Think Bigger
Summer 2023

Location & Time
Block Week, Jul 30 — Aug 3 (Sun — Thu)

Professor: Sheena S. Iyengar, S.T. Lee Professor of Business at Columbia Business School

www.sheenaiyengar.com

Contact: siyengar@columbia.edu

Executive Coach: Neale Godfrey

Neale is an Executive in Residence at Columbia Business School, who will assist and coach students throughout their completion of the Think Bigger method. Neale is most recognized as The New York Times #1 Best-Selling Author of *Money Doesn't Grow on Trees: A Parent's Guide to Raising Financially Responsible Children*. She was one of the first female executives at The Chase Manhattan Bank (the world's largest bank at the time) and later became President of The First Women's Bank and Founder of The First Children's Bank in FAO Schwarz. Neale was also involved with the Institute for Youth Entrepreneurship in Harlem.

Her full bio can be found in the Canvas Files category.

Course Coordinator/Administrator: Eleanor Bentley

Contact: sheenaiyengaroffice@gsb.columbia.edu

Course Overview

Think Bigger answers a timeless question with enormous implications for problems of all kinds across the world: "How can I get my best ideas?"

Drawing from recent advances in neuro- and cognitive sciences, Think Bigger offers an innovative evidence-backed method for problem-solving by using six steps for problem-solving. This new method provides essential tools to spark creative thinking and help us make our most meaningful choices. For anyone looking to innovate, the black box of creativity is a mystery no longer. Think Bigger upends the myth that big ideas are reserved for a select few – everyone can become the innovator they have always dreamt of being.

In every class, you will learn the science behind what we're about to practice. You will then complete in-class creativity challenges designed to help you strengthen your creative mind.

Think Bigger is a new and unique ideation methodology only offered here at Columbia Business School. It is different from mainstream methods of ideation, such as Design Thinking. We will introduce you to a

set of tools that can be used whether you're an entrepreneur, an engineer, an investor, an artist, or a scientist. Think Bigger teaches you how to come up with out-of-the-box solutions for complex problems, big and small.

Think Bigger Fellows

The Think Bigger course was first established in 2016. Since then, leading global business practitioners from industries spanning technology, media, sustainability, food and beverage, venture capital/private equity, consulting, blockchain, and fintech have increasingly become involved in this course by providing students feedback and mentorship at critical points in the ideation process. We now have over 200+ Think Bigger Fellows. You will meet a number of these Fellows on Mentor Day. They serve as a valuable resource to Think Bigger students interested in developing their experience and skills in the innovation space. The Fellows are an important part of the Columbia Business School ecosystem and, as members of the Think Bigger social network, you can connect with any of them throughout your careers as innovators.

Workload

Class Attendance and Participation

    Attendance: Think Bigger is not a class that you can learn through watching recordings. Your ability to learn this course depends on your in-class participation. To this end, Attendance in class is expected. More than three recorded absences from class constitutes a drop one letter grade for the course.

    Participation: For every class, there will be an in-class assignment posted in the Assignments section on Canvas. You are expected to submit the in-class assignment before class ends. This submission is integral to your overall participation grade.

Presentations

This class gives you the unique opportunity to choose a problem in need of a solution. As you have now learned the method, you have a chance to present your problem and its solution beyond the classroom to a group of industry experts who act as Mentors! They will advise you on your problem and potential solution.

Further, you will pitch the solution to your identified problem to your peers. You will present for no more than five minutes. Everyone can decide for themselves the best way to present their idea. There is no requirement for the presentations (meaning, your final presentation can consist of a video, a verbal pitch, a slide deck, a one-page advertisement). Just as you would pitch your idea to a Venture Capital firm, you will pitch the final idea as you see best.

Extra Credit

There will be opportunities for extra credit throughout the class during creativity challenges and other assignments that are given to you.

Class Sessions

<u>Class 1</u>
Where do Big Ideas come from?
The Creative Mind
Choose the Problem

In this class, we will talk about some of the "biggest" ideas of all time and walk through how the creators of those ideas pieced them together. You will get a taste of Thinking Bigger in this class, as you compete in an innovative Creativity Marathon exercise. I will provide an overview of the method and the semester to come.

We will also examine the stories of great innovators: from the Buddha who sat under the Bodhi tree and attained enlightenment, Archimedes who cried, "Eureka!" as he sat in his tub and observed the displacement of water, Steve Jobs' idea for the Apple I as he sat in his garage with a typewriter wired to a television screen, or Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s iconic "I Have a Dream" speech which came about because a woman shouted from the crowd, "Tell us about your dream!" We might ask ourselves: do good ideas come to special people in special places? Is creativity something you're simply born with? In this class, using the latest neuro- and cognitive science, we will find out what creativity is, who has it, and how it can be fostered.

You will choose a problem you feel passionate about solving.

Readings
- Iyengar, Sheena. *Think Bigger: How to Innovate*, Columbia University Press (2023). Preface and Chapters 1-2.
- Fallows, James, *"The 50 Greatest Breakthroughs Since the Wheel" The Atlantic* (2013).
- Knowledge at Wharton Staff, "A World Transformed: What Are the Top 30 Innovations of the Last 30 Years?" *Knowledge at Wharton.* (2009).
- Iyengar, Sheena. *Think Bigger: How to Innovate*, Columbia University Press (2023). Chapter 2 (Pages 38-69).
- Duggan, William. "Discovery vs. Design," *The European Business Review* (2021).
- Deloitte Insights. "Eyes to the sky: Three enduring eternities," *Tech Trends of 2023* (2023).

<u>Session 2</u>
The Innovation Marketplace
Problem Breakdown

Einstein once said, "If I were given one hour to save the planet, I would spend 55 minutes defining the problem and five minutes finding the solution."

The Innovation Marketplace is a unique exercise that enables you to survey the myriad problems present in the classroom. You will be able to invest in different problems and seek investment for your own. During this class, each of you will present your pitch in 60-second to your classmates. You will then hear

theirs in return. Now is the time to scope out the problems you are inspired by and edit your own. You begin by choosing a problem you care about and want to create a solution for. Too often, we identify problems that are unsolvable or trivial – you might even end up solving the wrong problem. In this class, we will learn the pitfalls of problem identification and how to choose problems that are worth solving.

Readings
- Iyengar, Sheena. *Think Bigger: How to Innovate*, Columbia University Press (2023). Chapter 3: Step 1.
- Netflix, "Period. End of Sentence," (2018).
- Keen, Greta and Whiting, Kate, "Emerging technologies: 10 years of top tech trends and how they've changed the world." *The World Economic Forum.* (2021).
- Schultz, Alex. "100+ global problems worth solving," *World Innovation Forum* (2019).

Class 3
What's the Big Picture
Search

In this session, you will learn to apply Think Bigger Steps 3 & 4 to the problem. Here, you will ask yourself: why do I want to solve this problem? And who else matters? You will learn how to sketch the Big Picture to your problem. You will also begin to search for ideas that can help with your potential solution. In this class, we answer the question, "How do you generate 'out of the box' solutions using a method that can be repeatedly used?

Readings
- *Nordgren, Loran and Schonthal, David,* "How do you get people to embrace a new idea?" *TED Ideas.* (2022).
- Iyengar, Sheena. *Think Bigger: How to Innovate*, Columbia University Press (2023). Chapter 4-5.

Session 4
Building the Choice Map
Choice Mapping

In this session, you will learn to apply Think Bigger Step 5. We will then show you different techniques for Choice Mapping so you can generate myriad solutions to your problem. We will show you the "secret sauce" of ideation and what to do when you find yourself "stuck."

Readings
- Iyengar, Sheena. *Think Bigger: How to Innovate*, Columbia University Press (2023). Chapter 6-7.
- Casadesus-Masanell, Ramon and Ricart, Joan. "How to Design a Winning Business Model," *Harvard Business Review* (2011).
- Iyengar, Sheena. *Think Bigger: How to Innovate*, Columbia University Press (2023). Chapter 7 (Pages 177-207).
- Heath, Chip. *Made to Stick: Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die,* Random House (2007). Chapter 1 (Pages 25-62).

Session 5
The Third Eye
Think Bigger Lab
Final Presentations

You now have an idea that feels ready to present to the world. But what is it, exactly? How does it differ from what's already out there? How will others see it? In the sixth and final step of Think Bigger, you will present to your peers and learn if what you see, they see too.

In this session, you will be matched with five mentors to meet in thirty-minute intervals. During your sessions, you will present your idea and the Mentors will use the What Works framework to give you feedback. You will walk away with tangible feedback for how to proceed after learning from their perspectives "what works," in your idea, "what doesn't work," in your idea, and recommendations for improvement.

You will then present the solution to your problem.

Reading
- Iyengar, Sheena. *Think Bigger: How to Innovate*, Columbia University Press (2023). Chapter 8 (Pages 208-228).