manager with foreign languages -Some exports/low value added export -Product ready for export
Recommendations	-Export manager must be hired -Corporate marketing strategy developed -Education about export processes, standards, industry insights, quality standards and expectations in the priority markets gained. -Market overviews & industry information -Study visits abroad, B2B missions

III NOT READY FOR EXPORT

Description	The company's product or offer is not ready for export. Firstly, there is a need to develop product so that it fits to international standards, and then support the development of other business elements like corporate marketing, skill development and export promotion.
Characteristics	-No export record -Product not up to standards to be sold internationally -No website/ marketing developed -No export manager
Recommendations	-General education on business management and professional skills are needed.

DESIGN MATURITY SELF-ASSESSMENT RESULTS

24-32 points – Design aware

You are conscious of design and practice design either as a method, strategy or innovation to address end-user needs and global challenges. You recognize the importance of design pre-research and understand the impact of local or global context and user behaviour to deliver the best solution. You are aware of user/human-centred approach and sustainability – resource usage in product or service development. But still, there is room to improve the use of design process!

12-23 points – Design relevant

Design is relevant and applied narrowly as style or form, giving method in the operation of your company. Global challenges and end-user needs are weakly analysed and understood. You should explore design pre-research and understand the impact of local/global context and user behaviour to deliver the best solution as a product or service. It is a challenge to discover design for the benefit of your company.

11 or less points – No design

Design is an invisible process in product or service development of your company. The solution is perceived by design as function and aesthetic. A human – user centred approach plays little or no role in the company. It is recommended to discover design as a method for developing your company.

EXPORT CHECKLIST RESULTS

35-40 points – Export ready

Congratulations! You have done all the possible preparation tasks needed for export. Now it is time to focus on sales and showing the company to the potential partners and clients abroad.

25-35 points – Export close

Part of the preparation work is done; thus, you are in good process. Concentrate on some of the most important points, while do not leave the focus on export sales for later as it will get the preparation process moving much faster.

24 or less points – Not ready for export

Your company has set some business development goals, but still has some preparation tasks to achieve to get to the desired results. Continue working on preparing your company and your employees for export minded work and you will see the improvements sooner than later!

"Innovation and export of wood and furniture in Võru County and Vidzeme Planning Region"

The "Design and Export guidelines" are created within the framework of Interreg Estonia - Latvia cross-border cooperation programme 2014-2020 project "Innovation and export of wood and furniture in Võru County and Vidzeme Planning Region" (Wood & Furniture) to help and understand the product or service development processes. Its aim is to enhance cross-border cooperation in Võru County and Vidzeme Planning Region between wood and furniture sector companies to innovate industry and add value to wood and furniture products, introduce design-thinking and increase export capacity.

This informative material reflects the views of the author.
The managing authority of the programme is not liable for how this information may be used.

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