



Course Name: Design Thinking in HR

Credits	3
Faculty Name	Facilitators from LagomWorks Consulting (profiles appended) Abhilasha Jha, Aastha Khandelwal
Program	MBA (HRM)-II Class 2019 - 2021
Academic Year and Term	2020-2021, Term-IV

1. Course Objectives:

Design Thinking is a solution-based approach to finding what would-be users really need. It is a human- centered, iterative and creative process with five key steps: Empathize, Define, Ideate, Prototype and Test. Design thinking is useful in tackling problems that are ‘wicked’ i.e. ill-defined or unknown. For HR practitioners, this is all the more pertinent since it helps them make decisions based on what employees and their stakeholders really need or want, instead of relying only on historical data, static benchmarks or individual perceptions and instincts.

The Workplace of the Present is already **demanding a specific set of skills** from its Leaders and Managers - including flexible mindsets, critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and service orientation. This holds true for the Human Resources function as well. As HR Business Partners, they are expected to not only manage scale and complexity but also build differentiated capabilities within the organization. In doing so, they will need to shift focus from just running programs or processes to creating **impactful employee experiences** across the employee life cycle. Design thinking principles and tools can be leveraged to do this by thinking people first and process second.

In other words, design thinking is a process for **creative problem solving** that fosters a deep understanding of empathy, ideation and experimentation as HR practitioners arrive at **innovative ‘human’ solutions**. **Creative problem solving is also the top ranked future skill** as per ‘Future of Jobs’ study published by World Economic Forum.

As Design Thinking Facilitators and Practitioners, we realize the importance of hands-on and function- relevant learning of Design Thinking methodologies and application. We have leveraged our experience of having applied Design Thinking across organizations, functions and situations to build an immersive and action-based approach to teach Design Thinking. We aspire to enable future HR Practitioners understand and embrace Design Thinking principles and be at the forefront of org and HR transformation.

2. Learning Outcomes:

- The student participants will learn how to solve HR and talent problems with a solution-based, human-centered, creative and hands on approach.
- They will be introduced to Design Thinking elements and application of Design Thinking principles in organizations. They will become familiar with popular Design Thinking tools.
- They will experience a series of structured Design Thinking Sprints to be able to apply their learning and solve for relevant Use Cases within the ambit of Strategic HRM.
- They will understand how to assess tangible/ business impact of a Design Thinking led HR intervention.
- They will learn the basics of stakeholder management and storytelling to effectively communicate and create buy in for their proposed solutions, using the pillars of Desirability, Feasibility and Viability.
- They will learn how to design new as well as augment existing HR programs and frameworks within the context of an organization and its workforce.

3. Reference books and reading materials:

- Tim Brown. *Change by Design*
- Donald A. Norman. *The Design of Everyday Things*
- Tom Kelley. *The Art of Innovation - Lessons in Creativity from IDEO, America's Leading Design Firm*
- Tom and David Kelley. *Creative Confidence: Unleashing the Creative Potential Within Us All*
- Marc Stickdorn and Jakob Schneider. *This is Service Design Thinking: Basics, Tools, Cases*
- IDEO. *Human-Centered Design Toolkit: An Open-Source Toolkit To Inspire New Solutions in the Developing World*
- Alexander Osterwalder. *Business Model Generation*
- Chang, Y., Kim, J., & Joo, J. (2013). *An exploratory study on the evolution of design thinking: Comparison of Apple and Samsung*. *Design Management Journal*, 8(1), 22-34.
- Miaskiewicz, T., & Kozar, K. A. (2011). *Personas and user-centered design: How can personas benefit product design processes?* *Design Studies*, 32(5), 417-430.
- Blomquist, Å., & Arvola, M. (2002, October). *Personas in action: ethnography in an interaction design team*. In *Proceedings of the second Nordic conference on Human-computer interaction* (pp. 197-200). ACM.
- Kumar, A., Maskara, S., & Chiang, I. J. (2014). *Building a prototype using Human-Centered Design to engage older adults in healthcare decision-making*. *Work*, 49(4), 653-661.
- Lee, P., & Sunder, M. (2016). *The Law of Look and Feel*. S. Cal. L. Rev., 90, 529.

4. Proposed Session Plan

Session No.	Session Coverage	Objectives	Pedagogy/ Methodology	Duration (in hours)
1	Design Thinking 101	Introduction to Design Thinking What is design? Why design? Introduction to desirability, viability, feasibility of a design led solution. Deep dive into Design Mindset	Concepts and tools shared through conversations supported by slides, individual & team activities and videos.	1.5

Session No.	Session Coverage	Objectives	Pedagogy/ Methodology	Duration (in hours)
2	Design Lab Empathize	Introduction to concepts and tools used in Empathetic phase on how to understand the different employee segments in detail.	Case study based learning approach is followed from here onwards. During Empathize, they use different tools and methods like user interviews, personas, empathy maps, and journey line to understand the employee needs and context.	1.5
3	Design Lab Define	Introduction to concepts and tools used to examine and reflect on design problems. Students learn about questions they should ask about their problem and framing the problem from a design point of view.	In the Define phase, they articulate the employee need based on insights gathered. The problem statement is defined in the form of 'How Might We?' which is taken forward for Ideation.	1.5
4	Design Lab Ideate	Introduction to concepts and tools for collaborative ideation. Students learn about effective methods for generating ideas as well as bundling ideas together to create a concept.	Students use tools such as Braindumping, Brainstorming, Prioritization Matrix to generate, build and select ideas.	1.5

Session No.	Session Coverage	Objectives	Pedagogy/ Methodology	Duration (in hours)
5	Design Lab Prototype	Introduction to concepts and tools for developing low to medium fidelity prototypes. In this module, students are introduced to the storytelling approach to design. They learn about creating storyboards to visualize their concept. They develop physical or digital prototypes. Approaches for assessing the feasibility, viability and sustainability of the solutions are discussed.	Shortlisted ideas are taken forward to create a Prototype - physical or digital. Students use tools such as Business Model Canvas to assess solutions and build readiness for sponsorship.	1.5
6	Design Lab Test	Introduction to concepts and tools for testing intent and commitment of stakeholders. In this module, students are introduced to testing methods and learn the importance of having employees/ stakeholders experience the design or proposed solution	Students test prototype/s and business model canvas through tools like user interview and validate feasibility, viability and sustainability of solutions.	1.5

Session No.	Session Coverage	Objectives	Pedagogy/ Methodology	Duration (in Hours)
7	Interim Presentations	Interim presentation after fine tuning the prototype and carrying out a detailed testing with the user group	Groups present the solution prototype and Business Model Canvas, take feedback from each other. Incorporate the feedback received, carry out testing with the user group and refine their solution/ prototype and Business Model Canvas.	1.5
8 to 12	Design Sprint 1 – Strategic HRM _Performance Assessment	Enable the students to apply Design thinking principles to revisit the ‘Performance Assessment’ process covered in the Strategic HRM Module.	Groups now get an opportunity to use all the five stages of Design Thinking and apply Process, Principles and Tools discussed in the previous sessions to assess the efficacy of the Performance Assessment process followed in organizations.	7.5
13 to 17	Design Sprint 2 – Strategic HRM _Benefits Structure	Enable the students to apply Design Thinking principles to revisit the ‘Compensation and Benefits’ principles covered in the Strategic HRM Module.	Groups will get another opportunity to use all the five stages of Design Thinking and apply Process, Principles and Tools to assess whether the existing Benefits Structure followed in Organizations is able to meet the needs of a multigenerational workforce.	7.5
18 to 20	Final Presentations	Enable student to converge their learning through Strategic HRM focused Design Sprints	Final Presentations by students of the Performance Assessment and Benefits Structure Prototypes, post user testing for the final assessment.	4.5

5. Evaluation:

Components	Weightage	Description
Class Participation	10%	Active participation in the class
Quiz	20%	Two MCQ Quizzes of 10 marks online
Assignment	10%	Short assignment to test the application of concepts learnt in the class.
Interim Presentation	30%	The Group will present on a specific topic provided by the faculty with relevance to the course. A group will comprise of a maximum of 6 members and after the presentation, the groups will also face the Q&A from their classmates on their topics.
Final Presentation	30%	

The cumulative points will be normalized to arrive at the Course Grade.

6. Post-course support:

We will share relevant learning material of links to scholarly articles, sanitized client stories etc. at the end of the course. We will invite the students to relevant virtual sessions/ webinars hosted by us, as and when they are planned.

7. Academic Honesty Policy:

Students subscribing to this course will be bound by the Academic Policy as specified in the Student Manual of MBA-HRM Programme. For all in-class and evaluation purposes, the decision of the course instructor will be binding and final on every student.

Every Student for this course must conduct their studies honestly, ethically and in accordance with generally accepted standards of academic conduct. Any form of academic misconduct is unacceptable. If some students are found to engage deliberately in academic misconduct, with intent to deceive it would be construed as pre-mediated form of cheating and would attract the highest penalty of grade withholding.

8. Faculty Profiles:

Abhilasha Jha

Abhilasha is a director with LagomWorks Consulting. She is a Human Capital SME with over 18 years of experience across the technology (Accenture), pharmaceutical (Ranbaxy) and consulting sectors. She has worked in areas across the HR spectrum including Performance and Career Management; Compensation; Employee Engagement; Mergers and Acquisitions; Training; Communication and Change Management; as well as HR Service Delivery.

During her tenure with Accenture, she led and delivered large scale, high impact HR programs by partnering with leaders and working with large teams.

Abhilasha did her MBA in Human Resource Management from XLRI, Jamshedpur. She is also an ICF credentialed coach.

Design Thinking Facilitation Experience: Abhilasha has been a course facilitator for LagomWorks' courses on Applied Design Thinking at IIM-Calcutta, Tata Institute of Social Sciences-Mumbai, T.A.Pai Management Institute, XIM Bhubaneswar and Xavier School of HRM (Xavier University Bhubaneswar). She has facilitated Design Thinking workshops to drive innovation for organizations in BFSI, pharmaceutical, real estate, aviation and social impact sectors.

Design Thinking Practitioner Experience: Abhilasha has worked on several priority projects at Accenture. On one such project, the internal client sought to build a flexible on-demand talent pool to address client needs at a short notice. Abhilasha was instrumental in creating a framework for internal crowdsourcing using the design thinking principles. She co-facilitated the stakeholders' workshop with cross-functional teams to roll out the pilot in one geography. This was subsequently extended to other geographies.

Aastha Khandelwal

Aastha is a Functional Expert with LagomWorks. Until recently she was part of the Corporate HR team at ITC Limited, leading the Rewards practice for all the ITC Businesses. With over 15 years of professional experience, Aastha has worked on both ends - as a Consultant (with Mercer and EY) and in Corporate (with CavinKare, Star News, IBM and ITC). She has significant cross-sectoral and cross-cultural exposure, having been the HR partner for managers located across the globe, and has led Human Capital projects for clients across South Asia.

Aastha is a PGDM from XIM, Bhubaneswar and an Honours graduate in English from St. Xavier's College, Kolkata.

Design Thinking Facilitation Experience: Aastha has been a course facilitator for LagomWorks' courses on Applied Design Thinking at IIM-Calcutta, and Xavier School of HRM (Xavier University Bhubaneswar). She has facilitated Design Thinking workshops to drive innovation for organizations in BFSI and social impact sectors.

Design Thinking Practitioner Experience: Aastha has been trained in using Design Thinking to scope and solve client problems. She has used this in projects including HR strategy determination and process and policy design for clients in the social impact sector.

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