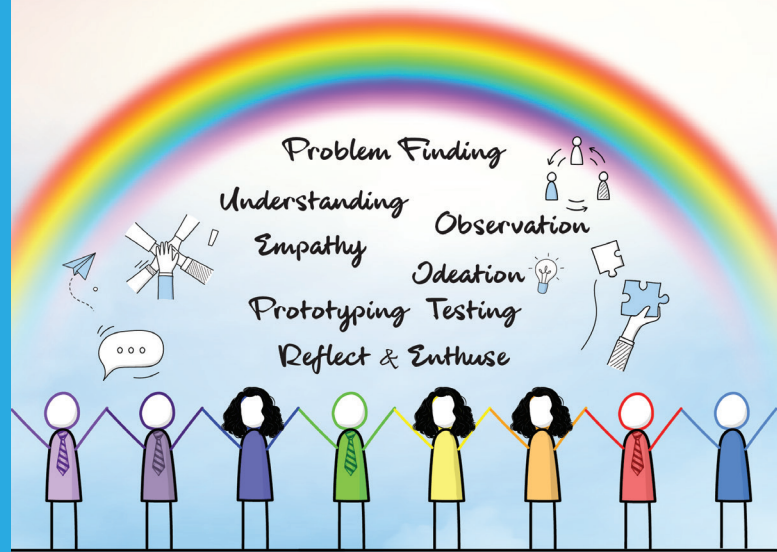


Case Study

The Application of Design Thinking in the Automobile Industry

About Client

They are India's leading two-wheeler Manufacturer with over a 100 million two-wheelers sold till date. With innovation at the core of its philosophy, the New Delhi (India)-headquartered two-wheeler manufacturing giant has been at the forefront of designing and developing technology.



Objective

The goal of the program is to investigate how innovation-led design thinking can be fostered and supported in providing tangible solutions to strategic as well as tactical problems and possibilities faced by employees and stakeholders of the organization. For example, lowering automobile production costs, reducing risks of unintended consequences and partial approaches and assisting in the delivery of more complete and resilient solutions, new model creation, customer centricity, product - service innovation for new markets, product - service enhancement, efficiency and productivity enhancement of workforce, culture and temperament for change management and innovation

Design Clinic Methodology

Clinic approach entails the participants to bring problems and possibilities from their workplace. These could be strategic or of tactical level. In multidisciplinary teams they work upon the problems and possibilities through a series of stage specific sequential workshops carried throughout this program. The stages of Design Thinking process were applied:

1 Understand
During this phase, participants tried to unearth a macro & micro perspective on Automobile Industry, identify global, national and regional trends & patterns, identify HR customer-centric trends, business model innovations based on newer entrants.

2 Observation of both Humans and Systems
During this phase, participants observed and engaged with real users or people who represent the target audience, as well as several stakeholders which included employees at several levels, processes and systems study, business associates and partners, government regulatory bodies, the list is endless.

3 Empathy
In this stage, participants indulge in getting to know the user, and understanding their needs, wants, and objectives.

4 Holistic Problem Articulation
In this stage, participants were told to outline the problem from the information gathered in the observation and empathy stages. A seven-step problem articulation process was done from identifying the problem to Agreeing on contingencies, monitoring, and evaluation. Their key is to keep recognizing and appreciating all stakeholders views in context to the identified problem.

5 Radical & Incremental Solutions through Ideation
Here, participants were encouraged to come up with novel ideas by thinking outside the box, challenging assumptions and exploring new territories. At this stage, we made sure that no idea should be as apparently the most trifle idea could prove to be the Solution.

6 Prototyping
The focus of this stage is to quickly turn problem-solving ideas into something tangible that can be tested as a solution to the problem in solving the problem. Saving upon resources i.e. both time, money and efforts.

7 Testing
The final stage is all about testing the set of ideas generated and seeing the final outcome of it -the solution to the identified problem is not just directly beneficial but also sustainable and scalable.

8 Reflect & Enthuse
The final stage is all about either participants reflecting on their presented ideas or enthusing key decision makers to progress on the presented ideas. Here, participants with the help of storytelling through mediums including visual aids and videos enthuse management to bring the proposed solution to life and to inspire others to get behind it.

Conclusion:

Based on the conducted study and workshops, several challenges in different departments were highlighted. Through empathy, the cause of the problem was traced and finally resolved. The two main problems in the manufacturing department were highlighted: attrition and confusion among the employees about work allocation and priority. There was one senior, and 60 subordinates reporting to him. This caused a lot of confusion among all employees as their work assignments kept changing on a day-to-day basis. The insight gained also pointed to increased attrition.

The teams also iterated upon various ideas—one being an example of ownership through multilevel network organization, i.e. the solution proposed was that 10 of the 60 employees be given a raise in salary and promotion. And each of the 10 was made accountable for the nine employees under them. Each of the 10 employees reported to the supervisor. On the one hand, the cost of attrition in this case was calculated in terms of the company's recruitment and training costs. On the other hand, the increased salary of the 10 employees was calculated. In the end, it was concluded that the cost of attrition was greater than the cost incurred due to the increment in salaries.

