

IT firms train employees in 'design thinking'

Growth of economy to be tepid in next 5 years

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IT companies in India have started to inculcate "design thinking" practices in their employees. While Infosys trained close to 9,000 employees in the concept last quarter, Polaris group company Intellect started its monthly design talks lecture series from the beginning of this year to evangelise the concept among associates.

Design thinking is a concept propagated by Tim Brown, president and chief executive officer of the design firm IDEO. In his words, it is described as a discipline that uses the designer's sensibility and methods to match people's needs with what is technologically feasible and what a viable business strategy can convert into customer value and market opportunity. It is a human-centered approach to innovation that draws from the designer's toolkit to integrate the need of people, the possibilities of technology and the requirements for business success.

"Thinking like a designer can transform the way organisations develop products, services, processes, and strategy. This approach, which IDEO calls design thinking, brings together what is desirable from a human point of view with what is technologically feasible and economically viable. It also allows people who aren't trained as designers to use creative tools to address a vast range of challenges," he adds.

In order to train employees in the concept and state its applications in not only



Designer thoughts

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corporate organisations but also in everyday life, Intellect Design Arena started its 8012 Design Talks on January 5, 2015. The talks would be a series of monthly interactive sessions and demonstrations with leading innovators who apply design thinking in their respective fields to effect change in their areas of work, said Rajesh Kuppaswamy, chief design officer at Intellect. The series will have speakers from various walks of life speaking on how they have understood industry requirements, observed and clustered patterns, connecting dots and unearthing blind spots. The first speaker for the series was Jayanti Ravi, commissioner — higher education at the government of Gujarat.

IT major Infosys on the other hand has started to

train employees and clients on the concept. Its chief executive officer Vishal Sikkā said during the company's Q3 results: "We have covered over 9,000 employees across the company with design thinking training more than 400 of these are at senior levels. We have gone further and got our clients to embrace design thinking concepts. We currently have a pipeline of workshops for over 25 clients planned."

Several others including SAP have partnered with universities and colleges to sensitise employees about the concept to create products that meet client requirements and break away from the mould of "innovation for innovation's sake."

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