DESIGN THINKING: A POWERFUL APPROACH TO USER-CENTRIC PROBLEM SOLVING

Abstract: Human-centric design is proving to be a powerful approach for creating innovative products that provide superior user experiences. Design Thinking is a useful team-based methodology that helps organizations solve a multitude of problems by way of focusing on the design. These concepts originated in the 1960’s, and just like other problem-solving methods, such as Lean and Lean Six Sigma, they have evolved over time. In this session, we will learn and apply a few design thinking concepts, such as capturing customer needs and understanding the key stakeholders and personas. The session will also discuss developing an empathy map, wherein we will understand the needs by "putting ourselves in the shoes" of the end-user. We will also discuss the various stages of a playback and capturing client feedback in terms of the product design and co-develop the final solution with the end-users. During this session, we will apply these tools through an illustrated case study (something different than a healthcare setting, with final discussion of applicability of the same processes within a healthcare setting).

Outline of the session
- What is design and ‘design thinking’?
- Why does design matter today
- Design thinking practices and philosophies – understanding empathy
- Illustrative examples from various domains
- Case Study
- How can we apply to healthcare?
- Closing thoughts

Biography: Sreekanth Ramakrishnan is a Sr. Data Scientist at IBM Corporation’s Systems organization, based in San Jose, CA. In this role, he is responsible for designing and implementing client experience analytics using IBM Design Thinking framework. Prior to this role, he was a data scientist in IBM Corporation’s HR and Learning divisions, based in Cambridge, MA. He is a certified Lean Master and Lean Six Sigma Black Belt. He has won international awards such as the 2016 and 2011 IIE Lean Best Practice Award, 2015 Brandon Hall Award, and the 2012 SEMS Engineering Manager of the Year Award. Dr. Ramakrishnan has a Ph.D. (2008) and M.S. (2005) in Industrial and Systems Engineering from the Department of Systems Science and Industrial Engineering at Binghamton University. He has 12 patents, over 100 publications in reputed conferences/journals, and a visiting/adjunct professor at various universities. His first book “Lean for Sales: Bringing the Science of Lean to the Art of Selling” was launched in April 2016. He has served on numerous boards of professional societies and he is currently the president-elect of the Society for Engineering and Management Systems. He resides in San Jose, CA, with his wife and an active three year old daughter.