



## Dan Formosa keynote @ DAA Workshop Barcelona on April 24<sup>th</sup> 2014 “How Design can Change the World”

On Day 1 of the DAA workshop Dan Formosa divided his keynote presentation into seven parts – presenting seven short stories.

Here is a brief summary:

### 1. Design

This segment was an introduction to design. Smart Design was established in 1980, with the point of view that design should focus on understanding people, as opposed to just things. While this seems obvious, it was not the case then, when designers conducted little or no research, and focused simply on form and aesthetics.

### 2. Good Design

There are two related messages in this section. Good design requires that we exceed expectations, not simply meet them. Exceeding expectations is a minimum requirement. To do so, companies and organizations need a point of view, they need to stand for something.

### 3. Design Thinking

There are many definitions of the term “Design Thinking.” In the version presented here, it places people as the central focus – human centered design. This is easier said than done. Since in our experience many companies and organizations need to re-think their internal culture and management structure to fully accomplish this goal.

### 4. Questions

Throughout our school careers we have been trained to respond to our assignments with answers. In this segment, the art of asking the right questions was discussed. Without the right questions, answers mean little. Innovative solutions to problems or opportunities require first that we ask brilliant questions. In general, we’re not that good at it.

## 5. Good questions

How someone asks a question is also important. In general, we are not all good at framing questions – or understanding the importance of individual responses or the proper way to collect information. The example was given of the question “Which one of these things do you like the best?” That very common question contains two fatal flaws – it assumes that the person being asked likes at least one of the items being shown, and it assumes that the person prefers one over the others.

## 6. The Quiz

In this segment, 10 questions were posed to the group. A series of statements were shown that were made by either females or males, talking about attributes of services or personal relationships. The workshop attendees were asked to guess if the statements were made by females or males, and if they were referring to products or people. It was impossible to distinguish, the point being that there is little difference between the attributes we look for in a good service compared to what we look for in a personal relationship.

## 7. Operating systems

In this last segment Dan made the point that the ability of a service to establish a personal relationship is important. He gave an example of how he related more closely to the \$150 GPS system in his car, than to the \$30,000 car itself. The car is nice, but generic. In contrast, the GPS system provides more personal assistance. Smart phones, laptops and other items similarly become invaluable “personal” items, as can (and should) the services we design.