Resources

Adjacent Industries Track
Hearken Engagement Innovation Summit
October 2019

Engagement is not restricted to the field of journalism. From professional baseball to health care, from the world of entrepreneurs to the grassroots outreach of community organizers, other industries devoted to understanding and serving stakeholders have many lessons to offer engagement practitioners. These six articles have been adapted from sessions in the Adjacent Industries track of the 2019 Hearken Engagement Innovation Summit.

Official event photographer: [DDC - Digital Development Communications](#)

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Tailgate parties and growing your fan base: What journalism can learn from professional sports teams

Caitlin Moyer, the director of new media for the Milwaukee Brewers, explored what it takes to create content that is highly shareable and builds an engaged fan base.

Moyer also conducted graduate research and is the author of a thesis and several articles which examine the relationship between team identification and social media usage.

Using Jonah Berger's STEPPS acronym, she provided examples of how thinking of content in terms of these categories has helped her and her team design successful viral content for the Brewers.

From Jonah Berger's "Contagious":

S - social currency - first of friends to know about / share
T - triggers - e.g. Rebecca Black's song "Friday"
E - emotion - if we care, we share
P - public - e.g. profile picture changing, or Livestrong bracelet
P - practical value - e.g. Lifehacks on Facebook or Pinterest
S - stories - people connect to storytelling.

Dive deeper:

Moyer shared many examples that went viral for the Brewers that fell into one or more of these particular categories in the STEPPS model, such as a Spring Training video tied to the anniversary of the creation of "The Sandlot" and a spoof on Mean Girls, which also helped to introduce new members of the Brewers and share facts about teammates to a loyal fan base.

Moyer, who works with all sorts of social media metrics, said there a few that she values more than others. They are as follows:

- The interaction rate: Total number of engagements divided by number of followers and number of posts: Instagram, Facebook, Twitter. This helps you compare the success of

your posts to both yourself and others.

- Follower growth rate: Subtract current from original then divide by original followers.
- Top posts: Which are performing above the norm?
- Patterns and most emailed/shared: What patterns do you see in the type of content that your followers are interested in? Looking at stories that are "most shared/emailed" can also help inform future content.

The Sandlot, as presented by the Brew Crew

735,573 views • Mar 21, 2018   👍 13K 👎 351   ➤ SHARE   ☰+ SAVE   ...

Mean Girls, as presented by the Brew Crew

107,829 views • Mar 18, 2019   👍 3.4K 👎 47   ➤ SHARE   ☰+ SAVE   ...

Moyer also had a lot to share about which demographics care about which platform and the nuances between them.

- Instagram drives more engagement per post compared to any social network -- Instagram stories are twice as popular as Snapchat. Examples Moyer shared include: Players playing Fortnite on the jumbotron.
- On Twitter, tweets with images get 150 percent more retweets than text-only tweets.
- Engagement on native Facebook videos is 109 percent higher than on YouTube videos.
- Up to 85 percent of video views happen with the sound off, so think about stories that can be told with and without sound.
- Young viewers enjoy "hate light" -- "negativity served up with the right amount of wit, sarcasm, and sass" -- a fine line to walk, but can really build a solid connection with younger audiences.
- Memes: Timeliness is key. Memes often have a very short shelf life, so you have to act fast, or know when to resurrect a meme.
- How can you resurface tweets or content when timeliness isn't right then? Having content banked is a way to continue to conversation digitally.

Resources:

- **STEPPS**: jonahberger.com/resources/
- **Jonah Berger: Invisible Influence:** jonahberger.com/books/invisible-influence/
- "**Take Me Out to the Facebook Page**": henrystewartpublications.com/jdsm
- *Sandlot* **spring training video**: youtube.com/watch?v=3SQjoGO773Y
- *Mean Girls* **spoof**: youtube.com/watch?v=syMtO9Z4hbw

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Diagnosing the truth:
What journalists can learn from the art of medicine

What can journalists learn from the art of medicine?

Hearken asked Alexa Miller, a healthcare consultant who studies diagnosis, to lead this session.

Our takeaway: a lot! Making assumptions not only will make an ass out of you, but it also can lead to major errors and a loss of trust.

After bringing us through some basic concepts of diagnosis, such as:

- what a diagnosis even is (there are two definitions! Who knew! The identification of the disease, and the process of getting there — and getting that process piece

"If medical misdiagnosis is a leading cause of death in this country, then misrepresentation in the media is a primary cause of suffering."

–Jennifer Brandel, Hearken,
in commentary at Diagnosing the Truth workshop

right can be what makes or breaks health)
- different modes of thinking (fast/intuitive, and slow/analytical)
- what illness scripts are (your internal picture of disease, based on what you have seen before)
- the extreme importance of having discipline in language, such as separating fact from

inference, when describing what you see

Miller asked us: Where do diagnosis and journalism/ reporting intersect? Where are they different?

The resulting discussion prompted a much-needed step back from our work and thinking about what we do, why we do it, and how.

Dive deeper:

One of the main themes voiced by the group was the standard practice of hearing about a story, going out to collect data to confirm it, and then getting it on the news by 5 p.m., and that sinking feeling knowing this practice differs significantly from the listening practices known to beget reality-based narratives.

Miller also engaged us in a practice of art-viewing as a mini-practicum experience of observation and listening skills, using a process called Visual Thinking Strategies. She began by asking us to look silently, and then asked, "What's happening here in this picture?"
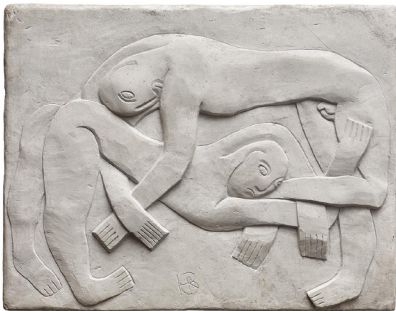
Image credit: [Museum of Fine Arts Boston](#).

In her facilitation, Miller asked us to track our initial impressions of the work of art, and compare them with our thinking about the piece following a discussion that integrated a roomful of perspectives.

She demonstrated active listening and differentiated between fact and inference in participants' commentary.

The result was first-hand feedback on our own inferencing patterns at play, and also how much more there is to see beyond what you initially expect. Humbling! Some of us saw violence, some of us saw rest, some of us saw shapes carved in plaster. The main thing was that we had time and space to look longer and allow the narratives and possibilities emerge.

We talk about it a lot, but experiencing it is a different ballgame: It's hard to separate out fact from inference when you're observing something, whether that's art, a sick patient, or a breaking news situation. It is so, so hard, and most newsrooms are optimized not for listening but for rapid distribution of stories. This will take a larger change (Hearken's working on that, hand in hand with some great partners!), but until then, journalists can do better to understand and practice and even enjoy listening.

One of our biggest takeaways was that there are several steps you can take to separate fact from inference: Some of the strategies that great diagnosticians use, and journalists could learn from:

- Frame the problem using disciplined language, separating out facts from inference, conveying curiosity.
- When hypothesizing, use speculative language instead of definitive language.
- Verify "Here's what I heard, did I get that right?" (like good journalists use quote-checks).
- Recognize where your hypothesis came from: "What did I see or hear that makes me think that?"
- Force yourself to answer "What else can it be? What doesn't fit?"
- Recognize when a set of fresh eyes is needed
- Seek feedback on the accuracy of your story
- Take the time to do the above steps: [A pilot study](#) even showed that alerting doctors and nurses to take a pause while trying to diagnose urgent care patient actually resulted in the medical provider deciding to take a new action as a result of pausing.

Whatever you're encountering — a work of art, a sick patient, or a breaking news situation — taking a pause for observation makes good sense.

Resources:

- **Arts Practica:** artspractica.com
- **Visual Thinking Strategies**: vtshome.org

Interested in more training from Hearken and Arts Practica? [Let us know!](#)

Interested in learning more about Miller's work? [Watch this recent talk.](#)

Listening with love:
What journalists can learn from community health workers

Healthcare in America is often complex, costly and impersonal. It does very little to address challenges like joblessness, social isolation and hunger that often make people sick.

To respond to these challenges, healthcare organizations are increasingly looking to community health workers (CHWs), trusted individuals who share life experiences with the people they serve. CHWs bridge healthcare and community settings to support people in addressing unmet social needs like housing insecurity, loneliness and underemployment.

One of the most widely disseminated CHW programs in the country is the IMPaCT model, developed by the Penn Center for Community Health Workers at Penn Medicine. Three clinical trials have demonstrated that the model consistently improves patient health and quality of care while reducing unnecessary hospital use. IMPaCT started in Philadelphia at Penn Medicine and is being replicated across 18 different states by more than three dozen organizations including Veterans Health Administration, state Medicaid programs, and integrated healthcare organizations.

There are several lessons from IMPaCT's design and scale that are relevant for improving people-centered journalism.

Facilitators Jill Feldstein and Tamala Carter of the Penn Center for Community Health Workers

Dive deeper:

Focus on hiring

CHWs are often referred to as "demographic mirrors" of the patients they serve. They share life experiences – growing up in the same community, being a veteran, etc. – with the people they serve. They are also "natural helpers" – individuals who are innately empathic, non-judgmental and great listeners.

To find CHWs, IMPaCT has pioneered non-traditional recruitment and selection methods, including hosting informal meet and greets as a screening tool to select candidates to interview.

"You can't use a resume to see if someone is a good listener," said Jill Feldstein, the Center's chief operating officer. IMPaCT hiring practices work: published studies have shown a 50% CHW turnover rate; in contrast, the Penn Center for CHWs has had a 1.7% annual turnover rate.

Put people at the center of the work

The IMPaCT model was designed as part of an academic/community collaboration led by Dr. Shreya Kangovi at the University of Pennsylvania. The first person that Kangovi hired was Tamala Carter, a long-time resident of West Philadelphia, where the University is located. Carter's role was to conduct interviews with patients – to sit by their hospital beds and in their living rooms and kitchens and understand their experience with healthcare.

Before she started that role, at the time IMPaCT was hiring for community health worker positions she was skeptical that this was another instance in which people were taking from her community without serving.

"Two reasons why I was hesitant — that you had to have this education in research, and I was hesitant to take information from community and not do anything with this," Carter said.

As she learned that she had a role in co-creation of this position, she began to see the value of this approach.

Carter asked patients: "what do you think will improve your health?" Her interviews revealed a common – and powerful – theme.

"There was a misconception that patients do not want help. They want people to listen to them, to be heard. People are intelligent enough to know what they want," Carter said.

The results from Carter's initial interviews formed the basis of the IMPaCT intervention. For each barrier that patients mentioned, Kangovi and Carter mapped what that meant in terms of what CHWs needed to do with and for patients (e.g. the intervention); who CHWs need to be (e.g. what to screen for); and what CHWs needed to know to be successful in their role (e.g. topics for IMPaCT's college-accredited CHW training).

Continue to learn from your community

Although the IMPaCT model has served more than 10,000 patients, the Center continually refines its processes in response to feedback from the community. Carter is currently the community based research coordinator, and her role is to interview patients and CHWs to glean insights to improve the model. This feedback, along with real-time input provided by all team members at "design jams" – rapid-cycle redesign meetings – helps the model continually improve. A design jam a few years ago resulted in CHWs starting to reflect back to the patient the totality of what they hear, in what the model calls a "snapshot."

"If you get who a person is wrong, then nothing works," Carter said. You must understand exactly what is motivating someone to do what they are doing and be who they are. The questions you create don't have value if you miss the essence of who someone is.

For example, one CHW asked her patient: "What do you do for fun?" He replied: "I haven't had any fun in 27 years." The next question she asked was, "What did you do 27 years ago that was fun?" He said he had gone bowling.

Although the patient had multiple resource needs (insurance, housing, etc.) the first thing the CHW and patient did when he got out of the hospital was go bowling. Everything else flowed from there because the CHW started by unlocking joy. The community health worker was then able to work on all the other things the patient needed because first she listened and took action related to what was meaningful to him.

"When you say back to people how you see them, and not just what they said," is when things begin to shift, according to Carter.

Resources:

- [A glimpse at IMPaCT](#)
- [Healthcare Providers are Hiring the Wrong People](#) (in *Harvard Business Review*)
- [Understanding Why Patients Of Low Socioeconomic Status Prefer Hospitals Over Ambulatory Care](#) (in *Health Affairs*)

The IMPaCT model was developed by asking patients, "what do you think you need to improve your health?"

BARRIER	INTERVENTION	TRAITS	SKILLS
Patients want to be heard and do not want to feel judged	CHW conducts open-ended, strengths-based interview	Listens more than talks Non-judgmental	Motivational interviewing

Power to the people:
What journalists can learn from community organizers

The process of community organizing can teach journalists how to build relationships with community members to make a difference (without crossing into activism).

A six-month project called Stories of Atlantic City illustrates how the principles of community organizing can create more diverse, nuanced coverage of a community.

Dive deeper:

The idea that journalism is about giving voice to the voiceless or empowerment is wrong, according to Mike Rispoli.

"Inherent in journalism is this idea that people don't have voices, and that they don't have power. Neither of which are true," said Rispoli, director of the News Voices project for media technology advocacy organization Free Press.

> *"We believe that the public should be treated as constituents and not consumers of news."*
> *— Mike Rispoli*

Journalism instead is about sharing and building durable power with communities, he said. For this work, journalists can learn from community organizers, who are experts in building investment in a community to make things happen.

Facilitators Mike Rispoli, Evan Sanchez, and James Thompson.

Community organizing requires several steps:

- Relationship building
- Bringing people together to understand existing attitudes and how they can work together to make things different
- Strategizing and visioning - trying to create a world that could be
- Taking action
- Learning and evaluation

Rispoli cautioned not to mistake organizing for activism.

Instead, organizing is about understanding people's needs, what world they want, collaborating with them to make it happen.

And that, in order to shift journalism, we first have to shift the relationships that impact journalism.

In practice:
Stories of Atlantic City

When people think about Atlantic City, they usually think of one thing: casinos, said Evan Sanchez. Sanchez is the co-founder of Authentic City Partners, which has partnered on the Stories of Atlantic City project, which community members and local newsrooms created to create nuanced news coverage that more accurately represents the diversity of Atlantic City.

> *"It feels like journalists kind of view community as a liability, but in reality it's one of the key assets."*
> *— Evan Sanchez*

The secret sauce of the project, Sanchez said, was bringing not only media partners together but

also community partners together.

That process mapped to the community organizing process:

- **Relationship building:** They first reached out to community members and identified leaders who may be able to connect them to the community.

- **Bringing people together**: They held a free community mixer to attract community members who would be interested in sharing their stories or nominating people whose stories could be shared.

- **Strategizing and visioning**: Hearing community members' ideas on how local news in Atlantic City could look different, they went to all local news organizations to ask them to participate in the Stories of Atlantic City project.

- **Taking action**: Sanchez and his collaborators knocked on doors and handed out flyers to find out what stories were not being told. Leaders in community would nominate the stories of people who journalists didn't already know. Community members pitched 12 stories to the newsrooms, and "every single newsroom in that pitch meeting had never heard of these stories," Rispoli said.

- **Learning and evaluation**: They then looked at what worked and what didn't over the course of the six-month project, with plans to start on a longer timeframe next time.

Key takeaways

Trust takes time. It took four years to get the pieces in place for newsrooms and community members to work together on a six-month project.

"The amount of skepticism around this project was really, really strong because people had not seen their stories in local press for so long, they didn't really understand it," Sanchez said.

"I know, over time, that we'll continue to break down more of that distrust, because really you can't make change until you start to build trust."

Be prepared for pushback from journalists. "There was definitely resistance to the idea that these stories would be sourced by community and pitched to them," Sanchez said of the news organizations.

A couple tactics that helped were:
- making sure the newsrooms were compensated for their work out of the funding for the program (community organizers were also compensated)
- bringing them in at the earliest planning stages for the project

Look beyond grass-top leaders. Community leaders who are well-connected to newsrooms can be helpful but can sometimes hoard power, said Free Press Organizer James Thompson. Reach into the leaders' networks to get closer to the ground and think about the people who may not be leaders but know a lot about what is happening, such as baristas, hair stylists and cashiers.

Journalists can use community mapping to identify the gaps and shortfalls in their existing relationships. And when they begin to have conversations with people, it should not only be as sources in a story but just to understand their needs and perspectives.

Try setting up one-on-one conversations to build those relationships.

"When you reach out to folks, it sends a message to them that you're not only just focused on getting a quote from them but you're spending time to understand what's happening in that community."
— James Thompson

Resources:

- [Report: These Are the Stories of Atlantic City](#)
- [Creating an engaged newsroom: a toolkit](#)
- [News Voices Organizing Guide: Don't just engage. Organize!](#)

Facilitator Jennifer Godzeno running a mini-participatory budgeting exercise with summit participants.

Real money, real power:
Learning about engagement from participatory budgeting

Participatory budgeting is a process that gives people real power to make decisions that affect their lives. They convene to decide what projects they want to see in their own communities, and bring those ideas back to the wider public for a vote. Ideas with the most votes get funded. A steering committee sees to the implementation of the projects. The cycle happens annually and then restarts.

Participatory Budgeting Project's mission is to empower people to decide together how to spend public money. They research and develop new tools and practices to make participatory budgeting and democracy work better. They aim to make participatory budgeting not "just another bureaucratic process" but rather to center equity. They've inspired or advised almost every participatory budgeting process in North America and are celebrating their tenth anniversary as a non-profit.

Dive deeper:

Budget participation can happen on many levels, from limited participation, where average people have no chance to share input, up to full participation, where participatory budgeting lives. Godzeno shared this full "ladder of budget participation." From lowest to highest:

1. **Listening (to the officials).** Any journalist who has covered a hearing or a deputation knows how this level operates. At this level, folks just hear information from officials with no chance to share back input.

2. **Informing.** At this level are online games where people can simulate and be educated about a budget process, but that information/brainstorm doesn't go to anyone with decision-making power.

3. **Consultation.** At this level are focus groups and town halls. These at least provide an opportunity to talk back to the officials, but there's no guarantee anyone will do anything with that input.

4. **Limited participation**. At this level are community boards and councils that make some budget decisions. Godzeno is on her own Connecticut city's planning board. She said these boards do make really important decisions, such as how to spend a multi-million dollar capital budget, or approving a new building development. But, Godzeno said her board only has five voting members on it, and she is the "only person of color member in a community that is 50 percent people of color, and a third immigrant...and for several years was only person under the age of 60, even though the median resident age is in the thirties." Between the limited spots and this demographic mismatch, which is common on these boards, decision-making bodies are limited in their ability to redistribute power and represent residents equitably.

5. **Full participation**. Here you have participatory budgeting!

Godzeno shared the case study of the Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative using participatory budgeting. In this effort, the people actually experiencing poverty had a chance to shape how they'd like to work on it. The projects they approved included:
1. A childcare cooperative for people working shifts outside of the traditional 9-5 window (especially service and retail workers), because the mainstream childcare system is set up for 9-to-5 workers.
2. An emergency housing fund and tiny homes community.

Participatory budgeting gave some back to the people experiencing an issue to determine their own solutions. The solutions they chose are innovative, not government as usual.

In the question and answer portion of the session, someone asked how governments get on board with participatory budgeting in the first place. Godzeno answered, "participatory budgeting is a new way to decide about the same funds. The government has to do some form of public engagement, so why not do it better?"

She finds that elected officials who are invested in reaching constituents that they don't normally hear from are excited by participatory budgeting. There are some leaders who don't want to hear from certain segments of their communities and ignore them purposefully, but enough leaders want to engage and just don't know how. Participatory budgeting provides a proven tool.

Another benefit of participatory budgeting, Godzeno said, is that it makes the process of budgeting and the common complexities of bureaucracy transparent to a larger number of everyday people. When people start asking when projects they voted on through participatory budgeting will be built or implemented, they learn that that across the board "government procurement is really slow," so it can motivate residents "to advocate for whole systems to change so government can become more responsive."

Resources:

- [PBCan: How does participatory budgeting advance hot issues?](#)
- [Participatory Budgeting Project case studies](#)

Summit participants doing a mini-PB exercise - what would you do with $20 to fuel a project?

Facilitators Alison Go and Anna Nirmala

What journalists can learn from the world's most entrepreneurial companies

Innovative and entrepreneurial companies lean hard on one simple skill: Listening to their customers.

In the business world, it's called user research, and this approach is often at the core of some of the largest leaps in business and technology. As the lines between editorial, audience, revenue, and product continue to blur and intersect, it's important to take a closer look at how successful startups, tech giants, and top business leaders deploy user research to solve the world's hairiest problems.

Dive deeper:

Alison Go has found there is a particular role in business that former reporters can be good at, one where innate curiosity is useful in making good business decisions: product manager.

Go started her career as a reporter and copy editor at U.S. News & World Report, The Boston Globe, and the San Jose Mercury News. Now, she is Chalkbeat's head of growth, in charge of product, marketing, strategic planning,

and business development, after working as a product manager at Amazon, Facebook, and Rent the Runway.

There are numerous ways that reporting lays the foundation for good business thinking. It starts with how both industries define success.

In business, the story is always centered around the consumer. It's an approach that journalists can use to inform how they design approaches to their users - read-

ers, listeners and viewers - in their everyday work.

Anna Nirmala, who previously worked at PricewaterhouseCoopers as a management consultant and Hearken as Director of Business Development, is now Director of Portfolio Development and founding team member of The American Journalism Project (AJP), which is the first ever venture philanthropy firm dedicated to reinvigorating local news. AJP seeks out social entrepreneurs who share their belief that local news is a public good and are leading civic news organizations positioned for growth.

"Yes, the industry is struggling, but there is a bright future," Nirmala said.

In order to answer business questions and solve for market wide issues, you must test ideas and potential strategies in order to make sure they will land. User and market research set the stage for how to guide subsequent deci-

sion making, ensuring that what you're testing has a solid story to launch off of.

At Rent the Runway, Go said, the CEO was "masterful" at telling the story about why its approach was working, going over how major changes in society make the opportunity for the business to exist.

An exercise in questions

To demonstrate how the process of user research maps to the skills of a reporter, try out this brief exercise.

First, as a reporter, consider the following:
If you were writing a story about special education in New York City, what kind of questions would you ask?

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Now imagine you're building a product for the parents of special education students. What questions would you ask? What do you need to know to understand what parents need and whether your product would be effective at meeting those needs?

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Next steps

To ensure you are able to tell stories and build products that can not only change the world, but make an impact and money, too,

Go and Nirmala advise:

• Be comfortable with ambiguity
• Think in an open-ended way
• Always come back to the broader context and history that your work is living within

What's the difference between success in reporting and success in business?

	Reporting	Business
What's the end goal?	To change the world! Often measured by impact.	To change the world! Often measured by money or profits.
How do you achieve this?	You tell stories. People/citizens do something because of the story you told. Tangible change happens.	You tell stories. People invest in your vision. You then make products that people use (and often pay for). Tangible change happens.
What's the story like?	Thorough, trustworthy, interesting	Energizing, inspiring, credible enough
What kind of work do you do to tell that story?	Beat reporting, investigating reporting, enterprise reporting	User research, market research