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For information about the

MBA Dinner Series, contact

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Key Knowledge Points Developed

WHAT IS IT?

- *Design Thinking* is a framework applied to various problems in many different fields. Great design is not limited to visual design or to traditionally creative roles. Design is a tool used to solve problems; however, it is not always the best tool to use. It is a popular term in the business world right now – beware the buzzword!
- Design is not a clear process. It is a new way of thinking and a new or open way of questioning.
- Design is a mindset focused on empathizing with the person who will ultimately interact with the product, service, process, or company you are developing.
- Great design begins with a comprehensive understanding of the context of what you are designing.

WHO NEEDS IT?

- Many organizations operate every day in reactive mode or they are strapped for resources, and they simply do not have the long-term focus or vision for improving the status quo. These companies could greatly benefit from Design Thinking champions working or consulting for them.
- There are great opportunities to make positive changes and design innovations in more traditional and less tech-savvy industries. Government, healthcare, long-term care and education can all benefit from design thinking.
- The way we approach design is changing. Many of us have learned to design within antiquated constructs. These are due for reevaluation, with some being timeless and others requiring complete overhauls.

HOW TO USE IT?

- Richmond is a dynamic, growing city with a mix of cultures, perspectives, innovation, and creativity. Richmond MBAs can really flourish by bringing *Design Thinking* to life in an infinite number of projects that improve the community and its residents, and there is a supportive community of designers, academics and innovators available to help.
- When using *Design Thinking* to solve a problem, consider re-framing the question – Are you asking the right question?
- Ask “*Why?*” five times to get to the root of a question or problem and when encountering push back on innovative ideas. You may encounter that in order to implement or explore an innovative idea, it will be your responsibility and initiative to do so on your own time.
- Design new business ideas by thinking differently. Write things down that may never work together or take opposites and combine them and you might just invent the next *Frappuccino!*
- Design with a purpose. It is not necessary to redesign just for the sake of redesigning.
- The re-design process is a never-ending process. It is like a shark - the minute redesign stops is the day your company/product/process becomes obsolete.
- The worst thing a client can say to a designer is “don’t worry about the money.” Having less money can lead to more creativity.

BE CAUTIOUS!

- Some companies have pushed the practice of design too far without balance of implementation and action.
- Design thinking has become a very popular term in the business world; however, it is important to recognize that design thinking does not work for every business. Some businesses have created teams of designers that are not productive and simply expend money. Not all businesses need to change their model; however, if applied with the right idea and in the proper way it can be great.