Lessons from a UX career 10 years in the making

Anita Cheng, *civic technologist*

About me

- Career changer
- UX Team of One to content designer
- Government experience (city, county, federal*)

* Disclaimer!

- I am speaking in my personal capacity, and not on behalf of my current agency.
- I (still) can't talk about my work in the federal government, not even during the Q&A. (Sorry!)

Let’s get started!

Lesson #1:

Solve problems

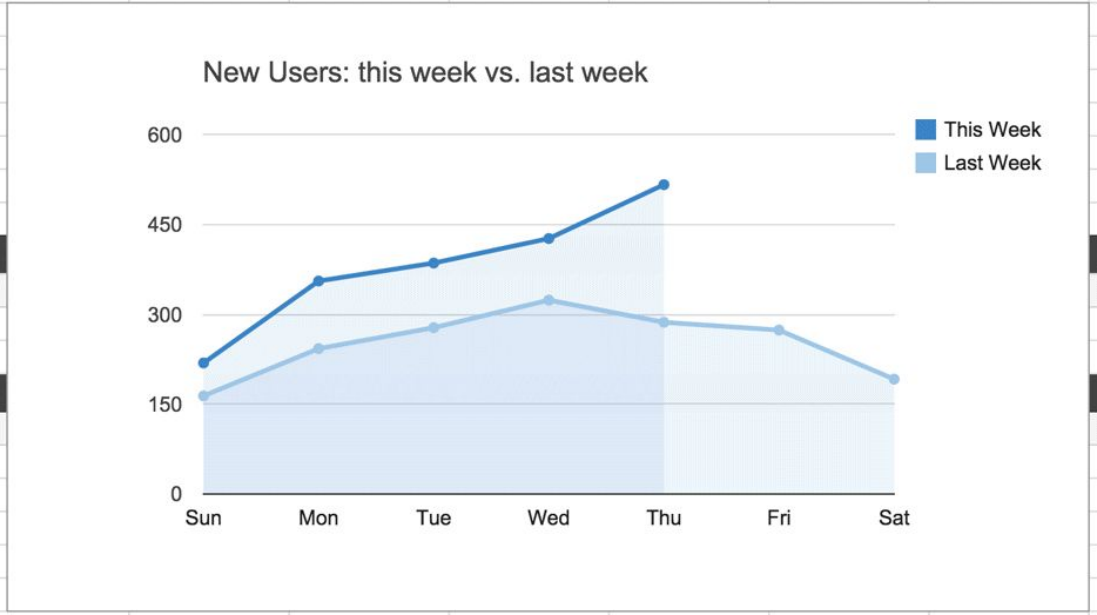
It’s not about how much you know, it’s how much you can listen and help.

(Nobody cares about the design tools or frameworks you know!)

Design is about problem solving.

And it’s people who have the problems.

	A	B
1	**This Week**	
2	**Last Run On**	12/18/2014 19:20:50
3	**View (Profile) Name**	All Web Site Data
4	**Total Results Found**	5
5	**Total Results Returned**	5
6	**Contains Sampled Data**	No
7		
8		
9		
10	**Totals For All Results**	
11		**ga:newUsers**
12		1905
13		
14	**Results Breakdown**	
15	**ga:date**	**ga:newUsers**
16	12/14/2014	219
17	12/15/2014	356
18	12/16/2014	386
19	12/17/2014	427
20	12/18/2014	517
21		



(Not real data, but generally what the spreadsheet looked like.)

Give help to get help.

Lesson #2:

Manage expectations

People often don’t agree on the problem being solved.

It’s ok if you don’t achieve as much as you would have liked...

...as long as people didn’t expect you to. 😅

Talk enough to be sure everyone is on the same page at all times.

Be extra communicative around updates - they often involve scope changes!

Knowing what you need, articulating it, and being able to predict the future are all signs of deep experience.

“We’ll look into it and get back to you later.”

Good stakeholder management 👍

Lesson #3:

Learn what came before

“Never forget that someone initially designed it. It was most likely a developer, but *someone* made design decisions about it.”

Jared Spool, Center Centre - UIE

If there’s an obvious solution, someone has probably tried it before.

Be curious! Find out why it didn’t work, and if it might work now.

If it won’t work now, it’s ok to to table it for later.

Lesson #4:

It’s all about storytelling

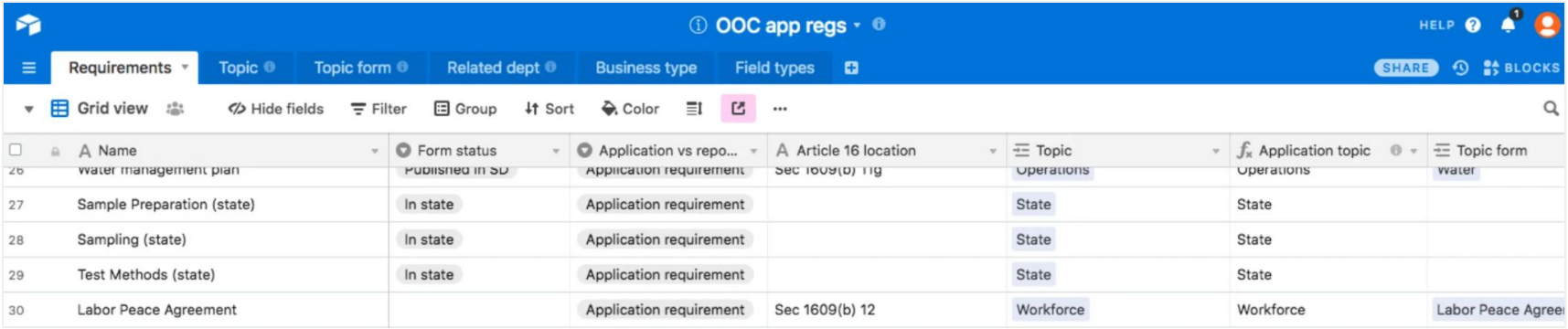
It’s not about how much design work you do.

It’s how well you explain how you solved someone’s problem.

Nobody cares how you arrive at a solution!

They just want their problem solved.

(Sometimes they do try!)



	Name	Form status	Application vs repo...	Article 16 location	Topic	Application topic	Topic form
26	Water management plan	Published in SD	Application requirement	Sec 1609(b) 11g	Operations	Operations	Water
27	Sample Preparation (state)	In state	Application requirement		State	State	
28	Sampling (state)	In state	Application requirement		State	State	
29	Test Methods (state)	In state	Application requirement		State	State	
30	Labor Peace Agreement		Application requirement	Sec 1609(b) 12	Workforce	Workforce	Labor Peace Agree

* Immediate regret *

36	Energy assessment authorization from DE o...	Published in SD	Business reporting	Sec 1609(b) 18	Operations		Energy
37	Good Neighbor Policy	Published in SD	Application requirement	Sec 1609(b) 19	Community	Community	Good Neighbor Poli
38	Staffing plan (org chart with reporting struc...	Waiting for dept fields	Application requirement	Sec 1609(b) 20	Workforce	Workforce	Staffing
39	Community Benefits Agreement	Published in SD	Application requirement	Sec 1609(b) 21	Community	Community	Community Benefit
40	Equity Business Development (rent-free spa...	Published in SD	Business reporting	Draft	Community		Equity
41	Equity workforce (hire equity, purchase fro...	Published in SD	Business reporting	Draft	Community		Equity
42	Equity in city (donations, donate time, other)	Published in SD	Business reporting	Draft	Community		Equity
43	Confirm not selling tobacco or alcohol		Application requirement	Sec 1609(b) 23, Sec 1618(f), Se...	Operations	Operations	Retail
44	Community Outreach Strategy	Published in SD	Application requirement	Sec 1609(b) 24	Community	Community	Outreach
45	Equity Progress Report	Waiting	Business reporting	Sec 1609(b) 25	Community		Equity

Storytelling a design

1. Context and background → Conflict
2. Figuring out the solution → Narrative journey
3. Presenting the solution → Conclusion (“and they lived happily ever after!”)

If it doesn’t engage people, it has to go.

Lesson #5:

Set yourself up for success

Pinned

sm
@sashax

Gov't Digital Service progression:
year 1: "Why y'all talk about procurement so much? How boring."
year 2: "Man, procurement's a pain."
yr 3: "We should really consider doing something about procurement"
yr 4: "Holy crap there's nothing more important than solving procurement!"

12:05 PM · Dec 13, 2017

(Procurement: buying goods, software, and services. Often involves contracts of varying details.)

Make sure you can get the resources and help you need.

(This includes staff!)

If success is imperative, you will be given the means to succeed.

Lesson #6:

Work as a team

“I need to finish this project.”

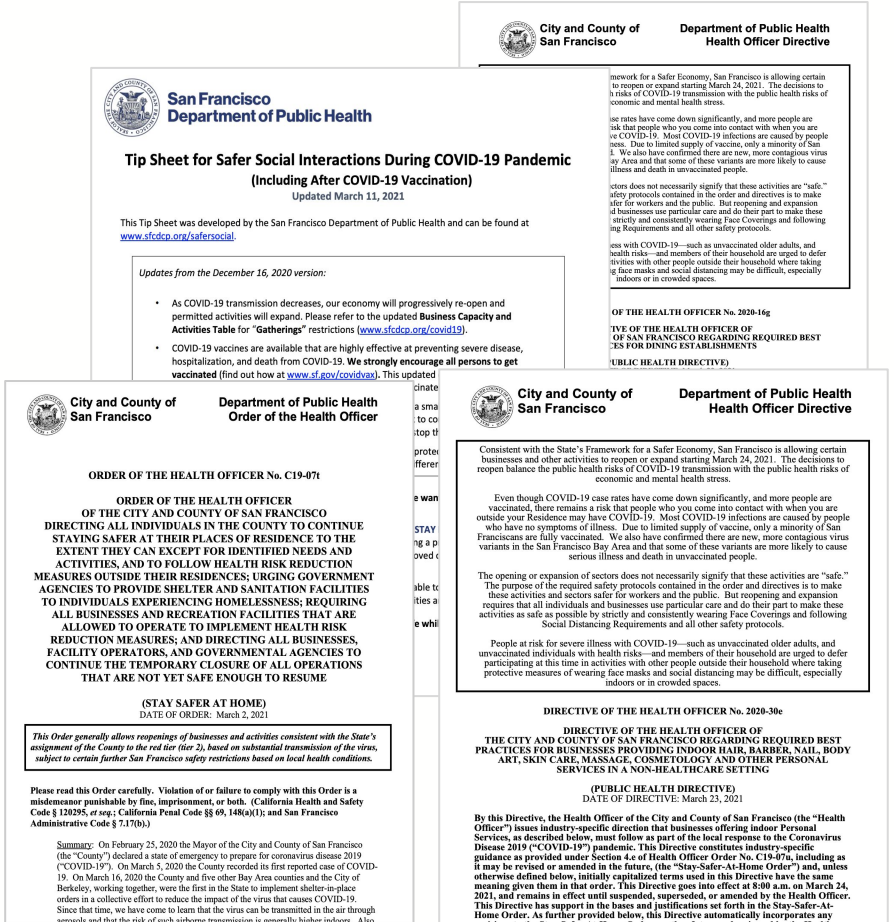
~~“I need to finish this project.”~~

“We can solve this problem together.”

Other people are not obstacles to getting your work done.

Other people are how the work gets done.

Source material



San Francisco Department of Public Health

Tip Sheet for Safer Social Interactions During COVID-19 Pandemic
(Including After COVID-19 Vaccination)
Updated March 11, 2021

This Tip Sheet was developed by the San Francisco Department of Public Health and can be found at www.sfcdcp.org/safersocial.

Updates from the December 16, 2020 version:

- As COVID-19 transmission decreases, our economy will progressively re-open and permitted activities will expand. Please refer to the updated **Business Capacity and Activities Table** for "**Gatherings**" restrictions (www.sfcdcp.org/covid19).
- COVID-19 vaccines are available that are highly effective at preventing severe disease, hospitalization, and death from COVID-19. **We strongly encourage all persons to get vaccinated** (find out how at www.sf.gov/covidvax). This updated

City and County of San Francisco — Department of Public Health
Order of the Health Officer

ORDER OF THE HEALTH OFFICER No. C19-07t

ORDER OF THE HEALTH OFFICER OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO DIRECTING ALL INDIVIDUALS IN THE COUNTY TO CONTINUE STAYING SAFER AT THEIR PLACES OF RESIDENCE TO THE EXTENT THEY CAN EXCEPT FOR IDENTIFIED NEEDS AND ACTIVITIES, AND TO FOLLOW HEALTH RISK REDUCTION MEASURES OUTSIDE THEIR RESIDENCES; URGING GOVERNMENT AGENCIES TO PROVIDE SHELTER AND SANITATION FACILITIES TO INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS; REQUIRING ALL BUSINESSES AND RECREATION FACILITIES THAT ARE ALLOWED TO OPERATE TO IMPLEMENT HEALTH RISK REDUCTION MEASURES; AND DIRECTING ALL BUSINESSES, FACILITY OPERATORS, AND GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES TO CONTINUE THE TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF ALL OPERATIONS THAT ARE NOT YET SAFE ENOUGH TO RESUME

(STAY SAFER AT HOME)
DATE OF ORDER: March 2, 2021

This Order generally allows reopenings of businesses and activities consistent with the State's assignment of the County to the red tier (tier 2), based on substantial transmission of the virus, subject to certain further San Francisco safety restrictions based on local health conditions.

Please read this Order carefully. Violation of or failure to comply with this Order is a misdemeanor punishable by fine, imprisonment, or both. (California Health and Safety Code § 120295, *et seq.*; California Penal Code §§ 69, 148(a)(1); and San Francisco Administrative Code § 7.17(b).)

Summary: On February 25, 2020 the Mayor of the City and County of San Francisco (the "County") declared a state of emergency to prepare for coronavirus disease 2019 ("COVID-19"). On March 5, 2020 the County recorded its first reported case of COVID-19. On March 16, 2020 the County and five other Bay Area counties and the City of Berkeley, working together, were the first in the State to implement shelter-in-place orders in a collective effort to reduce the impact of the virus that causes COVID-19. Since that time, we have come to learn that the virus can be transmitted in the air through aerosols and that the risk of such airborne transmission is generally higher indoors. Also

City and County of San Francisco — Department of Public Health
Health Officer Directive

Consistent with the State's Framework for a Safer Economy, San Francisco is allowing certain businesses and other activities to reopen or expand starting March 24, 2021. The decisions to reopen balance the public health risks of COVID-19 transmission with the public health risks of economic and mental health stress.

Even though COVID-19 case rates have come down significantly, and more people are vaccinated, there remains a risk that people who you come into contact with when you are outside your Residence may have COVID-19. Most COVID-19 infections are caused by people who have no symptoms of illness. Due to limited supply of vaccine, only a minority of San Franciscans are fully vaccinated. We also have confirmed there are new, more contagious virus variants in the San Francisco Bay Area and that some of these variants are more likely to cause serious illness and death in unvaccinated people.

The opening or expansion of sectors does not necessarily signify that these activities are "safe." The purpose of the required safety protocols contained in the order and directives is to make these activities and sectors safer for workers and the public. But reopening and expansion requires that all individuals and businesses use particular care and do their part to make these activities as safe as possible by strictly and consistently wearing Face Coverings and following Social Distancing Requirements and all other safety protocols.

People at risk for severe illness with COVID-19—such as unvaccinated older adults, and unvaccinated individuals with health risks—and members of their household are urged to defer participating at this time in activities with other people outside their household where taking protective measures of wearing face masks and social distancing may be difficult, especially indoors or in crowded spaces.

DIRECTIVE OF THE HEALTH OFFICER No. 2020-30e

DIRECTIVE OF THE HEALTH OFFICER OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO REGARDING REQUIRED BEST PRACTICES FOR BUSINESSES PROVIDING INDOOR HAIR, BARBER, NAIL, BODY ART, SKIN CARE, MASSAGE, COSMETOLOGY AND OTHER PERSONAL SERVICES IN A NON-HEALTHCARE SETTING

(PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTIVE)
DATE OF DIRECTIVE: March 23, 2021

By this Directive, the Health Officer of the City and County of San Francisco (the "Health Officer") issues industry-specific direction that businesses offering indoor Personal Services, as described below, must follow as part of the local response to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 ("COVID-19") pandemic. This Directive constitutes industry-specific guidance as provided under Section 4.c of Health Officer Order No. C19-07u, including as it may be revised or amended in the future, (the "Stay-Safer-At-Home Order") and, unless otherwise defined below, initially capitalized terms used in this Directive have the same meaning given them in that order. This Directive goes into effect at 8:00 a.m. on March 24, 2021, and remains in effect until suspended, superseded, or amended by the Health Officer. This Directive has support in the bases and justifications set forth in the Stay-Safer-At-Home Order. As further provided below, this Directive automatically incorporates any

Content I designed on SF.gov

SF.GOV — Services — Departments — Search

Part of Stay 6 feet apart: Physical distancing

Visiting businesses during the coronavirus pandemic

What to expect when you go shopping, get services, or visit public places.

Even as we reopen San Francisco, the safest choice is to stay home. If you do go out to public places or shop at local businesses, you can reduce your risk for getting or spreading COVID-19.

Think about the risk of going out

Although COVID-19 cases have gone down, coming in contact with people you don't live with is still risky. People may transmit COVID-19 while not feeling sick. Most people have yet to be vaccinated, and there are new, more contagious strains for COVID-19, here in the Bay Area.

Every time you go out, you increase your risk of getting COVID-19 and passing it on to your household. Consider how much the outing means to you.

Consider the risk to yourself and the people you live with. Older adults and people with pre-existing health conditions are most in danger if they get COVID-19.

You should avoid any activities where you'd be in crowded, unmasked situations with people who don't live with you, if:

- You are older and unvaccinated
- You have health risks and are unvaccinated

Related

Check if a business can be open
During the pandemic, many businesses in San Francisco must close. See what businesses can operate.

Check your health before you go out
Watch for COVID-19 symptoms, especially if you work outside your home, get healthcare, or go out.

Masks and face coverings for the coronavirus pandemic
Wear something to cover your nose and mouth when you leave your home.

The Joint Information Center team at the SF COVID Command Center

If you can learn from everyone, and leverage their strengths, what you can achieve together will be beyond your imagination.

Bob Wachter
@Bob_Wachter

argue a response like CA's or SF's would be best. Had US matched CA's death rate, 234K deaths would have been averted to date; if matched SF's, 663K averted (1/4).

Per Capita Covid-19 Deaths, U.S., CA, & SF

	Total Deaths	Population	Deaths/100K Population	Ratio vs. U.S.
United States	975,302	329,500,000	294	
California	88,689	39,500,000	224	0.76
San Francisco	839	875,000	95	0.32

- Had U.S. matched CA's per capita death rate, there would have been 741,229 U.S. deaths, and thus 234,073 deaths averted.
- Had U.S. matched SF's per capita death rate, there would have been 312,097 U.S. deaths, and thus 663,205 deaths averted.

Data Source: https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/us/california-covid-cases.html

9:11 AM · Mar 26, 2022 · Twitter Web App

https://twitter.com/Bob_Wachter/status/1507752069414866948

Lessons while working in UX (so far!)

1. Problem solve.
2. Manage expectations.
3. Learn what came before.
4. Tell the story.
5. Set yourself up for success.
6. Work as a team.

You'll learn much more as you go along.

You'll do great!

Thank you! Q&A time!

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