

Design Thinking Questions

Design thinking is a set of learnable skills that rely on empathy, creativity, and collaboration to find solutions that are useful, usable, and delightful.

Asking questions lets us discover new opportunities and avoid jumping to obvious solutions

DEFINE

What is the opportunity? How we frame our challenge shapes the next steps we take. Use “How might we…” as a starting point.

- What are our long- and short-term goals?
- Who are we doing this for?
- How will we define success?

LEARN

What are the needs to consider? We observe to gain empathy and understanding. Listen to stories and be open to the world around you.

- Who can we learn from and be inspired by?
- What is the context and landscape?
- How do people solve analogous problems?

IDEATE

How do we come up with new ideas? Collaborative creativity requires clear rules, good facilitation, and an inspiring, conducive space in which to work.

- What are our key topics and challenges?
- Who will lead, and who will participate?
- What will we do with the ideas?

TEST

How can we best evaluate our ideas? By embracing failure, “thinking by doing” lets us minimize risk and accelerate success.

- What can we prototype quickly and cheaply?
- What are our questions and assumptions?
- Who will give us valuable feedback?

SHARE

How do we best communicate our ideas? Well-told stories help persuade, build consensus, and provide honest feedback.

- What is the essence we need to convey?
- Who is our audience, and who is theirs?
- Who is our hero, facing what conflict?

REFLECT

How do we learn? Pausing to synthesize and integrate is key to finding the connections and insights that drive our work forward.

- What patterns become apparent?
- What was significant and meaningful?
- What might we do differently?

