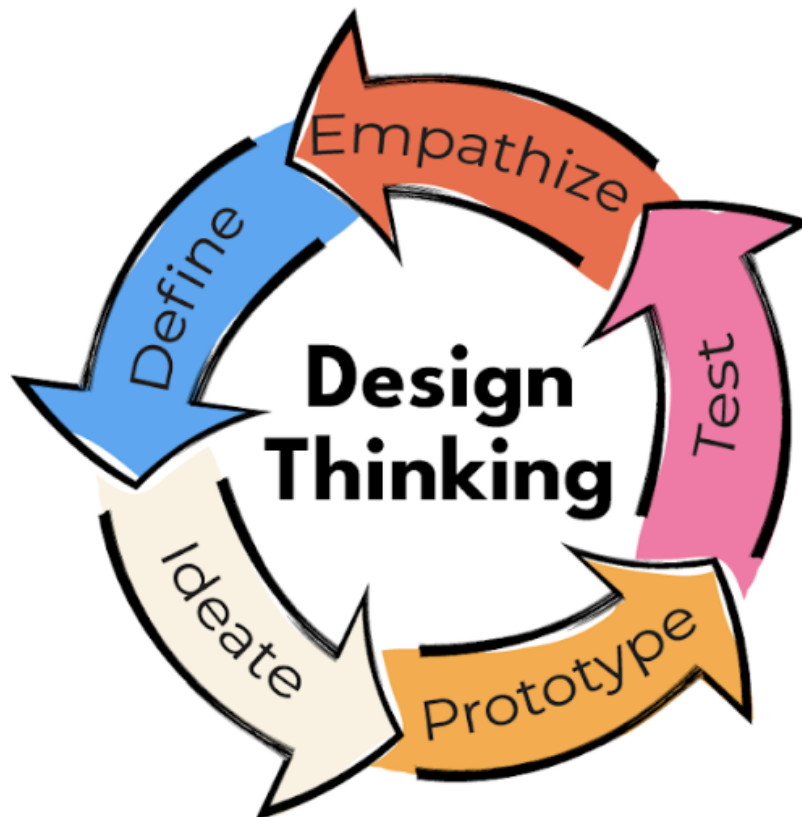


Design Thinking

"Design Thinking" as used in the Stanford d-school outlines 5 iterative principles of design thinking. These are empathy, define, ideate, prototype, and test. See figure 5.1

Design thinking is iterative, this means you can use these principles in any order and you're likely to repeat them throughout the development of your project, in fact, you've already tapped into design thinking, empathizing with potential users during your flash talks and defining the problem in conducting research. In Ch. 5 we'll focus on Ideation.



As students engage with and practice design thinking strategies, they'll start to develop a design thinking mindset. A design thinking mindset emphasizes empathy, creativity, and a user-centric approach to problem-solving, diverging significantly from polemic approaches that focus on debate and persuasion. Unlike the confrontational nature of polemics, design thinking advocates for understanding problems through the users' eyes, valuing

collaboration and diverse perspectives. It's characterized by an iterative process, where solutions evolve through prototyping and feedback, viewing failure as a crucial step towards innovation. This mindset is not about proving a point but about exploring and creating solutions that genuinely address user needs, marking a shift from arguing to understanding and solving.

Design thinking sets itself apart from traditional problem-solving methods through three key characteristics that focus on innovative and user-centric solutions.

1. Forward Orientation

Design thinking prioritizes envisioning future possibilities over critiquing existing solutions or dwelling on past problems. It motivates designers, authors, and artists to look ahead, aiming to shape the future by strategically deploying resources to meet the target audience's needs effectively.

2. Empathy over Analysis

While problem analysis is a crucial step in any creative endeavor, design thinking places a stronger emphasis on empathizing with those directly affected by the issue. This approach seeks to understand the problem through the eyes of potential users, focusing on their experiences to drive the development of solutions. Instead of dissecting problems in isolation, design thinking values, making connections and embracing the diverse perspectives of users to find meaningful solutions.

3. Embracing Multiple Solutions

In the realm of design thinking, generating a wide array of solutions is encouraged as a starting point. This process acknowledges the complexity of addressing user needs and leverages iterative, human-centered methods to refine and evolve these solutions. By embracing this approach, designers are better equipped to navigate through various possibilities and, over time, hone in on the most effective strategy to serve users.

