COOPER HEWITT

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Smithsonian Design Museum

COOPER HEWITT DESIGN PROCESS

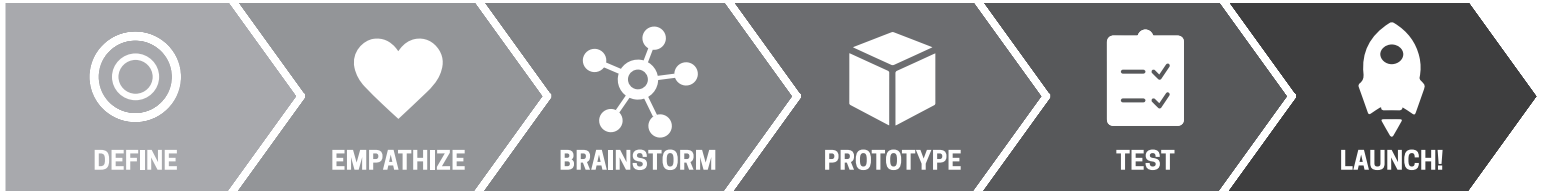| DEFINE | EMPATHIZE | BRAINSTORM | PROTOTYPE | TEST | LAUNCH! |

1 DEFINE

Designers often begin defining the problem by mapping out any constraints or needs of the user and asking "how might we?" questions. Designers may also start to gather and analyze information through research, such as interviewing, observing, and documenting.

2 EMPATHIZE

Empathy is the ability to understand what another person is feeling or experiencing without taking on that emotion as one's own, and is the centerpiece of the design process. By empathizing with users, designers can develop ideas that better meet the needs of their intended audience. In addition to helping define the problem, research can help designers learn more about their users.

3 BRAINSTORM

There are many ways to get ideas and brainstorm, including making lists, creating mash-ups, and looking at similar design solutions.

TIPS
· Encourage wild ideas
· Defer judgment
· Write everything down
· Go for quantity

4 PROTOTYPE

Prototypes allow designers to bring their ideas to life, share their designs with others, and see what works. Prototypes do not have to be miniature models of something, they can also be sketches, skits demonstrating the user experience, diagrams, lesson plans, etc.

TIPS
· Build to think
· Fail early to succeed sooner
· Don't fall in love with your idea
· If a prototype fails, are there elements you could still use?

5 TEST

Designers test their prototypes with users and interview them about what works and what doesn't. After gathering feedback, designers work on improving their prototype.

6 LAUNCH

After testing and improving prototypes, designers develop a solution that they are ready to launch into the world.