Sharing Inspiring User Stories

One way of making sense of your data from your fieldwork and research is to share with your team the most inspiring stories you've heard from the people you're designing for. Think about user stories or experiences that have stuck with you: stories which surprised you, made you curious, or verified or falsified your assumptions. Please note, it's also important to look for stories which falsify your previous assumptions as you don't want to risk moving forward just confirming your own wishes without really paying attention to your users' core stories and needs. Stores will most likely not provide you with the ultimate solutions to your design challenge, but chances are they'll resonate with your team. At the international design company IDEO, team members share inspiring stories with each other so that user stories become part of their collective consciousness.

> The goal is to build a repository of stories for your team to draw from, tell, and retell. Capturing those resonant ideas and feelings, and building them into the very narrative of your team's work helps everyone down the line.
> – IDEO.org

Best Practice: Construct Your User Story Madlib

Try to tell the most essential stories and consider them to be a series of steps within a broader system.

- As a [who are they], he/she wants to [what do they want to do], so that [their end goal].

- Example: As a freelance consultant, Peter wants to easily schedule meetings, so that he can ensure his schedule is always organised and effective.

- Example: As a corporate web designer, Lisa wants to improve the company's website, so that users can easily find and get access to what they need.

Steps for the Facilitator

1 | Tell your most compelling stories from the fieldwork to your team. You should be both specific (what actually happened) and descriptive (use your physical senses to give texture to your description). Report on who, what, when, where, why, and how.

2 | Invite each of your teammates to share their own inspiring stories.

3 | As you and your team listen to your teammates' stories, you and your team should write down notes and observations on Post-its. You should use concise and complete sentences that everyone on your team can easily understand. Write down quotes, household details, income, aspirations, barriers, the person's life history, and any other relevant observations.

4 | Make sure to write large enough so that everyone can read your notes. Then gather all the Post-its up on the wall, organise them into separate categories for each person that your team interviewed and each place that your team visited. At the end of your story sharing, you'll have many sheets lined up on the wall with hundreds of Post-it notes.

How to Use the Inspiring User Stories

- Your team can use these user stories when you start defining the problem statement and your design challenge.

- Your team can use these stories for solid inspiration when you create personas.

- Your team can use these user stories as a collective consciousness when you start ideating and imagining opportunities and solutions.