

Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism
**ASCJ 420: Professional Effectiveness: Building a Career through Third
Space Thinking**

Fall 2017 (Start Date: Aug 23 –End Date: Nov 29)

2 units – 15 weeks

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Office Hours:	By appointment

Class Meeting Time: Wednesdays 6:30 – 8:10 pm

Location: Room ANN L115

Course Description

Background and Rationale: This class provides students with a communication-driven analytic framework, along with knowledge that will help them identify and take advantage of opportunities in today’s digital, distributed media-rich society. The framework is built around years of Annenberg Third Space research on communication effectiveness and problem solving necessary to succeed in today’s world. The framework draws on classic communication concepts. We also compare and contrast mindsets of communication thinking, engineering thinking, and business thinking. Students from each of these backgrounds will benefit equally. We draw on recent research by McKinsey, LinkedIn, Harvard Business Review and other sources indicating that communication effectiveness is equally or more valuable than technical hard skills. This trend is inevitable as communication moves to the centers of modern life. Students educated in Third Space Thinking will be practiced at group problem solving and communication effectiveness. This course develops the five Third Space attributes. They are:

1. Adaptability
Demonstrate mental agility and tolerance for risk in ambiguous situations; be flexible when handling change and less likely to rely on legacy solutions. Think beyond black-and-white to the gray areas, and ask expansive, unexpected questions that lead to better solutions.
2. Cultural Competency
Have a capacity to think, act and move across multiple boundaries of functions, silos and global cultures, including the sometimes insular worlds of engineering, law, and business.
3. Empathy
Formally listen to the needs of the people involved the ecosystem a product/service. Demonstrate emotional intelligence and effective listening and collaboration ability. Consider and include the views of others across a variety of disciplines, cultures and perspectives.
4. Intellectual Curiosity
Asking questions makes the invisible visible. Have a deep hunger to learn and grow. Show a desire to dig deep – to be creative and willing to risk and experiment in order to learn. Ask questions in structured format.
5. 360 Degree Thinking
Think holistically – understand the full ecosystem of a problem across time and multiple touchpoints, recognize patterns, and make imaginative leaps based on those patterns.

Real World Interaction: Students will use communication-centric problem solving to develop solutions for a real world partner who will participate in the class – such as campus entity.

Requirements: This is a 2-unit course for letter grade. Each week students will receive a combination of short lectures, assessments, communication effectiveness exercises, and problem solving exercises. Students will work in teams to create a final class project using the communications thinking.

Grading Criteria

The following percentage breakdown will be used in determining the grade for the course.

Readings Prep and Class Participation	15
Communication Effectiveness Training In-Class Exercises	15
Communication Effectiveness Assignments	15
Problem Solving In-Class Exercises	20
Problem Solving Assignments	20
Final Presentation	15
Total	100

Class Policies and Resources

Academic Conduct

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, *Behavior Violating University Standards* <https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/>.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* <http://equity.usc.edu/> or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>. This is important for the safety whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. *The Center for Women and Men* <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage sarc@usc.edu describes reporting options and other resources.

Support Systems

A number of USC’s schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. *The Office of Disability Services and Programs* http://sait.usc.edu/academicssupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* <http://emergency.usc.edu/> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

Schedule of Classes

Week 1 (date: Wednesday 8/23): Third Space Thinking Overview – The Five Attributes

Lecture and Discussion of Readings

Our research in multiple sectors identifies five essential attributes: Adaptability, Cultural Competency, Empathy, Intellectual Curiosity and 360 Degree Thinking. When carefully brought together they constitute a distinctive mindset (Carol Dweck) different from an engineering mindset (Richard Miller), or an MBA approach. This third approach “Third Space Thinking”, essential on its own, is used to complement, enable and amplify the insights of other professions and it parallels scholarly work on emotional intelligence. (Daniel Goleman).

Communication effectiveness is not simply using power point well or speaking clearly. Rather, according to recent research, communication skills are the highest in demand across the U.S. economy. McKinsey estimates the shortage of this ability in the workforce cost the U.S. economy between \$800 billion and \$1 trillion dollars annually.

The five critical attributes

1. Adaptability
2. Cultural Competency
3. Empathy
4. Intellectual Curiosity
5. 360 Degree Thinking

Just as hard skills are easily grasped and remembered with the acronym STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math), a parallel communication-driven acronym is A C E I T.

Communication Effectiveness

In Class Exercise

Silent Interview (Empathy)

Empathy emerges as perhaps the most widely cited of the five attributes in our research. Empathy is defined as having the capacity to feel what another is experiencing from within the other’s frame of reference. Unfortunately, most of us make snap judgements about others based on surface-level impressions like dress, hairstyle, language, etc. The Silent Interview is a low-risk, non-threatening experience that highlights how our first impressions are often incorrect and misleading. Working in groups of three, participants “interview” each other simultaneously. What is interesting about this is interview is that no one actually speaks. Instead they answer a list of questions about one another based solely on their first impressions of one another. After a few minutes, participants share their responses with one another and learn each interviewee’s true responses. Followed by debrief and discussion.

Chair Exercise (Cultural Competency)

This activity powerfully illustrates a phenomenon that occurs in most organizations in which critical information is (unintentionally) not shared with all team members. Participants are given a simple challenge to complete as a team. More likely than not, participants will experience frustration and confusion resulting from a lack of shared information. This hinders the team’s ability to think holistically, recognize patterns and solve the problem easily. Followed by debrief and discussion.

Assignment

Students complete the self-awareness exercise provided by instructor on Blackboard – due Week 2

Readings for Next Week

1. Weick, K. E. (1979). *The Social Psychology of Organizing (2nd ed.)*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
2. Putnam, L. L., & Sorenson, R. L. (1982). Equivocal messages in organizations. *Human Communication Research*, 8(2), 114-132.
3. Emotional Intelligence 2.0, Chapter 3: What Emotional Intelligence Looks Like, by Daniel Goleman

Week 2 (date 8/30): ACEIT, Self-Awareness, and Mental Resilience

Lecture and Discussion of Readings

ACEIT ability and mindset in individuals fuel effectiveness in organizations – Adaptability, Cultural Competency, Empathy, Intellectual Curiosity, and 360 Degree Thinking. These attributes can be formally assessed, developed, and practiced.

This lecture explores methods and assessments for improving one’s self awareness and mental resilience with regard to ACEIT. Class discusses methods described in lecture and readings. Instructor provides data driven explanation of what ACEIT-related self-awareness is, how it can be quantified, and how individuals can increase it in themselves. This course provides a barrage of ACEIT assessments, exercises and assignments to educate and develop self-awareness. The Third Space team has designed an assessment tool – the Third Space Thinking Assessment Test (TSTAT) to evaluate individuals’ effectiveness with the five core attributes. We make this online assessment available to the students.

Problem Solving

In Class Exercise

Pre-Project Team Alignment (Cultural Competency, Empathy)

All team members write out their working styles, objectives, needs, and pet peeves using worksheets. Team discusses and collaboratively creates a poster in the workspace. Builds team empathy and trust. Followed by debrief and discussion.

Communication Effectiveness

In Class Exercise

The Marshmallow Challenge (Adaptability)

This is a fun exercise wherein teams *experience* simple but profound lessons in leadership, collaboration and innovation. Participants will likely learn tough lessons about how people approach view leadership and hypothesis testing how that inhibits innovation. This is a lesson-filled introduction to Communication Thinking as a group problem solving methodology. It provides the team hands-on experience thinking holistically and working collaboratively on a problem.

Assignment

Students take the Third Space Thinking Assessment Test (TSTAT)

Students take home the Pre-Project Assessment worksheets generated during today’s in-class exercise. Each student creates a Problem Statement in the format provided outside of class. Secondly, each student generates list of assumptions in three column format of Unmet Needs, Reasons Why, and User Questions.
Due Week 3

Readings for Next Week

1. *The Importance of Mindset* – whitepaper, Richard Miller
2. *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*, Chapters 1-3, Carol Dweck.

3. What Google Learned from its Quest to Build the Perfect Team - http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/28/magazine/what-google-learned-from-its-quest-to-build-the-perfect-team.html?_r=0

Week 3 (date 9/6): The Importance of Mindset

Lecture and Discussion of Readings

Research shows that employers are increasingly frustrated that new hires out of college are lacking in the communication and human interaction ability that often matter most for professional success. Employers complain that graduates—even those at the top of their classes—are “not equipped to engage with others and navigate the complex relationships and integrated global work environments in today’s workplace” (Richard Miller). Studies demonstrate that the “complex constellation of attitudes, behaviors and motivations (mindset) that transcend any set of college courses often has more significant impact on long term success in life than academic achievement does” (Richard Miller). This lecture surveys research by Prof Carol Dweck and others that demonstrates that “mindset is definable, measureable, and teachable, and has a major impact on positive outcomes in life” (Richard Miller). This lecture also delves into the methods for shaping mindset via personal experiential learning and emotional support.

Communication Effectiveness

In Class Exercise

Growth Mindset vs Fixed Mindset – self-awareness activity to help student gain an understanding of their own mindset and attitudes and how to expand.

Problem Solving

In Class Exercise

Pre-Project Assessment (with real-world partner) (Cultural Competency)

All projects start with this process. It is an interview and survey conducted with stakeholder to understand the problem the team will address. Gathered via worksheets. Socialized with multiple stakeholders. Results in a one page problem statement. Followed by debrief and discussion.

Assignment

n/a

Readings for Next Week

1. Personal Styles & Effective Performance, Introduction and Chapter 1, by David Merrill and Roger Reid
2. Hofstede, G. (1991). *Cultures and organizations, software of the mind: Intercultural cooperation and its importance for survival*. United Kingdom: McGraw-Hill.
3. Carton, A. M., & Cummings, J. N. (2012). A theory of subgroups in work teams. *Academy of Management Review*, 37(3), 441-470.
4. Chi, R., & Suthers, D. (in press). Assessing intercultural communication competence as a relational construct using social network analysis. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2015.03.011>

Week 4 (date 9/13): Social Styles, Part 1: Understanding the Four Types

Lecture and Discussion of Readings

Social Style is a widely used behavioral style model. It has been used by thousands of organizations to improve leadership and team performance results. The system uses factor analysis to identify two scales a) assertiveness and b) responsiveness. Each person’s social style can be plotted on a matrix to identify the degree to which he or she is a) Analytic, Driving, Amiable, Expressive. This lecture provides an overview

of Social Styles. Language from Social Styles will be used throughout the course.

Communication Effectiveness

In Class Exercise

Make a Flyer (Adaptability)

This experiential activity brings to life the dramatic differences in how we prefer to communicate, what motivates us, and what we need from others based upon our respective Social Styles. Participants will get a heavy dose of self-awareness as well as a great deal of insight into how to better understand and communicate more effectively with people of different Social Styles.

Assignment

n/a

Readings for Next Week

1. Schwaber, E. (1981). Empathy: A mode of analytic listening. *Psychoanalytic Inquiry*, 1(3), 357–392.
2. Spitzberg, B. H. (2015). The composition of competence: Communication skills. In *Communication Competence*, Hannawa, A. F. & Spitzberg, B. H. (eds), Chapter 10, 237-272.

Week 5 (date 9/20): Third Space Thinking and Making Ideas Tangible

Lecture and Discussion of Readings

Our approach to Third Space Thinking includes efforts to turn abstract communication ideas into tangible materials. For example, early in the process – when a problem is in its most ambiguous and confounding state – a team can employ the five attributes to define the parameters of the issue at hand to define its parameters rigorously and inclusively. With the parameters carefully defined, an individual or group can then choose one of multiple Communication Thinking tools, like the Journey Map to define where and how people engage with the problem. The Journey Map process includes talking to the people identified and then including formal write-ups of their perspectives. The final Journey Map deliverable would therefore provide a much more robust insights on the problem than if the team had just say brainstormed ideas around a table. Making the Journey Map is key because it formally converts abstract and invisible ideas into a tangible building block. Design Thinking is to product development as Third Space Thinking is to communication.

Problem Solving

Journey Map students are given a case study of a complex communication problem and must work together to create a journey map of how to solve it.

Assignment

n/a

Readings for Next Week

1. Personal Styles & Effective Performance, Chapters 2 and 3, by David Merrill and Roger Reid

Week 6 (date 9/27): Social Styles, Part 2: Communication Versatility

Lecture and Discussion of Readings

This is a continuation of the discussion of Social Styles. This session educates the student on Communication Versatility. Professors Rebecca Weintraub and Patti Riley of the Annenberg School of Communication effectively employ “strategic communication” tools like “stakeholder analysis” with their students, and the class will follow their approach. Students learn how to develop actionable strategies.

Communication Effectiveness

In Class Exercise

BARNGA (Cultural Competency)

This classic simulation game focuses on cultural clashes. Players learn how to reconcile differences and become more self-aware in order to avoid miscommunication.

Problem Solving

In Class Exercise

Hypothesis Test (with real-world partner) (Empathy, Adaptability)

Write out team assumptions on whiteboard in three columns: Unmet Needs, Reasons Why, User Questions. Test assumptions on stakeholders (users, channel partners, etc.). Gather results and reframe.

Assignment

Students use the Hypothesis Test questions generated in class, organize into teams, and then interview Stakeholders outside of class about the questions. Each student team delivers a Hypothesis Test report using worksheet provided by instructor. Due Week 7

1. Dancing with Ambiguity: Causality Behavior, Design Thinking, and Triple-Loop-Learning - https://www.researchgate.net/publication/262289320_Dancing_with_Ambiguity_Causality_Behavior_Design_Thinking_and_Triple-Loop-Learning
2. Why Human Centered Design Matters, Wired Magazine - <http://www.wired.com/insights/2013/12/human-centered-design-matters/>

Week 7 (date 10/4): Communication @ Center

Lecture and Discussion of Readings

By drawing on the work of other academics, we introduce the insights of ‘design thinking’ into our teaching (dSchool, Stanford).

Listen to the people who actually touch the problem in order to solve the problem – e.g. customers, partners, all internal groups (finance, marketing, and engineering). Asking questions makes the invisible visible.

- Communicators historically good at getting all the voices in the room to collaborate
- TST attributes are critical for innovating and solving intractable problems
- Talk to diverse set of users / stakeholders and iterate
- Reframe problem and solution as info is gathered

Communication Effectiveness

In Class Exercise

Empathic Interview – students learn the principles of this technique and follow a structured process wherein they interview one another about the topic of Work-Life Balance. By following the process they end up with a tangible document to help their partner achieve a better work-life balance on their terms.

Assignment

n/a

Readings for Next Week

1. Service Prototyping According to Service Design Practitioners - <http://www.servdes.org/pdf/blomkvist-holmlid.pdf>

Week 8 (date 10/11): Service Prototype – Deep Dive

Lecture and Discussion of Readings

Both products and services in the 21st century typically have a service component whether as a core attribute or a minor attribute such as customer support. This lecture delves into case studies of how strategic design firms have broken down service design challenges including tools used and process for overcoming ambiguity.

Problem Solving

In Class Exercise

Journey Map (with real world partner) (Empathy)

Write out stages of customer engagement with your product/service as columns. Write out what happens in each stage. Test the map with users and stakeholders. Gather results and reframe.

Assignment

Students use the Journey Map created in class, organize into teams, and then interview Stakeholders outside of class about the map. Each student team delivers a Journey Map report using worksheet provided by instructor. Due Week 9

Readings for Next Week

1. Mindset: The New Psychology of Success, Chapters 7, 8, Carol Dweck.
2. The One-Trillion Dollar Global Talent Gap: What It Is and What Can We Do About It, Ernest Wilson (2014)
3. Agile versus Lean versus Design Thinking - <https://medium.com/@jboogie/agile-vs-lean-vs-design-thinking-2329df8ab53c>

Week 9 (date 10/18): Comm Thinking vs Engineering Thinking vs MBA Thinking

Lecture and Discussion of Readings

This lecture compares and contrasts leading frameworks that define the way communication professionals think, engineers think, and MBAs think. Research demonstrates that the mindsets and skillsets of each group result in differing paradigms and ways of looking at the world. Third Space research is presented to make the differences tangible.

Problem Solving

In Class Exercise

Selective Prototype (with real world partner)

Effective prototyping is about selecting the information you need to learn about in this iteration. It is okay to not have the full experience in every prototype you make. Determine 1-2 things that you want to learn about and make a low fidelity prototype. Bias toward fast turn-around. Bias toward physical/tangible. Use throw away materials – paper, foam core, models, single page designs.

Assignment

Students use the Selective Prototype materials generated in class, organize into teams and build materials of their choice for their Selective Prototype v1 Assignment. Materials may include: System Flows, Ecosystem Models, Storyboards, Question Ladders, etc. Due Week 10

Readings for Next Week

1. Adaptability: The New Competitive Advantage, Martin Reeves and Mike Deimler (2011) Harvard Business Review <https://hbr.org/2011/07/adaptability-the-new-competitive-advantage>
2. Callan, V. J. (1993). Individual and organizational strategies for coping with organizational change. *Work & Stress*, 7(1), 63–75.

- Lewis, L. K., & Seibold, D. R. (1996). Communication during intraorganizational innovation adoption: Predicting users' behavioral coping responses to innovations in organizations. *Communication Monographs*, 63(2), 131-157.

Week 10 (date 10/25): Adaptability: The New Competitive Advantage

Lecture and Discussion of Readings

Globalization, new technologies, and greater transparency are combining to disrupt businesses and making it much a harder to maintain a stable position. Companies are formalizing adaptability techniques to best compete in this changing world. Instead of being good at doing one thing, companies and individuals have to be good at learning how to adapt to new things. This lecture presents methods for formalizing adaptability including:

- Ability to Read and Act on Signals
- Ability to Experiment
- Ability to Manage Multi-Company Systems
- Ability to Mobilize

Communication Effectiveness

In Class Exercise:

Blind Square (Adaptability, 360 Degree Thinking)

Perhaps the most challenging activity on the list, this activity requires teams to have achieved very sophisticated levels of communication and teamwork. It is a brief exercise in which teams must communicate even though they can't see each other because they are wearing blindfolds. The team is given a length of rope and must lay it out on the ground to create a perfect square.

Assignment

Students take the Entrepreneurial Aptitude Test online. Due Week 11.

Readings for Next Week

- IDEO on Embracing Ambiguity & the Economist on Design Thinking - <http://www.core77.com/posts/25231/IDEO-on-Embracing-Ambiguity-n-the-Economist-on-Design-Thinking>
- The Lean Product Playbook, Introduction + Chapters 1 and 2, by Dan Olsen

Week 11 (date 11/1): 360 Degree Thinking and Overcoming Ambiguity

Lecture and Discussion of Readings

A key element of effective problem solving is the ability to operate in and overcome ambiguity. This lecture explains how 360 Degree Thinking can be used to frame and reframe problems. It also takes students on an interactive discussion of common patterns that emerge when tackling ambiguity. These include:

- Big picture paralysis - Occurs when the problem is so large and amorphous that no frame exists to get to the next step. Solution: Make something, show to stakeholders. Iterate, reframe & repeat. Fall back on whatever tangible data available (e.g. ask who are stakeholders, what do they want, etc.)
- Overcontrol – ambiguity leads to anxiety which leads to desire to control. Control limits collaboration and sharing of ideas. Solution: Check how much team members insist on their point of view, Facilitate team decision versus having someone dictate

Problem Solving

In Class Exercise:

Building Partnerships Map (with real world partner) (Empathy)

The Building Partnerships Map helps facilitate the development of a partnership between two groups. Use

provided worksheets to break down the partnership into stages. This helps you anticipate potential roadblocks as well as think through realistic collaboration points at each stage. Deliver to real world partner for potential usage with 3rd party partner.

Assignment

Students work on their Selective Prototype v1 outside of class. Due Week 12

Readings for Next Week

1. Harvard Business Review on Negotiation and Conflict Resolution, Chapter 3: The Team That Wasn't
2. The Lean Product Playbook, Introduction + Chapters 3 and 4, by Dan Olsen
3. Goff, M., & Ackerman, P. L. (1992). Personality-intelligence relations: Assessment of typical intellectual engagement. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 84(4), 537.

Week 12 (date 11/8): Cultural Competency and Conflict Resolution

Lecture and Discussion of Readings

This lecture walks participants through framework for managing internal conflicts effectively. Developing ability to resolve internal conflicts effectively is one of the biggest challenges in today's business world and is vital to success.

Communication Effectiveness

In Class Exercise:

Divide the Loot (Cultural Competency, Adaptability)

This is a negotiation and conflict management activity designed to help students understand their own relationship to fairness and authority. Students are divided into two groups – Management and Employees. Each group starts its own pot of money. Each group member pays some amount into the pot but no one knows how much. The instructor takes both groups' pots of money, combines them into one, and adds his own unknown contribution. He then tells everyone how much in the combined pot. Each group has 10 minutes to decide how to fairly split the total pot amongst everyone in the room. Then Managers and Employees negotiate a final outcome.

Student Presentations

Selective Prototype v1 Student Presentations

Assignment

Students take feedback from Selective Prototype v1 presentations and prep Selective Prototype Final Presentations. V2 due Week 14

Readings for Next Week

1. When You're Innovating, Resist Looking for Solutions - <https://hbr.org/2013/09/when-youre-innovating-resist-l/>
2. The Lean Product Playbook, Introduction + Chapter 11 (End to End Case Study), by Dan Olsen

Week 13 (date 11/15): Problem Space versus Solution Space

Lecture and Discussion of Readings

This lecture provides language to explain the important distinction between the problem space and the solution space. When in the Problem Space you are seeking to understand, gather constituent needs, and create prelim sketch for iterations of feedback. The Solution Space is about executing on the learnings from

the Problem Space – e.g. actually creating the product or service. The two spaces interact and feed one another. However keeping the spaces separate during the development process enables the team to more systematically and efficiently reach a valuable solution.

Communication Effectiveness

In Class Exercise:

Nuclear Reactor (Adaptability)

A final and highly challenging activity to see how well participants apply lessons to overcome ambiguity and create innovative solutions.

Assignment

Students take the following assessment as provided by the instructor (due next Week)

- Intercultural Development Inventory

Readings for Next Week

1. Managing Transitions, Chapter 6: How to Deal with Non-Stop Change, by William Bridges
2. The Development Model of Intercultural Sensitivity - <http://idr.institute.org/page.asp?menu1=15> and http://www.idr.institute.org/allegati/IDRI_t_Pubblicazioni/47/FILE_Documento_Bennett_DMIS_12pp_quotes_rev_2011.pdf

Week 14 – No Class Due to Thanksgiving Recess

Week 15 (date 11/29) Final Student Presentations

Lecture and Discussions of Readings

Short discussion followed by student presentations.

Student Presentations

Students present their final Selective Prototypes to real world partner.

After final presentations students brainstorm possible future class projects to make facets of USC better.

Chris Swain

Chris Swain is an entrepreneur, designer, author, and founding member of the strategic design firm R/GA Interactive in NYC (www.rga.com). R/GA grew from 4 people to over 200 designers, engineers, and artists and \$0 to over \$50mm in annual revenue during his time with the company. R/GA now has 14 offices on four continents and over 1800 employees. Chris led strategic design initiatives for clients that include: Intel, IBM, Sony, AT&T, Disney, NASDAQ, Kodak, Enterprise Rent-A-Car, Warner Brothers, Discovery, BBC, and many others.

Chris is also a longtime USC faculty member. At USC he co-founded the Electronic Arts Game Innovation Lab and was one of the original game faculty at the university. Via his lab Chris explored play mechanics in a research setting. He developed methodology to solve hard UX problems with original play mechanics. His thesis students have gone on to win multiple Game of the Year Awards in industry. Chris led many other projects at USC including for Rockefeller Foundation, Gates Foundation, Annenberg Center, LA Times, and the US National Counterterrorism Center. His USC lab project, *The Redistricting Game*, is a staple in the redistricting reform community. His game, *Ecotopia*, was created in collaboration with Conversation International and translated in-game actions by players into real world impact – specifically in into thousands of trees being planted in the Brazilian rain forest.

In industry, Chris led game projects for companies that include: Microsoft, Sony, Disney, Activision, NBC, MTV, Game Show Network, Turner Network Television, and others. His game projects have won over two dozen design awards. Notable games include the world's first massively multiplayer casual game *NetWits* - original IP which Swain sold to the Microsoft Network; *Multiplayer Jeopardy!*; and *Multiplayer Wheel of Fortune*. The *Jeopardy!* and *Wheel of Fortune* games were landmark hits for Sony Online that helped establish the then new, business of online casual games. Chris created Cred.FM which was a venture-funded music discovery network built on the Youtube platform.