“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, SKAAN OF THE ROTMAN SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT, UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

JEANNE LIEDTKA has been involved in the corporate strategy field for more than thirty years. She has served as associate dean of the MBA program at the Darden School of Business, executive director of the Batten Institute for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, and chief learning officer at United Technologies Corporation.

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Jeanne Liedtka, Andrew King, and Kevin Bennett

SOLVING PROBLEMS WITH DESIGN THINKING

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 DRIFT AND TO SUCCEED

“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 use to aid readers in their own planning processes. Solving Problems with Design Thinking provides depth of value to the graduate professional classroom while being simple and clear for immediate use by managers.”

—TONI UNGARETTI, JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

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, IBM, Intel, and SAP; entrepreneurial start-ups such as MeYou Health; and government and social sector organizations, including the City of Dublin and Denmark’s The Good Kitchen.

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 Ogilvie’s Designing for Growth: A Design Thinking Toolkit for Managers.
Solving Problems
with Design Thinking
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.