

Tool: Writing Dialogue

Best Practices:

- Use the scenarios as prototypes or working models of the desired interactions you want to have with your stakeholders. Use the strategic sparkline, strategic matrix and transmedia grid to guide your work.
- Use the why, what, how structure to organize each scenario, focusing on the call to adventure and the call to action, the key moments of engagement and transformation.
- Try starting at the end, with a scenario's call to action and working your way back: write to capture decisions and key steps leading to them.
- At the same time: start fast at the beginning by jumping to the chase, envisioning how the stakeholder hears your call to adventure and enters into the storytelling.
- Use narrator boxes to introduce scenarios and key background information.
- Use dialogue to dramatize information and interactions as well as describe them abstractly. Long passages are fine: dialogues act out and act upon information. Show and tell your project in action while demonstrating its value.
- Use thought bubbles to convey characters' internal deliberations. Avoid dumbing down and strive to smarten up your work by framing it from different perspectives.
- Compose interactions using conversational language, the way you speak out loud to others. Avoid slang and jargon while using everyday language to translate and share specialized terms associated with your project.
- Write about a page of double-space dialogue for each stakeholder, striving for clarity and concision, focusing on calls to adventure and action, STAR moments, and the dramatic arcs of transformation.
- Scenarios can run one after the other with different sparklines, or form a layered structure with one overarching sparkline, or be embedded or entwined within different sparklines, much like TV shows and life. Err on the side of simplicity and concreteness.
- Use the sparkline, matrix and grid to model interactions between different stakeholders and transmedia forms, as well as different platforms they appear on: if you don't know your stakeholder's media ecology, where and how they engage with your work, do some formal or informal demographic research.