Reports are boring and you know it

Daniel Pshock
UX coordinator
University of Houston Libraries, Texas, USA

June 18, 2019

Why reports are boring

- I would rather be designing

- Reports take time away from designing

- Reports are just homework

- Nobody reads reports anyway

Poorly communicating your research is the same as not doing it

3 points

1. Understand your coworkers and their engagement

2. Use the right communication tactics

3. Reflect on yourself and how others perceive you

Point 1: Understand your coworkers and their engagement

What do people want to know?

Levels of UX engagement

Low: What does this mean for me?

Medium: This is interesting, tell me more

High: Let's work on a project together

Which group does this colleague fit into?

Idea: Keep a spreadsheet or create personas about this

Creating buy-in

- Meet people where they are

- Also try to raise engagement to gain more buy-in

- A report is not likely to raise engagement at lower levels

- Use a multi-pronged strategy to reach more people

Point 2:
Use the right tactics

Tactics and their engagement level

Tactic	Description	Level
Flyers	Quick updates for passers-by	Low
Blogs	Pithy, concise posts	Mid-low to medium
Newsletters	Recent posts, suggested readings	Medium
Presentations	Showcase recent work	Mid-medium to high
Reports	Maximum details, final option	High

Pick and choose from these tactics

Instead of just dropping a report, you can...

- Write a blog post **and/or**

- Send a newsletter out **and/or**

- Put up a flyer **and/or**

- Give a presentation **and/or**

These are more fun than writing a report!

Strategize for higher reach and engagement

Connect each tactic to "pull" people into higher levels

- **Flyer** includes a short link to matching blog post...

- **Blog** includes a newsletter sign-up...

- **Newsletter** promotes an upcoming presentation...

- At the **presentation**, give out copies of a report

- **Report** is concise and well-designed

Point 3: Reflect on yourself and how others perceive you

Reflection is key

- If people don't "get it," that's your problem

- What can I do to communicate better?

When communicating, think about your:

- Attitude / tone

- Hierarchical position

- Social privileges

Strategy takes time

- Success does not come overnight

- All libraries are different

- Testing and failure are necessary

- Don't give up

- As a UX designer, you probably know this already

Final thoughts

What a better communication strategy means

- Fewer surprises

- Less pushback to changes

- Smoother stakeholder meetings

- Increased buy-in

- More mature UX over time

- It's more fun than lame reports

Things to do when you get back to work

1. Evaluate recent communication

2. Review engagement levels

3. Determine right tactics

4. Plan for future communication

5. Reflect

6. Tell your boss no more reports (just kidding)

Thanks

Daniel Pshock
UX coordinator
University of Houston Libraries
djpshock@uh.edu

Slide deck available at
ux.lib.uh.edu/uxlibs5