WORKSHEET + WORKED EXAMPLE

Notice the Workaround

An overlooked need, an account from the people experiencing it, and a small inquiry before building a solution.

20 minutes | Unmet needs and weak signals

Use it in three moves

1. Notice who works around the current offer and who does not use it at all.
2. Learn the need and the barrier from their actual work.
3. Choose an inquiry or bounded test without labeling every new idea disruptive.

What workaround or absence have you noticed?

Describe behavior without labeling it resistance or innovation yet.

Who uses the workaround, and who is missing entirely?

Include people who cannot use the current offer.

What are they trying to get done?

Ask about the circumstance and desired progress.

Notice the Workaround

YOUR WORKING NOTES / CONTINUED

What makes the current offer difficult or excessive?

Look at cost, complexity, access, time, and trust.

What does this challenge in our current thinking?

A successful service for one group may miss another group's needs.

What will we learn before proposing a response?

Observe real work and test the need, not just enthusiasm for your idea.

What should remain protected in a small test?

Keep essential accessibility, privacy, and operational checks in view.

A question for me

Whose absence have our current measures made easy to ignore?

See one way through

FICTIONAL WORKED EXAMPLE / NOT THE ANSWER TO YOUR SITUATION

What workaround or absence have you noticed?

Community groups keep organizing sign-ups in their own spreadsheets instead of using the central portal.

Who uses the workaround, and who is missing entirely?

Small volunteer groups without a dedicated administrator rarely register through the portal.

What are they trying to get done?

They want to collect ten names quickly and send a reminder without learning a complex system.

What makes the current offer difficult or excessive?

The portal requires a full organization profile before a group can create one small event.

What does this challenge in our current thinking?

We assumed more features would make the portal more useful to every group.

What will we learn before proposing a response?

Sit with three small groups as they organize an event; ask what a simpler route must preserve.

What should remain protected in a small test?

A simpler sign-up still needs clear consent, an accessible route, and a way to correct details.

The thinking behind it

The people outside the usual success story may see the limits of the current system most clearly. Invite them to shape the question before deciding what to build.

Clayton Christensen's disruptive innovation theory examines particular paths through underserved or overserved markets and nonconsumption. This original inquiry borrows attention to overlooked needs; a workaround alone does not prove that an innovation is disruptive.

Christensen Institute · Disruptive innovation theory

Read You Have a Culture Problem by Nic Payne