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, SKAN OF THE ROTMAN SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT, UNIVERITY OF TORONTO

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 DRIVE AND TO SELL OR HOPE

In a clear and simple style, this book looks 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.

—TONI UNGARETTI, JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

STORIES OF WHAT WORKS

DESIGN-ORIENTED FIRMS SUCH as Apple and IDEO have demonstrated how design thinking can affect business results. However, most managers lack a sense of how to use this new approach for issues other than product development and sales growth. Solving Problems with Design Thinking details ten real-world examples of managers who successfully applied design methods at IBM, Toyota, BMW, Cisco, and SAP; entrepreneurial start-ups such as MeYou Health, and government and social sector organizations, including the City of Dublin and Denmark’s TheGoodKichen.

Using design skills such as ethnography, visualization, storytelling, and experimentation, these managers produced innovative solutions to such problems as implementing strategy, supporting a sales force, redesigning internal processes, feeding the elderly, and engaging citizens. They elaborate on 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 O’Hara’s Designing for Growth: A Design Thinking Toolkit for Managers.

Jeanne Liedtka, Andrew King, and Kevin Bennett

SOLVING PROBLEMS WITH DESIGN THINKING
Solving Problems

with Design Thinking
SOLVING PROBLEMS WITH DESIGN THINKING

10 STORIES OF WHAT WORKS

JEANNE LIEDTKA, ANDREW KING, AND KEVIN BENNETT

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For Debra and Matt
# Contents

Preface ix

Acknowledgments xiii

1 Dispelling the Moses Myth 1

2 Reimagining the Trade Show Experience at IBM 15

3 Postmerger Integration at Suncorp 35

4 Transforming B2B Customer Engagement at 3M 57

5 Rethinking Strategic Planning at SAP 74

6 Redesigning the Customer Contact Center at Toyota 92

7 Social Networking at MeYou Health 107
Contents

8  Industry Collaboration in Financial Services with the FiDJI Project  126

9  Rethinking Subsidized Meals for the Elderly at The Good Kitchen  143

10 Engaging the Citizens of Dublin  160

11 Scaling a Design Thinking Competency at Intuit  179

12 Where Do We Go from Here?  196

POSTSCRIPT

Educating Managers for Design  211
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.