

Keynote Presentations

Putting Possibility Thinking into Action

As developers of “communication products” in the workplace, we share a capacity for bringing vision to life. Where does our vision come from? Perhaps we associate vision with mission statements that have no power and make us snore. Vision, however, gives us more. Vision gives us structure, and this structure gives us a framework for possibility.

So what? Where does possibility start? How can we infuse possibility into the downward spiral of deliverable-focused product development that often leaves us grumpy? In a story-filled, humor-laced presentation, Thom Haller will walk us through personal vignettes, thinking questions, and opportunities for chatting with colleagues. We'll explore how our vision can be solidified (perhaps rekindled) by creating relationships of mutuality, reciprocity, and respect. We'll explore how in the face of difficulties we can choose possibility. We'll leave the session with specific ideas for putting possibility thinking into action.

“Never Consider Yourself a Failure, You Can Always Serve as a Bad Example.”

Thom attributes this lesson to a fortune cookie, but has found it useful advice for us all. In this presentation, he explores different definitions of failure and presents three hysterical case studies where (as he states) “the results were not as grand as I would have preferred.” What happened? We'll see how people, politics, perceptions, time, and budgets conspired in fascinating ways leaving users with products that could have served them better. We'll learn how our own mental models can hold us back. Participants will get a chuckle or two and learn some strategies for avoiding similar fates.

Information Overload: A Love Story

This keynote gives us a chance to assess labels we use to define ourselves and our jobs limit our potential. To take us into the story, Thom tells personal stories, illustrated with images of popular culture. He uses familiar props such as Play-Doh and hula hoops to dramatize how he discovered the value of possibility thinking. Sure, 60% of us have worked in a cubicle and 93% would like to see an “improved working environment but we can make our separate peace with “cubicle hell,” and find passion for our work and the results we create.

Learning More

For more information, contact us at 202.328.8466 or send Thom an email at thom@thomhaller.com



Learning Information Structure

Thom Haller thom@thomhaller.com

Workshops || Workbooks || Presentations

Challenge

You want your staff and colleagues to craft clear print and Web products that are easy to understand and use.

Solution

Thom Haller can support your organization via workshops, presentations, and workbooks. He can help you structure information so people can find what they want, use it, and appreciate the experience. As a speaker, he can energize a crowd. As a facilitator, he can direct your team through a process of creating user-focused products. As a teacher, he can enable you to think differently about your writing and your role as a content provider. Oh, you'll have fun too.

About Thom Haller

Thom is a passionate believer in clear communication. He's a teacher who knows what it's like to get lost in information (it sucks) and harbors the belligerence to ask, “How can we structure information with the user in mind?” And “Why should we care?”

About Thom's Seminars

Turn the page. You'll find information on workshops, presentations, and workbooks that can help you and your staff. All of Thom's seminars and workshops can be adapted and modified for individuals and small groups. Also, workshops can be presented in half day or full day format.

Perhaps your company isn't large enough to support a workshop and you'd like to team with another small firm. Or you might be an independent consultant looking to increase the breadth and depth of your services. Whatever your situation, let Thom know what you need, and he will be happy to work with you to shape the content and time structure to suit your audience and goals.

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Workshops

Helping Users GAIN

What happens in users' heads when they process online (or print) information? How can we structure information so people can find what they want, use it, and appreciate the experience. How can we share our knowledge with others?

In a dynamic, exploratory, and fun-filled presentation, you'll have the chance to step inside the human experience and discover how people think graphically (relying on patterns, thinking actively, facing limitations), how the desire for action affects human thinking and decision making, how humans look for interconnections in data (reviewing structures human beings expect) and how they rely on navigational cues (and what this means as we craft products for understanding and use.)

In this session, you will have the opportunity to synthesize research so you can articulate to your colleagues why structure matters. In the process, you may rediscover the value you create in your work and the possibilities that await you.

Improving User Performance by Incorporating User-Focused Process

User-focused process can guide us as we craft communication products. But how do we synthesize the literature of the field so that we can explain to our bosses and colleagues how our work supports improvements in user and organizational performance?

In this fast-paced, interactive session, you'll have the opportunity to look at the product development through the lens of GECKO – Gathering, Evaluating, Chunking, Knowing, and Optimizing. You'll discover tips and tricks for planning your project, managing political conflicts, focusing your content, selecting and grouping content, testing and listening to users, and structuring your content for optimal effectiveness.

The presentation will give you an opportunity to reflect on the context in which you do your work and the process you follow. You may find that by "talking GECKO" you can remind yourself and others of opportunities for overcoming barriers and structures to support your actions.

Want Personal Enrichment? Consider a Life-stories Workshop

Life-stories Writing Workshop is an 8-week hands-on, experience-filled seminar held at the Dupont studio of Info.Design, an information architecture consultancy. Your host, Thom Haller will lead you through classes that run for 2.5 hours each. In class, you will incorporate free writing, structured lecture/ conversation, and workshopping -- sharing writing. As a participant, you will be required to keep a class notebook and create a 4-5 page story. It's fun. And satisfying. Learn more at www.thomhaller.com

Crafting Usable Content

How can we synthesize our user-focus with complementary structures for crafting content that supports others? In this session, you'll have the opportunity to look at product development through different lenses as Thom helps participants develop strategies for thinking like the user and then delving into the structure and content in communication products. Specifically, we will look at strategies for crafting content so it is user-focused, clutter-free, clear, concise, and helpful. We will also look at ways narrative strategies support users and follow a structure for focusing our narrative writing.

Structuring Stories for Organizational Benefits

Increasingly, our organizational brand is conveyed by the stories we tell. Are you familiar with story structure and how you can use it in your organization? In this workshop, Thom will introduce story elements "character," "action," "location" "time" "emotion" and "detail." Participants will rework organizational or personal narratives so they are succinct, understandable, and effective.

Workbooks

In addition to Presentations and Workshops, Thom has developed three training manuals to complement his presentations and to assist you in taking what you learn back to your workplace.

- **Writing for the Web**
Designed for the content writer and editor, provides instruction on how to visually structure information and help users see connections.
- **Information Architecture for the Web**
Designed for individuals who make decisions on designing large scale web sites. Explores why structure matters.
- **Structure: Information Design for Print and Web**
Designed around the framework of helping users GAIN, and offers a structure for crafting products that meet the user's needs.

Each manual is available to seminar/workshop participants at 25% off.
Further details online: www.infodn.com/workbook.shtml