

LENFEST INSTITUTE FOR JOURNALISM

Identifying and communicating actionable insights

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Mastering qualitative audience insights



Today's session

- 1 Synthesis
- 2 Identifying the most actionable insights
- 3 Making a memorable research artifact
- 4 Making a communications plan

Section 1

Synthesis

What is synthesis?

- It's the process of making connections and finding patterns in your data
- It tells you what you should pay attention to: patterns and opportunities for segmentation
- It's when you answer the questions "What does it mean?" and "Why does this matter?"
- Without it, you're swimming in "noisy" data and can't make decisions.

Synthesis takes you from observations to insights

Observations are **what happened.**

Objective descriptions of actions, behaviors, and emotions

Insights tell you **what that means and what you can do about it.**

Explanation of what's driving the observable action, behavior, or emotion

Unsure where to start? Start with these four actionable categories of data.

Demographics (who users are)

The most basic kind of audience background information, such as age, life stage, relationship and family status, gender, and race/ethnicity

Behaviors (what users do)

Individuals' patterns and propensities

Geographies (where users are)

Where people live and work

Attitudes (what users think)

The decisions – including lifestyle, career, brand affinity and activity choices – that users make and that indicate what they care about

Turn a pattern or theme into an insight



What?

What do we see?



Why?

What's driving this behavior or feeling?



How?

How could we respond?



Simple synthesis methods

- Clustering
- Confirmations and surprises
- Tallying
- Rapid interview digest

Section 2

Identifying the
most actionable
insights



An actionable insight is
a piece of information
that can **move a
product forward.**

Volume ≠ value

- Even well-designed research results in extraneous insights
- Be intentional about what you bring back to teams responsible for implementation
- Better to deliver fewer, more actionable insights than to dump everything you learned on people

For every insight you want to share, ask yourself...

- ✓ What is happening?
- ✓ Why is it happening?
- ✓ What can someone do with this information?

Don't share an insight without an answer to this Q

Start by going back to
your research goal.

Why did you do this research
in the first place?

This keeps you focused on the most strategic insights, not the most easily accessible or sexiest.

START HERE.

What is your business challenge?

COMPLETE THIS SENTENCE.

I wish we knew how/why/what our audience ...

GET SPECIFIC.

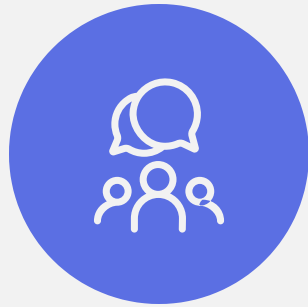
What behaviors do you want to understand?

Who is the audience you want to understand? Be specific.

Other Qs that can guide you

- What are our organizational goals, and what insights are we lacking that would help us meet them?
- What decisions do we need to make, and what do we need to know in order to make them?
- What core assumptions are we making about our users, and how can we test them?

Other places you can find insights



Audience questions



Audience complaints



Prior research efforts

Section 3

Making a memorable research artifact

Elements of a strong research artifact

Visually distinct

Communicates the model and the detail

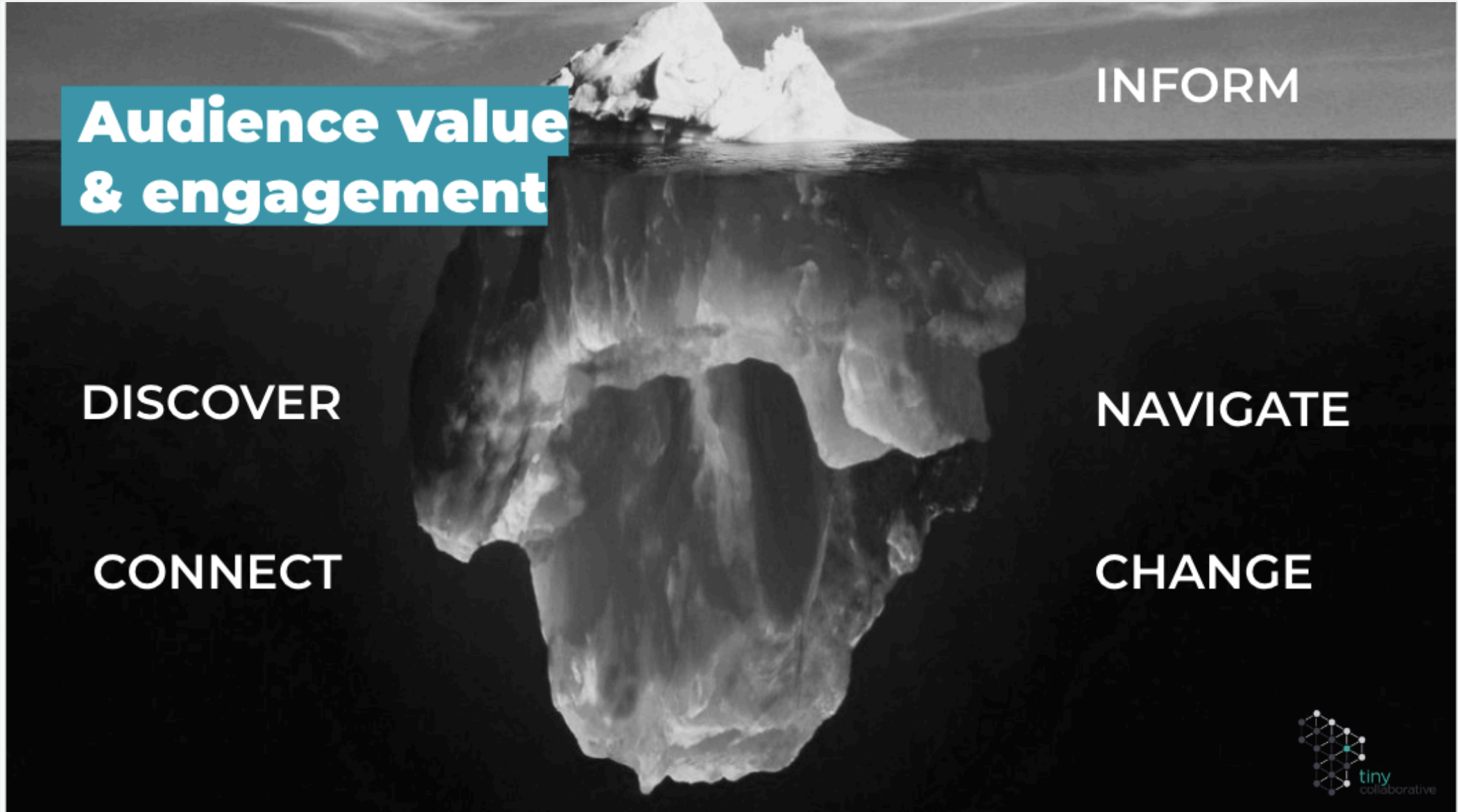
Tips on how to apply the insight

Who is your core user? Design for them.

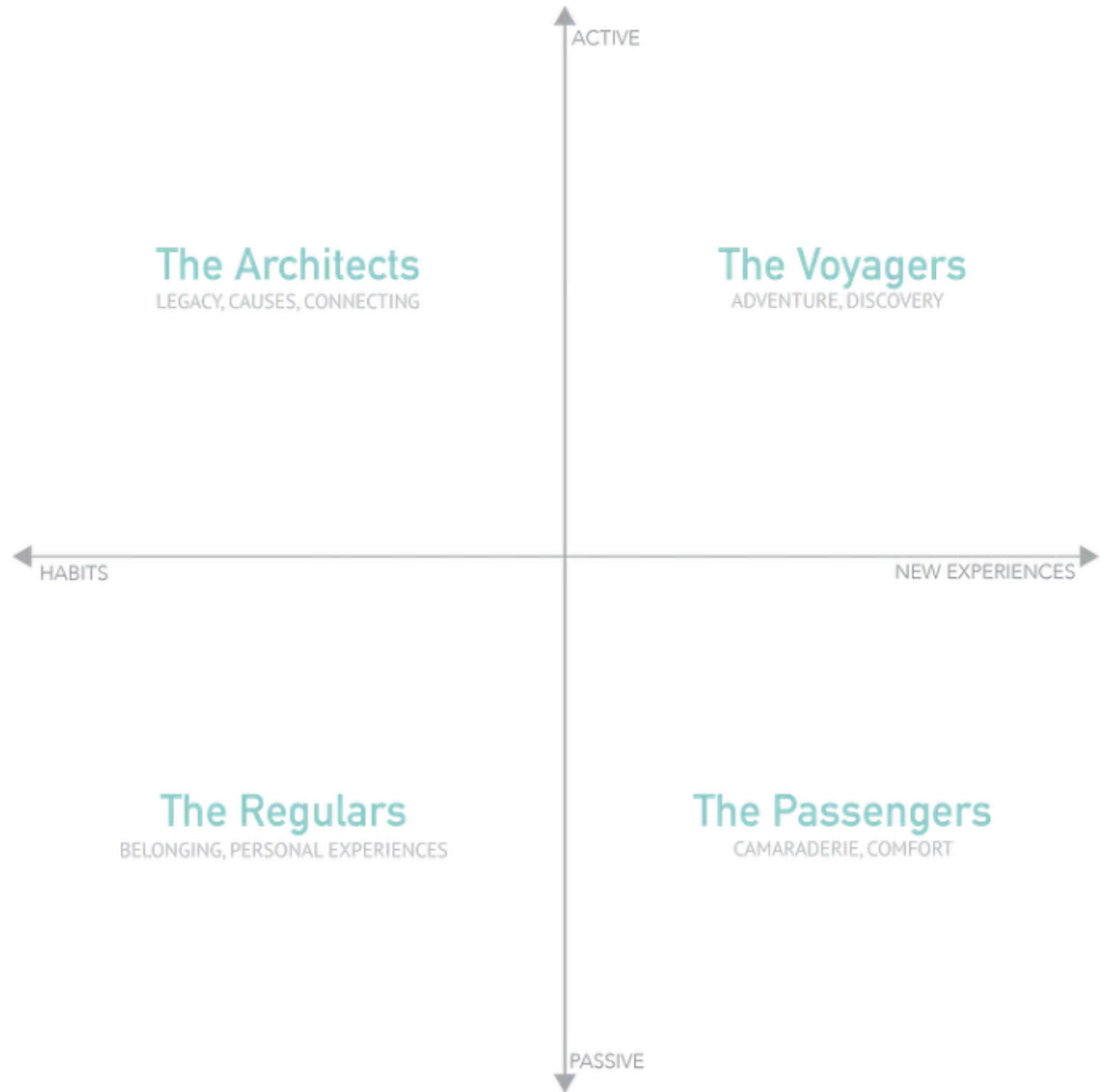
Evidence of humans and stories

Quotes, anecdotes, and examples that make the insight come alive

LAist's "Modes"



WhereBy.Us



MODE NAVIGATE



**“You don’t know what you don’t know,
and there’s nobody to show you.”**

—Anika

DRIVEN BY: CONFUSION

In this mode, residents are seeking simplicity, clarity or guidance on something complex. They are trying to achieve a specific objective but are not sure how to best do it: This could include accessing essential information, services or resources, or understanding and solving a problem that affects their daily lives, their livelihoods or their future. Many don’t have the time, capacity, know-how or connections to find what they need.



KPCC + LAIST’S ROLE: GUIDE

How might we help residents make L.A.’s complex systems work for them?

AUDIENCE NEEDS

- 1 Ways to learn from and connect with others who have experience or expertise in specific areas
- 2 Wayfinding support for essential information, services or resources
- 3 Ways to ask for and receive help/advice on specific topics

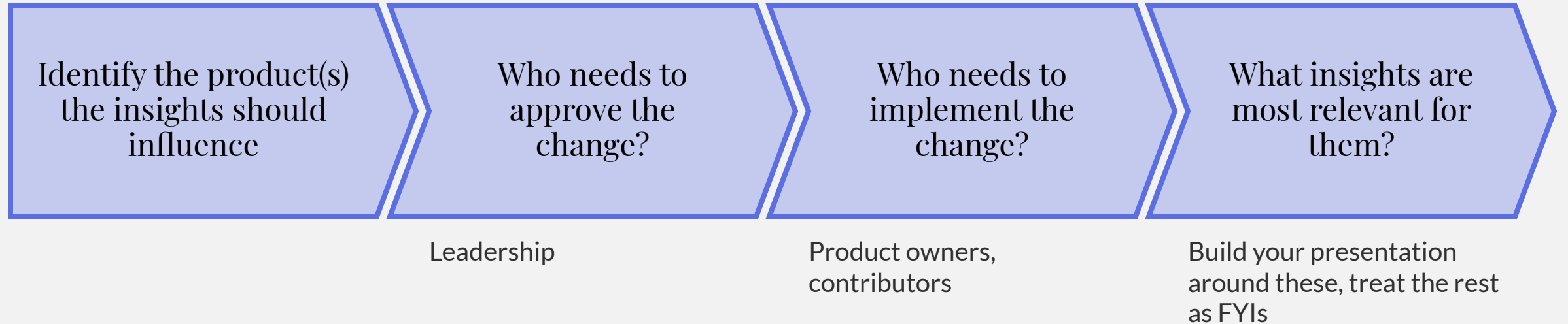
OPPORTUNITIES

- How might we help residents feel more confident and make informed decisions?
- How might we identify and create targeted information and resources for LA’s most confusing systems and processes?
- How might we identify and help the audiences/communities who might most need navigation support?

Section 4

Make a communications plan

Build your communications plan



Lead with the answers to these three questions

What?

What happened or what is going to happen?

I'm going to share the results of some research we did with voters about how they make decisions on their ballot.

So what?

Why is it important or why does this matter?

The research gave us useful insights into what information voters find most useful and what they're struggling to understand or find.

Now what?

What will we do next or what should we do moving forward?

This will help us decide how we want to iterate on our election strategy for the midterms.

Leadership might need to approve this.

You should spend more time answering questions than presenting.

- What do you think?
- Does this make sense?
- Is there anything unclear or confusing?
- How could these insights be useful to your work/product/effort?
- What could help you apply these insights?

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