

Design Thinking in Project Management

August 2021

Design Thinking^{topic} in Project Management

Date : 20 Aug, 2021

Time:19:30 IST(GMT+5:30)

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Panelists

Session Moderator



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Cristhian Ortiz



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From the editor's desk



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Design thinking is a an iterative process to help us understand the user, challenge assumptions, and redefine problems in an attempt to identify alternative strategies and solutions that might not be instantly apparent with our initial level of understanding.

There are five phases of Design Thinking according to the Design School.

They are:

1. Empathize - know thy audience
2. Define - construct a point of view based on your understanding of your audience
3. Ideate - come up with solutions to address your audience's need
4. Prototype - build a prototype to visualize the solution
5. Test - go back to the original audience to test your ideas and gather feedback

So Design Thinking is a flexible process that is solution-focused to help solve problems that everyday people have issues with.



Cyril Awere

Africa



Question:

How can we leverage design thinking for our remote or hybrid teams for innovation?

Answer:

We want to see our new ways of working (remote or hybrid) as an opportunity to leverage technology to reach out and connect with customers regardless of where they are in the world. This is enabling us to collect rich and credible data, which helps us to even better understand our customers from different segments.

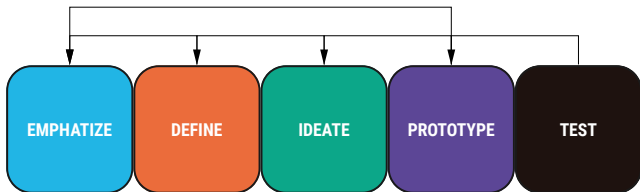


Question:

What are the skills required to integrate design thinking into our projects?

Answer:

The key building blocks for building an organisation that recognises Design Thinking as a key part of how it conducts its business is creating an organisational culture that embraces a growth mindset across the whole organisation. Displaying behaviours that demonstrate empathy, good listening, being comfortable with change, and the application of customer centricity tools and techniques and product/service design will form a key part of this.



d-school Design Thinking Phases



Nivarti Jayaram

Asia



Question:

How can we leverage design thinking for our remote or hybrid teams for innovation?

Answer:

Remote or hybrid teams usually start with being "Extended Delivery" teams supporting the on-shore teams on various deliverables, whether it could be near-shore based or off-shore based. Design Thinking can be leveraged to develop trust and confidence in the team's capabilities by understanding the requirements as well as priorities of the counterparts. This can help the team continuously evolve their state of relationship and enhance their ownership levels from being extended mode to full ownership progressively over a period of time. We have successfully tried and tested this progressive ownership model which is now being deployed across the organization.

Question:

What are the skills required to integrate design thinking into our projects?

Answer:

Systemic Thinking, Ability to navigate through ambiguity, being certain about uncertainty, growth mindset, empathy and a transparent & open people centric approach are key for project teams & leadership to practice to be able to successfully integrate design thinking into our projects. System Thinking helps us understand the bigger picture and be clear of what the organization is trying to accomplish (The WHY). In this era of disruption, the ability to navigate ambiguity and uncertainty is critical, else it can cause a lot of heartburn when you are faced with a continuously changing environment. The growth mindset helps us to be flexible, receptive to change and be positively focused on the outcomes. Empathy is key to understanding where the customer is coming from and being able to appreciate their needs and purpose they are looking to fulfill. Transparent & open people centric approach helps us gain trust of the customers as well as our own project team members which again makes it easier to focus on delivering outcomes than spending effort in managing relationships.



Nina Maldonado

Europe



Question:

How can we leverage design thinking for our remote or hybrid teams for innovation?

Answer:

Being remotely or in hybrid teams does not stop you from reaching out to your potential customers/users. Design Thinking is all about bringing the customer/user at the center of what you do. Customer driven innovation is possible and highly recommended in any way of working: f2f, remotely or hybrid, it works anyway!

Question:

What are the skills required to integrate design thinking into our projects?

Answer:

The skills needed are both soft and hard:

1. On the soft or 'human' side: listening, empathy, change management, user-centric mindset
2. On the hard side: customer research, ideation techniques, data driven decision making, prototyping, testing, user acceptance criteria





Cristhian Ortiz

Latin America



Question:

How can we leverage design thinking for our remote or hybrid teams for innovation?

Answer:

It is important to understand that the nature of remote work is different from our face-to-face way of working. It is based on the process of not only understanding the new context but feeling it from the team's perspective. In that sense, we need to make our work and our teams visible to each other proactively and explicitly and give importance to contribution and celebrate achievements, especially when we are using design thinking.

On the other hand, real-time collaboration is our most valuable resource in a virtual environment. We conserve it by first resorting to asynchronous and centralized communication, creating new habits with new types of technology.

Likewise, we need to develop a set of new management behaviors to guide teams working remotely. We need to

focus on results versus effort and offer flexibility to the team to meet their deliverables.

Question:

What are the skills required to integrate design thinking into our projects?

Answer:

We need to develop empathy and resilience throughout the process. It's important to focus on collaboration and commitment in our team. Besides, we should start developing a mixed mindset between analytical and intuitive thinking to pass over parameters and structures context to uncertain situations. Another important skill is observing. The observation process is like any art. We listen and get inspired with our eyes. Finally, we need to be curious instead of judging to go deeper and obtain key information about the situation in which we are trying to solve.



Wiselin Mathuram

North America



Question:

How can we leverage design thinking for our remote or hybrid teams for innovation?

Answer:

The pandemic has accelerated digital transformation and changed the way we work together. Reducing handoffs between globally distributed or remote teams can be achieved by organizing teams around value flow and using the right framework, collaboration tools, and techniques. Value stream identification exercises should be a norm in all organizations as companies try to implement design thinking strategies post pandemic. To further Customer centricity by “Genchi Genbutsu” which means Go and see for yourself, employees should also be empowered with design thinking tools like Typeform, Creatlr, MakemyPersona, Usertesting.com, Qualtrics, Crazy egg, Adobe Target, Invision, Sessionlab, Figma etc. This helps us empathize with our customers despite the distance.

Question:

What are the skills required to integrate design thinking into our projects?






















Answer:

The book by Mik Kersten “Project to Product” states the need to adopt a flow framework to thrive in the age of digital disruption. This is key to instill design thinking in our enterprise initiatives. To operationalize a customer-first mindset we need to introduce new acts in our organization, the acts when repeated becomes a habit, and a habit when repeated becomes a culture. We also need to promote T Shaped skills in our organization with leadership support.



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Have a suggestion?

Feel free to drop a note to the PMI Chapter Xchange team by sending email to:

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