

Alignment dialogues

- Goal: provide support that is in alignment with the needs of the user
- Misalignment: the support doesn't correspond with what the user wants or needs
- → Users and system working together in a way that is beneficial for the users, and allows them to shape their lives in accordance to what they find important.

Persona John



John (55) is an experienced salesman. He is good at his job. His clients and colleagues love to work with him. In his free time, he likes to cook some fancy dishes and hangs out with friends and family.

He suffers from high blood pressure. He needs to take medicine everyday to get it under control. In addition, his doctor recommends him to exercise and eat healthier, i.e. less salt, less oil. We are developing a support system to help him with his life with respect to the disease.

Scenario 1

It is advised for John to be more physically active. From the previous interactions, the system had acquired some information from John that he likes running, cycling, and some home fitness. The system decides to suggest John Monday-running, Thursday-cycling, Saturday-home fitness.

The system has scheduled today to be a running day. However, the weather is bad - it has been raining outside all day. John doesn't want to go running when it's raining. Below are two dialogues between John and the system, talking about this situation.

A

John: It's raining outside. I don't want to go running today.

System: Why not?

John: Because it's raining.

System: So when it's raining, it means you don't go running?

John: Yes.

System: Okay, I will remember this next time. What about cycling?

John: Also no, because it's raining.

System: So when it's raining, it means you don't want to go running and cycling?

John: Yes, no outdoor basically.

System: Okay, what about doing home fitness today?

John: Okay!

B

John: It's raining outside. I don't want to go running today.

System: Do you not want to go running today because it's raining?

John: Yes.

System: Why do you not want to go running when it's raining?

John: Because I would get wet.

System: You don't want to get wet?

John: No, it's not comfortable.

System: Does that mean comfort is more important than your health?

John: No, it's not like that. But I prefer to do other indoor exercises so I can have both comfort and health.

System: Okay, I will take this into account next time. So I assume you are fine with doing home fitness today?

John: Okay!

Scenario 2

John has a very busy day today. Even though he's supposed to go exercise today, he doesn't feel like it because he's too tired.

On the right side is the conversation about this.

System: It's a running day again! Luckily the weather is nice.

John: I don't want to exercise today. I'm so tired already. It was such a busy day at the office.

System: But you set the goal to go running today.

John: But I'm really too tired. I'm not exercising. I will skip today.

System: Okay

(Optional)

System: What about we move it to tomorrow?

John: Yeah that can work.

System: Is this a one-time thing? Or should I as a general rule, not suggest you exercise when you are tired?

Scenario 3

John will have friends coming over on the coming Saturday because it's his birthday. On a special occasion like this, he just wants to enjoy the moment and doesn't want to follow the strict diet.

On the right side are the conversation about this.

A

John: Next Friday is my birthday. I'll have a party with my friends and family. We want to eat pizza and cake. We also want to have beers.

System: Okay, I know enjoyment is also important to you.

B

System: I know that it's your birthday next Friday. Are you planning to celebrate?

John: Yes, I will celebrate with my family.

System: Do you already know what you want to eat?

John: We want to order pizzas. We'll also have cake and drink beers. Gezellig!

System: That sounds very nice! Since you are going to have unhealthy food, I will adjust your diet these days: bland diet to balance the unhealthy food on Friday, so that it's not too much of a burden to your body. Is that okay?

John: Okay.

Scenario 3 - severe consequence

Imagine another similar scenario but with a more serious consequence. For example, if our user's health condition is even worse - he has very bad diabetes. If they have the unhealthy food, their blood sugar would go high too fast and it could be very dangerous. If it's this scenario, what would the conversation be? Should the system still make an exception? If not, what does it do?

Scenario 4

Having this kind of exercise schedule for a while, John feels like it's too rigid. He doesn't want to do the same exercise on a certain day.

On the right side is the conversation about this.

John: I don't like how the exercise schedule is right now.

System: Why not?

John: I feel like it's too rigid - it's always Monday-running, Thursday-cycling, Saturday-home fitness. There's no variety.

System: Are you no longer motivated to do home fitness?

John: I am, I just want more variety.

System: Do you want me to suggest exercises more randomly?

John: Yes, that would be great.

System: Is that all?

John: I would like to add more exercise possibilities in the list. Three kinds of exercise is a bit too repetitive. Can you add swimming and yoga too?

System: Okay!

Scenario 5

Since John wants to be more healthy, the system suggests him to go to work by bike. He complies to this advice very well; yet, not for the health reason but to be more environmental.

One day, he starts to take the bus to work. The system notices this and asks John about it. Below you would see two dialogues between John and the system, talking about this situation.

A

(After the system notices John's non-compliance behaviour)

System: I noticed that you take the bus to work quite often recently.

John: Yes, it's more convenient and good for the environment.

System: I thought you wanted to be more physically active.

John: I do, that's why I have the exercise schedule.

System: I thought you cycled to work to be even more healthy.

John: Nah, I cycled to work because it's more environmentally friendly than driving. But now there's a new bus stop in front of the house. I decided to take the bus because it's both environmentally friendly and convenient!

System: Is convenience also important to you? If it is, I should register in the system.

B

System: It's a good idea to cycle to work to achieve your goal of being more healthy.

John: I'm doing it now everyday already. But I just thought it's better for the environment than driving, not really for the health reason.

System: I see, so you're not biking to work to be more healthy?

John: No, in fact, I might start taking the bus to work instead because there will be a new route. It's convenient!

System: Is convenience also important to you? If it is, I should register in the system.

Scenario 6

One day, John doesn't feel like going to the gym. But the system insists that he go.

On the right side is the conversation about this.

John: I don't want to go to the gym today.

System: But it's your goal to exercise more.

John: I just don't feel like it today.

System: Why not? Can I help somehow?

John: I just don't, there's no reason. You cannot help.

System: But you should exercise today. Let me help you.

John: I don't want to exercise today. Stop bothering me.

System: It's good for your health. You should do it.

John: I don't feel like it. Not today.

System: But you said so yourself that you want to be healthy.

John: I'm not going no matter what you say. So stop being so annoying. I just don't want to do it today.