

HK Tailoring Association Operations Management Workshop Summary

I. Workshop Objectives

- ❖ Conduct SWOT Analysis of tailoring industry in Hong Kong
- ❖ Evaluate efficiency and effectiveness using process mapping
- ❖ Macro and micro view on change management
- ❖ Explore industry operational topics including:
 - Merchandise display
 - Pricing transparency

II. Content Summary

IIa. SWOT Analysis

SWOT was introduced as a tool to provide a holistic consideration of a topic, in the case of the workshop: *Current Tailoring Industry in HK*.

Participants were asked to discuss the following perspectives:

- Strengths
- Weaknesses
- Opportunities
- Threats

The following are the common areas shared by the different groups:

Strengths:

- Heritage of the bespoke tailoring in Hong Kong
- Reputation of bespoke tailoring
- Highly skilled tailors
- Convenient location of Hong Kong
- Exposure to updated trends and techniques
- Cost efficiency: materials, labour

Weaknesses:

- Lack of new generation of tailors
- Lack of quality skilled labour
- Falling behind in employing information technology
- Industry operates in traditional manner; more like family businesses
- Difficulty in passing on skills due to traditional apprentice mindset and lack of systematic teaching
- A comparative lower threshold of entry into industry

Opportunities:

- Labour market in China conducive for manufacturing
- Trends in appreciation of bespoke craft
- New business owners with updated approach to industry

Threats:

- Deteriorating reputation of HK tailoring industry
- Available choices for consumers
- Ready-to-wear brands offering “bespoke” service

Iib. Process Mapping

Process mapping was introduced as a tool to document in details each step involved in a given process. Participants engaged in an activity where they had to create a structure, thus went through a process that involve actions and decisions. They were then asked to identify part(s) of the process that appeared to be cumbersome and inefficient.

Iic. Change Management

Using the Kubler-Ross Change Cycle (also known as the Kubler-Ross Grief Cycle) to allow awareness of human psychology and emotional reactions to changes in general. With each stage of these reactions, individuals leading and managing change could in term provide what is required which are information and communication, emotional support and training of new skills and techniques.

Iid. Design Thinking

As one of the two tools introduced to generate creative ideas, *Design Thinking* led the participants to consider a new concept from the perspective of the end user rather than from historical data and practices. This way of generating ideas starts with empathy (being able to be in another’s perspective), ideate through brainstorming and eventually building a prototype and test.

In the workshop setting, participants could only go through the process up to brainstorming ideas and to understand the concept behind this particular approach.

Ile. Brainstorming

The second tool was introduced to help generate ideas, especially to drive target audience to think out of the box. The rationale is to gather ideas by stimulating one another in thinking of as many ideas as possible, unleashing the boundary of logics and past experience in order to reach innovative ideas.

The process involve generating a quantity of ideas, then group them into similarities and at the end prioritize what could eventually been used.

In the context of the workshop, the following topics were used to generate ideas through brainstorming of the groups:

- Merchandise Display
- Pricing
- Delivery Service

III. Conclusion

While the tools used in the workshop are common in commercial practices, workshop participants were generally not exposed to them. By being introduced to these tools, participants could make use of them to regard their practices in a more objective and holistic manner:

- SWOT: regarding different aspects of the industry to offer a more comprehensive understanding
- Process Mapping: identify inefficient process stages, leading to decision of changes
- Change Management (Cycle of Change): help change managers understand human reactions to change in order to plan more effective communication and support
- Design Thinking and Brainstorming: systematically generate new ideas to bring innovation to the industry