Design Thinking

Rules of Behavior: Do’s and Don’ts

Ben Sigman - September 2022

Who am I?

20+ Years in Tech

Why should you listen to me?

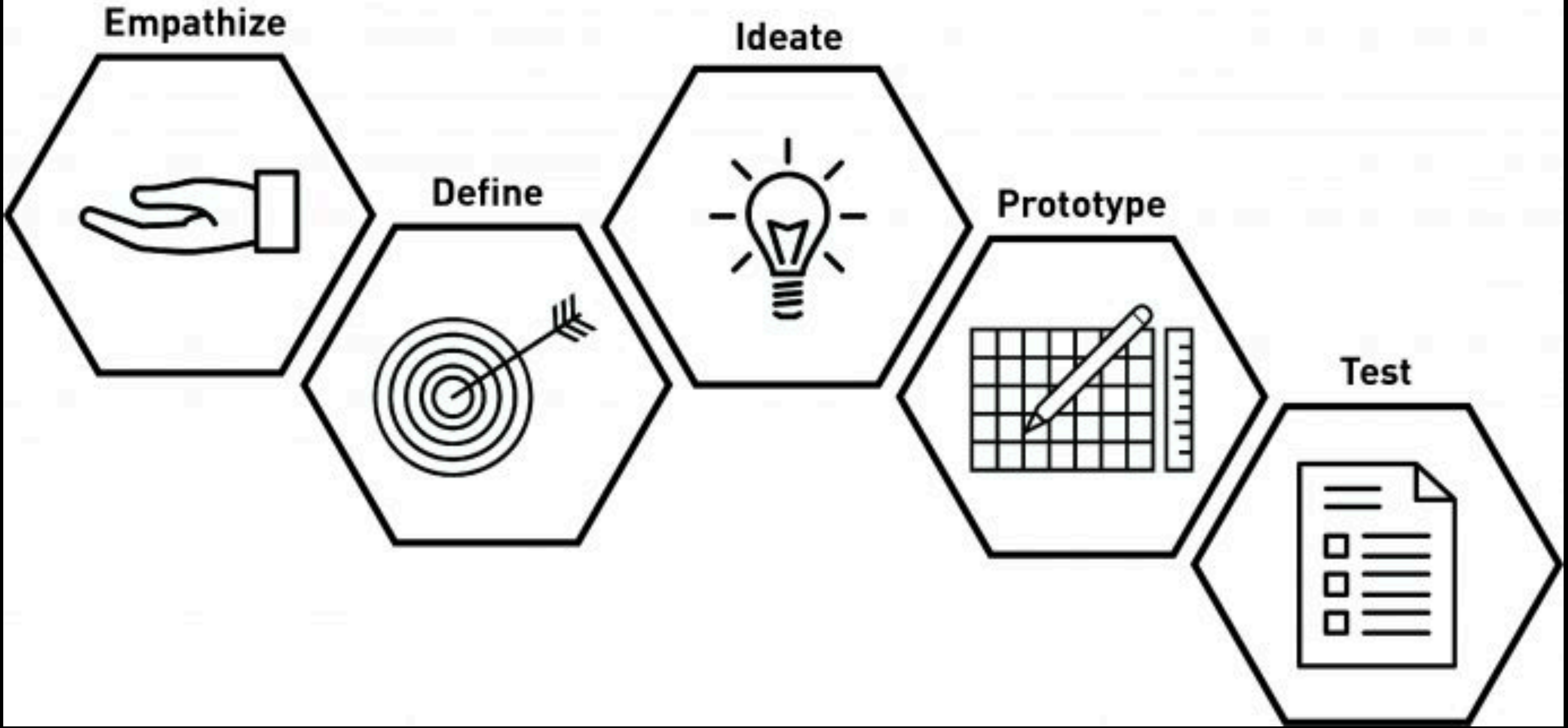
Fixing

Destroying

Building

What is design thinking?

Design Thinking



Empathize

Define

Ideate

Prototype

Test

What is design thinking?

A system for putting your customer / user at the center of your problem solving process.

Why should you care about design thinking?

Solving problems

Making Choices

Maintaining Creative Confidence

SPALDING
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“You've got to be very careful if you don't know where you are going, because you might not get there.”

Do’s and Don’ts

Do : Define the User / Customer

- Who is this for?
- Why do they need it?
- Will they pay for it?
- Will they stick around if it doesn’t work 100% of the time?

Don’t : Build for Anyone

- Anyone = No One
- If you build too broadly, you will fail

Do : “Yes and” Brainstorming

- Collaborative brainstorm sessions
- Give everyone an opportunity to share ideas
- Create a safe space for sharing… just say yes and… see where that takes you

Don’t : Play “It Would Be Cool If…” forever

- It would be cool if is the ultimate creator and destroyer of products… if you keep playing that game, you will lose

Do : Make It Personal

- Best is if you are building a product that you will personally want to use. You will do much better if it’s personal

Don’t : Venture Into Unknown

- Don’t go and venture into building something you do not even understand yourself…

- Example: if you don’t know anything about food delivery, don’t build a food delivery app. If you don’t know anything about games, don’t build a game

Do : Start With a Clear Need

- The more narrow the better
- Squirrel - better portfolio tracking for people with multiple portfolios
- Bitcoin Libre - non-governmental bitcoin wallet for beginners in El Salvador

Don’t : Start With a Feature or Tech Stack

- Example: Add Crypto to WhatsApp
- Example: Add Blockchain to Shipping

Do : Define Success

- Really know what success looks like how many users? How much money? How many downloads?

Do : Start Simple

- Start with a simple clearly defined need, build the designs flush out EVERY detail before you begin building anything. This might take a week, but more likely it will take you 2-3 weeks full time… maybe even months

Don’t : Boil the Ocean

- If you want to build crypto chat, but you need to build the chat first - then you’ve already lost the game.
- Don’t try to build some thing that will take 6 months to develop… a good initial timeline is 2 months for ideation / design + 2 months for building
- Do not try to boil the ocean… you will run out of money, time, energy, and the patience of your friends and family

Do : Start with Wireframes

- Start with simple designs in Miro - ideally not on a napkin

Do : Flush Out Every Detail

- build the designs flush out EVERY detail before you begin building anything.
- This might take a week, but more likely it will take you 2-3 weeks full time… maybe even months

Don’t : Iterate on the Fly

- Developers are not designers Give them the complete designs - if there is an issue, then bring it back to design and have a SINGLE SOURCE OF TRUTH

Do : Build A Prototype

- Building a clickable prototype is worth it, you need to be able to click through every screen and know what every button does and where it goes next

Do : Start with Web

- If you are thinking about building an app, start in web - build in react and then you can build react native later…
- Even when you build react native, you really want to start with one platform: iOS or Android

Do : Start with iOS

- Even when you build react native, you really want to start with one platform: iOS or Android.
- I would recommend starting with iOS since it’s much simpler to build on and the users are worth more.

Do : Ask “What is the next most important thing we need to learn?”

“Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication”

Summary

- Simply put, your customer has to be at the center of your problem solving process.
- You must be deeply interested in the person for whom you are designing a product or service.
- Iteration at the core, no solution is optimal - everything requires testing and refinement