

# ITEC

develop | train | equip

AUGUST 2020 NEWSLETTER

## Practicing Creativity

by Jim

Are you creative? If your answer was “no,” I bet you are more creative than you think you are. I would challenge that the way you answer that question often reflects more on past experiences than your actual ability. We are born creative. As a child, your life was probably full of creating art, playing make-believe, and asking imaginative questions. Somewhere in the process of growing up, we tend to put ourselves in either the category of “creatives” or “non-creatives.” More often than not, most people would put themselves in the latter.

In reality, each and every one of us is creative. If God is Creator, and He formed us in His image (Genesis 1:27), doesn't that mean we're creative, too?

ITEC has a wide variety of talents and backgrounds on the team. On any given day, you might share lunch with a doctor, an aerospace engineer, a dentist, or a videographer. We strive to challenge the assumption that only the engineers are going to bring the innovation and design ideas to the team. When we take the diversity within our team, innovation happens collectively in a way that is better than what we could achieve individually.

A culture of creativity doesn't just happen, but it is something we strive for. The ability to be creative often goes back to the way David Kelley of IDEO describes it, “Creativity is something you practice, not just a talent you're born with.” A process we have found that provides a system for practicing creativity at ITEC is called Design Thinking.

Design Thinking is a human-centered approach to the innovation process. This requires imagining the point of view of someone that might be using a tool, product, or solution that you are trying to create. The qualification to participate is to be human and to gain empathy by imagining someone else's point of view. Sometimes the best way to gain this perspective is to simply ask and listen. Anyone with these qualifications is able to help in the process.

Design Thinking has five phases; Empathize, Define, Ideate, Prototype, and Test. Although often referenced as phases one through five, it is important to note that the phases are not always sequential, but can be approached somewhat out of order and repeated, as long as the focus stays on the end-users' perspective. Here are the five phases of Design Thinking:

1. Empathize: Empathy is gaining insight and understanding of a problem from someone else's point of view. Develop an empathetic insight of real-world challenges through interviews, observations, and research.

2. Define: Gather and organize the information gained through phase one. Determine and define the core problem. Write a problem statement describing the impact on the individual.

3. Ideate: This is the time to “think outside the box” and look for alternative ways to view the problem and create innovative solutions to the defined problem. Look at the problem from different vantage points and avoid going too deep on any one idea until you have explored as many ideas as possible.

4. Prototype: This is the experimental phase where you work on inexpensive, scaled-down versions of the product/solution to investigate the ideas you've generated.

5. Test: This is where you test the prototypes to prove they solve the problem outlined in phase two. Does it solve the problem? Are we trying to solve the right problem or do we need to go back to phase one and gain more empathy?



Design Thinking is a great tool to spark creativity and innovation on any team. It can be used in your work, ministry, church, or home. The key is to start with empathy. You might be surprised where God will lead if you take the time to simply ask and listen to those you are trying to serve.

It was empathy that led to the creation of ITEC. Steve Saint shares how the idea of training the Waoani in Ecuador wasn't his idea; he was just listening to their request. You can read more about that story by scanning the code above or visiting [www.bit.ly/waoidea](http://www.bit.ly/waoidea).

The challenge we would like to leave you with is to consider your own creativity. Has someone convinced you that you are not creative? Do you inspire others to be creative? Ask God the Creator (Colossians 1:16) to give you a renewed perspective on how He made you creative (Romans 12:2). Then consider praying about how you might use your talents and abilities to be creative for His glory.

# Learn More about Design Thinking



Jacob Hancock of Seeds Global Innovation Lab joined us for a recent podcast. The mission of Seeds is to equip the global missions community for the emerging world using Design Thinking. Learn more about Seeds, their history, and their connection to Pioneers.

Visit [www.bit.ly/seedsinnovation](http://www.bit.ly/seedsinnovation) or scan the code with your phone.

## A Ripple Effect

International travel is a big part of the work at ITEC. Over the past few months we have discussed how to handle the upcoming travel arrangements. What should we do? What will this mean? When will we be able to go? What are the ripple effects of a pandemic on international trips? So many questions without answers.

In the chaos, it has been encouraging to hear follow-up reports from a previous ITEC medical and film training in East Africa. The film training has provided opportunities for African Christ-followers to open doors for the Gospel in their community.

*"We have been using it on the field of giving the voice to the voiceless, sharing impactful God stories and sharing the Gospel by showing compassionate to the rejected."* – Film Student Testimony

*"We got several opportunities to share the Gospel. We were able to be accepted in some villages, ITEC MED gave us access to some villages that it could have been impossible without it. We share the gospel with five more families, though none gave their lives to Christ, but we have organized with the strategic team of our church to do the follow up."* – Medical Student Testimony

It was encouraging to read these stories and the additional feedback on how we can improve in the future.

As we have been forced to postpone future trips, it has been encouraging to consider past opportunities we have had to train and work with our partners around the world.

No one could have predicted this global pandemic, and no one knows for sure the limitations we will have going forward. Even with travel slowly opening up, the access of local churches in communities will likely open up sooner than a country's borders to outsiders, especially from the US.

The non-Western church is growing and sending missionaries. How can we focus on supporting this movement?

Often times, short-term mission trips are focused on going and doing. This has the potential to sideline the indigenous church, overlooking local strengths and resources, limiting national participation.

Could it be that this pandemic will force us to change our mindset when it comes to short-term mission trips?

We will continue to wrestle with effectiveness in short-term mission trips and would love for you to join in the conversation. This time of canceled plans and trips might represent a unique opportunity to begin some honest discussions.



We released a new video in early August asking some of these questions about COVID-19's impact on the year but also celebrating the opportunities that it has brought. To watch, scan the code or visit [www.bit.ly/ripplecovid](http://www.bit.ly/ripplecovid).

352.465.4545  
INFO@ITECUSA.ORG

[itecusa.org](http://itecusa.org)

10575 SW 147TH CIRCLE  
DUNNELLON, FL 34432

ITEC can only achieve its goals of helping those in the hardest to reach areas through the generosity of individuals like you. All gifts are tax deductible, and can be sent to the address above. To give online, please visit our website at [itecusa.org](http://itecusa.org). Thank you!