WORKSHOPSKILL · FACILITATION KIT

Storyboard the Journey — Facilitator Run Sheet

Folder: `storyboard-the-journey` · Category: creativity · 4–12 people · 25 min · offline + online · print props · tool pack

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25	4–12	print props
MINUTES	PEOPLE	SETTING

Storyboard the Journey — Facilitator Guide

A group draws a person's end-to-end experience as a strip of storyboard panels — what they do, see, feel at each step — then marks every panel with a high, a low, and a hope. The wall becomes one shared map of the journey: not a list of features, but where the experience actually rises and falls, and where a small change would land. **Unlike a feature backlog that flattens every step into equal priority, this strip makes the shape of the experience visible — the dip nobody owned is usually the fix.**

Objectives

By the end of the activity, participants will have:

1. Drawn one named person's end-to-end journey as a strip of rough panels — what they do, see, feel at each step.
2. Marked every panel with a high, a low and a hope, and drawn the experience line through them.
3. Circled the two or three dips worth a move, and named who could own the change.

When to use this activity

- A team optimises pieces (a screen, a form, a policy) without ever seeing the whole arc the person moves through.
- You want a shared, concrete picture of an experience before you argue about fixes.
- You have 4–12 people and 25 minutes; it works on a shared board online.

The three marks per panel

Mark	Looks like	Why
High ⛰	A moment the person would happily relive	Protect it; don't optimise it away.
Low ⚡	Where effort spikes or trust drops	The dip nobody owned is usually the fix.
Hope ✦	What they wish happened next	The seed of a design move, from their side.

Setup

Clock: 25 minutes total — bound 3, panel 9, mark 7, cluster 4, name the move 2.

Space: a long wall or shared board that holds a left-to-right row of panels, with room to draw the experience line under them.

Materials per person:

Item	Source
Blank panel cards (one per step)	any index-card stock or sticky notes
Markers	bring your own

Materials for the room: the three mark cards (High / Low / Hope) from `storyboard-the-journey-prop-cards.pdf`, and the A3 poster up on the wall.

Grouping: 4–12 people; one named person and one journey at a time. A second strip beats arguing over one.

Roles: the group draws and marks; you bound the journey, keep the sketches rough, and force the line through the highs and lows.

How to run it

Time	Phase	Facilitator does	Participants do
0–3	Bound it	Name one person and one journey — first-timer onboarding, a return, a complaint. Agree the start and end.	Suggest the person; confirm the journey boundaries
3–12	Panel it	Across a row of panels, draw/write what they do, see, feel at each step, left to right. Fast, rough sketches only.	Draw panels; write what the person does/sees/feels at each step
12–19	Mark it	On each panel add a high, a low, a hope. Then draw the experience line through the highs and lows.	Mark each panel; draw the line together
19–23	Cluster	Look where the line dips hardest and where hopes pile up. Circle the two or three places worth a move.	Discuss the shape; circle the dips and hope clusters
23–25	Name the move	For each circle: who could own a change, and what it would take.	Name an owner and a first step for each circled dip

Why draw the line

Listing steps flattens everything into equal boxes. Drawing the highs and lows as a line makes the shape of the experience visible — the shape usually points at one neglected valley between two fine steps, which no feature list would ever show.

The card

Use the faces from `storyboard-the-journey-prop-cards.pdf`: the three mark cards (High ⛰ / Low ⚡ / Hope ✦), a blank panel card, and a “draw the line” card. The mark cards are what the strip standardises — so two people don’t quietly define “low” differently.

Failure modes

1. **It becomes a feature wishlist.** Every panel must be something the person does/feels, not something you’ll build. Rescue: pull hopes back to moments — “what does the person wish happened *next*, not what do we ship?”
2. **The team draws their process, not the person’s journey.** Internal handoffs creep in. Rescue: anchor on one named person; if it’s an internal handoff, it’s off the map.
3. **Only the loudest journey wins.** One persona dominates and the others never get drawn. Rescue: bound one journey at a time; a second strip beats arguing over one.
4. **The line stays flat.** Every panel gets the same marks and the shape says nothing. Rescue: force a ranking — “which panel is the *hardest* low? Which is the *brightest* high?” The extremes make the line speak.

Variations

- **Remote:** one shared board, everyone drawing into the same strip live; the line is drawn together at the end.
- **Two journeys side by side:** run a first-timer and a returning user on parallel strips to see where the arcs diverge.

- **Service vs product:** bound the journey to a service encounter or a product flow — same strip, different read on the dips.
- **Longer (40 min):** after clustering, take one circled dip straight into a quick “how might we” sketch.

Facilitation notes

- The strongest moment is seeing a big dip nobody had owned because each team only saw their own box.
- Keep sketches rough; polish slows the map and shifts attention to drawing skill, not the journey.

Put it on the wall

Print `storyboard-the-journey-activity-poster.pdf` (A3) to put the run of show, the three marks and the “draw the line” prompt on one wall while you facilitate.

Props in this folder

- `storyboard-the-journey-prop-cards.pdf` — poker-spec print sheet (63.5 × 88.9 mm, bleed and cut guides): three mark cards (High / Low / Hope), a blank panel card, a “draw the line” card, branded backs
- `storyboard-the-journey-run-sheet.pdf` — the print edition: this run sheet + the debrief, bound as one A4 document with bookmarks (`-Letter.pdf` is US Letter)
- `storyboard-the-journey-activity-poster.pdf` — the whole journey map on one A3 wall sheet
- `storyboard-the-journey-guide.md` · `-debrief.md` · `-start-here.md` — the facilitator guide, the debrief, the one-page start here
- `storyboard-the-journey-license.md` — what you may do
- `SKILL.md` · `storyboard-the-journey.zip` — the machine-readable manifest, and the whole folder in one download

Agent version

Every file in this folder has a stable public URL — an AI agent can fetch the cards, the debrief and this run sheet with three curl commands (see `SKILL.md`). The paper version needs nothing but a long wall, blank panel cards and markers.

Storyboard the Journey — Debrief

> The map isn’t for admiring — it’s so everyone argues about the same valley instead of their own box.
>
> Use with `storyboard-the-journey-guide.md`. The name-the-move close at minute 23 is the compressed version; this sheet is the full one.

How to run this debrief

- Keep the whole strip **on the wall** and stand beside it — you are debriefing the shape of the line, not one panel at a time.
- Read the dips as seams between boxes, not anyone’s failure; that’s what keeps the room arguing about the valley, not each other.

- Land each circled dip with a name and a first move — a map with no owners is just a nice drawing.

Read the wall

1. **Where the line dips hardest.** That's the experience's real problem, often sitting in the seam between two teams who each think their part is fine.
2. **Where hopes pile up.** Several hopes at one moment is a strong, cheap design move waiting there.
3. **The highs people are about to break.** If an upcoming change would sand down a high, name it now — some dips are worth protecting.

The six debrief questions

1. The deepest valley.

"Which dip surprised the most people — and why hadn't anyone owned it?"

→ Targets: the shared blind spot the map exists to surface.

2. The seam.

"Whose box sits around the worst valley, and can they see it from here?"

→ Targets: the handoff gap — the dip lives between teams, not inside one.

3. The hope cluster.

"If you could only act on one hope cluster, which would move the whole journey most?"

→ Targets: leverage — the cheap move that lifts the line, not the expensive one that polishes a high.

4. The protected high.

"What stays on the map as sacred — the high you'd protect even while fixing the dip?"

→ Targets: the guardrail — what not to optimise away in the name of improvement.

5. The shape shift.

"How did the line change your read of the journey compared to the list of steps alone?"

→ Targets: meta-awareness of what the visual shape reveals that a flat list hides.

6. The next map.

"Whose journey deserves this same strip treatment next — and when will you draw it?"

→ Targets: transfer — scheduling the habit instead of ending the exercise.

Failure modes of the debrief

Failure mode	Why it happens	The rescue
Everyone defends their own panel	The map got read as a scorecard	Read the dips as seams between boxes, not failures of a person.
It turns into a backlog dump	The map wants immediate tickets	Name two or three moves with owners; park the rest against the map.

Failure mode	Why it happens	The rescue
The protected highs get lost	Only problems get airtime	Say each high aloud and mark what would break it.