

# Complex problem solving



The business world keeps changing at a fast pace. We see constant changes in the workplace as a result of emerging technologies. Organizations have to repeatedly change their business model to keep up with these changes and have to come up with new methodologies to tackle problems and create solutions. World Economic Forum predicted in one of its publications the top ten skills that will be needed the most in the Fourth Industrial Revolution by 2020.

Complex Problem Solving was listed at the top (World Economic Forum) With the continual change in the business environment and the way we work, more than half of the skills won't be considered important. Companies will look for problem-solving skills in its employees and the ones with the best ability to define problems and effectively find a solution for them will be the ones to thrive in the near future. Design Thinking has emerged as a discipline that focuses on the experience economy and finding solutions for the customer.

## **Adopting a Growth Mindset**

Design Thinking is about designing human-centric experiences and solutions. Looking at complex problems that are not necessarily evident to the naked eye by understanding the needs of the customers and employees. Only by having a clear understanding of who the customer is and their behavior, an organization can be able to provide a more valued and effective solution. We see this happening when a person, and the company they work with, shift from a fixed mindset to a growth mindset. They learn to adapt and change their old-fashioned, linear approach to problems and a way to solve them.

Reflecting and doing more research on the e-commerce, Wayfair, I can reaffirm the company is leading the industry through innovation by applying Design Thinking. They adopt a growth mindset and deeply understand the needs of their customers. Like most companies, they want to consider growth opportunities for the business. However, they have learned that with this fast-paced change in the way we work, they have to learn and adapt and be the ones to disrupt before they get disrupted. With this mindset, the company is more willing to accept uncertainties than its competitors.

### **Wayfair's Design Thinking Culture**

The company has made sure to incorporate Design Thinking into its culture. They started with little steps like an open-plan office. By having different teams together, communication became easier. They realize problems aren't necessarily to be solved by a specific department. By bringing different perspectives into a project, they were more likely to find hidden problems more easily. Wayfair also gives a huge amount of importance to its Customer Service team and encourage them to be involved with all the departments and vice versa.

They make customers the first priority and are constantly involving them in their research. They make sure they have a one-to-one experience with different customer demographics. To wonder about things, that may not seem like a problem at the moment, but that could eventually improve. Things like, why the customer didn't complete a purchase or why do they prefer retail shopping instead of online shopping. By understanding the type of consumer they have and their behavior they have managed to lead the industry through innovation.

From this way of thinking originated their newest added feature- Augmented Reality Camera. This feature enables customers to visualize how a furniture would look like in their house using their phone camera. It will show the real features (like height and lighting) of the item and the customer can see how it fits the house before purchasing. They came up with this idea when they were trying to understand why some customers were leaving items in their shopping cart but not completing the purchase. These customers all had problems visualizing how it would look like in their house or simply prefer shopping in a retail store to see the actual size of things. Wayfair's Product Innovation team quickly address this problem by disrupting the industry with the new technologies available in the market.

Wayfair is a good example of a company that follows the Design Thinking process to solve complex problems effectively. The company helps to understand that a shift in mindset from linear to one that embraces chaos and complex problems, and that is customer-centered, is crucial in the business world. With a Design Thinking mindset, they empathize with new situations and search for growth opportunities in the market. They also integrate new solutions into the business with well thought out and tested prototypes to make certain new products and services into business operations will be successful. By applying the Design Thinking process, they have been known to scale fast when necessary.