# SHAPE
BETTER SERVICES

NAME
The Fuzzy Front End

SOURCE
Public Domain

INTRODUCTION

The fuzzy front end is a principle that demonstrates how designers work. This process is included in the Shape resource because designers do not always communicate their way of working externally.

Design is a creative process and is in no way linear. 'Fuzzy front end' refers to the front end of a process, where an organisation formulates ideas and concepts and decides whether or not to proceed with the further development of an opportunity or idea. It is important for users of the Shape resources to understand that designers might work in this manner and will do their best to shield you from the iterative approach taken.

Uncertainty / patterns / insights   Clarity / Focus

Research   Concept   Design
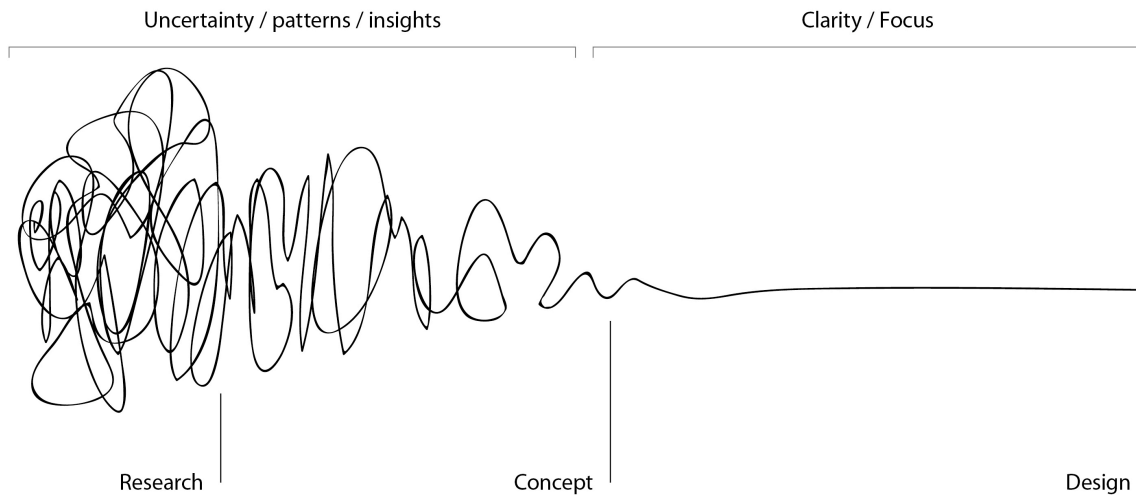
NOTES

The front end is the phase between first consideration of an opportunity and the decision to process into a structured development process. It includes all activities from the search for new opportunities, through the formation of an idea to the development of a more detailed concept. The Fuzzy Front End ends when an organisation signs off the recommendation and begins formal development of the concept.

Although the Fuzzy Front End may not be an expensive part of product development, it can consume a lot of development time and it is where major commitments are typically made involving time, money, and the deliverable's nature, thus setting the course for the entire project and final end deliverable. Consequently, this phase should be considered as an essential part of development rather than something that happens "before development".

USEFUL LINKS

- http://iveybusinessjournal.com/topics/innovation/strategic-innovation-and-the-fuzzy-front-end#.U2IO9RxbBsg
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_product_development