



Steve Portigal is an in-demand presenter who engages and inspires audiences with stories and real-world examples about ethnographic research, understanding culture and product development. These presentations will help your team to adopt new tools and to hone the skills they already have.

Reviews

Steve Portigal's workshop on ethnographic research has introduced our designers to valuable tools for understanding our global customers. He has given us new insights on how to approach ethnographic differences and how to apply that knowledge. I recommend Steve Portigal's research experience to any company interested in driving innovation through learning about consumers.

Henry Schmidt, Director Product Design, Fisher-Price

When we were putting together the roster for Core77's 2nd Design Innovation Conference, Steve was our first phone call. Steve made a connection with the audience that was emotional and profound. His storytelling, empathy and insight really helped the attendees see the world in a new way.

Allan Chochinov, Editor-in-Chief, Core77

Steve's ability to see things that others miss and to develop profound insights about people and culture make for a provocative presentation. He opened my eyes and got me thinking in new ways. I learned a lot and enjoyed his sense of humor.

Denise Lee Yohn

Steve's experience with ethnographic research, coupled with compelling real-world examples and an engaging slide show, gave us all new insights into this important branch of study and the cultures he has explored. As the Research Manager for the Chapter, I was especially glad to host a compelling program of interest to our members, as witnessed by their high satisfaction scores for the program. We highly recommend him as a speaker and ethnographer.

Kathy Stershic, Former Research Manager, San Francisco American Marketing Association

Steve's overview of the importance of cultural context in product design was a much appreciated eye-opener for our global design team

Luke Wroblewski, (formerly) User Experience & Design, eBay

Steve provided a spectacular capstone presentation to our professional speaker series. By all accounts, Steve's presentation was considered one of the best, inspiring a great deal of discussion and comment.

Leo Frishberg, Chair CHIFOO and Principal Architect, User Experience, Tektronix, Inc.

Steve's skill and experience observing and analyzing the intersection of culture, users, and design, as well as his engaging presentation style, provided our students from the Taiwan Design Center a treasure trove of useful insights into the research process.

Kelly Kodama, CEO, Zoe Design Associates

Training and Presentations

1. Overview of Ethnographic Research (half-day)

Description This half-day session illustrates a basic framework for planning and conducting ethnographic fieldwork, with an emphasis on interviewing.

Agenda

The Tools

- Considering data collection in three areas:
 1. observation
 2. interviewing
 3. understanding cultural context
- Understanding usage, and understanding meaning.
- Beyond "going out there and talking to people" – what are needs?
- The "Research Plan"
- Tips for interviewing well
- Taxonomy of interview question types

Interviewing exercise

- What is an interview guide?
- Form teams of 3
- Topics pre-assigned
- Create interview guide, conduct interview

Process debrief

- What surprised you the most?
- What was the hardest thing to do?
- What are some ways to get better at this?
- What are the most insightful or exciting parts of the process?

Understanding Cultural Context

- What is *normal*?
- Cultural cues in advertising, news, street culture
- Examples from around the globe

Wrap-up

2. Introduction to Ethnographic Research (full-day)

Description This full-day session presents a framework for planning and conducting ethnographic fieldwork, with an opportunity to conduct a real interview. The session includes an opportunity to reflect on the process itself and identify the most relevant benefits for your organization.

Agenda

Groundwork: The Tools and the Mindset

- Considering data collection in three areas:
 1. observation
 2. interviewing
 3. understanding cultural context
- Understanding usage, and understanding meaning
- Beyond “going out there and talking to people” – what are needs?
- The “Research Plan”
- Observation and photography
- Tips for interviewing well
- Practice interviewing exercise

Fieldwork

- Specifics of the “who” and “where” are dependent on your location and focus
- Teams of 3 with specific roles (interviewer lead, interviewer second, note taker/diagrammer)
- Conduct pre-arranged interviews with a supplied interview guide and an observation guide.

lunch

Content debrief

- Teams will pair up and give a quick summary of their interview and observation
- First steps of analysis
 - What surprised you the most?
 - What was the most obvious need?
 - What solutions had been tried?
 - Why had or hadn’t they worked?
- Importance of triangulation and multiple perspectives

Process debrief

- What surprised you the most?
- What was the hardest thing to do?
- What are some ways to get better at this?
- What are the most insightful or exciting parts of the process?

Application to Real-World Business Situations

- Using different types of tools to deliver different results (at different costs)
- Strategies for organizations to adopt these methods given their resource constraints (people, skills, budgets)
- Understanding how to apply ethnographic methods at different points in your development process
- Discussion and Q&A

Wrap-up

3. Introduction to Ethnographic Research (multi-day)

Description This multi-day session (customized to your organization needs) provides your team with hands-on experience in conducting, synthesizing, and applying ethnographic research to a design, brand, or product challenge.

Agenda

Day 1

Groundwork: The Tools and the Mindset

- Considering data collection in three areas:
 1. observation
 2. interviewing
 3. understanding cultural context
- Understanding usage, and understanding meaning
- Beyond “going out there and talking to people” – what are needs?
- The “Research Plan”
- Observation and photography
- Tips for interviewing well
- Practice interviewing exercise

Understanding Cultural Context

- What is *normal*?
- Cultural cues in advertising, news, street culture
- Examples from around the globe

Fieldwork Preparation

- Problem definition/hypothesis generation
- Dump/download assumptions about people to be interviewed
- Develop interview guide

Fieldwork

- Teams of 3 with specific roles (interviewer lead, interviewer second, note taker/diagrammer)

Day 2

Opening

- Debrief from previous fieldwork
 - What worked?
 - What didn't work?
 - Key observations

Fieldwork

- Teams of 3 with alternating roles

Closing

- Team and collective debrief from day's fieldwork
 - What worked?
 - What didn't work?
 - Key observations

Agenda (cont'd)

Day 3Analysis and Synthesis Workshop

- Teams will pair up and brief each other on key points from their interviews and observations
- Analysis
 - What surprised you the most?
 - What was the most obvious need?
 - What solutions had been tried?
 - Why had or hadn't they worked?
- Importance of triangulation and multiple perspectives
- Identify and address low-hanging fruit needs
- Synthesis into generative user models
- Ideation

Wrap-up

- Review the interviewing process
 - What surprised you the most?
 - What was the hardest thing to do?
 - What are some ways to get better at this?
 - What are the most insightful or exciting parts of the process?
- Application to real-world business situations
 - Different tools to apply to different research situations
 - Exploration of next-steps for your organization
- Discussion and Q&A

4. Observation of Culture and Artifacts (half-day)

Description This half-day session emphasizes the rich data available in observation of people and artifacts. Your team will learn more about seeing the extraordinary in the ordinary. This session is often most appropriate during an off-site or retreat, where the team is already in a “new” location.

Agenda

Warm-Up

- Considering data collection in three areas:
 1. observation
 2. interviewing
 3. understanding cultural context
- Understanding usage, and understanding meaning.
- Beyond “going out there and talking to people” – what are needs?

Understanding Cultural Context

- What is *normal*?
- Cultural cues in advertising, news, street culture
- Examples from around the globe

Observation exercise

- In teams of 2 or 3
- Go out into the “field”
- Observe and document (note-taking, photography)

Sharing and storytelling

- What did you find?
- Why did you notice this?
- How could your observation be applied?

Wrap-up

5. CultureVenture (multi-day)

Description

As brands become global and companies do business in and with these other cultures, gaining an in-depth understanding of those cultures is essential.

CultureVenture provides immersive and inspirational experiences in foreign cultures to help you discover and make sense of the notable differences in your other markets.

These customized field trips are targeted at marketers, executives, project managers, designers, engineers, and other key team members who must understand a culture outside their own.

Agenda

CultureVenture trips are highly customized to your organization and depending on the places we visit. Over several days we will engage in a variety of everyday activities such as

- Shopping
- Sampling restaurants and cafes
- Examine TV, magazine, street, and print advertising
- Take public transit
- Observe the preparation of meal at home
- Visit a school

We'll debrief daily to share pictures, observations, raise new questions, and summarize our key learnings.

6. Other Presentations

We are available for lectures on many other topics: design, innovation, user research, ethnography, storytelling, etc. See <http://www.portigal.com/about-steve/> for examples of previous presentations.

About Portigal Consulting

Company

Portigal Consulting was founded in 2001 by Steve Portigal. We are a boutique agency, based in the coastal community of Pacifica, CA, 15 minutes from San Francisco, and 30 minutes from much of Silicon Valley. See <http://www.portigal.com> for more information.

We help our clients discover and act on new insights about themselves and their customers.

Clients

Recent clients include: Belkin, BIC, Bosch, Chevron, France Telecom-Orange, GE, Hewlett-Packard, Nestle, SC Johnson, and Sony.

About Steve Portigal

In addition to regularly speaking at design and marketing events, Steve writes regularly (<http://www.portigal.com/blog/>) about the relationships between business, culture, technology, products, and consumers. He has taught ethnographic research at the Stanford School of Design, the Stanford School of Business, Art Center College of Design, San Jose State University, and the Institute of Design/IIT, as well corporations such as Nestle, eBay, Fisher-Price, and Shure. Steve is on the faculty of the California College of Art in San Francisco, where he teaches Design Research in the Industrial Design department. He is an avid photographer who has a Museum of Foreign Grocery Products in his home.