Unseen: Exploring Users' Campus Experiences

Facilitation Script

Timeframe

5 minutes prior - Set up exercise board and exercise pieces at each seat, match worksheet
title colors to the pieces, and pass out cards
3 minutes - Introductions of the group members (starting with facilitator)
5 minutes - Read opening script
15 minutes - Create backstories
15 minutes - Share out backstory
1minute - Explain and draw group event card
3 minutes - Explain and draw first personal event card
Have participants explain reaction
Have participants move pieces
Repeat for each participant
15-18 minutes - Successive rounds, if time (up to 3 total rounds)
30 - Discussion questions
1 - Thank you and good-bye!
90 minutes total (95 minutes including set up)

Advice for Facilitator

- Have everything set up before people get there
- Encourage group discussion. If people are moving pieces or making decisions and someone wonders "why?" allow them to ask why and discuss.
- Make sure it's a safe place to share opinions (even controversial ones!)
- You may find that some of the cards contradict each other; in that case, you can have participants either ignore one of the contradictory cards or turn it in for a new one
- Only allow draws from the personal event card pile one at a time! After someone has completed reacting to their personal event card then the next participant may draw a card. The purpose is to react out loud.

Opening Script

Thank you for coming to participate today! This exercise is intended to help identify knowledge gaps between our library staff members and the undergraduate student population. Most of the data that forms this exercise was created using interview data collected by the library lifecycle team. Data that comes from other sources is noted in the glossary in front of you.

We want to assure you that there are no wrong answers and that we respect all of the interviewees we collected data from. We are using this as a learning opportunity. While going through the exercise you'll be creating a background story for a created character and responding to situations throughout. The story will be based on characteristics described in the cards sitting in front of you. We've broken them up into different categories: Health, Family, Financial, Study Style, Previous Schooling, Why I Chose This School, Race, Sexuality, and Gender. Feel free to add any additional backstory to your characters such as their academic year or potential major.

You may find that your character is exactly how you would be at a certain stage in college or maybe you'll find your character to be nothing like you or anyone you personally know. All are perfectly fine. We ask everyone to remember that the individuals here are not their character or the expert on how their character would feel. You'll only be asked to say how you think your character will respond to various situations. You're creating a story for a singular character, not representing any identity groups. If you don't know what your character would do in a certain situation it's okay to say that or ask for advice from other participants. The entire purpose of this experience is to identify gaps in knowledge we have toward our undergraduate user community at this institution. *[Pause]*

You don't need to be an expert going in about a certain gender, race, background, etc. and we don't expect you will be after this experience. This experience is based on trust and empathy. We ask everyone here to be respectful--try to empathize with your character and the other characters in the exercise. This is an interactive exercise. We hope you will feel comfortable to interact with each other and discuss each others' decisions.

In a moment I'll ask you to please fill out the top part of your cards. If at any point you feel uncomfortable or have a question please let me know or feel free to get up and take a break. We expect this experience to take around 90 minutes. I will continue to explain the objectives and structure as we go. Are there any questions? *[Pause]* Great. Now let's take about fifteen minutes to fill out your sheets about your character's background and identity.

Introduce Characters

If you didn't get to write down everything about your character that's okay. Just have it in your mind as we go through the exercise and be sure that you remember it. The writing portion is just to help you connect your ideas about who your character is. As long as you know who they are you're good.

Let's go around and introduce our characters. After you've introduced your character, place your two pieces on the board. The board contains two scales: safe and seen. Based on the backstory you created and your knowledge of this campus, place your pieces on the board to represent how safe and seen you feel here. Pretend it is the beginning of a school year. Please share with the group why you placed your pieces in those positions. For the purpose of this exercise we're defining seen as feeling like your identities are noticed by others. Safe is defined in this exercise as feeling comfortable and content in a campus setting without fear of facing any physical and/or emotional distress. These definitions can be referred to in the glossary. ***[Pick the first person to present]***

Common Experience Cards

We're going to draw a Common Experience Event Card now. These common experience cards are occurrences that can happen on campus that may or may not affect your character. You may find that these incidents have an impact on your character later in the exercise too. Also feel free to change your position on the board if you feel that this event would impact your feelings of being safe and seen on campus. Please talk through your reasons for shifting positions if you choose to do so. ***[Have someone pick and read one card to the group]***

Personal Event Cards

Now let's have everyone go through and pick a Personal Event card one at a time, read it to the group, and discuss how your character would react. Again, feel free to change your position on the board if you feel that this event would impact your feelings of being safe and seen on campus. Please explain your reasons for shifting out loud. ***[Have participants draw cards one at a time]***

[Repeat Group and Personal Event Card parts up to three times]

Thank you all for the great experience. We've made it through as many event cards as time will permit. Now we're going to transition into a large group discussion about this experience.

Questions (30 minutes)

Personal/Group Questions

- Where do you fall on the board at the end and why?
- What made you feel uncomfortable?
- What do the characters from this experience have in common?
- What were some of the differences across our characters?

Library Related Questions

- Which of these users are we currently serving?
- Where are there gaps in knowledge and do those gaps need to be addressed?
- Which users were we not thinking about serving/need more information about to serve better?
- What are your big takeaways?

Feedback on Exercise

- Feel free to come talk to us or email us.

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