design thinking

human-centered innovation

Innovation today demands the ability not only to create value, but to deliver that value through streamlined processes and seamless experiences. Simply flooding the market with overblown and overbuilt new products is not the answer. New-school innovation requires speed, agility and flexibility, and a strong discipline around understanding needs, conceptualizing solutions, and testing ideas.

Enter design thinking, a powerful creative framework defined by Stanford's D School as: "A human-centered approach to innovation that allows people who aren't trained as designers to use creative tools to address a vast range of challenges."

Design thinking is now the *de facto* standard not just of how to rethink key products and services, but also of how to reframe everyday processes and projects.

With the ultimate goal of sustaining a companywide culture of constant creativity and collaboration, design thinking embeds a simple, consistent and sustainable innovation approach across the entire organization.

Needs Identification   **Concept Ideation**   **Lean Iteration**
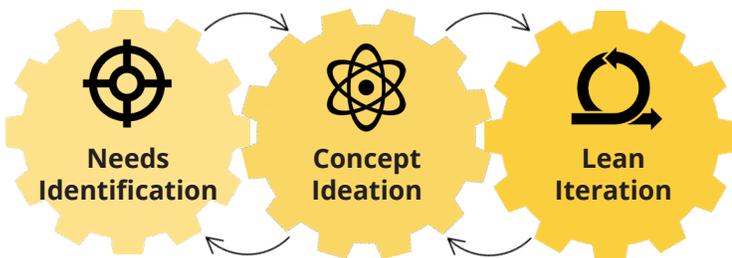
Blending creativity and logic in a phase-driven process of needs identification, concept ideation and lean iteration, design thinking turns everyone in the organization, irrespective of role or responsibility, into a designer of sorts.

Which is why we use design thinking as our chosen method for guiding innovation efforts.

LEAN ITERATION: Fail Fast & Learn

Ideas are a dime a dozen. It's the ones that uniquely position you to win and grow that are invaluable. And they rarely come from sitting in a room endlessly brainstorming. Great ideas come from getting out more: observing customers in their native habitat, framing and solving real-world problems in an empathetic and insightful way, and then testing them rapidly, iteratively.

But, the half-life of an idea is shrinking rapidly. If you can't get your great idea into the hands of potential customers quickly, someone else will.

Our custom design thinking approach features rapid-cycle innovation utilizing a key tool: **lean learning loops**, a mashup of the innovation method used by Toyota with the tactical OODA Loops used by military fighter pilots and the entrepreneurial focus of the "Lean Startup." Lean learning loops can wreak a devastating and disruptive effect on markets and competitors.

Best used as the creative engine driving a 2-day accelerated design thinking sprint, lean learning loops revolve around an iterative 3-step cycle of **guess**–**test**–**learn**:

Guess is focused on identifying the riskiest elements of the innovation concept.

Test is focused on constructing a prototype and devising a simple, fast, and frugal experiment to capture measurable human response to the idea.

Learn is focused on comparing results with expectations, then deciding whether to pivot, persevere, or abandon the concept entirely.

SAMPLE DESIGN THINKING CLIENTS