

# Are You Performing Workshop Theatre?

UX Camp Winter 2026  
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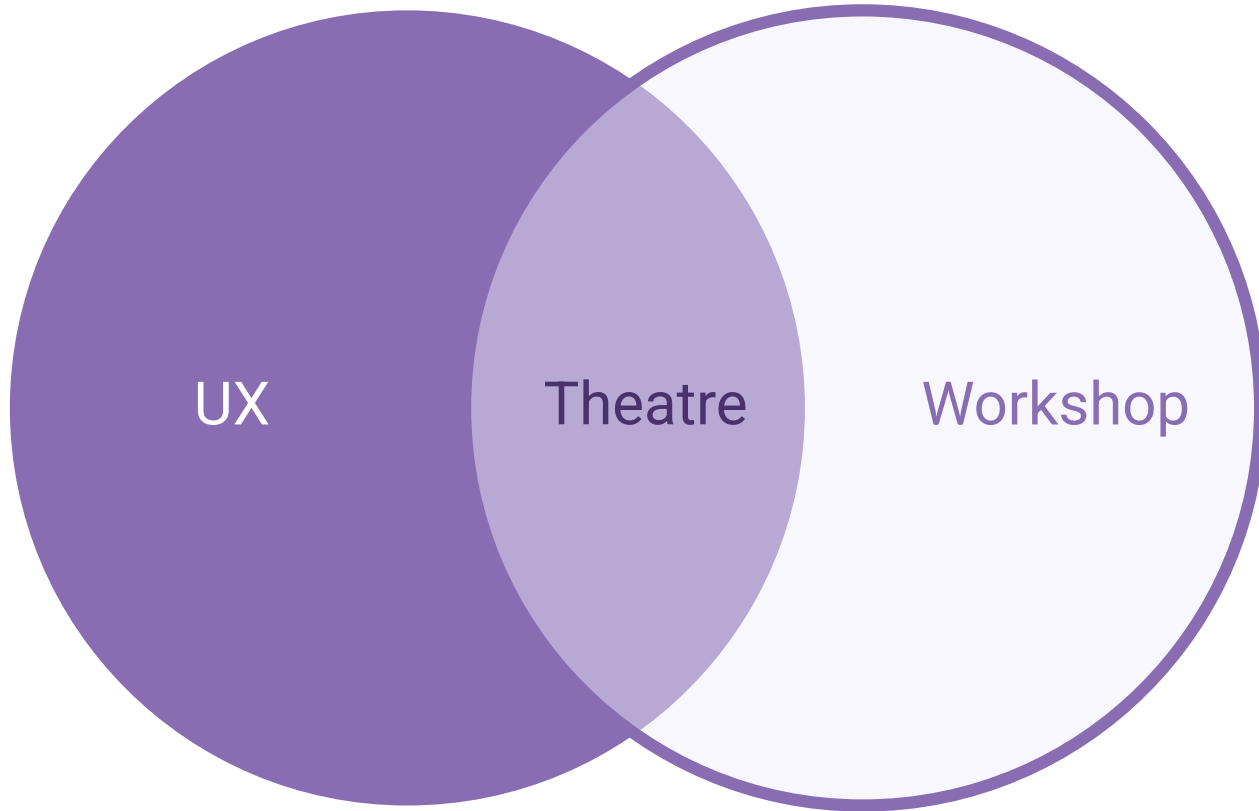
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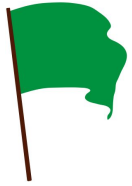
## 3 red flags

- 1 Lack of preparation
- 2 Poor selection and design of activities
- 3 Unskilled facilitation



# Lack of preparation





## Rigorous preparation

3:1 ratio

Discovery work

Define session purpose

Select the right  
participants

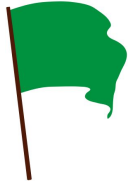
Choose the right activity





# Poor selection and design of activities





## Deliberate activities

Identify the purpose of the session

Select activities with goals in mind

Design activities to generate desired outputs

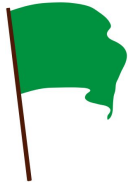
Design activity facilitation and participant experience





# Unskilled facilitation





## Balanced facilitation

Plan activity facilitation in advance

Set clear expectations for participation

Manage engagement and make room for quieter voices

Summarize ideas to keep flow moving (esp. from tangents)





# Architect collaboration





- 1** Rigorous preparation that assembles the right participants
- 2** Deliberate activities that produce clear, actionable outcomes
- 3** Balanced facilitation that allows all critical voices to be heard

# Workshop Diagnostic Scorecard

SPYDERGRRL

Are you running workshops, or just meetings with sticky notes?

A true workshop is engineered for collaboration and data extraction.

Use this diagnostic to score your last 3 workshops and uncover gaps holding back your ROI.

## 1 The Setup (Planning & Design)

Success is determined before participants arrive.

Tally your A's: \_\_\_ / 4

### 1. Information Gap Test

**A:** We clearly defined what information we had, what we were missing, and exactly who held that missing information before booking the room.

**B:** We selected a topic and identified high level goals.

### 2. Pre-Planned Outputs

**A:** We planned how we would use the workshop outputs before the session even started.

**B:** We ran the workshop and considered the outputs after the session wrapped.

### 3. Seed Materials

**A:** We provided "Straw Dogs" (draft lists, half-baked ideas, or prototypes) for participants to react to and break.

**B:** We worked from blank canvases and generated ideas in the room.

### 4. Experience Design

**A:** We considered and planned the participant experience.

**B:** Participants experienced the session as a standard meeting with workshop elements.

## 2 The Experience (Facilitation)

Facilitation extracts data, it doesn't create it.

Tally your A's: \_\_\_ / 3

### 5. Fast Start

**A:** We provided context then moved into active, structured workshop activities.

**B:** The session was a presentation with short workshop exercises at the end.

### 6. Inclusive Contribution

**A:** We used structured activities that gave everyone the chance to contribute to every topic.

**B:** We facilitated open discussion where the majority of ideas emerged from the most active participants.

### 7. Divergence Welcome

**A:** We encouraged disputes and captured divergent views as valuable data points.

**B:** We curbed disagreements to reach consensus.

## 3 The Output (Delivery)

Sticky notes ≠ value.

Tally your A's: \_\_\_ / 2

### 8. Audience-Tailored Results

**A:** We analyzed the raw inputs and "packaged" them into a format specific to the audience (e.g., strategic summary for execs vs. detailed requirements for practitioners).

**B:** We compiled the raw inputs from the session. Notes and visuals were shared as-is.

### 9. ROI Test

**A:** We treated the session as an expensive asset (e.g., 20 people x 3 hours = 60 hours of salary) and the output justified that cost.

**B:** We filed outputs for future reference.

Your Score: Total A's \_\_\_/9

Score Range	Level	What it means
7-9 A's	Workshop Capable	Refine to scale
4-6 A's	Workshop Developing	Strengthen key areas
0-3 A's	Workshop Curious	Start with structure

Note your lowest-scoring part (s): \_\_\_\_\_

### Spotted gaps?

We can help! Learn about our training services and our exclusive Workshop Workshop at [spydergrrl.com](http://spydergrrl.com)



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