



DESIGN THINKING

HUMAN-CENTERED INNOVATION METHODS

Design Thinking is a human-centered approach to innovation that allows non-designers to use the designer's creative tools and methods to match human needs with what is conceptually feasible and what a sound strategy can convert into true value.

The ultimate goal of Design Thinking is to embed a simple and sustainable innovation method across the entire organization, enabling a companywide culture of constant creativity and collaboration.

Similar to the way I learned it at Stanford's d school, my Design Thinking training course is an experiential immersion in which participants focus on solving a real-world problem, enabling them to experience the entire design thinking process:

- **Humanizing** — *gaining empathy for users*
- **Conceptualizing** — *meeting user needs creatively*
- **Prototyping** — *building low resolution mockups*
- **Testing** — *iterative experimenting with prototypes*

Course formats can be tailored, and range from a 90-minute "crash course" to a multi-day bootcamp delivering a deep dive into design thinking techniques.



STRATEGIC THINKING

PLAY-TO-WIN STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

What *is* strategy? The best definition on the planet is the one offered by Roger Martin: "Strategy is an integrated cascade of choices that uniquely positions a player in its space to create sustainable advantage."

That cascade consists of five key questions:

- *What is our winning aspiration?*
- *Where will we play?*
- *How will we win?*
- *What capabilities do we need?*
- *What management systems are required?*

Participants learn not only how to integrate answers to these deceptively simple questions in an innovative way, but also how to reverse engineer the logic with strategy's "magic" question—*what must be true?*—the answers to which identify critical assumptions.

Participants will learn and gain facility with the *Play-to-Win Canvas*, my proprietary visual tool designed in collaboration with, and approved by, Roger Martin.

Course formats can be tailored, but are best delivered as one- or two-day seminars.

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LEAN THINKING

TOYOTA-BASED CONTINUOUS INCREMENTAL INNOVATION

Whether it's lean manufacturing or lean startup, the word *lean* in a business context has a simple definition: the absence of excessive complexity.

Lean has a single goal: make more room for what truly matters by eliminating what doesn't. It's a different, subtractive way of thinking. That's why so many companies can't get lean, no matter what they do.

Nearly a decade of working closely with Toyota—the birthplace of lean—taught me the right way. And it's what makes my Lean Thinking unique: it's *authentic*.

Lean Thinking is applicable to everything from internal process redesign to new product development and entrepreneurial startup.

Participants in my Lean Thinking course experience lean continuous innovation principles in action through the official Toyota Production System (TPS) simulation. They then engage in an exercise designed to identify real-world issues that represent opportunities to employ Lean Thinking.

Course formats can be tailored, and range from a 2-hour "crash course" to a 2-day immersive bootcamp.



BRAIN GAME

ADVANCED CREATIVE THINKING TECHNIQUE

Based on my 2016 book *Winning the Brain Game*, this is a high-energy, highly interactive training program in which participants tackle several thought challenges in order to experience the very same "7 fatal flaws" of thinking as those I catalogued over the course of ten years through hundreds of creative sessions:

- **Leaping**
- **Fixation**
- **Overthinking**
- **Satisficing**
- **Downgrading**
- **Not Invented Here**
- **Self-Censoring**

Each of the seven fatal flaws is explained, then followed by practice with a super-curated, field-tested set of "fixes." Participants leave with a mental toolkit enabling them to realize higher levels of creative problem-solving capability.

Course formats include 1-hour, 2-hour, and half-day seminars.

FOCUSED CONCEPTING

FRAMESTORMING BEFORE BRAINSTORMING

Research studies repeatedly show that traditional, unfocused brainstorming yields few if any new and novel ideas. Without a laserlike focus coupled with a sound method structured to provoke new thought, the gravitational pull of pre-existing patterns and mindsets overpowers fresh, divergent thinking.

What's needed is a sound creative process designed to reframe pressing challenges in new ways while producing the escape velocity needed to enable participants to "blast off" and break free from the gravitational pull of old thinking patterns.

My focused ideation sessions do just that, by adding a unique step to the process: *framestorming*, a mashup of problem framing and brainstorming. The ability to properly frame an issue or problem goes far in avoiding the typical pitfalls that limit our ability to reach truly innovative solutions. With framestorming, instead of leaping to ideas and solutions, a portfolio of provocative questions is generated, enabling the group to launch into more innovative ideation and go off-road with their thinking.

All Focused Ideation sessions are custom designed.

STRATEGY SESSIONS

PLAY-TO-WIN STRATEGY FORMULATION

All too often, a new strategy ends up looking a lot like the old strategy. That's because conventional strategy development begins with analyzing existing options rather than generating new possibilities.

Strategy Summits break with convention by employing the *Play-to-Win* strategy framework, which centers on producing a multitude of possibilities surrounding two tightly bound choices: *where to play* and *how to win*.

The process begins with identifying the most pressing strategic issue, which is then reframed as at least two mutually exclusive high-level alternatives. From there, multiple where-to-play/how-to-win possibilities are produced, clustered and culled to arrive at the most attractive strategic themes, each of which is then fully developed into an integrated cascade of choices.

The logic of each strategy is reverse engineered to determine conditions for success. The final deliverable is a portfolio containing at least two unique strategies, complete with a first strategic test of validity.

All Strategy Summits are tailored for timing, but are generally delivered in a sequestered 2-day format.

MATTHEW MAY FACILITATION

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LEAN STARTS

MULTI-DAY RAPID PROTOTYPING & TESTING

There's no shortage of good ideas, and the half-life of an idea is shrinking rapidly. If you can't get a tangible version of your concept into the hands of potential users quickly, someone else will.

Enter Lean Starts, innovation sprints designed to turn a new product/service concept into to a minimally viable prototype validated through testing with users in the wild in the shortest possible time. Lean Starts are an actionable component of Lean Thinking.

Lean Starts revolve around an iterative 3-step cycle of *guess-test-learn*.

Guess is focused on identifying and prioritizing an idea's riskiest assumptions and producing falsifiable hypotheses.

Test is focused on constructing a low fidelity prototype and devising a simple, fast, and frugal experiment to capture measurable human response to the idea.

Learn is focused on comparing experimental results with expectations, then deciding whether to reiterate, pivot to a new direction, or abandon the effort.

Lean Starts are generally delivered in 2-day formats.

KAIZEN SESSIONS

TIME-BOUND OPERATIONAL WORKFLOW SIMPLIFICATION

Kaizen is the Japanese word referring to the continuous improvement methods popularized in the U.S. during WWII and later adopted by Japan during the post-war occupation.

Like Lean Starts, Kaizen Sessions are an actionable component of Lean Thinking, with one fundamental difference: the focus is on incremental improvement rather than creating a new product or service, with the express intent of removing excess complexity by streamlining *existing, internal* workflows.

Kaizen Sessions start by setting compelling objectives. The work then turns to mapping the current situation, producing a visual depiction of value and waste. From there, problems get framed and analyzed, ideal outcomes defined, and potential solutions generated.

Experimental test plans are then developed, complete with timing, targets, and expected business gains.

Finally, the team prepares and presents a short pitch to the leader sponsoring the session.

Kaizen Sessions are generally delivered in 1 or 2-day formats, depending on process scope and complexity.

INNOVATION CENTERS

GUIDANCE ON CREATIVE CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE

Creating future revenue streams is a much different endeavor than growing current ones.

The best innovators realize the need and benefit of having dedicated resources, spaces, and structures earmarked not only for creative experimentation with new products, services, and business models, but also developing companywide innovation capability.

Done right, innovation centers of excellence can bear fruit in the form of transformative strategies, products, services, processes and capabilities. However, they must be conceived with great care.

I provide guidance on navigating issues such as:

- *How to build innovation bench strength and depth*
- *How balance the innovation investment portfolio*
- *How to train and develop the innovation team*
- *How to strategically align innovation efforts*
- *How to integrate new concepts into the business*
- *How to monitor and measure return on innovation*

Advisory services are based on a daily rate. Long-term retainer relationships reduce rates significantly.

OPERATIONS STRATEGY

GUIDANCE ON TRANSFORMING OPERATIONS

Today, the rate of change in technological innovation is accelerating, reducing barriers to entry to existing markets as well as the development of new ones. Market leaders are losing their dominant positions at an increasing rate. Too often they simply speed up to run the race faster, only to lose in the end to a more nimble, agile opponent.

But there is a better way.

The challenge lies in transforming operations into a competitive advantage that fuels company growth, while maintaining the traditional operations focus on quality, reliability, efficiency and cost.

It can be done. Leading companies like Amgen, Disney, Intel, and Toyota are leveraging corporate operating groups to stay ahead of the innovation curve.

The key to operational innovation lies in the ability to optimize speed-to-market simultaneously with speed-in-market. In other words, creating a competitive advantage based on operational agility.

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INNOVATION STRATEGY

GUIDANCE ON ALIGNING THE INNOVATION PIPELINE

Innovation is the implementation of creative concepts that are both novel and useful. Novelty comes from insight, usefulness from input.

And to be an innovative organization, you have to ask for innovation, assemble a group of talented people who are eager to do new things, and put them in an environment where innovation is expected.

It's that simple. And that hard.

What's needed is a repeatable innovation system that consistently and predictably guides creative concepts from inception to tangible commercial offer in alignment with the company's strategic goals.

My proprietary *Strategic Innovation System*, or SIS, is an effective approach to systematic innovation. It consists of three key drivers: *Governance*, *Generation*, and *Go-to-Market*.

When installed and embedded in the organization, the result is a well-aligned, highly productive pipeline of innovation...a value-creating machine.

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GO-TO-MARKET

GUIDANCE ON NEW PRODUCT/SERVICE COMMERCIALIZATION

Good ideas are everywhere. It's the ones that position you to win that are rare.

Winning ideas have a few things in common. They achieve the maximum effect with minimum means. They provide compelling customer value, often by subtracting something from the current experience—generally something viewed as excessive, confusing, wasteful, unnatural, hazardous, hard to use, or ugly. And they break a pattern, a convention.

Some people call that disruptive. They're right.

But ideas, even ground-breaking disruptive ones, remain merely concepts until they are not only proven, but brought to market. Perhaps the most differentiating feature setting winners apart from the crowd is the ability to ensure that fresh ideas see the commercial light of day.

My go-to-market insight is based on my product and service launch experience with market leaders like Toyota, Intuit, Wells Fargo, and Edmunds.com.

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