Introduction

Design Thinking can help established companies exploring the *fuzzy front end* of innovation in a systematic way: from identifying opportunities up to generating strong product concepts for later development. If successfully adopted, the **approach** and its **methods** can help corporate teams in cutting through complexity by integrating market, technology and consumer understanding from early on.
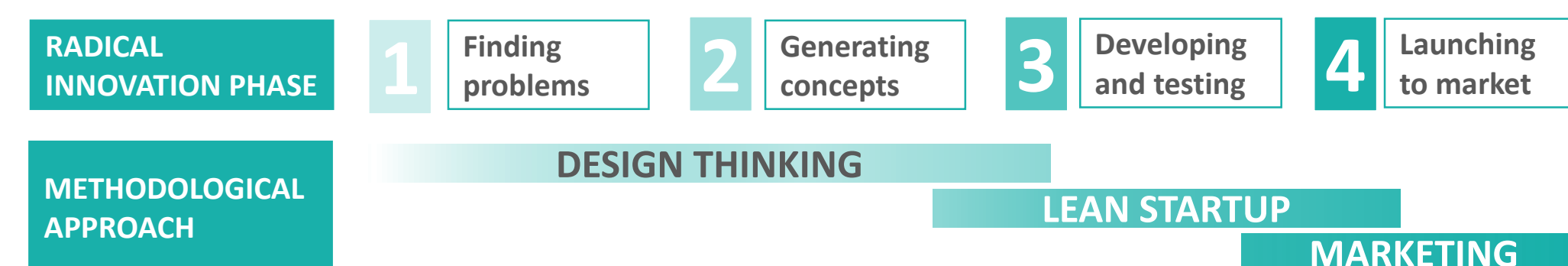
However, the methodology **tends to get killed in corporate and team dynamics**. The lack of time, co-location, mindsets, team cohesion or autonomy are just some of the many elements that can severely limit the ability of an *intrapreneurial* team from achieving its goals.

A **careful project setup** that assembles and protects the **right team** can prevent the appearance of many of these barriers.

HOW TO SET UP YOUR DESIGN THINKING PROJECT IN CORPORATE?

1 Assemble the right team

In a corporate venture, the goal of the team is not only to generate new concepts, which is what Design Thinking is good for, but make sure that the concepts are developed and implemented. This requires the integration of different technical and commercial expertise along all the radical innovation phases:

RADICAL INNOVATION PHASE	1 Finding problems	2 Generating concepts	3 Developing and testing	4 Launching to market

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

DESIGN THINKING
LEAN STARTUP
MARKETING

However, not every expert should be involved in every phase of the process. Instead, initiatives are easier to manage by the combination of (a) a small and stable **core team** that integrates the work and manages the direction of the process and (b) an **extended team** of internal or external experts that provide particular inputs.
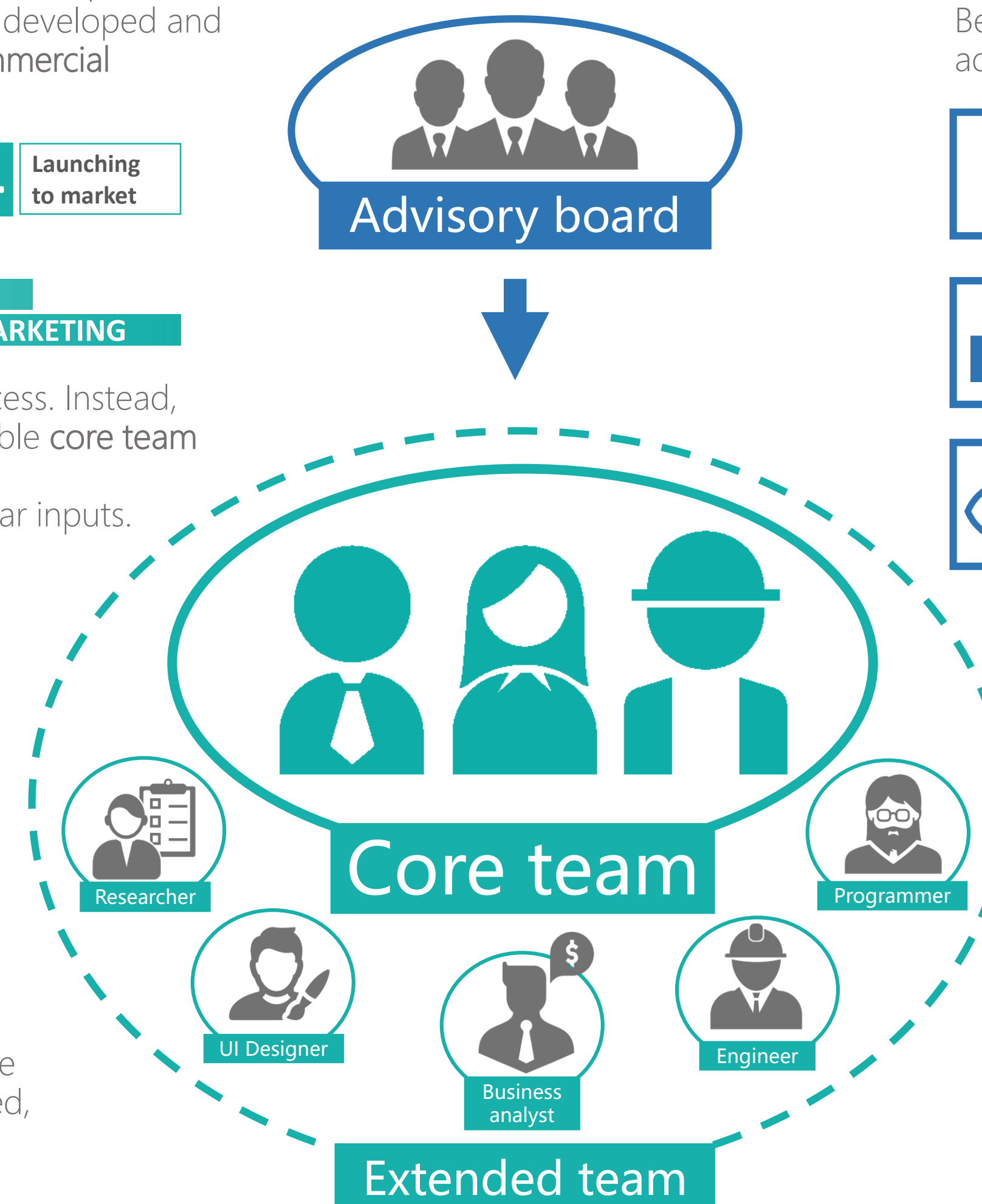
Who should be in the core team?

A diverse and balanced team

The team should cover the whole spectrum of learning styles (*thinkers* and *doers*) and include expertise in business, technology and consumer research.

Individuals with the right attitude

Individuals should be motivated about the challenge, have the right mindsets for DT (e.g.: empathic, learning-oriented, humoristic...), the time for its methods and be co-located.

Advisory board

Core team

Researcher

UI Designer

Business analyst

Engineer

Programmer

Extended team

2 Ensure organizational support

The innovation team needs **resources and autonomy** to execute the innovation project. Because the project takes place inside an established organization, it is required that an advisory board composed of senior leadership **nourishes and protects** the team.
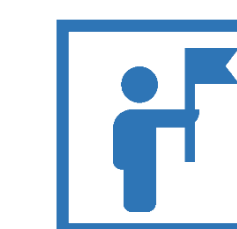
Believe in need for Radical Innovation and Design Thinking approach

Unlike many R&D initiatives, Design Thinking starts by being solution agnostic. The company needs to trust this explorative approach and understand its requirements.

Ability to provide and secure resources such as money, time and space

Activities like consumer research require money and time. A very constrained budget or deadline will lead to low quality insights which will turn into less innovative ideas.

Appropriate evaluation metrics for individuals and overall performance

The advisory board should provide feedback and monitor the work of those managing their funds. However, the team should be given autonomy.

How to enable an effective collaboration?

Decision-making mechanisms

Common-accepted mechanisms are required to resolve major conflicting views regarding the innovation process or the ideas.

Accountability mechanisms

Individuals need to be evaluated and rewarded for their work. This needs to account for the collaborative nature of most design methods.

Communication systems

The knowledge generated by the different individuals in both the core and extended teams needs to be integrated and synthesized.

Javier Melcior

Adoption of Design Thinking by a novice multidisciplinary team in industry

May 26th, 2017

MSc. Strategic Product Design

Committee: Dr. Boris Eisenbart
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