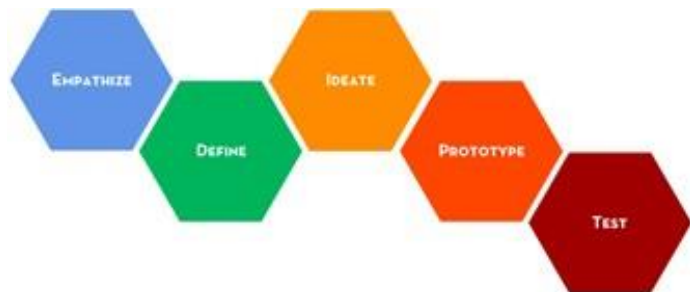# mHero

DESIGN THINKING FOR MHERO

May 2016

Design Thinking for mHero

What is design thinking? According to IDEO, the innovators behind it, Design Thinking is a deeply human process that takes advantage of the abilities we all have but get overlooked by more conventional problem-solving practices. It relies on our ability to be intuitive, to recognize patterns, to construct ideas that are emotionally meaningful as well as functional, and to express ourselves through means beyond words or symbols. Design thinking is a highly creative process. It relies on empathy, problem solving, rapid ideation, prototyping and testing.

What does this have to do with mHero? A lot actually!

mHero is an innovation and one that, even in new iterations or versions, can greatly benefit from the ideas of design thinking. Let's break it down.

Why should you consider **empathy** in mHero implementation?

Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of other people. You are likely using mHero to solve a problem. Gaining empathy helps you to understand your users and their needs. There are three great ways to help empathize with your users - observing, engaging and listening. This will help you gain insights to give you directions for creative solutions. Human behavior is a very powerful indicator of what might or might not work.

Here is an example of how you may gain empathy if you are a mHero User. In order to best support stakeholders or those who are requesting your help in setting up mHero to connect with health workers, spend some time talking with them about their needs for using the data. Observe them in their workspace. Engage with them and their colleagues about how they use other data. You will gain insights to help guide your mHero implementation. If you are already developing workflows for mHero, you should still get to know your stakeholders. You'll probably learn something new by engaging and gaining a bit of empathy about their work and role in this platform.

Many of you reading this are stakeholders - those decision makers or requestors of mHero use so that you can get more information to support health workers. How might you gain empathy? If you spend time with health workers you may learn more about how they use their phones and use SMS. Do they always have their phones at work? How extensive is their knowledge? Would they rather answer yes/no questions or type free text? You would benefit so much from connecting with them and observing how they use mobile phones to communicate. You can also learn about what kinds of challenges they are facing in providing health services. Are they experiencing a lack of supplies? Is electricity not available and they are unable to provide services? Are they unmotivated to able to do their jobs because they don't have clear job descriptions and career ladders?[1]

If you want to learn more about empathy, one of the cornerstones to design thinking, check out this White Board Video by Roman Krznaric: https://youtu.be/BG46IwVfSu8

Once you have taken some time to empathize with end users, you should be able to better **define** your problem. At this stage you should be able to articulate the challenges and craft a meaningful action statement. An action statement may be "Develop a workflow to collect information about health worker engagement with mobile health clinics." This will guide your focus. If you are a user, you may want to be focus on analytical challenges of your requestors' of mHero. Not everyone will understand terms such as denominators or confidence intervals - keep it simple. By giving them clearer data you may be able to help them make decisions faster. For mHero Stakeholders, you may be able to understand the needs of health workers and design workflows to connect with them more specifically on those needs.

The **Ideate** Stage is where you create ideas! For mHero, this would be where you may generate a list of possible use cases. You'll learn more about this in the next week of the course but ideation is important for any problem. You ideate to create answers to problems. And you likely won't have just one solution - you'll have many ideas, which is good.

There are many ways to generate a lot of ideas - bodystorming, brainstorming, sketching, mindmapping etc. Check out this link to explore some ideas if you want to learn more:

 http://notosh.com/lab/come-up-with-great-ideas/

One of the most important things to consider at this stage is to defer any judgement. You want to allow creativity to flourish[c]. Don't stop and evaluate your ideas - keep coming up with more new ones! Don't criticize an idea you have brainstormed - you'll think through it more later but keep it on the list because it could be a great idea. It is important to keep an open mind when brainstorming and not suppress creativity.

The fourth step in design thinking is **Prototyping**. This is where you "build to think". Say for example you are building a new idea for a better shopping cart. This was actually something done through design thinking.

---

[1] http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/career-ladder.html

You have to build - or prototype - a lot of iterations to see how things come together. Some things work. Some will not. For mHero, prototyping might mean creating workflows for your use cases - those questions that you'll send to health workers. If you are creating a new mHero report or adapting some existing content for mHero, you might explore using your tools about which methods work and which do not.

This is the stage things may not work out how you thought they would - and that is ok. For example, an idea for a graphic data visualization may not work. Figuring out what works and what doesn't <u>fast</u> is an important part of the prototyping stage. The point is to test possibilities.

Lastly, you want to **test**. Say you have a workflow of a quick refresher training for health workers providing nutrition services to children. This would be the point when you want to gather feedback from your end users. Take that feedback and see how you can use it to make your workflow better. For example, you may get feedback that our workflow is too long. Use this to refine your questions. The point is to improve what you are trying to do. In testing, it is important to "show" and not "tell". Give users the look and feel of what you are doing, whether it's a workflow, a report or an infographic. For mHero, this is why it is important to do a test of the workflow with the stakeholder. Let them SEE on their phones what the messages look like. This is better than just telling them what messages will be sent.

You can use Design Thinking for any area for your work, not just mHero. Unleash your creative confidence and take this approach to your work.
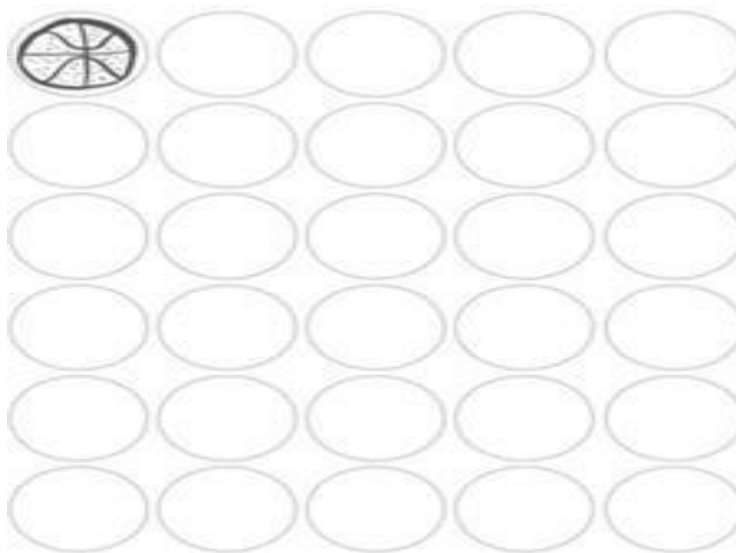
Try this "Creative Challenge" to get your brain thinking!

Grab a pen and paper and draw 30 circles.

Set your timer on your phone for 3 minutes.

Your goal is to use those 30 circles to draw recognizable objects. Think about a peace sign or a clock. See the image to the right to get an idea of what you might draw.

Now start your timer and draw. Go!

How did you do? What kinds of ideas did you generate? How many circles did you fill?

When you generate ideas you are balancing two goals - fluency and flexibility. Fluency is the speed and quantity of ideas. Flexibility is how distinct and flexible these might. Look at your circles. Did you have more circles that were innately different (i.e. a clock, a door lock, a soda top, etc.) or more variations of the same idea (i.e. lots of different types of balls)?

CONTACT

IntraHealth International
digitalhealth@intrahealth.org