

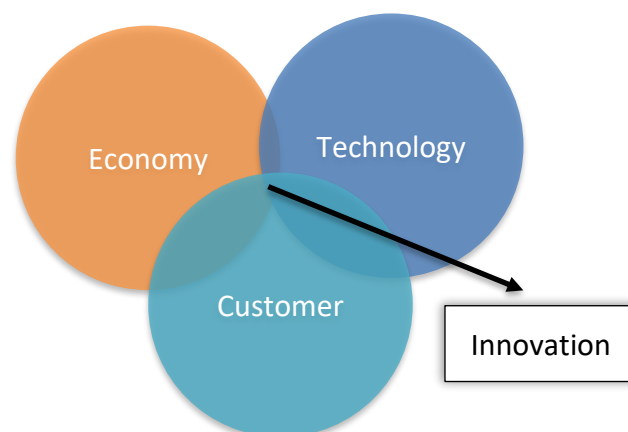
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Apple, Google, Tesla are doing it! Will Design Thinking save us all?

Design Thinking: another credo could be “Learning by doing”. People, ideas, concepts, and also products are improved by innovating, reinventing, testing and readjusting. The process is repeated until the goals are achieved and even further. All you have to do is to use the Design Thinking concept. It sounds very simple and it, in fact, is very simple.

What is Design Thinking?

The Design Thinking process was developed by the IDEO founder David Kelley, who defined it as a people- and customer-centric approach to drive innovation. This method combines three important participants: people, technology, and business. The focus is on people’s needs, combined with the technical possibilities to realize the idea and the economic background to make your idea a profitable product or service.



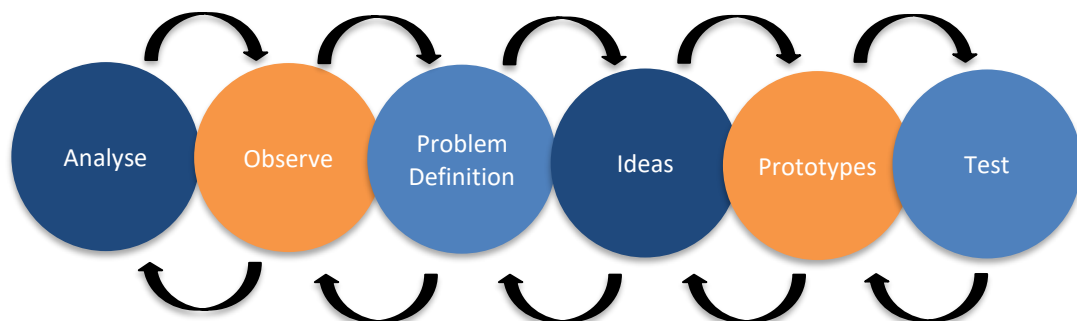
The Design Thinking mind-set is a very good and effective solution especially for start-ups, that face the unique challenge of developing the right business model for their company, but also for every other business that wants to innovate its obsolete structures, identifying and really understanding its customers.

This is, however, more than just a mind-set or a simple process to foster innovation. It is, in fact, the ability to take an abstract idea and create something meaningful with it, based on the belief that every idea, also the minimalistic one, is helping you along with innovation. Furthermore, it focuses on those you are designing for: individuals, with different expectations, hobbies, lifestyles, and opinions. The goal is to create an outstanding and completely new experience of what and how your ideas will finally be consumed.

How to be a Design Thinker?

The Design Thinking process consists of six steps, which can be repeated various times until you are satisfied with the outcome:

- > *Analyse*
- > *Observe*
- > *Define problems*
- > *Collect ideas*
- > *Create prototypes*
- > *Test*



A multi-disciplinary or multi-national team is, therefore, a big advantage for the situational analysis and observation, which go far beyond the borders of the individual member's own discipline. The Design Thinking method can also be used by "normal" teams, to drive new and creative ideas.

The individualistic way of analyzing a particular situation is replaced by a synthesis of different ways of thinking to create multiple approaches. Mutual support drives each team member to its best performance.

The aim of the first two steps is to analyze and reconstruct customer's background, their needs, wishes, actually, their whole life, to get more in touch

with their beliefs and desires. During this step, you are starting to think and act like your customer, using all the input for the next four steps.

To provide excellent solutions, first, you have to find the problem. Within the Problem Statement step, it is important to target the right problem. Therefore, the right words and phrases are essential. Instead of saying “We have to design...”, the Design Thinking approach focuses on a much simpler approach: for example, “We want to provide...for our clients”. Relentless questioning is key to this approach, as it helps to reveal the true issues.

Once framed the problem in a way that it attracts creative solutions, it’s time to move to the next two steps: collecting ideas and creating prototypes. The daily routine is a trap that almost every business is falling into, therefore, the Design Thinking method focuses on variety. Variety of problem approaches and of possible solutions. No matter how obvious and simple a solution may seem, the more solutions we collect the better the final product will get being considered from multiple perspectives. Helpful devices, such as 3-dimensional objects, flip charts or sticky notes, can foster the creative process and motivate the team members.

Finally, once a minimum viable prototype is realized, the testing phase begins – and testing means failing efficiently. Only throughout failure, the prototype can be readjusted and developed to its best. Businesses rarely get the solution right the first time, understanding this scenario and expecting failure to happen will teach us to test early, often, and adjust effectively.

Zulla Consulting & Partners with its strategic foresight and multiple years of experience will support your Design Thinking process by developing tailor-made solutions based on a wide series of best practices, identifying your business and customer needs, challenges and potential, as well as adapting your company to the new cultural and business environment.

For additional information and an initial consultation, feel free to contact Daniele Zulla at zulla@zulla-consulting.com.

Sources:

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- › <https://www.gruenderszene.de/lexikon/begriffe/design-thinking>, Gründerszene Lexikon, 12.06.2017