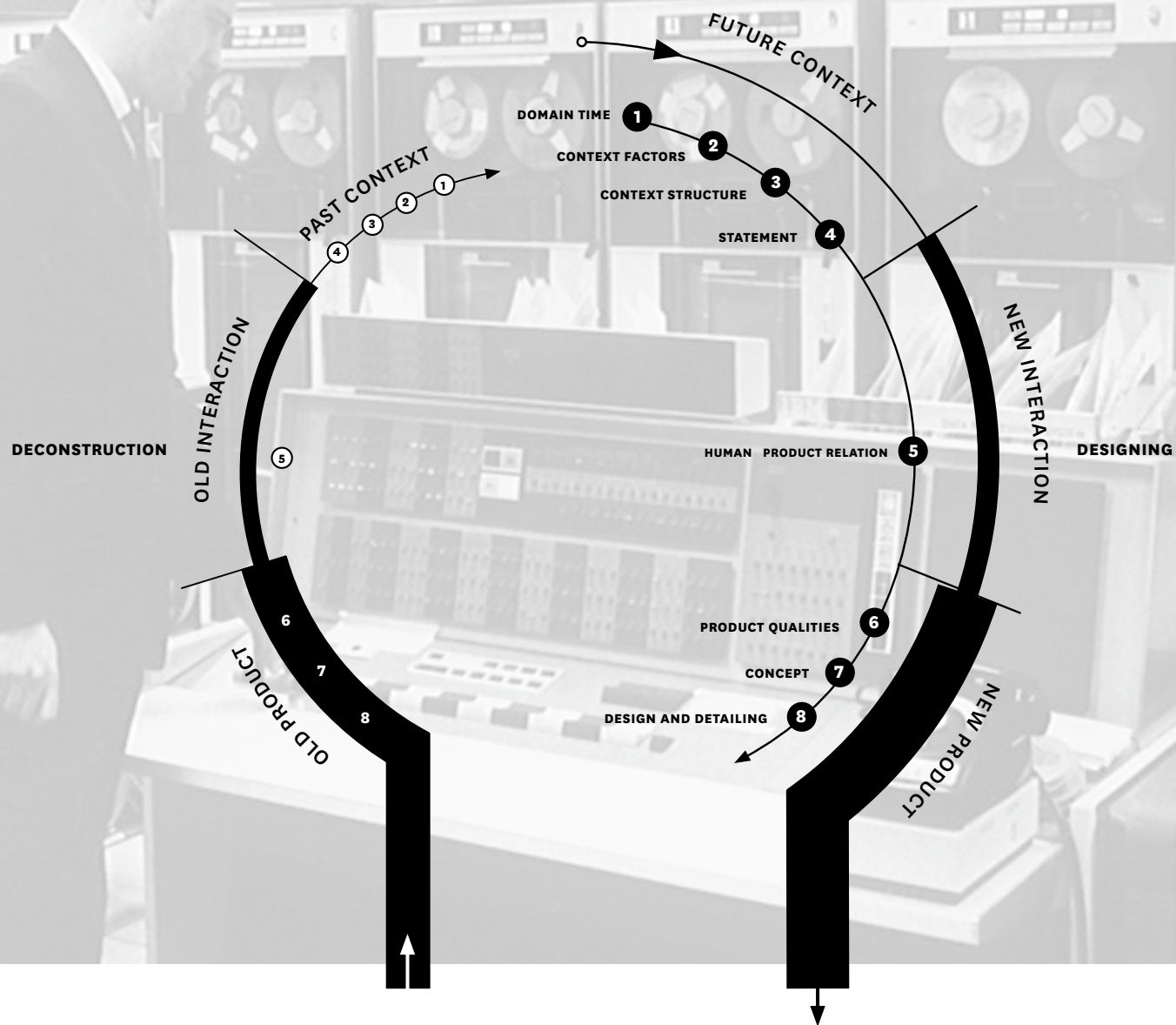


8 steps of the process embedded in the ViP model. After Hekkert and van Dijk, 2011.



How personal is your relationship with your PC? The ViP approach focuses on the relationship between user and product and how it changes when moving into the future. For example, IBM was the main manufacturer of large mainframe computers during the Seventies. Extrapolating from their business at that time, they predicted that a handful of their machines per country would be enough to do all necessary calculations. They did not realise that the relationship between people and computers would become much more personal, as Microsoft and Apple proved.



# VISION IN PRODUCT DESIGN (VIP)

## What is the purpose of the approach?

ViP is a context-driven and interaction-centred approach that offers you a way to come up with products that give people meaning or value. These are designs with a soul: authentic products that reflect the vision and personality of their creator – you. Given the big impact of products on our society, daily life and well-being, the developers of this method consider this responsibility to be essential. ViP provides you with a perspective on your role as co-shaper of society and a step-by-step approach to developing a responsible and authentic design vision that will steer the conceptualisation. This vision includes the explication of what you wish to offer people in a future context before defining the means whereby the design can achieve this. This aspect of the method makes it suitable for innovation processes of any kind.

## Process description

ViP distinguishes between the preparation phase and the designing phase. In the preparation phase the current product(s), product-user interactions and context of those interactions are questioned. In the designing phase, the future context, interactions and design are developed.

When developing a future context, you are confronted with all kinds of considerations. What starting points are interesting and which ones are relevant? What facts lend support to my context and how do I allow personal motives, interests or intuition to play a part? Where and how do I involve the mission of my client and/or developments in the market?

**Vision in Product Design is an approach that supports innovators of any kind to ‘design’ the vision underlying their design or intervention, for example, its reason ‘why’ or ‘raison d’être’.**

By carefully selecting and discussing the building blocks of this future context, you shape the worldview underlying the design.

In order to act upon this world, you need to take a position, which is called ‘the statement’. In this statement you carefully define the *raison d’être* of the final solution: what do I want to offer people? What do I want them to understand, experience or do?

This statement is not directly translated into a product. Products are just a means for accomplishing appropriate actions, interactions and relationships; products provide meaning for people only through interaction. Hence, you are encouraged to consider this interaction first. Without knowing what to design yet, you have to conceptualise a vision of the interaction, an image of the way the product is going to be viewed, used, understood and experienced.

After envisioning the interaction between user and product, you define the product character, for example the qualitative characteristics that the product has to embody.

The statement, interaction and product vision together form the basis for further conceptualisation and materialisation.

## Tips & Concerns

- It is key to devote attention to the quality of the factors that build the future context as this sets the basis for the remainder of the project. Factors need to be specific, meaningful and original.
- Conceptualising an interaction is not an easy task. Here, ViP makes a strong appeal to your skills in conceptual and abstract thinking. It helps you to come up with analogies – for example, comparable situations in which similar interactions exist.
- Although the structure of the method reflects a clear rationale, it helps you to move back and forth through the steps: statement, envisioning interaction and product vision.

## Limitations of the approach

- ViP postpones the development of product ideas as it supports designers to consider its meaning to people first. You should be willing and able to set aside enough time to do so.
- ViP does not provide answers to questions, but rather asks you to pose the right questions. It is up to you to take a position and argue for this position consistently and convincingly.