

Miss Penrose

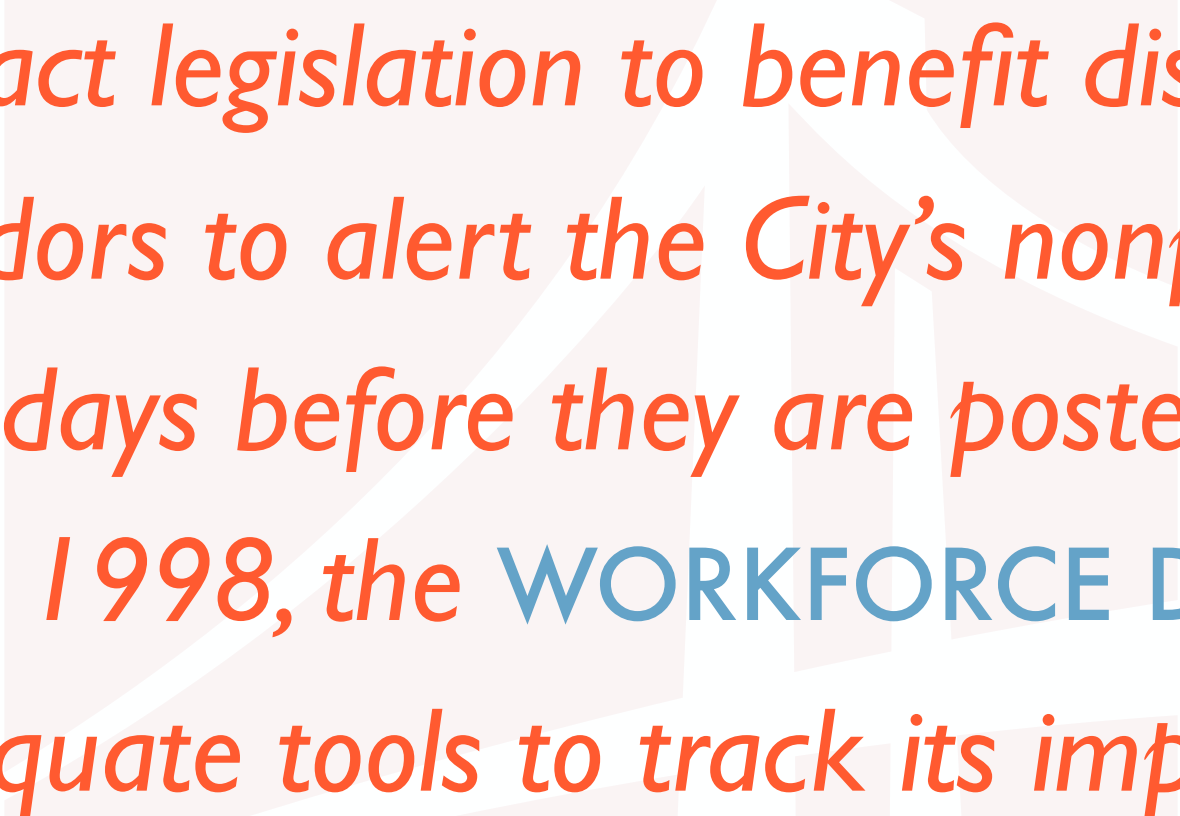
SELECTED WORK



# FIRST SOURCE PLATFORM *for* EQUITABLE HIRING

CLIENT: *SF Office of Economic and Workforce Development*

ROLE: *Project manager, educator, researcher*



**FIRST SOURCE** is high impact legislation to benefit disadvantaged residents. The ordinance requires City vendors to alert the City's nonprofit workforce partners of entry-level openings 10 days before they are posted publicly. Although the legislation was enacted in 1998, the **WORKFORCE DIVISION** has not had the adequate tools to track its impact.

**CHALLENGE** ∴ SF Workforce Division

## ① TASK / WORK FLOW ANALYSIS

I tracked down and reviewed the various ways in which Workforce Division staff collected First Source data. Each employee used unique record-keeping methods that included spreadsheets, email, and handwritten notes

## ② STAKEHOLDER & USER INTERVIEWS

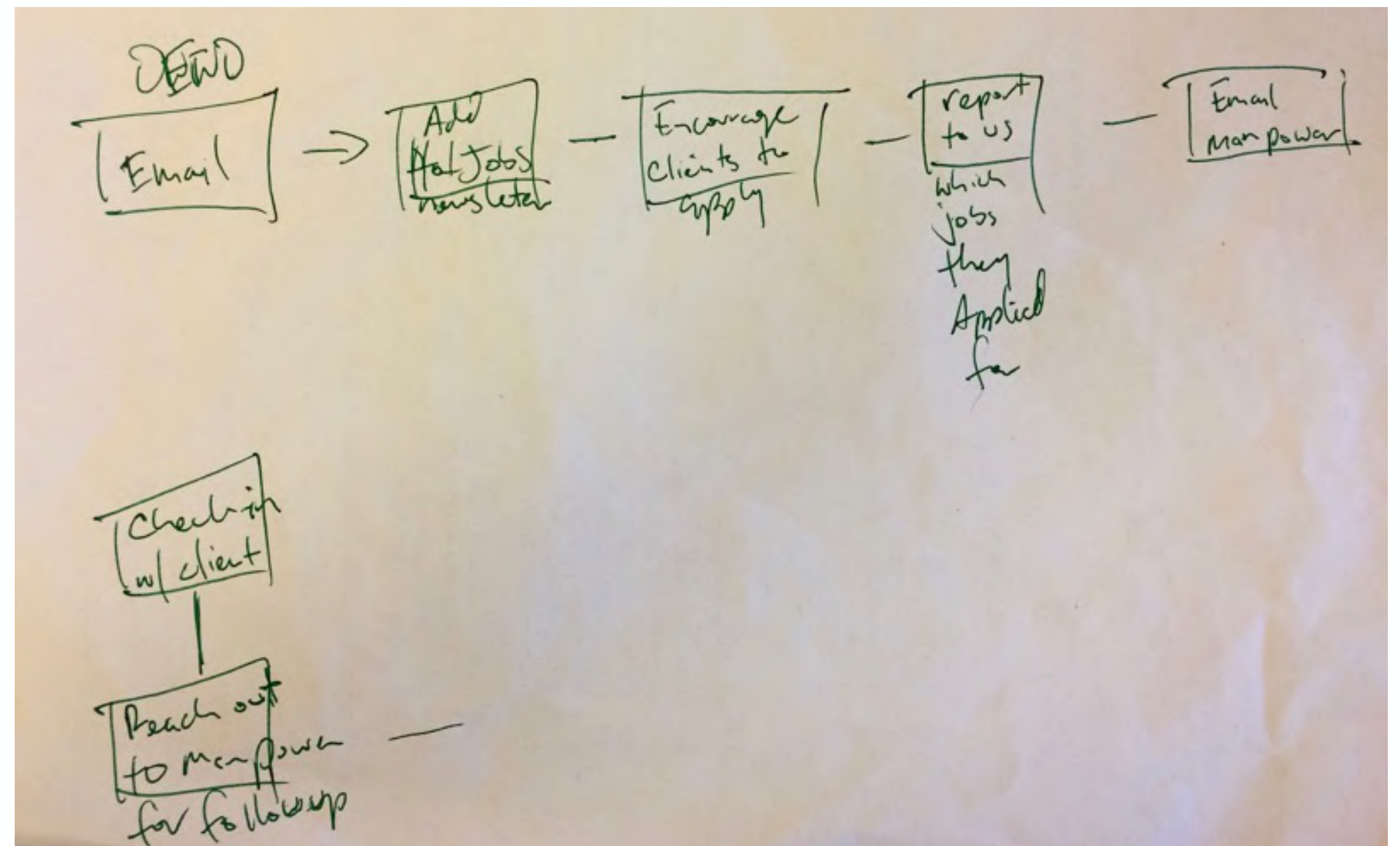
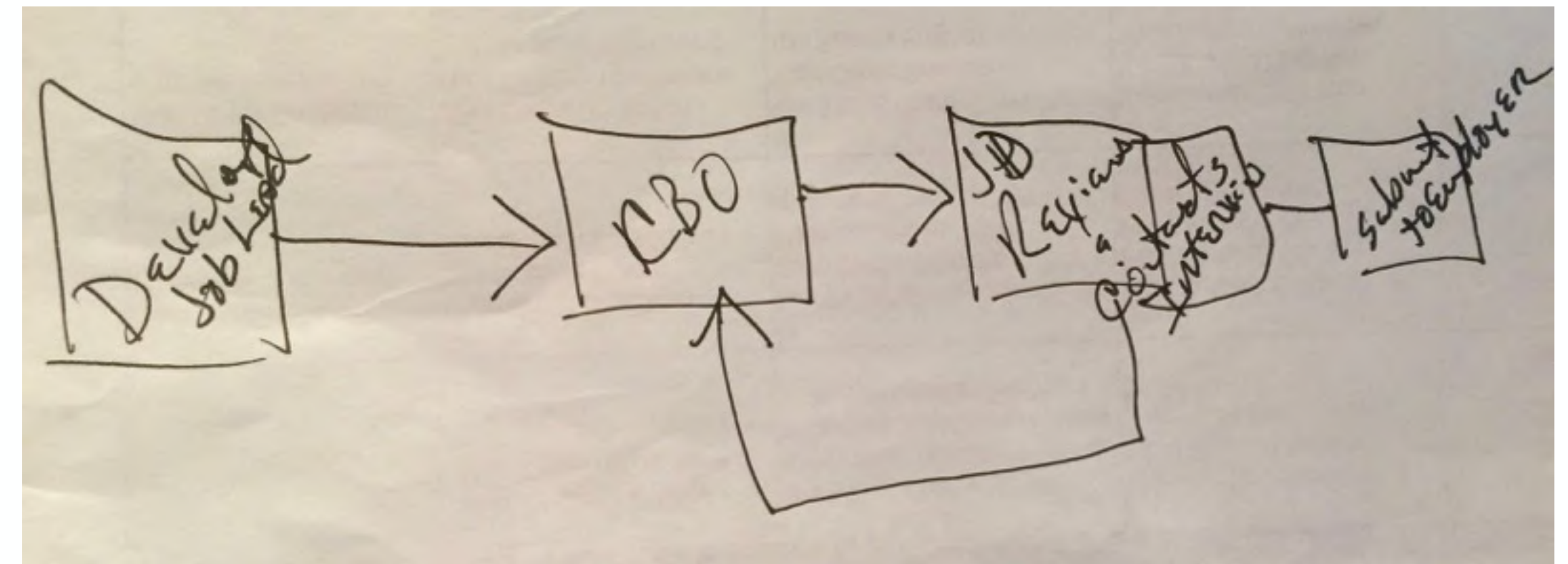
I conducted semi-structured interviews with Workforce Division staff, nonprofits, and employers of all sizes to understand how they perceived their responsibilities in the First Source process

## ③ PROTOTYPING, USER TESTING, ITERATING

I presented interview findings to my Workforce Division collaborator. We designed and iterated on a prototype and recruited nonprofit testers

## ④ PILOT ROADMAP

After completing a successful first phase (nonprofit adoption), I laid out a product roadmap so that the Workforce Division could launch the pilot in 2016



Diagrams by end users of how they thought the process was supposed to work

## KEY LEARNINGS

- ▶ *Individual Workforce Division staff recorded information across spreadsheets, faxes, and even handwritten notes, so the team couldn't coordinate internally*
- ▶ *Even though employers didn't know they were beholden to First Source, they love local hires and would be happy to comply if the process is easy. Local hires tended to relate better to local customers and had a better retention rate*
- ▶ *The compliance process is so cumbersome that even though nonprofit partners are the heart of the First Source process, they would rather violate grant requirements than redirect staff capacity from direct-service work*

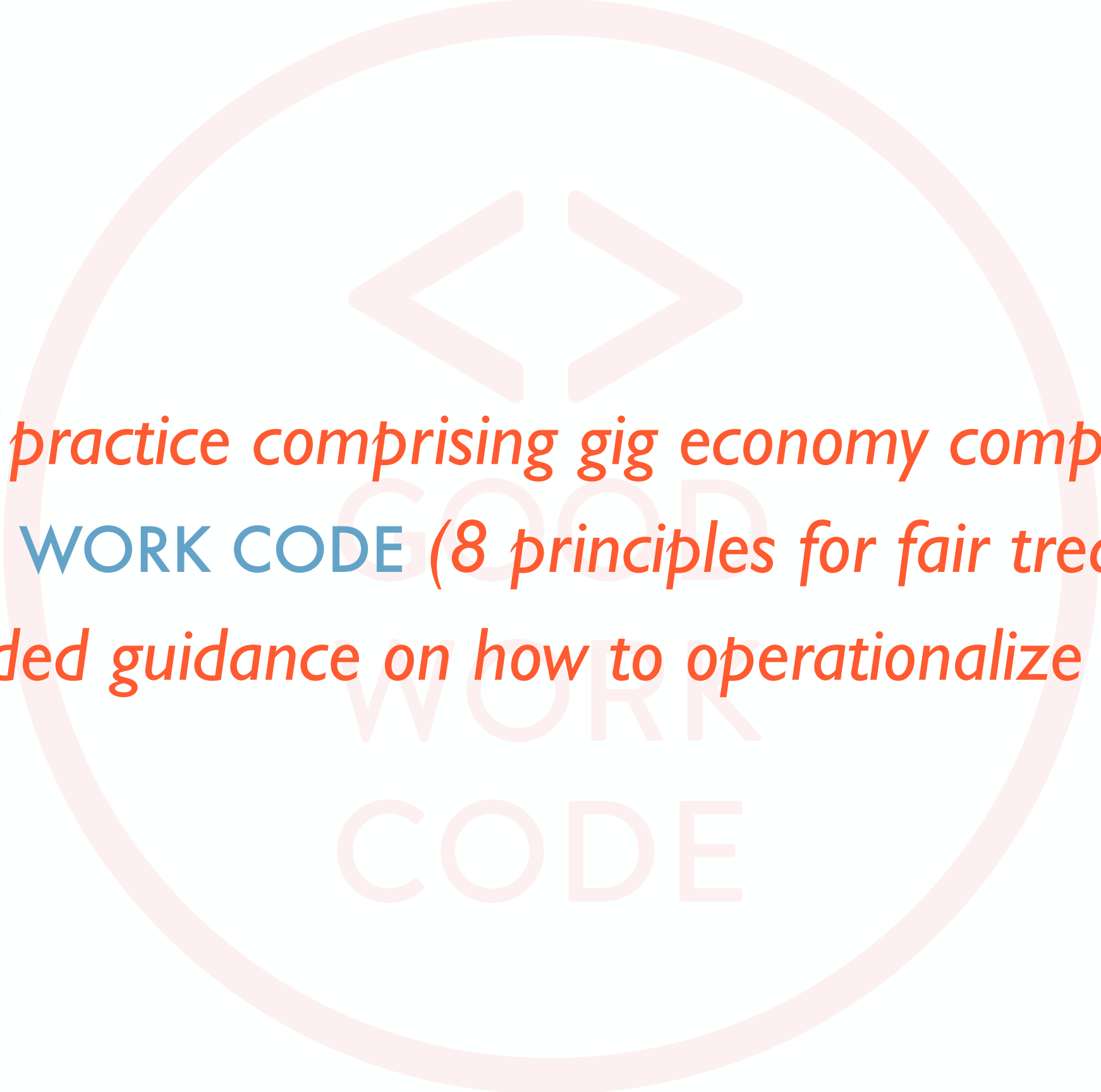
## OUTCOMES

- ▶ *We validated an online platform to facilitate the First Source hiring process across employers, nonprofits, and jobseekers*
- ▶ *After validation, the Workforce Division decided to increase funding and rallied other agencies to contribute as well*
- ▶ *Nonprofits liked the platform's user-friendly interface and data-gathering capabilities, so they volunteered to be testers*
- ▶ *My counterpart at the Workforce Division became an evangelist for user research and iterative design*
- ▶ *The pilot platform has since replaced the City's original matchmaking platform for jobseekers and employers*

# DESIGN KIT *for* FAIR REPUTATION SYSTEMS

CLIENT: *National Domestic Workers Alliance*

ROLE: *Consultant - Project manager, lead strategist*



*A community of practice comprising gig economy companies has grown around the **GOOD WORK CODE** (8 principles for fair treatment of workers). They needed guidance on how to operationalize the Code.*

**CHALLENGE** ∴ *Good Work Code*

## ① SECONDARY RESEARCH

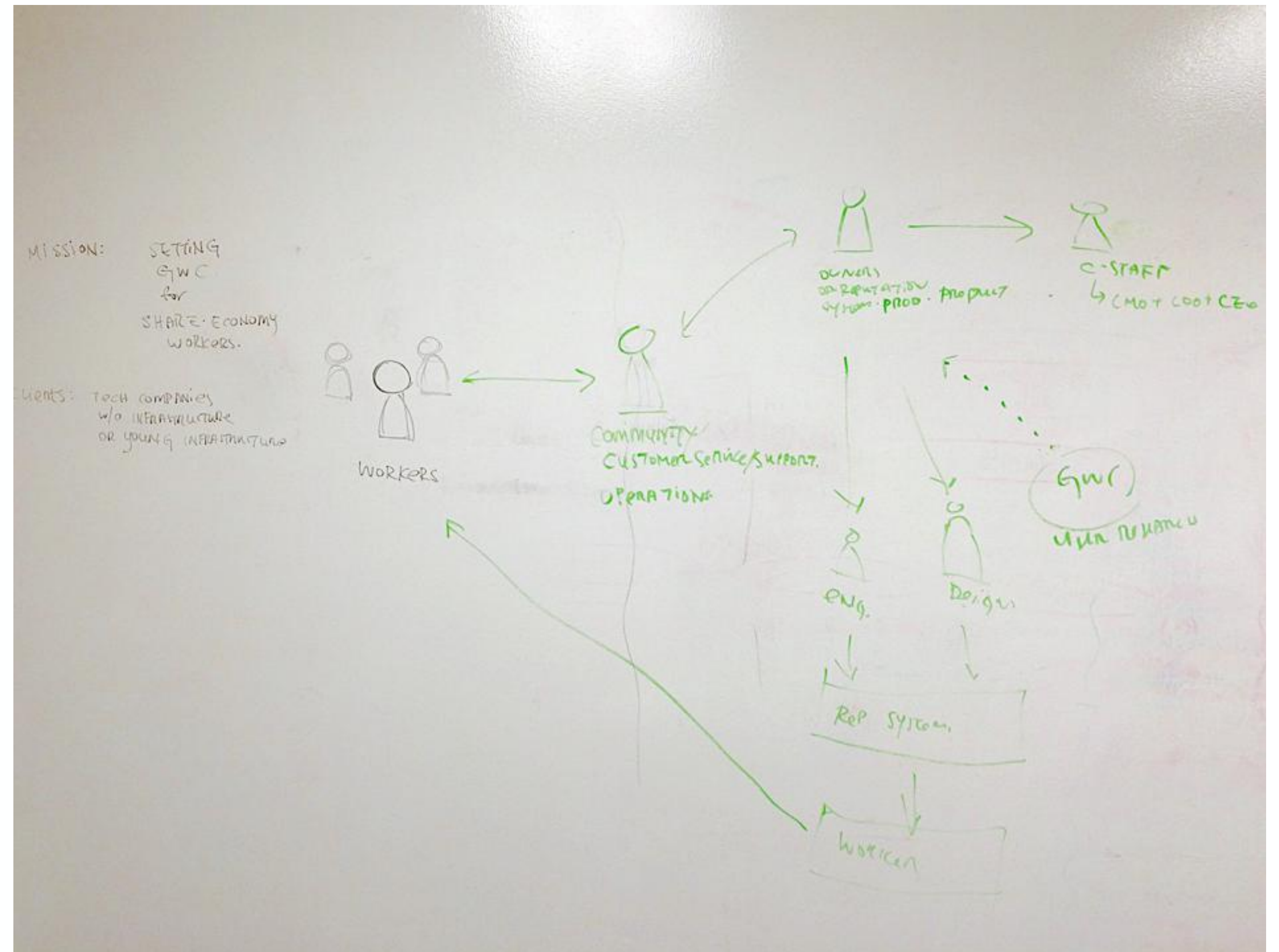
*There is a lot of rich and adjacent research about online identity and reputation, so I reviewed literature from the fields of behavioral economics, human-computer interaction, and social science*

## ② STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

*Since NDWA is a trusted advisor and bridge between both the social justice and private sectors, we needed to validate all stakeholders. We distributed a survey to companies, activists, investors, and scholars to understand their foremost concerns, what essentials must be encoded into a reputation systems, and the examples they find most inspiring*

## ③ CODESIGN

*I engaged several stakeholders throughout the content production process. We actively solicited content feedback and checked in regularly with companies to make sure we were producing an actionable and supportive design kit*



*Mapping the product workflow and lifecycle for companies of different sizes, finding spots to insert the GWC*



## KEY LEARNINGS

- ▶ *Under pressure from tight timelines and limited resources, companies default to photocopying what other companies do rather than designing a system from first principles*
- ▶ *Small and medium-sized companies tend to lack in user research support. Without it, companies don't know how to prioritize recommendations*
- ▶ *Even when contextualized, recommending tasks only adds to the mounting list of tasks that startups already have. C-staff are goal-oriented, not task-oriented, and we need to speak to their aspirations*


## OUTCOMES

- ▶ *A design kit that translates research conclusions into actionable insights for product, UX, engineering, legal, and community support teams*
- ▶ *One company informed us that they drew from the draft version as they iterated on their reputation system*
- ▶ *Based on validation from companies and enthusiasm from foundations, we are experimenting with a new approach for a design kit on background checks, where we will prototype recommendations with companies*

# WORKPLACE DEMOCRACY *in the* TECH SECTOR

CLIENT: *Coworker, Media Democracy Fund*

ROLE: *Principal researcher*



*As tech companies expand their economic, civic, and cultural power, a well-coordinated and active employee base could influence working conditions, pay, and benefits for millions of people. Employees could also hold companies accountable to their local communities and to those who use their products on a global scale.*

*To activate this workforce, COWORKER and the MEDIA DEMOCRACY FUND needed foundational research to understand conditions that tech employees face.*

**CHALLENGE** ∴ *Coworker + MDF*

## ① SECONDARY RESEARCH

*There is not much formal research on smaller tech companies, especially those established after the dot-com crash. I reviewed available media, which helped me refine the scope*

## ② TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

*I treated blogs, comment threads, and online forums that are frequented by the tech community as primary sources*

## ③ SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

*Since there is little literature and ethnography from which we could make general statements, I conducted 14 ethnographic interviews with tech workers across professional class, age, and ethnicity*

## ④ QUALITATIVE CODING

*Coding is a method to quantify qualitative data. The goal of the project was to turn up a wide array of relevant issues, and the coding resulted in 56 concepts and 9 categories*

	A	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	AA	AB	AC	AD	AE	AF	AG	AH	AI	AJ	AK	AL
1	Time stamp	Structural/functional influence or value	Team/coworker dynamics	Quitting/resigning	Laid off/fired	Empowered by autonomy, structurelessness	Growing into leadership/ more responsibility	Directionlessness (supervisor)	Boredom or not being challenged	Skills growth	Professional growth	Personal growth	Training	Popularity/social influence	Reporting responsibilities	Exclusion	Business direction	Isolated from strategy, greater business	Personal stake in work	Transparency	Compensation and benefits	C-level's values and influence	Culture fit, cultural stuff
2	<b>TOTAL</b>	42	52	13	20	19	19	14	10	29	88	32	17	29	5	36	22	12	9	22	16	37	126
76	49:00										1												1
77	51:25		1								1						1						1
78	54:44				1																		
79	56:30	1							1													2	1
80	1:02:02	1									1												
81	RM																						
82	5:30										1												
83	7:40										1												
84	11:45							1							1				1				
85	15:00													1									2
86	20:35							1		1							2					1	1
87	24:45																						
88	26:35	1								1	3						1						
89	30:00									1							1						
90	35:00					1	1				1						1						
91	40:24										1						1						3
92	49:05				1												1						1
93	52:26																1						1
94	54:30				1																	1	1
95	JY																						
96	14:00			1			1			1									1				
97	22:55																						1
98	26:40		1											1									2
99	31:00																			2		1	
100	37:50	4														3	1						
101	41:46	2	1						1	1													
102	48:40		1							2			3										
103	58:14													1									
104	1:00:48		2								1												3
105	1:02:24		4																				4

**METHODS** : Coworker + MDF

## KEY LEARNINGS

- ▶ *Everyone thinks transparency is a good idea, but nobody knows how to practice it. Companies rarely provide training or commit resources to help their employees be good at it*
- ▶ *Engineers are valuable but not necessarily influential. Even though they are treated leniently and have high job security, other professional classes have more strategic influence*
- ▶ *Many small and mid-sized tech companies do not have enough management layers for employees to continue growing within the company. Employees pursue growth by leaving for other companies*
- ▶ *Women and minorities second-guess whether their colleagues and managers value their technical chops as much as those of their non-marginalized counterparts*

## OUTCOMES

*This was a joint inquiry between COWORKER and the MEDIA DEMOCRACY FUND. The research has informed grantmaking, a set of future experiments, further research inquiries, and campaign opportunities to build a stronger power base for organizing tech employees*

# COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY *for* DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT

CLIENT: *SEIU-UHW Education Fund*

ROLE: *Consultant - project management, research*



*The **ED FUND** provides education benefits for unionized healthcare workers in the **WESTERN U.S.** Although there are **90,000** eligible members across **35 HOSPITALS**, only **7,000** have been served over **10** years. As the healthcare industry adopts new technologies that threaten to displace workers, the Ed Fund also needs to develop a robust digital outreach strategy.*

**CHALLENGE** ∴ *SEIU-UHW Education Fund*

## ① IDENTIFYING GOALS

The client started with a very broad goal, and over multiple meetings, I helped them hone in and divide it into five measurable and guiding subgoals

## ② CONTENT AUDIT & ANALYTICS

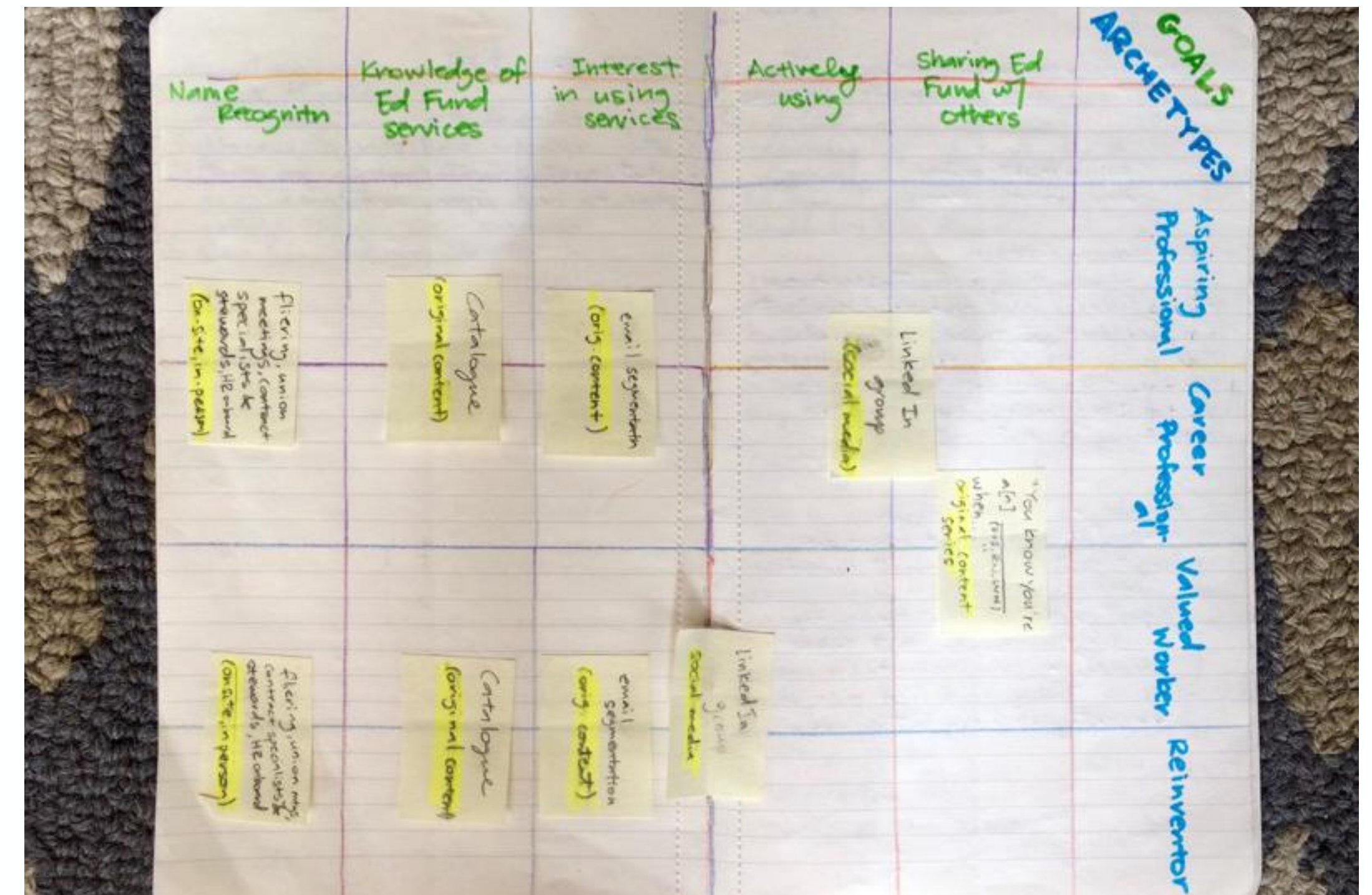
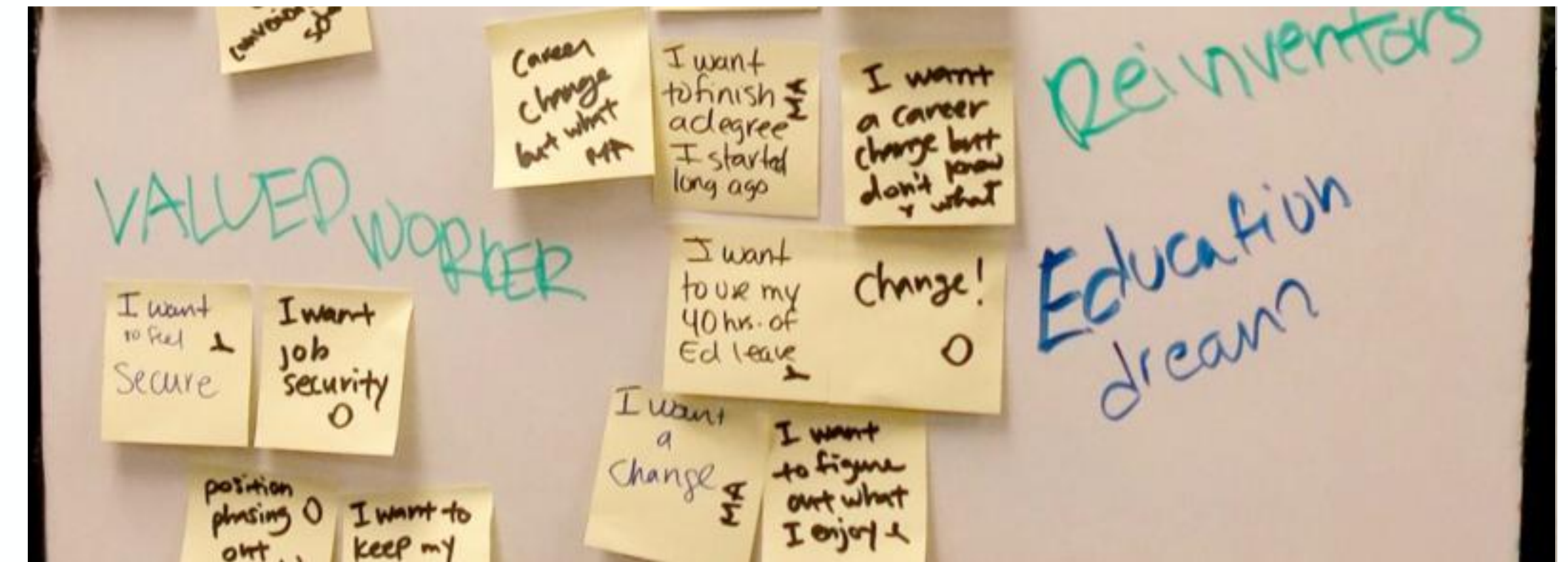
I audited 13-years' worth of abandoned media assets and efforts. I analyzed their website and newsletter analytics to understand user challenges, drop-off points, and resonant content

## ③ STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS & SURVEYS

I conducted 11 interviews with members, union organizers, and staff. To make sure all staff felt heard, I administered surveys across their 8 offices. With staff, I wanted to understand their in-house knowledge and capacity to manage media channels

## ④ ARCHETYPES WORKSHOP

After gathering enough data, I facilitated a workshop with front-line staff across two different offices to identify archetypes and sketch out draft personas



**METHODS** :: SEIU-UHW Education Fund



## KEY LEARNINGS

- ▶ *The Ed Fund relies heavily on union stewards who are hospital employees to let their coworkers know about opportunities. However, coworkers/union members only seek out stewards when they have conflicts with the hospital administration*
- ▶ *Most Ed Fund users take advantage of Ed Fund opportunities when there is a major upheaval in their lives. This ranges from children leaving the nest to the threat of being laid off due to automation to relationship breakups*
- ▶ *The effectiveness of prior communications efforts had been abandoned because of a lack of metrics knowledge on staff to set benchmarks and assess ROI*

## OUTCOMES

- ▶ *A strategy report that outlined digital outreach tactics, new workflow processes, a communications analysis, messaging for member engagement, and benchmarks/evaluating ROI*
- ▶ *The Ed Fund is hiring a digital strategist after realizing the need for someone in-house who understood their membership, had the know-how, and could coordinate comms across all 8 offices*
- ▶ *I showed through analytics that their site's foremost problem was user experience, not visual design. Instead of contracting with a graphic designer, the Ed Fund issued an RFP for a service-design overhaul of their site*
- ▶ *The Ed Fund adopted annotation practices to monitor traffic data and spikes/dips that coincided with events*
- ▶ *After developing archetypes and personas, the staff applied them broadly to all program design and outreach strategies*

# LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS *of* DIGITAL INCLUSION IN SF

CLIENT: *SF Mayor's Office, SF Committee on Information Technology*

ROLE: *Project lead*



*Despite being a technology hub, San Francisco has a significant digital divide. The mayor needed a report that laid out local efforts, inventoried initiatives in other cities, assessed decision-making frameworks, and presented a range of policy, program, and partnership options.*

**CHALLENGE** ∴ *City of San Francisco*

## ① SECONDARY RESEARCH

*I reviewed more than 26 reports that covered facts and figures. Many reports also tested frameworks to engage the community and public/private institutions in closing the digital divide*

## ② STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

*I interviewed 18 direct-service organizations on their work and identified themes from those conversations. Community-based organizations ranged in neighborhoods as well as focus (e.g., women's shelter, veterans, re-entry, non-English speaking seniors, LGBTQ youth, etc.)*

## ③ COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

*I examined approaches in 14+ cities and extracted lessons and applicable models for San Francisco*

## ④ WORKSHOPS

*We conducted discovery and ideation workshops at the beginning and end of the research period. The workshops also served to seed a community of practice by helping CBOs share ideas together*



**L:** Group sticky sheet from one of the problem-definition workshops  
**R:** categorizing recommendations across all research sources

## KEY LEARNINGS

- ▶ *Due to misconceptions about Internet privacy, undocumented residents are afraid that Internet usage could lead to their deportation*
- ▶ *Nonprofits can't teach classes on how to use mobile and tablet devices because residents' devices run on different operating systems*
- ▶ *Nonprofits don't have enough capacity to offer advanced classes in non-English languages (i.e.: Photoshop, iMovie, etc.)*
- ▶ *As low-income residents get displaced, transportation is becoming a barrier for them to access community-based computer labs in their former neighborhoods*

## OUTCOMES

*Based on the landscape analysis recommendations, the City hired for a senior digital inclusion advisor that is responsible for executing the other 11 formal recommendations. In order to prioritize between business needs, I also provided a matrix of recommendations organized by the length of execution time, financial commitment, program implementation, policymaking, and reliance on public-private partnerships*



BLUEPRINTS *for a* WORKER SUPPORT INFRASTRUCTURE  
*in the* PEER ECONOMY

INSTITUTION: *Massachusetts Institute of Technology*

ROLE: *Master's candidate*

*The economy has rebounded from the recession, but the wealth gap is worse than ever. As Americans look for creative ways to stabilize their income, can the “sharing” economy provide the necessary support and protections for its participants to thrive?*

## ① SECONDARY RESEARCH

*I reviewed relevant scholarship and mainstream media on labor history, communications, economic sociology, and law*

## ② ETHNOGRAPHY, PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION

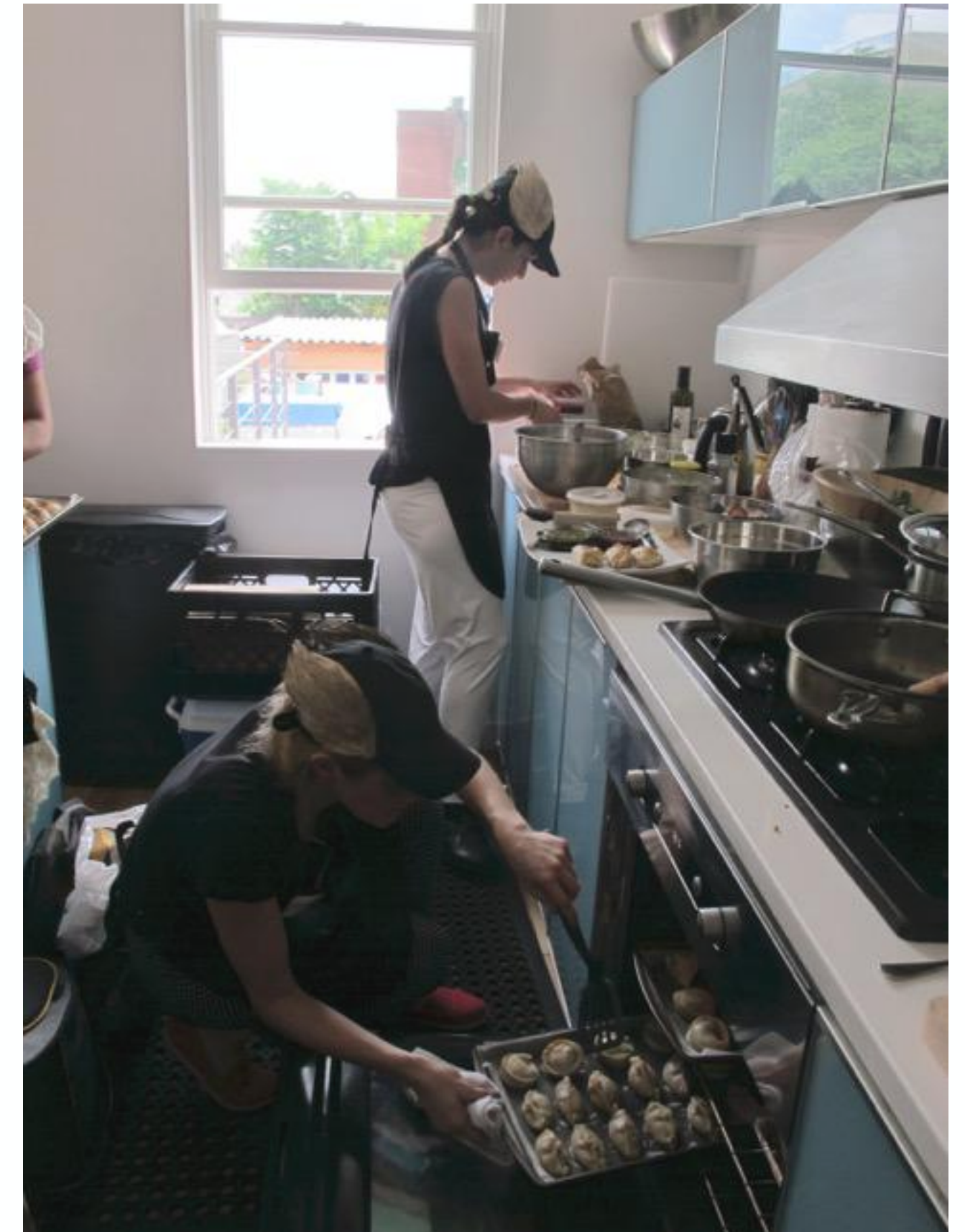
*I wanted to understand various stakeholders perspectives, so I did site visits and participated in a working group of private sector stakeholders*

## ③ 1:1 & GROUP INTERVIEWS

*I:1 interviews with workers, labor advocates, companies, inventors, policymakers, corporate consultants, scholars, critics, etc. I administered surveys that informed the lines of inquiry for four group interviews. The interviews aimed to foster dialogue that happens only between peers*

## ④ QUALITATIVE CODING

*After coding the interviews, I made recommendations for stakeholder-specific actions and suggested areas for further research*



*Photos from a p2p company's weekly cooking demonstration*



# KEY LEARNINGS

- ▶ *Workers see themselves as employees. They used terms like “our CEO” when describing their relationship to the company*
- ▶ *The domestic workers movement and the franchising industry provide political, legal, and campaigning precedents for p2p activists*
- ▶ *Savvier workers also used p2p marketplaces to network, build their professional reputation, and explore new careers*
- ▶ *Unsuccessful workers bought into the micro-entrepreneurship rhetoric would obsessively made “micromoves” without weighing their cost*
- ▶ *In the years since publishing my thesis, media have become more critical of sharing economy rhetoric, the domestic workers movement has assumed its leadership mantle for worker rights, and workers have pushed back on misclassification*

# OUTCOMES

- ▶ **SHARING ECONOMY 101 FOR POLICYMAKERS**  
*The sharing economy is not well-understood within government. Through an award from MICROSOFT RESEARCH, I am producing primers that contextualize the sharing economy, unpack the ethical turmoil, equip policymakers with terminology, and lay out relevant proposals and experiments taking place in the U.S.*
- ▶ **BARRIERS TO GROWTH IN THE ‘SHARING ECONOMY’** (2015 policy paper)  
*The research influenced the ROOSEVELT INSTITUTE’s policy agenda for its Next American Economy project. It contributed scaffolding for a prominent Institute fellow’s book*
- ▶ **IS SHARING REALLY CARING? A NUANCED INTRO TO THE SHARING ECONOMY** (2014 white paper)  
*The research helped to shape the Open Society Foundations’ political framework on the “sharing economy.” I was invited to present my work at the U.S. Department of Labor*
- ▶ *In 2014, my research helped to frame MICROSOFT RESEARCH FUSE LABS’ inquiry into the “sharing economy”*

etc.

## ON-DEMAND APP *for* NURSES' CO-OP

CLIENT: *United Healthcare Workers*

ROLE: *Advisor*

METHODS: *paper prototyping*

## eLEARNING *for* NONPROFIT PROFESSIONALS *in the* GLOBAL SOUTH

CLIENT: *Exygy, Philanthropy University*

ROLE: *Market / product strategy, Director of design research*

METHODS: *expert interviews, stakeholder research,  
comparative analysis, literature review*

## LEARNING MODULES *for* P2P PLATFORMS

CLIENT: *U.S. Dept. of Labor, City of SF Workforce Division*

ROLE: *Project manager*

METHODS: *usability research, stakeholder engagement*