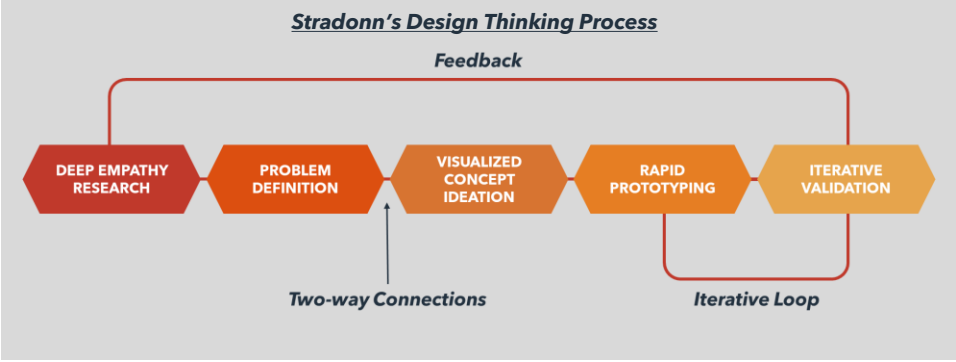
Introduction to Design Thinking

- By Stradonn Consulting

What is Design Thinking?

In simple terms Design Thinking is a way of creating products and services *Actually Works*. This is done by deeply understanding the end users, generating great ideas, validating those ideas with the end users and then adopting continuous improvement.

Design Thinking helps in solving a problem in a very structured yet flexible way. It is not just a process, ***it is a Mindset***. It is a way of understanding, approaching and solving any problem with a balanced analytical and creative side.



Some Characteristics of Design Thinking:

- Human Centric – It is an approach which has human experiences in its core value, hence the primary focus of this methodology is understanding and making for Humans.
- Collaborative – It is collaborative in the sense that the whole process encourages team collaboration as well as User-to-maker collaboration.
- Iterative – The process encourages iterations, which ensures continuous improvement.
- Hands-on – Design thinking encourages Hands-on experiences, communications and visualization. The more you use it, the more you develop an innovative mindset.
- Analytical – The whole methodology is designed to take advantage of data collection and analysis, then use it to our advantage and create something unique for the end user.
- Versatile – The theoretical concepts of design thinking is flexible; hence many companies have adopted it according to their specific needs and goals. It is highly versatile.

Design Thinking requires you to consider a Person's Experience & hence Focus on their Human Needs

Your customers don't inherently care about the manufacturing process of a backpack: They seek a Comfortable, Spacious, Lightweight, Good Looking and Unique Bag that they can carry while travelling, clicking photos or using it while packing/unpacking

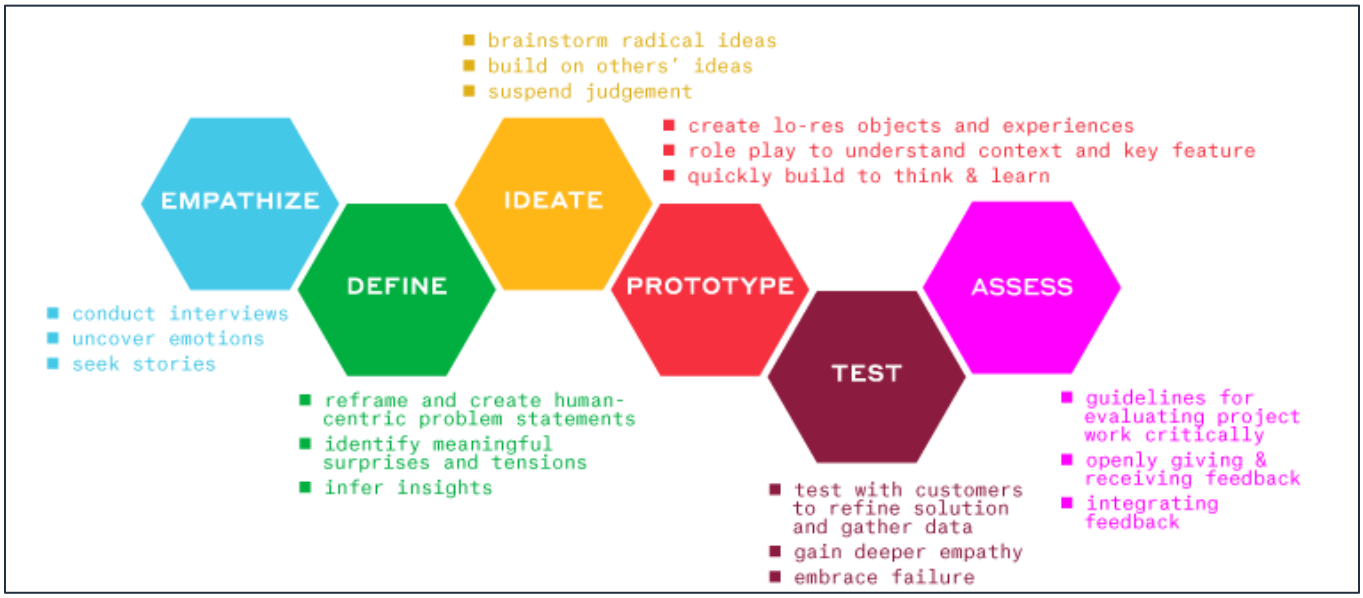
Design Thinking Models

Stanford School's Five-Stage Model:

Developed by Stanford's Hasso Plattner Institute of Design, this model emphasizes empathy and iteration to solve complex problems.

- **Empathize** – Engage with users through observation, interviews, and research to understand their needs, emotions, and challenges.
- **Define** – Synthesize the insights from the empathize stage to create a clear problem statement that focuses on the user.
- **Ideate** – Generate a wide range of creative ideas without judgment, encouraging divergent thinking.
- **Prototype** – Develop low-fidelity or high-fidelity representations of ideas to explore how they work in real scenarios.
- **Test** – Gather feedback from users on prototypes, refine ideas based on insights, and iterate until an optimal solution is found.

This model is widely used in education and business due to its structured yet flexible approach.



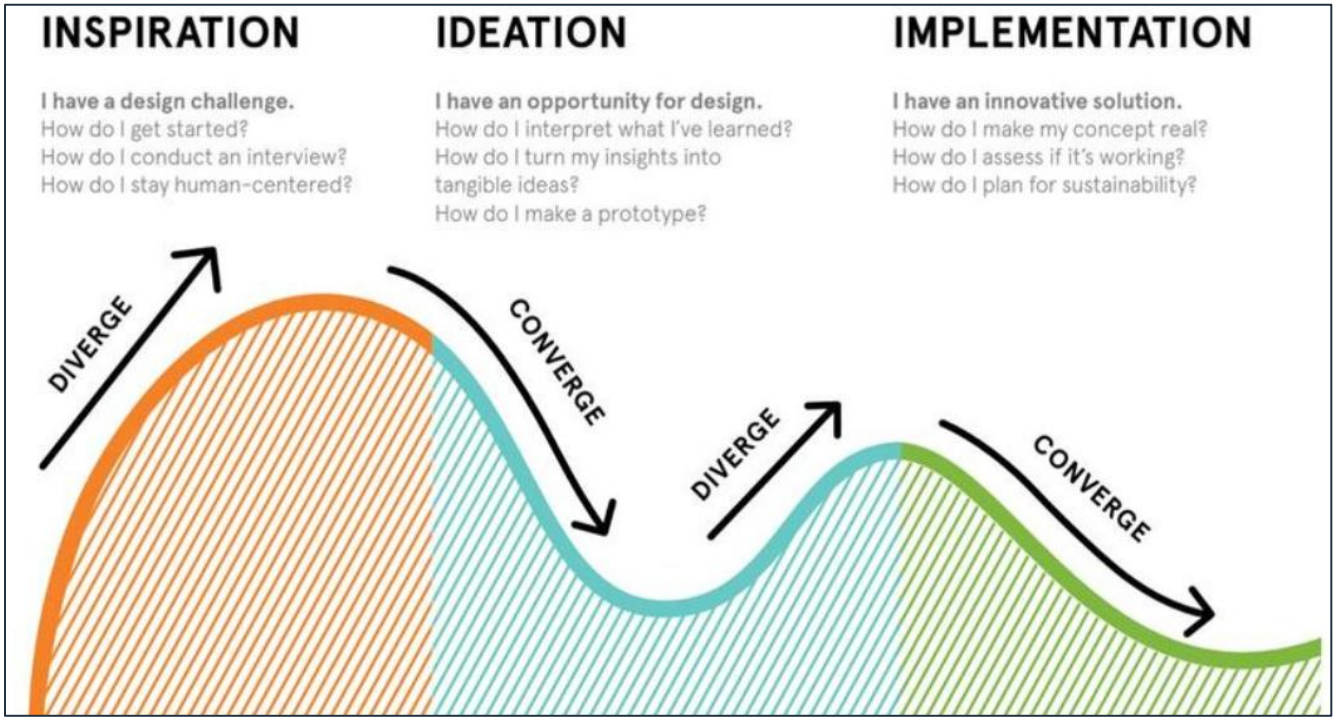
IDEO's Human-Centered Design Model:

IDEO, a leading design and innovation firm, developed this model emphasizing human needs as the foundation of problem-solving.

- **Inspiration** – Understand users and their environment through field research, interviews, and direct observation.

- **Ideation** – Brainstorm, prototype, and refine ideas while involving users in the design process.
- **Implementation** – Develop and scale solutions, ensuring they are practical and impactful for the intended audience.

This model is particularly useful in social innovation and service design, ensuring real-world applicability.

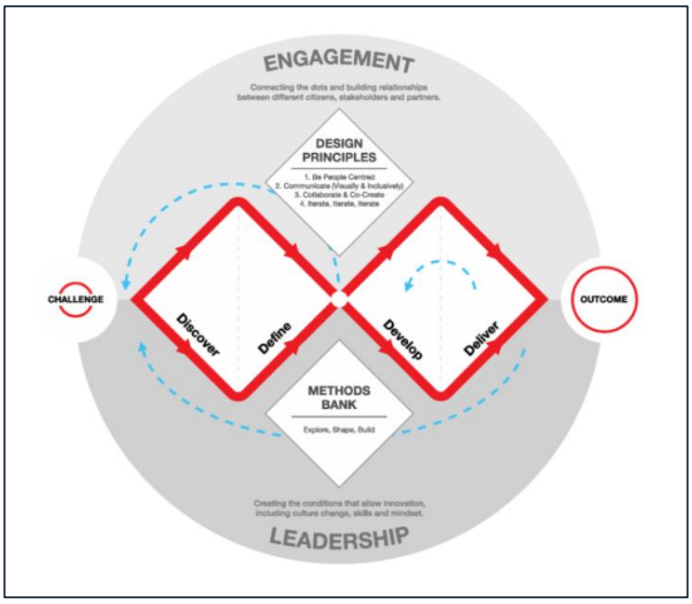


Double Diamond Model (Design Council, UK):

The **Double Diamond** is a **divergent and convergent thinking** approach structured into four phases:

- **Discover** – Conduct broad research to explore the problem, gather insights, and identify user needs.
- **Define** – Narrow down the problem, synthesize findings, and establish a clear design challenge.
- **Develop** – Brainstorm and prototype multiple solutions, experimenting with different possibilities.
- **Deliver** – Test, refine, and implement the best solution to ensure effectiveness.

This model is particularly used in policy-making, service design, and product development, ensuring a structured and iterative problem-solving approach.



IBM Design Thinking:

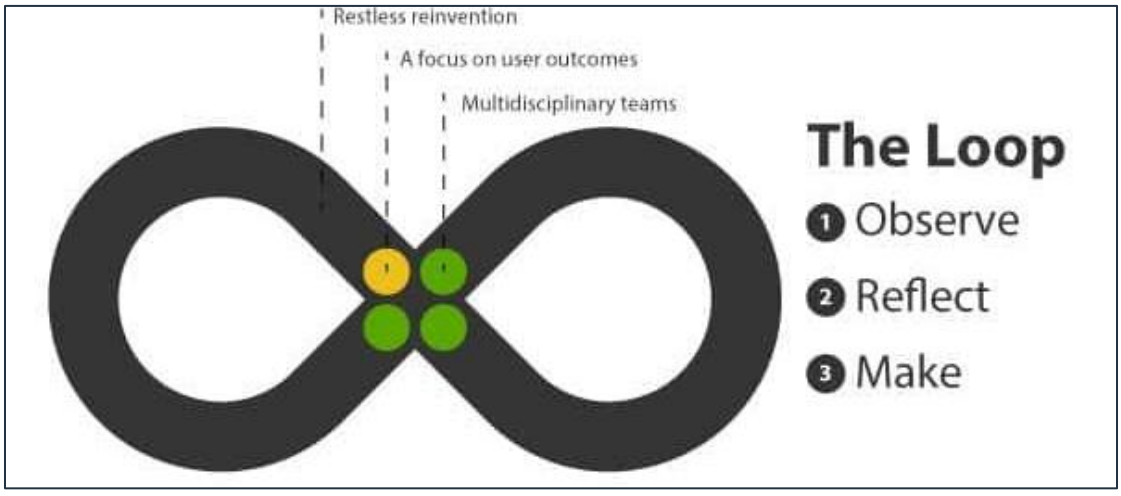
IBM adapted design thinking for large-scale enterprise and digital innovation. It focuses on three core principles:

- **User-Centered** – Solutions must prioritize user needs based on research and empathy.
- **Collaborative** – Cross-functional teams work together to generate and refine ideas.
- **Iterative** – Rapid prototyping and continuous feedback ensure adaptability.

Key phases:

- **Understand** – Deeply research the problem and user needs.
- **Explore** – Ideate and create early prototypes for testing.
- **Prototype & Evaluate** – Continuously test, refine, and deploy solutions.

This model is used in software development, enterprise UX, and corporate innovation.

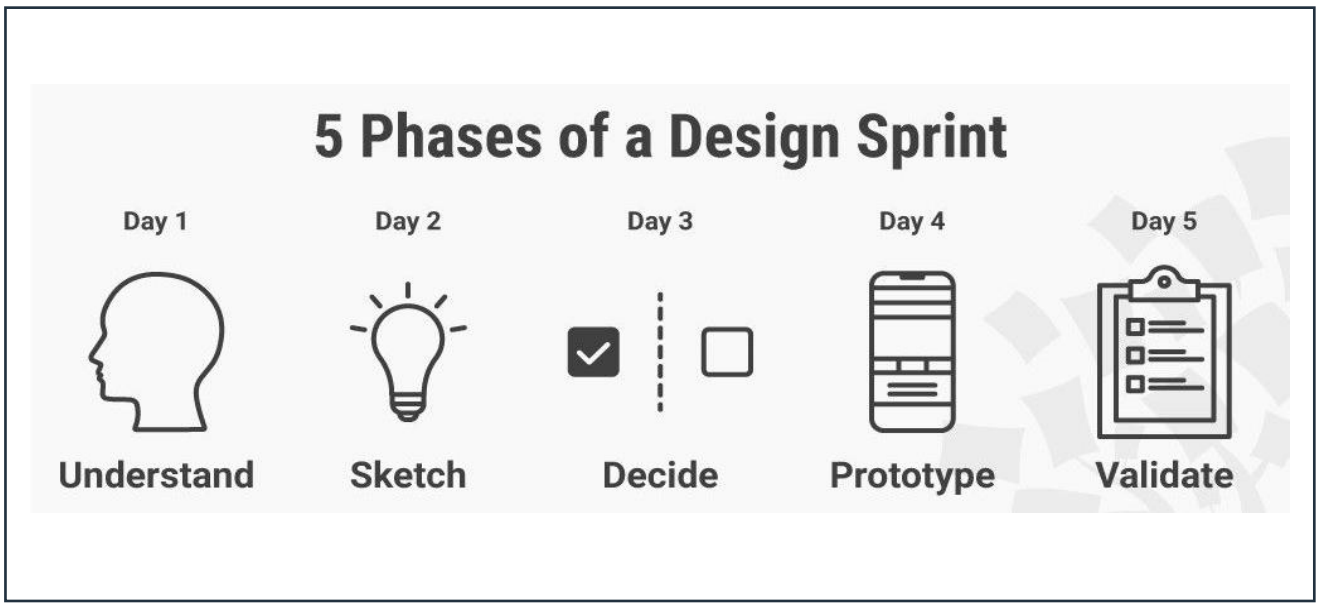


Google's Design Sprint:

A fast-paced, five-day framework for solving complex problems and testing solutions rapidly.

- **Understand (Day 1)** – Gather insights, map the problem, and define a clear goal.
- **Sketch (Day 2)** – Individuals brainstorm and sketch possible solutions.
- **Decide (Day 3)** – The team selects the most promising ideas and refines them.
- **Prototype (Day 4)** – Create a quick, testable version of the solution.
- **Test (Day 5)** – Get real feedback from users, analyze insights, and iterate if needed.

This model is ideal for startups, tech development, and digital product design, allowing teams to validate ideas quickly.



LUMA System of Innovation:

The **LUMA System**, developed by **LUMA Institute**, is a **modular design thinking framework** that consists of **36 methods** categorized into three key design skills:

1. Looking (Research & Discovery)
Focuses on observing, understanding, and analyzing user needs.

Methods include:
- Stakeholder Mapping – Identifying key players and their roles.
- Fly-on-the-Wall Observation – Unobtrusive observation of user behavior.
- Experience Mapping – Visualizing customer journeys.
- Contextual Inquiry – Conducting deep-dive user interviews.

2. Understanding (Synthesis & Analysis)

Translates research into actionable insights.

Methods include:
- Affinity Clustering – Grouping insights to find patterns.
- Personas – Creating fictional user profiles based on data.
- Rose, Thorn, Bud – Identifying positives, negatives, and opportunities.
- 2x2 Matrix – Prioritizing ideas based on importance and feasibility.

3. Making (Ideation & Prototyping)

Focuses on generating, refining, and testing solutions.

Methods include:
- Concept Mapping – Visually organizing ideas.
- Thumbnail Sketching – Rapidly sketching ideas.
- Storyboarding – Creating visual narratives of user interactions.
- Prototyping – Building early models for testing.

The LUMA System is especially useful for customizing workshops, making it a great fit for your design thinking course if you want a non-linear, mix-and-match approach.

Thank You

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Let us learn together!

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