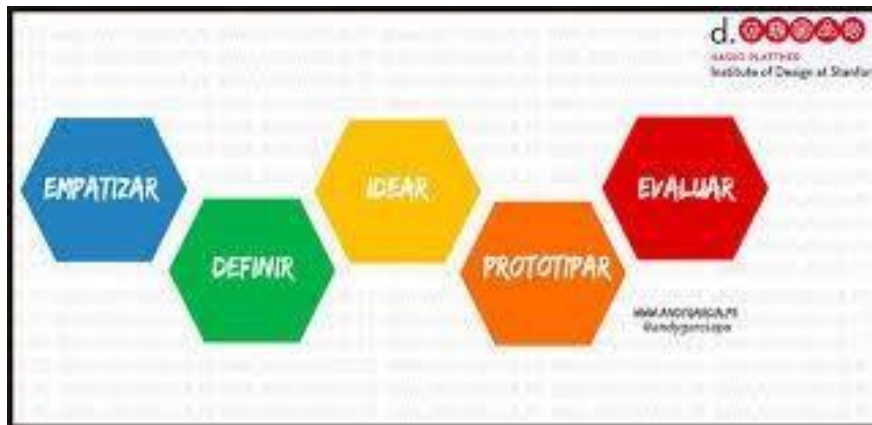# WE RECOGNIZE THE 5 STAGES OF THE DESIGN THINKING

Design Thinking refers to a methodology for the generation of innovative ideas and that takes as center the perspective of the end users. In this way you can detect problems and needs, as well how to offer effective solutions and, in many cases, alternatives, for each of them.

Although, by name, it seems that it is only linked to design or advertising, Design Thinking has been charging greater importance in recent years since the IDEO consultancy began to talk about the issue and currently this company has become one of the main exponents of Design Thinking.

In this article we mention what are the five stages of Design Thinking and what each one of them consists of, in case you want to put it into practice in other projects that are not totally related with the design.

1. EMPATHIZE
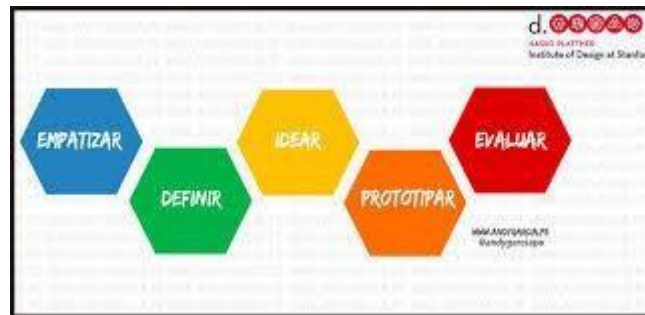
Empathy is the ability of human beings to identify with certain people and understand their feelings. As you must imagine, this is the essential phase in which the designers or group members try to know and understand the users ends in a deeper way. It is not only about knowing data and statistics, but about analyze situations, understand the lives of users, as well as the different problems and needs they have.

In order to develop empathy, it is not enough to observe the users, but to get involved with them through a conversation in which they can share their point of view and you should try to listen carefully. It can be complicated to develop a degree of empathy with the end users, but This phase is the basis of Design Thinking, so it is very important that it is done with a lot of patience

2. DEFINE
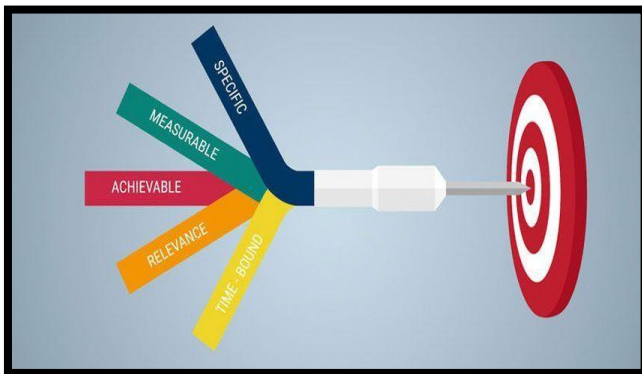
Once you get to know in depth the difficulties and problems of users can move to the next stage. As part of this phase, you must evaluate all the information collected in the previous stage and keep only that which is really relevant to users, as well as having a more accurate idea of their daily life.

In the first phase, apart from knowing the routines of end users, you can recognize a wide variety of problems and needs. Since not all problems can be solved or simply cannot solve all problems of end users, as someone has a focus for a single item or a couple of items, so it is possible that the problems are all your problems. It is essential, then, to define the client's problems according to the area of opportunity

offered by each determined problem. In this way, it can have a series of specific problems to be able to focus the necessary measures to arrive at a definitive solution.

3. DEVISE
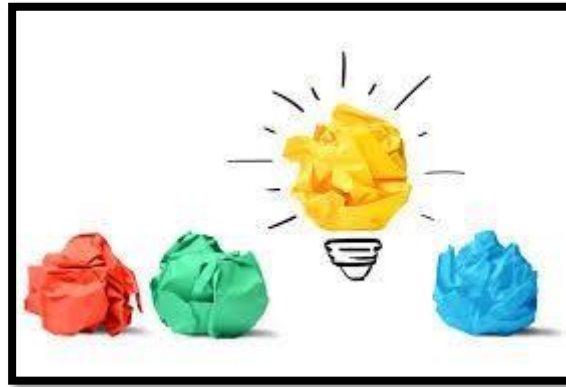
As the name suggests, in this phase the process of generating ideas begins based on previously established problems. The objective is to have many alternative solutions and not go in search of the best solution, at least for the moment. All team members should be encouraged to participate in this session and share their opinion and point of view. No idea should be discarded and you can use various creative methods such as brainstorming or mental maps, any strategy that is more suitable for your team.

Particular efforts must be made to create an environment in which all members feel capable of contributing and giving ideas, without being judged by them. It is essential that a free and trusting environment is created, where no idea is questioned.

4. PROTOTYPE

The purpose of this phase is to convert the idea or solution to which you have arrived in a digital or physical prototype. It should not necessarily be an object, but also a drawing or even a storyboard. The prototypes can be made with materials such as paper, cardboard, plasticine or lego blocks. Usually these economic materials are used when the project is in its initial stages and it is improving as the project shows progress.

As you already know, a prototype within the web design process is usually one of the final elements with which the user can interact and is used to perform tests. In the case of Design Thinking, as we have already mentioned, the prototype can be made with economic materials and tools, according to the budget that is available. The great advantage of using this approach is that gradual improvements can be made to the prototype without spending too much.

5. TEST

In this stage tests are carried out with the prototypes previously made and users are asked for their opinions and comments on the matter, based on the use of prototypes. It is an essential phase in Design Thinking because it helps to identify errors and possible shortcomings that the product may have. Based on the tests, several improvements can be presented on the product.

In spite of being the last phase you may find yourself with different situations that require you to return more than one stage back in the process. For example, if you realize that you have not defined the problem well, then it is necessary to go back to that stage and start again from there. Otherwise, it is most likely that you will go back to the prototyping stage to refine certain details or include new features.

Conclusion   …

     As you have seen, Design Thinking is intimately related to the design process and even some of the phases are very similar. The main difference may lie in the depth of analysis of all phases. Although the web design process also has certain phases, each person adapts it according to their needs or preferences. Also, in the web design process there is already a specific product that you want to elaborate. On the other hand, Design Thinking serves to generate ideas and products based on the needs and different problematic situations of the users themselves. For this reason, it is not only used in areas related to design but also in any company in which they wish to offer specific and innovative solutions.