

Design Thinking: What Does It Have To Do with Project Management?

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Setting the Context



- I am...
 - Project/Program Manager
 - Change Manager
 - Scrum Master
- I am not...
 - Designer
 - Expert in Design Thinking
 - Expert in UX (User Experience)
- I am curious...
 - What is Design Thinking?
 - What does it mean to me as a PM?
 - How can I integrate it into programs, projects, and initiatives?

What is Project Management?



According to PMI:

- A project is temporary in that it has a defined beginning and end in time, and therefore defined scope and resources
- Project management is the application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to project activities to meet the project requirements and objectives, realize benefits



Life of a Project Managers



Concerned about:

- Time
- Cost
- Scope
- Quality
- Issues and risks
- Communications
- Monitoring progress
- Managing client expectations
- Guiding and motivating the team
- Stakeholder engagement

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=WkQ52FOX8c>

So Where Does Design Thinking Come In?



■ While there can be different phases, in general, Project Management processes fall into five groups:

- Initiating

- Planning

- Executing

- Monitoring and Controlling

- Closing



Requirements Gathering

What are the business needs?

What are the client requirements?

What are the desired outcomes?

So, What's the Problem?



- In innovative context, there is uncertainty and unknown
- Problems are initially ill-structured and neither technologies nor customer requirements are necessarily known at the start
- Basic assumptions of standard project management do not hold because you can't clearly identify all requirements up front, at the beginning of the project
- This is particularly problematic, because in a world characterized by rapid change, intensive innovation, and increasing complexity, such uncertainty is becoming the norm rather than the exception

WHAT TO DO?

What is Design Thinking?



According to IDEO:

“Design Thinking is a human-centered approach to innovation that draws from the designer's toolkit to integrate the needs of people, the possibilities of technology, and the requirements for business success.”

— Tim Brown, CEO of IDEO

- Design Thinking utilizes elements from the “designer's toolkit” like empathy and experimentation to arrive at innovative solutions
- By using Design Thinking, you make decisions based on what future customers really want instead of relying only on historical data or making risky bets based on instinct instead of evidence

Design Thinking 101



- Iterative process
- Seeks to:
 - Understand the individual, client, user
 - Challenge assumptions
 - Redefine problems
- Why do this?
 - Attempt to identify alternate strategies and solutions that may not be instantly apparent
 - Provides a solution-based approach to solving problems

Design Thinking is for Everyone



- Design Thinking is not only for designers
- For anyone (staff, developers, leaders, project managers) who seek to drive new alternatives for business and society

“Design Thinking is essentially a problem-solving approach, crystalized in the field of design, which combines a user-centered perspective with rational and analytical research with the goal of creating innovative solutions.”

— Tim Brown, CEO of IDEO

Design Thinking is Problem Solving



- Design Thinking revolves around a deep interest in developing an understanding of the people for whom we're designing the products or services. It helps us observe and develop empathy with the target user
- Design Thinking helps us in the process of questioning: questioning the problem, questioning the assumptions, and questioning the implications
- Design Thinking is extremely useful in tackling problems that are ill-defined or unknown, by re-framing the problem in human-centric ways, creating many ideas in brainstorming sessions, and adopting a hands-on approach in prototyping and testing

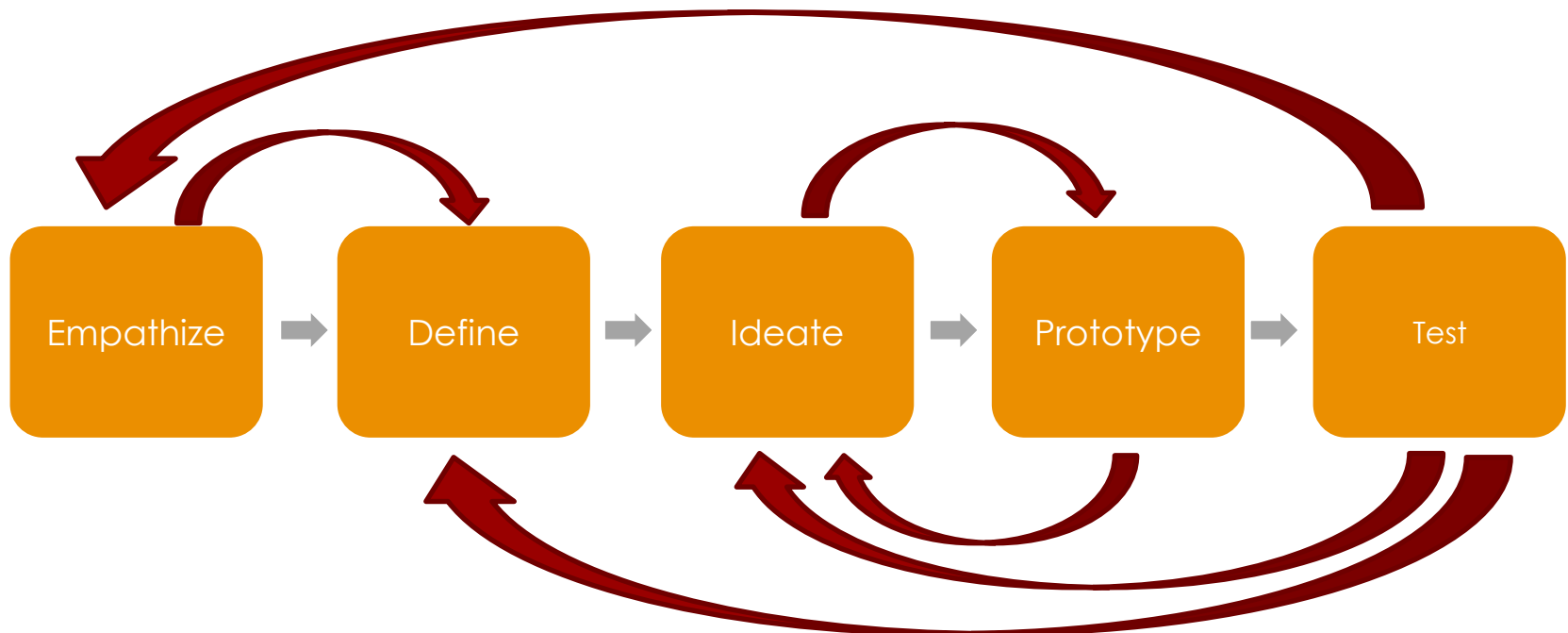
Design Thinking Phases



- Like project management, people have different takes on the phases
- Some of the more popular schools and teachers adhere to a 5 phase approach
 - Empathise – with your users
 - Define – your users' needs, their problem, and your insights
 - Ideate – by challenging assumptions and creating ideas for innovative solutions
 - Prototype – to start creating solutions
 - Test – solutions

Design Thinking Phases

- Phases are not sequential, are not linear
- The design team continuously use their results to review, question and improve their initial assumptions, understandings, and results



What It Means to Be Human



- Design Thinking seeks to generate a holistic and empathetic understanding of the problems that people face
 - Not rooted solely in analytics, science or rationale
 - Not rooted solely in intuition and emotion
- Tries to empathize with human beings, including ambiguous and subjective concepts: emotions, needs, motivations, and drivers of behaviours
- This approach is typically more sensitive to and interested in the context in which users operate, and the problems and obstacles they might face when interacting with a product
- The creative element of Design Thinking is found in the methods used to generate problem solutions and insights into the practices, actions, and thoughts of real users

Empathy

- Empathy is our ability to see the world through other people's eyes, to see what they see, feel what they feel, and experience things as they do
- In Design Thinking, this is developing a deep understanding of the problems and realities of the people you are designing for
- More concerned about people's motivations and thoughts
- Understand this through observing, engaging, and listening
 - User Interviews and Observations
 - Empathy Map
 - Journey Map
 - Ideation Session
 - Visual Brainstorming

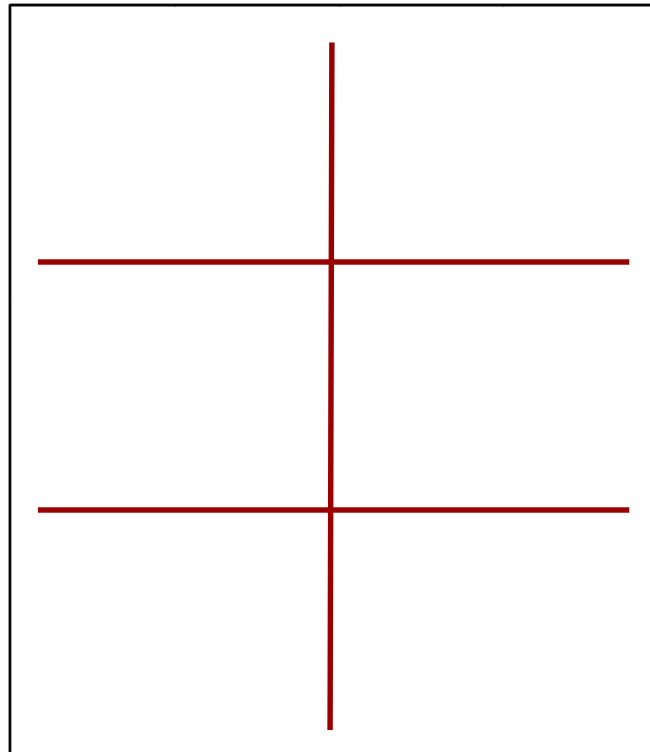


<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XcYrvvu2EIM>

Understanding Users: Visual Brainstorming



- Divide up a sheet of paper into 6 sections



Visual Brainstorming Exercise



- Draw each of the following

Home	Coffee
Mouse	Sun
Computer	Bread

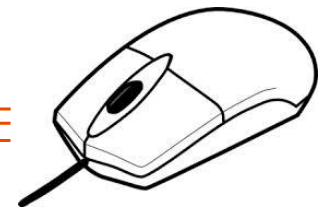
Visual Brainstorming Exercise



HOUSE



MOUSE



COFFEE



COMPUTER



Visual Brainstorming: Value



- Common words that have different meaning depending on the context
- Sketching and visuals allow for more precise communication
- Builds deeper understanding of the user = builds empathy

Design Thinking vs. UX

- Similar in their approaches, both human-centric
- Design Thinking is more strategic and involves all levels of business
- Design Thinking is about finding solutions
- User Experience is about designing the solutions



Design Thinking and Project Methodologies



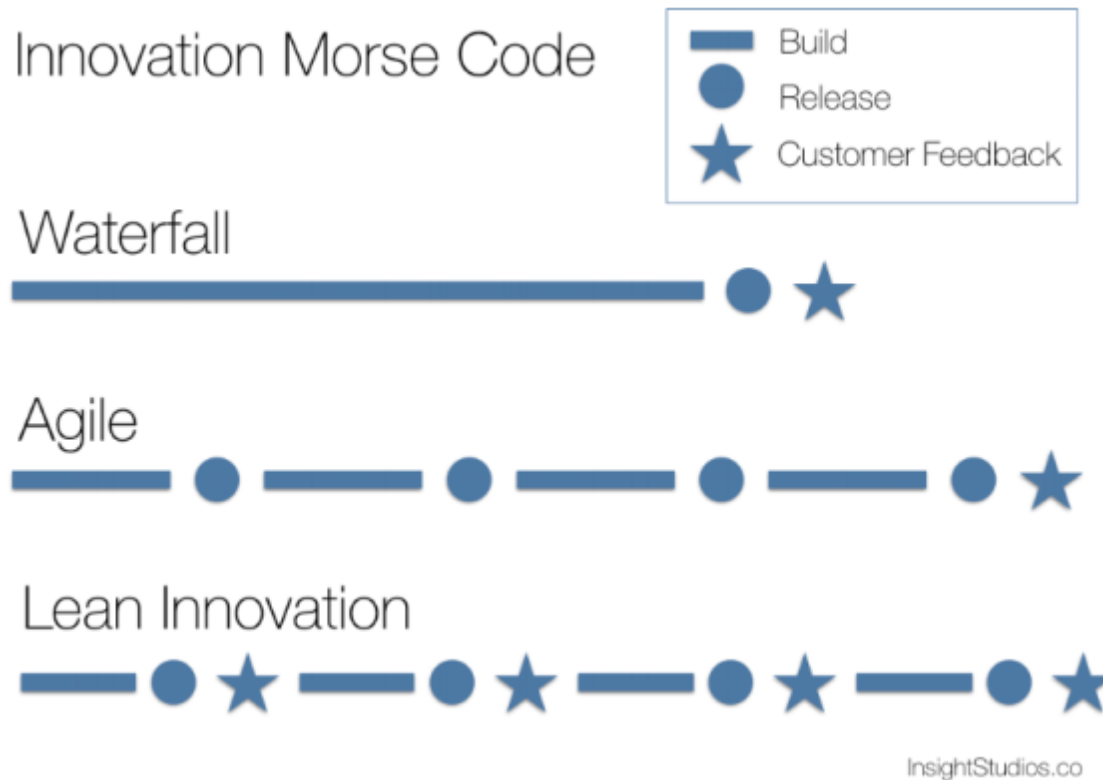
- Waterfall
 - Can use Digital Thinking tools to gather and define requirements
 - Establish a deeper understanding of the user, better understand needs
 - However, really only get meaningful user feedback at the end of the process
 - Risk: end up with something that isn't what is needed or wanted
- Agile
 - Release more frequently and efficiently
 - Requirements are defined up-front but can be refined iteratively
 - Can use tools for more meaningful input during Sprint Planning
 - However, only get user feedback at the end of the sprint
 - Risk: feature creep, bloated products, overly complicated solutions

Design Thinking and Methodologies



- Innovative
 - Integrating Agile and Design Thinking
 - Get meaningful user feedback throughout the iterative process
 - Better suited for situation with high uncertainty
 - More efficient at generating client/user insights
 - Increased client/user engagement and passion
 - More likely to realize benefits
 - Higher overall return on investment
 - Risk: needs a certain level of comfort with the unknown, needs flexibility

Innovation Morse Code



Design Thinking and Agile

- Some company's have got this right
 - Amazon
 - Apple
 - BMW
 - IBM
 - Lufthansa



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pXtN4y3O35M>

Conclusion



- No matter what project methodology you use, there is the opportunity to adopt some Design Thinking approaches and tools
- Design Thinking approach is more strategic, works well for innovation and digital transformation
- Design Thinking is a natural companion to the Agile methodology
- Projects that adopt Design Thinking and human-centred design have better client/user insights, so are better at meeting the needs, have higher value, and can aligning strategically