Design Thinking in Pharmaceutical Innovation Training Course

Professional Development Training Course Outline

Category	Biotechnology and Pharmaceutical Development	**Duration**	10 Days
Base Fee	$4,000 USD	**Delivery Mode**	Online / On-site Hybrid

Course Introduction

The pharmaceutical and healthcare sectors face unprecedented challenges, including escalating R&D costs, complex regulatory landscapes, and the imperative to shift from "product-centric" to truly patient-centric solutions. This training course introduces Design Thinking as the transformative, human-centered design methodology essential for driving breakthrough innovation across drug discovery, clinical trials, device design, and "Beyond the Pill" services. Participants will acquire a growth mindset and practical, rapid-iterative prototyping tools to effectively address systemic, complex problems, ensuring that future products and services are not only scientifically sound and commercially viable, but also deeply desirable and usable for the end-user: the patient.

Design Thinking in Pharmaceutical Innovation Training Course is engineered to foster radical collaboration and strategic creativity within multidisciplinary teams. By embedding the 5-stage Design Thinking Process Empathize, Define, Ideate, Prototype, and Test into their organizational DNA, professionals will learn to reframe problems, challenge long-held assumptions, and reduce the high cost of failure by failing fast and learning quickly. The curriculum is built around real-world case studies and Design Sprints, enabling immediate application of concepts like Patient Journey Mapping and Ethnographic Research to deliver measurable impact, accelerate time-to-market, and achieve competitive differentiation in a highly regulated industry.

Programme Curriculum

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Course Duration

10 days

Course Objectives

1. Master the Human-Centered Design (HCD) philosophy and its non-linear application in a regulated Pharma environment.
2. Develop Deep Patient Empathy through advanced Ethnographic Research and interviewing techniques.
3. Effectively Reframe Complex Problems by creating compelling Point-of-View statements and User Personas.
4. Apply the Five-Stage Design Thinking Process to real-world business challenges.
5. Facilitate Divergent and Convergent Thinking sessions using Brainstorming Techniques
6. Rapidly Prototype solutions, moving from low-fidelity mock-ups to testable concepts with speed and efficiency.
7. Design and conduct meaningful Usability Testing and gather actionable User Feedback to refine solutions.
8. Formulate innovative "Beyond the Pill" services and digital health solutions for chronic disease management.
9. Integrate Design Sprints into the Pharmaceutical R&D lifecycle for faster, risk-mitigated decision-making.
10. Cultivate an Experimentation Mindset and a culture of Creative Confidence within organizational teams.
11. Leverage Cross-Functional Collaboration to break down silos between R&D, Marketing, Regulatory, and Medical Affairs.
12. Design Patient Adherence and Engagement Programs that drive measurable health outcomes.
13. Apply the Desirability, Feasibility, Viability framework for vetting and scaling innovative concepts.

Target Audience

1. R&D and Discovery Scientists/Leaders
2. Product/Brand Managers and Marketers
3. Clinical Operations and Trial Design Managers
4. Digital Health and Medical Device Developers
5. Regulatory and Compliance Professionals

6. Strategy and Innovation Unit Executives
7. Patient Engagement and Advocacy Leads
8. Medical Affairs and Health Economics Teams

Course Modules

Module 1: The Design Thinking Mindset in Pharma

- DT and Traditional R&D Models.
- The Human-Centered Design Philosophy.
- Cultivating a Growth Mindset and Creative Confidence.
- The Non-Linear, Iterative Nature of Innovation.
- Case Study: Shifting the focus from 'Drug Efficacy' to 'Patient Experience' in chronic disease.

Module 2: The Empathize Phase: Deep User Research

- Techniques for Ethnographic Research and Contextual Inquiry.
- Conducting effective User Interviews and Deep Listening.
- Understanding the Patient Journey Map and identifying "Pain Points."
- Uncovering latent and unarticulated patient needs.
- Case Study: Redesigning clinical trial recruitment by understanding patient barriers and anxieties.

Module 3: Defining the Problem Space

- Synthesizing research data with Affinity Diagrams.
- Developing detailed User Personas
- Creating Empathy Maps to capture thoughts, feelings, and actions.
- Framing the challenge with a concise Point-of-View (POV) Statement.
- Case Study: Defining a problem statement for poor adherence to a cardiovascular medication.

Module 4: The Ideation Phase: Generating Breakthrough Ideas

- Principles of Divergent and Convergent Thinking.
- Advanced Brainstorming Techniques.
- Structuring and facilitating successful Ideation Workshops.
- Selecting and prioritizing the most promising ideas.
- Case Study: Generating 100+ ideas for a novel drug delivery system packaging.

Module 5: Fundamentals of Rapid Prototyping

- Low-Fidelity Prototyping.
- Mid-to-High Fidelity Tools for Digital Solutions.
- Prototyping for different needs: Product, Service, and System Prototypes.
- The concept of "Just Enough" Prototype and managing scope creep.
- Case Study: Building a paper prototype of a simplified patient portal for managing health records.

Module 6: Testing and Iteration in a Regulated Environment

- Designing Usability Tests and pilot programs with target users.
- Collecting and analyzing qualitative and quantitative User Feedback.
- The Build-Measure-Learn loop and its application in pharma.
- Balancing the need for Rapid Iteration with regulatory constraints.

- Case Study: Iterative testing and refinement of a new auto-injector device interface.

Module 7: Design Sprints for Pharma Challenges

- Introduction to the 5-Day Design Sprint methodology
- Mapping the patient journey and defining the Sprint Goal.
- Roles, responsibilities, and team selection for a successful sprint.
- Facilitation techniques and tools for time-boxed innovation.
- Case Study: A 5-day sprint to design a patient support service for a newly launched oncology drug.

Module 8: Innovation "Beyond the Pill"

- Identifying opportunities for complementary Digital Health Solutions.
- Designing patient support programs
- Creating a holistic Product-Service System (PSS) around a core treatment.
- Understanding payer and provider value in "Beyond the Pill" services.
- Case Study: Developing a self-managed app for tracking symptoms and lifestyle for diabetic patients.

Module 9: Designing for Medication Adherence

- Identifying behavioral and systemic barriers to Compliance.
- Applying DT to Packaging Design, Labeling, and Instructions.
- Developing personalized reminder and educational systems.
- Integrating IoT and connected devices for passive data collection.
- Case Study: Using DT to redesign pill dispensers and adherence-tracking for seniors.

Module 10: R&D Process Transformation

- Integrating the Design Thinking phases into the Drug Discovery pipeline.
- Shifting from a linear, stage-gate process to a dynamic, iterative approach.
- Using DT to improve internal workflows and Cross-Functional Collaboration.
- Applying HCD principles to improve R&D data and knowledge sharing.
- Case Study: Re-designing the internal process for evaluating early-stage compound viability.

Module 11: Patient Engagement in Clinical Trials

- Using Empathy to improve participant recruitment and retention.
- Designing user-friendly Patient Portals and Communication tools.
- Reducing the burden of participation for patients and caregivers.
- Prototyping consent forms and trial documentation for clarity.
- Case Study: Creating a patient-friendly app for managing appointments and data entry during a trial.

Module 12: Building the Experimentation Culture

- Overcoming the Fear of Failure and the stigma of ambiguity.
- Establishing a Safe-to-Fail environment for high-risk innovation.
- Defining key metrics for Measurable Impact beyond traditional sales figures.
- The Real-Win-Worth Framework for evaluating business opportunities.
- Case Study: Implementing A/B testing on patient education websites to optimize engagement.

Module 13: DT for Hospital and Pharmacy Services

- Applying HCD to improve the outpatient **Pharmacy Experience**.

- Redesigning hospital workflows for care coordination and delivery.
- Improving communication between HCPs, pharmacists, and patients.
- Using DT to enhance medical education and training curricula.
- Case Study: Redesigning a hospital pharmacy waiting area to reduce stress and improve service flow.

Module 14: DT and Digital Health/AI

- Using Design Thinking to scope AI and Machine Learning projects in health.
- Designing intuitive user interfaces (UI) and user experiences (UX) for health apps.
- Ethical considerations for Human-Centered AI in healthcare.
- Prototyping diagnostic support tools for physicians.
- Case Study: Designing the UX for a blood glucose meter that connects to a personalized diabetes app

Module 15: Scaling and Implementing DT Innovation

- Strategies for piloting, validating, and scaling successful prototypes.
- Gaining Stakeholder Buy-in and managing change within the organization.
- Developing an internal DT Training and Mentorship program.
- Sustaining an ongoing culture of Continuous Innovation and learning.
- Case Study: Strategies for internal adoption of a new collaborative innovation framework across a global pharma company.

Training Methodology

The course employs an Action Learning approach, focusing on experiential learning and immediate application.

- Interactive Workshops & Lectures.
- Hands-on Toolkits.
- Design Sprints.
- Real-World Case Studies.
- Team-Based Capstone Project.
- Expert Mentorship & Peer Feedback.

Register as a group from 3 participants for a Discount

Send us an email: info@fineskilltrainingcenter.org or call +254769199797

Certification

Upon successful completion of this training, participants will be issued with a globally- recognized certificate.

Tailor-Made Course

We also offer tailor-made courses based on your needs.

Key Notes

a. The participant must be conversant with English.

b. Upon completion of training the participant will be issued with an Authorized Training Certificate

c. Course duration is flexible and the contents can be modified to fit any number of days.

d. The course fee includes facilitation training materials, 2 coffee breaks, buffet lunch and A Certificate upon successful completion of Training.

e. One-year post-training support Consultation and Coaching provided after the course.

f. Payment should be done at least a week before commence of the training, to Fineskill Training Center account, as indicated in the invoice so as to enable us prepare better for you.

Upcoming Scheduled Sessions

Start Date	End Date	Location	Price
23 Nov 2026	04 Dec 2026	Online	$2,000
23 Nov 2026	04 Dec 2026	Physical	$3,000
23 Nov 2026	04 Dec 2026	Physical	$6,000
23 Nov 2026	04 Dec 2026	Physical	$6,000
23 Nov 2026	04 Dec 2026	Physical	$12,000
23 Nov 2026	04 Dec 2026	Physical	$9,000
23 Nov 2026	04 Dec 2026	Physical	$12,000
23 Nov 2026	04 Dec 2026	Physical	$12,000

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