IB 407 · SLIDE NOTES

Synthesis: From Stories to Insights

Each slide is on the left. Type or write your notes on the right. https://julesmorrisphd.com/teaching/smith-gls/ib-407/synthesis-insights/



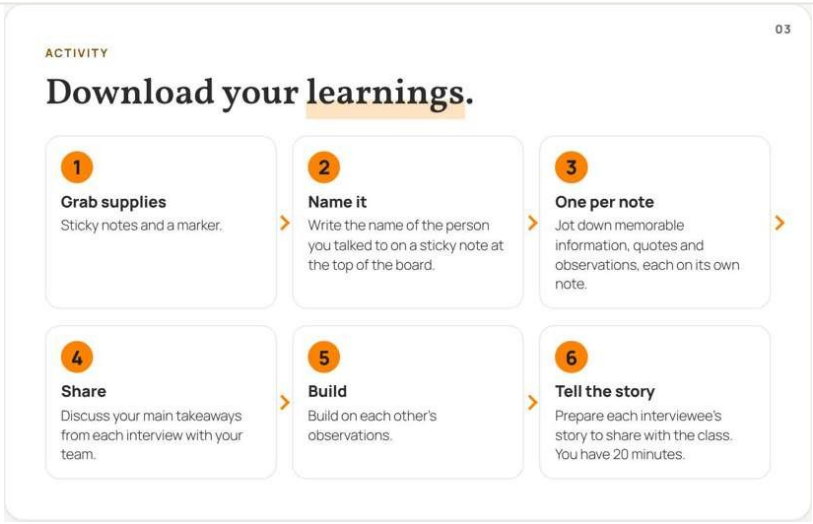
Slide 1

My notes



Slide 2

My notes



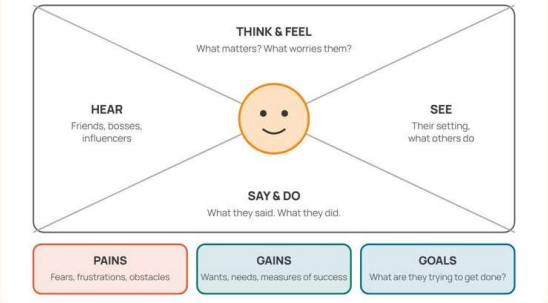
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My notes

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EMPATHY MAP

Sort what you heard into one picture.



Our own drawing.

⊕ Text version of this diagram

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My notes

05

THE EMPATHY MAP

Look hardest where the squares disagree.

Put the person in the middle. Sort your stickies around them. Gaps show you what you still do not know.

Says
Direct quotes. What they told you out loud.

Thinks
What they seem to believe or worry about but may not say.

Does
What you watched them do, including workarounds.

Feels
The emotions you noticed: in their face, voice or choices.

⊕ Pains, gains and tensions

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My notes

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EMPATHY MAP EXAMPLE

One person, one map.

Example from class: someone shopping for a new TV. Their sticky notes cover what they said, did, thought and felt along the way. Try one for each person you interviewed.

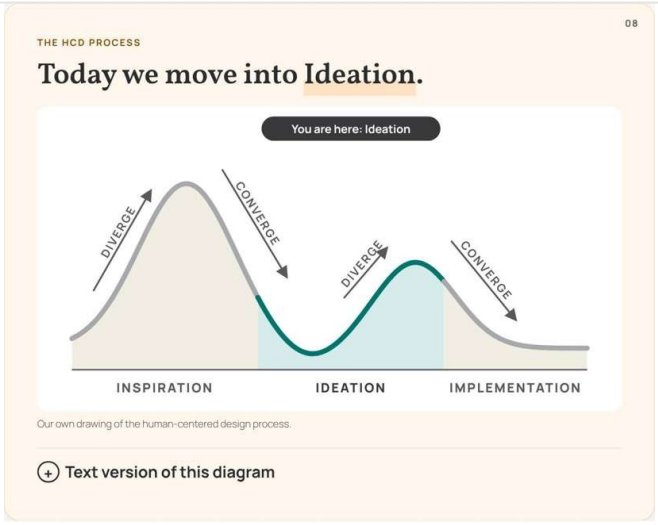
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My notes



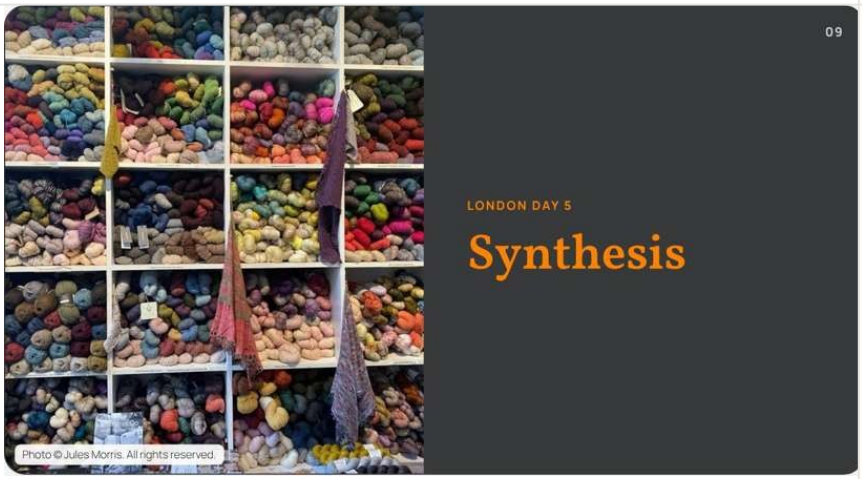
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Slide 8

My notes



Slide 9

My notes



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SYNTHESIS

Synthesis means making sense.

Synthesis is making sense out of what we see and hear to uncover opportunities for design.

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STEPS OF SYNTHESIS

Three steps, in order.

1 **Download your learnings**
Get every story out of your head and onto the wall.

2 **Find themes and insights**
Cluster the notes and ask what they mean.

3 **Craft How Might We questions**
Turn insights into design questions.

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My notes

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UNPACKING STORIES

Ask these of every story.

1. What things stood out to me or us?
2. Why is it interesting in light of the design challenge?
3. What does this reveal to me about this person?
4. What do they care about? What do they believe?
5. Why is this highlight important? What does it mean?
6. Are there other types of situations this makes me think of? Why?
7. How does this help me see the design challenge in a new way?

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My notes

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DOWNLOAD YOUR LEARNINGS

One note, one idea.

1. **Supplies** — Sticky notes and a marker.
2. **Name** — The name of the person you talked to, at the top of a board, flip chart or wall space.
3. **Jot down** — Memorable quotes and observations on your own.
4. **Share** — Share your notes with your team for each interview.
5. **Divide time** — If you talked to more than one person, prioritize who you discuss first and for how long.

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My notes

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FROM LEARNINGS TO IDEAS

Your notes will evolve.



Each step makes the notes fewer and the thinking bigger.

Our own drawing, with a made-up London example.

⊕ Text version of this diagram

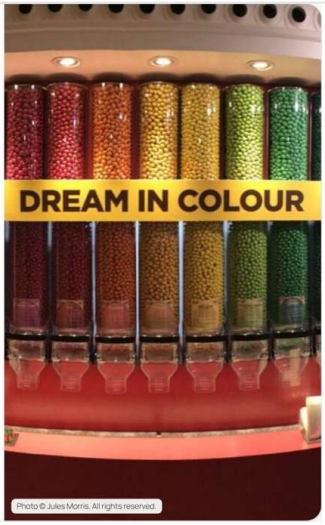
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FIND THEMES

Patterns emerge as you share.

- Remind yourself of the design challenge: HMW delight London tourists?
- Set up your sticky-note boards from all of your interviews.
- Move the most compelling, common and inspiring quotes, stories or ideas to a new board and sort them into categories.
- Look for patterns between categories and possible tensions. Notice what's missing.
- Arrange and rearrange the notes. Discuss and talk through what's emerging until everyone agrees the clusters are meaningful.
- Identify themes that are useful in the design process.



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FIND THEMES AND INSIGHTS

Name the cluster. Then ask what it means.

1 **Name each cluster**
Write the name on a sticky note and place it above the cluster.

2 **Capture insights**
As you see what's important or interesting about these clusters, write insights on new notes and place them near the themes.

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WHAT IS INSIGHT?

Not data. A new way of seeing.

An insight is NOT
Data. A plain observation (the "what" without the "why"). A person's wish or a statement of need.

An insight IS
A fundamental human truth that reveals the inner nature of things. A new way of viewing the world that challenges the status quo. A discovery about the motivations that drive behavior.

My notes

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THE FIVE PRINCIPLES OF AN INSIGHT

One London visitor, five principles.

1 **Context**
They plan every hour of the trip on their phones.

2 **Dilemma**
The plan falls apart by lunch.

3 **Why**
Queues and Tube changes take longer than expected.

4 **Motivation**
They do not want to waste a trip they saved for.

5 **Envision the ideal**
The day feels well spent, whatever they saw.

⊕ What each principle asks

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EXAMPLE: INSIGHT STATEMENT

Three sentences that tell the truth.

First sentence
Describe the current situation and the person's behavior.

Second sentence
Describe the dilemma: why this is a frustration in their life.

Third sentence
Describe their desired end-state and ideal situation.

⊕ Example

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KNOWING WHEN YOU HAVE AN INSIGHT

A real insight does something.

Connects
With people's emotions and elicits "You understand me."

Challenges
Existing conventions and the status quo.

Solves a real problem
That results in satisfying people.

Inspires action
Gives a clear customer to aim for.

Clear
On what to do next, and how to deliver new value.

Brings new keenness
To the team and helps informed decisions.

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CREATE INSIGHT STATEMENTS

From themes to insights.

1 **Gather themes**
Put the themes from Find Themes on a wall or board.

2 **Rephrase**
Rephrase each theme as a short statement. You are not looking for a solution, just turning the theme into an insight.

3 **Narrow**
Look back at your design challenge. Discard the ones that don't relate. You want three to five insights.

4 **Refine**
Make sure each one conveys a new perspective or possibility. Check it with someone outside your team.

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ACTIVITY

Create insight statements.

Use the worksheet: write your design challenge, then each theme with the insights that came from it.

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CRAFT "HOW MIGHT WE" QUESTIONS

Turn insights into questions.

1 **Pick an insight**
Start with one of your most interesting insights or needs.

2 **Write HMW**
Turn it into a design question using "How might we...?" Stay affirmative and aspirational. Focus on where you want to be, not what you want to avoid.

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CRAFT "HOW MIGHT WE" QUESTIONS, CONTINUED

Not too broad. Not too narrow.

1 **Generate more**
Explore related questions by asking "Why?" (to broaden) and "What's stopping you?" (to narrow).

2 **Pick 1 to 3**
Choose the HMWs at the right level: broad enough for lots of ideas, narrow enough to focus.

⊕ Example

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ACTIVITY

Create How Might We questions.

On the worksheet, write each insight and the HMW question it inspires. Aim for three to five strong HMWs.

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LONDON DAY 5

Brainstorming

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