NEW HORIZON COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

The Department of Management Studies

Design Thinking Workshop Report

Event Title: Design Thinking Workshop
Target Audience: MBA 1st Year Students (A,B and C) 180
Date: 28th and 29th May 2025
Time: 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM
Venue: Tejas Seminar Hall and 301
Facilitator: Mr. Ramani Venkat

Introduction

The Design Thinking Workshop, which was conducted on May 28th and 29th, 2025, was a pivotal learning event organized for MBA first-year students. Held at the Tejas Seminar Hall, this two-day workshop was facilitated by Mr. Ramani Venkat, a seasoned expert in innovation management, creative problem-solving, and design-led strategies. The primary aim was to introduce students to the design thinking process, emphasizing a human-centered, iterative, and solution-based approach to tackling complex business challenges.

Design Thinking encourages understanding user needs, redefining problems, and creating innovative solutions. The workshop blended theory with hands-on experiences, enabling students to apply the Design Thinking framework in real-time scenarios.

Objectives and

Framework Workshop

Objectives

1. To introduce the principles and stages of Design Thinking.
2. To encourage empathy-driven problem-solving.
3. To develop students' ideation and prototyping skills.
4. To foster teamwork and collaborative innovation.

5. To provide exposure to real-life case studies and industry-relevant challenges.

Design Thinking Framework

- Empathize
- Define
- Ideate
- Prototype
- Test

The workshop methodology was built on experiential learning, collaborative engagement, and iterative solution development.

DAY 1

Overview - Activities in Detail Session 1:

Inauguration and Ice-Breaker

The event began with a welcome note from the faculty and an introduction to the resource person. Mr. Venkat initiated the "Marshmallow Challenge," where teams built the tallest freestanding structure using spaghetti, tape, strings, and marshmallows. This hands-on activity revealed insights into various aspects of collaboration, prototyping, and iterative development.

Introduction to Design Thinking

Students were introduced to the origins and evolution of Design Thinking. The five-phase model was explained through interactive visuals and case examples like:

- IDEO's shopping cart redesign
- Apple’s user-centered product innovation
- Airbnb's user journey transformation

Empathize and Define

Students worked in teams to interview each other acting as users with specific challenges. They developed empathy maps identifying users’ pain points, needs, and desires. They then created personas such as “Arun, the 72-year-old retired professor struggling with city mobility.”

Insight Presentations

Each group presented their defined problem statements using the "Point of View" and "How Might We" formats. Mr. Venkat emphasized reframing problems to unlock innovative opportunities.

Day 2 Overview - Activities in Detail

Session 5: Ideation Sprint

Students were guided through ideation techniques including:

- Brainstorming with Post-it notes
- SCAMPER (Substitute, Combine, Adapt, Modify, Put to another use, Eliminate, Reverse)
- Mind Mapping

They generated more than 30 ideas per team addressing urban mobility for the elderly. Ideas included: foldable ramps, AI-powered travel assistants, smart benches, and companion community apps.

Session 6: Prototyping and Feedback

Teams selected their most promising ideas and built low-fidelity prototypes using materials such as cardboard, strings, plastic cups, and markers. They presented prototypes to peers acting as target users to collect feedback and refine designs.

Examples:

- "EzyWalk" – a foldable, AI-powered smart cane for elderly navigation.
- "CareVan" – a community transport booking system with support alerts.
- "SafeStop" – a smart bus seat with height adjustment and emergency notification.

Session 7: Team Presentations

Final presentations were conducted with each team showcasing their journey from empathy to prototype. Judges evaluated based on innovation, empathy alignment, feasibility, and presentation.

Session 8: Closing and Certificate Distribution

Mr. Venkat gave closing remarks on integrating Design Thinking in Business Management. Participants received certificates, and a group photograph concluded the workshop.

Case Studies in Detail

1. Urban Mobility for the Elderly

Objective - To design safe, inclusive urban travel for elderly users.

Approach

- Interviews with senior citizens (role-play)
- Empathy maps and journey mapping
- Ideation and prototype of mobility aids, and digital interfaces

Key Ideas

- Companion apps with audio guides
- Wheelchair-accessible e-rickshaw aggregator
- Smart seating with auto-adjust sensors

2. Disaster Relief Innovation

Scenario: Designing a post-flood survival kit for remote communities.

Process

- Studying disaster relief logistics
- Understanding emotional stress of displaced families
- Ideating compact, waterproof survival kits

Solutions

- Solar-charged LED kits with medical supplies
- Modular food and water kits
- Emergency community radio in a box

3. Retail Inclusivity Redesign

Challenge

Create a shopping experience for differently abled individuals.

Tools Used: User journey map, persona, role-play

Proposed Solutions

- Voice-enabled kiosks
- Smart trolleys with motor support
- Navigation apps with indoor GPS

Page 6: Tools and Techniques Used

- **Empathy Maps**: Helped students identify feelings, thoughts, pain, and gains of users.
- **Personas**: Fictional characters representing real users enabled targeted design.
- **Customer Journey Mapping**: Mapped user steps, emotions, and touchpoints in a scenario.
- **Ideation Tools**: Brainstorming, SCAMPER, 6-3-5 brainwriting.
- **Prototyping Materials**: Paper, glue, scissors, markers, cardboard, mobile apps.
- **Feedback Mechanism**: "I Like, I Wish, What If" method during peer testing.

Page 7: Learning Outcomes

At the end of the workshop, students were equipped with:

- Understanding and applying design thinking phases
- Skills to conduct empathetic user interviews
- Ability to visualize user journeys and identify pain points
- Creative thinking for ideation and structured problem-solving
- Rapid prototyping and iterative testing competence
- Presentation and storytelling through design artifacts

This experiential workshop helped bridge theoretical learning with real-world application.

Page 8: Student Reflections and

Feedback Reflective Quotes

- "Empathy changed how I define problems."
- "It was an eye-opener on how to innovate without coding."
- "I learned how to think beyond obvious solutions."

Group Outcomes and Follow-Up Actions

Team Outcomes

- 7 functional low-fidelity prototypes developed
- 3 ideas shortlisted for further development in the innovation lab
- 2 student groups expressed interest in incubating their ideas

Futuristic Steps

- Creating a Design Thinking Club
- Hosting monthly innovation sprints
- Integrating DT projects into summer internships

Conclusion and Acknowledgements

Conclusion: The two-day Design Thinking Workshop proved to be a transformational experience for MBA students. It empowered them to tackle ambiguity, engage users empathetically, and innovate through iteration. The exposure to practical tools, real-world challenges, and teamwork created a lasting impact. The event concluded with **certificate distribution**, followed by a vote of thanks from the faculty coordinators, appreciating the efforts of students, facilitators, and organizers in making the workshop a grand success.


Team 1
Vegetarian
Men
Less than 10 k per
month
Are 31- 40
Industrial Are

Faculty Coordinator
Prof. Ankita N. Jeewankar
Sr. Assistant Professor
The Department of Management Studies

Convenor
Dr. Rose Kavitha
Professor and HoD
The Department of Management Studies