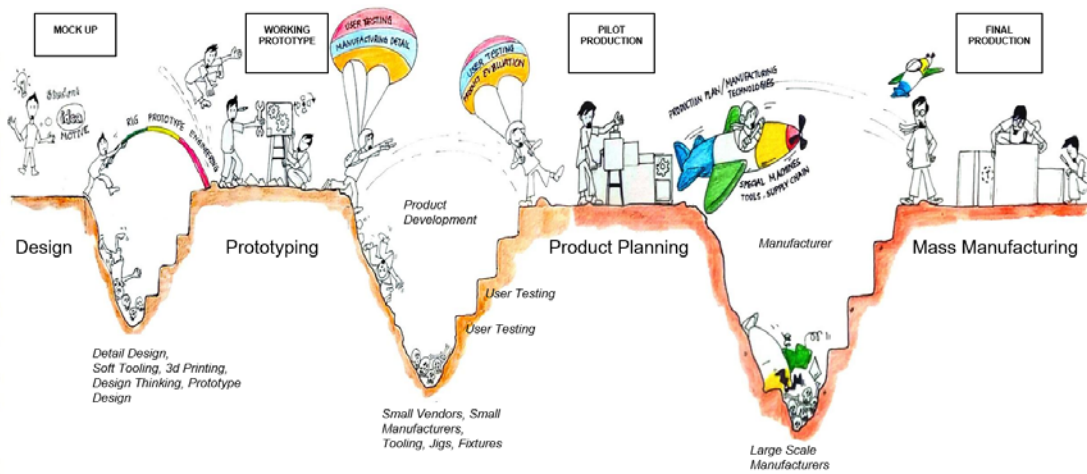


Pitfalls in the Innovation process



This landscape shows us the path of a product from idea to large-scale deployment. You can see three canyons which spell danger, where the idea could fall in and fail before it gets anywhere.

At the first stage, the designer is taking his idea from a mock up to a prototype stage which can help in user testing. At the testing stage the designer's role is say 70% of the total work. The collaborators could be social scientists, material experts, technologists and so on. If things are satisfactory, at this stage our idea is able to make the leap across the pitfall to become a working prototype.

Now the prototype needs to be tested with users and refined. The designer takes inputs from different collaborators to take the idea from prototyping to pilot production. Here the collaborators could be from user experience, market research, manufacturing and related areas depending on the product.

Now the challenge grows harder with large numbers of user trials. In this case the collaborators are engineers, tooling and manufacturing experts, and most importantly, the financiers.

So the designer needs some out-of-the-box thinking tools, and a lot of technical help from other domains in order to leap over these canyons at critical junctures in the innovation process. The pitfalls grow successively deeper at every stage because of the increasing stakes in the project.