Finding Patterns & Insights

Sometimes, it's difficult to know where to start when you're analyzing the data you've collected. We've provided a few methods you can use to begin finding patterns as you sort through data. This can happen after the Explore phase, when you are sorting through what you've learned in Reflect, or in the Play phase as you gather feedback about your prototype.

Option 1: Rose / Bud / Thorn

1. As your team discusses what they've learned from the Explore or Play phases, identify data points as being positive (rose), having potential (bud) or a problem (thorn).

2. Select different colors to indicate whether it's a rose, bud, or thorn, and note the data point on the corresponding colored post-it note.

3. After sharing out, sort similar post-it notes into clusters to see what patterns are emerging. Give each pattern or grouping a title.
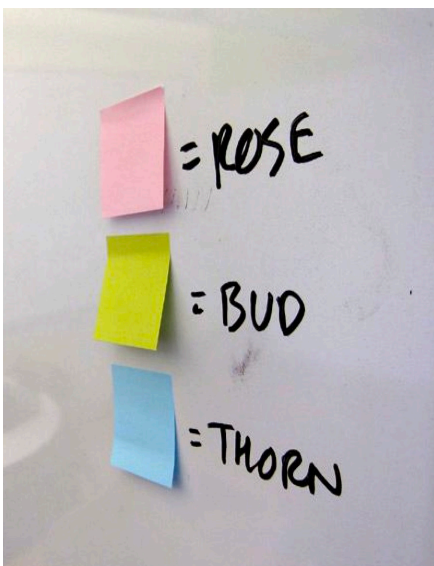

Photo courtesy of Luma Institute

Photo courtesy of Ariadna Font Llitijos

Option 2: P.O.I.N.T. Technique

1. As your team discusses what they've learned from the Explore or Play phases, identify data points as one of the following:
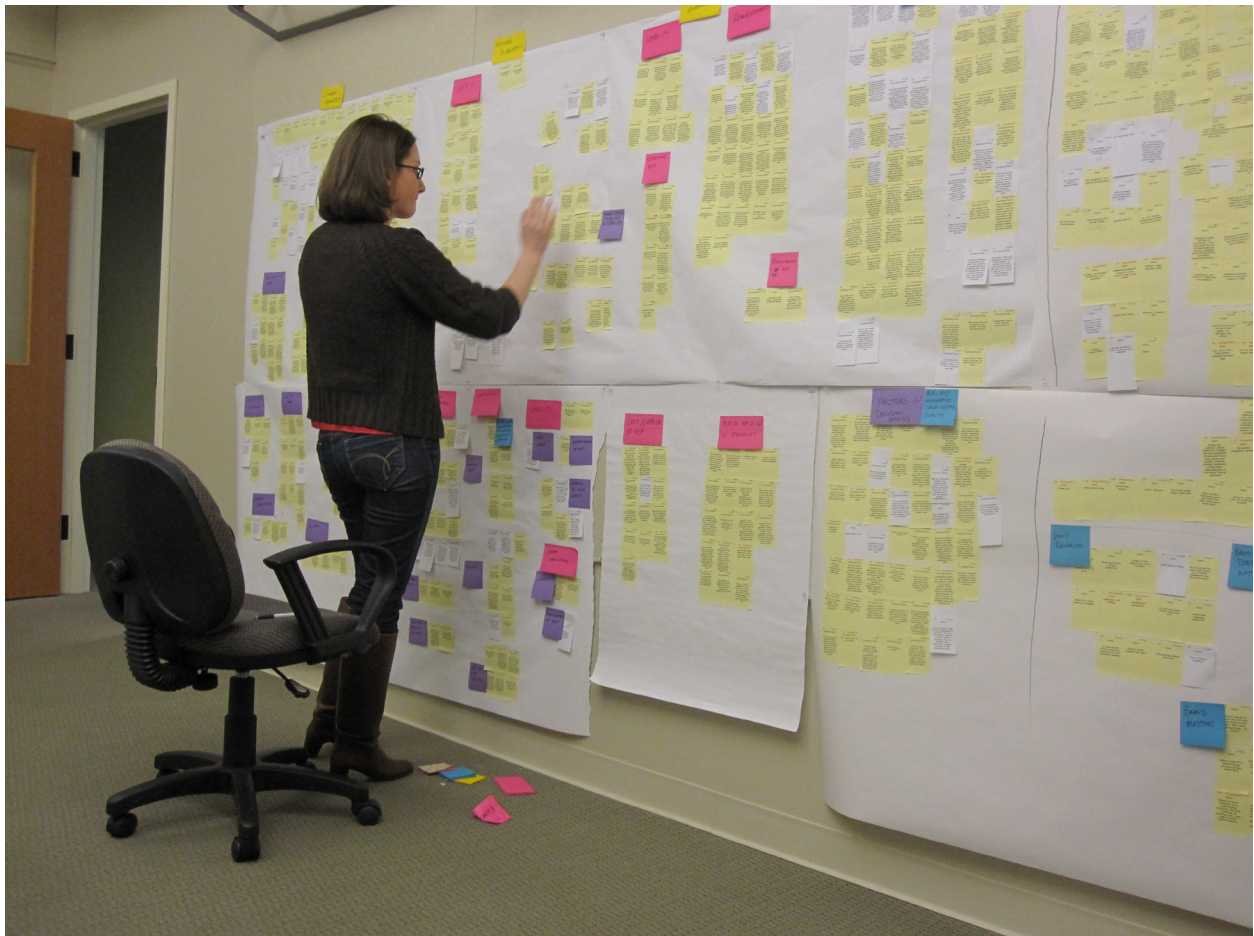
P = Problems
O = Obstacles
I = Insights
N = Needs
T = Themes

2. Select a way to indicate the type of data (either through colors or a label), and note the data point correspondingly.

3. After sharing out, sort similar post-it notes into clusters to see what patterns are emerging. Give each pattern or grouping a title.

Defining Insight Statements

Now that you have grouped similar data points to find patterns, you can use a variety of different frameworks to help you interpret those patterns. Themes become insights when you answer the question, "So what?"

Use the following questions to help you reframe patterns into insights:

- What do these patterns mean?
- Why are they important?
- Why are they occurring?
- What are the implication on your design challenge?

When you've landed on a general statement that describes the implication of the pattern on your design challenge, write it above the group. This will serve as the insight statement for that group. Keep going until your team has an insight statement for each pattern you've uncovered.

You may want to add a short description to each insight so someone outside the team would be able to understand the insight and its impact on your design challenge.

By the end of analyzing, synthesizing, and interpreting your data, you should have a 4-6 insight statements that bring your design challenge into focus.