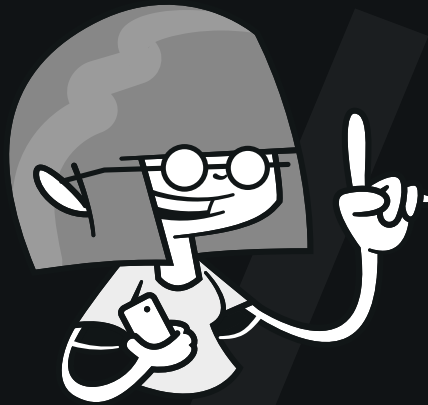




Think Experience

Learn actionable strategies for your charity to improve engagement, reach and revenue through your digital platforms.



The team behind the experience

Jan Golding

Jan works closely with businesses to create better customer experiences across digital channels, utilising a blend of strategic thinking and user centric design. As a founding member of Yoyo, he draws from his 15 years of digital experience to drive forward the agency's Strategy & UX teams, championing insight and innovation to deliver the most appropriate solutions.

Jan has worked across a wide range of sectors, helping brands like RNLI, England Athletics, Open University and the RSPCA to increase their customer engagement. He's built a reputation around his pragmatic approach to creative problem solving alongside his lifelong passion and commitment to producing design that makes a difference.



Matt Pollitt

Over the last 10 years Matt has worked with some incredible teams to deliver ground breaking digital services across mobile, TV, the web and beyond. With a background in mobile application design and development, Matt has helped to craft and deliver digital solutions that are used by 1000's of people every day around the world. His impressive clients list includes Sony Ericsson, Channel 4, Intel and RBS.

Matt takes pride in running small and large cross-discipline teams to ensure that quality of experience for the user is the key focus. He uses customer insight and goal-based logic to drive this forward, always keeping a close eye on how solutions will deliver real value for businesses and their customers.

Foreword - why we did this.

So why have we done this?

After reading about the gap in digital skills in the charity sector in the recent NPC report '[Charities Taking Charge](#)', we decided that we wanted to do something about it. We noticed that despite there being a lot of information out there on UX, digital products and the like, hardly any of it is presented in an approachable and actionable way.

Not all charities can afford to work with a digital experience agency to help them design and deliver their next website or digital product. We believe, however, that many of the techniques, strategies and tools can be used to improve the way they approach these types of projects.

We have created this free eBook series to help debunk some of the fears around digital projects. We always recommend putting the user at the heart of what you do. We have tried to give people some straightforward, plain-talking, accessible, and most importantly, actionable information.

By changing the way charities approach digital products and services, and by giving away the information that big agencies will charge a lot of money for in consultancy fees before a project even starts - we hope to help define a brighter digital landscape for charities in the future. By approaching projects in the 'Think Experience' mindset, you will retain focus, save money and see more success when trying to create engaging and focused experiences for your audiences. And most importantly, you will start creating digital experiences with humans at the centre. Improving their experiences will improve your chances of success.

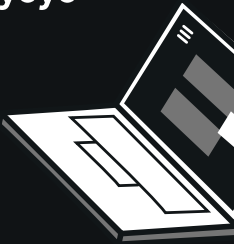
Over the next 3 months we will be releasing more chapters - and giving charities the digital skills they need to understand how to define and create digital products that deliver on their promises. It will give you the knowledge to work in better ways with your internal teams, or empower you to work with external suppliers in a more efficient and successful way.

But most importantly, it will help to ensure that you and your charity maximise the value that can be gained from digital technologies - and improve the impact you make on a daily basis to the causes and lives you care about the most.

Enjoy and good luck

Matt Pollitt - Experience Consultant

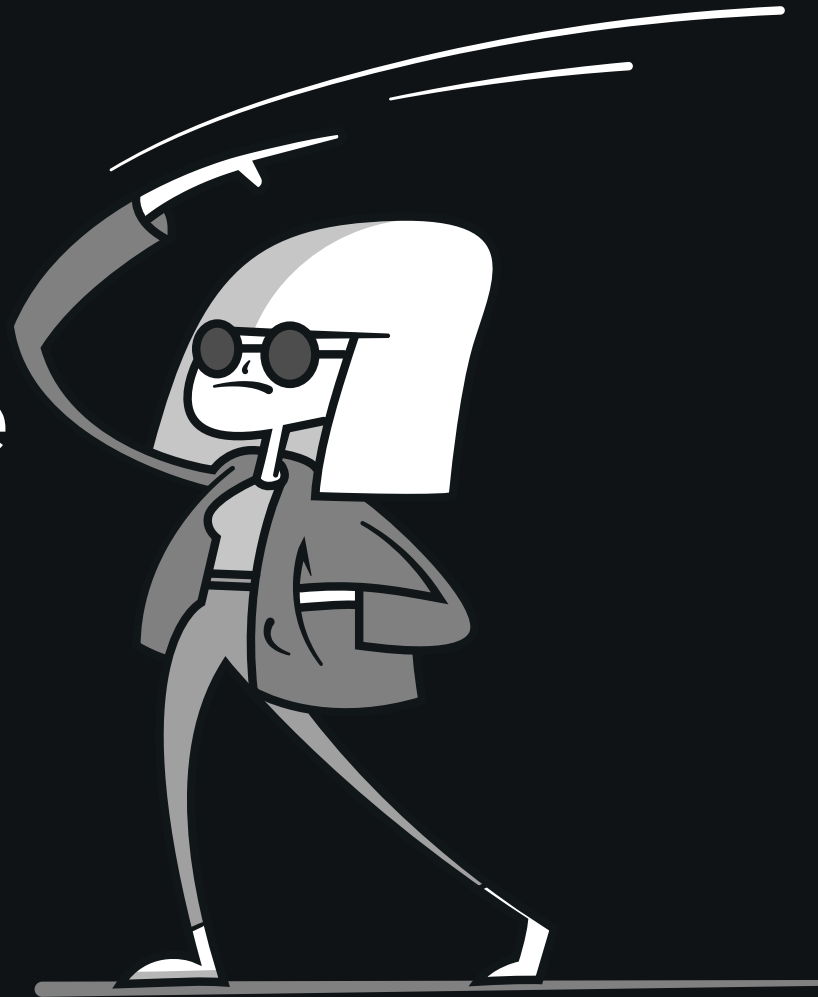
Jan Golding - Strategy Director



CHAPTER 2 - USERS DON'T CARE ABOUT YOUR WEBSITE

Users don't care about your website

Creating focused experiences for the goals of your users, not you.



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Chapter 2

Users don't care about your website.

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"Today I really want to explore a website"

Only ever said by people who make websites.

People are motivated by things they want to do.

These might be 'jobs' they need to complete or they might be completing an impulsive urge - but I can almost guarantee you their key motivation is not to spend time exploring your website.

Think about it - did you get up in the morning and think 'oh, today I want to explore Amazon's website'? You might want to spend some time browsing, but you are browsing the products, not the site itself. The more common case is that you go to Amazon because you know it is the quickest, cheapest and fastest way to get 15 kg of dog food delivered to your house the next day.

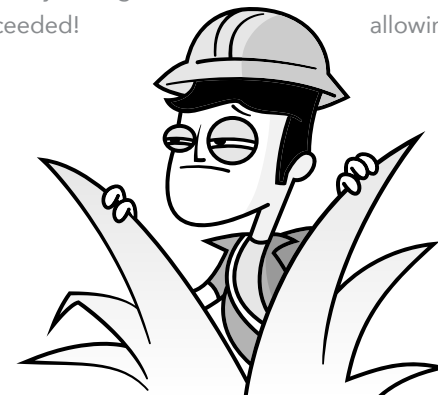
Amazon is a very good example of a company that understands how to create and simplify its user journeys through their site. They quickly worked out that by reducing the number of barriers to purchase it could massively increase the number of sales they made. This led to the 'one click' purchase model that has been copied by many other online retailers since. They basically worked out the less a customer had to interact with Amazon and the quicker they could complete their purchase, the happier they were.

This next section is going to help you understand how to take the goals of your users and the business to map out the most effective user journeys through your site, so everyone's goals can be met - and hopefully exceeded!

These journeys will not only give you greater context of why your users are interacting with your digital products or services, but also help to give you a place to start when it comes to designing your experience, and will make sure you focus on the most important things first.

By taking the time to fully flesh out and understand these journeys, you will gain a much deeper insight into the motivation of your users and uncover ways to engage and delight them that would not be obvious any other way.

And once you realise they don't really care about your website (and that's not a bad thing), you will be able to give them exactly what they need, allowing them to care about your product or cause.



"The homepage feels a little empty...."

Every client. Ever.

Why your homepage doesn't need to have everything (and why user journeys don't always start at home)

The biggest assumption ever made when designing a website is that it is a strictly linear journey with the same starting place. It's actually a very human assumption to make, and one that has been ingrained from the dawn of the web. The name 'homepage', and its structure in the hierarchy only continues to reinforce that.

The assumption is that a user comes to your homepage and is then inspired to explore your site from there.

What comes with that assumption is that the homepage is therefore the most important page - and must contain everything, for all people. Welcome to the silo of your website my friends.

That was probably the case maybe 10-15 years ago. However, now we are in an age of mobile devices, social media and the evolution of search algorithms, the way people find and consume content, purchase and interact with each other and businesses has started to change.

For example, I might go to amazon.co.uk to search for my 15 kg of dog food. However, it's more likely I would have gone to Google and searched directly for my dog's favoured brand. Or maybe Kim Kardashian recommended some on Instagram and I have ended up at Amazon through that link. Maybe I didn't know exactly what brand I wanted, but found it through the pet section page instead of the homepage.

This very simple example of a very specific requirement from a user already shows the huge number of entry points to a site - now imagine all the variations based on your personas and goals.

The homepage is an important page on your site, but other pages are likely to be even more important to your users. So remember - it doesn't need to include everything.

Due to the emphasis placed on the importance of this page, the real estate on the homepage can become a hotly debated subject and fought for, tooth and nail (especially in larger organisations). There is often the perception that if certain content, business sections or items are not included, they are deemed less important.

If you have been involved in the design or commission of a website before, you will know what I mean. If this is your first time, you have this to look forward to!

The homepage is in many cases an important page of your site. But it is often not the most important page, and doesn't need to contain everything. In a lot of cases, the more a homepage has crammed onto it - the less useful it is to its users.

So - let's see how we start to map out these user journeys, the different places they can start and how they can be used to create valuable, informative and enjoyable experiences for your users.



Everybody loves a happy ending...

How do you map user journeys?

User journeys are easier to create than you would think. If you've got your personas and goals (see [chapter 1](#) on how to create these), then user journeys simply flesh out the logical steps they would need to take on your website to achieve their goals - as quickly and as easily as possible.

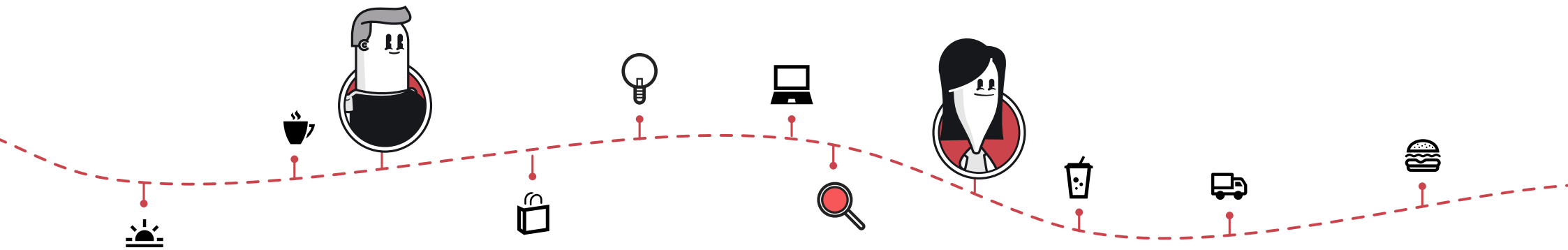
Take a persona. For this example I will use a persona based on someone who wants to complete the following job: "I have read an article that relates to x cause, and it has made me want to help". Let's call him Bob.

Now - completely forget about your website and your charity. Think about the steps that Bob would take from realising he wants to complete this goal, to making him happy by completing his goal. What is this 'happy path' ? Map it out in steps.

Bob's 'Happy Path'

1. Bob is reading an article on the BBC website about a child with a terminal disease. The article touches Bob as he feels a personal connection with it, and he decides he wants to help make a difference.
2. Bob goes to Google, and searches for information on the condition and a way to make a difference. He uses the term ' <insert disease> support '.
3. A number of results are returned from various charities that help raise funds and support people with that illness.
4. He selects the one which he feels (through the page description) he connects with the most, or particularly speaks to the goal he is trying to achieve.
5. Once on the site, he wants to view information that provides him with a level of confidence that makes him feel like his actions will have impact.
6. Once he feels reassured that his actions will make a difference, he decides to make a donation.
7. Bob feels good in his belief that his actions have made an impact.
8. Once he feels reassured that his actions will make a difference, he decides to make a donation.
9. Bob feels good as he believes that his actions have made an impact.





See? Easy. Couple of key things to take away. Notice how the journey doesn't even come close to your website until step 4 - and he might not even have chosen yours!

Also notice that his goal is not to make a donation - but to make an impact.

In fact, when you look at this journey in the cold light of day you realise that your site is only there to facilitate a positive feeling for him, by enabling him to do a specific thing.

By extracting what **you** want Bob to do from the equation you can take an unbiased view of what **he is trying to achieve**. Then when you review those steps you can try and work out how to mesh his goals with yours, while still making sure he experiences a 'happy ending' to his journey.

Look at the 'happy paths' of your own personas - and the steps they take to achieve their goals.

Ask the following questions:

- Where can you start to influence their behaviour?
- What touch points outside of your site are also important to consider? Where in your site is a user naturally entering?
- Is it the homepage, or is it a more content specific page based on their happy path?
- What is the end experience? Do they come back? How do you further engage with them?



Top Tips : Carrying on with our example of Bob's journey, let's look at how we would apply some of this thinking.

Steps 1 & 2 are not in your control. These are pre-engagement actions that users take based on their existing habits and preferences. These are important to include, however, as by uncovering these you can start to have different strategies in place to take advantage of them, and also understand the context of their engagement.

Understanding the 'why' helps you solve the 'how'.

Steps 3 & 4 highlight your first area of potential action - before they even choose to visit your website. By understanding how third party service such as Google, list and highlight results, you can work to ensure that your result surfaces the right content / message to get Bob to choose your content over that of others.

Think about the most appropriate meta data (page title and description) as you want it to be contextually relevant to his goals. Whereas before your description might have described your charity - maybe it's worth considering messaging that focuses more on the impact you make or the results you have achieved. You would be surprised at the number of companies / organisations that leave this until last - don't be those guys.

Steps 5 & 6 are where the content and structure of your website comes into play. What is the first thing you want Bob to see? What messaging can you give him to relate to his current goal? How can you organize the information and call to actions in a way that facilitates his requirements

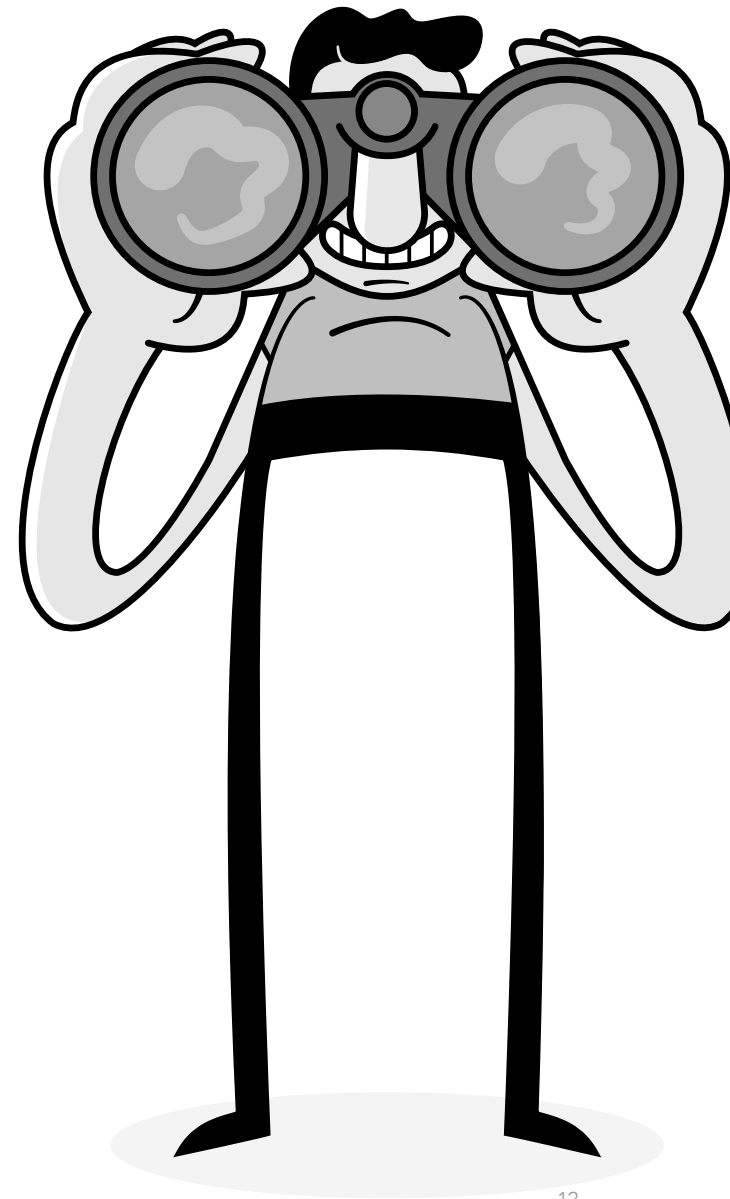
into a journey that gets him to where he wants to be, without losing velocity or more importantly focus? How do you re-affirm that he has made the right choice in coming to your website and that he should feel good about the actions he wants to make?

Step 7 and beyond - once he has completed his goal, how do you reassure him that he has made the right decision, and that he has had the desired impact? This might be by showing him the results of his donation. Importantly this doesn't have to all happen straight away. One of the most significant things to consider here is how do you keep him engaged past this initial 'happy ending', and get him coming back for more - be it to donate further or to engage in other ways with your charity. This is where you should start to think about personalised, automated emails to follow up with useful, contextual information as opposed to marketing spam. How do you get Bob coming back to your site, and what does the next phase of his engagement with you look like?

If you are looking to redesign or improve a currently live website, to get started it's really useful to map out the existing user journey to understand the potential barriers and then use this as a baseline for optimisation.

Does the content answer the user's questions?
Can you reduce the number of steps for them to achieve their primary goals? Use the same steps as above and you will quickly identify areas that will provide you with quick wins, as well as help you plan more developed and focused experiences for your users further down the line.

The mapping does not have to be complicated. It is always nice to have a visual map to stick on the wall / show in meetings / make you feel awesome - but I would always recommend starting with a written journey in your writing application of choice. Nail them down and get them clear before distracting yourself with the visual presentation of them, this will ensure that you are focusing on the right things before creating beautiful documents.



Swiping right for all the wrong reasons.

How to make the right first impression.

Tinder can be a pretty brutal dating method (or so I am told). Is it fair that you are judged on a picture - and potentially if they make it that far, a short profile description? Does it ensure that you will get a perfect match every time and sail off into a gorgeous sunset of relationship bliss? Probably not. But it does give people the opportunity to then get to know each other more, initially through chatting through the app, then meeting up in real life.

As with Tinder, getting users to choose your content and services over others is key. How do you position yourself above the competition? People who don't know you are not going to wade through paragraph after paragraph of copy - they are going to make a snap judgement based on their perception of you, how you relate to them and if you are the person that is going to fulfill

their immediate needs based on bias and your initial impact. Once they have made that initial move, they will then explore your site further and refine their opinion - but you need to meet that initial need to get that 'first date'.

Often the assumption made by businesses and charities alike is that once a user connects with them through their website, they will instantly be connected together for life.

Many websites try and get across everything on the first page (typically the homepage) to make sure that the user can immediately know everything about them and all that they offer.

Imagine you went on a first date and proceeded to give your full life story to the lucky lady or gentleman over a plate of Nando's chicken in the first ten minutes. I am pretty sure it would not go that well - and not just because you went to Nandos on a first date (although that might be a big factor). Not only does no one really enjoy a one-way conversation, but if you are getting a stream of consciousness which you can't relate to and has no relevance to what you are interested in, you'll probably be looking to make your excuses and be seen climbing out of the bathroom window at the first opportunity.



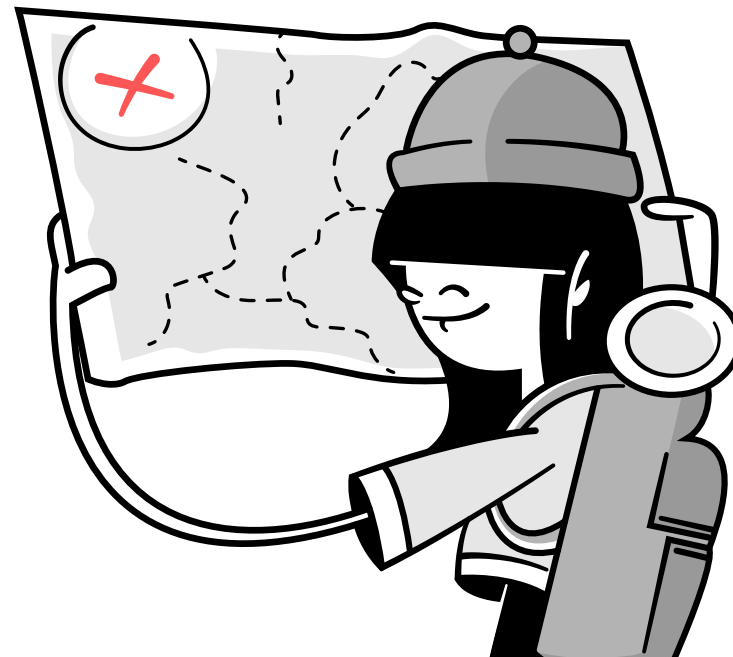
The key again lies in understanding the journeys of your goal-led personas, and creating focused, targeted entry points into your website / service.

If a user visits your site based on a search result or link on social media, ensure that they are delivered directly to what was promised.

If the current highest priority goal of your charity is to drive one-off donations, facilitate this by structuring your homepage (or other entry point) to make it obvious and easy for users to go down that route. If your main goal is to educate users about the impact your charity makes, ensure that this is the focus for the main point of entry. If you have multiple goals and, for larger charities,

multiple areas of focus - consider creating a small number of custom landing pages to create a focused path to help your users get where you need them to be with the least amount of distraction. You might even decide that a number of different landing pages for the same goal are required to meet the needs of your different personas.

Start to explore this by mapping out potential solutions against the 'happy paths' of your users - see the diagram on the next page for an example.



Mapping Bob's goals to the Charity's goals.

Bob's goal is to make an instant difference to the people suffering in the article he just read.

The charity's goal is to increase the amount of one-off donations.

PRE-ENGAGEMENT



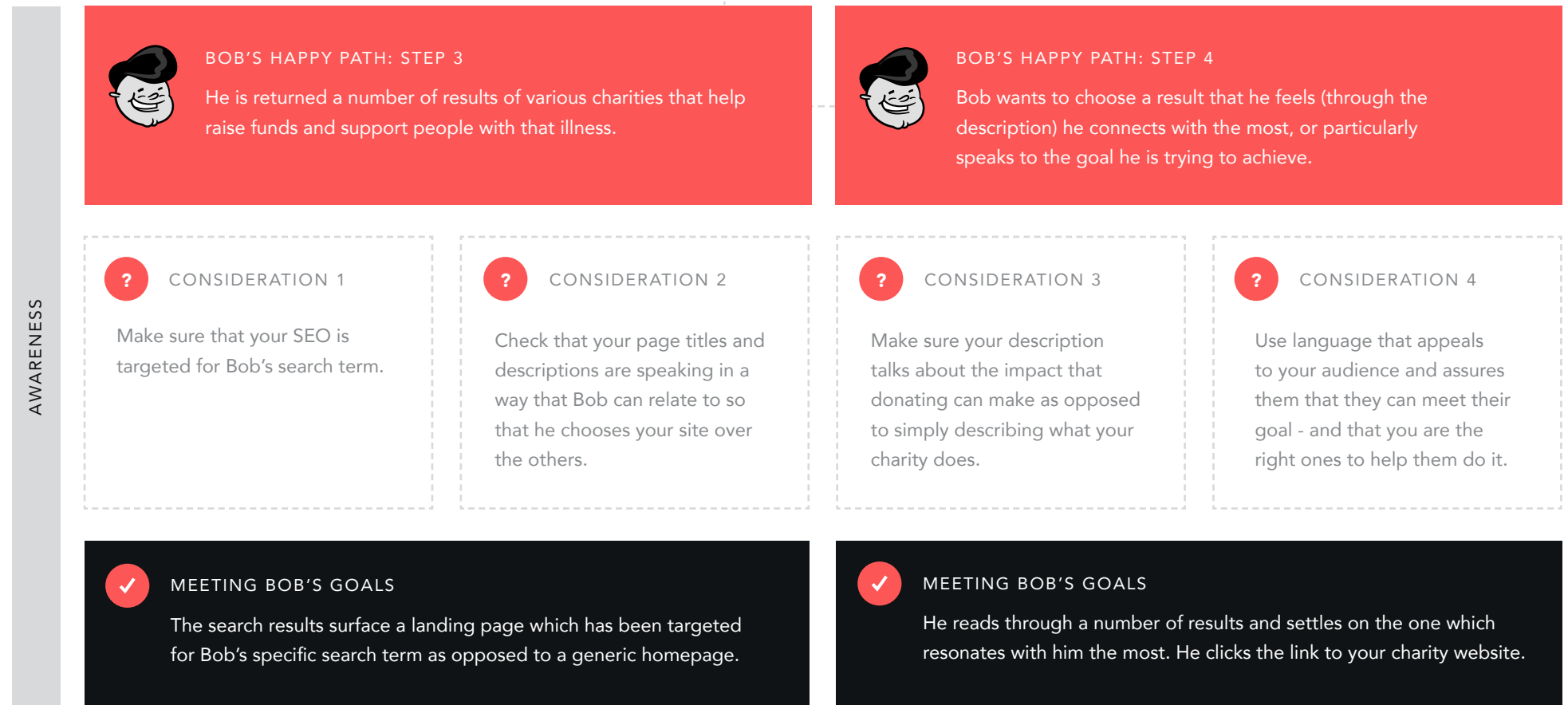
BOB'S HAPPY PATH: STEP 1

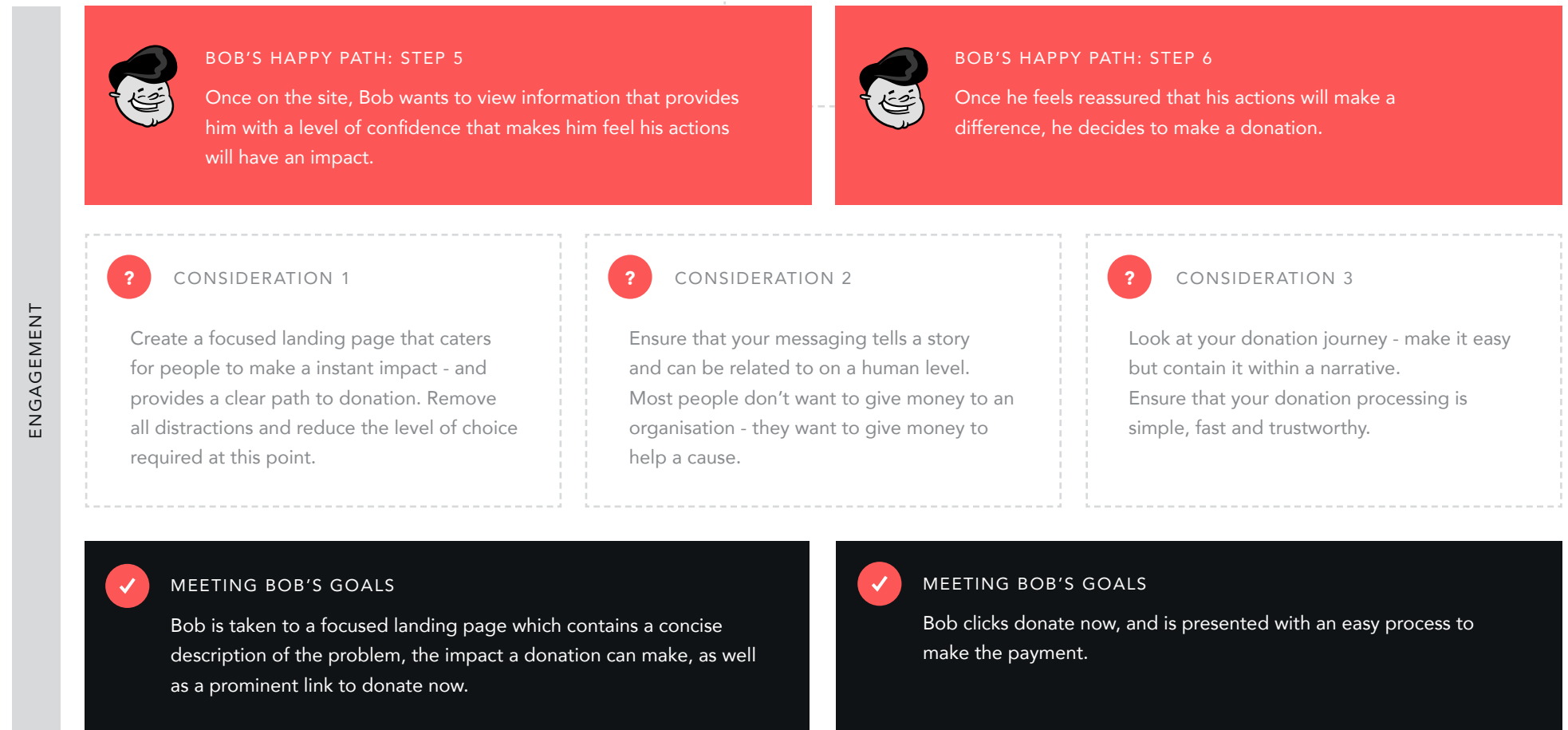
Bob is reading an article on the BBC website about a child with a terminal disease. The article touches Bob as he feels a personal connection with it, and he decides he wants to help make an instant difference.

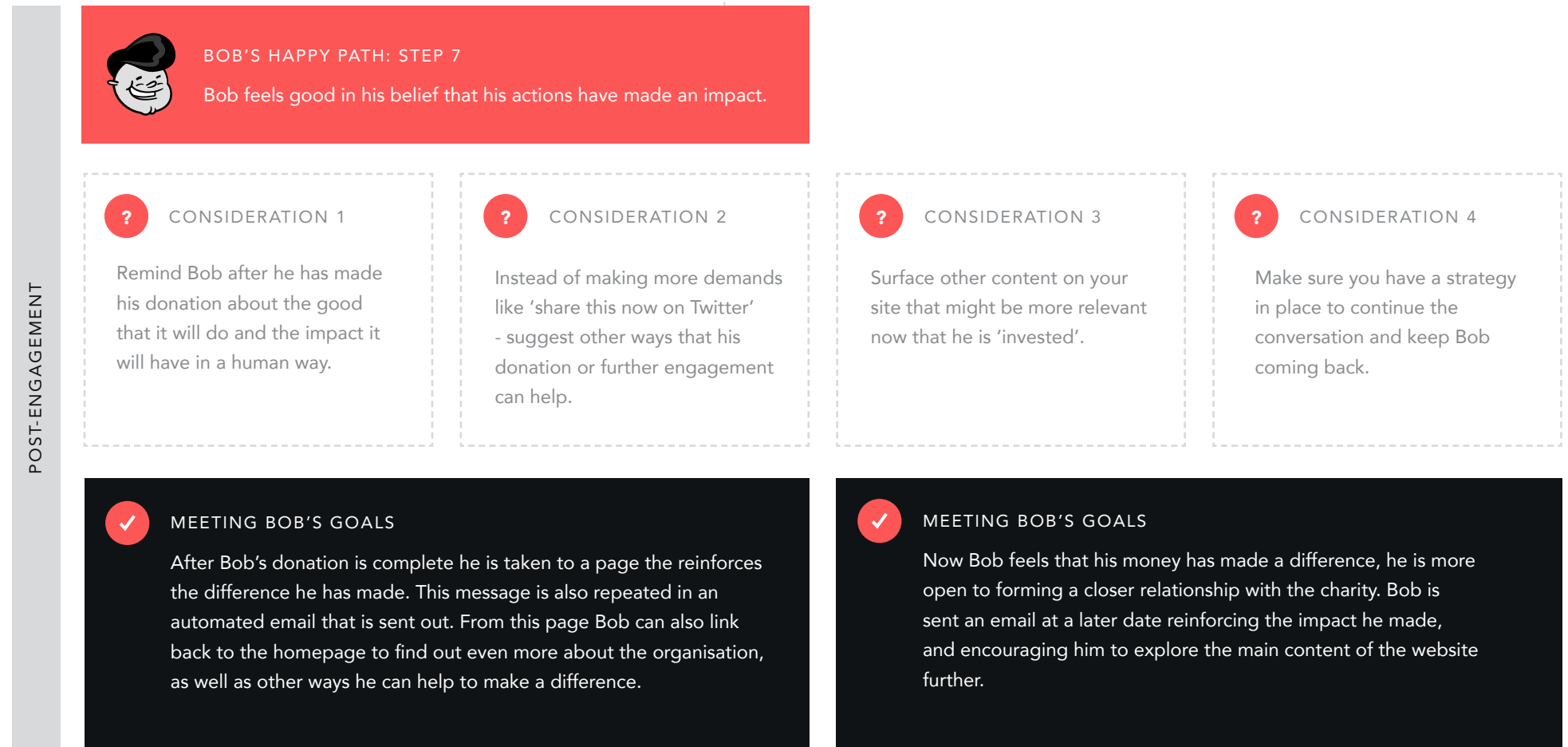


BOB'S HAPPY PATH: STEP 2

Bob goes to Google, and searches for information on the condition and a way to make a difference. He uses the term 'help people with <insert disease>'.







Chapter 2 summary.

So you've made it this far.

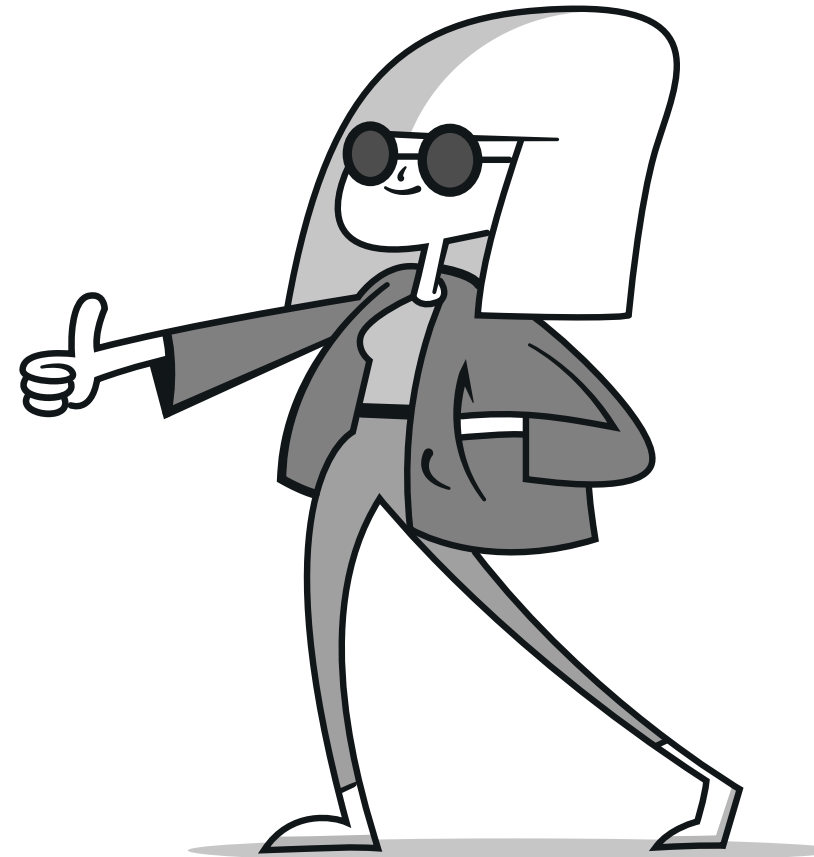
This chapter should have given you the tools you need to start focusing on the goals of your users, and molding experiences that enable and empower them, whilst meeting the goals of your charity. By mapping out their 'happy paths', you have hopefully started to understand how you can build experiences that help them reach that happy ending, and further engage with you.

You should also have hopefully taken away the reasons why your homepage doesn't have to have everything crammed onto it, and by actually creating more focused entry points to your site based on specific goals you can slowly build a mutual relationship with your users - as opposed to scaring them off with too much overshare.

You should have the following:

- A set of 'happy paths' for your key personas to help you define focused journeys.
- A number of user journeys based on meeting the needs of those paths, which help you define the requirements of the project based on needs, not a big list of wants.
- By prioritising personas and goals you can start to ensure that pages contain focused content - avoiding paralysis of choice and people not engaging.

The next chapter will specifically look at creating frictionless experiences, focusing on donations, forms, payments and other key elements to make the process of getting involved as hassle-free as possible.





CHAPTER 3 - TEASER

Don't make this awkward

Enabling frictionless interactions.



"Don't make me think, and don't waste my time"

Ever bought a car or got a mortgage? As far as a sales / purchase experience goes, they can be two of the most frustrating and stressful experiences you can go through.

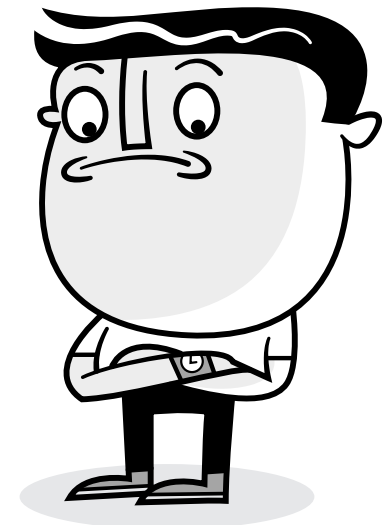
In the case of a car, it might be the endless back and forth with the sales man and his manager to get a good price on exchanging your car, negotiating the terms of a credit agreement, constant checks etc, etc, etc.

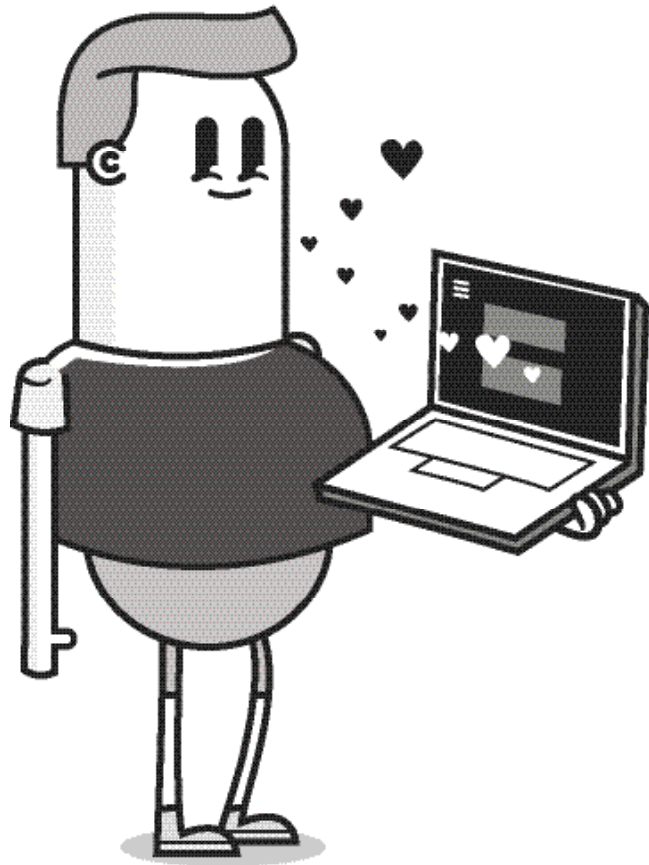
After about an hour in, if you are anything like me you probably want to give in and go home.

Why do we continue to go through these small forms of torture? Because those are high personal value goals, and however frustrating the process is, you endure. Most businesses and especially charities don't have this in their favour. Often, their users are there for an impulse purchase, or find out more about the work a charity does. You don't have the luxury of having a bad payment service, or bad user experience because your users will just go somewhere else. Some might persevere if the cause is one that is close to their heart, but it will still be a process that is full of frustration - and you are potentially

missing out on a wider audience - even if you are still engaging some.

This chapter looks at some of the common areas charities (and businesses!) can neglect, and gives some solutions that can be implemented to help you reach your goals.





Chapter 3

→ [Click here to sign up for the next chapter](#)