



"FAIL OFTEN
SO YOU CAN
SUCCEED
SOONER"

Tom Kelley.

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IDEO

IDEO-OVERVIEW

IDEO is a global design and consulting company founded in Palo Alto, California, in 1991 by David Kelley as a merger. It has been named as one of the Top 10 most innovative companies in the world. It has locations in 9 major cities like London, New York, Munich, Shanghai. IDEO uses the design thinking methodology to design products, services, environments, and digital experiences. Where "Design Thinking" is a methodology used by designers in IDEO to solve complex problems, and find desirable solutions for clients. IDEO focuses on understanding the latent user needs, technology factors, and business requirements for success. Their main principle is empathy for the end-user of their innovative products. They believe that the key to know what humans really want is depending on two things: Observing user behavior and putting yourself (designers) in the situation of the end-user. They believe if they stay connected to the behaviors and needs of the people they're designing for, their ideas will evolve into the right solution. They put users at the core of everything they do which they call it "human-centered design" which starts with people problems and ends with innovative solutions. IDEO have been so innovative over the years because of their cultural values within the company itself that make their teams more effective and successful.

Personally, this company who inspired me to be a designer and think about solutions that will help the world. I got inspired when I read about design thinking and feeling empathetic with the user. I believe this is what a real designer should be!

IDEO-PROCESS AND PRACTICES

In order for IDEO produce a solution; they go over human-centered design phases that help them in understanding the problem and creating a solution for it. The process consist of six phases:

PHASE 1: OBSERVATION

The first phase is observing the user, learning, and being open to creative possibilities in order to understand the people we are designing for. For example, designers need to observe the user's behavior pain points and places to see if they have any problem. As the designer puts their self in the user place and feels what they feel, by doing this, designers will understand the users and what they really need. I believe this is an important step as a design student because when we understand user needs and put myself in user situation, I will come up with effective solutions that can really help users. This is what I am aiming to be in my design career!

PHASE 2: IDEATION

This phase is to brainstorm ideas with your team based on what you learned from your observations to come up with as many ideas as you can.

PHASES 3: RAPID PROTOTYPING

In this phase, designers will build a simple prototype of their idea to test their idea with users. The prototype is usually simple in this phase where it's made out of cardboard.

PHASE 4: USER FEEDBACK

Here designers will get their simple prototype to be tested by their end users where they will get input from end-user. I believe this step is important as Without input from end-user designers won't know if their solution is on target or not!

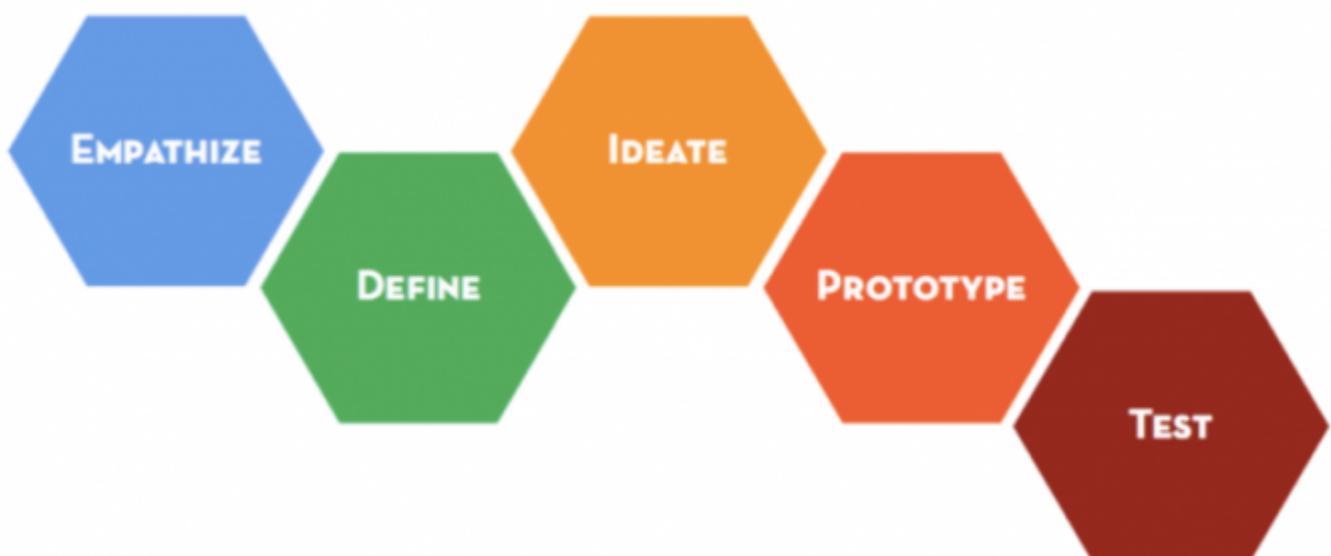
PHASE 5: ITERATION

In this step, designers will use the information they got from the user feedback to iterate their idea and improve it. They will continue doing these steps until they've fine tuned their solution.

PHASE 6: IMPLEMENTATION

Now designers have validated their idea, they can start implementing it!

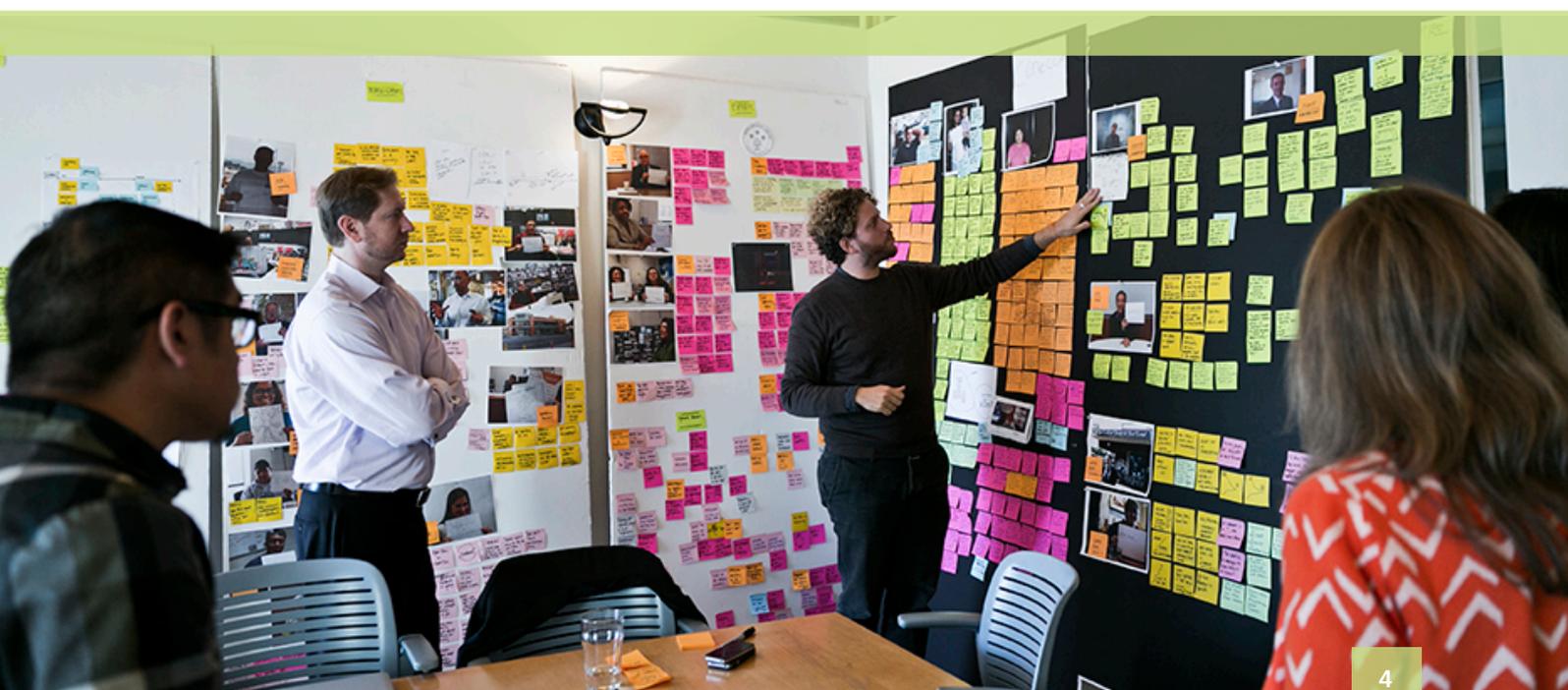
In these phases IDEO doesn't spend too much on product/solution as they prototype and keep user involve in the development process. They actually create their solution when they get a validation that they have a good solution that could help users.



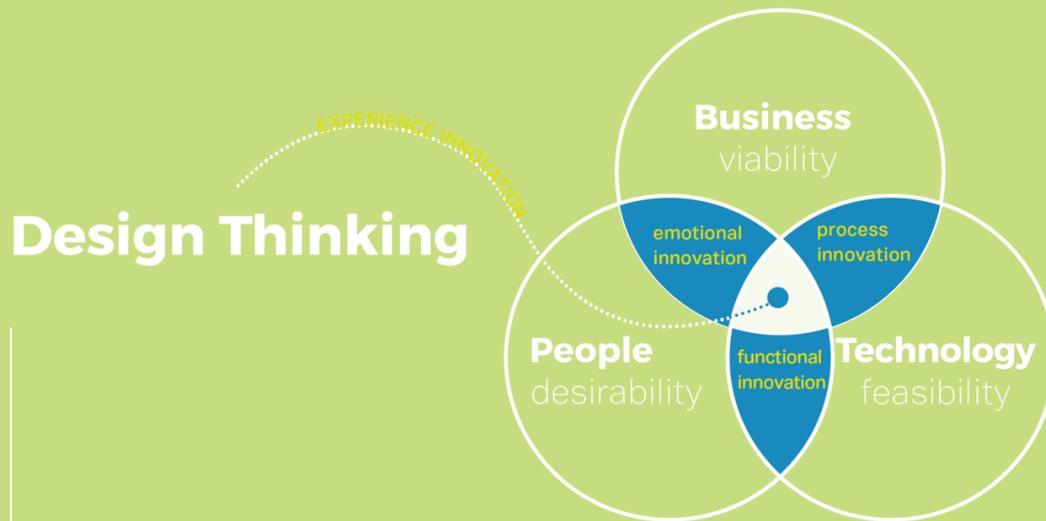
WORK ENVIRONMENT

IDEO is a diverse company, where they have psychologists, anthropologists, engineers (of every type), architects, visual designers, interaction designers, writers, and business working together. Employees are from different parts of the world as in "IDEO Bay Area, estimate more than 40% are foreign-born"(Jimmy Chion, 1) employees are from South Korea, Italy, New Zealand, Denmark and other different countries. The company has great faith in diversity, as they will produce products that solve people problem not just in one place but globally!

On the other hand, IDEO believes that it's important to keep their workers engaged, happy, and fulfilled. There are some factors that IDEO has in order to make workers engaged. First having a maker space that offers people the right environment, materials, and tools to bring their ideas to life. Also, they can set up their own environment. Second sharing a common purpose, tailored. IDEO's purpose statement - "Positive and disproportionate impact in the world through design" - which help workers figure out which work best aligns with their skills and where they're going to be most engaged and successful in the organization. Third, having a social contract where they have 7 common values: be optimistic, collaborate, learn from failure, embrace ambiguity, talk less and do more, take ownership, and lastly, make others successful. Finally, having a Bottom-up innovation. As they believe that bottom up has the most effective ideas.



DESIGN THINKING IS HUMAN CENTERED



CONCLUSION

After doing this research about IDEO, I got more interested in it. I believe it's a place where a person can grow as individual and designer. Reading Employers review about the company I realized why it's considered one of the top companies in the world Top 15 Employers for MBAs, Universum, 2013. I believe Designing for the user is important to a product's success. IDEO is a place that shares the person's enthusiasm and where they can continue to grow. They focus on diversity which I personally a huge believer in diversity.

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