Design Conversations

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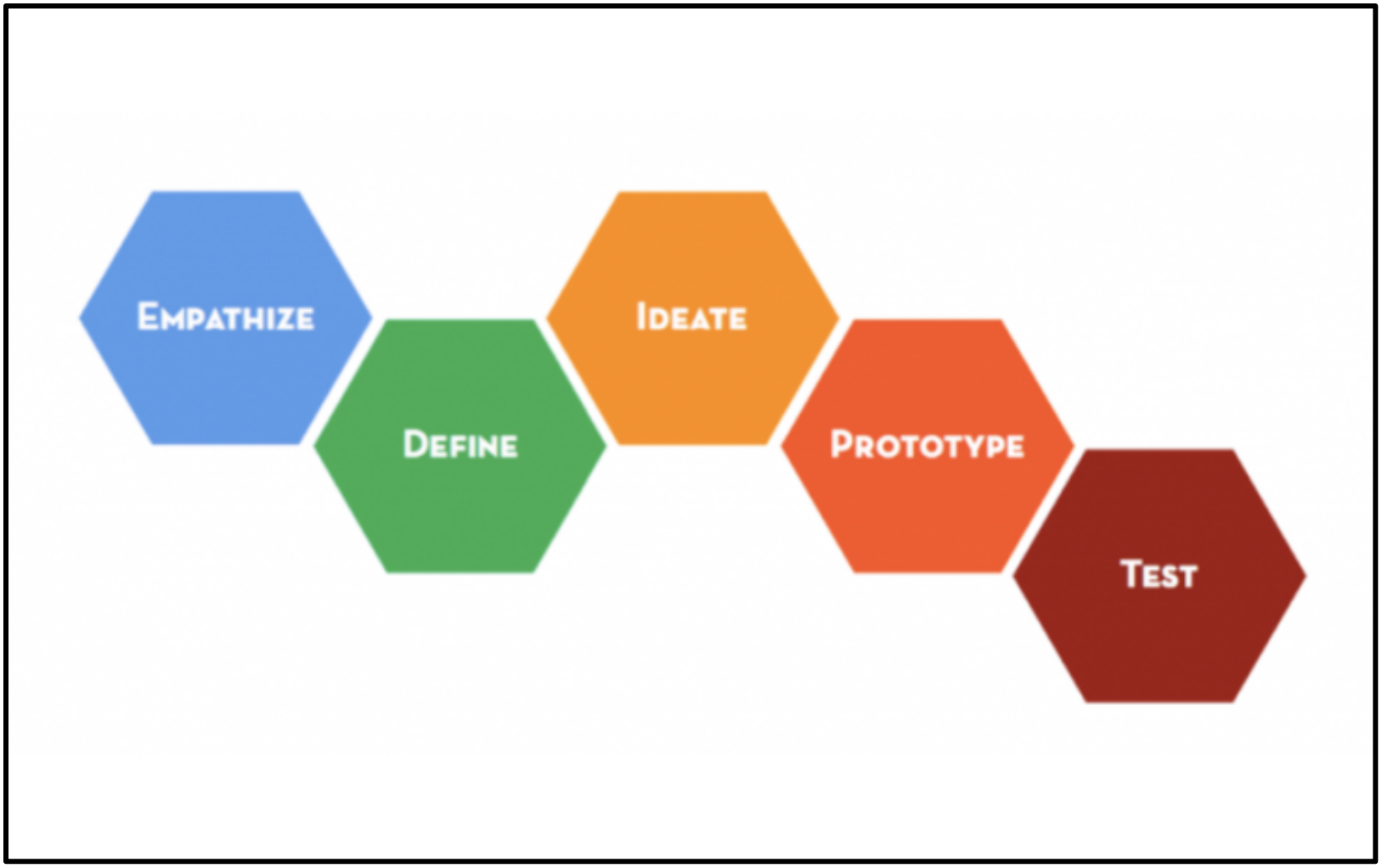
design

Better designs for African cellphone users

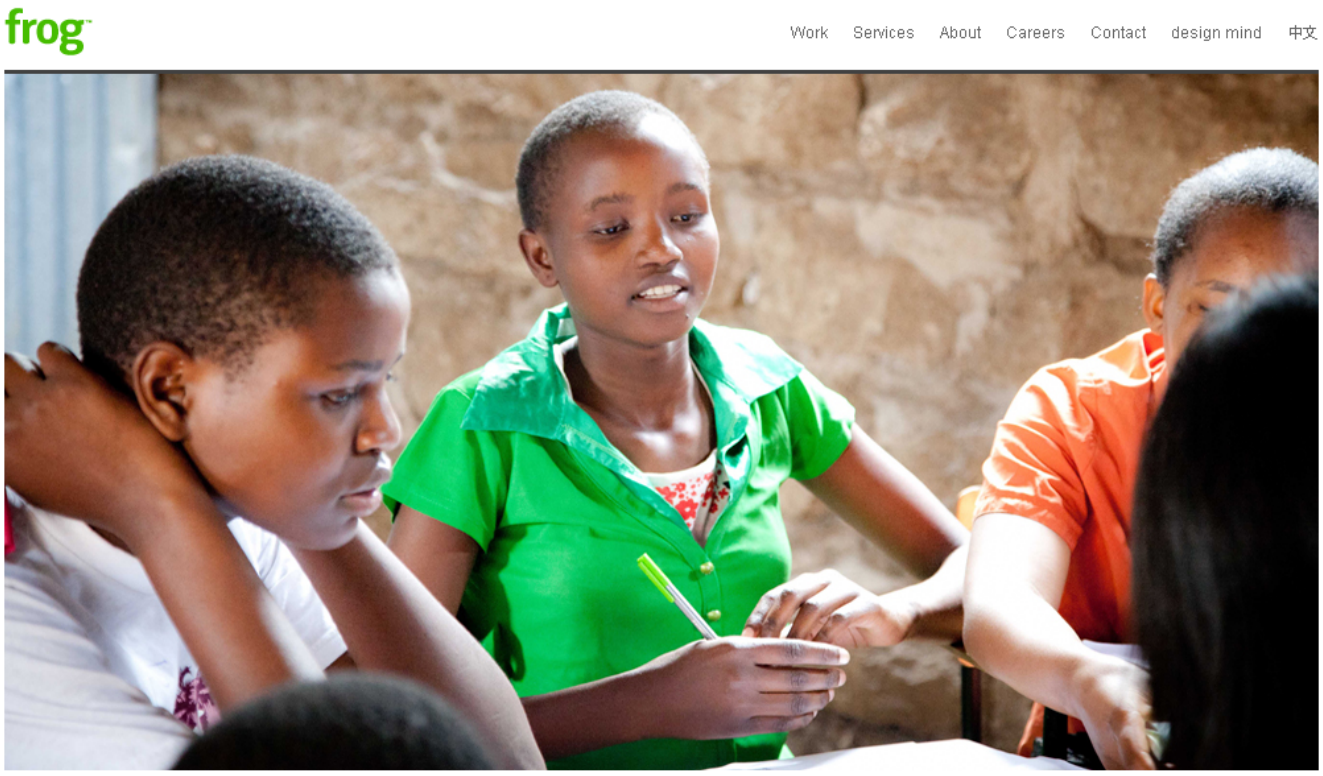
NOT

BUT THIS

Stanford d. (Design) School



Girl Effect + Frog Design =



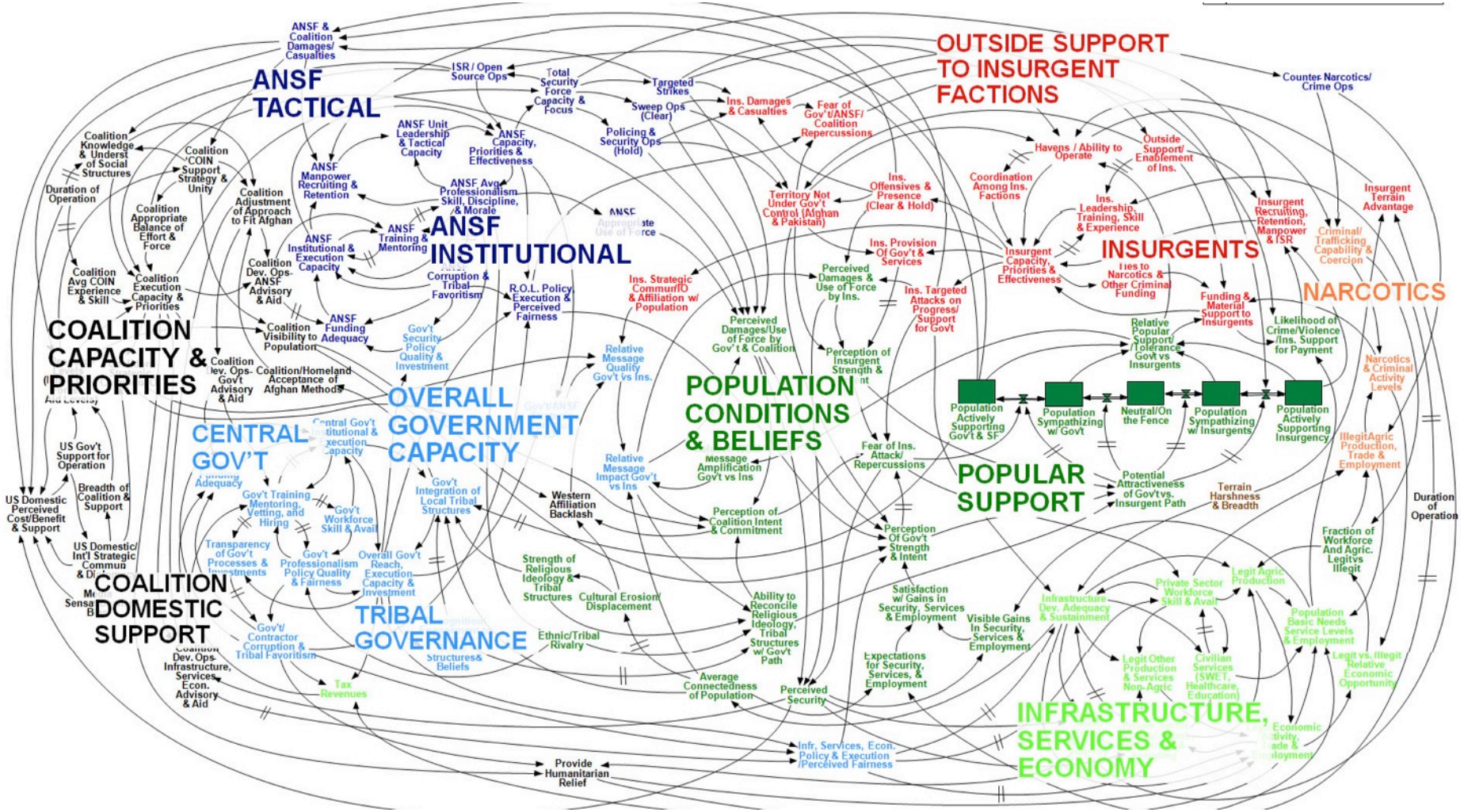
Design thinking @ Tulane

+

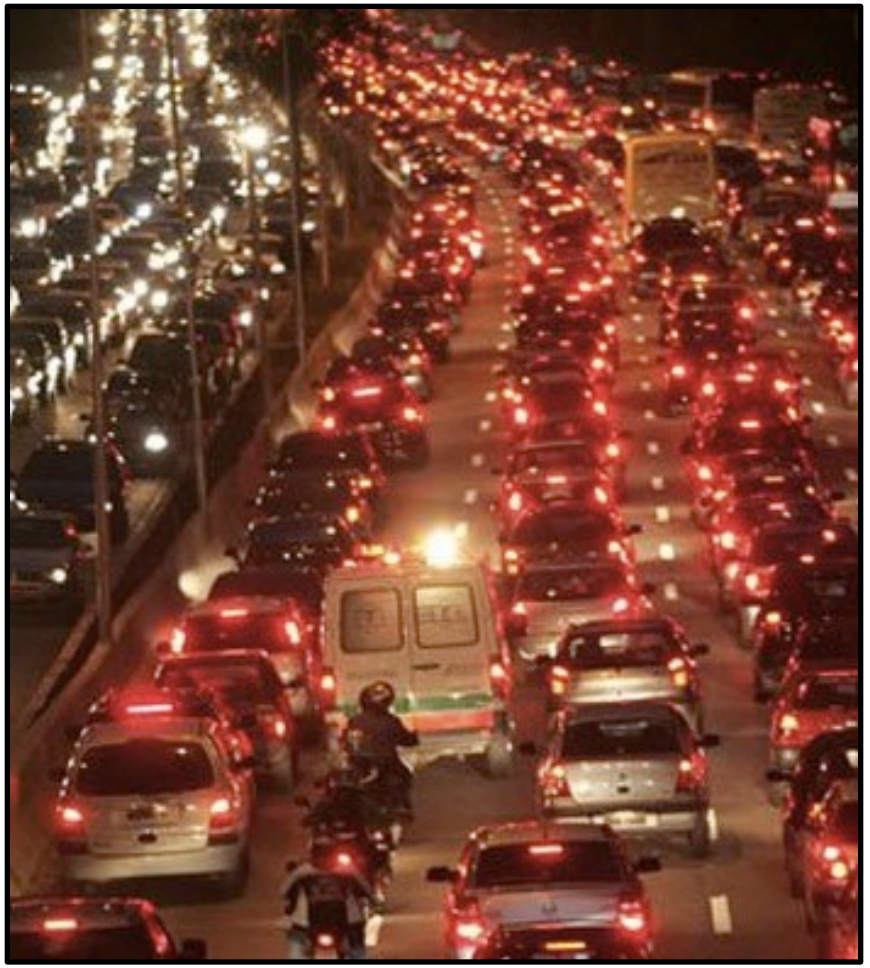
?

Why design <u>conversations</u>?

= wicked problems!



to address urban issues



conversations about designs

Poorly designed conversations

Confused signals

No learning

real conversations

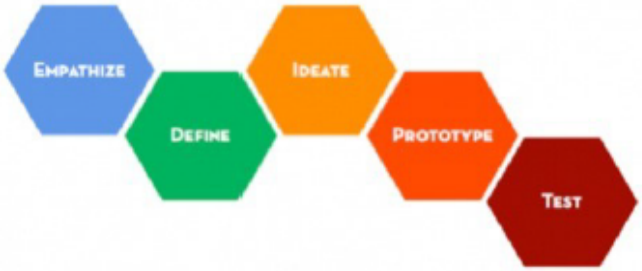
Channel

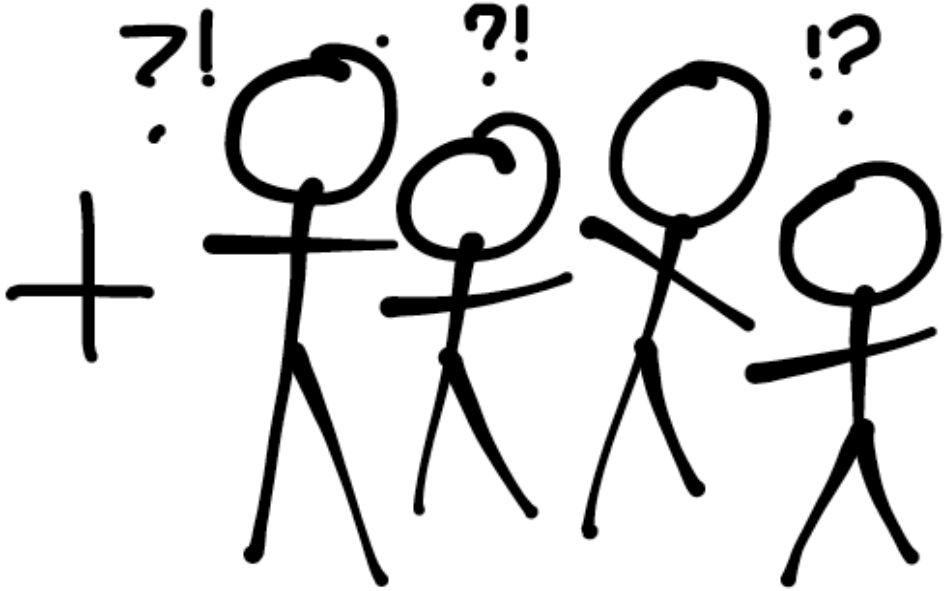
Engagement

Construct meaning

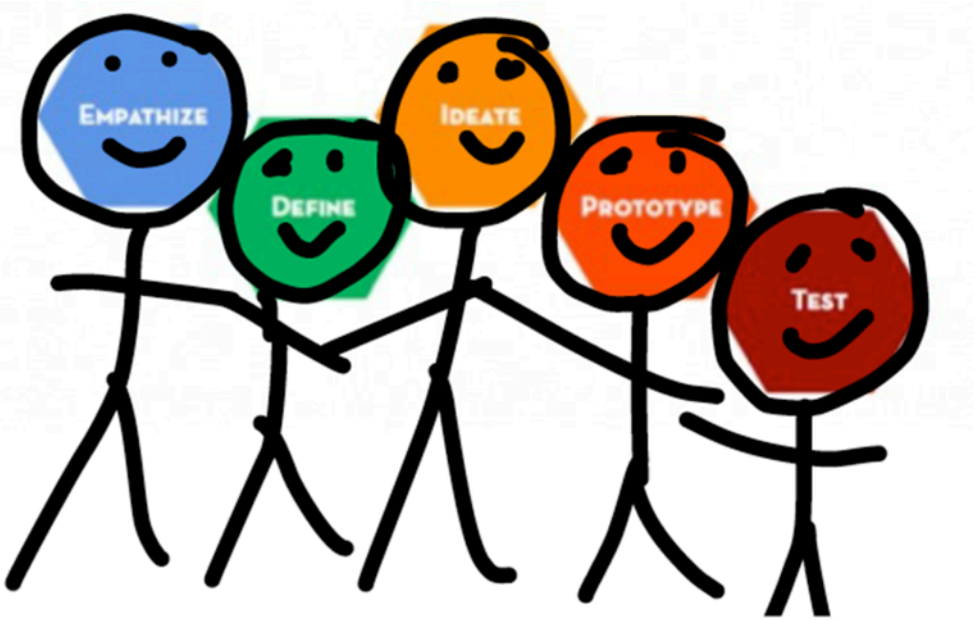
Learn

design thinking + conversation





“better conversations to deliver better designs”



1. Convene
2. Exchange
3. Give

1. convene

Gather diverse people

in a comfortable and interesting place

with refreshments

Campus or community

2. exchange

Real conversations about
real matters

Do disasters better?

Find better leaders?

questions I have heard lately

What's for supper, and why?

Do Tom's Shoes really promote kids going to school?

Does your degree define your life?

Do we need plasma TV screens in all our restaurants?

How can we enjoy Mardi Gras without trashing our city?

3. Give

Give it away

Pitch!

PROPELLOR NOLA

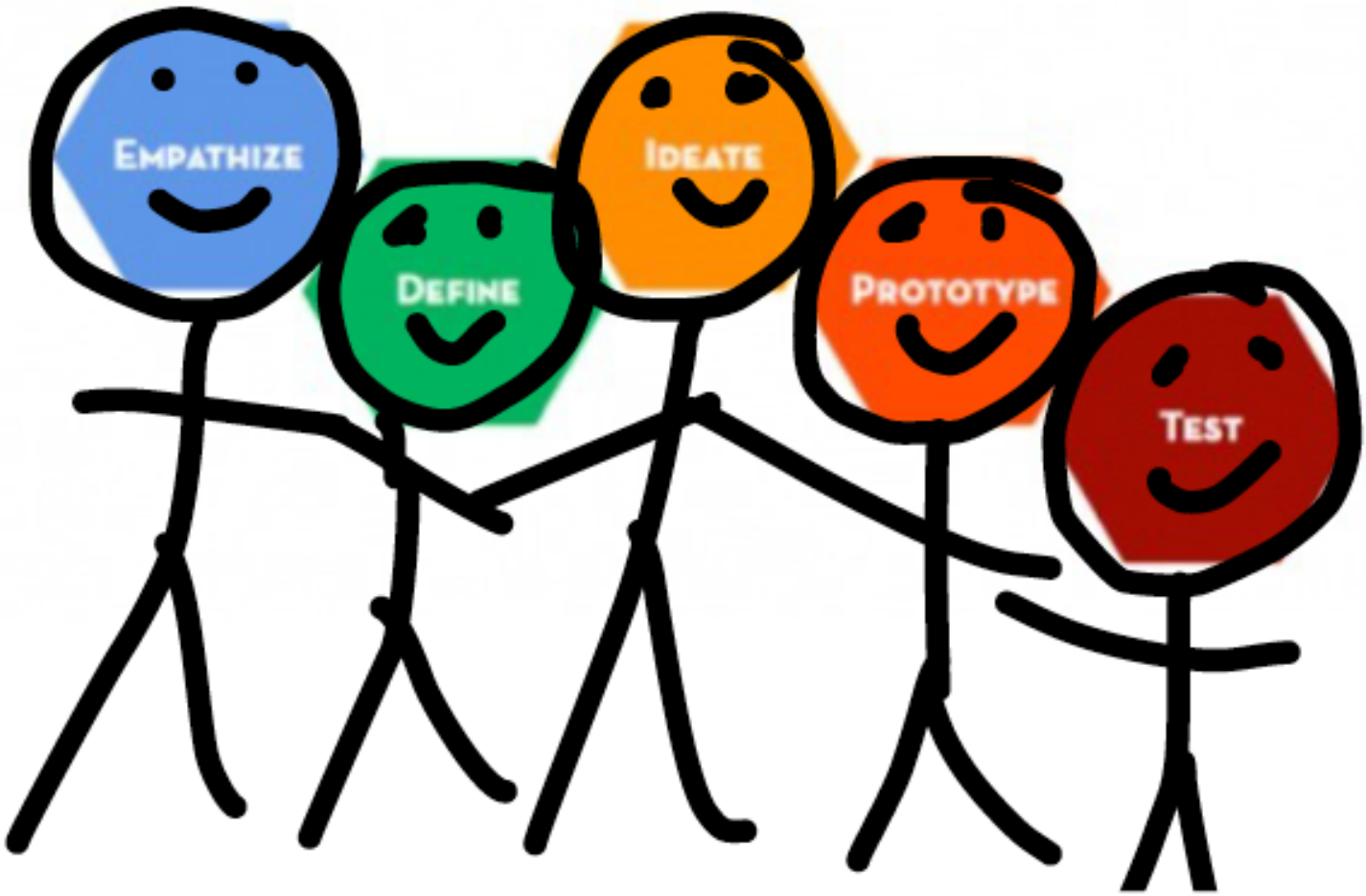
Ashoka.org

Inspire!

ideagroups

Why?

Design Conversations^{CC}



Because design thinking is not enough

Thank you!

Babson College Faculty Forum on the Future of Social Innovation, Middlebury College Social Innovation and Liberal Arts, Ashoka U 2011 Exchange Event, Ideagroups, Tulane SISE team, City Center, UrbanBuild, RUCEBO (Bungoma, Kenya), FlipFlopRecycling Company (Nairobi, Kenya), LABB, LifeCity, GrowDat Youth Farm, Andrea Chen/ Propellor, Dave Cressy, Susan Wyche (MSU) plus

Many many students!

Notes for Laura Murphy's talk on "Design Conversations" at TEDxTU 2012
October 25, 2012
Dixon Auditorium, Tulane Campus, New Orleans
These notes correspond to the slides and are pretty close to the live five minute talk.

1--What if we could ignite great conversations AND tackle financial exclusion, deforestation, homelessness ? … What if through better talk, we can find better leaders -- right here? … So, we need to transform universities, reinvent the college: how do we do that? I propose a new approach to **generating better conversations to deliver better designs for complex problems**. My idea for "Design Conversations" links "design thinking" & "conversations"
This can work on campus, in the city, and in the world.

2 --Designers create beautiful, functional, affordable products and services that make our lives better …

3 --Design-thinking brings this creative, intentional process to address social problems…. I have been helping Kenyan women to help them gain access to better phone-charging solutions. Ddesign thinkers helped generate the good designs (on the right) that "work" for users. They are functional, durable, safe, affordable, and fixable.

4--Stanford's institute of Design--the"D.School"--freely shares their design thinking "bootcamp" toolkit which follows this process:
"**Empathize** with the user—observe, immerse yourself & investigate their reality
Define a meaningful and specific challenge
Ideate –generate radical ideas —
Prototype the a few ideas, early on, try it out
Test"—refine and improve your solution

5--Girl Effect Partnered with Frog Design to → CODESIGN with young girls in Kenya …. An empowering process to create new digital experiences

6--Design-thinking is coming to Tulane. Byron Mouton and I will teach a course this spring for the social innovation program. We'll bring 'd-school' techniques to campus to tackle local problems. So… I am excited about this!!
We'll seek new solutions to age-old problems here and around the world:
But I do wonder… Can "creative types" do what generations of development experts, Peace Corps Volunteers, and grassroots activists , and Tulane graduates have not done yet? ??

7--Perhaps…. Design-thinking is not enough! We need better designed conversations to generate the innovative ideas we need to address "wicked problems" ---Problems that lack obvious technical solutions. Problems that involve social, economic, environmental and value dimensions, like how we measure success!

8--These are "Wicked problems" . Like the the Afghan insurgency, whose interconnections look like messy, complicated spaghetti diagrams printed in the NYTimes several years ago.

9--Urban problems of providing food, energy, water, transport … and waste management for billions of urban dwellers

10-- So I've had lots of conversations over the years about designs… designs for research, food systems, about cellphones .. and with students, colleagues, community partners . I have realized that design-thinking techniques …

11-can help us avoid poor, badly design conversations. Where language and poor signals (Fingers pointing!) mean there is no learning.

12--What we want are real conversations with engaged and willing participants, who communicate in a co-learning process. It can be with

yourself--if you are listening! —or between groups . But most often it is with a small group of individuals.

13--Let's put design thinking's intentional, creative toolkits together with real conversations …

14--to generate better conversations to deliver better designs for big messy problems. There are three steps: Convene, Exchange, Deliver.

15--First, Convene a diverse group of open-minded people From different walks of life or disciplines Into a neutral, or Provocative space – a seminar room but not a class; around a dinner table -- without the TV. Over the compost pile at the Grow Dat Youth Farm. Disconnect --Turn off digital devices! Order some local food!

16--You'll want to have a conversation, not hold a meeting or lecture. Prepare, bring your tools – post-its, etc. BUT expect the unexpected. Live with ambiguity. Learn change your mind. Figure out what you care about.

17-- Ignite a conversation about an important topic. On a Loyola Avenue (NOLA) bus stop, a sign shows "Bourbon Street" under water .The caption says– "sea level rise + wetland loss + … Let's 'Fix it'"!!

18--Kenyans are having conversations around leadership and vision in an age of epic corruption. This is one billboard among many asking—what will Kenya look like in 2030?

19—Here are a few questions I've heard lately around campus …What's for Supper and why? Do "Tom's Shoes" really work …? What should I major in?

20--The third piece. You are Learning from others. Be generous & Share the ideas –If they are really good, you really want people to act on them & Find people to journey with

21—So: pitch it at Propellor's local PITCH event. Post it on the Changemakers site of Ashoka for the world to see.

22--Build a community through Designed spaces for conversations like Ideagroups on campus and seminars with community partners, such as LifeCity with the Chamber of Commerce on sustainability

23--Why?!
First: We don't always know what **the problem** is….
We can jump too soon to solving it with the "hammer" of our discipline. Talking can help us figure out what the problem is. For example -- Who knew where cellphone conversations would lead North Africa? Where might the chats about food access take us in the Lower Ninth?
Second-- Not everyone can go to design school or hire design teams. Let's have more "DoItYourself" design-thinking.
Third, designed conversations about real issues can re-engage our humanity and create smaller, meaningful communities

24--So "Design conversations, because Design Thinking is Not Enough"
It's happening in New York & Nairobi, Oakland and New Orleans and on Tulane's campus. You might not feel ready to pitch an idea. But I invite you to ignite a new conversation!

25--Thank you!