

Information Anxiety (pages 23-52)

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Overview

The Business of Understanding


Finding Wisdom

L. A. T. C. H.

An example: Dogs

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Richard Saul Wurman



:: Architect  
 :: Well known scholar & theorist  
 :: **Access** series of travel guides

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The Business of Understanding

*"The only thing we know is our own personal knowledge and lack of knowledge.. And since it's the only thing we really know, the key to making things understandable is to understand what it's like not to understand" (23).*

**What does this mean?**  
**How does this relate to the design process?**  
**When have you ever heard this before?**

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Data to Wisdom

Data	Information	Knowledge	Wisdom
<p>Data on its own has "nothing to teach us".</p> <p>Much current news &amp; mass media is data masquerading as information.</p> <p>By observing context, we can make information out of data.</p>	<p>Derived as we organize and present data in various ways.</p> <p>Organization changes meaning.</p> <p>Presentation enhances existing meaning, mostly on a perceptual level.</p>	<p>Distinguished from information by "the complexity of the experience used to communicate it".</p> <p>Experience design (?) helps the user create knowledge from information by experiencing the information in various ways.</p> <p>Stories &amp; conversation as a delivery mechanism for knowledge.</p>	<p>Understand enough patterns to use knowledge in new ways and situations.</p> <p>Personal, hard to share, reflective.</p> <p>Gained over time?</p>

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Data to Wisdom : An Exercise

In groups of two, visually display the path from data to information, to knowledge and finally to wisdom.

Pick a topic relevant to your lives and articulate, diagrammatically, the progression:

data > information > knowledge > wisdom

**Is this a linear process? Iterative?**  
**Easy to accomplish? Hard?**

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### LATCH - Methods of Organization

- Location** Compare information coming from various sources.
- Alphabet
- Time :: Atlas
- Category :: Travel Guide
- Hierarchy :: Parts of the Body
- :: Parts of a System

**Other examples?**

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### LATCH - Methods of Organization

- Location
- Alphabet** Used for very large bodies of information.  
Not always the best organization method – forced organization rather than natural.
- Time :: dictionary
- Category :: list of states on a website
- Hierarchy **When would this be ideal?**

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### LATCH - Methods of Organization

- Location
- Alphabet
- Time** Used for events that occur over a fixed duration.  
Easy to understand, easy to draw comparisons and conclusions.
- Category :: a joke
- Hierarchy :: a scenario
- :: a narrative

**What lends itself to this method of organization?**

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### LATCH - Methods of Organization

- Location Well reinforced by color & placement.
- Alphabet Grouped by similar importance – a value judgment.
- Time :: Organization of goods.
- Category** **What are examples of categorical groupings?**
- Hierarchy

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### LATCH - Methods of Organization

- Location Assign value or weight to the information  
Usually on a scale
- Alphabet
- Time :: largest => smallest
- Category :: \$\$\$\$ => \$
- Hierarchy **Other examples?**

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### An Example : Dogs

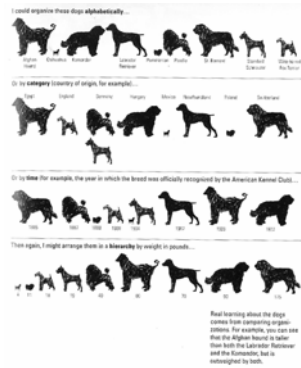
*"Once you have a sense of organization, however casual, you can relax with that knowledge and begin to examine the information from various vantage points, which will enable you to understand the relationship between bodies of information" (42)*



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## An Example : Dogs

*"The dogs don't change, but the information about them does" (44)*



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## An Exercise.

Let's try it. Take out everything you have in your bag & pockets. Stick it on the table.

**Make meaning out of data.**

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## Key Takeaways

Think about how you can structure data to maximize the implied information for the user

Various visualizations and arrangements of data can change meaning

Pay attention to **location, alphabet, time, category** and **hierarchy**

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## Summary

*"We don't invent information; we allow it to reveal itself as it marches past" (52)*

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