2 SPECIAL EDITION

BUSINESS
COACHING

DESIGN THINKERS' STARTER PACK

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Design is not just what it looks like and feels like. Design is how it works.

— Steve Jobs

EDITORIAL

The editorial team of the "Business coaching" magazine is constantly trying to improve the content, design, but also the format of the magazine as well. Thus, in addition to the paper version, we also created a website where we first published the content of the paper versions. Later, as we grew along with our readers, there was a need for articles to be published more often and with topics that we did not cover in the paper edition.

We experimented with formats in June, when we worked hard to "revive" the magazine in an electronic, interactive version.

The latest format that we are publishing this time is the "special edition" format of the magazine. This magazine is smaller in format, but we tried to keep it large in content and design.

Why this format? We wanted to collect and share with you all the articles published by the authors only in the online edition as an added value to your knowledge. The thematic edition of the magazine always focuses on a single topic, and this time it is Design Thinking.

To learn more, please visit us:

www.bcoaching.online

CONTENT

ABOUT **AUTHOR**

Milena Međak is business analyst focused on the experience, currently exploring analysis within agile software development in Endava. As an accomplished service design practitioner, she has hands-on experience in CEM and customer-facing processes. Milena believes in holistic customer-centric approach and practices design thinking (and doing) in all her business and private endeavors.

DESIGN THINKING INTRO

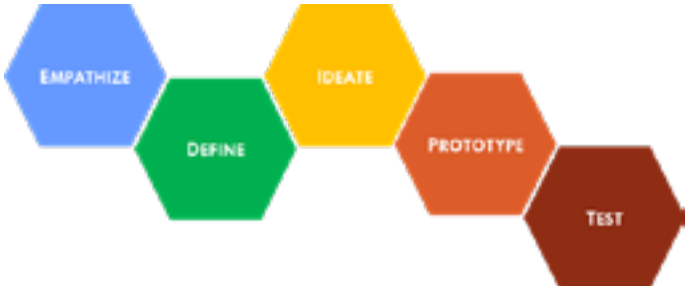
Design Thinking, simply put, is the way designers think, as creative people able to start with something immaterial, an idea born from a user's, human need and transform it into something physical, tangible.
The new model starts with the foundation: Ethics and Coaching Mindset

The concept surged in popularity in recent years (visible in Google Trends), so *„design thinking"* Google search lists over billion results today (March 2020), and Amazon search several thousand books, but design thinking isn't new. For as long as original, creative, creators created, there was a design process they followed and scholars have been attempting to define it within psychology, anthropology, sociology. What is new is that design thinking as approach to innovative problem solving, as management practice, has become accessible to non-designers in the last 15-20 years. Vibrant discussions and numerous opposing viewpoints on value, significance and even definition of this concept are resulting from mixed perspectives.

Success of companies like Apple, IBM, Airbnb, Google, who made disruptive changes (some transformed themselves in the process) is said to be due to the innovation backed by the very design thinking paired with entrepreneurial culture. Their stories show that's what it takes in today's market. Design thinking expands horizons, creating new areas for problem solving, not easily perceived otherwise, and quickly validating them.

In the broad sense, design thinking is the sum of mindsets, principles, practices and tools that mimic the way some designers design and solve problems.

Tim Brown, former CEO of IDEO, that popularised design thinking, defines it as a human-centred 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.



Design thinking process illustrated by Stanford d.school (Hasso Plattner Institute of Design)

Design thinking is often represented through as a set of several (three to seven) phases or components. Stanford d.school, one of promoters of design thinking accessible to all, lists these five components (modes):

- **Empathize**
- **Define**
- **Ideate**
- **Prototype**
- **Test**

Design thinking process is not linear, these components are not sequential steps, they can be parallelised and repeated if needed.

Empathize is the founding component of design thinking. The problem to be solved is rarely the problem of the designer, so the user, the user's needs and the context surrounding them have to be understood, in order to solve the problem successfully, as the best solutions come from the best insights.

What is empathized and discovered about the user has to be interpreted, reviewed in new light in the **define** component, in order for the problem to be clearly defined from the user's perspective.

A clearly defined problem, reviewed in the light of new insights, can be subject **ideation**, or generation of alternative, if possible, radically creative, innovative solutions.

Design thinking is actually more than just thinking, it is also doing. Solving complex, unknown problems requires more than what's known, something new has to be tried. So, an early validation of the idea through a prototype and testing with the users is the way to go.

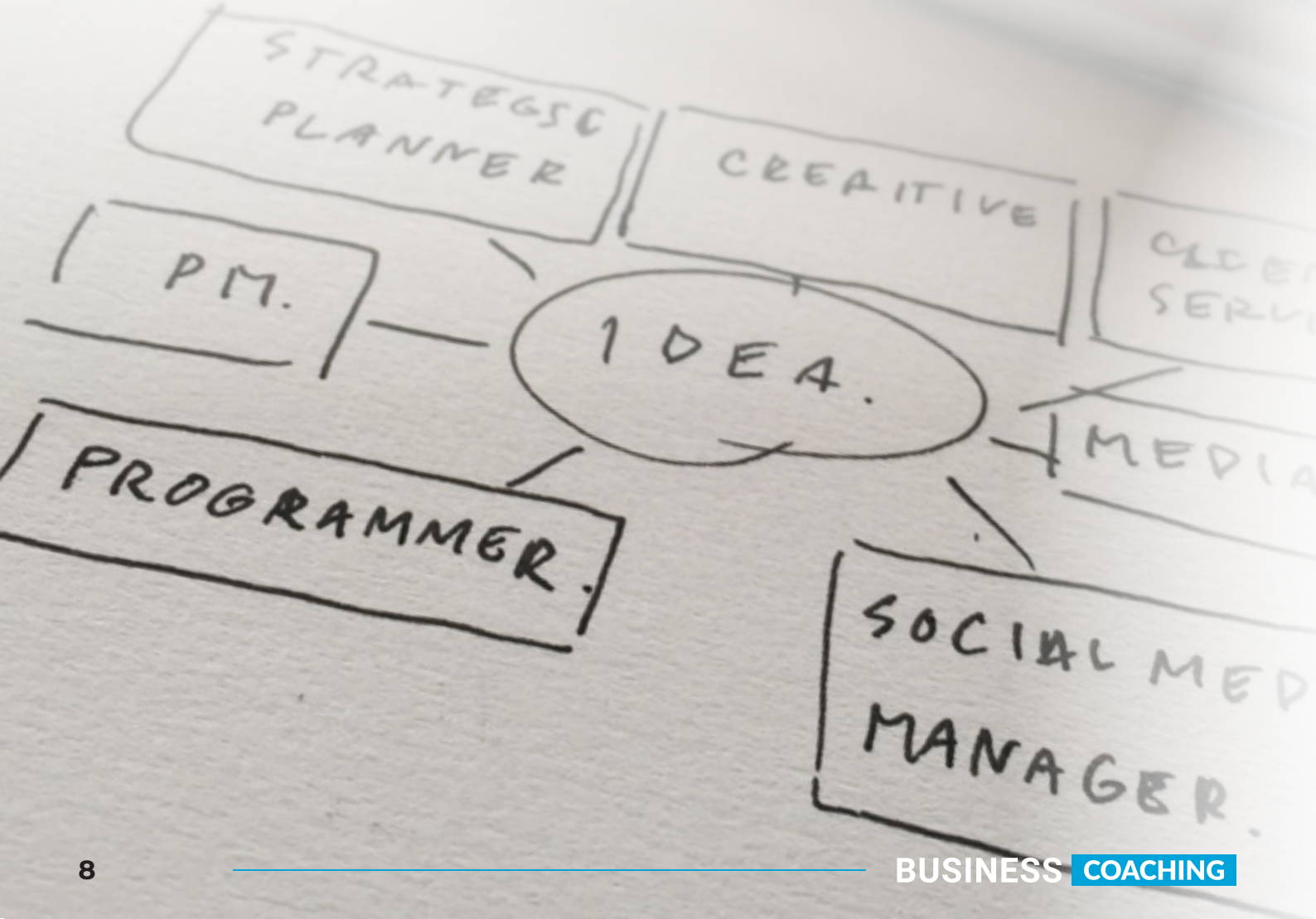
Prototyping, transforming an immaterial idea into something tangible (only very quickly, much faster than it would take to produce complete solution) allows for the idea to be tried, **tested** and that way quickly validated if it is any good, or it would need some improvements through the next iteration.

In doing all this, designers use different tools. Stay tuned, in the following articles we will review the tools most often used.

“Have no fear of perfection—you’ll never reach it.

- Salvador Dali

EMPATHY MAP AND PERSONA – DESIGN THINKING TOOLS



Design thinking helps solve complex problems through a non-linear process that is based on understanding of customers or empathy, further used to question assumptions, reframe the problem and then generate an innovative solution, validated with users.

Since the problem being solved is rarely the designer's own problem, successful solution is preconditioned by deep understanding, empathy for the customer, i.e. answers to who is the customer, what are their needs, what is the environment and context surrounding these needs. The best solutions come from the best insights into human needs.

The first step towards this goal is research:

- **Observe customers;**
- **Engage with customers, talk to them;**
- **Immerse, put oneself into customer's shoes.**

Good research should unveil how customers think and act: what they want, what they value, what they hear in their environment, what they say, how they act, what are their needs, how they feel, even if it is different from what they say or do. Insights especially valid for problem solving are not easy to perceive, because researchers unconsciously disregard, filter out, some pieces of information. This is why it is important to be extra careful, listen and observe without judgement, questioning everything, curious the whole time and listening, actively. Research work, as well as synthesis of the results afterwards is, ideally, a group exercise.

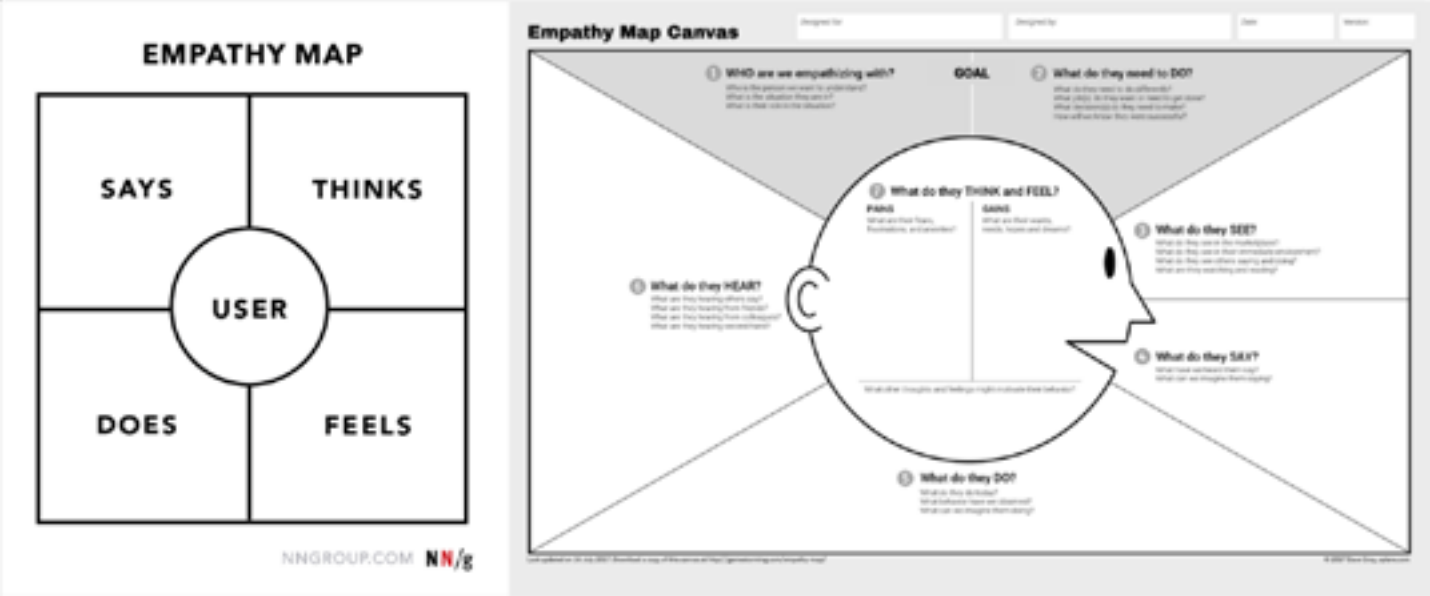
Empathy map is a great tool to synthesise research results, as it helps organise, group retrieved data, creating easily one holistic view of the customer and their needs. This is how insights valuable for future problem-solving work are recognised.

Number of different, both simple and more complex templates for empathy mapping can be found online. However, anyone can make their Empathy map.

Work area (e.g. whiteboard or a bigger sheet of paper) is divided into four quadrants representing four areas:

- **Say?**
- **Do?**
- **Think?**
- **Feel?**

A customer is placed in the centre with an illustration and/or some basic information.



Empathy map template examples: www.nngroup.com; Dave Gray, xplain.com from www.gamestorming.com

Empathy map includes also identified needs and insights.

Needs are recognised from patterns or contradictions observed in research mapping. They are physical and emotional necessities. Needs will help better define the problem, but it is important to articulate them as needs, not presuming the solution.

Insights are inconsistencies or surprising facts worth being noted as these can also be valuable when defining the problem.

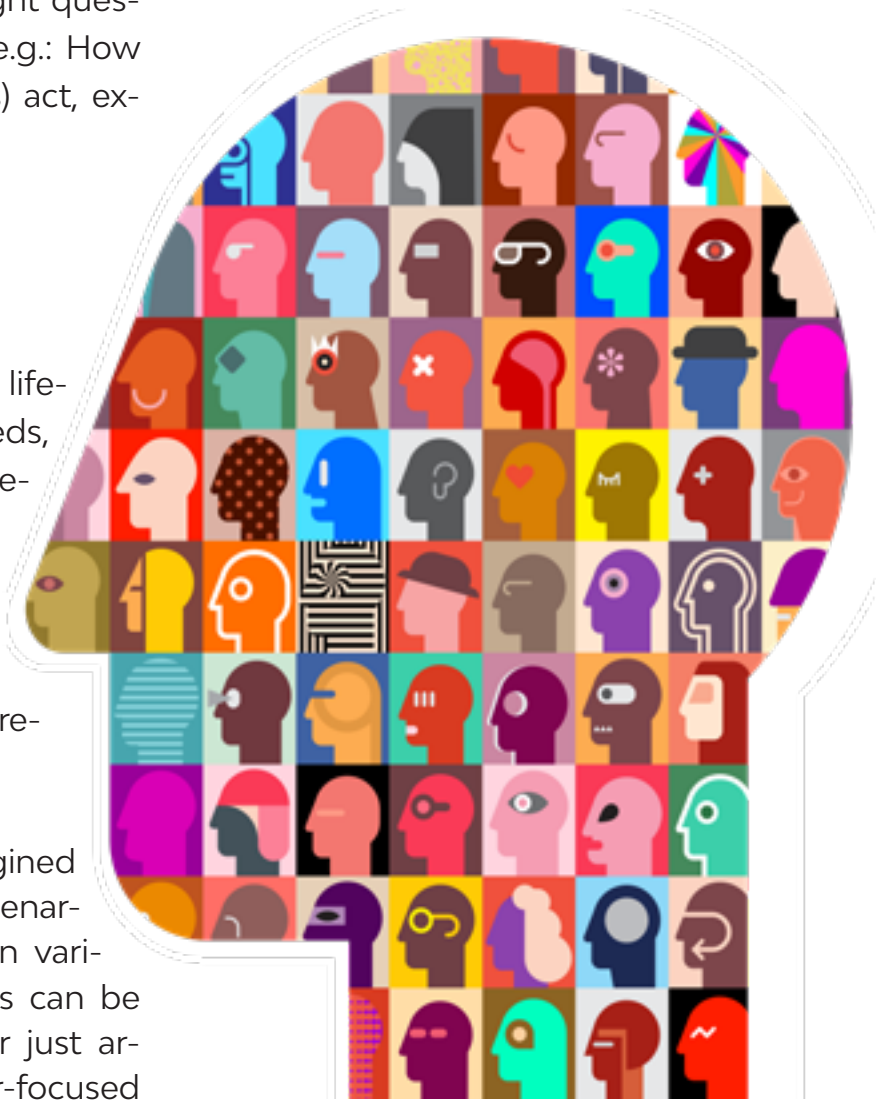
Empathy map created this way presents deep insight into the customer, their surroundings and needs, and what needs to be achieved to solve the problem.

Empathy map is often the first step towards creation of a **persona**, a fictious representation of a customer type, based on research. As an archetype, a persona is like a picture of a real person, while actually it is a personification of the research findings, merging together traits and actions of a certain customer category relevant for the problem be-

ing solved. Persona is a tool used in ideation process helping communication towards the solution. It helps to ask the right questions and get adequate answers e.g.: How would Petar, Ana, Maria (personas) act, experience xx?

Persona is defined with:

- Name, picture;
- Details about education, family, lifestyle, interests, values, goals, needs, limitations, wishes, attitudes and behaviour patterns;
- Description of a typical day or behaviour relevant for the problem being solved, also a story told to make persona livelier, not a mere research product.



Good persona can easily be imagined in different environments and scenarios. Visually it can be organised in various forms. Ready-made templates can be downloaded from the internet, or just arranged as suitable. Some customer-focused companies keep their personas as life-sized figures in the offices, as a reminder of the customers they are working for.

CUSTOMER JOURNEY – DESIGN THINKING

Design thinking helps solve complex problems through a non-linear process that is based on understanding of customers or empathy, further used to question assumptions, reframe the problem, and then generate an innovative solution, validated with users.

Successful solution is preconditioned by deep understanding or empathy for the customer. Great tool for establishing deep understanding of the customer, or insight into experience of the customer upon meeting a certain product or service is customer journey map.

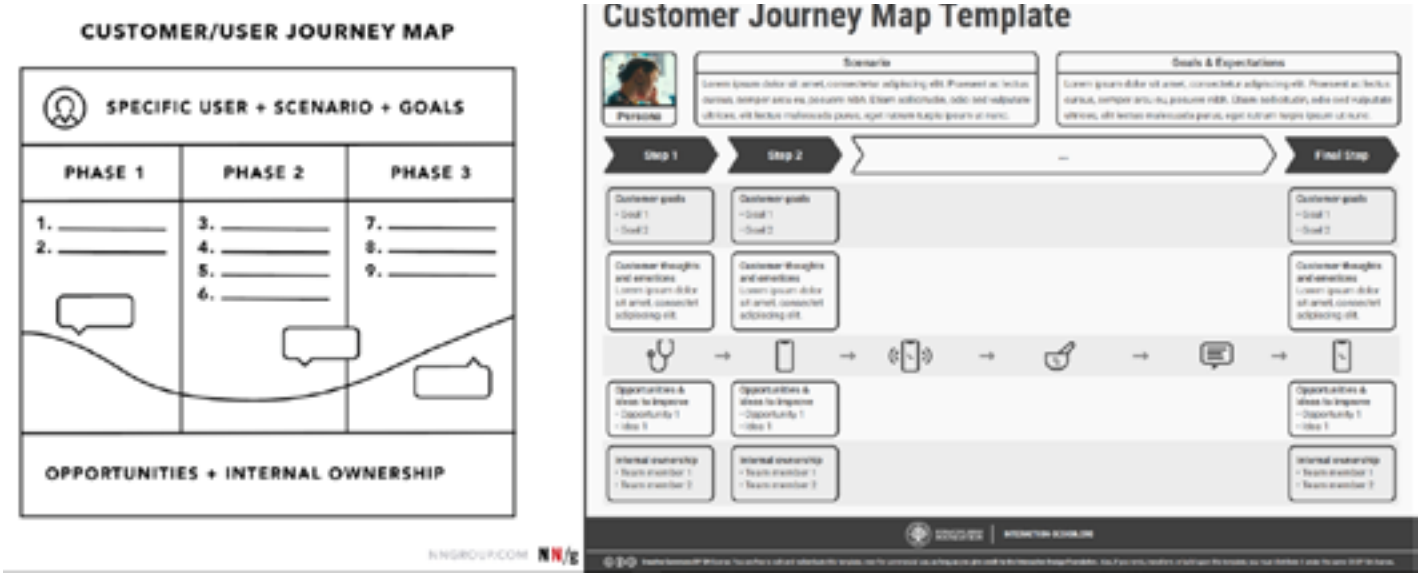
The customer or user journey map is a visualization of the process a customer/user – a certain **persona** goes through towards accomplishing a goal. Most often, it is an interaction with a product or service that spans over time. It is a journey, as the overall experience, spanning over time is mapped step by step, or "dissected" in order to recognize and investigate in detail specific steps, thus clarifying potentially interesting areas.

HOW TO MAP CUSTOMER JOURNEY?

First of all, it is necessary to determine the journey, or the scenario that needs to be mapped – what is the beginning and what is its end. One scenario, or journey needs to have a clear goal from the customer's perspective, so accordingly it needs to be defined when the journey starts and when it ends. E.g. whether certain purchase begins when the customer enters a shop or a webshop or the journey begins earlier, with the advertisement of that product on social media. Answers to these questions must be provided by the very customer. As there may be different answers coming from different customers, it needs to be defined whose journey it is mapped – who is persona journeying. In some cases, it is possible to have other actors in the process, so they need to be defined.

When it is clear who is taking the journey in question, where it starts and where it ends, one step at a time needs to be captured, defining activities and their circumstances. Examples include: where is the step taking place, is it initiated by the customer or another actor, how much time it takes to perform the step, is the customer aware of the next step, does a step include some documentation or specific systems support, waiting time, etc. Depending on the customer journey and needs, this data can be visually organized in different ways, but frequently grouped into phases. What is important is that steps are detailed (the devil is in the detail, they say, no matter how trivial they seem at first), they are organized in a logical order and, most importantly, they are resulting from customer research – they came from observations, interaction with the customers or testing.

An additional aspect of the customer journey map are emotions. Every step of the journey, depending on the step and the cir-



Customer journey mapping examples: www.nngroup.com; www.interaction-design.org

cumstances is added an emotional aspect, e.g. a smiley. This way problematic areas are easy to spot.

Depending on the journey mapped, as well as the end goal of mapping, the map can contain other information. It is often transformed into a **blueprint**, that maps, in addition to the customer journey also activities "behind the curtain". They include everything invisible to the customer, internal processes that needs to be performed, in order to proceed to the next step of the customer journey "in front of the curtain". Blueprints help identify challenges with internal processes that cause bad customer experience. Mapping customer journey is an excellent team exercise that helps team members understand both overall customer experience, but also details behind the specific steps that make out the whole experience. An experience with an existing product or service can be mapped in order to improve it. This creates a common empathy for the customer. Mapped customer journey can, further be used to communicate recognised problems and investigate solutions. It is, also possible to use the same tool to devise, design customer journey for a future product or service. In that case this exercise is useful to throw light on all specific steps in order for the team to plan for a really good experience.

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Good design is like a refrigerator—when it works, no one notices, but when it doesn’t, it sure stinks.

- Irene Au

PROTOTYPE – DESIGN THINKING TOOL

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Design thinking is actually more than just thinking, it is also doing. Solving complex, unknown problems requires more than what's known, something new has to be tried, something new has to be built and validated with users as soon as possible.

Prototyping, transforming an immaterial idea into something tangible (only very quickly, much, much faster than it would take to produce complete solution) allows for the idea to be tried, tested and that way quickly validated if it is any good, or it would need some improvements through the next iteration.

A prototype can be anything tangible or visible that can be demonstrated, experienced and as such it can provide user's feedback. It may be a wall with post-it notes that describe the use of product or service, it can be a role-playing activity that depicts the experience of using the product or service, a model of the future product of a lower or higher fidelity, even an interactive model, or a storyboard.

The main goal of the prototype is to secure validation of the solution idea and do that as quickly as possible. That is why it is important not to lose too much time on creating a prototype, especially in the early stages of the project. Cheap prototypes can be tested and improved in several iterations, each time providing new insights. Rule of thumb is that if you are not in the least embarrassed of the prototype, you have spent too much time on it!

Good prototype can do more than just test for improving solution, it can also:

- improve empathy, better understand the user, their needs and ways to satisfy the needs;
- open the area for new solution ideas;
- open different perspectives in the dialogue with the user, especially if the user is involved in prototyping;
- improve communication within the team, decrease the risk of misunderstandings and improve ideation.

Prototyping is always done with a clear idea what is to be tested, so that testing can also

concentrate on the same goal. However, there is always a chance to learn something more about the users.

When **testing** a prototype with a user, it must be placed in a context or a scenario, in order to help the user immerse into it. Over-doing the explanation is not good either, as the user should experience it in its own way.

Similar to the empathize component of the design thinking, when testing, it is important to actively observe the user, to interact with the user in order to better understand the experience and finally to capture feedback during testing for later consideration.

“Look at usual things with unusual eyes.

- Vico Magistretti

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