

- A PUBLICATION OF BA COACH -

AN INTRODUCTION TO

DESIGN THINKING

AND WHY BUSINESS ANALYSIS PRACTICES CAN BENEFIT



TABLE OF CONTENTS

3

What is Design Thinking?

4

Design Thinking Principles

6

Working with constraints

7

Approach

9

Design Thinking & Business Analysis

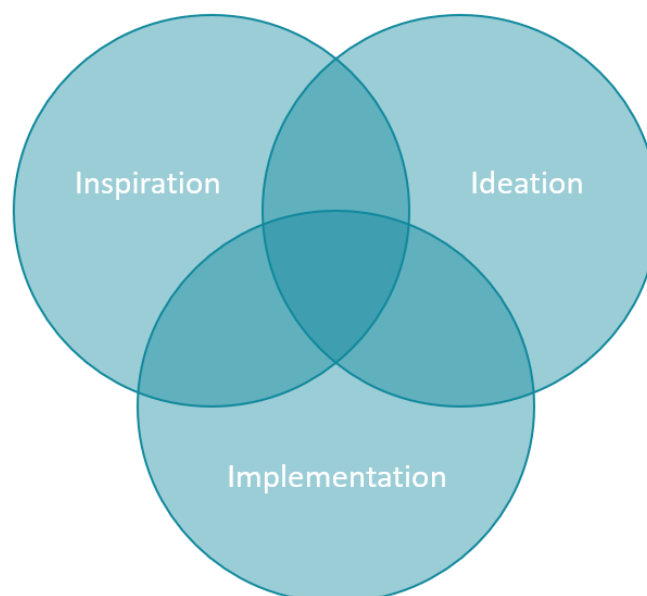
DESIGN THINKING

What is it?

Design Thinking is a human-centered approach for creative problem-solving. It utilizes elements from the designer's toolkit like empathy and experimentation to develop innovative solutions.

Design Thinking has started to receive increased attention in business settings. This is because the design of products and services is a major component of business competitiveness, to the extent that many known companies (e.g. Amazon, Apple, IBM, SAP) have committed themselves to becoming design leaders.

Design Thinking is not about following the process, but about *inspiration* expressed by a problem or opportunity worth addressing, *ideation* during which ideas are generated, developed and tested and *implementation* that translate the idea to a product or service. The innovation is reached by looping through these spaces.

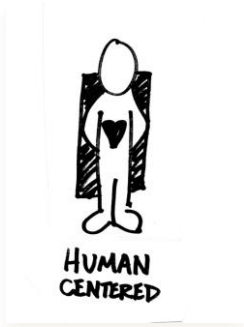




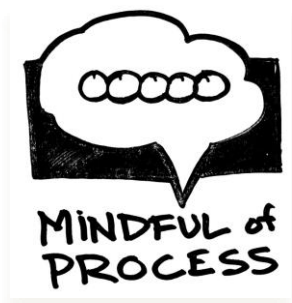
DESIGN THINKING

Principles

Like agile development, **Design Thinking** is also guided by principles. These principles, developed by d.school are fundamental truths every design thinking initiative embraces.



Design Thinking involves the **human perspective** in all steps of the problem-solving approach. It focusses on **understanding the mindset of people** who will use the solution and their unmet needs.



Mindful of process means teams who apply Design Thinking find ways to be thoughtful of the work they do, how they do that work, and how they will improve on their methods in the future.



People with different backgrounds bring new, interesting insights into the table. Design Thinking promotes vastly **different thinking styles** to work **together** to generate better ideas.



Expressing ideas in a non-verbal way, makes ideas more compelling, helps spotting problems and opportunities that discussion may not reveal. Visualisation helps teams come to agreed design decisions.



Culture of prototyping allows team stay experimental, build to think and engage people with artefacts. Prototyping facilitates elicitation and early feedback that will help teams learn more about both their designs and about Design Thinking.



Design Thinking promotes action-oriented behavior, rather than discussion based work. Don't talk too much, start creating!

To successfully apply Design Thinking a designer mindset is required. This mindset embraces empathy, curiosity and overall interest in other people. We need to be open to unexpected, think holistically and visually. Design Thinking asks us to be playful, learn by doing, be eager to share and receive feedback. Applying toolkit of Design Thinking without mindset is a work half-done.

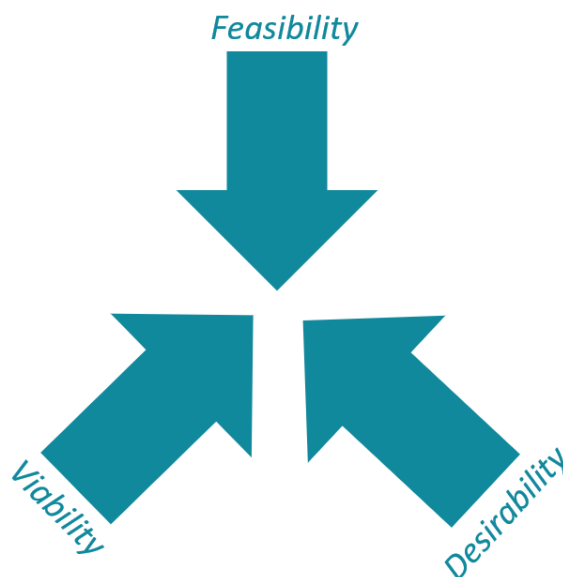


DESIGN THINKING

Working with constraints

Every initiative is restricted by constraints. **Design Thinking** embraces them, because the design process cannot take place without them. Constraints impact the solution space. They are grouped into three categories:

- **Feasibility** – what is possible within foreseeable future
- **Viability** – what is likely to become part of a sustainable business model
- **Desirability** – what is needed by people



“ *The willing and even enthusiastic acceptance of competing constraints is the foundation of design thinking* ”

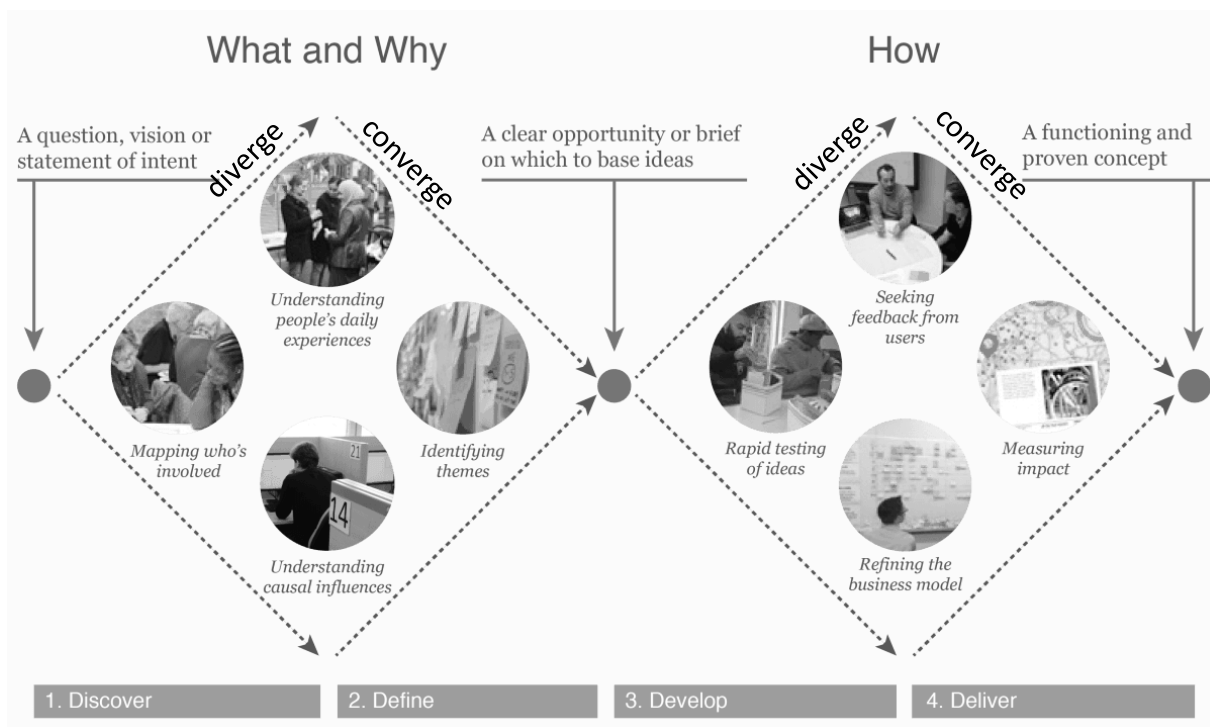
- Tim Brown, IDEO

DESIGN THINKING

Approach

At a high level, the steps involved in the **Design Thinking** approach are simple: first, fully understand the people and the problem they experience (What and Why); second, explore a wide range of possible solutions, iterate extensively through prototyping and testing; and finally, implement (How).

Different thinking styles used in Design Thinking: divergent to explore and convergent to synthesise, resulted in an alternative name for this framework - **Double Diamond**.



Design Thinking framework created by [The Design Council \(UK\)](#), which maps the design activities into four distinct phases: Discover, Define, Develop, and Deliver.

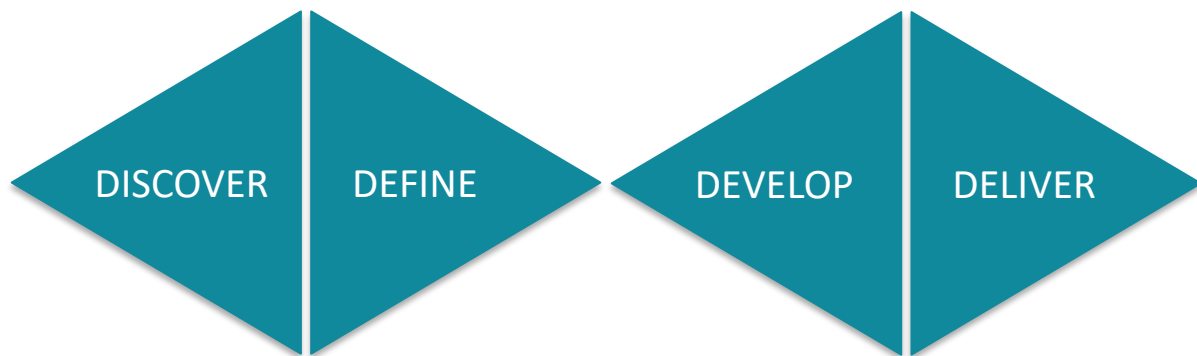
Discover

The Discover phase focusses on a '*phase of divergent thought*', where the team members keep their perspectives wide to allow for a broad range of ideas and influences. In this stage, the company is asking a question, posing a hypothesis or identifying a problem by analysing market data, trends and other information sources.

Develop

During the Develop phase, the team refines one or more concepts that will address the problems or issues identified during the **Discover** and **Define** stages.

Design development methods are used in this stage including creative techniques and methods such as *brainstorming*, *visualisation*, *prototyping*, *testing* and *scenarios*.



Define

At the Define phase, a combination of the *ideas or directions* identified during the Discover phase *are analysed and synthesised* into a brief with actionable tasks related to creation of new and/or improvement of existing product or service.

The Define phase ends with a clear definition of the problem(s) and a plan for how to address this through a design-led product or service.

Deliver

The **Deliver** phase is where the final concept is taken through acceptance testing, signed-off, produced and launched.

It will result in a product or service that successfully addresses the problem identified during the Discover phase.



DESIGN THINKING

And Business Analysis

Enriching Business Analysis practices with Design Thinking make us better Business Analysts. Analytical capabilities that include among others the process of gathering information relevant to the investigated business situation and identifying key issues related to this information are important. In this analytical thinking the risk of forgetting for whom we want to provide our service or product is big. Finding a solution to complex business issues is not as solving a simple math problem. The challenge lies in diverse stakeholder group, different interests, unexpressed needs, latent needs our stakeholders have.

New approaches are required. Approaches that focus on the person who will work with a product or service we create. Approaches that involve this person in the creation process. Problem-solving activities deliver better results when people with different perspectives and backgrounds work together.

Design Thinking offers new mindset, approach and techniques that can be applied by Business Analysts to make its practices more focused on the customer and his or her latent needs. Doing so Business Analysis results not only in better, but also more innovative business outcomes.

“ *Business Analysis is the practice of enabling change in an organizational context, by defining needs and recommending solutions that deliver value to stakeholders.* ”



Design Thinking in Your Organization?

Explore how to apply Design Thinking in
your organization.

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