“Jeanne Liedtka is dedicated to bringing design concepts and theory down from the stratosphere into the hands of managers tackling everyday problems. She and her coauthors achieve just this in Solving Problems with Design Thinking. Read it once for inspiration and encouragement. Then go back to its pages time and time again for models, tools, lessons, and stories that will transform design thinking into a powerful asset for you.”

—ROGER MARTIN, DOCTOR OF THE ROTMAN SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT, UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

PRAISE FOR SOLVING PROBLEMS WITH DESIGN THINKING

“This book offers a solid, in-depth look at the power of design thinking to solve organizational problems. Better yet, through real-life examples, it demonstrates a far more important skill: how to uncover the more urgent problems lurking beneath the surface. The authors brilliantly reveal how the design mindset can permeate—and then transform—an organization.”

—DANIEL PINK, AUTHOR OF DRINK AND TO SELL OR BE HUMAN

“In a clear and simple style, this book shows how design thinking has been applied successfully to address complex and different problems in a variety of organizations, both for- and not-for-profit. The ten case studies provide creative and innovative applications of design principles and supply sufficient detail of the challenges they faced and the processes and tools they used, providing a clear path to implementation based on the principles and practices laid out in Jeanne Liedtka and Tim Ogilvie’s Designing for Growth: A Design Thinking Toolkit for Managers.”

—TONI UNGARETTI, JENNY HOPKINS UNIVERSITY
Solving Problems
with Design Thinking
SOLVING PROBLEMS WITH DESIGN THINKING

STORIES OF WHAT WORKS

JEANNE LIEDTKA, ANDREW KING, AND KEVIN BENNETT
For Debra and Matt
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Preface
The Story Behind Our Stories

For those of you who don’t read prefaces, feel free to continue on without remorse—the stories you are about to hear will be just as satisfying. But for those who like to know what is going on backstage, we thought a bit of detail about the origin of our ten stories might be of interest.

In the spring of 2010 the Design Management Institute (DMI) and researchers at the University of Virginia’s Darden School of Business (a team that included us) launched a multistage research program to assess the prevalence and impact of design thinking in business organizations. Sponsored by the Batten Institute, a center for the study of entrepreneurship and innovation at Darden, the study set out to develop an understanding of the extent to which the methods, techniques, and processes traditionally associated with design and designers had been adopted within established business and social sector organizations.