



MAKHletter

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No.3 October 2021

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Quote Of The Month

“Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.”

Henry Ford

What's New On Design Thinking?

Redefining The Problem: A Compass For Finding The Way Through Design Thinking

By: Kosar Moghanian

“The first step toward a great answer is to reframe the question,” says Tom Kelly in his book *Creative Confidence*. Lack of understanding of the customer needs and consequently, the wrong definition of the problem is one of the organizational weaknesses that affect the entire organization. One of the main tasks of organizations is to question the existing problem to achieve a proper definition of the problem and empathize with the target group (user and customer) in different ways. The famous phrase “Half of the answer lies in the question” also applies here. The first step to a suitable solution, an efficient idea, and a good strategy is to know the problem properly. Many organizations lose the chance to succeed by focusing on an issue that has not been properly identified in all its aspects, or by using the empathy stage outputs directly for ideation.

Before diving deeper into the Define phase of design thinking, let's talk a little bit about identifying the customer needs and its effect on redefining the problem.

Correctly identifying the customer's needs is a fundamental step in the Define phase

A key to achieving a good strategy in a competitive and ever-changing business world is adapting to changing market demand and the current trends. This adaptability can be achieved if the customer needs have been properly identified. Investigating customer needs results in their satisfaction and loyalty. This is a simple deal: If the organization is reckless about the customer needs or fails to meet them, the customer will choose another organization! Now imagine that an organization, instead of searching to identify customer needs, settles for its assumptions or launches a product or service based on the organization's internal goals. The result is clear! A product or service that fails to meet customer needs will quickly lose its position in the market.

But because most organizations have biases about customer needs, it is not easy to grasp the right perspective. Many times, even despite studying the market, the customer needs are not properly identified; This is mostly a result of asking wrong questions in market studies. If the questions are based on organization's assumptions and are biased, the outcome will not be a clear overview of the problem.

How design thinking redefines the problem

Design thinking helps organizations reach a correct definition of the problem. Challenging and questioning assumptions is one of the basic principles of the design thinking process to get a broader perspective on the problem. Eliminating the assumptions helps the organization to create a clear view of customer needs. This clear view addresses the basics of the problem more than anything else, leaving aside all presuppositions that have no valid reasoning.

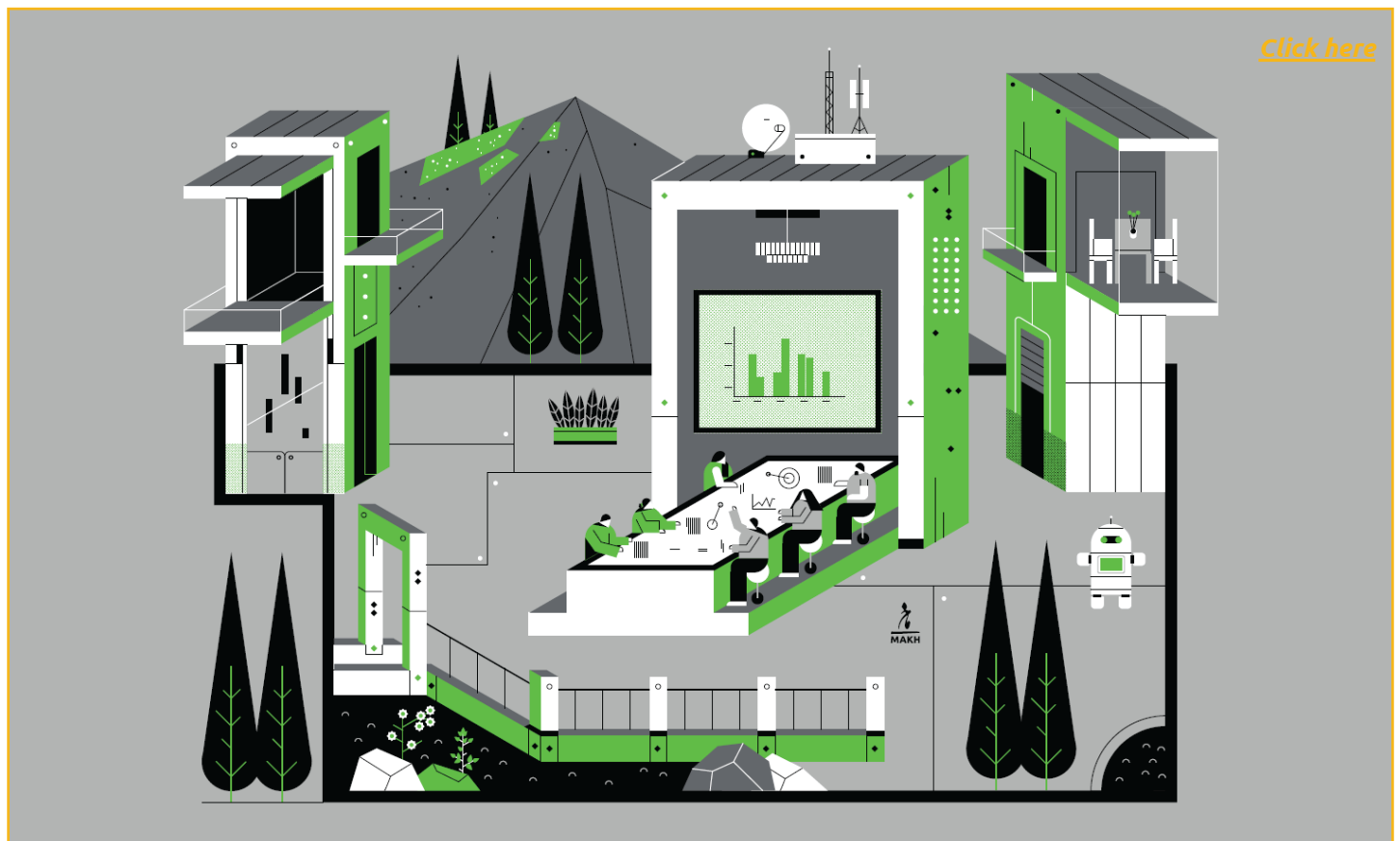
Consider a shoe factory that has faced many customers complaining about uncomfortable shoes. A majority of customers have reported backache and foot injuries as a result of wearing these shoes. If this company does not redefine the problem and doesn't search for the core issue, it will probably end up redesigning the shoes.

But what if they redefine the problem and come to the conclusion that the reason why shoes are uncomfortable is inappropriate usage. If a customer wears party shoes to work, pain and injuries are not so surprising!

In such circumstances, the real issue is the inappropriate brand awareness and marketing; Not the design of the shoes. So an ideal solution could be designing a clear product ID.

This is where the importance of redefining the problem appears to us. This stage of design thinking is a convergent process that uses unprocessed empathy-stage data to get to the root of the problem.

In "Change by Design: How Design Thinking Transforms Organizations and Inspires Innovation," Tim Brown emphasizes that asking "why?" instead of "What?" is a basic principle in design thinking.



Organizations focus on “what to offer to the market” and ignore “why” they have to offer something to the market. This is a major organizational error that leads to failure at meeting the customer needs.

Asking “why” gives the organization a great opportunity to properly identify challenges, redefine constraints, and come up with innovative solutions. Instead of accepting assumptions, ask, “Is this the main issue?”. Do people need faster cars? Or are better transportation systems their real need? Do people need TVs with more features or more high-quality TV shows?

It may seem annoying for organizations to emphasize on “why” at first. But this path ultimately causes the organization to spend energy, time, and money for properly solving a problem and addressing a real need.

There is nothing more frustrating than getting a “right answer” to a “wrong question”. Defining the problem correctly and identifying the real need is a fundamental step in developing a business strategy and coming up with good solutions and ideas.

In the Define phase, the organization often encounters an issue that the user has never mentioned before. Most of the time, what users say is just an unpleasant event and not the core reasons. The organization must find out the causes of the unpleasant events.

5 Whys: A shortcut to the real problem

Consider a mineral water factory that receives numerous reports of slippery bottles. If the factory comes up with an idea and a solution without redefining the problem, it would probably change the form of the bottle to make it easier to grab. While the reason for the bottle slipping may be something else: the bottle is wet!

If the factory solves the problem without redefining it, after spending a lot of time and money, it will realize that the proposed solution has not solved the real problem. The “5 whys” technique prevents this:

Primary problem: Our sales are down.

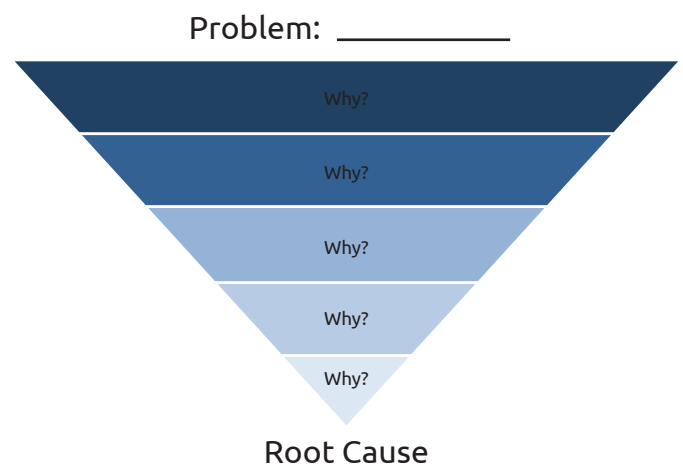
Why? Because customers are dissatisfied.

Why? Because the bottles slip.

Why? Because the bottle is wet.

Why? Because the bottle cap doesn't fit.

Why? Because factory injection machines are old and have low accuracy.



To save time, many organizations use the vast data obtained from the empathy phase directly for ideation. As we saw in the example above, this huge error will mislead the organization.

Correctly defining the problem is the second step in the design thinking process. Analyzing the divergent outputs of the empathy phase and turning them into the right problem definition is a vital step for businesses to succeed and achieve a winning strategy. Many organizations think that redefining the issue is a waste of time and an unnecessary action. While the difference between top-notch organizations and failed organizations is determined by these clever actions!

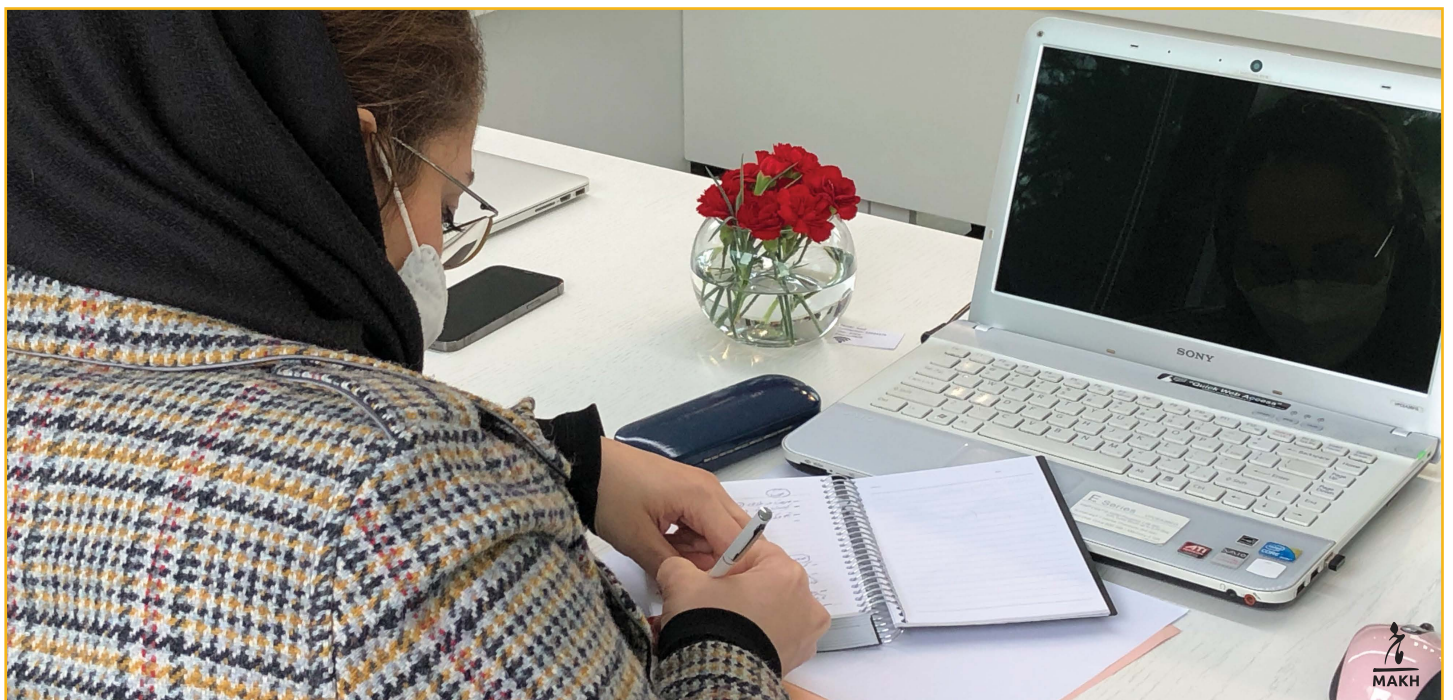
Turning A New Idea into A Business

Written by: Maedeh Mehraein

Probably it may have occurred to you that the idea of starting a business has been on your mind for a long time, but how exactly do you

transfer your idea scribbled on a napkin into a full sustainable company? Many businesses before you have taken a unique path, some have succeeded, and some have failed. But do not forget that to succeed, every business must go its own unique way. However, there are some fundamental steps that every new entrepreneur can take to get their idea in motion.

Every business is shaped by a “why” to solve a problem. Now it’s your turn to think: what problem is your idea supposed to solve? Many businesses claim to have solutions, but what specific problem are they really eliminating? Amazon, for instance, solved how e-commerce was, at one time, expensive and inconvenient. Today, it has more customers (and sales) than its brick-and-mortar competition. All successful companies, products, or services enhance the lives of their customers by eliminating a problem. Take these steps to turn your idea into a functioning business.



1. Identifying the customer

Identify your ideal customer. This is the first step in figuring out which category of customers, your idea fits exactly. Your customers may have different habits, behaviors and needs, but they have the same problem that you are going to solve.

2. Finding a support

You need support. "Have you ever noticed how few successful startups were founded by just one person?" Having business partners has several benefits, especially when you're first starting out.

3. A proper financial model tailored to your product/service

Since you have your market research done, now you must figure out if it's financially viable. Create a "bottom-up" financial model that focuses on how your product or service is created, marketed, and sold to an individual user

4. Build MVP

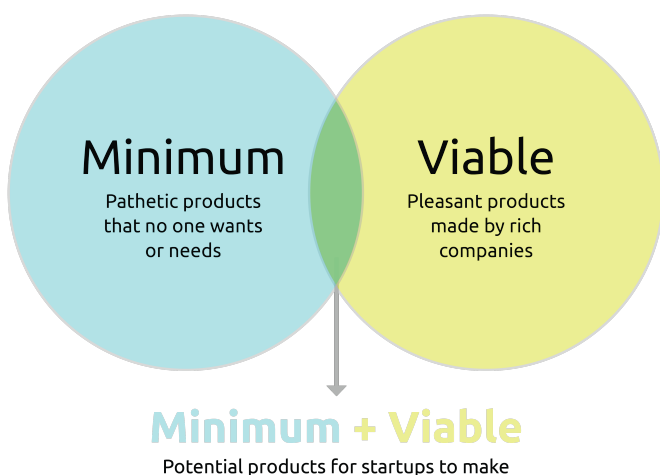
Now it's time to build an MVP. The MVP, or minimal viable product, provides you with the feedback you need from your real customers before putting your idea on the market and build a product they like.

Minimal does not necessarily mean "basic." The point is not to build a minimal product, but a product that is already great (viable), yet has room to improve (minimal).

5. Find the pivot

The information gathered from the previous step will help you understand what factors play an important role in turning an idea into a sustainable business and which of your audience's questions you answered. You might find that their feedback is entirely different than what you expected and planned for. Some businesses face challenges or opportunities in their development path to overcome them, they may have to make changes in different areas of their business. This change is called pivot. Pivot occurs when a startup changes its strategies. In fact, a business is trying to succeed in another way.

To read the full article, [click here](#)



MAKH Architecture

Roshanai Project

Roshanai House

Location: Tehran ,Iran

Architecture Firm: MAKH Design Studio

Architect: Majid Ahmadi Khoshbakht

Design Team: Neda Estiri, Saba Kamali,
Ali Ahmadi Khoshbakht

Date: 2018

Built area: 440 sqm

Type: Residential, Renovation

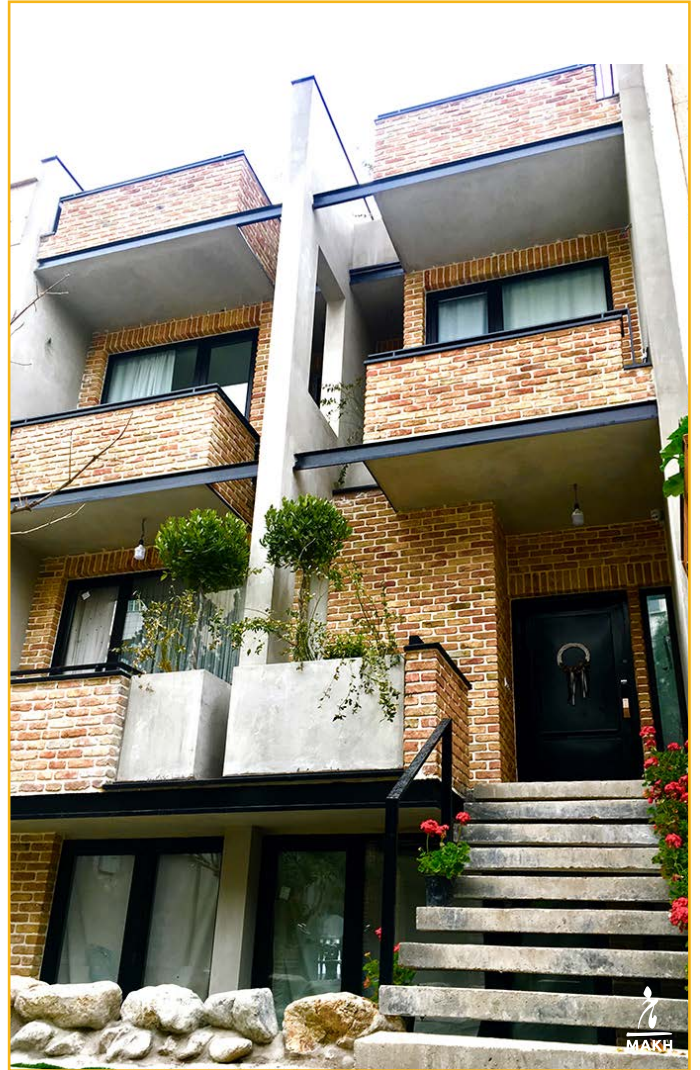
Structure: Ali Abdolbaghi

Electrical: Reza Karimi

Materials: Brick, Concrete

Construction: Makh Design Studio

Client: Mr.Roshanai



The 50 years old house rebuild by some materials that remained during the destruction process and reused in the facade as brick and stones.

Saving materials in this way is a kind of sustainable approach.

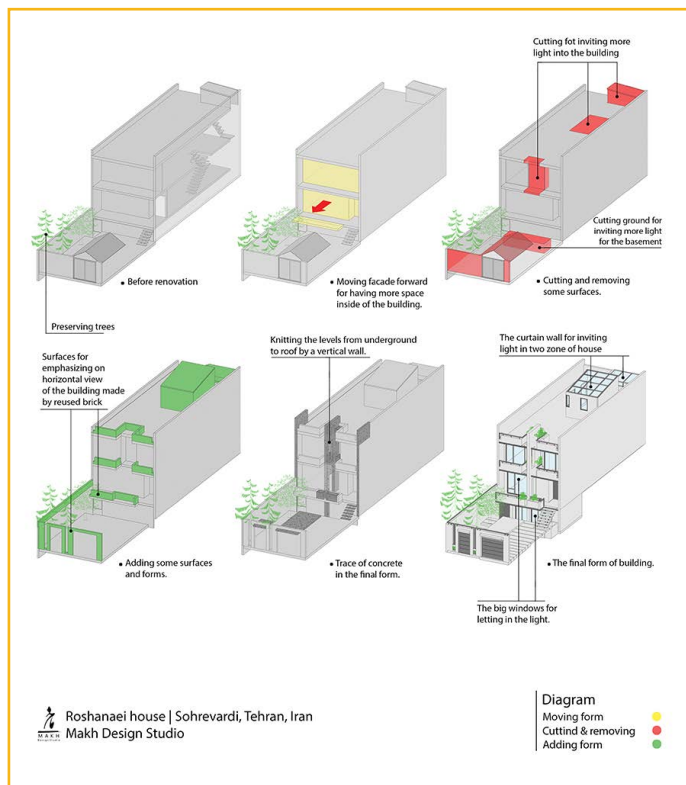
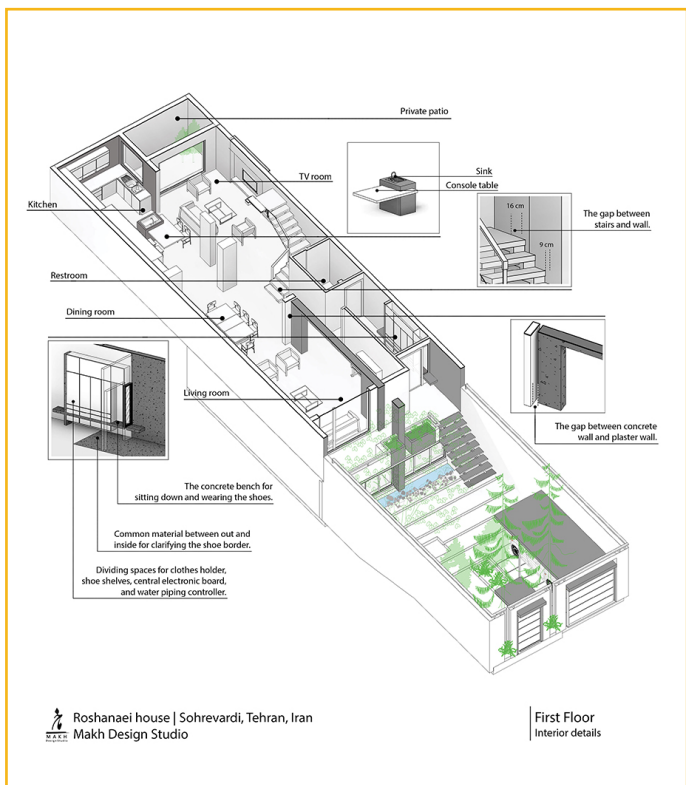
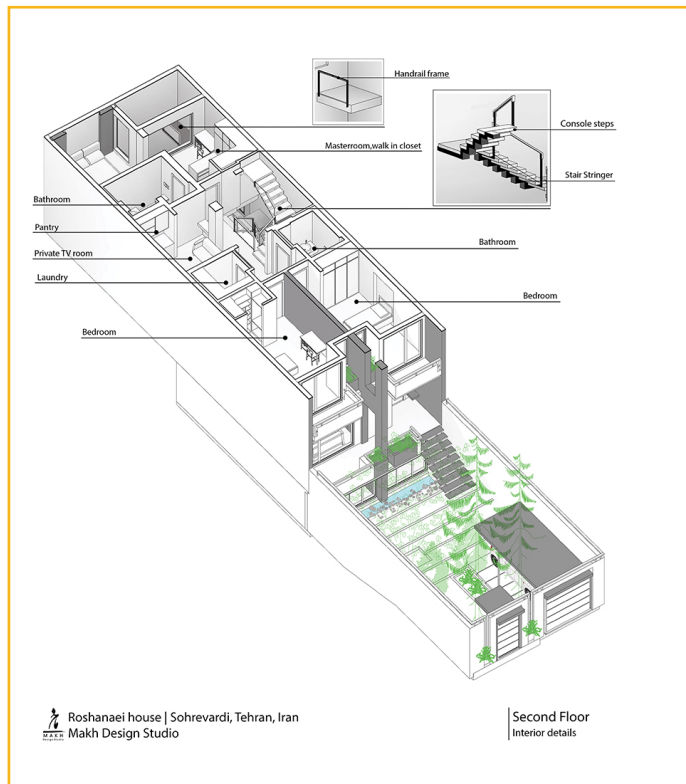
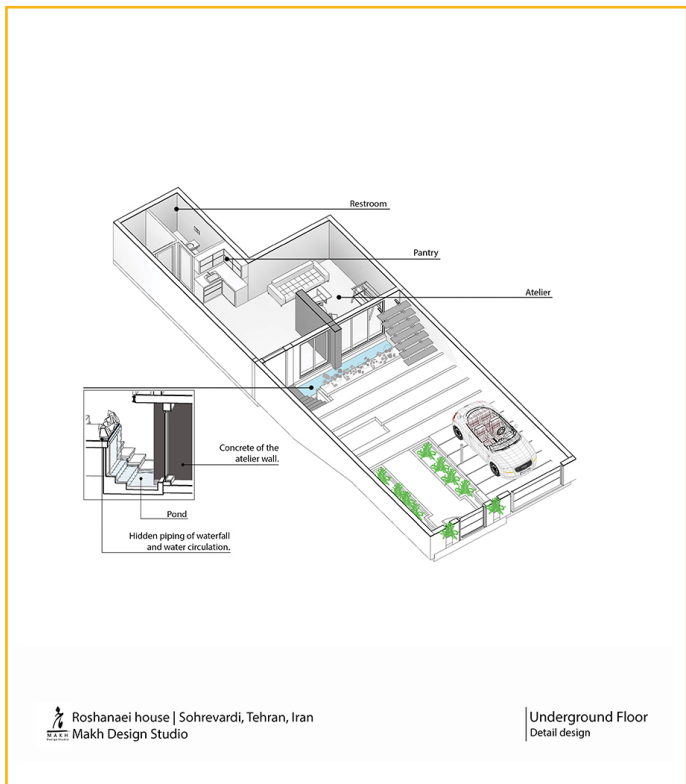
As can be seen, the concrete wall comes from the outside to in, and we can see the trace of it in the Interior design.

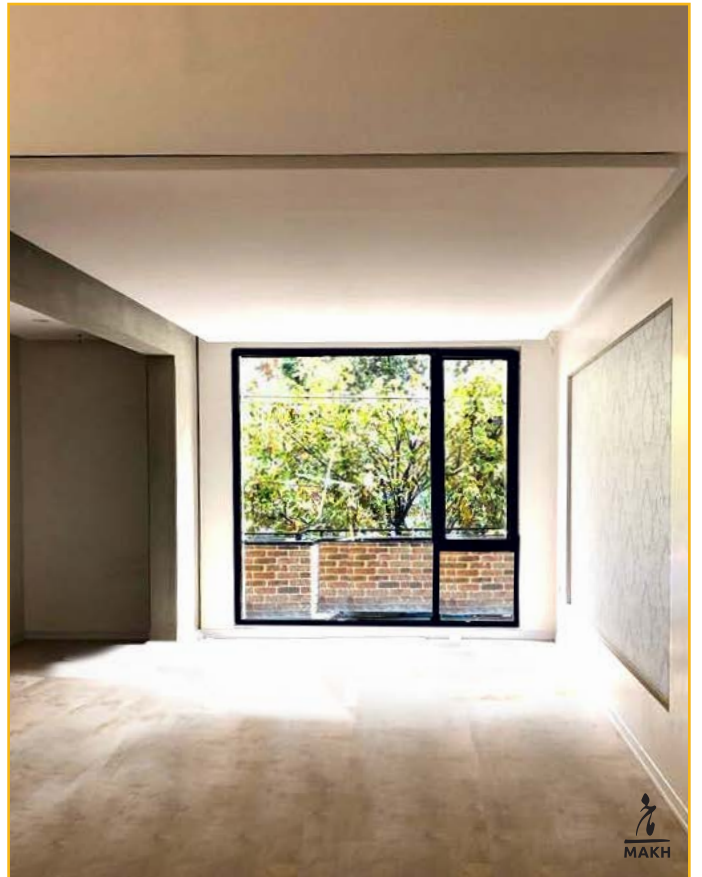
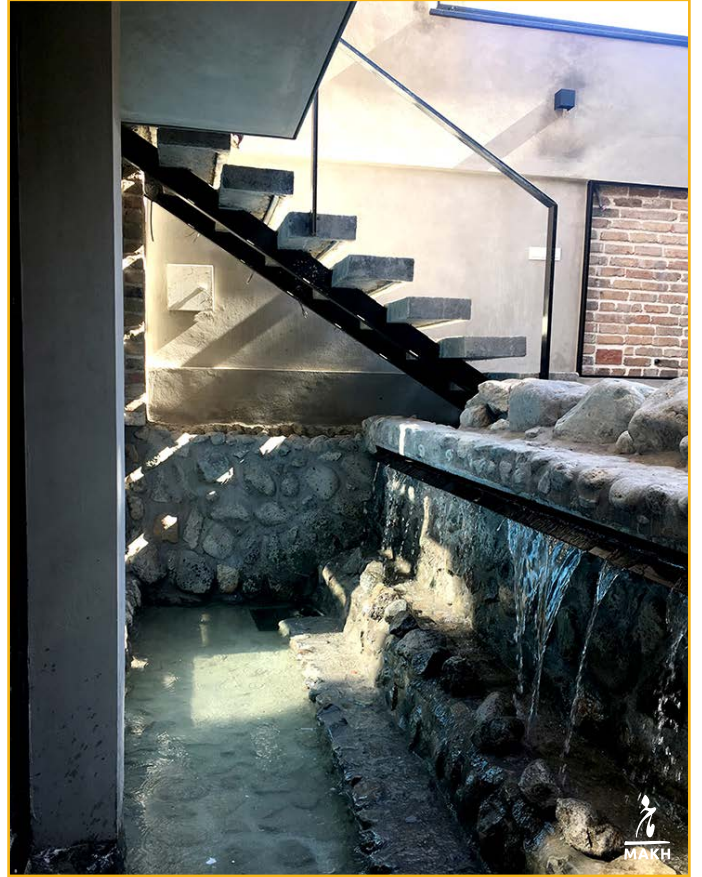
Inviting more natural light inside the house and spreading light in a different zone make the main concept of design.

Above the stairway, you can see the sky, and base on the design of the stairs combination of shadow and light is eye-catching.

All in all, the subtle gap between the stairs and walls let pass the more light in down levels.







MAKH Business

How Can Organizations Adapt Themselves to Effectively Applying Design Thinking?

Project at Yaks Co

This question occurs to many design thinkers and business owners. If we consider the organizational structure as a pyramid, at the top of the pyramid are managers, and at the bottom are employees and workforce at the operational level.

The presence of design thinking at the strategic levels of an organization has a long-lasting and significant impact. It affects the main structure and different layers and sections of the organization as a way of thinking and culture. Design thinking at the macro level of an organization is mainly about changing the culture, strategy, and leadership in that system. This is a path that requires the patience and support of all members of the organization.

Before implementing design thinking: What should be done in the organization to prepare the infrastructures for applying design thinking?

First, we at MAKH identified important aspects that influence design thinking, such as culture, strategy, and leadership model.

Each of these items plays an important role in the organizational structure. The three main aspects that must be prepared before implementing design thinking are:

1) Culture: Organizational culture is about relationships, community, and the Dos and Don'ts within the organization.

2) Strategy: Strategy is the main structure of the executive level of an organization that expresses the direction of growth and development of the organization.

3) Leadership: Leadership indicates the members responsible for leading the organization, employees, and strategy.



Aligning organizational culture with design thinking:

To prepare the organizational culture for implementing design thinking, the following sections should be addressed:

- Relationships based on the organizational pyramid
- Teamwork
- Supporting each other and caring
- Discipline and regularity
- Change management and change acceptance
- Targeting and foresight
- Playful atmosphere
- Authority
- Learning and creativity

Aligning strategy with design thinking:

For the strategy which is decided by the senior managers of the organization, the following sections are addressed:

- The core values of the organization
- Vision
- Short-term and long-term goals
- The main power of the organization

Within this part, branding and marketing are examined:

- Brand book
- Marketing strategy document



Aligning leadership with design thinking:

Design thinking is a method in which “management” is replaced with “leadership”. Leaders are so much into the future, and their passion is doing groundbreaking things. They encourage others to create innovative solutions to solve problems. Successful leaders can empathize with their people to meet their needs properly, and they can build a team in which people do their best. Last but not least, the leadership approaches in normal and critical situations, and how different organizations lead projects are discussed:

- Hiring and recruitment
- Criticizing and encouraging the workforce
- The approach of problem-solving sessions
- Defining a clear roadmap in the project
- Expanding and encouraging teamwork
- Transparency, responsibility, and accountability
- Identifying and investing in the strengths of the workforce

Curious to know more about this project?

[Click here](#)



Professional talk

Design Thinking in Execution

An Interview with

Hakhamanesh Mashayekhi



In this interview with Hakhamanesh Mashayekhi, we talked about design thinking in execution and the factors influencing it. Hakhamanesh with many years experience as a designer, is working as a product design manager for HBO Max at warner media.

- Please introduce yourself.

+Thank you very much for inviting me. I am Hakhamanesh. I Graduated from the University of Tehran in Industrial Design and then got a degree in Multidisciplinary from the CCS (College for Creative Studies) in Michigan.

I worked in R/GA for 5 years, which is a design agency, and in those five years I focused on design services, product, and experiences, from websites to apps or even experience design for retail stores and also brands such as Nike, Uber, Innovasport in Mexico. After 5 years working in the Agency and Consultancy, I decided to experience a different space so that I could have a little more ownership of projects, so I entered the world of startups. I was in the startup space for about a year, and after that I have been working as design manager at HBO-Max at Warner-Media for till now.

-Great, I am very happy to have you as our guest and tonight we want to talk about design thinking from another aspect. Although there are many resources and documents about design thinking in theoretical spaces, what is fascinating and I think there are few resources about its practical aspects of design thinking, how it works in organizations and how organizations accept that method of thinking? What challenges did you face in the workplace as a designer with your employer? What challenges did you face when it comes to applying the design thinking method into processes?

+ I remember the first project I did. I was very shocked. Because when you work as a designer and have an academic background, your impression is that as much as you know design thinking, others have known too, But the first time I did my first job in an agency I was very shocked. The level of our clients' knowledge of design thinking compared to me is very different and it has its own merits and demerits.

I was a completely new graduate, and I saw everything in its own academic context and thought that everything must be done exactly the same as what you read in the books but when you come to reality, it is not like that at all. But the point is, I realized that each company has a different culture and different behavior from another one towards applying design thinking. For example, when your client is a tech-based company, such as Nike, Uber, every activity automatically has been done based on design thinking. This means that just having a common language can help a lot to get projects done with a high quality. The biggest challenge I had in the R/GA was when we wanted to work with Innovasport, Mexico's largest sports retailer with a big annual revenue but traditional structure. The first meeting we had was about realizing their need. Nothing was going well, and it got harder when they did not know what they really needed. Working as a consulting agency, time means money, and your account for the client minute by minute and hour by hour. Your client should trust you. The sooner you can build it, the more successful you become. That was the time when I thought about what we really should do now. In addition, we had another challenge to the one I mentioned, and that was its language and culture. Well, our agency was an international one. We've done plenty of projects in many countries, but it was our first

experience in Mexico. We wanted to run our project based on design thinking in the context of that culture.

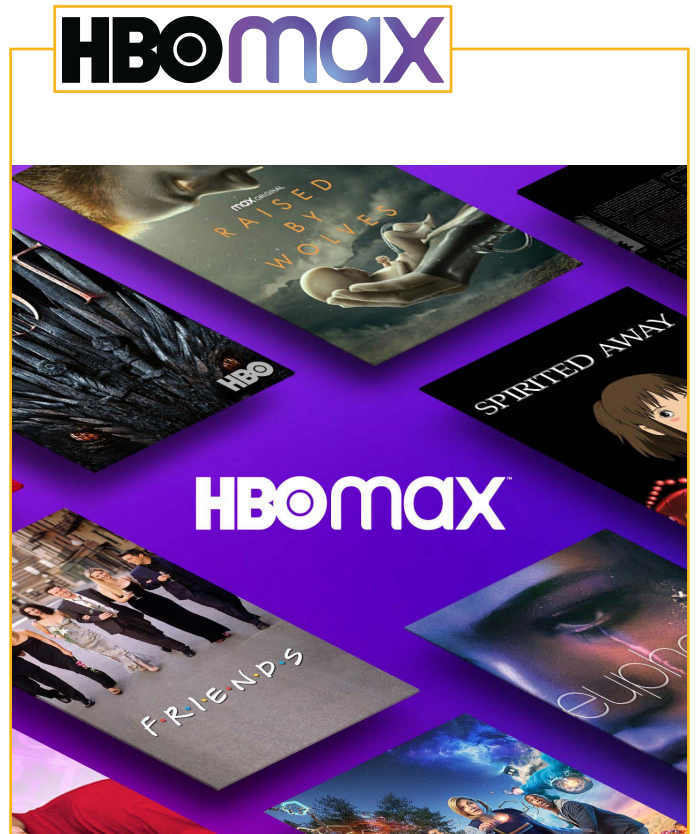
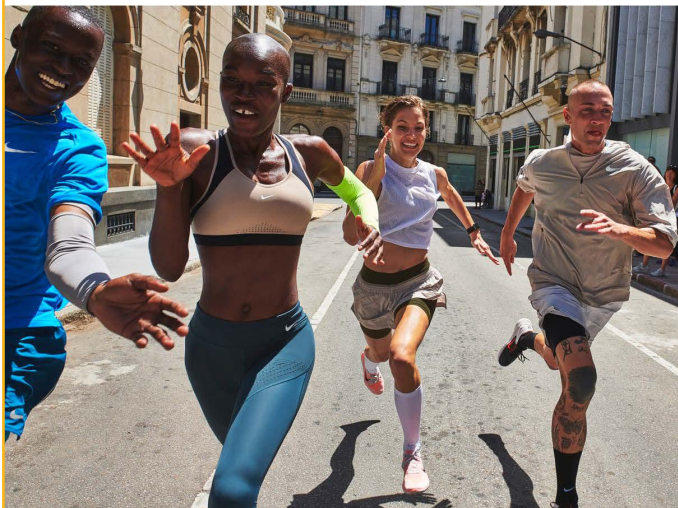
You cannot do design thinking projects in other countries with the same approach that you did in the United States.

All the researchers and designers we had, either grew up in American culture or studied in America, so there was a very big gap, and what we did quickly was to sign a contract with another agency in Mexico to become our partner in this case and be able to support us with user research. For us, this partnership was a fruitful opportunity.

- Well, as you mentioned, the culture of an organization is very important. To implement design thinking in an organization, it should be applied at an organizational strategy level or from the bottom of the organization. When we want to make changes at the highest levels of the organization, the culture of it should be welcoming to the design thinking so that you can apply design thinking to your strategy. Just tell us about your experiences, how did you take design thinking to the organization's strategy?

You cannot apply a design thinking method just in the design department and then spread it to the whole organization that has no idea about it at all. Design thinking is something that should go well in the organization.

+ It is just a tool, and all these components are helping to deliver a product to the customer with great value. Especially those parts of the organization that directly have contact with the user. That is, a good experience for the user is not formed just by delivering a product, a service or product which is designed based on design thinking and according to user need, can be a valuable experience for your customers. A successful experience is a combination of a successful story and a successful system. To illustration, Take Nike running app, as an example, I have been involved with various projects with Nike for a long time, this app is not really the best running app, that is, it really has a lot of problems compared to the best running apps, but it has been very successful and the reason for its success is the story that is being told which is supporting design thinking process. You can never have a good design process without a successful storytelling behind it.



Another experience I have had in HBOMax is about when it decided to get through a business transformation, Warner Media in its classic form is a media company not a tech one, so the first step is to apply design thinking in all processes in the organization. What HBOMax has done, instead of spending a so much money on R&D or working with agencies (which is very common amongst companies), blocked the related organization routine activities every two weeks each six months, and run innovation sprints. A fully multidisciplinary team and 30 or 40 teams like this are formed. A goal is set, which is the long-term goal of the company, and all design members become a leader of these teams, and in the end, after two weeks, we have 40 new ideas which have been generated by the design thinking process. Not only the cost you wanted to spend, saved in the company but so many innovative ideas were generated.

- *What a great experience. In those two weeks, at what level are those issues raised in the organization? Those issues are supposed to solve what problems? Are the problems process-oriented or operation-oriented? The question is, at what level in the organization, ideation was accomplished to generate new ideas for solving those problems?*

+Good question. An interesting thing happened, the ideas generated are beyond the organization, they aimed at users. We realized that two or three teams got through this process deeply and generated fruitful ideas for their own department activities. Whether or not teams focus on the end user's need is left to them to take what they like out of it and shape it the way they want. IDEO's leadership have several of books which illustrate how you can incorporate design thinking into your daily life and influence your daily decisions. What matters is how you look at the process.

IDEO

Change By Design by Tim Brown



- *How did you build interdisciplinary teams in execution design thinking? How do you analyze the meeting outcomes in the organizational process and their progress?*

+ When you want to join any team in an organization, you must put yourself in their shoes and look into everything from their point of view.

The most important element that can make you part of a team is the KPI of that team, which means that as soon as you can understand their goal and for what they are fighting it will make things much easier for you as a design thinker to disseminate their thoughts.

But there is another big point that I mentioned before, and that is trust. Trust is very valuable. That is, you understand the importance of trust, especially when you join an organization as a consultant. Just focus on the team's KPI and proof of concept. Try to celebrate the little results with your teammate so it helps the team to boost its confidence.

There is a psychologist named Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi who argues many about design and design thinking and has a book called Flow that talks about when an organization, a human, and NTT have a flow, and from Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's point of view, there is a flow when you are happy. What does flow mean? It means that you are successful. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi sees a flow as a diagram in which the vertical axis is the challenge, and the horizontal axis is the skill. When the level of the challenge and the skill are both high, then you have a flow so as a result you feel happy as you think you solve a problem. But when the challenge is high and you do not have the skills, you get frustrated, or vice versa you get bored, you tell yourself, "I can do more than that."

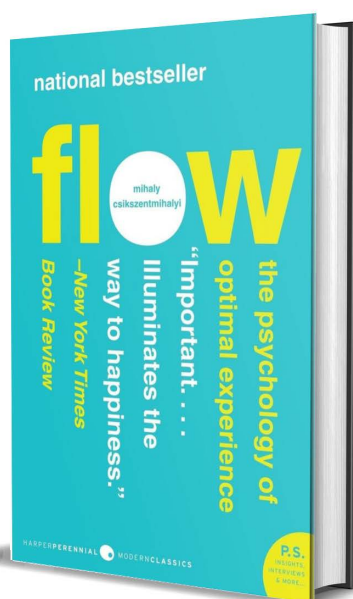
Now let's think about the system of the organization. For applying design thinking in the team based on that mentioned diagram, we should empower them. Give them a challenge and teach them skills. When the challenge and skills meet each other, flow happens. Let the team be happy and celebrate the flow, take the level of the challenge and skill step by step higher. It makes the team stand tall in the organization and gives them confidence and that is when they can say we've got through this challenge by design thinking.

To hear more from Hakhamanesh Mashayekhi about Design Thinking in Execution,

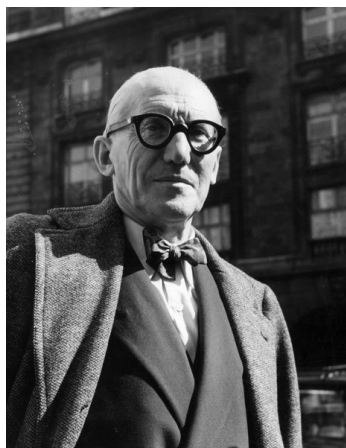
[***check this out!***](#)

Flow

by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi



Birthdays Of The Month



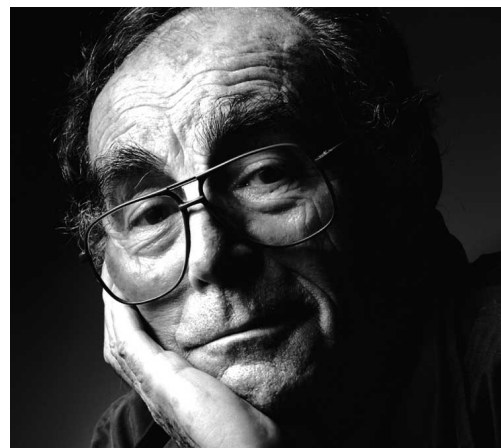
Le Corbusier

Swiss-French architect

October 6, 1887 - August 27, 1965

In his architecture, Le Corbusier chiefly built with steel and reinforced concrete and worked with elemental geometric forms.

Le Corbusier's painting emphasized clear forms and structures, which corresponded to his architecture.



Vico Magistretti

Italian industrial designer

October 6, 1920 - September 19, 2006

A prolific designer, he won the price "Compasso d'Oro" in 1967 for the Artemide Eclisse lamp, in 1979 for the Oluce Atollo lamp and for the Cassina Maralunga sofa.



Richard Meier

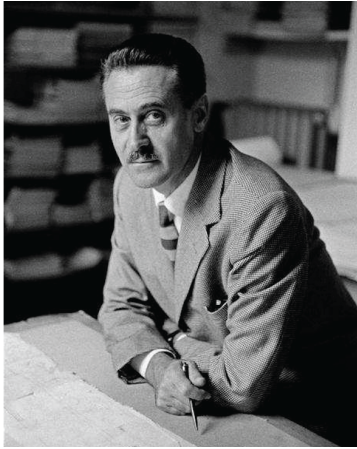
American artist

October 12, 1934

"Architecture which enters into a symbiosis with light does not merely create form in light, by day and at night, but allow light to become form."

Richard Meier

Birthdays Of The Month



Franco Albini

Italian architect

October 17, 1905 - November 1, 1977

He was a major figure in the Rationalist Movement, excelling in architectural, furniture, industrial and museum design.



Marc Newson

Australian Industrial designer

October 20, 1963

"If I want to buy a light in a shop and I don't find a light that I like, I think to myself what would I like? What would I like to buy? Then I started to imagine and design it for myself a lot of the time."

Marc Newson



Fabio Novembre

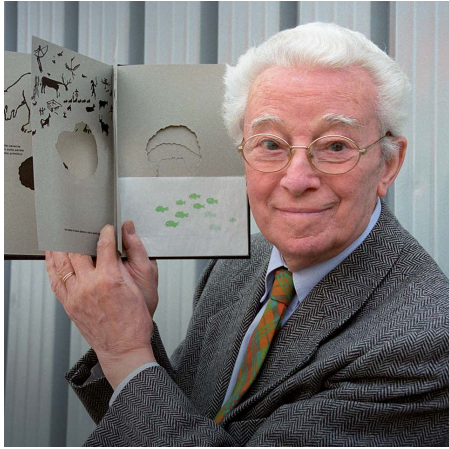
Italian architect

October 21, 1966

"Do less but do it better. Projects stay on my desk for months and years because I always have to find a good reason to create something."

Fabio Novembre

Birthdays Of The Month



Bruno Munari

Italian artist

October 24, 1907 - September 30, 1998

People haven't got time to stop in the street, size a poster up, see what it refers to and then decide whether or not it interests them. Communication must be instant and it must be exact.

Design as Art by Bruno Munari



Zaha Hadid

Iraqi architect

October 31, 1950 - March 31, 2016

"Architecture is really about well-being. I think that people want to feel good in a space ... On the one hand it's about shelter, but it's also about pleasure."

Zaha Hadid



Richard Morris Hunt

American architect

October 31, 1827 - July 31, 1895

Architect who established in the United States the manner and traditions of the French Beaux-Arts (Second Empire) style. He was instrumental in establishing standards for professional architecture and building in the United States.

