

Design Thinking



This blog is all about design thinking and how we can use it to innovate the tech industry. This blog will highlight a general solution to try and counteract wicked problems.

Innovation

The first question we should ask is, what exactly does the term “Design Thinking” mean! Design thinking is an intellectual process of looking at a problem and designing a better outcome. In simpler terms, we look at an everyday problem, we decipher what the key factors of the problem are, and we then try to find a solution to relieve the problem.

Design thinking is undoubtedly one of the most in demand skills in the workplace. Many employers want someone that can come into the workplace and boost the rate of innovation.



According to a survey by McKinsey & Company, 84% of CEO's believe innovation is the biggest challenge facing their businesses. They are afraid that if a new company was to transform the game their businesses wouldn't survive. In the same survey by McKinsey & Company, 94% of business don't believe that they have the people and the know-how to win at innovation.

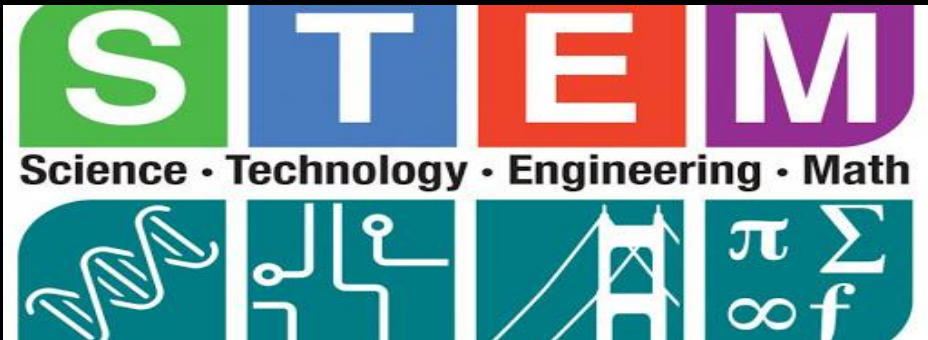
Tech Businesses these days are known to have a VUCA environment. VUCA in this case is an acronym for Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, Ambiguous. VUCA defines the risk involved in decision making in tech businesses. It consists of what Dr Peter Robbins describes as, "A tornado of uncertainty".



Consumer Research



In the past we have focussed too much on the STEM subjects as opposed to the arts. What we have concluded in terms of innovation is that, Data analytics brings you to common ground. If most businesses are looking at the same thing, using the same approach, they will inevitably arrive at the same conclusion.



This is where Consumer Research comes in. Consumer research is the action of gathering information about consumers' needs and preferences. Consumer research is crucial in tech innovation. A lack of consumer research can lead to innovation failure. Failure at innovation is much more common than success. Every decision made is a risk. Consumer research can reduce that risk but like most things the system isn't fool proof.

Wicked Problems

A simple or tame problem is one that can be solved by choosing and applying the correct algorithm. You know when it's complete and the problem is solved. A wicked problem on the other hand has no right answer or solution. Generally, the problems are multifactorial and multi-layered.

When dealing with wicked problems, the main problem is rarely the actual problem but, concluding on what the actual problem is. Many people don't fully understand the problem before they dive into it. Without understanding the problem, it is very difficult to attack it.

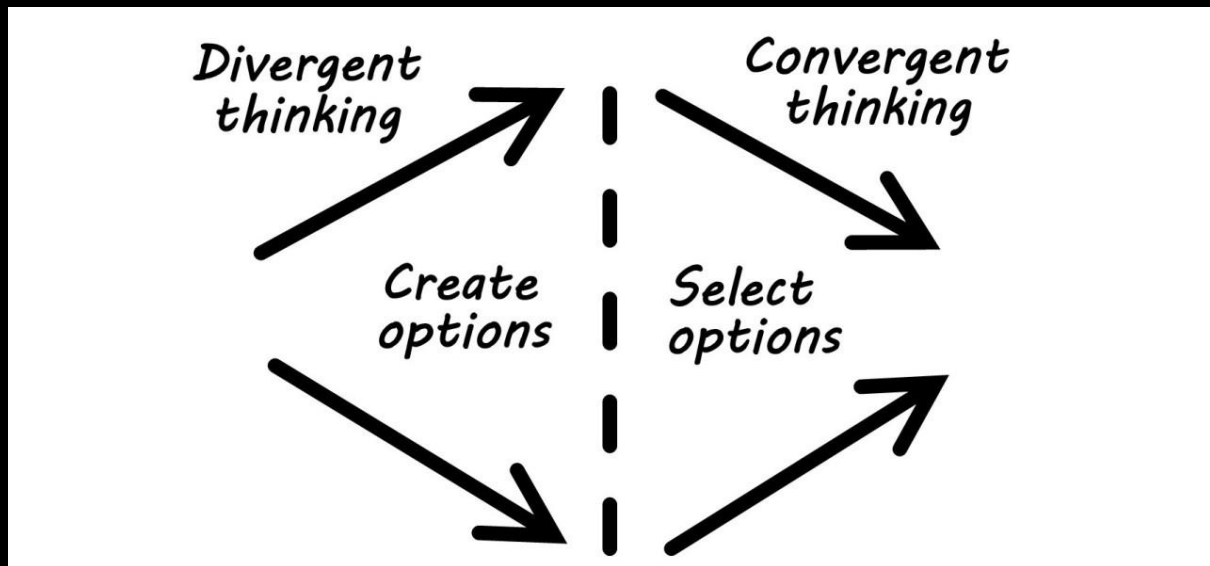


Once You understand the problem it's time to implement design thinking. As previously mentioned, design thinking isn't about all about solving problems. It entails looking at a problem and designing a better outcome.

"If I only had an hour to solve a problem, I'd spend 55 minutes defining the problem and only five minutes finding the solution."

~ Albert Einstein

Divergent thinking is a thought process or method used to generate creative ideas by exploring many possible solutions. In order to think divergently, you must allow all ideas. No ideas are “silly” in this process. The aim of this way of thinking is, to generate as many possible ideas as possible.



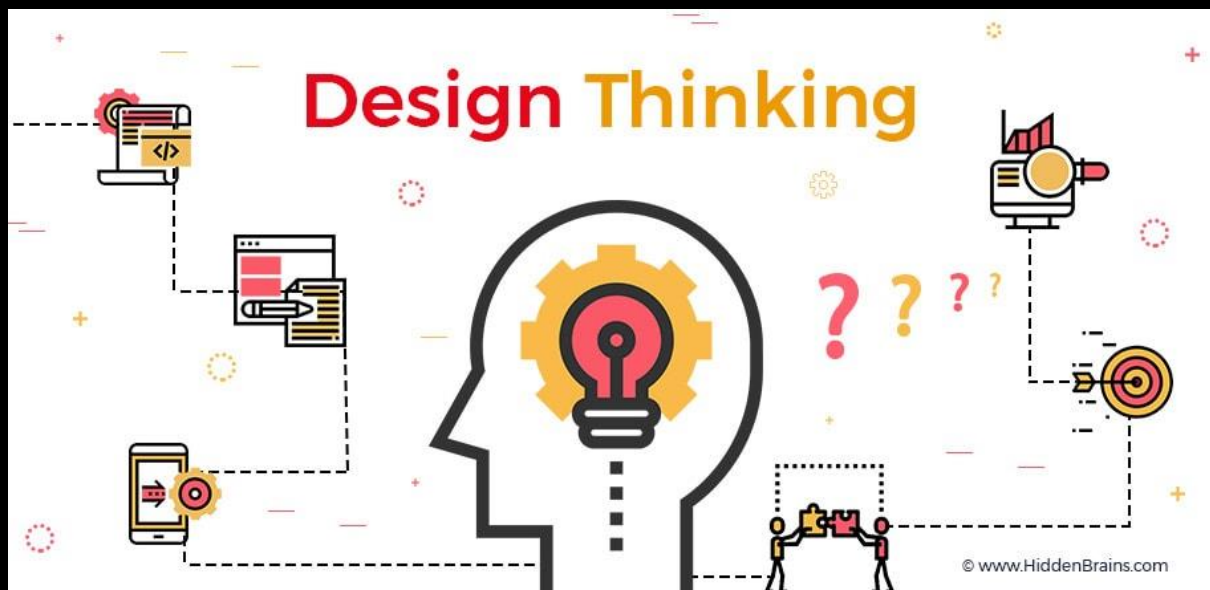
Convergent thinking on the other hand is the type of thinking that focuses on coming up with the single, well-established answer to a problem. It is a process of elimination. This is where we narrow down what would work. In this type of thinking there are “silly” ideas, and this is where we get rid of them. Although wicked problems can never actually be solved convergent thinking can help in getting to the best solutions to improve the problem.

Summary

Innovation is the future, but many businesses and companies are too afraid to do anything outside “the norm” because they don’t want to fail. In the business

industry is a case of “Innovate or Liquidate”. If all these businesses are following each other we get a case of Imitation rather than innovation.

Design thinking provides of catalyst for the rate of innovate. If many more business used this approach a significant amount of our day-to-day problems would be restrained.



For more information on Design Thinking and Innovation visit:

- <https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/article/what-is-design-thinking-and-why-is-it-so-popular>
- <https://www.ideatovalue.com/inno/nickskillicorn/2016/03/innovation-15-experts-share-innovation-definition/>

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