

FOUNDER'S SPEAK



We all are scintillating professionals who have embraced Design Thinking, which has rapidly gained momentum in the business world. As Design Thinking Master Practitioners, we have witnessed the groundbreaking impact of Design Thinking in almost every vertical of an organization. Design Thinking is originally known for its way to brainstorm innovative challenges, and now has a new home in the "sales departments."

Reimagining Sales Using Design Thinking

As Design Thinking is all about understanding problems before looking for solutions, when applied to sales, involves asking multiple questions to get a grip on the customer's point of view. Yes, the process is slow and might not work for salespeople who are always short on time, have high goals to reach, or are employed by companies that give incentives to those who bring in the most revenue. Contrary to popular belief, this extremely rendered design thinking strategy is most likely to boost sales.

According to HubSpot Research, buyers today are keen to steer clear of pushy salespeople. They want someone who will pay attention to their demands, give them pertinent information quickly, and care about their company's success. Unfortunately, 84% of consumers reported having a bad sales experience and feeling pressured by salespeople. Similarly, 62% of customers believed that salesmen did not pay attention to their demands.

The solution is simple: Reframe your information to reflect the needs of your audience. "Personalize your sales pitch to the requirements and preferences of your buyer. Over time, as you get more insight into your leads, you may more effectively mold your messages to meet their unique demands. The habits of the best-fitting customers can be recognized over time by organized sales teams, which will produce more qualified leads.

Unique Challenges - Unique Solutions With Design Thinking

Earlier sales professionals used to play by the book, latest trends, and past experiences while creating marketing strategies. However, Design Thinking provides an edge to stay relevant and informed on the underlying demands of customers to deliver desired real-time solutions.

"We can create solutions based on needs and requirements through human-centric lenses, which will boost sales."

A new approach to business development must take over, with a vision to identify changes in customer trends and values to fine-tune the sales strategy.

Editor's Speak

While working consistently for so many months with SDTP now, I discovered the importance of "Stop, Think, and Act" to take a break and then switch the work mode on. This single tool isn't limited to personal growth but professional clarity as well. And as we are talking about sales, it becomes a necessity for the team to rewire & sync themselves again with their goals to acquire the flow with less churn. The sole purpose of the process is to maintain mental & emotional balance which sometimes we tend to forget, is the basis of why we started.

So, be it any department or be it individualistic aspiration - Design Thinking can serve a variety of solutions once you are open to explore. I use a few tools to keep my creative & analytical mind in balance. As for one fine morning, I narrowed my attention to "FOCUS" on my work for the day. As a result, my day became more productive because to start a day with the right reminder prioritized the work at-hand.

Please write to me at afreen@sdtp.co.uk, in case of feedbacks, inputs, or you want us to cover any specific topic.

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Requisites To Apply Design Thinking In Sales Function



We Have Ignited The Spark of Innovation at -



And many more...

When the sales professionals align with the customer values, they are able to successfully solve the problems on the client's terms rather than making push sales. The best way to pull the strings together is by applying the tools and techniques from the Design Thinking principles. Below are the fundamental Design Thinking tools required to propel sales and enhance productivity.

Empathy

Empathy can turn the tables for emotional intelligence. It works as a human connecting agent that helps to perceive customer feelings, challenges, or problems. The trick is to genuinely care about them as connecting with people is directly proportional to boosting sales. The goal is to build human-centric relationships with the customers and it will automatically set a new course for sales. Therefore, rather than merely asking questions like it's a checklist, sales professionals should engage with customers in various ways to learn more about what matters to them.

Curiosity

It's important to be curious about the preferences, needs, and requirements of the customer. Salespeople should make an effort to learn about people's working styles, projects they are working on, organization processes that are important to them, and things they dislike. With the help of these insights, they may develop solutions that are more valuable to the consumer and more relevant to them.

Customer-Centricity

The third important feature in the Design Thinking process for sales is customer-centricity. Prior to making any purchases of goods or services, people are aware of the possibilities that appeal to them. Before delving into educating customers about their products, sales professionals should take into account their wants and preferences. The key to executing Design Thinking business strategies is the capacity to recognize insights into the values and desires of the customer.

Design Thinking is valuable because it can contribute to market changes. Furthermore, with Design Thinking, salespeople can best collaborate with customers to bring invaluable solutions and overcome complicated challenges, which frequently become impediments to driving sales.

The goal of Design Thinking for Sales is to convert roadblocks into stepping stones and put salespeople on the same side of the table as the customer. To do so, you must first establish trust, which can only be achieved through the practice of empathy and emotional intelligence – the foundation of Design Thinking.

Thank You.

Happy Reading!

Dr. Jimmy Jain

Founder

Society Of Design Thinking Professionals

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<https://www.sdtp.co.uk/>

Thought Leader Speak – Mr. Ritesh Ranjan



“We can champion the concepts of Design Thinking by mastering three elements – stories, visuals, and rituals.”

Accomplished HR and Learning Leader, 2 times Brandon Hall Gold Winner, and 2 times ATD Award Winner, Ritesh has over 19 years of professional experience in Human Resources, with a breadth of experience across all facets of the function with deep specialization in Talent Management, Learning, and Development, and HR Business Partnering.



Can we apply Design Thinking in different areas in any organization?

As a concept, Design Thinking is pervasive and as its fundamentals are user-centric; it can be applied across a wide range of processes in any organization.

As a Thought Leader, do you think Design Thinking can be built with time as its concepts are mostly culture-driven?

When we talk about culture, we see it through stories, visuals, and rituals. If we are able to build these three elements into our processes, then only we can champion the concepts of Design Thinking. Let's talk about product development, the first thing is to identify the problem, then we find ways to solve it. Why is that a big problem for a certain set of people? How does the solution come into the picture? It's not about developing a great product, it's about developing something which will solve a particular problem. It may sound very subtle, however, it requires a huge mental or mindset shift to move beyond the internal focus and take into account everything from a user's perspective.

The stories, visuals, and rituals have to be embedded in the organization's process. It is where leadership commitment comes into the picture which leads us to discuss the accomplishments, the probability of getting the solution and identify the end users. It's even applicable for enabling functions like HR to keep in mind the user, employee, or any individual who is going to use the solution.

Post-Covid 19, as work-from-home culture evolved, a lot of new challenges were observed including Live Sessions. Do you think the Design Thinking framework can manage this challenge?

In any business, there are three major stakeholders who hold the fort together – clients, employees, and investors. If we see from the client's perspective – there's no glitch in various processes like deliverables or time management or security concerns – then it's a fair deal. However, considering the Indian context in mind, we need to use principles of Design Thinking to bring out better solutions in terms of communicating with employees.

Whereas, from a hybrid employee's perspective – productivity doesn't rely on different geographies. It is the bond that suffers while we use to work together under a single shed. So as long as we as an organization keep alive their experience by sharing values & recognizing efforts – working from home is a pretty cognizant option. Design Thinking, particularly, can be applied to the three perspectives of hybrid models, the client's end, the employee's end, and the investor's outlook.

Innovative solutions are the need of the hour, considering DT is a framework for innovation. What would be your recommendation for building this mindset?

In recent years, organizations have shifted their focus from analytical thinking to Design-led engineering. We have started implementing Design Thinking in our organizations by involving the entire team to work in an agile manner contributing effectively to the solutions regardless of the hierarchy. The moment we test the solutions and launch the products, the kind of work involved in the process changes the mindset of the people. We introduce the new hires to the process, the culture, and the practices we apply in our projects, they will not only learn agility, however, experience a shift in their mindset.

It has become a need of the hour because if you do not operate that way, the market will make its shift and you will fall short of time. Therefore, it is quintessential to equip the new hires with the right skills, and the right mindset for them to understand that the traditional ways of working are not going to work anymore. The responsibility of the leaders is to target the entry-level and middle-level employees as it is going to be pervasive with changing times.

Methods Of Designers For Non-Designers



DESIGN THINKING FOR SALES

One way the sales team can look at Design Thinking is to refrain from thinking they are vendors of products. They are rather the ones who solve their client's problems in an innovative way. Design Thinking offers the salespeople to enjoy power and freedom. It magnifies their creativity in umpteen ways they may never have experienced before.

"It's not suitable if you are doing hard sales in something like double glazing, where you have three products to flog, it is there to solve more complex problems. It's like finance, you don't want only your finance team to understand numbers. You want your entire team to be commercially literate. It is true for innovation. You want everyone to contribute."

- **David Kester, Co-Founder of the Design Thinkers Academy**

"One recent study written up in the Harvard Business Review, for example, showed contact center staff allowed to flex and experiment to meet customers needs, rather than stick to a rote script. Within four months they achieved targets twice as fast as a control team that used a tactical approach. Freedom and a remit to think on their feet and experiment to be more responsive made a world of difference."

- **Greg Taylor, Chief Provocation Officer at Elmwood, a brand experience agency**

"Companies can gain a lot from Design Thinking to improve customer experience. Design thinking starts by investigating problems, rather than by immediately looking for solutions. This means that assumptions and preconceptions may be probed and, as a consequence, problems may be reframed."

- **Pietro Micheli, Professor of Business Performance and Innovation at Warwick Business School**

Sales Design Thinking, adapted from the legendary method of "design thinking" in engineering and design, is a left-brain thinking process that aids in the generation of right-brain innovation. In recent years, fields other than design have used Design Thinking to innovate and solve problems.

- **SalesGlobe**

"As a sales professional, you have to focus on co-creating value rather than "push" sales. The result is a better understanding of customer business challenges and unlocking the opportunities that lay in front of you. Design Thinking is a powerful tool for rethinking and revitalizing sales strategy. By placing customers' needs at the center of the selling process, you can shorten the selling cycle considerably."

- **Jimmy Jain, Founder of the Society of Design Thinking Professionals**

Design thinking has a long track record of success. The only thing new is that salespeople are learning the skills. It is no longer enough to sell products. It is all about being creative, problem-solving, and developing solutions for clients. Design thinking will be prevalent in this environment for many years to come.

To learn more about Design Thinking for Sales, follow the link given below:

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescoachescouncil/2022/04/14/design-thinking-for-sales/?sh=falb8f41fa6b>