Domain Storytelling Cheat Sheet

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Domain Storytelling

A domain story visualize **who** (actor) **does what** (activity) **with what** (work objects) **with whom** (other actors).

The **actors** are the **subjects** of the sentences, they appear **once per domain story**.

Avoid making implicit assumptions or drawing premature conclusions.

Tips

Invite real experts—people from the trenches—and not proxies who know the domain from hearsay.

When the story seems to be finished, tell the story from the beginning and try to get agreement: Did we miss something? Is something obviously wrong? Do all domain experts agree with the story?

The Pictographic Language

Actors	Domain stories are told from an actor's perspective. It can be a person, a group of people, or a software system. Usually **labeled with** their **role or function**.
Work Objects	Actors create, work with, and exchange work objects (documents, physical things and digital objects). They also exchange information about work objects. **Labeled wih a term from the domain language**.
Activities	Activities are shown as arrows and **labeled with verbs from the domain language**.
Sequence Numbers	A story has multiple sentences, told one after the other. Keep the order by adding a sequence number.
Annota-tions	The pictographic sentences are complemented by textual annotations. Annotate infomation about variat-ions, or the goal of an activity. Explain terms from the domain language.

A Typical Journey

COARSE-GRAINED PURE AS-IS	Explore a New Domain
FINE-GRAINED PURE AS-IS	Drill Down into Subdomains
FINE-GRAINED DIGITALIZED TO-BE	Introduce New Software

Story Size (rule of thumb)

Flip chart	10 sentences
Large whiteboard	15 sentences
Digital tools	20 sentences

Granularity

Describes the level of detail, which can vary from story to story. Aim for a consistence level of detail. Mixing might be confusing and indicative of a larger problem.

COARSE-GRAINED
FINE-GRAINED

Point in Time

As-Is	The current situation, often called the *problem space*, the intent of modeling is to improve somthing bad or solve a problem.
To-Be	Possible improved situations can also be explored with domain stories, decribe the *solution space*.

Domain Purity

PURE	Domain stories without software systems, helpful for building new software systems. Understanding of the domain without the complexity of existing software. Talk about how things would be done if all activities were motivated only by the domain.
DIGITALIZED	When the domain model is hidden within (badly modelled) software systems. Can be used to visualize and talk about the mess.

Workshop Duration

COARSE- or FINE-GRAINED AS-IS	30-45 minutes
TO-BE	longer
Recomm-ended	60-90 minutes or 2-3 domain stories
Remote	Set a timer for a short modeling session (around 45 minutes) followed by a break.

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