Design Thinking for HHS Ignite Teams

Design Thinking (DT) is a collaborative process for identifying and solving problems by addressing the needs of the people who experience them. It offers concrete tools that translate innovation from an abstract art into a replicable process. Its iterative approach ensures that organizations don't have to take big risks, but instead regularly test their ideas before making commitments so they can be confident when the time comes to formally invest in new systems or products.

Key Principles of Design Thinking

- Collaboration: collective insights and creativity are more powerful than lone genius
- Synthesis over analysis: complex (wicked) problems are puzzles, not mysteries
- Ambiguity is welcomed: uncertainty is necessary in order to maintain an open-mind that allows for new possibilities ('a-ha' moments)
- Make things tangible: communicate problems, solutions using visual or physical representations
- Human-centered: solve problems for people by empathizing with them

What it will help you to do as an Ignite team

- Enable you to harness the full observation, insight, and creative abilities of the entire team's members by providing specific tools that alternately take advantage of the individual's divergent and the team's convergent thoughts.
- Enlist ethnographic methods such as interviewing and other observation techniques that will help you empathize with people who have unmet needs thereby enabling you to understand their issues but apply your own interpretation and creativity.
- Derive meaning from a large and complex set of qualitative data points in order to uncover hidden themes, intersections, and problems to solve for people in need.
- Allow people to be unfettered in their search for solutions, encouraging out-of-the-box thinking and communication of ideas with a series of exercises and facilitation principles.
- Share your ideas in order to learn about what people really want and need; get early validation of whether you're on the right track or not.