

How to embed design thinking as a core value in your organisation

Foreword

Over the last 10 years, much has been written about the power of design thinking to create better customer experiences across different industries and sectors. But there's another area that has become increasingly important to organisations which remains under-explored: the power of design thinking to re-energise employees.

Today's (and tomorrow's) employees use more and more technology to get their work done. Because the quality of the digital experience in their personal lives is now so high, the expectations of the tools and systems they use at work has grown. And, because employees need to solve more problems, with more creativity, than they did 10 years ago, traditional ways of working – with strict processes, long feedback loops and heavy penalties for perceived failures – risk damaging employee productivity.

Design thinking, with its human-centric, solution-based focus on problem framing and solving, can help organisations address this. But applying it on a project-by-project basis isn't enough. Instead, future-thinking leaders need to empower employees throughout their organisation to address these challenges every day, by giving all of them the skills, approaches and attitudes of design thinkers. To do that, they need to instil design thinking as part of their organisation's culture – as a core value.

Departments across the organisation will benefit – from HR to IT, from the production line to the CEO. In return, organisations will see sustained improvements in employee engagement and productivity, customer experience metrics and overall organisational performance.

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Most people make the mistake of thinking design is what it looks like. People think it's this veneer — that the designers are handed this box and told, 'Make it look good!' That's not what we think design is. It's not just what it looks like and feels like. Design is how it works.”

Steve Jobs

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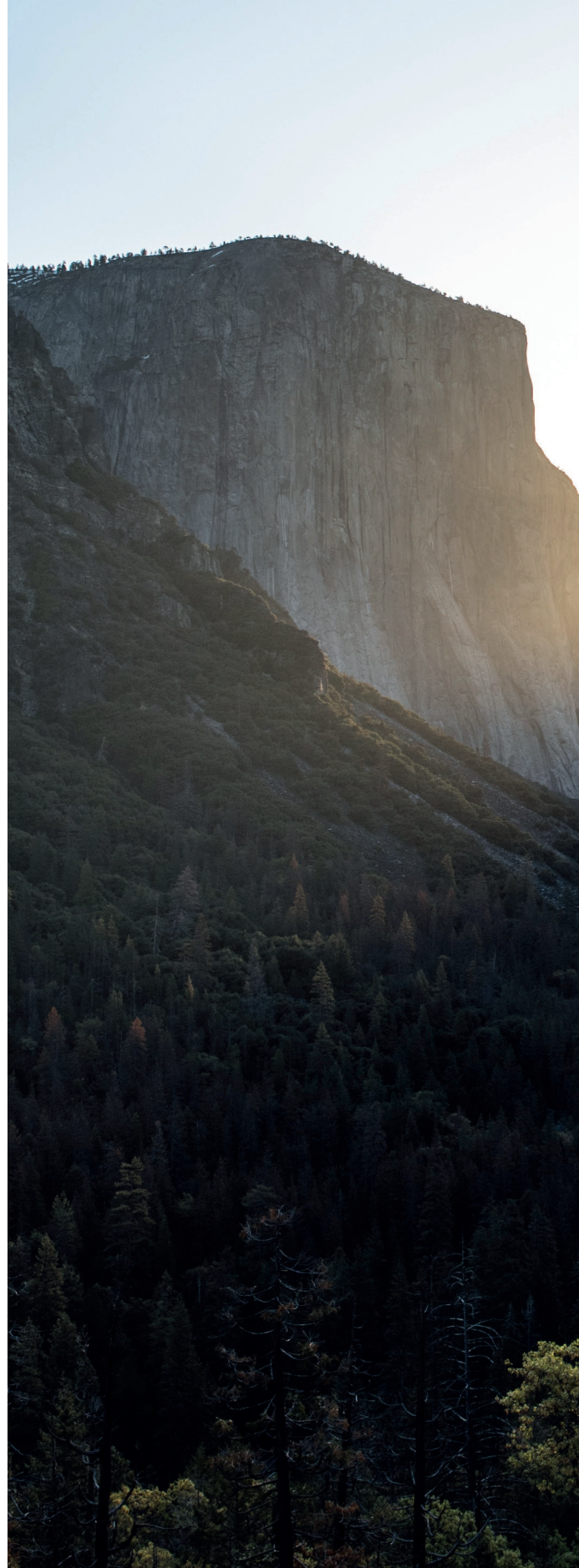
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Design thinking: the core value to drive your organisation's future

Introduction

Since the turn of the twenty-first century and the growth of online distribution channels, more companies have gained access to more markets around the world, resulting in increased competition. As a result, the price of hardware and components has been driven down, and more and more products now share the same features.





For digital products, functional capability is no longer a competitive advantage. In the mobile phone category, for example, brands like Xiaomi and Oppo sell devices for around £200 that share many of the same specs as those costing three times as much¹. These companies have captured around 16% of global market share between them in just a few years², basing their business models on minimal labour costs.

Many manufacturers who have survived this intensified competitive environment have seen their margins steadily eroded. But the category leaders, Apple and Samsung, have managed to transcend this base competition by focusing on something beyond functional capability: a superior customer experience, comprising product design, build quality, packaging, after-sales care and the whole brand experience. It's a key differentiator, as evidenced by the fact that nearly 70% of consumers are happy to pay more for a superior customer experience³.

At the same time, while developed economies have grown more service oriented and increasingly digital, organisations have had to adopt a more agile operating model in order to respond to the changing market dynamics⁴. More people are now responsible for decision making across the organisation – and they have higher expectations of their workplace experience as a result.

To deliver on these expectations, organisations can look to the way they have driven competitive advantage with their customers, and apply the same thinking to improve their internal processes, systems, tools and working environment. That thinking is design thinking.

¹ <https://www.trustedreviews.com/reviews/xiaomi-mi-8-lite>

² <https://www.counterpointresearch.com/global-smartphone-share/>

³ Salesforce 'State of the Connected Customer'

⁴ 'Services and the Knowledge economy', edited by Mark Boden

What is design thinking?

At its simplest, design thinking is a solution-based, exploratory approach to problem solving.

Although it is based on the way that designers work, it can be applied by non-designers to a vast range of problems. Based on gaining deep understanding of people and their needs, and on reframing problems in human-centric ways, it is particularly powerful in contexts where observed patterns feel unfamiliar or where problems are complex, poorly defined or unknown.

Often, it is a non-linear, collaborative and multi-disciplinary approach that encourages people to look beyond the surface rationality of why things are happening to explore solutions and gives people the freedom to “fail early to succeed sooner”⁵.

Although there are many design thinking frameworks to choose from, nearly all of them move iteratively through these three phases (or ‘spaces’):

Inspiration, Ideation and Implementation.

Inspiration

Overview: This is the stage where a problem or opportunity is discovered that demands a new solution. This can be formally defined in a brief that outlines the relevant constraints, objectives and benchmarks.

Key detail: A key component of this phase is establishing empathy with the end user, to understand their needs, and the potential impacts that any solution will have on them beyond the assumed scope of the problem.

e.g: An employee notices that it takes people a long time to claim their expenses. Their colleagues are always complaining about this. It's inefficient and it's damaging morale. They observe the behaviours of themselves and their colleagues from different departments as they carry out the expenses process from start to finish, to understand where the pain points are.



Implementation

Overview: Implementation shouldn't be viewed as the final phase. Instead, it's another step forward. Build prototypes, share them, test them and refine them. This is the most effective way to uncover unforeseen challenges and unintended consequences.

Key Detail: You can only move through this space quickly if people remove their 'fear of failure'. The whole point of prototyping is to help you see why some ideas won't work as well as planned.

e.g: Try a 'dummy run' of just a few expenses that have already been filed, using a 'prototype for each method'. Get people from the relevant departments in the room, and walk through each process using sketches and post-it notes of the information that's passed from one person to the next at each stage of the process. You could even 'time' how long each method takes, by calculating the number of steps involved.

⁵ <http://designonline.org.au/fail-early-to-succeed-sooner/>

Ideation

Overview: Once the brief has been written and you understand the end users, design thinkers transform what they've observed into a number of different insights, and synthesise ideas based around them.

Key Detail: Encourage divergent thinking at this stage. As Nobel-Prize-winner Linus Pauling said, "To have a good idea you must first have lots of ideas." Framing and reframing what has been observed in different ways can help to generate more ideas. A diverse team will also improve the chances of multiple ideas.

e.g: Assemble a small team not just from HR and IT, but also from the wider workforce. Keep an open mind as to what's possible. Would it be possible to get someone else to file the expenses? Would it be possible to improve the software that's used, or use a different piece of software? Would it be quicker to remove the software altogether, and use a manual process? Would it be best to train people better in the current process? Could a pre-paid card avoid people doing expenses altogether?

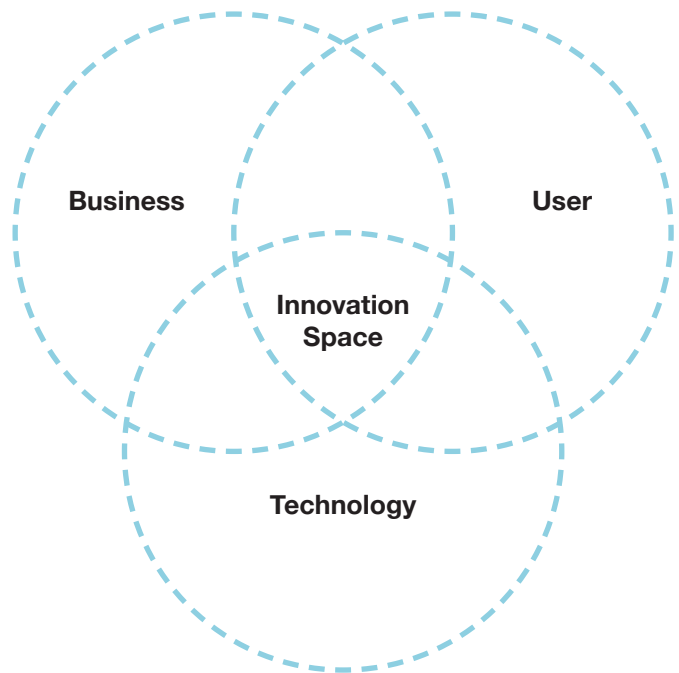


Throughout these phases, the process is driven by three forces:

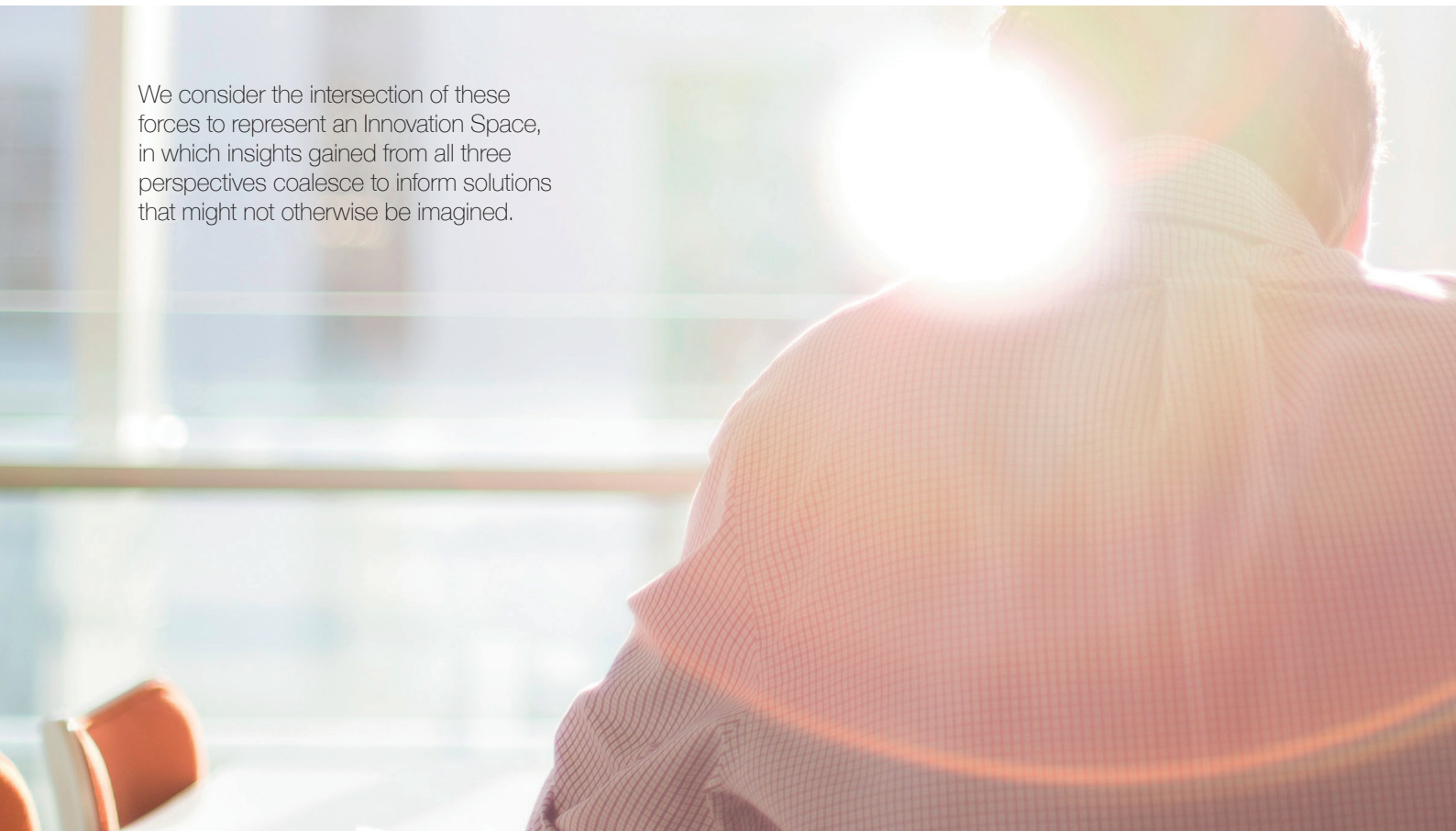
The aims and goals of the business (also known as viability)

The behaviours and needs of the intended audience (desirability)

The constraints imposed by a particular technology, process or ecosystem (feasibility)

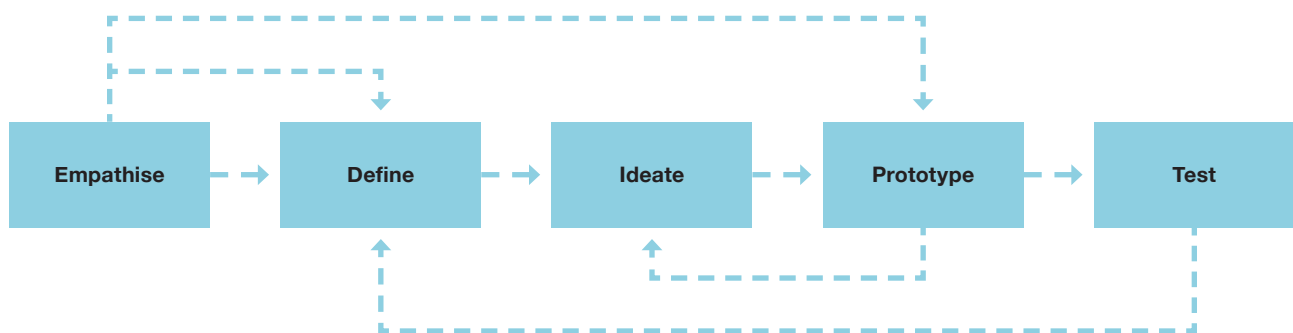


We consider the intersection of these forces to represent an Innovation Space, in which insights gained from all three perspectives coalesce to inform solutions that might not otherwise be imagined.



Due in part to its popularity, and because of its flexibility, there are many other variations on this three-stage framework⁶.

One of the more popular models breaks these stages down further into five steps: Empathise, Define, Ideate, Prototype and Test. These steps still fall under the umbrella stages of Inspiration, Ideation and Implementation.



Each of these models can be useful, and some will suit certain groups better than others. Often, more process-oriented people prefer following more detailed steps, whereas more creative people prefer to find their own way to loop through the three stages. Ultimately, the people involved will have a far greater impact on the outcome than the particular model you choose.

⁶ <https://www.designorate.com/approach/inspiration-design-thinking/>

Revolutionising the experience for customers – and now employees

Design thinking lies behind many of the most successful products and services available today. The world's biggest consumer brands – including Apple, Google, Microsoft, PepsiCo, Nike and IKEA – have embraced design thinking, and have grown their market share and their margins by focusing on holistic and often disruptive experiences that deliver real value.

The result in the digital domain is that consumers increasingly expect richly functional experiences through which they can create and consume content, communicate with each other, entertain themselves and interact with the world's leading brands. Uber makes it simple to find a ride. Amazon brings a high level of convenience to online shopping. Netflix has revolutionised the way in which we watch film and TV. None would exist without a focus on human-centred design, and the opportunity for companies to apply that approach to other areas of their business is huge.

The growing acknowledgement of design thinking as being increasingly important to business success is evidenced by the fact that major management and technology consultancies have for some years been acquiring design companies to supplement their existing propositions⁷. NTT DATA is no exception, having recently completed the full integration of a design team acquired in 2012 with the rest of the NTT DATA Impact organisation.

⁷ <https://www.wsj.com/articles/consulting-firm-mckinsey-co-takes-on-design-strategy-1540486522>



It's easy to forget that employees are also consumers

In the workplace today, employees engage ever more frequently with an increasing number of digital solutions. The choice of tools available – and the impact they can have on the ability of people to do their jobs effectively – is enormous.

In a single day, for example, we might communicate by email, Yammer, Jabber, Slack, Skype, Teams, Webex, iMessage, WhatsApp, or WeChat, and that's before we've even got to the office.

On top of this, emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, augmented reality and robotics are beginning to become mainstream, and are likely to add yet another layer of technology between employees and the work they're expected to do. Looking further ahead also raises the prospect of employees as 'centaurs' – effectively working as half human, half AI.

Crucially, it's important for companies to recognise that, in an increasingly digital world, it's only natural for employees to expect the same quality of experience in the tools they use at work as they do in those they interact with as consumers. A recent survey showed that 75% of young people view the technology that organisations use as being a key factor in whether or not they would choose to work for them⁹, so it's clearly important for a company to get things right.

Which provokes the question: does enterprise investment in technology actually help people do their job better, or does it just get in the way? It's a question that organisations should be asking of themselves every day to ensure greater employee engagement and productivity.

Design thinking can help a company answer that question by looking at problems from a human-first perspective, and by providing opportunities to rapidly explore, iterate on, test and validate potential solutions before substantial investment in technology is required.

⁹ <https://www.fuze.com/future-of-work>

The changing nature of work

Technology is also changing the nature of people's jobs. In many developed nations, the 'knowledge economy' is growing, and the three most important skills employees need to keep pace with the changing nature of work will be: complex problem solving, critical thinking and creativity⁹.

As research from the World Economic Forum¹⁰ has highlighted, "with the avalanche of new products, new technologies and new ways of working, workers are going to have to become more creative in order to benefit from these changes." Creativity, and the other core skills (including emotional intelligence) that will be most in demand from 2020, are exactly the sorts of attributes that design thinking can encourage and refine.

How can different industries respond?

In recent years, Fortune 500 companies like Microsoft and PepsiCo have looked to design-thinking approaches not just to produce new products, but to transform their companies and the way their employees work. It's an approach that is widely applicable across industry sectors, and one that NTT DATA's design team has used successfully in major projects for clients as diverse as UBS, Schlumberger and NATO.

The diagram to the right shows the typical internal issues that organisations across different industries are facing, and how design thinking can help solve them.

⁹ <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/01/the-10-skills-you-need-to-thrive-in-the-fourth-industrial-revolution/>

¹⁰ http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Future_of_Jobs.pdf

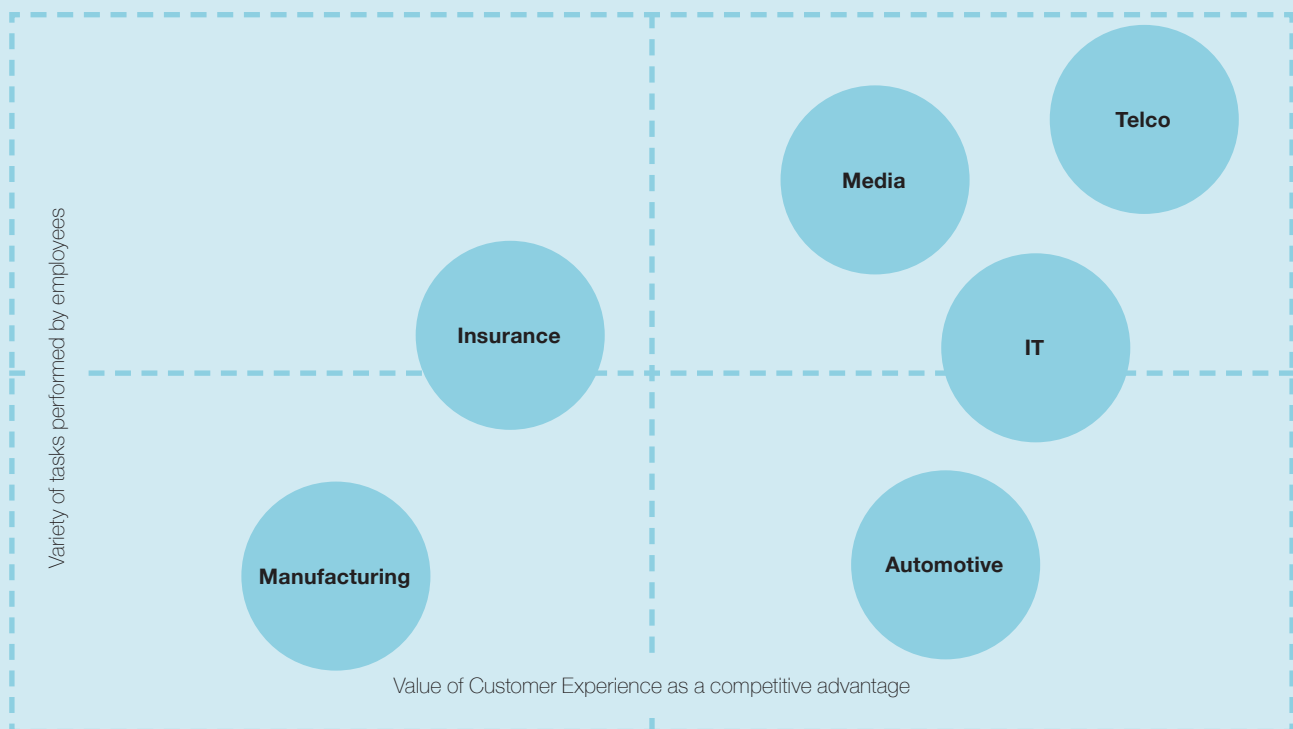
¹¹ <https://hbr.org/2015/09/design-as-strategy>

Typical internal behaviours: Legacy processes causing unnecessary friction. Unsatisfactory communication between departments.

Suggested actions: General training throughout the organisation, led by small design team. Removal of physical boundaries between departments. Creation of shared physical spaces.

Typical internal behaviours: Complex, multi-team projects that run through deadlines. Overcomplication of external offerings.

Suggested actions: Deep embedding of DT as a core value. DT forms key part of recruitment criteria. Reshape physical spaces to encourage smaller, more agile teamwork. Reduce 'time-slicing' by meetings that distract from creative work. Position CEO as 'Designer-in-Chief'.



Typical internal behaviours: Hierarchical org structures with little communication up the chain.

Suggested actions: Create specialised centres of design excellence at each site, with areas of physical space adapted to stimulate divergent thinking. Encourage bottom up innovation and suggestions from line workers. Build feedback loops by sharing customer stories with teams throughout the organisation.

Typical internal behaviours: Heavy investment in large-scale projects, and few quick and easy wins. Sales-led, quarter-by-quarter (or even month-by-month) thinking that prevents real progress being made. Targets barely being met.

Suggested Actions: Encourage product designers to collaborate on internal projects, large or small.

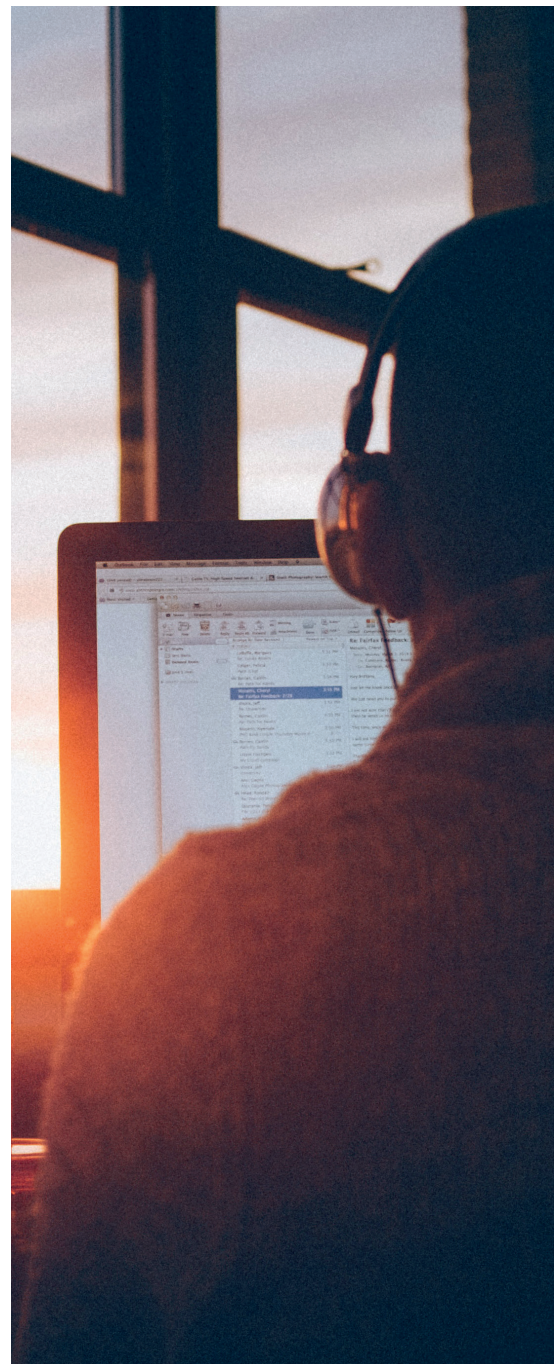
How to embed design thinking as a core value

For design thinking to become a truly effective component of a business transformation strategy, it needs to be considered a core value that is embedded at all levels of an organisation, and not just by a design team.

In an ideal world, designers should be encouraged to bring their insights and creative processes to every project initiated by a company. In most cases, though, that's not feasible – either because the number of concurrently running projects means that designers become a bottleneck, or because key individuals within the organisation do not recognise the value of engaging with designers.

The solution is for leaders to make concerted efforts to embed design thinking into the very culture of their organisations, to equip each and every employee with the skills and attitude to tackle problems in creative ways, and to enable them to leverage those skills to deliver better experiences both for themselves and their customers.

These things can be achieved in a number of ways:



01 Reframe failure as a key step to improvement

In *Black Box Thinking*¹², Matthew Syed contrasts the extraordinary safety record of the modern aviation industry with that of the healthcare industry. The aviation industry has dramatically reduced its rate of fatalities due to accident over the past 100 years (from one in four in the early 20th century to one per 83 million take-offs in 2014), whereas in healthcare, it's estimated that accidental, preventable medical error is the third biggest killer in the US today, behind only heart disease and cancer.

Syed observes that “the most profound difference between these two industries is in their divergent approaches to failure,” as symbolised by an aircraft’s ‘black box’ flight recorder. The aviation industry captures failures, analyses them, learns from them, and implements improvements as a direct response to them. In healthcare, however, failures often aren’t even reported, let alone analysed. As a result, the same mistakes are repeated time and again, and the system as a whole doesn’t improve as it could. Syed observes that this is part of a far wider trend, in which “failure to learn from mistakes has been one of the single greatest obstacles to human progress.”

Another relevant aspect of failure for organisations is the fear of failure. This can slow decision making, even prevent decisions from being made at all, as well as stifling innovation. We’ve spoken to many software engineers who have spotted potentially significant improvements to products, but never shared it with their manager for fear of it going wrong. And if they were to share it, it’s then the manager who has to shoulder the risk, who might choose not to act on the suggestion for fear of their own failure. It becomes a systemic issue, both demoralising and debilitating.

Design thinking is predicated on the belief that it’s okay to fail. It removes fear by giving people permission to fail and encouraging innovation. It has a tolerance for failure built into it – the prototyping phase – which reframes failure as a valuable step in the learning process. James Dyson didn’t invent his eponymous vacuum cleaner at the first attempt. He did so on the 5,127th attempt¹³. This discipline, this continual willingness to experiment, to fail, to learn and to improve, is one of the reasons he has been called “an evangelist for failure”¹⁴.

Another benefit is that, with less pressure on achieving perfection at the first attempt, it’s possible to move faster and make decisions quicker. It’s much easier – and more productive – to respond to negative feedback in the early stages of a project than to wait until months of effort and cost have been invested in the wrong idea. Furthermore, rapid and frequent prototyping allows any issues to be reported openly, analysed, and the learnings used to refine the output of the next iteration.

¹², ¹³ & ¹⁴ *Black Box Thinking* by Matthew Syed, published by John Murray, 2016.

02 Source and celebrate role models

In 2012, Indra Nooyi was facing several challenges as CEO of PepsiCo. She was leading a bloated business and losing market share. Activist investors were calling on her to break up the company, and her new initiative to move PepsiCo into the wellness space was foundering. It was around this time that she brought in Mauro Porcini as PepsiCo's first Chief Design Officer. In this newly created position, Porcini infused design thinking into PepsiCo's culture and led a new approach to innovation that spanned product, packaging, events, advertising, retail activation, architecture, and digital media. As a result, PepsiCo's shares have steadily gained value, and according to both Nooyi and Porcini, design has had a voice in every decision.

Appointing a Chief Design Officer was a bold move. Often, the role of design can be misunderstood in the wider organisation, so identifying a champion and giving them resources is an important step towards changing employees' understanding of the potential of design. It's important to give design thinkers a seat at any table where decisions are made, so that the understanding of design permeates the culture of the company, from top to bottom.

However, the role models shouldn't just be at the top of the organisation, and nor should they just be designers. Find people at every level who intuitively understand the importance of design thinking, and put the essential principles of it into practice (even if they're unaware they're doing so). They can become the ambassadors of a new attitude if you give them the license to bring teams together. Solving problems collaboratively with these people is an effective teaching method for other employees to learn the skills of design thinking.



03 Change the space in which people work (to change the way they work)

There are two ways to change physical spaces within your organisation that will help design thinking to thrive. First, create a design thinking 'hub'. Second, create a variety of spaces that allow people to think and behave differently.

Creating a design thinking hub gives people the tools they need to loop through the design-thinking process, and it also sends a signal that it is the desired behaviour for employees. Set up a combination of modern and traditional technologies like whiteboards, touchscreen tech (like the Microsoft Surface Hub), and post-it notes. Make sure people can put stuff up on the walls, physically rearrange pieces of information, talk about a range of topics, and share ideas freely. Lego famously has sets of its building blocks in every meeting room, partly as a promotional tool, but largely to encourage people to 'play', and to be more creative at work.

There are times when it's best to work with your head down, but there are also times when it's helpful to lift your head and see what other people are doing. The environment that people work in will change the way they approach the work that they do. Creating different spaces gives them a choice of approach, and makes that choice more apparent to them. Instead of uniform grey cubicles, give people a variety of spaces in which to think.

The goal is to create an environment in which they feel they have the freedom to experiment, that gives them tools to explore and to play with ideas, that enable them to engage in active collaboration, and that makes them feel sufficiently comfortable that they're willing to unleash their creativity without constraint or fear of criticism.

NTT DATA's Innovation Lab in Epworth House, London, was created explicitly for this purpose. It's a large, open and flexible space that provides an ideal environment for groups of designers, technologists and clients to participate in creative ideation sessions. It also allows internal teams to explore the capabilities and solution opportunities that exist within a wide range of current and emerging technologies. Distinctively different in style, appearance and environment from the rest of the building, it encourages people to work together, and to think and collaborate in ways that are impossible in a typical office space.

As well as creating the right physical environments, you should also clear space in people's calendars for non-core activities. Google's famous 80/20 time allowed employees to spend a fifth of their working week on projects beyond their job spec. This might not be realistic for most enterprises, but you could perhaps start by carving out an hour each week, or a day each month for people to work on 'extra-curricular' projects.

Finally, look beyond the walls of your own organisation, to create collaborative opportunities with companies in other sectors. This brings different perspectives, different sets of knowledge and experience together, which increase the chances of novel solutions. For example, if you're in the insurance sector, looking to retain customers over a number of years, what might you learn from the way media subscription services communicate with customers?

04 Create a multi-disciplinary ecosystem

Design thinking benefits from a diverse range of skills and perspectives. This diversity helps to uncover a wider range of insights for any given problem, and helps to foster divergent thinking. The sorts of skills that can be useful are in various strands of design (UX design, interaction design, product design, service design), but just as importantly they are in psychology, behavioural science, ethnography, business analytics, strategy, engineering and technical expertise.

Recruiting people with these different specialisms enhances the design thinking capability of other employees working with them and around them. Encourage employees to explore these disciplines themselves, whether through a formal training programme, through bitesize workshops with specialists, or using the wealth of online material available¹⁵. The aim is to create as many 'T-shaped' individuals as possible, who have a working knowledge of many different disciplines, and a deep knowledge of one or two. These are the individuals who can contribute in every phase of the design-thinking process, and who weave together the needs of the business, an understanding of the users and an awareness of the technical constraints and possibilities.

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People shouldn't have to work around a system; systems should work the way people work. That's a core principle behind a design-led, user-centric approach – and we know from experience that you get happier, more productive employees because of it.

George Neill, NTT DATA

¹⁵ http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_2019_Strategies_for_the_New_Economy_Skills.pdf

¹⁶ <https://go.medallia.com/rs/669-VLQ-276/images/Medallia-Learning-Before-Earning.pdf>

¹⁷ https://www.jstor.org/stable/2951373?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents

05 Measure what matters: speed and customer/employee experience

There are a range of internal and external measures to help employees understand the business implications of design thinking. Using the right incentives can also help to encourage empathy amongst employees for their colleagues and customers.

Find a mix of metrics that works well, and review it. Focusing on one set of metrics for too long can be dangerous: employees may follow the letter of the targets rather than the spirit – deliberately or subconsciously. For example, a recent survey showed how car dealerships would press customers into giving them better feedback on customer surveys. It's also been shown that focusing on improvement and learning over longer periods of time is more effective than focusing on short-term job ratings.

Here are some of the typical metrics that encourage design behaviours:

- **Speed-to-Market.** The importance of speed-to-market has increased in an age where first-mover advantage has grown. Design thinking accelerates your release cycle, so should reduce the time taken to launch products and services.
- **Time to first prototype.** Too long, and employees are fearful to test their ideas. Too short, and they aren't spending enough time framing the problem.
- **Process Efficiency.** Design thinking starts by understanding a person's behaviours, goals, needs and pain points. Observing and analysing how employees engage in a process (rather than looking at the process from a system perspective) will provide insights that help optimise the process and improve efficiency and productivity.
- **Employee Engagement/Churn.** Design thinking should improve employee engagement, because it empowers employees to solve the problems they face.
- **NPS.** As well as the internal improvements, organisations should expect to see an increase in NPS, as the customer experience improves.
- **Product ratings.** Similar to NPS, you should see an upswing in product ratings as the customer experience improves, even if the underlying technology hasn't progressed.

What design thinking can mean for different departments

Design thinking can benefit the work of every department in your organisation. Here are four examples from HR, IT, the Production Line and a CEO.



HR

Design thinking helps HR better understand the way in which employees behave, and helps them to create programmes and services that increase engagement and productivity.

The CHRO for a large telco needed to train staff around a new 5G proposition. Some of the information she was given to distribute was highly technical.

Typically, the information that goes into training programmes was mandated by whoever developed the proposition. However, the CHRO took a different approach. She started with a brief survey of different departments, and gathered observations around how teams in each department worked. Her team soon realised that there were only a handful of people in the building who both needed to digest the technical information, and had the capability to do so. This led the HR team to prototype and refine a tiered training programme, where different teams were able to dive in to the topic to different depths. This increased engagement significantly, aligned people internally on the proposition and created a more focused story to take to the market.

As a result of the research, the HR team also created a related programme to improve their employees' understanding of the technical infrastructure behind the organisation's products. This had the unforeseen benefit of bridging the technical and customer-facing centres of the business, stimulating communication between the two, and helping them to better understand the value that the technical teams brought to the business.

IT

Design thinking can help IT design tools that help people do their jobs better, rather than just supplying them with technology.

The IT team of a large insurer was looking to update the way that claims were handled and processed internally. Years of legacy processes had become a drag on efficiency for employees, and a source of frustration for customers. Rather than simply upgrade a couple of elements in the software stack, IT analysed how different people used the information at each stage of a claim's journey, as it travelled through different departments.

They were able to see how people were bouncing information from one department to the next, and how redundant information (or information that had not yet been verified) was having knock-on effects for other people's tasks, which was significantly slowing down the whole process. Instead of improving the current system, they created a new automated system that routed information to different departments once certain criteria had been fulfilled, or certain information verified.

This shortened the response times for claims significantly, and streamlined the workflows for employees, reducing the amount of time they spent checking things manually.

Production Line

When Toyota first implemented the practice of Kaizen in the middle of the 19th century, the processes they put in place shared a lot of the principles of design thinking. Groups of workers ('quality circles') met regularly to identify, analyse and solve work-related problems. This was radical at the time, in that it stimulated bottom-up innovation. The workers closest to the issues were the ones raising their hands and designing better solutions.

Moreover, with its focus on continuous improvement, Toyota was effectively iterating and testing every time it switched on its production lines. Kaizen itself has gained traction in manufacturing and beyond, and today can be seen as a reflection of design thinking through a specific lens.

CEO

Design thinking can help CEOs design their organisations for the future.

The CEO of a large manufacturer knew that he had to enter new markets in order to maintain or accelerate growth, as the market his firm was currently in was stagnating. He had brought in the usual strategy houses to help, but the paths they suggested were indistinguishable from the ones he knew his competitors would be taking. They might help his organisation keep up, but they wouldn't push him ahead.

He convened a small steering group, comprising his CFO, a bright young process designer, a production line manager, a senior marketer and his Sales Director. He tasked them to, between them, create a list of the exceptional behaviours that happened in his organisation every day – what people did better than anyone else. He also tasked them with finding out what people enjoyed most about their work, and asked the sales and marketing team to find out what customers liked most about the firm, and to find wider societal trends that could impact the global economy over the next five to ten years.

Once every couple of weeks for three months, the team took over a meeting room, armed with post-it notes, printed research, video footage of employees and interviews with customers. After three months, the CEO had seven completely new, credible ideas that could influence the company's strategy for the next ten years. But the steering group didn't stop there. They took these seven ideas and tested aspects of each with employees and customers, with a view to uncovering any possible impact that each idea might have in practice.

With a new strategy in place, the steering group continues to meet in three-month stretches, with 12-month breaks in between. These breaks are now viewed as opportunities for research and refinement, as different impacts come to light and the ideas are refined. It's a continuous loop, and one that has enabled the company to become more agile, and more responsive to significant changes in any of the markets they enter.

Design thinking: the core value to drive your organisation's future

We work in an era in which capital is abundant and talent is an organisation's scarcest, most valuable resource. To attract the best employees, engage them, and get the most out of them, leaders need to put as much emphasis on employee experience as they do on customer experience.

As we enter the fourth industrial revolution, the nature of work is changing: people, processes and technology will all have to become more adaptive. Those leaders who recognise this will empower their employees and strengthen their organisation.

Design thinking gives people the ability to succeed in this environment: to adapt to different situations; to create innovations from the bottom up; and to work collaboratively across different departments and disciplines. The exploratory, iterative nature of design thinking can help organisations challenge their assumptions of people, processes and outcomes in the search for innovative new products and services. The companies that thrive will be those who equip all their employees for this new world of work, and design thinking is ideally suited for this. Design thinking is no longer something to implement on a couple of projects, it is something to embed in your organisation's culture as a core value.



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