

Laaté Olukotun

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Summary & Objective

An imaginative designer adept at discovering opportunities, envisioning & prototyping concepts, and launching innovative products, services & interactive experiences. Seeks opportunities to work with fun, creative teams to develop solutions that matter.

Strengths & Talents

Uncovering opportunities – reframing problems by testing innovation hypotheses, developing and conducting secondary and primary research, helping multi-disciplinary teams understand users' unmet needs, generating frameworks to explain complex phenomena, and uncovering insights.

Envisioning new concepts – generating and expressing ideas (through sketching, photography, 2D & 3D visualization, filmmaking and mapping a systems logic). Creative lead for several design teams.

Pitching ideas (to secure funding and drive sales) – sharing concepts with stakeholders during on-stage presentations, walkthroughs, panel events and sales tours.

Skills

film	iMovie, Vegas Video, ScreenFlow
interactive	Director with Lingo, Flash, Dreamweaver
visualizing	Sketching, Rhino, SketchUp, PhotoShop, Illustrator, InDesign, and digital photography
presenting	studied improv at Improv Olympic in Chicago; multiple presentations to executives and boards; sales representative at Steelcase

Experience

2010 - now	CEO & Creative Director , Lollygig LLC • Princeton, NJ Uncovering opportunities to build a user-centered tablet accessories brand, beginning with NapoleonGlove, a patent-pending product enabling people to hold their iPad in a new way.
Spring 2011	Business Innovations Consultant , Amway Inc • Grand Rapids, MI Participated in the development of an initiative to build a user-centered meta-strategy for Amway's Business Innovations Group. This project and subsequent presentations to business leaders offered a strong roadmap for future innovation efforts.
May 2010	Designer , BoomMaster, iTunes Co-created a music skin for the iPad that converts Apple's existing iPod library into a playable boombox – complete with turning knobs, changeable backgrounds and tape deck sounds. In May 2010, BoomMaster quickly became the #1 featured app in the Apple app store.
2007 - 2010	Entrepreneur and Experience Designer , Steelcase Inc • Grand Rapids, MI Launched several ventures in conjunction with Steelcase's Growth Initiatives group. Led the development of a user-centered strategy for launching new brands and customer experiences for Workspring, 654 Croswell, and Turnstone Furniture. Facilitated each team's efforts in understanding and interpreting user needs into breakthrough products and services, resulting in award-winning brands. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Led the research initiative that uncovered opportunities to deliver a new type of experience across all touchpoints for customers for Workspring, 654 Croswell and Turnstone.• Co-authored secondary research documents that set the stage for company-wide understanding of distributed teams and coworking trends which greatly influenced Workspring and 654 Croswell's development.• Led multiple teams – including business teams, in-house knowledge leaders and designers – to develop a vision for each platform based on team research.• Co-authored each business plan and pitched each initiative to secure funding.• Launched each of the initiatives beginning with Workspring (launched in November 2008), 654 Croswell (launched in November 2009), and Turnstone (launched in September 2010).• Led the development of Workspring's operations including workspring.com, the back-end IT systems and financial processes. Codeveloped 654 Croswell's overall brand, its look and feel, and led the development of 654croswell.com.

	2006	Extern, Jump Associates • San Mateo, CA Collaborated with several design teams to create a new process for product initiatives for a Fortune 100 company. Designed a user-centered process map charting the course for the development of a new statement of line that has since received high marks from consumers.
	2005 - 2006	SmartVisit Teammate, Institute of Design for the Museum of Science & Industry • Chicago, IL Developed an actionable strategic plan for the Museum with three other masters candidates from the Institute of Design. Utilized a user-centered design process to understand MSI's unique offerings, uncover visitors' unmet needs, and develop a system of solutions that were eventually presented to the Museum's CEO.
	Summer 2005	Design Intern, Mayo Clinic , SPARC Innovation Program • Rochester, MN Co-led the Department of Medicine's Plummer Project with two other interns. Working in conjunction with a team of researchers from Steelcase's WorkSpace Futures, developed concepts and a roadmap for new staffing models, room layouts, products, and processes.
	2000 - 2001	Business Analyst, Hill Holliday , Strategic Consulting Group • Boston, MA Conducted secondary and primary research to coauthor deliverables for a range of products and services with clients in multiple industries including high-technology, energy utilities and sportswear.
	1998 - 1999	Development Intern, Ab'strakt Pictures • Hollywood, CA Reviewed stories including the early drafts of Kinsey while also supporting the production of Nurse Betty starring Renee Zellweger, Morgan Freeman, Chris Rock and Greg Kinnear.
Education	2003 - 2006	Institute of Design , Illinois Institute of Technology • Chicago, IL Master of Design, Product Design
	1994 - 1998	Yale University , New Haven, CT Bachelor of Arts, Economics
Honors	May 2006	Graduate Outstanding Academic Achievement Award , Institute of Design • Chicago, IL
	May 2006	Finalist, "Seamless Connectivity for Youth Project," Motorola • Chicago, IL Created a concept for a handheld system designed for creating, sharing and selling stories.
	June 2005	Best Experimental Experience Award , Mattel Design Summit • El Segundo, CA Visualized and shared a concept for an interactive toy encouraging children to engage in open-ended play.
Press for Projects	Mar 3, 2010	"Office Furniture Makers Study How to Cash In on Connected Workers' Move to 'Third Places,'" by Julia Bauer in The Grand Rapids Press.
	Jan 7, 2010	"Cottage Atmosphere, No Long-Term Contracts," Rapid Growth Media
	Jan 6, 2010	"Co-Working Offers Community to Solo Workers," by Kaomi Getz on NPR's Morning Edition.
	Feb 20, 2009	"Workspring & the Workplace of the Future," by John F. Schneider on schneiderism.com
	Dec 29, 2008	Workspring named to list of top 10 marketing & advertising ideas by Springwise.com, a leading source of new business ideas.
Adventures	2003 - 2004	Improv comedy student, ImprovOlympic Theatre • Chicago, IL Studied comedy in individual and group scenes during three levels of classes.
	2003	Certified instructor, Outward Bound Canada • Black Sturgeon Lake, Ontario, Canada Developed facilitation and leadership skills during a thirty-day intensive outdoors program.
	1997 - 1998	Men's Varsity Soccer Player , Yale University Played midfield for nationally-ranked Division I soccer team.