UX Fundamentals

Week 4:

Synthesis + Storytelling

Feb 15 2021

Siebel
Center
for
Design

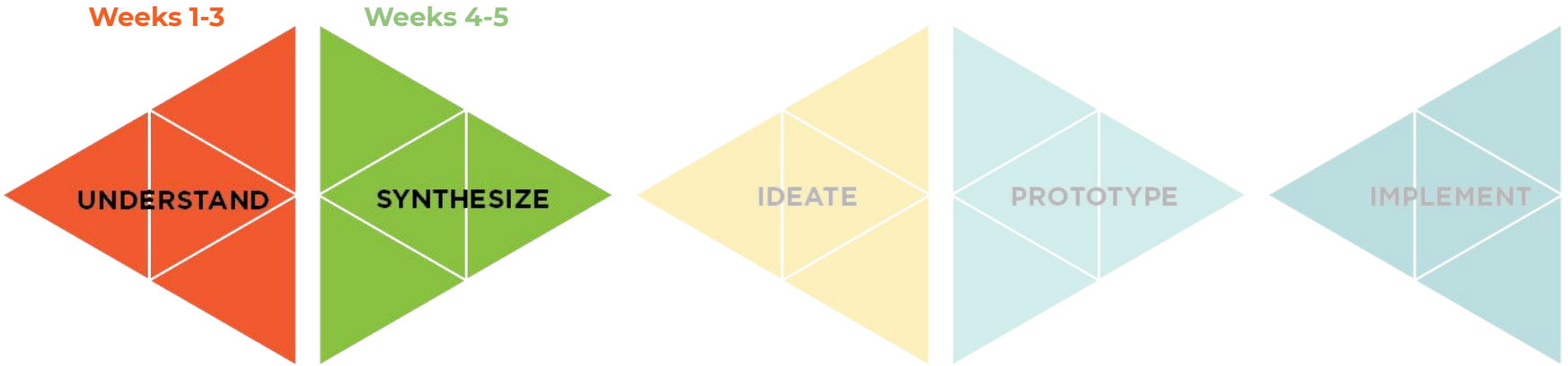
Assignment for this week:

Conduct user research, begin synthesizing insights

- All interviews should be conducted by **Weds. Feb 17**.
- Synthesize insights in **Deliverable 2** by **Sun. Feb 21**.

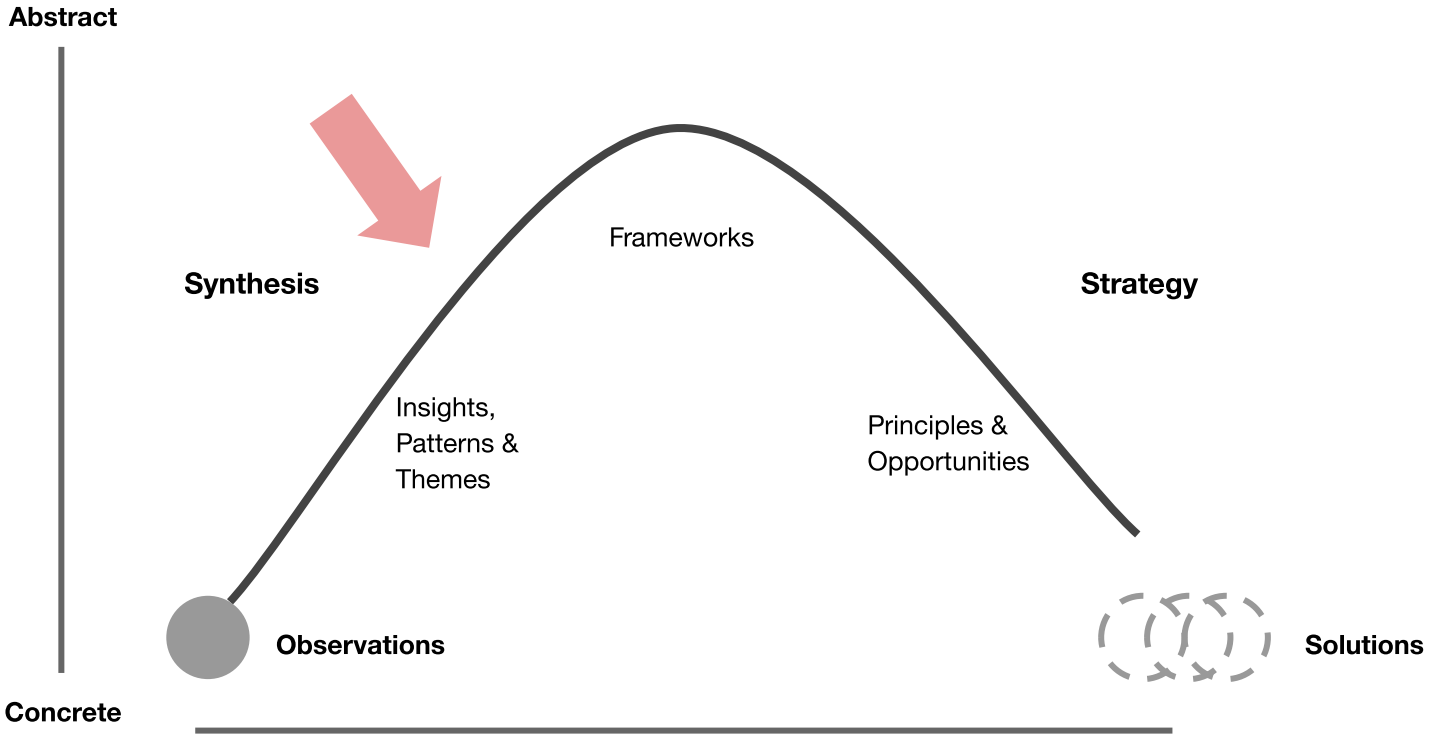
Introduction to Storytelling & Synthesis

Where we are in the process



- Initial assumptions
- Secondary research
- Plan and conduct user research

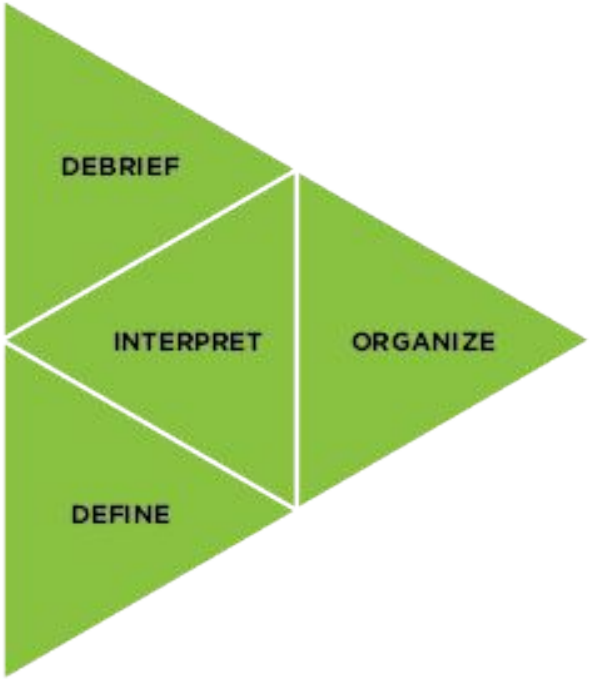
- Identify patterns and themes from research
- Apply frameworks to make meaning


Abstract
Synthesis
Frameworks
Strategy
Insights,
Patterns &
Themes
Principles &
Opportunities
Observations
Solutions
Concrete

What is Synthesis?

- Act of making sense of what we've seen and heard during observations and interviews
- Takes us from inspiration to ideas, from stories to solutions
- Enables us to establish a new perspective and identify new opportunities

Processes + Practices



SYNTHESIZE

Processes

Debrief

- Filter content for relevance and prioritize information
- Communicate content

Organize

- Collapse content
- Chunk & find themes
- Develop insights

Define

- Identify design and research opportunities
- Define the project scope
- Develop how might we statements

Now What?

Interpret

- Identify what else you might need to understand moving forward
- Build questions to inspire ideation

Four Key Activities for Synthesis

1. **Debrief:** Tell stories about individuals
2. **Organize:** Look for patterns
3. **Define:** Extract the key insights
4. **Interpret:** Create frameworks to best communicate

1. Tell Stories About Individuals

Debrief: Tell Stories about Individual

Downloading your interviews for synthesis

- Take turns telling stories
- Actively listen to your team members and look for meaning
- Analyze and interpret meaning
- Focus on the highlights
- Go deeper

“Downloading”

A structure process for recapping interviews and observations to establish a shared understanding of collected data.

Coding interviews allows us to connect each data point back to its source

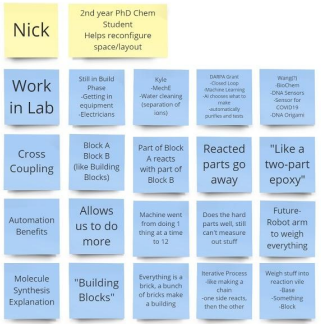
Downloading in Action

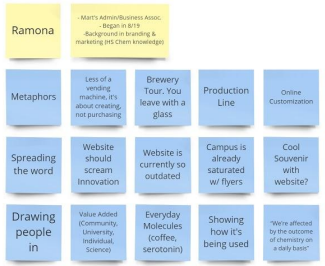
Color coding of interviews can help you stay organized!

Client

Expert

Potential User





Presenting a Story

Lisa

30yo, 3x cancer survivor

5yo — Ewing's Sarcoma, in remission
13yo — 2nd Osteosarcoma, in remission
30yo — Hylanizing Clear Cell Carcinoma, in remission

Pursuing a master's degree in games & education, after deciding not to be an oncologist for fear of spending her life in a cancer ward.

"I was told I was not going to make it through the weekend... my parents were asked to make funeral arrangements. The hardest thing was saying goodbye to my sister."

"No way did I think that bump in my mouth could be cancer."

"Once she got out of the Google terror rabbit hole she actually became useful — and convinced me to go to the best surgeon, who invented the procedure."

"I imagined all the things I would do when I grew up — going camping, going hiking. This one year was the tradeoff I would make to have the rest of my life."

2. Look for Patterns

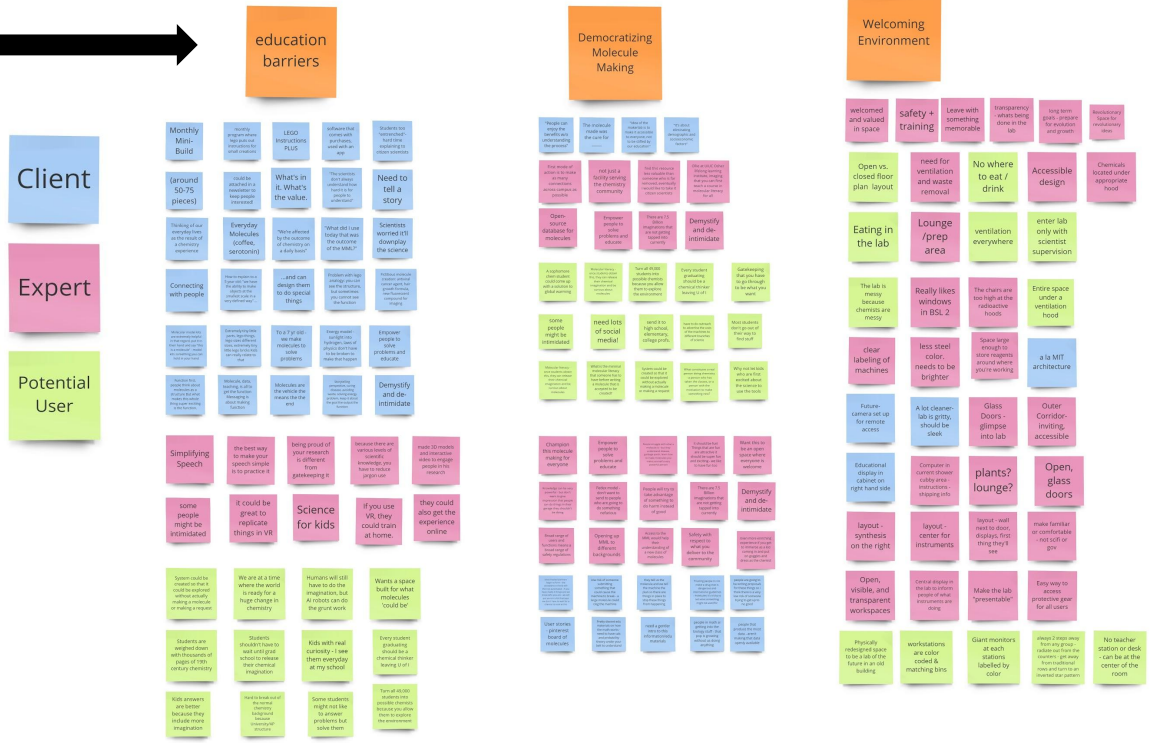
Organize: Looking for Patterns

Identifying Themes in the Stories

- Look for commonalities and themes, bucket like information
- Consider the relationships between buckets
- Group and re-group
- POINT (Problems, Opportunities, Insights, Needs, Themes)
- Develop additional questions/look for holes in research

Identifying Patterns & Themes

Organizing data gathered from interviews under emergent themes



Identifying Patterns & Themes

3. Extract the Key Insights

Define: Extract Key Insights

Develop a set of insights around the research.

What is an insight?

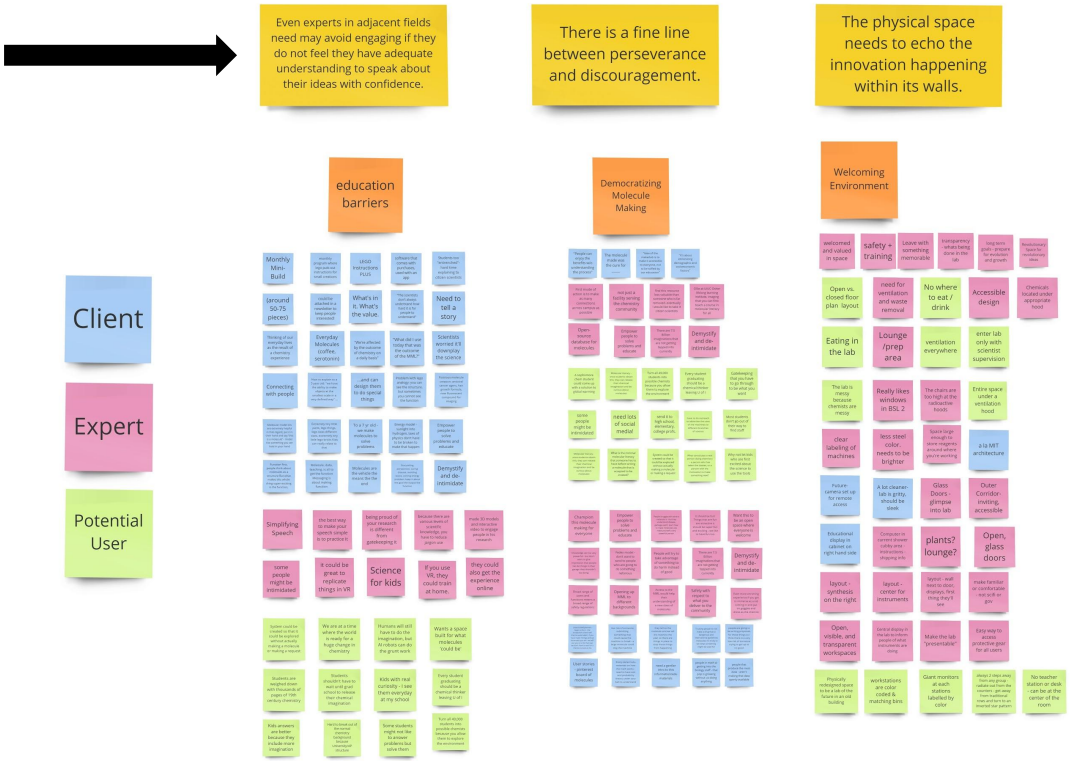
- Insights are revelations - the unexpected things that make you sit up and pay attention

- Insights bring visibility and clarity to previously hidden meaning

- Insights allow us to see the world in a new way

Extracting Key Insights

Full insight statements developed after themes and patterns identified



Example #1: Molecule Maker Lab – democratizing molecule making

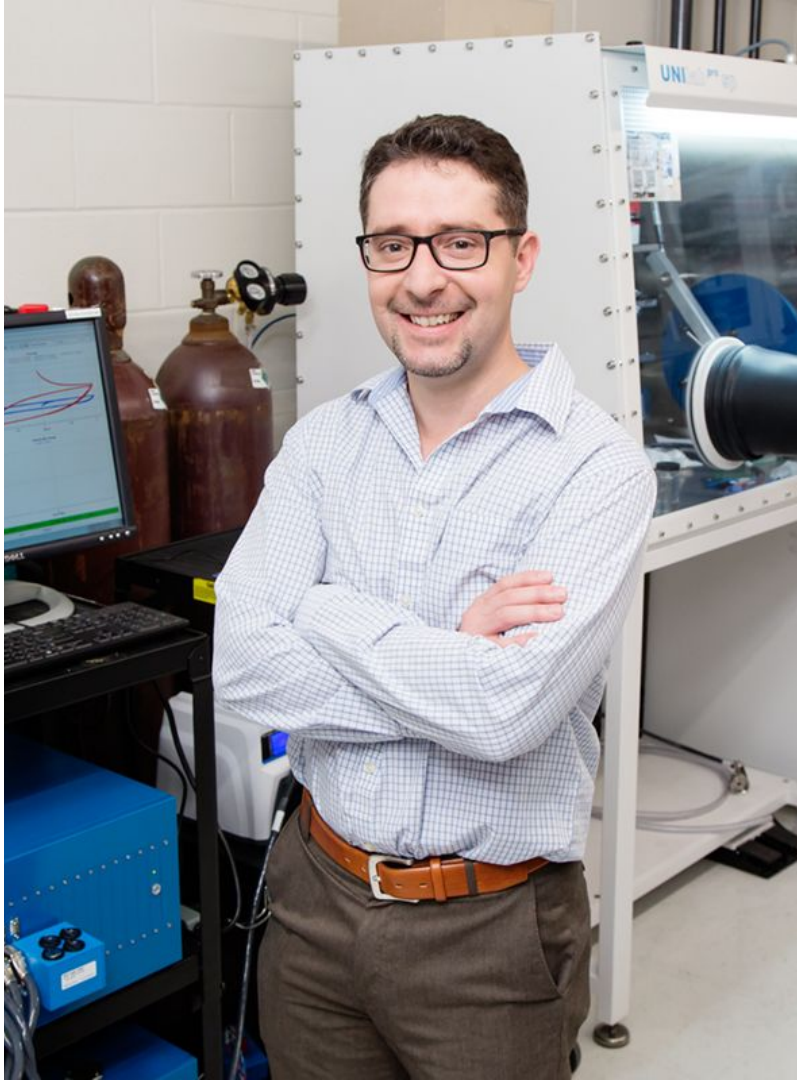
Kyle Smith

PROFESSOR IN MECHANICAL SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING, APPLIED FOR MML SEED FUNDING

“I feel very hesitant about disclosing the details of my plans especially before I get my funding.”

“If people at Illinois and my colleagues saw what molecules I’m choosing, they might make a connection and figure out what I’m trying to do.”

“Sharing my ideas could undercut my chances of getting this work supported.”



INSIGHT #4

Potential collaborators are fearful and hesitant to share their ideas.

"There is a generational divide on sharing data."

NATE RUSSELL

PhD student studying AI & machine learning

"When I hear an idea, it has no value. Come back when you have something tangible."

MARIA JAROMIN

Technology Manager, OTM

Example #2: Illinois App - supporting wellness on campus

Student Stories: Alyssa

Junior,
Industrial Design,
First Generation Student

“People don’t think [mental health] is as important as it is… there’s a lot of downplaying themselves.”

“My friend group openly complains about things… there’s a lot of covering things up with humor.”

“We don’t really say ‘mental health’ [among friends].”

“Professors here ‘preach empathy’ but don’t practice it.”

“One professor said ‘I don’t know why you guys are so tired!’ while talking to another professor.”

Insight #3

It's hard to talk (and be taken) seriously about mental health concerns.

As a result of toxic cultures, stigmas and misinformation, many students make light of their own mental health issues using humor or social norms to justify their behavior.

"People live at sort of the 'ehh' level... it's cute for the meme."

- *Kolton,*
  Sophomore,
  Global Studies

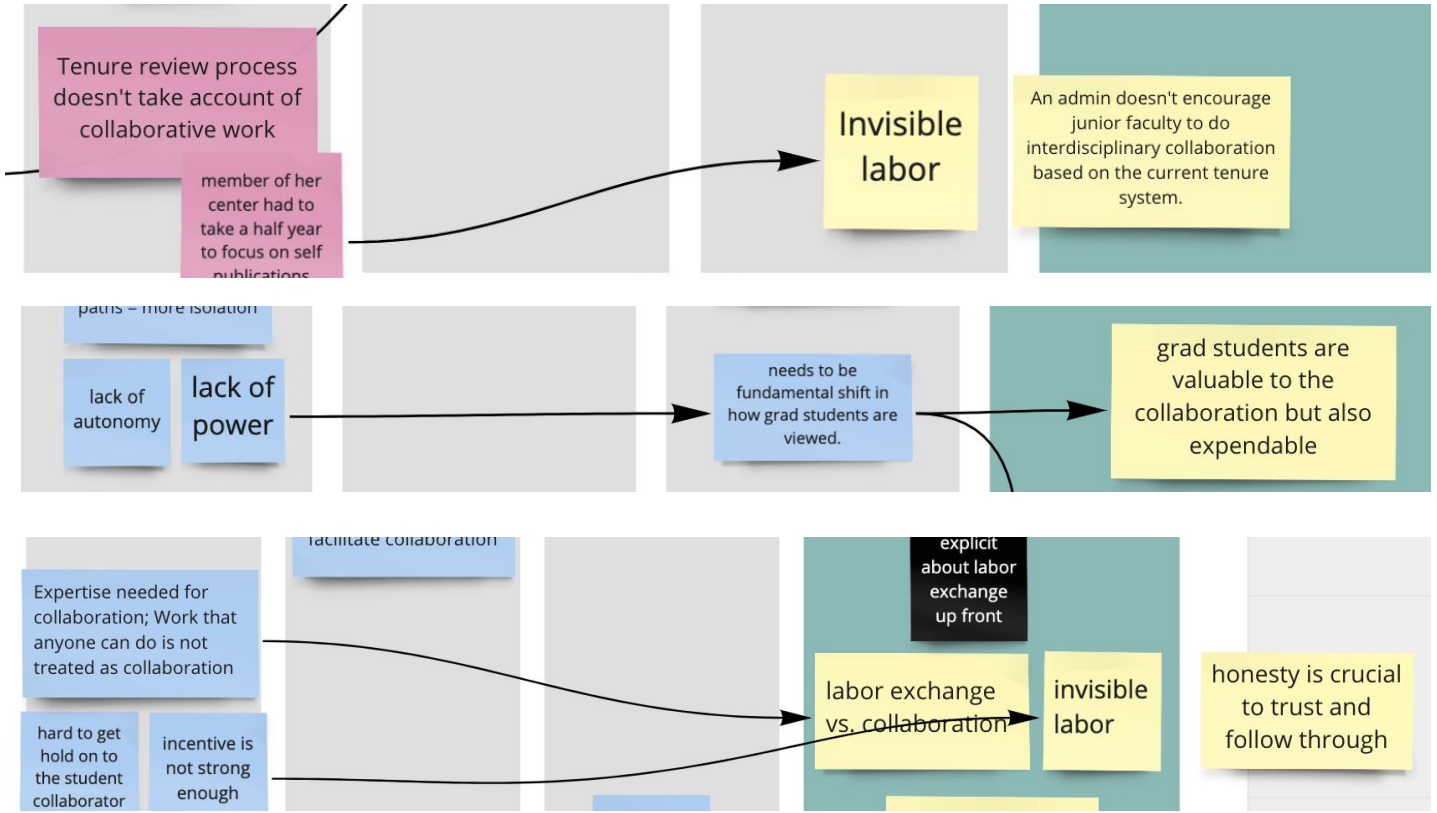
"Students often make jokes about being depressed or feeling suicidal... there's a stigma around seeking help."

- *Ally,*
  Junior,
  Urban Planning/
  Sustainability

"Promoting self-care is very hard when they're receiving conflicting messages... a student's PhD advisor told them 'If you had time to shower, you aren't dedicated to this program.'"

- *Jennifer Carson,*
  Stress Management Coordinator

Example #3: UIUCollab



Emerging Theme:

Invisible Labor / Labor Exchange

Key Insight

The system needs to promote all contributions as equal.

“When the time came for his third year tenure review, his department had told him that none of his collaborative papers would count for tenure."

-- A professor

“They don't necessarily treat female students' work the same way they treat male students' [work]...it feels like when you're trying to present to those PIs you have to go through two layers of defense before they will actually believe what you're saying."

-- A grad student

- Decide how you want to be represented
- Promote projects from individuals from marginalized groups
- Acknowledge labor exchange as “notable collaborations” regardless of status of individual, ie. undergrad vs. postdoc

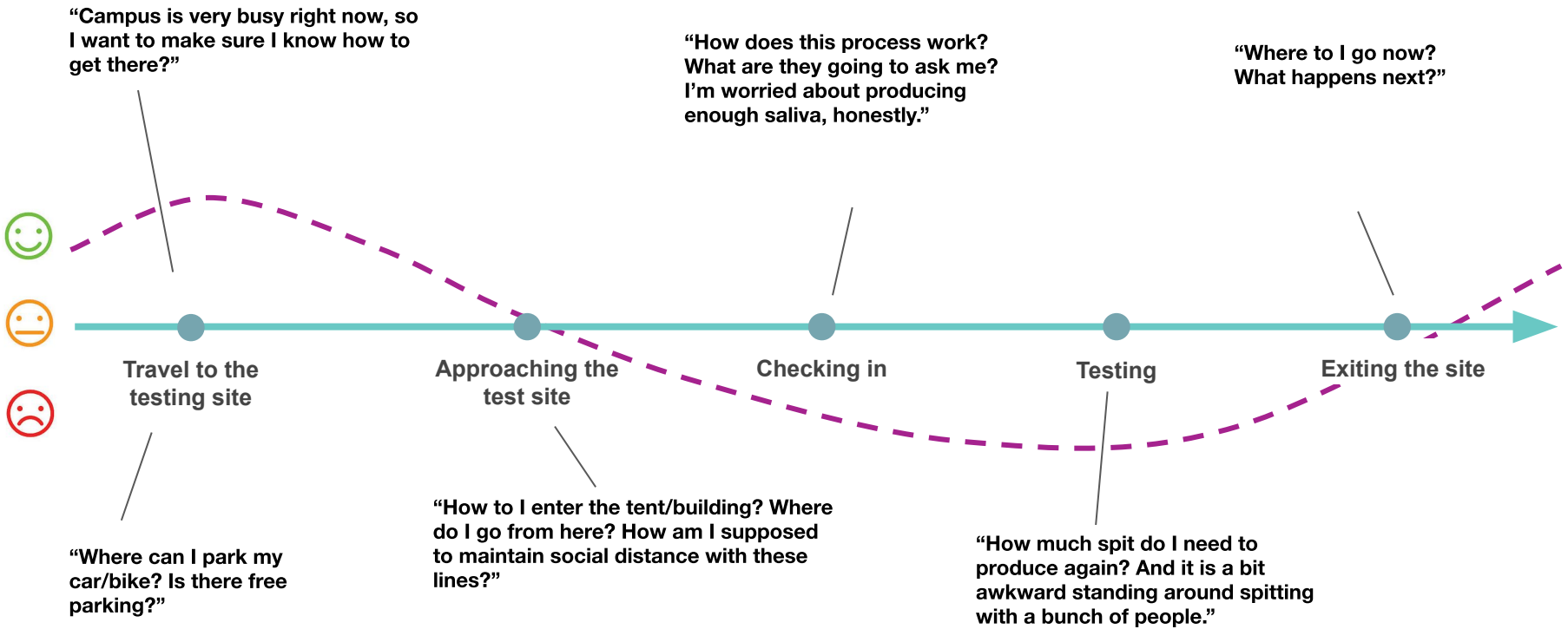
4. Create frameworks to best communicate findings

Interpret: Storytelling + Frameworks

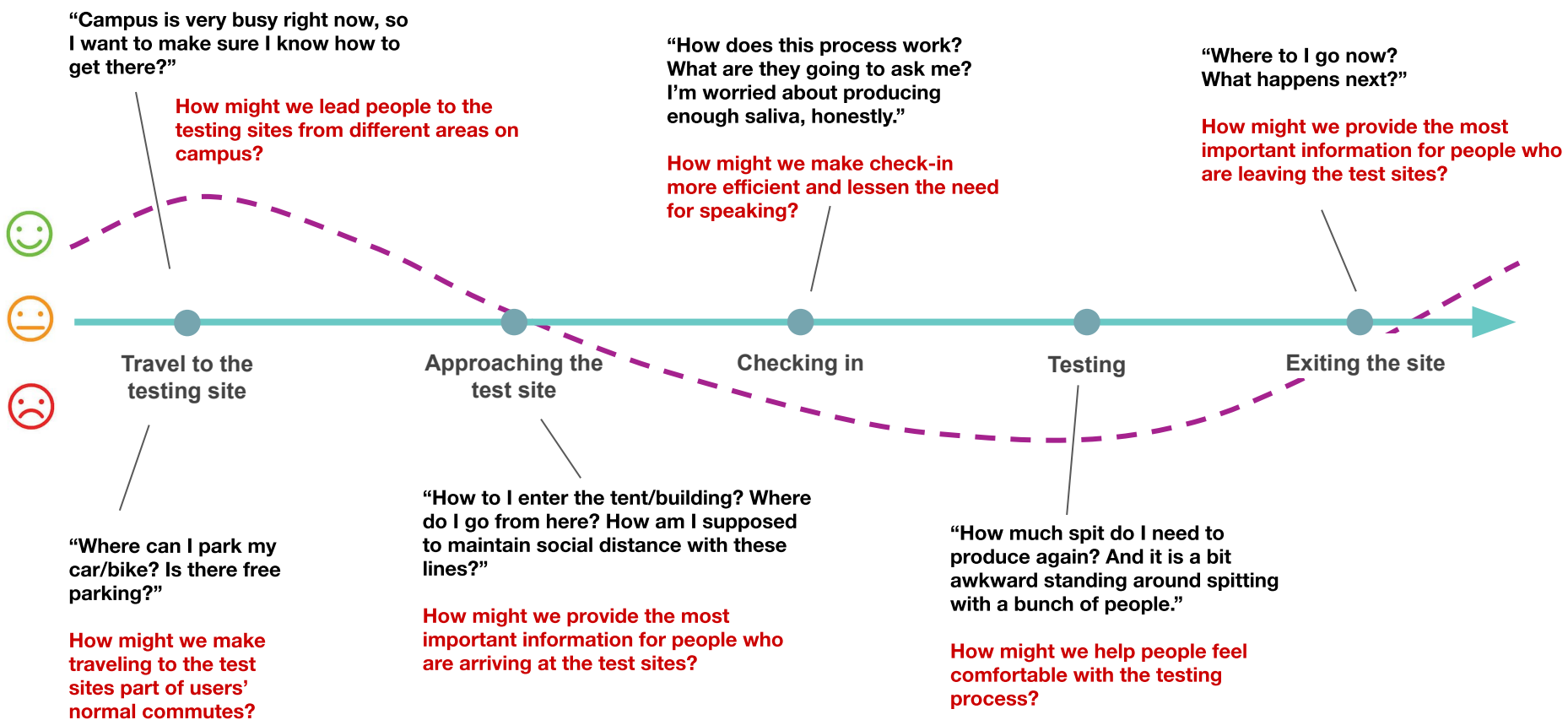
Communicating your research findings

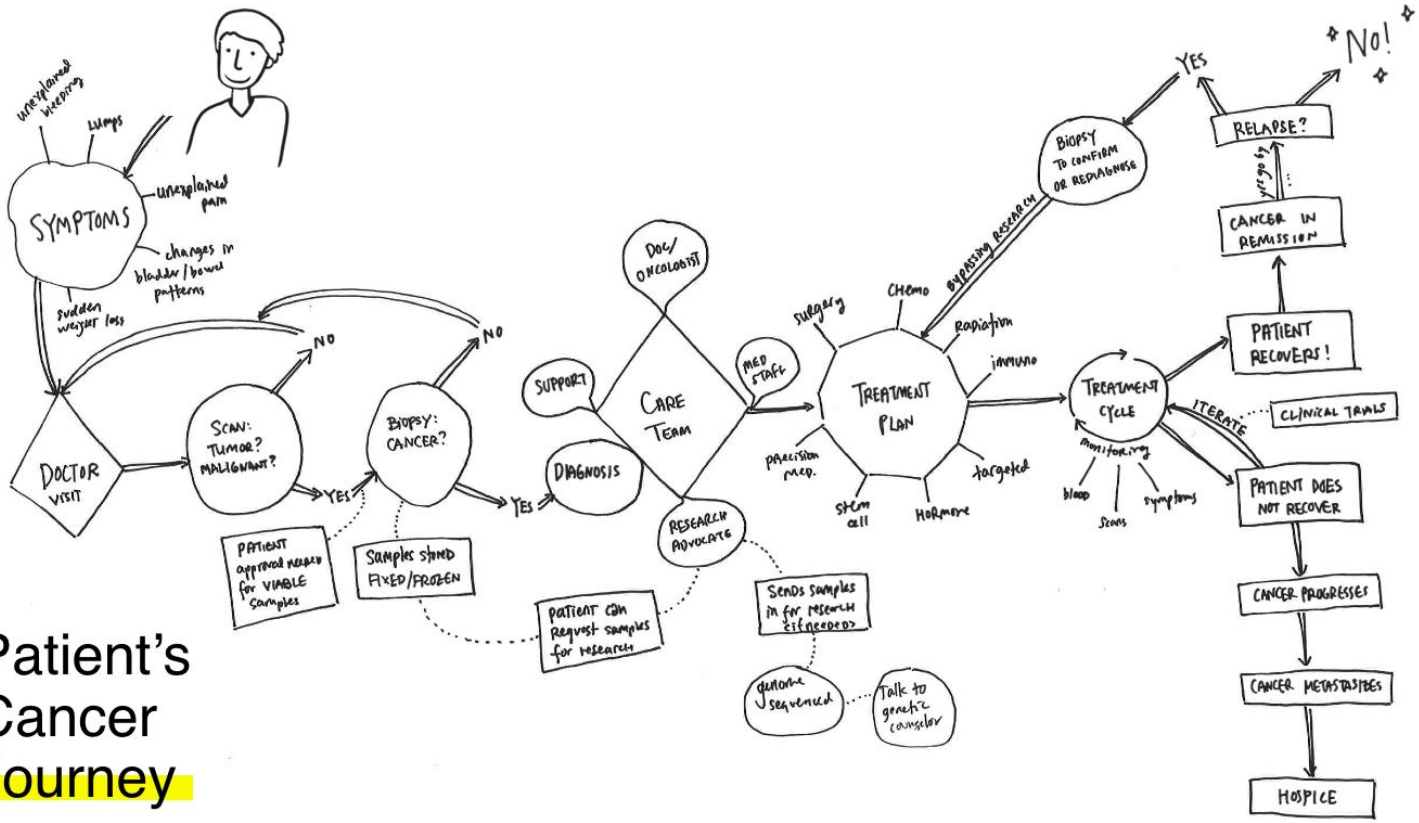
- Find the best way to express your insights
- Find the right framework for your story

Saliva Test Process: User Journey / Moments that Matter



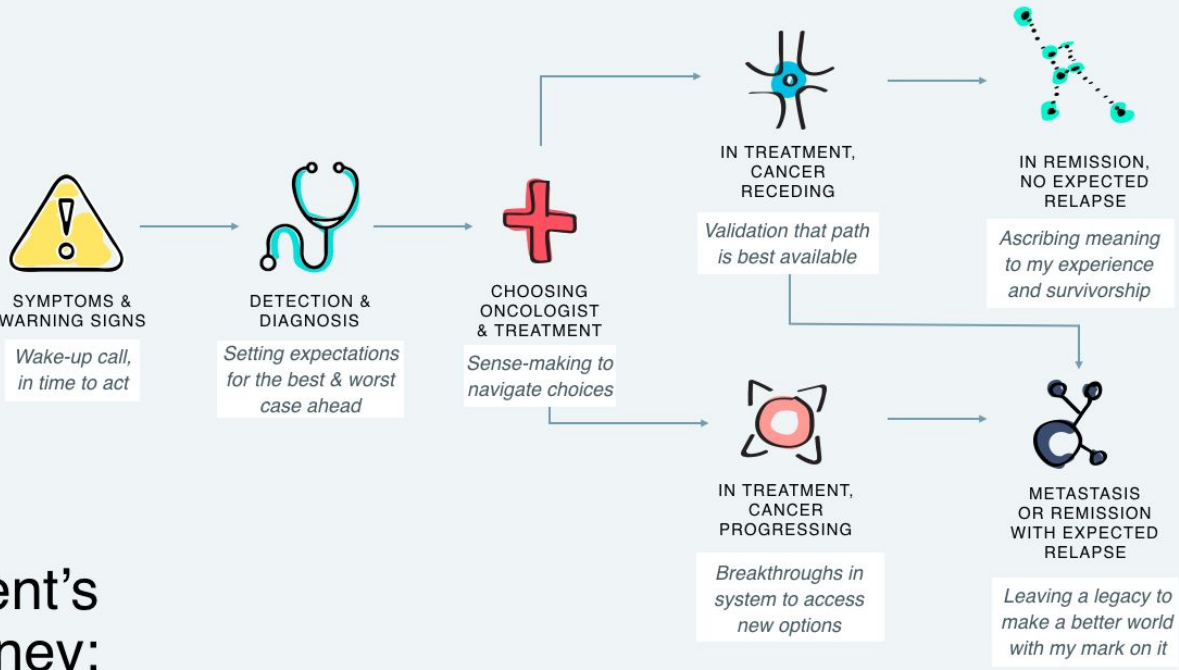
Saliva Test Process: User Journey / Opportunities for Design





Patient's Cancer Journey

Patient's Journey: Simplified



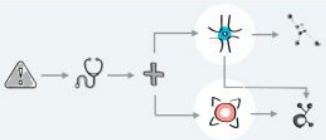
INSIGHTS

05

Caretakers are a critical part of treatment, but often lose their support system.

—

Caretakers play an extraordinarily important role in cancer journeys, especially for the old and the young. Supporters are often those who keep records, translate information and seek out the best possible treatment for those that they love. That said, as a patient it can also be challenging to build support when you're down both physically and mentally.



SUPPORTIVE QUOTES

—

"I'm ready to finish my bucket list. I want to travel, but my husband just wants to rest."
— Stacey

"It's been 6-7 months and now all this [bottled up emotional experience] is coming out. He felt like it was all about me."
— Stacey

"For my second surgery I told my mom she couldn't come because she was so worried and anxious that it put more stress on me." — Beth

"My mom would use a chatbot. Clearly she needs someone to talk to." — Beth

"I felt like I was going to pass out. I was crying non-stop. I didn't want to cry in front of him." — Natasha

Behavioral Segmentation

"Hold my hand through the process."

Offer the opportunity to learn more about, and be coached through the retirement process using straightforward language. Allow them to pause the process and take time to consult others when questions arise.

PASSENGERS

"Let me see all the possibilities in front of me."

Give them the opportunity to experiment with different retirement scenarios. Offer unbiased information to expand their understanding of retirement.

EXPLORERS

"Show me the process from beginning to end."

Show what the whole process will look like so they can plan in advance. Visualize multiple income sources all in one place.

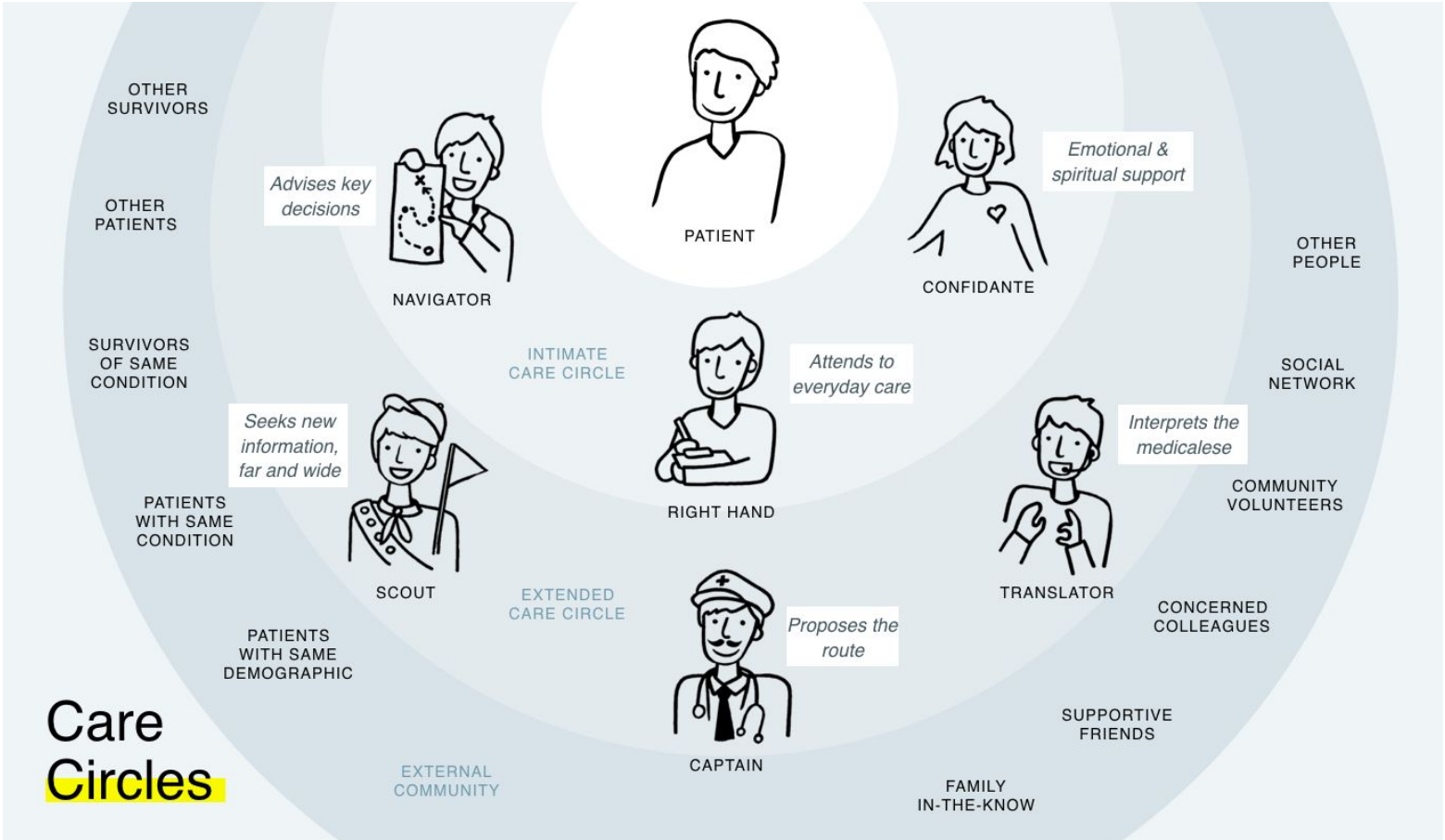
PATHFINDERS

"Get me to the finish line as quickly as possible."

Provide the convenience of completing the application without visiting an office. Offer instant feedback to let them know that the process has been successful.

BY-PASSERS

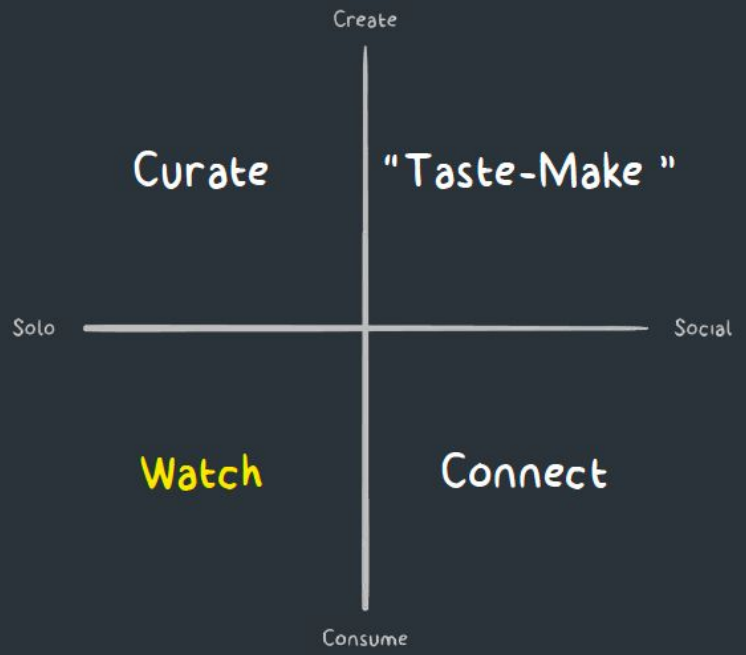
Maps


OTHER SURVIVORS
OTHER PATIENTS
SURVIVORS OF SAME CONDITION
PATIENTS WITH SAME CONDITION
PATIENTS WITH SAME DEMOGRAPHIC
Advises key decisions
NAVIGATOR
PATIENT
Emotional & spiritual support
CONFIDANTE
OTHER PEOPLE
SOCIAL NETWORK
COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS
CONCERNED COLLEAGUES
SUPPORTIVE FRIENDS
FAMILY IN-THE-KNOW
INTIMATE CARE CIRCLE
Attends to everyday care
RIGHT HAND
Seeks new information, far and wide
SCOUT
Interprets the medicalese
TRANSLATOR
EXTENDED CARE CIRCLE
Proposes the route
CAPTAIN
EXTERNAL COMMUNITY
Care Circles

Two by Twos

02. Levels of Engagement

Not only how, when, and where we watch TV has changed (content + context), but also how we might potentially engage with it, socially and/or creatively.



4. Generate “How Might We…” Questions

Creating Design Opportunities

Framing for Multiple Solutions
A properly framed “How might we….?” doesn’t suggest one solution; but gives you the perfect frame for innovative thinking.

Inspired by Insights
HMW is inspired by at least one of the developed insights which are linked to more than one observation, interview idea or quote.

Creating Helpful Boundaries
HMW question is broad enough to lead to a wide range of solutions; but narrow enough to create helpful boundaries to think about specific solutions.

Example: Improving the airline experience

HMW create a seats with adjustable heights?

HMW create a sense of personalization in the seating experience?

HMW redesign seating on long flights?

Too Narrow

Just Right

Too Broad

Why too narrow?

HMW create a seats with adjustable heights?

HMW create a sense of personalization in the seating experience?

HMW redesign seating on long flights?

Too Narrow | Just Right | Too Broad

Framing for Multiple Solutions

This HMW question suggests only one solution; it also suggests a very defined frame that limits thinking about the challenge.

Inspired by Insights

This HMW question is probably inspired by one interview idea under one insight, for example, one interviewee complaining about the height of current seats.

Creating Helpful Boundaries

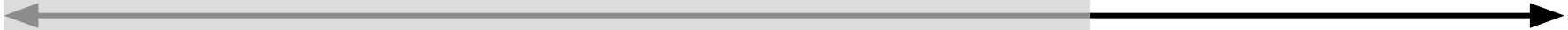
This HMW likely leads to one solution; it creates very strict boundaries that can only help think about one specific solution.

Why too broad?

HMW create a seats with adjustable heights?

HMW create a sense of personalization in the seating experience?

HMW redesign seating on long flights?



Too Narrow

Just Right

Too Broad

Framing for Multiple Solutions

This HMW question suggests infinite solutions; it does not suggest any defined frame to think about the challenge.

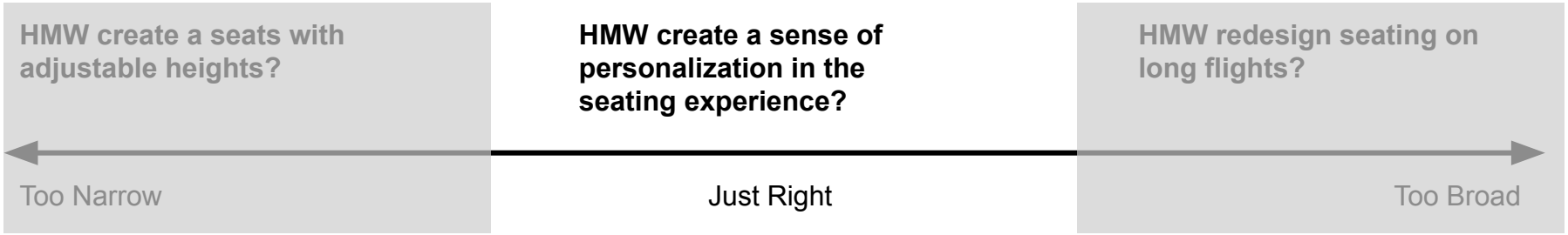
Inspired by Insights

This HMW question can be inspired by all insights!

Creating Helpful Boundaries

This HMW leads to infinite number of solutions; it does not create any boundaries that can help think about specific solution.

Why just right?



✔ **Framing for Multiple Solutions**

This HMW question suggests more than one solution; it also suggests a defined frame that permits innovative thinking under the area of the airline experience.

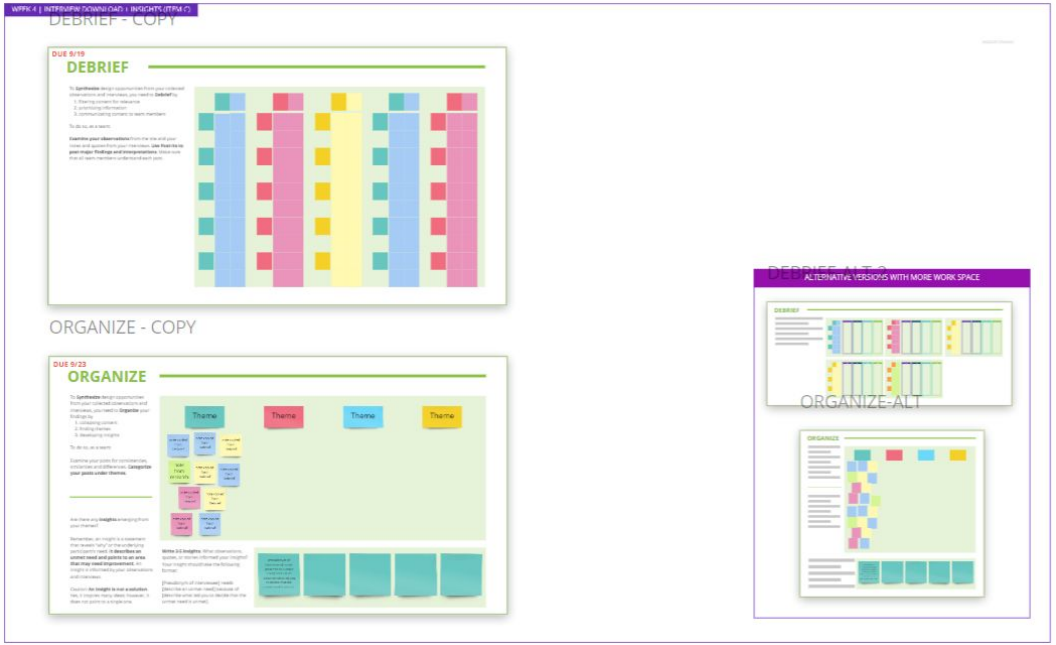
✔ **Inspired by Insights**

This HMW question is definitely inspired by one or more insights generated from multiple observations and interviews related to personalizing the seating experience.

✔ **Creating Helpful Boundaries**

This HMW leads to more than one solution; however, it creates boundaries that can only help think about specific solutions in the area of personalizing seating on airlines.

Let’s walk through Deliverable 2



Things to do this week:

1. Each **group** should **contribute at least one suggested reading** to the **#week-4-discussion** channel, about the topic of **Synthesis in UX research**.
2. Complete **Deliverable 2** in your group's Miro board by **midnight on Sunday 2/21**.

What to expect next week:

1. You'll start **creating your frameworks in Miro** to communicate your synthesized insights, and **build a 10-minute deck** to present in class on **Monday 3/1** that summarizes your work thus far.
2. In class next week, we'll share guidelines and discuss our expectations and parameters for these first presentations, and meet with each group to talk about your synthesis progress.