

Human Centered-Design Thinking in Evaluation and Consulting

Design Thinking



Institutions, funders, and community organizations are focusing more than ever on multi-sector and multi-stakeholder approaches to solving complex societal challenges. This focus presents evaluators and consultants with opportunities to expand our methodological toolbox to support our clients in developing and implementing solutions to these needs. As a way to support our clients, Harder+Company recommends adopting **design thinking** as a primary lens to approach projects where clients seek to address multi-faceted social issues.

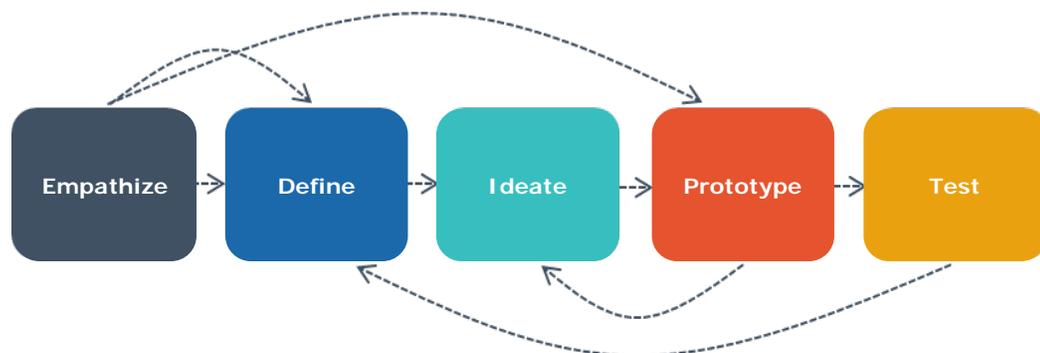
Adopting design thinking approaches allows us to create a **paradigm shift** from our more linear processes to one that will place empathy front and center. It helps refine and redefine clients' issues and test solutions more rapidly.

Our role as evaluators and consultants is continually evolving and includes supporting our clients to translate data into solutions. Design thinking is a **solution-based approach** to solving complicated problems. Design thinking is an **analytic and creative process** that engages a person in opportunities to experiment, create and prototype models, gather feedback, and redesign.

The Process

Design Thinking: A 5 Stage Process

Adapted from the Interaction Design Foundation



Design thinking is extremely useful in tackling the problems that we are increasingly confronted with: problems of program efficacy and impact that are ill-defined or not yet even unknown. By understanding the human needs trying to be addressed, by reframing the problem in human-centric ways, by creating many ideas in brainstorming sessions, and by adopting a hands-on approach in prototyping and testing, design thinking allows us to become more equipped to support our clients in their missions to make progress on complex, systemic issues.

Human Centered Design

Human-centered design (HCD) is an approach to design thinking that engages in problem solving **with** communities and seeks to deeply understand the people they're looking to serve and to create innovative new solutions rooted in people's actual needs.¹

Empathy is an important aspect of HCD that should be part of a human-centered evaluation. With **empathy**, we can acknowledge assumptions, set them aside, and work with clients to gain insight into their needs and the needs of the clients that they serve and whom we want to ultimately impact.



Learn more...

- IDEO
 - <http://www.designkit.org//resources/1>
- Stanford Design School
 - <https://dschool.stanford.edu/resources-collections/a-virtual-crash-course-in-design-thinking>
 - <https://dschool.stanford.edu/resources/chart-a-new-course-put-design-thinking-to-work>



Contact us!

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¹The Field Guide to Human-Centered Design, IDEO.org