Ethical Technology Check

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ETHICAL TECHNOLOGY CHECK WORKSHOP

CONTENT

The Ethical Technology Check workshop allows companies to identify ethical risks of new digital products, services, or disruptive technologies and to define areas of responsibility related to these risks.

This in-depth look into ethical aspects of innovations helps developers, engineers, product managers, designers, etc. deal with these risks at an early stage. Important developments can be anticipated early on, whether they are related to customer acceptance, the regulatory environment or societal reaction and thus also market prospects.

This has a positive impact on the following areas i.a.:

Sustainable value creation – *Trust and responsible innovation*
Innovation confronts us with ethical issues: systematically addressing the social impact of new technologies contributes to sound and sustainable value creation in the long run.

Responsible use of technology – *Value congruence and societal orientation*
The way we use technologies and the products and services based on them, can influence the business environment beyond clients and stakeholders. It further has repercussions on the extent to which the company acts in accordance with its own values. Addressing ethical risks supports the orientation towards (corporate) values, and positions an organization's social responsibility.

Strong market positioning – *Customer acceptance and loyalty*
Customers, investors and the public expect companies to act ethically and to provide sustainable solutions. The Ethical Technology Check workshop supports companies and organizations in using new (digital) technologies responsibly and in designing products and/or services based on them in a sustainable way. This strengthens customer acceptance and loyalty//retention.

Positive corporate culture – *Strong, motivated and efficient team*
Using technologies and derived products or services responsibly and clarifying internal responsibility strengthens employee's identification with the company or organization. If employees identify with the company or the organization and their work, this has a positive influence on the performance of the entire team.

Ethical Technology Check is also available tailor-made to your needs. Are you interested in professional support to tackle your ethical challenge? Contact us at info@ethix.ch.

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The Ethical Technology Check workshop consists of the following elements. They enable a goal-oriented discussion of the risks and potentials of the technology and the products or services based on it. At the end of the workshop, it is clarified who - outside and within the company/team - bears which form of responsibility regarding the use of the new technology.

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1. Technology Dimensions Sprint

Presentation of the technology or its discussed application and development of a shared understanding.

2 steps (30 min.)
- Presentation prepared by staff
- Technology Assessment Canvas: joint technology assessment

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2. Stakeholder

Identification of stakeholders and impacts on customers, society/ the environment, the company

2 steps (30 min.)
- Stakeholder analysis: What direct and indirect impacts arise?
- Stakeholder map: Customers, society/environment, company

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3. Risik Assessment

Assessment of risks and creation of a risk analysis matrix

2 steps (45 min.)
- Risk assessment: What risks does the technology entail?
- Risk analysis matrix: Positioning the identified risks in a matrix

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4. Responsibility

Create a responsibility matrix

1 step (25 min.)
- Responsibility matrix: Assigning responsibility outside and inside the organization.

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1. TECHNOLOGY DIMENSIONS SPRINT

STEP 1

The first part of the Ethical Technology Check workshop is to develop a shared understanding of the technology and its potential applications. To this end, one member of the team first summarizes the technology and its intended applications from their own perspective for all participants (approx. 10 minutes). This input is prepared before the workshop. If all participants are sufficiently familiar with the technology and projects in the planning, this summary can be skipped. The team then completes the Technology Dimensions Matrix together. The aim is to discuss essential aspects of the assessment and positioning of the technology in question and the intended application in the team. Finally, record the findings for subsequent processing.

TECHNOLOGY DIMENSIONS MATRIX

STEP 2

In the Technology Dimensions Matrix, assess possible uses and applications of the technology under discussion:

- Axis „innovation potential": Does the innovation bring something radically new (disruptive innovation)? Or does it build on existing innovations and develop these further (incremental innovation)?

- Axis „risk potential": Are the potential impacts of the innovation (on society, environment, companies or individuals) sensitive or rather harmless?

- List all possible aspects and discuss your respective assessment in order to reach a common understanding of the technology.

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TECHNOLOGY DIMENSIONS MATRIX

DISRUPTIVE

RISK POTENTIAL

NON-SENSITIVE —————————————————————— SENSITIVE

INCREMENTAL

INNOVATION POTENTIAL
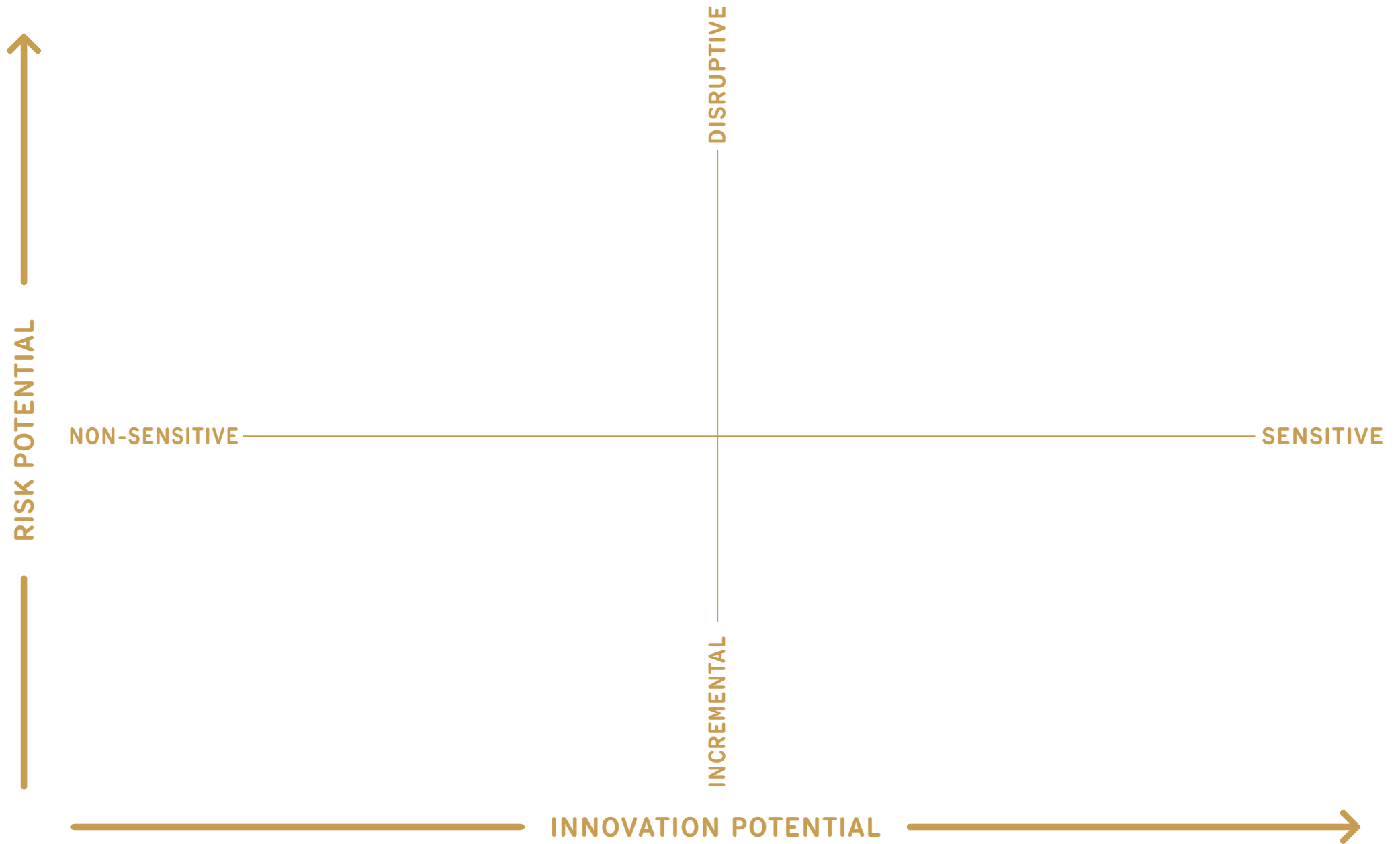
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2. STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

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In the second part, a stakeholder analysis will be carried out to identify direct and indirect impacts of the technology or product/service on the different actors that are affected by it. Subsequently, the results will be transferred to the Stakeholder Map, which divides stakeholders into the categories of customers, society/environment and companies. The stakeholder map clarifies which actors are particularly affected by the technology or the product/service. This provides an overview on the legitimate moral requirements of individuals and/or groups that have to be taken into account when using a certain technology - and which risks arise if these requirements are ignored.

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STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS
INDIVIDUAL BRAINSTORMING

Direct: whom or what does the product intentionally and directly influence?
(ex: Students, Teachers and Caregivers are direct users of the online edu platform)

Indirect: whom or what does the product unintentionally influence?
(ex: children whose parents use social media appear on that platform)

Now think about if the product was widely used globally...

... who or what does the product have an influence on?

... who are the possible users?

... are there influences on specific environmental sectors?

... are there influences on specific societal sectors?

... what are the influences on your company?

INDIRECT

DIRECT
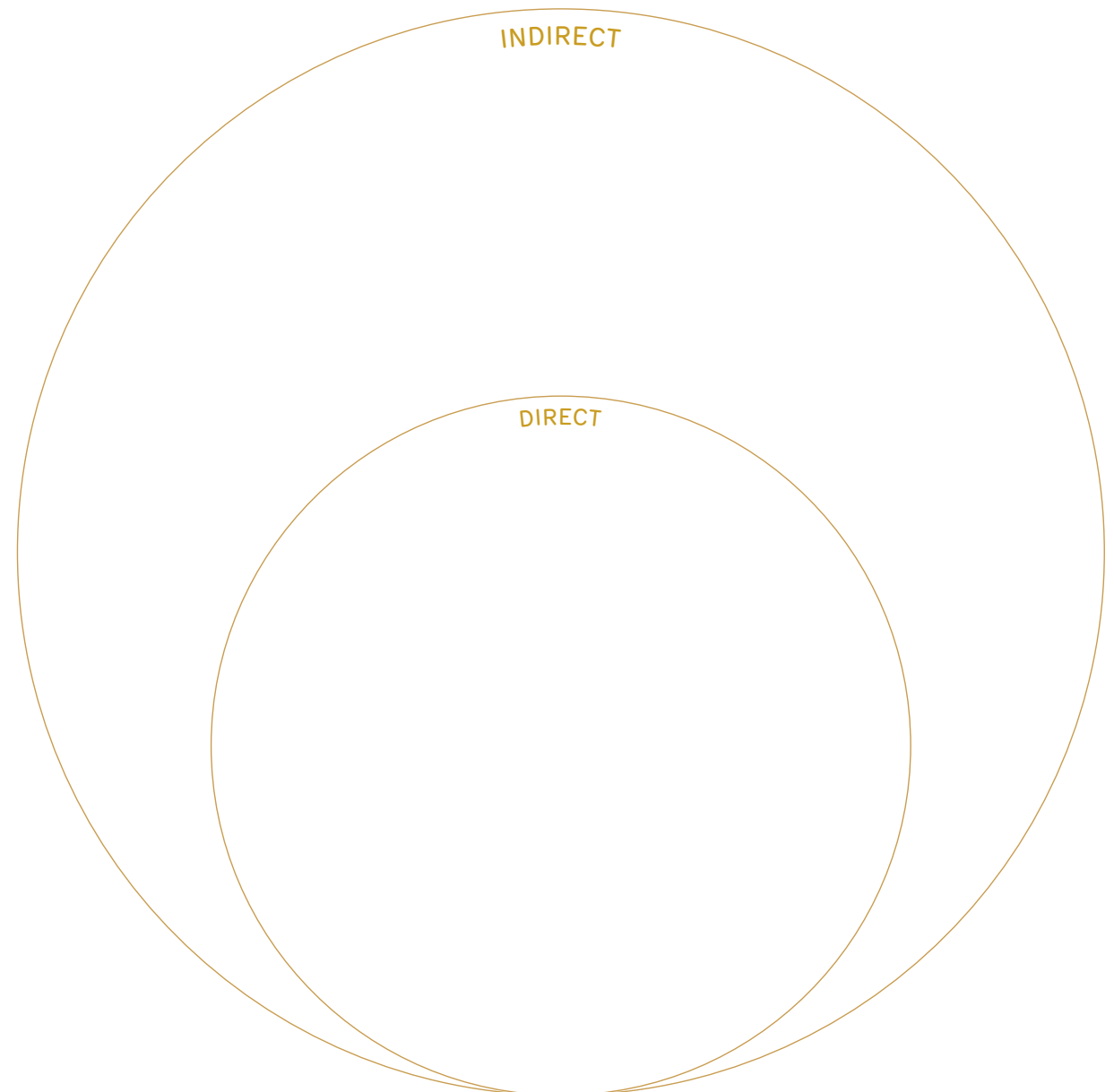
STAKEHOLDER MAP

USER

SOCIETY/ENVIRONMENT

BUSINESS

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3. RISK ASSESSMENT

STEP 1

In the third part of the workshop, the ethical risks associated with the technology or product/service are identified and assessed by using the Risk Assessment Canvas.

STEP 2

Now place the identified ethical risks on the Risk Matrix. These risks are sorted into high or low probability of occurrence. Further, it is estimated whether their potential negative impact is high or rather low. Special attention should be paid to the risks in fields 1 and 2, as they can occur with some probability and have a relevant extent of damage.

RISK ASSESSMENT CANVAS

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- Imagine the technology within different contexts. Think about where ethical risks may occur.
  Take the perspective of all actors. How would you use the technology? How could it harm you?
- Consider the identified risk areas. What values are at play here?
  Which principles would be particularly important for the different actors?

What are the ethical risk areas?	How can the ethical risks be minimized or avoided?
• What happens if the technology is used over a long period of time? • What happens if the technology would be used in a different context/ for a different purpose? Or combined with another technology? • How could this technology be misused?	• At what point in the development process should ethical risks be considered? • How could the product – or which parts of the product could – be designed differently? • What mechanisms could be introduced to avoid risks?

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RISK ANALYSIS MATRIX

	LOW IMPACT	HIGH IMPACT
REALISTIC	②	①
UNREALISTIC	④	③

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4. RESPONSIBILITY

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In the fourth part of the Ethical Technology Check workshop, a responsibility matrix is created that shows the ethical risks for which the company or the team is responsible. The responsibility matrix is used to identify individual decision-makers and to proactively define corresponding responsibilities.

The risks identified in fields 1, 2 and 3 (see step 3) are those for which responsibility should be assumed. These are now assigned to the fields „direct control", „indirect control" and „little or no control" in the responsibility matrix. In order to achieve a meaningful classification, it can be helpful to take a look again at the stakeholders from step 2. After the risks have been assigned to the three fields, the last step is to consider who the concrete responsible parties are, and to whom the corresponding responsibility could be assigned to. Enter these considerations in the right-hand column (responsible persons). The responsibility matrix thus shows where your company has to bear responsibility and already points to next steps to address this responsibility.

RESPONSIBILITY MATRIX

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	We take responsibility	Responsible person/team
Direct Control	④	①
Indirect Control	⑤	②
Low or No Control	⑥	③