Designing Meaning

What is the meaning of MIT?

How does the home page represent MIT?

- What is *selected*, highlighted, and emphasized in these images?

- What is *deflected*, hidden and missing in these images?

Your challenge:

Design an image that presents a new perspective on MIT, or represents a facet of MIT that is currently missing or *deflected* by the MIT homepage

Design Thinking is a Process
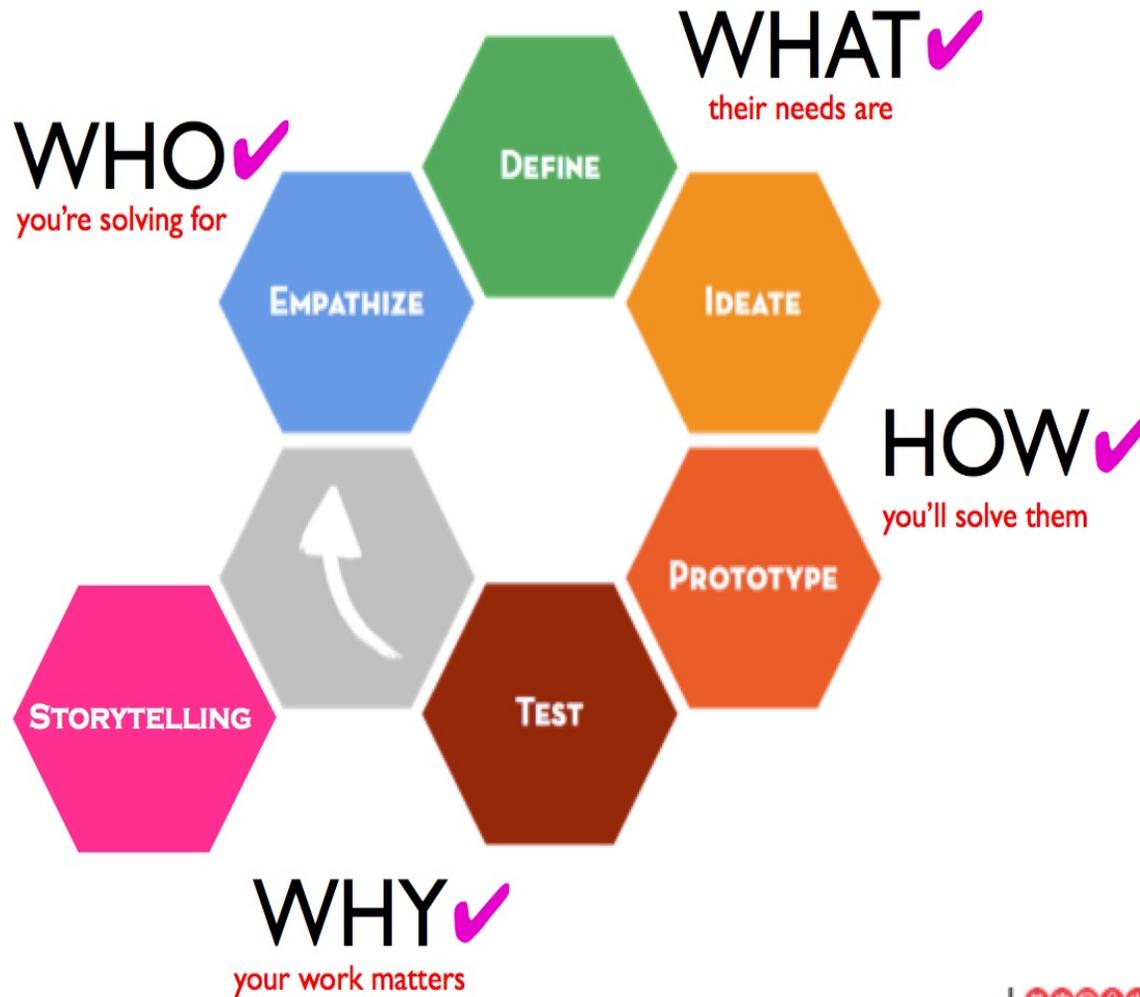
The process can be adapted to different contexts

THE FIVE PHASES

EXAMINE

Dig into the problem. Look at the history, the context, the objects, and (most importantly) the people involved.

UNDERSTAND

Go deeper and find patterns. Establish open questions to build on.

IDEATE

Have lots of ideas, good and bad. Don't stop at the obvious or the impossible.

EXPERIMENT

Try some things out. Make some things. Fail cheap and fast.

DISTILL

Strip your solution down to the essentials and tell the story to others.

To design MIT, first understand MIT

Understand what MIT *is,* what it *does*, how it does it, who does it, and why

Step 1: Empathize/Examine

What "stories" of MIT do you hear often from classmates, teammates, dormmates, faculty, etc.?

What do people do and say at/about MIT?

What do people think of MIT? How do people feel about MIT?

LISTEN to your classmates!

Step 1 beyond the classroom:

Engage with a wide variety of people, in many different locations and contexts around MIT

Interview, interact, question, and observe. Listen for stories. Take pictures.

Take notes—what do people say, think, feel, and do?

Empathy Map: What do people say, think, feel, and do?
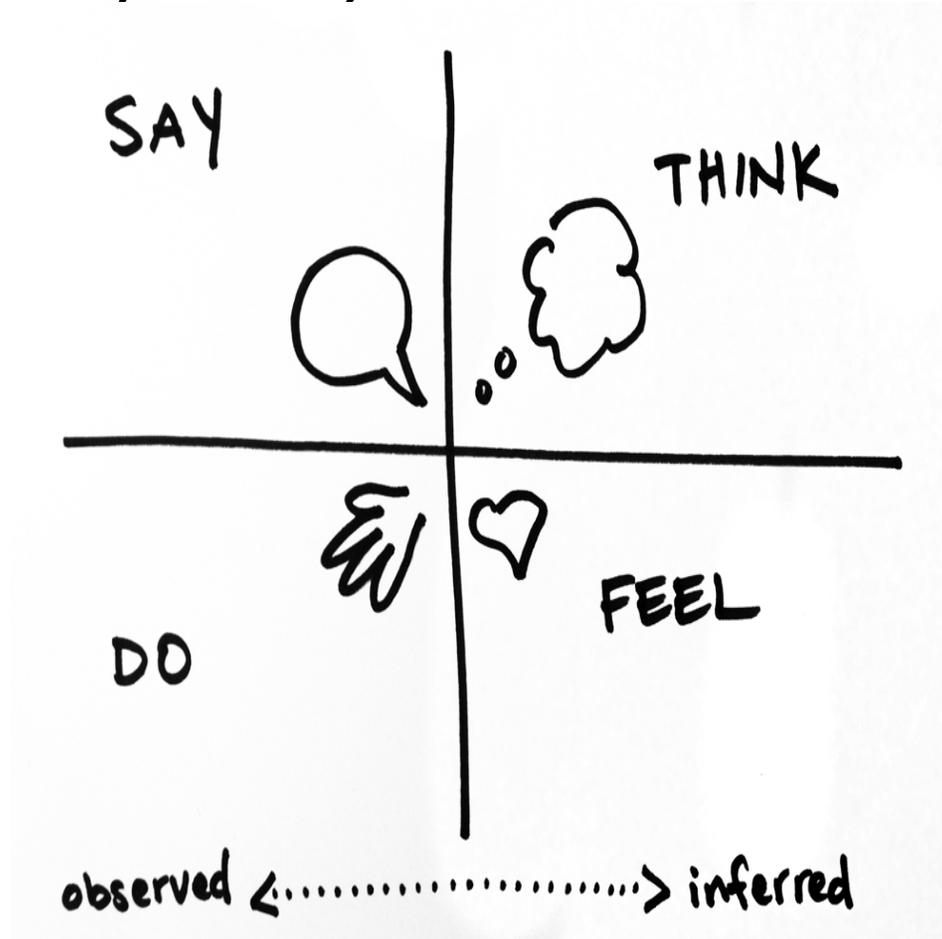
Step 2: Understand/Define

Look for patterns:

What terms/concepts were common?

What scenes, actors, agents, actions were common?

What physical objects were common?

Step 2: Understand/Define

What tensions or contradictions exist in those stories, or between stories?

What has surprised you most about MIT?

What do you "see" of MIT (literally or metaphorically) that others may not?

Step 3: Ideate—How might we show

Brainstorm: generate as many concrete ideas, good and bad, as you can. Do Not Edit or Critique—use the impulse to change one idea as a launch for the next idea. Captur everything.

Where, how, and with whom "MIT" happens?

How MIT feels?

What MIT does?

What makes MIT work?

Step 4: Prototype/Experiment

Start drawing/building—turn the ideas into concrete images. Do not make this   second version of the ideate phase

Keep the work low-resolution. Resist the urge to complete and perfec any prototype image

Make many prototype images—and be conscious of which "variables" you're changing in each (e.g., whether a "who" or a "what" is represented; which "whos" are represented, which "where" is represented, etc.)

Step 5: Test/Distill/Refine

Let others interact with your prototype(s) without guiding them

Ask: "tell me what you're thinking as you look at this"

Note: positives/alignments wit   design

   Questions, confusions, misunderstandings

   Suggestions/ideas for changes

   New ideas that develop

Step 6: Storytelling and Delivery

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