

Customer Experience Offsite Day

A day to collaborate and share with everyone on the team

July 24, 2019



Figure 1: Sharing ideas at the Customer Experience Offsite day

With so much of our time at work spent with our heads down or bumping to and from meetings about our individual projects, I recall the delightful surprise when I received an invite in my email for a “Customer Experience Team Offsite Meeting.” While not knowing much about the specifics of the upcoming event, I did know it would provide an opportunity to meet with our entire team (a true rarity!) and allow for everyone to share what they have been up to, useful learnings, and a vision of what they hope our future looks likes.

Our offsite day was held at an entirely different Premera campus than we normally work in. This is something I found that helped ensure that we were able to completely get out of our regular work routine, insisting that our attention was entirely focused on the day ahead of us instead of stuck back at the office.

Our morning was wildly interesting, as the team had the opportunity to hear short presentations from everyone about things they had learned from certain conferences and workshops they had been to over the last several months. This proved not only interesting, but entirely useful to learn new skills that only a select few had gotten the chance to develop while attending their various conferences. Now the entire team could put these skills into practice, benefiting all of our work and the company as whole. Additionally, I appreciated

the diversity of the presentations, which highlighted the importance of having a diverse range of skillsets and thought processes on a team.

The greatest thing to witness from these presentations was the passion from the presenters about how invested they were in what they had learned and their desire to pass this knowledge on to others. Meanwhile, I witnessed our team engage in such thoughtful conversation, asking questions and already generating ideas of how these skills could be applied to our work. While much of the day reminded me of sitting in a classroom at school, I felt a clear juxtaposition to that environment, as our team's engagement, encouragement, and desire to grow never faltered.

Below I will share some of my personal highlights and thoughts from the presentations.

IIT Design Camp

For this conference, my colleagues were given a real problem and had develop a real solution over a brief couple of days. Specifically, the problem pertained to the current design of a cafeteria in a popular planetarium. I found the process in which they dealt with this design problem to be a nice reminder of things we can carry over to our work at Premera.

- Identify the design problem
- Be able to frame the problem
- Draft a series of protocols
- Conduct fieldwork
- Begin to synthesize
- Start prototyping

There were two other techniques I found particularly interesting from their conference. The first being the concept of storytelling. The ability to put the work you do or the problems you have into a story makes your efforts easier to conceptualize and more tangible, often answering the question, "why?" The second technique I found interesting was the idea of "round robin brainstorming." To me this signifies a very divergent method of ideation, allowing all ideas to come forward and for people to build off of each other as opposed to getting immediately shut down.

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The most valuable piece of insight I received from this presentation was the reminder that, "everyone takes in information differently." It's such a simple statement, but I find it to be one of the most powerful pieces of awareness we have in our life. Taking even a brief moment throughout our days to reminded of this can help our understanding of others.