

Storytelling as a Method for Problem Framing in Design

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1. Workshop Organiser/s

Organiser Name	Email	Affiliation
Dalsu Özgen Koçyıldırım (Lead and Contact)	dozgen@metu.edu.tr	METU-Department of Industrial Design
Aykut Coşkun	aykutcokun@ku.edu.tr	Koç University- Department of Media and Visual Arts
Yekta Bakırloğlu	yekta@metu.edu.tr	METU-Department of Industrial Design

2. Context of Workshop

Storytelling is a prominent topic in design, as design researchers and practitioners discover its effectiveness in not only communicating ideas but understanding human behaviour, motivation and interactions. Our research explores the uses and the effects of storytelling as a tool, in different stages of the design process. Our previous work revealed this tool's potentials in design communication and defined a framework for its implementation in design education. Following on our findings, we are now looking at its use in the initial stages of the design process. We intend to conduct a workshop session to see the possibilities emerging from the use of storytelling as a technique for problem framing in design. Through this exploration we will address how design research can be *a creative and active force for rethinking ideas about Design*.

The workshop theme will be 'The Last Night Before The Deadline', a phrase many designers are familiar with and that proposes an emotional experience they can relate to. The phrase is also remindful that the design process itself is a story. In summary, we believe that rethinking a familiar topic through a visually expressed narrative provides an opportunity to explore storytelling as a problem framing tool.

3. Planned Activities and Expected Outcomes

Participants, working in teams of three, are expected to:

- share their experiences of 'The Last Night Before The Deadline'
- create a 'The Last Night Before The Deadline' narrative based on these experiences
- visualize and identify potential problem areas and intervention points in this narrative

The workshop consists of three phases.

Phase 1: Stories and Experiences (60 min): After a brief introduction to the workshop topic and definition of key storytelling concepts, participants are going to share their own *story* for 'The Last Night Before The Deadline' with other team members by explaining the *setting*, the *characters*, the *plot*, the *conflict* they faced and how they *resolved* it. Then, each group will create a narrative either based on one of the shared stories, a combination of them or a new narrative that emerged during the discussions. The expected outcome of this phase is four different narratives in the form of written and/or drawn descriptions.

Phase 2: Impact Areas and Intervention Points (90 min): Participants are required to identify and visualize at least three problem areas on which they think they can have an impact. As a guide we will show them two techniques for visualization of problem areas and intervention points. The participants will be free to choose one of them, combine them or use a different technique. The expected outcome of this phase is four different visual narratives identifying the impact areas and intervention points for 'The Last Night Before The Deadline'.

Phase 3: Closure and Discussion (30 min): In this phase, after each group presented its narrative, there will be an informal discussion in which we will ask participants about their experience of using the technique and their recommendations for improvements.

At the end of the workshop, participants will have a better understanding of the role storytelling plays in the design process, how it can be used as a design thinking tool to approach a topic, to rethink established conceptions and to discover new solution areas.

4. Intended Audience

The workshop is intended for practitioners and graduate students from design fields including industrial design, interior design, interaction design, communication design, graphic design and service design.

Ideal number of participants is 12.

5. Length of Workshop

The workshop will be a 3,5 hour, half-day workshop. The duration of its three phases will be: 1) sharing of stories and experiences: 60 mins, 2) impact areas and intervention points: 90

mins, and 3) closure and discussion: 30 mins. There will be 10 minute breaks between each phase.

6. Space and Equipment Required

- A studio space
- 15 chairs
- 4 tables
- A projector
- A white board
- Bunch of A3 (or larger) size white paper, coloured pencils, board markers, post-it notes

7. Potential Outputs

The workshop, building up on an initial participatory case study to be conducted in March, will provide insights for a succeeding research that will be conducted in Illinois Institute of Technology, Department of Industrial Design, starting in August 2016. The aim of the research, to which this workshop will contribute, is to rethink the design process by developing new and creative ways to frame a problem, develop design ideas and to present them, and finally to define a design method that would focus on storytelling.

About the Organisers:

Dalsu Özgen Koçyıldırım, DA. Lecturer in METU Industrial Design Department, with a background in Graphic Design and Motion Design (BFA: Bilkent University, MFA:Parsons School of Design, DA: MSFAU). Research interests are foundation design education, design communication and visual storytelling.

Aykut Coşkun, PhD. Assist. Prof. Dr. in Koç University Media and Visual Arts Department. Holds a BSc. Msc. and PhD. in industrial design from Middle East Technical University. Research interests are design for behaviour change, design for sustainability, design for healthy living.

Yekta Bakırlioğlu, Msc. is a Ph.D. candidate and research assistant in METU Department of Industrial Design and a part-time researcher in Sustain Design Research Lab in Ankara, Turkey. His research interests include product design for sustainability, sustainable production and consumption, and design education for sustainability.