



BRAND

**REVEALING YOUR TRUTH
THROUGH ANTHROPOLOGY**



Speakers



Chief Anthropologist | idfive
Dr. Robbie Blinkoff



Creative Director | idfive
Matt McDermott



**First, let's make sure
we're all talking about the
same thing here.**

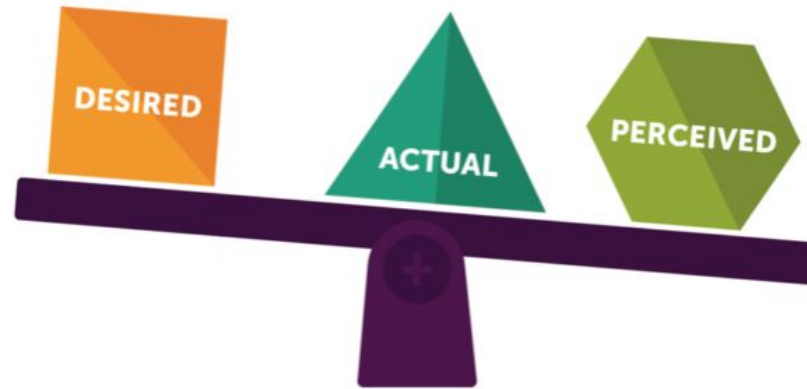
— What is a brand?



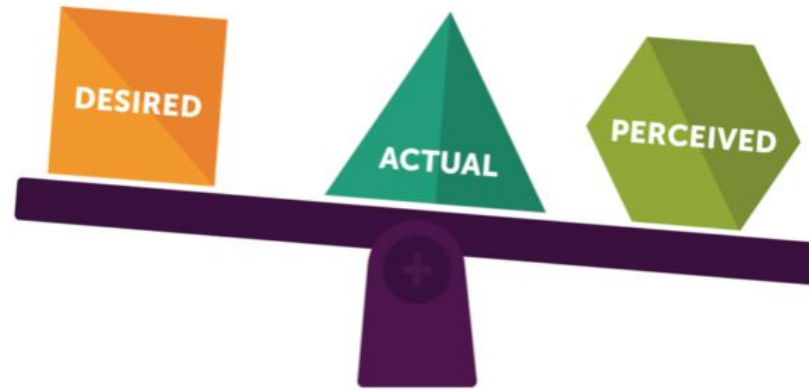
— **Brand, a working definition:**

An evolving sum of experiences — tangible and intangible, deliberate and accidental — that shape the feelings people have about you.

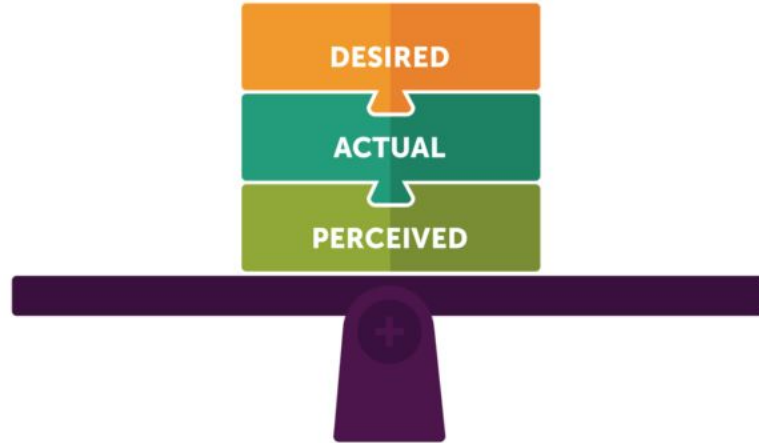
Brand exists in three states.



It's not unusual to see them misaligned.



Our goal is to change that.



— Why is brand so important?

Why is brand so important?

Because everything in the mind of consumers these days is commoditized.

	Overall score	Peer assessment score (5.0=highest)	Assessment score by lawyers/judges (5.0=highest)	'07 undergrad GPA 25th-75th percentile	'07 LSAT score 25th-75th percentile	'07 acceptance rate	'07 student/faculty ratio	'06 grade employed at graduation	Employed 9 months after graduation	School's bar passage rate in jurisdiction	Jurisdiction's overall bar passage rate*
University (CT)	100	4.8	4.8	3.77-3.97	170-177	7.3%	7.4	96.1%	99.6%	91.2%/NY	77%
ard University (MA)	91	4.8	4.8	3.75-3.95	170-175	11.8%	10.3	96.4%	98.1%	97.1%/NY	77%
ord University (CA)	91	4.7	4.8	3.74-3.95	167-172	9.0%	8.3	98.3%	98.5%	88.7%/CA	65%
mbia University (NY)							5	98.9%	98.9%	95.6%/NY	77%
York University							4	96.3%	98.5%	95.1%/NY	77%
ersity of California-Berkeley							3	99.0%	99.0%	84.9%/CA	65%
ersity of Chicago							3	96.4%	99.0%	97.7%/IL	87%
ersity of Pennsylvania							1	95.3%	98.2%	94.4%/NY	77%
western University (IL)							4	96.2%	99.2%	95.1%/IL	87%
ersity of Michigan-Ann Arbor							7	97.2%	98.8%	94.8%/NY	77%
ersity of Virginia							3	96.8%	99.6%	91.1%/VA	74%
ell University (NY)							2	96.9%	99.0%	92.1%/NY	77%
a University (NC)							9	91.8%	98.2%	97.0%/NY	77%
ngatown University (DC)							2	94.8%	97.8%	91.0%/NY	77%
erbit University (TN)							9	90.5%	98.3%	97.8%/TN	78%
ersity of California-Los Angeles							9	94.9%	97.8%	85.7%/CA	65%
ersity of Texas-Austin							2	92.0%	97.4%	89.4%/TX	82%
ersity of Southern California (Goold)	88	3.7	3.8	3.40-3.72	163-167	10.7%	11.7	90.1%	96.0%	85.1%/CA	65%
inglor University in St. Louis	67	3.6	3.9	3.30-3.70	163-167	25.7%	11.6	83.9%	98.8%	93.0%/IL	87%
rge Washington University (DC)	65	3.5	3.8	3.40-3.86	163-168	19.8%	14.9	95.1%	97.1%	93.9%/NY	77%
an University	64	3.4	3.6	3.51-3.81	164-166	26.8%	12.3	96.3%	98.7%	95.0%/MA	86%
ry University (GA)	63	3.4	3.8	3.28-3.62	162-166	26.2%	10.8	95.9%	98.3%	95.0%/GA	85%
ersity of Minnesota-Twin Cities	63	3.6	3.6	3.28-3.78	163-167	24.7%	12.1	87.0%	97.5%	96.3%/MN	91%
ersity of Notre Dame (IN)	63	3.3	3.8	3.40-3.76	164-167	18.6%	14.7	83.8%	97.3%	89.5%/IL	87%
ersity of North Carolina (UNC)	62	3.4	3.9	3.25-3.81	161-167	23.6%	10.6	74.4%	92.4%	79.2%/VA	74%

BEST COLLEGES

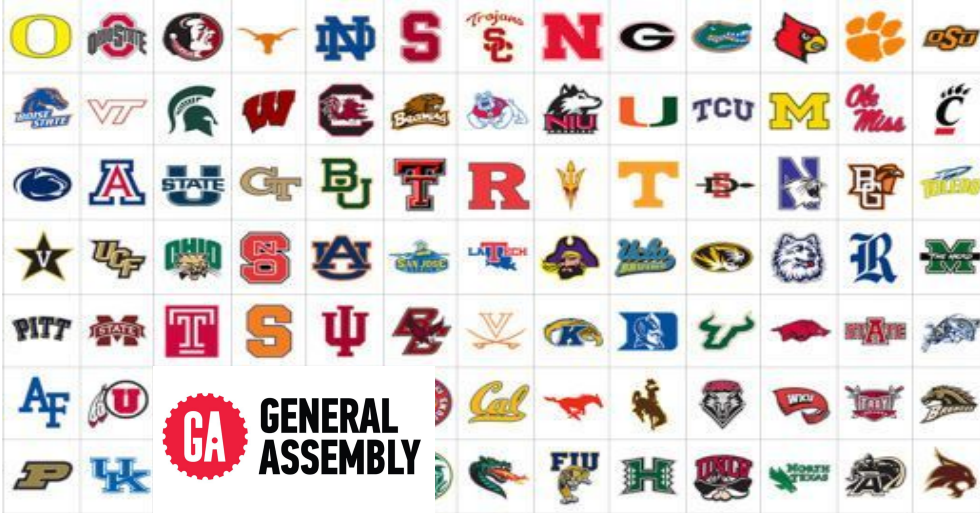
U.S. News & World Report

Why is brand so important?

Because competition is brutal.



lynda.com



Coursera



— Why is brand so important?

Because of increasing pressure to answer to the bottom line.

The Culling of Higher Ed Begins

The number of colleges and universities eligible to award federal financial aid dropped by 5.6 percent in 2016-17. The vast majority of disappearing institutions were for-profit colleges, but more than 30 private nonprofits were among them.

As Flow of Foreign Students Wanes, U.S. Universities Feel the Sting

By STEPHANIE SAUL JAN. 2, 2018



Higher-Education Enrollment Is On the Decline

N.Y. Private Colleges See In-State Enrollment Decline

Another Small Private College Will Close

St. Gregory's, an Oklahoma institution founded in 1875, will cease operations at the end of the semester.

Higher Ed

University enrollment decline continues into sixth straight year

Numbers fall at all levels, with the drop in first-year students speeding up

Young people are increasingly turning their backs on higher education, and rightfully so.

—
“This branding stuff is stupid.”

- *Actual faculty member at prestigious institution*




The Good News:

No one cares about your brand nearly as much as you do.



The Bad News:

No one cares about your brand nearly as much as you do.

A graduate in a cap and gown, seen from behind, with a blurred background of other graduates.

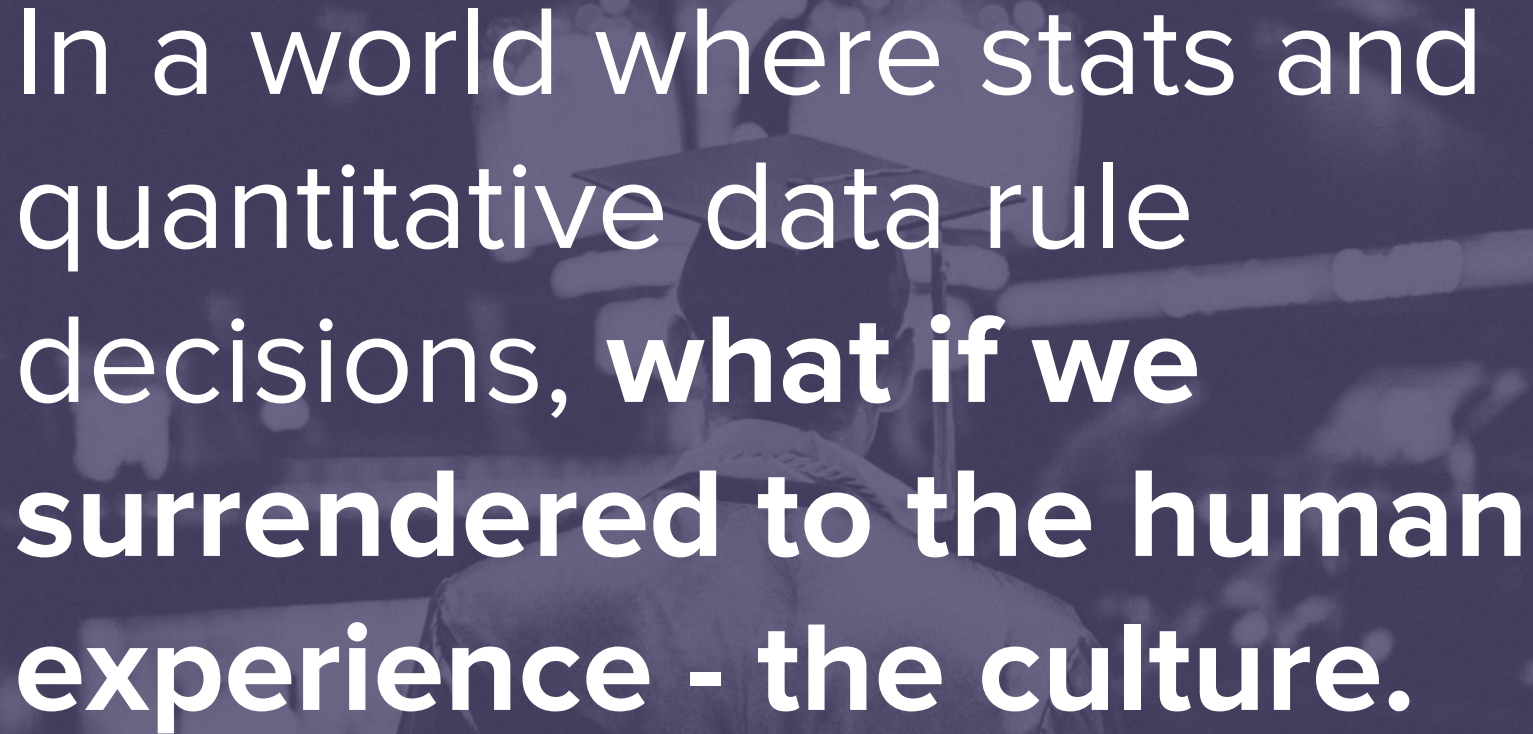
**There are many ways
to get at the heart of
your brand.**



**But what if we thought of
brand a little differently?**

A graduate in a cap and gown, seen from behind, holding a diploma. The image is overlaid with a dark blue filter and white text.

In a world where stats and quantitative data rule decisions, what if we surrendered to the human experience - the culture.

A graduate in a cap and gown, seen from behind, walking on a stage. The image is overlaid with a dark blue semi-transparent filter. The text is white and centered on the image.

In a world where stats and quantitative data rule decisions, **what if we surrendered to the human experience - the culture.**

—
**Culture is as important to
the brand as the brand
itself.**



**Become your brand's
anthropologist.**

An·thro·pol·o·gist

/,anTHrə'päləjəst/

Someone engaged in the practice of anthropology (see figure 1.)

Anthropology is the **study of various aspects of humans within past and present societies**. Social anthropology, cultural anthropology, and philosophical anthropology **study the norms and values of societies**.

Figure 1. Dr. Robbie



—
**What does anthropology
have to do with brand?**

Culture is a catch-all for our “everyday lived experiences.”

For anthropologists, everyday lived experiences are not “natural” – they are social, engineered, fluid, ritualized.

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For anthropologists, everyday lived experiences are not “natural” – they are social, engineered, fluid, ritualized.

We can isolate a culture's patterns to better understand people's beliefs, motivations and behaviors.

Then, align your brand with your culture — and the culture of your audiences.

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Then, align your brand with your culture — and the culture of your audiences.



Great.

But how do we do this?

Brand – Culture Alignment Exercise

Purpose

To create your brand grounded in the authentic experience of your students (i.e. their Culture).

Process

Observe your audience in their “natural habitat.”

Find out what what your audience actually does versus what they say they do.

Check your “gut” against the reality of your audience’s everyday experience.

Align what you see to your brand attributes and fill in the gaps.

Methods

- Observation
- Insight Session
- Culture – Brand Chart

Time and Materials

3-4 hours. 2 different colors of post-its. Pen. “Camera”



Keys to Doing Brand Anthropology Research

1 Observe



2 Be Curious



3 Open Mind



4 Respect



Observation

What to observe?



What are people **using**?



What are people **doing**?



What are people **saying**?

How to take notes

(Use)

Green post-its for **(USE)** observations.

(Do)

Blue post-its for **(DO)** observations.

Describe

Using just a few words. Enough to use in the insight session.

Label

Think of a label for that “moment” and write that down.

- Use the right color post-it
- No thinking and analysis

Insight Session

01 | Put up our observations, discuss

03 | Now turn to insights which encompass clusters

02 | Every 10 mins stop, cluster, then repeat

04 | Finish with narratives | stories that emerge

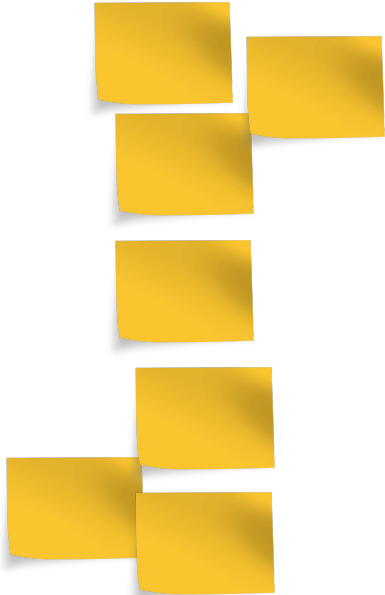
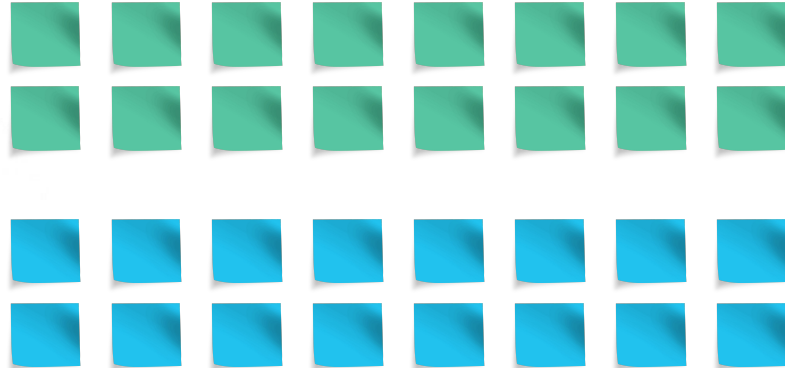
What does it mean?



What do people use?



What do people do?



Insight Session

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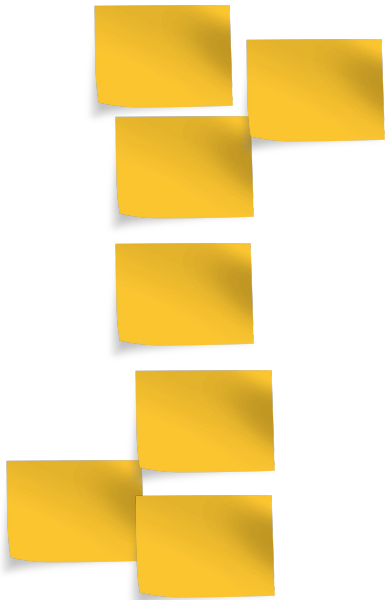
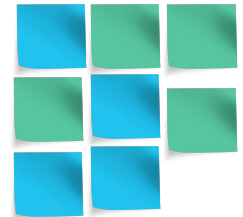
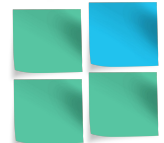
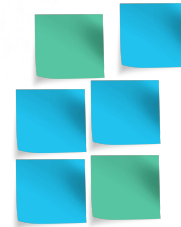
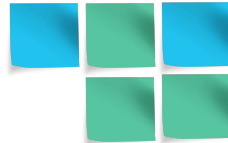
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What does it mean?

Insight 1

Insight 2

Insight 3

Insight 4

Insight 5

Insight 6

Insight 7

What do people use?

What do people do?

Fictive Kin

Social

Criticality

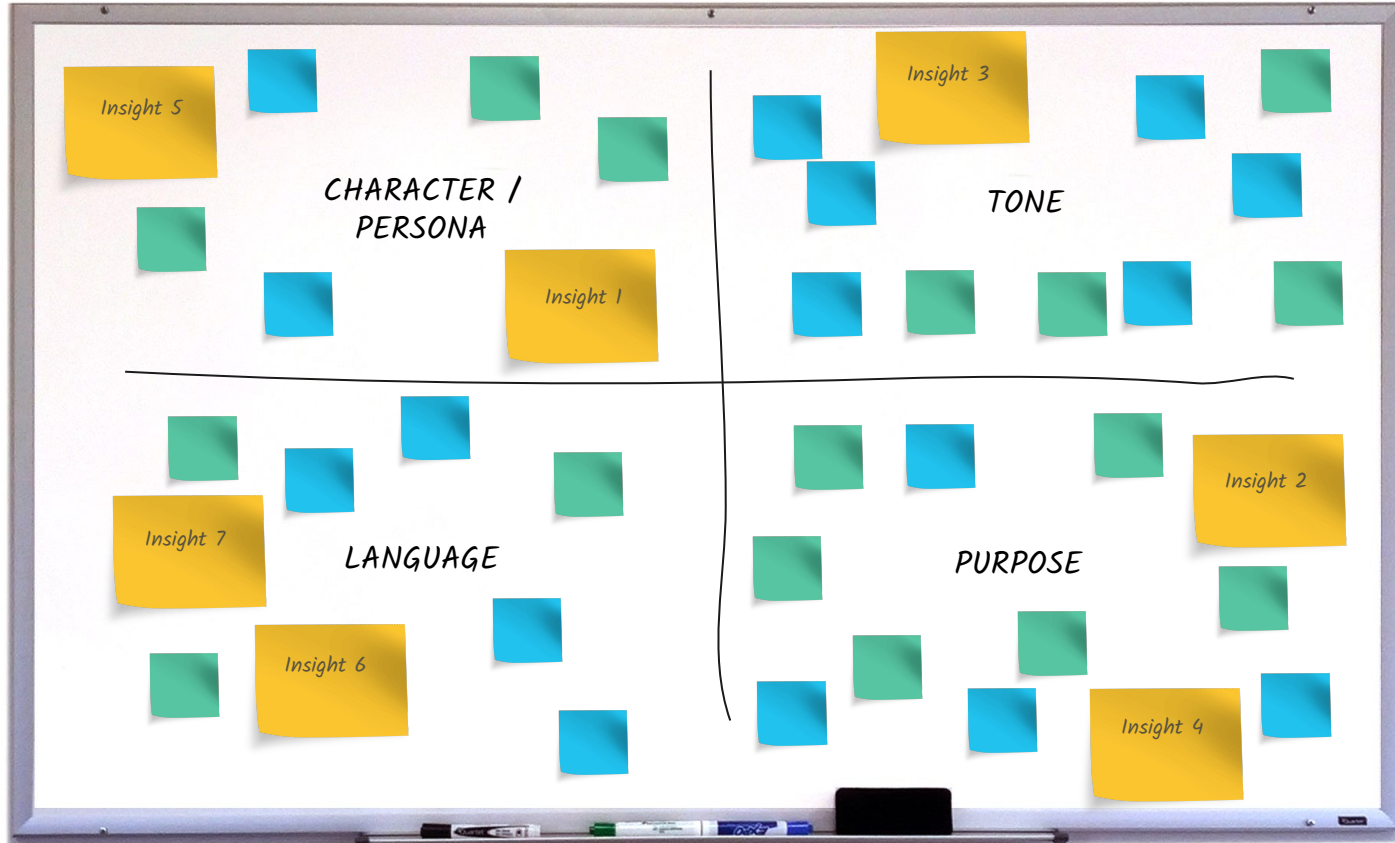
Loneliness

Mobile Dependent

Empowered

Culture – Brand Chart

- 01 | Use post-its and label learnings into these four quadrants
- 02 | Be honest, all learnings go up not just the “good ones.”
- 03 | Continue until you feel you have a strong narrative.
- 04 | What narratives emerge?



Brand – Culture Alignment Exercise

Purpose

Understand your audience based on observation in their “natural habitat.”

Outcome

Know what your audience actually does versus what they say they do. And check your “gut” against the reality of your audience’s everyday experience.

Methods

- Cultural Inquiry
- Insight Session
- 2 by 2
- Culture – Brand Chart

Time and Materials

3-4 hours. 2 different colors of post-its. Pen. “Camera”



Contextual Inquiry / Ethnography



What are we studying?



What is our plan?

Approach:

Observe

Open Mind

Be Curious

Respect

Observation and Field Note Instructions

What to observe?



What are people using?

(USE)



What are people doing?

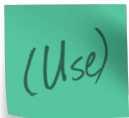
(DO)



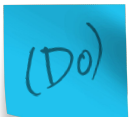
What are people saying?

(DO)

How to take notes



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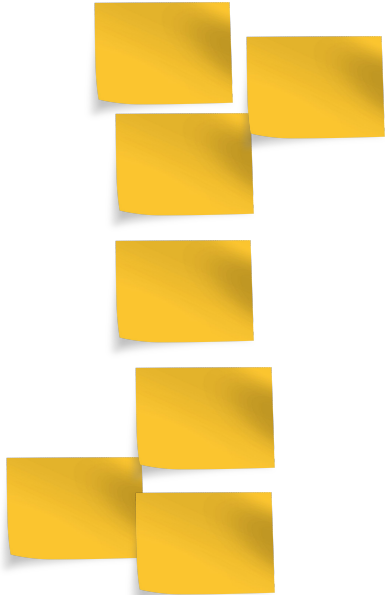
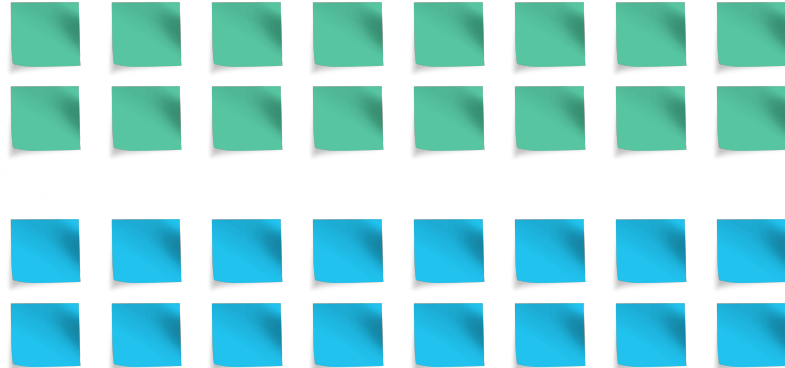
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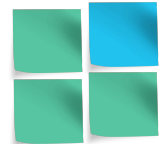
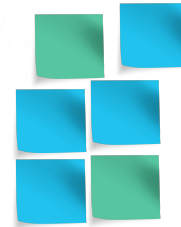
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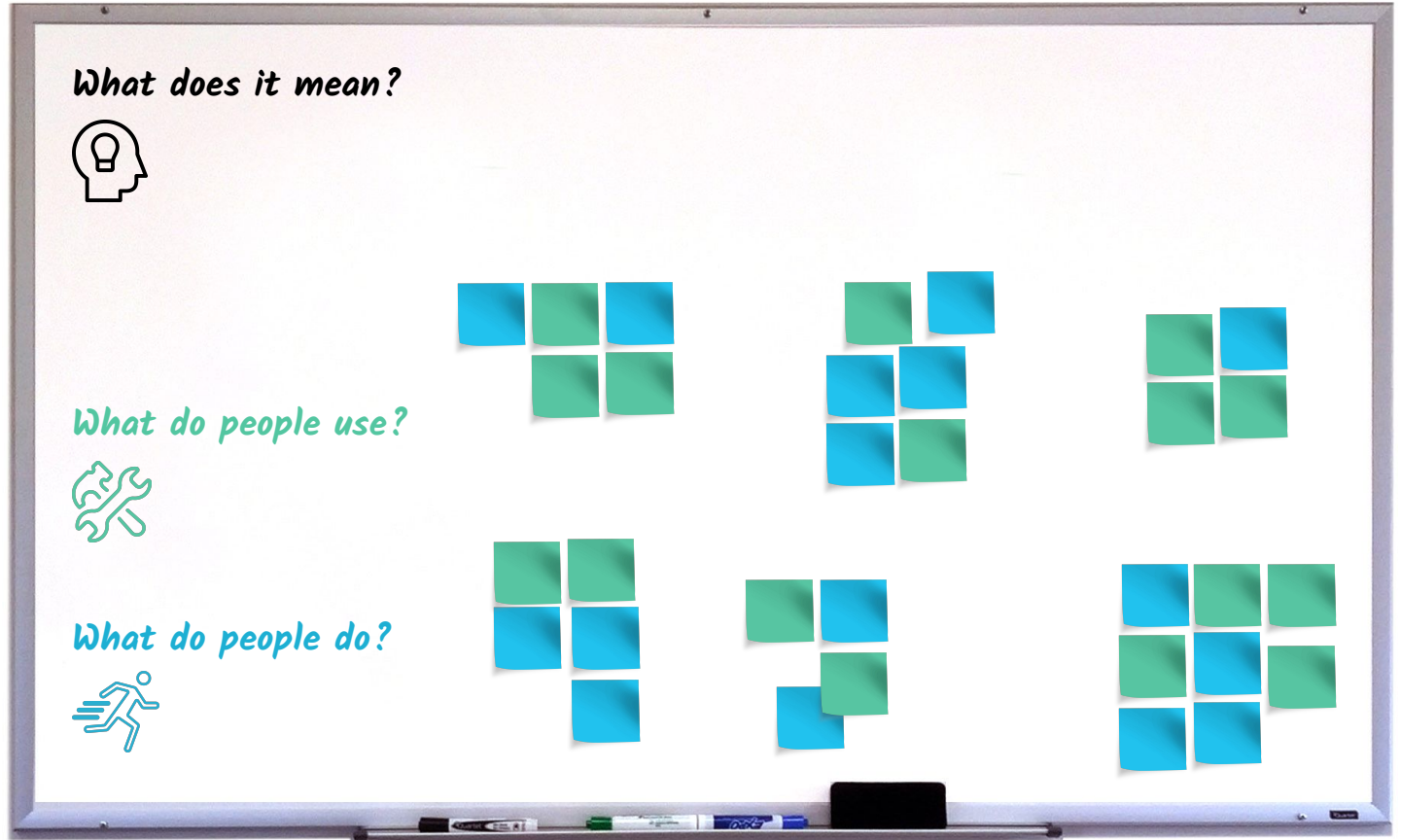
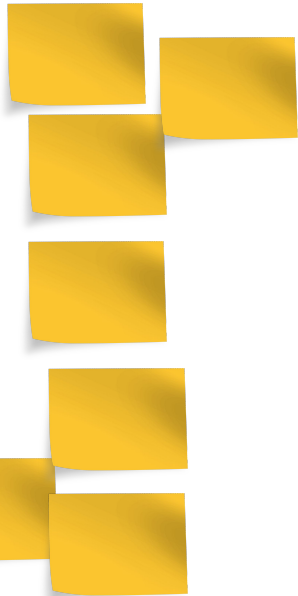
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The whiteboard is organized into three horizontal sections, each with a question and an icon:

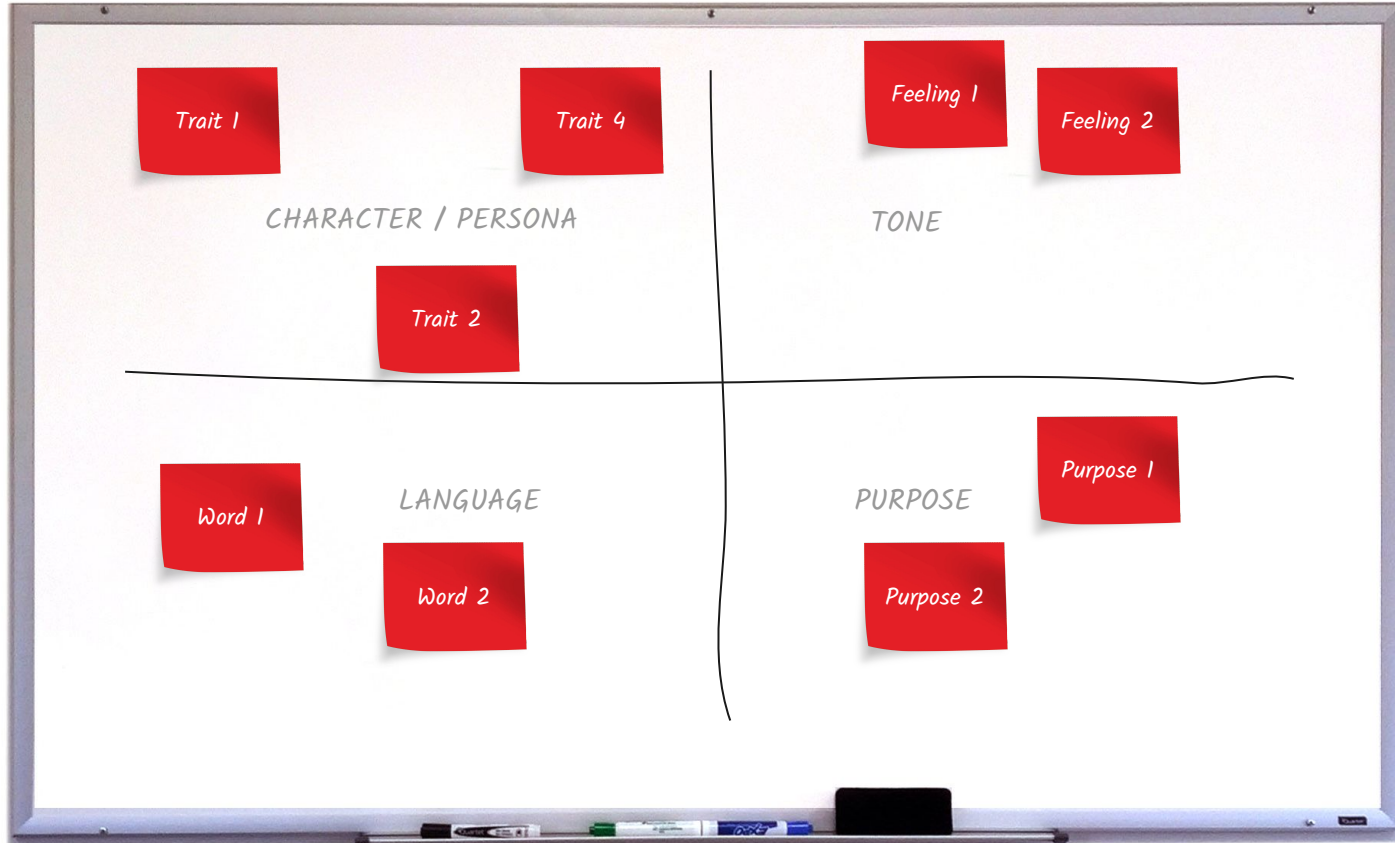
- What does it mean?** (Icon: Lightbulb in a head)
- What do people use?** (Icon: Wrench and screwdriver)
- What do people do?** (Icon: Running person)

At the top, seven yellow sticky notes are labeled *Insight 1* through *Insight 7*. Below these, clusters of blue and green sticky notes are arranged under the following labels:

- Fictive Kin**: 5 sticky notes (3 blue, 2 green)
- Social**: 6 sticky notes (3 blue, 3 green)
- Criticality**: 4 sticky notes (2 blue, 2 green)
- Loneliness**: 5 sticky notes (3 blue, 2 green)
- Mobile Dependent**: 5 sticky notes (3 blue, 2 green)
- Empowered**: 9 sticky notes (5 blue, 4 green)

Culture – Brand Chart

- 01 | Use new post-its and label learnings into these four quadrants
- 02 | Be honest, all learnings go up not just the “good ones.”
- 03 | Continue until you feel you have a strong narrative.
- 04 | What narratives emerge?



—

**Insights from this exercise
can then be used to refine
or enhance...**

— School and Individual Program Positioning

— Marketing Strategies and Tactics

—

Advertising Campaigns and Communications Collateral

—

In-Person, Online, and Phone Customer Experiences

— Facilities and Infrastructure



Wrapping it up.

Brand isn't one thing. It's the sum of experiences.

Carry the torch for your brand, but don't get blinded by it.

Consider tenets of anthropology to help you get to the truth.



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—

**Listen with an open mind,
not a personal agenda.**

—

Look for themes such as shared experiences, ideas, attitudes.

—
**Be your brand's greatest
advocate, by becoming
its most curious
anthropologist.**



Questions?