How to organise a great hackathon!

Hackathons are 1 to 2 day events, when teams of engaged people work on “hacks”. Hacks are simple and practical solutions to well identified problems.

Goal: generate new ideas and prototypes!

A hackathon unfolds in 3 steps:

Launch with brief of participants → Team work → Project pitches by teams, with possibility of winner and prizes

Discover 5 rules to succeed with your hackathon!

1. DEFINE THE HACK RULES

- **Theme**: A general topic and specific challenges
- **Place**: As much as possible, find unusual places that inspire creativity and motivation
- **Target your community**: Invite participants among collaborators, students, software developers, startup founders, customers, partners...

A key factor of success is a good mix of social, cultural and expertise backgrounds, scatter among teams.

2. REACH OUT WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

- **30 days before**
  - Tease your hackathon
  - Federate a core team
  - Feature partners and sponsors
  - Engage participants and encourage them to spread the word

- **During the event**
  - Share live
  - Feature live the making and highlight moments
  - Keep records for future communication

- **7 days after**
  - Capitalise!
  - Thanks participants and partners
  - Feature achievements (e.g., prototypes) and the way people proceeded together to make innovation happen
  - Broadcast pictures and videos for broader public outreach
Ensure that easy access to free Internet is provided at your location. Offer design thinking and prototyping gear (post-it markers, flipcharts, white boards).

Provide practical information
Location, program outline before and during the hackathon, nearby public transportation and parking lots, building entry code, site plan

Plan catering and facilities for participants
Food, drinks, and possibly a room for sleeping. Extra activities may be planned (yoga, workshops, tous, games to relax).

Welcome participants and launch challenges and teams!
To rhythm your hackathon, one can resort to experts, mentors and facilitators for short conferences or workshops. Yet keep in mind that hacker teams usually want to devote most of their time producing a surprising innovation.

A hackathon is a festive moment.
The relaxed yet intense atmosphere helps unleash creativity. Try-and-fail is encouraged.

Organizers should get prepared for surprising innovations. Pitch sessions and prototype demos reveal these innovations.

If prizes are awarded, they can be a money prize, some coaching for project acceleration, or other means to achieve follow-up milestones. Multiple awards give a chance to more projects teams, increasing the sentiment that everyone can win.

A cocktail party with food shall conclude the hackathon and celebrate participation!
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LAUNCH & ENTERTAIN

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CONCLUDE WITH A PITCH SESSION & CELEBRATE

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L'essentiel c'est l'innovation ouverte résultante d’un échange, d’un partage, d’une construction entre plusieurs participants

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