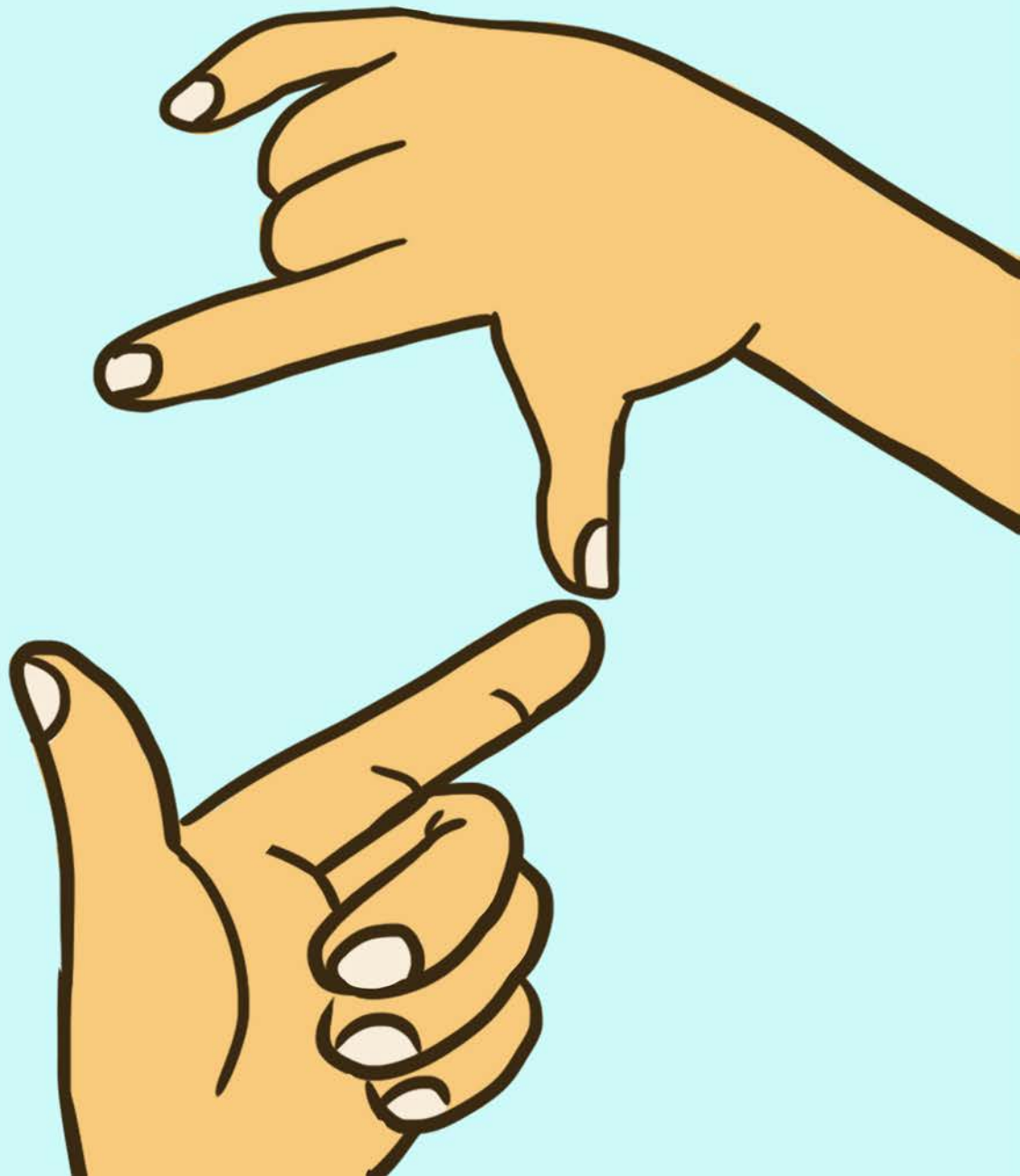


Meaning making
during a pandemic

A new course on
digital storytelling

Season 2
Episode 1:

The digested read by
Azam Masoumzadeh
Abhay Adhikari



our host for this series of meaning making are:



Andrea Geipel



Abhay Adhikari

our guest speakers are:

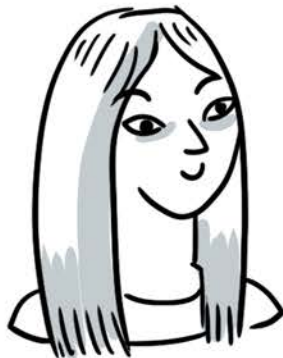


Padma Priya



Sören Affeldt

our digital producer is:



Jenni Mueller

Welcome to Season 2 of Meaning Making hosted by **Deutsches Museum**. It's fair to say that life hasn't returned to normal as we had hoped earlier this year. We often talk about the new normal, but to be fair, we don't really know what it looks like, as yet. In the midst of all this change, we felt it is important that we begin season 2 with an episode on reframing.



This time, we bring you two speakers who will share their lived experience of the theme we discuss every week. We've tried to preserve our multidisciplinary focus, especially as our participants come from many different cultural and professional backgrounds. So let's begin with Padma Priya, co-founder of the media startup - Suno India.

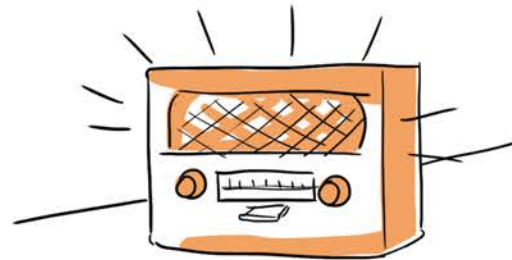


Hello, I'm Priya and I'm the co-founder of Suno India.



I work in journalism and it's no secret that we're seeing a lot of disruption - from storytelling to business models - in this field. Therefore, we've had to reframe in order to grow. So let me start this session by asking, what does reframing mean to you?

Getting back to the basics



Understanding who we are

Exploring new perspectives



Listening rather than doing

So, there's no right answer to the question I just asked. For us, at Suno India, reframing was a little bit of everything. For example:

It was really important for us to understand who we are - what are our values and what we stand for. As a result, we decided that we're not a platform for people on the extremes.



We're also eager to know what audiences want to hear from us. So we spend a lot of time listening to them and asking for their thoughts and opinions.



What helped me most was going back to the basics and reacquainting myself with the principles of good journalism. It reminds me why I got into this field in the first place.

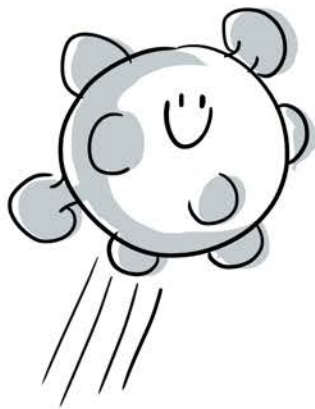


Elisabeth



I work in a museum, and going back to the basics isn't always an option. For example, the museum as it was, a hundred years ago, doesn't reflect the values of our society in the present day. We've worked incredibly hard to redefine what a museum can and should be. And going back to the basics can be taking a step back

And finally, flexibility is really important if you truly want to listen to your audience. For example, at the beginning of the pandemic, we changed the speed as well as the format of our coverage of COVID-19. It wasn't easy but we felt it was necessary if we wanted the audience to let us into their lives.



Suno India
compressed
info
and make daily
new
about Me!



I work in a newspaper where print is still very important. And to be honest, it was hard for us to adapt to the speed with which we are expected to share news. We have to find the time to verify our information. Therefore, whilst becoming more digital was vital, we had to take time to figure out how to remain true to our purpose



Priya:
I started this talk by explaining how we've reframed our stories. This was a change process. So let me ask you, how do we begin to change?



Learning new skills



Feeling overwhelmed and stressed



Reading up on everything
in our field/industry

Listening to our intuition and
relying on past experiences



I think relying on past experiences is important. I have worked in the cultural sector for many years. That's important to acknowledge.



Facing change has always been stressful for me. Especially discussing change with colleagues as it can seem you are challenging their experiences. But I've learned that there is nothing wrong with feeling overwhelmed in this situation. This topic is stressful for everyone and acknowledging that has made me both kinder to myself and towards others.



Our next speaker is Sören Affeldt.



I am Head of Education at the European Hanseum in Lübeck.

Sören started the conversation with a question to the participants:

What does change bring to your work?

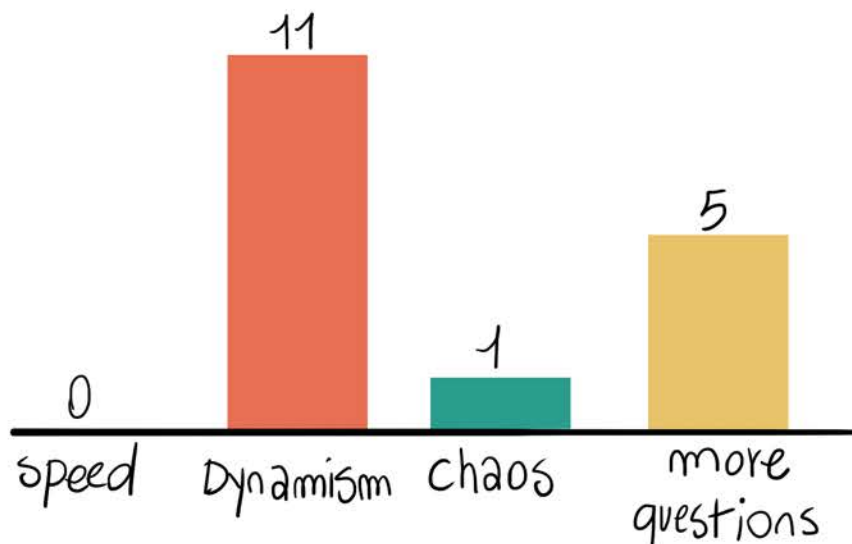
Speed

Dynamism

Chaos

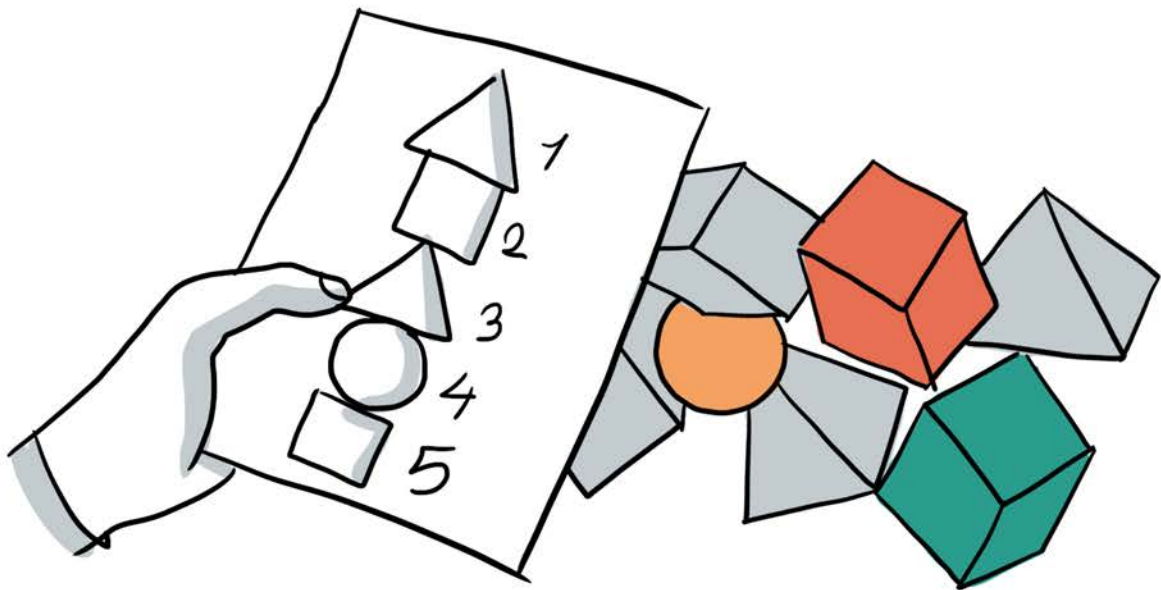
More questions

And this is how our participants answered this question:



Sören:

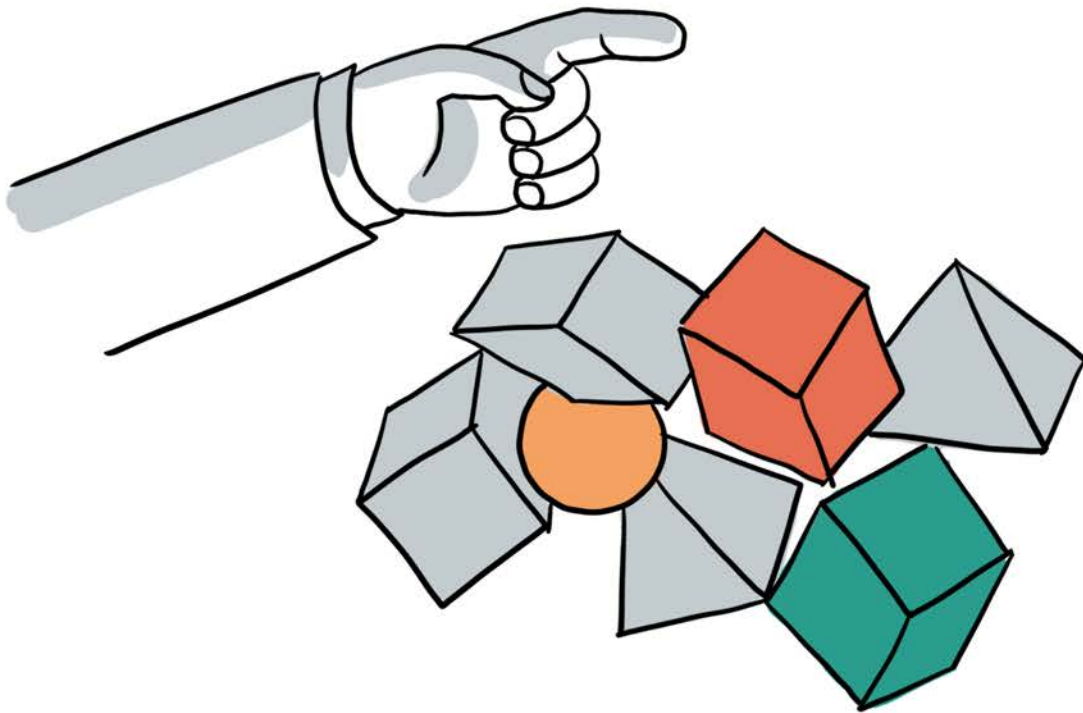
I feel chaos is an inevitable part of change. But in order to navigate through it, we do need some kind of hierarchy and leadership. This doesn't mean someone who tells people what to do. But someone who can organise and get things done. Someone who sees connections and brings people together. And that's what I try to do in my position at work.



Barbara:

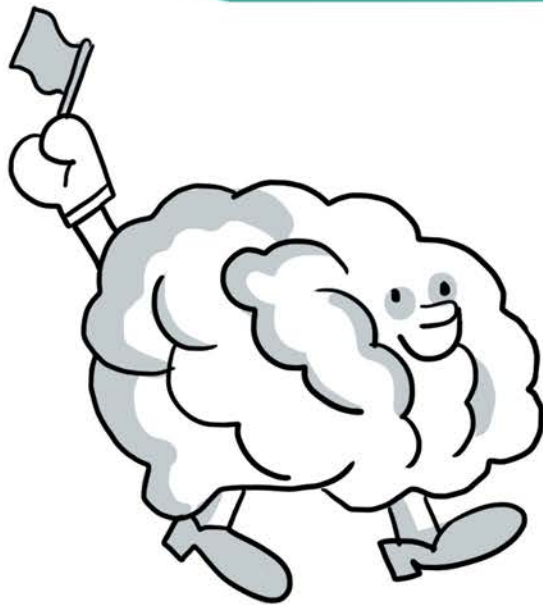
I agree, for example agile working got very popular during the pandemic and it brought some sort of chaos with it.

But we need some sort of structure and someone to co-ordinate



Ramya:

I think change brings dynamism and energy. I have a team used to working in print and we had to change the speed with which we work. There were many things that were outside our comfort zone, but eventually we came out on the other side with a different mindset. Being in a leadership position, it was my role to give some structure to this process.



New
mindset



Speaking of hierarchy and structure. In my organisation, we embrace change quite easily, because it's aligned with our values. And we are a small team, which helps.

Change is a slow process. We've talked about speed, but we also need to be patient and persistent. And perhaps acknowledge, that there will always be some people who never want to change.



And that concludes our comic for episode 1 of season 2 of Meaning Making. The theme was reframing our stories, but it quickly became a discussion about institutional and attitude change.

Our speakers shared several practical steps and projects during the episode. It's not always possible to include these in the comics. But we do want to leave you with a step you can take to start reframing your content.



Thank you to everyone who participated in
Episode 1 of Season 2
of Meaning Making During a Pandemic



Illustrated by: Azam Masoumzadeh