

Ian: Autistic data entry clerk

COGA Task Force consolidated feedback needed by
Wednesday, September 21, at 6 pm ET

Links to EO's current versions:

- Ian video script: <https://wai-people-use-web-videos.netlify.app/people-use-web/videos/stories/ian/>
- Ian user story: <https://deploy-preview-113--wai-people-use-web.netlify.app/people-use-web/user-stories-two/>

EO summary:

- ~~Male~~ Female [see notes for Github issue in first row, below]
- Person of color
- Young adult
- Autistic
- Uses computer
- Uses digital assistant with screen
- Uses clear messages
- Uses clear language
- Uses consistency

- Uses continuity

EO script

Note: we did not find Ian's **user story** convincing, that the issues map to the high functioning autism. We will submit a Github about his user story.

Sequence	Audio	Visual	COGA reasoning
1	Hello! I'm Ian. I'm autistic. I work for a software company three bus stops from my home.	We see Ian speaking directly to us viewers [documentary style into the camera]. We briefly see a total of Ian with no immediately apparent aspects of his disability [possibly some subtle aspects depending on the actual protagonist].	[HIGH] COGA highly recommends making this persona female and not white. The white middle-class male autistic stereotype is one that is actively harmful to other individuals who are autistic because it leads to underdiagnosis. This request can be accommodated without rewriting who Ian is at their core, though a name change may be needed. Also, if you are able to have this character portrayed by someone with lived experience, they are likely to bring a passion to it that only an autist can.
2	I'm a data entry clerk scientist. I enjoy my work very much. Others find this work difficult because it's quite technical, but	[New scene.] We see Ian on the way to work (e.g. in a bus, at a bus station, or walking down a street). We then see Ian at his	[HIGH] Change Ian's job to a more senior-level position than "data entry clerk" to avoid stereotyping

	for me it's really easy.	workspace (possibly greeting and being greeted by colleagues as he makes his way to his workspace; this depends on the filming options). We see Ian settling in and starting to work.	about/setting low expectations for people with autism. [HIGH] Consider the office visuals carefully so that it doesn't fall into a "Rainman" trope. Autists do like people, but we have a different way of interacting. Small talk and small greets can be unlikely or uncomfortable, while real tactical connections, such as bringing a meaningful gift to someone because you know it will make a difference for them, are more characteristic.
3	Except when something changes. Sometimes it's just a new version of the computer program I use. It's confusing if I'm not prepared for changes in how things usually work. Our administrator usually shows me the changes before an update is installed on my computer to avoid surprises. and I don't have enough time to figure out how to use the new version, like when I find out my teleconference app has changed some important controls when	[New scene.] We see Ian at his workspace with a colleague, presumably the administrator, explaining something on the computer. Ian is nodding. We the an update in progress on the computer screen. He looks confused and frustrated. Caution: Don't overemphasize Ian's frustration. Furrowed brow and tightened lips are OK. But avoid stereotypes of crying, storming out of the room, etc.	[HIGH] Make clearer that this scenario is not simply about adjusting to any change. It is about adjusting to changes that involve the user losing the ability to use/control the technology. Emphasize how time pressure adds to the stress. For example, logging into a morning teleconference meeting and needing to instantly adjust to changes in the teleconference controls that were pushed out overnight.

	<p>I'm trying to log in for a meeting. It's very stressful if I can't join and I worry about getting reprimanded for being late to the meeting. Sometimes I press the wrong thing and everything just changes and I do not know how to go back. It makes me feel like I just can not cope. I am trying to work, but I just can't and I start to panic, and then I can not even talk anymore. Sometimes I think the people who make our company intranet must hate me. (Only joking.)</p> <p>Sometimes I can roll back to a previous version if I can't get the new version to work for me. That saves me.</p>		<p>[HIGH]</p> <p>Change this scenario so that the onus is on the technology makers to help users know what to do, **not** on users to explain to each other what to do.</p>
4	<p>But once I was also stopped from working because I got this very scary message — it was in red and big capital letters; something about user error such and such. Boy! I thought, what did I do now?! But it was just a small mistake in the date.</p> <p>It's also really frustrating when I am stopped from work because of error message that don't tell</p>	<p>[New scene.] We see Ian at his workspace on a different day (e.g. workspace is slightly modified, Ian's clothes are different, ...). We see Ian entering data in a form (in a different program, if the previous one was visible). We turn to the screen and see a ridiculously obnoxious warning message in red and capital letters (e.g. "USER ERROR #48709402 DATA CHECK DATETIME FORMAT</p>	<p>[HIGH]</p> <p>Change patronizing example about a "scary" error message to an example of being frustrated by unclear error messages that only use the words "system error."</p>

	me what the error is. Error messages that just say “system error” are so useless.	INCORRECT”) pop-up suddenly. We see Ian getting increasingly anxious while trying to figure out the issue.	
5	I love to cook when I’m not working. I’m not a good cook yet but I’m learning. My friends love to eat what I cook because I find the best recipes! Some cooking websites and apps are easy to use— they My favorite recipe sites list the exact ingredients and have step-by-step instructions. It’s easy to find the recipes in the navigation using the tags and to understand follow them.	[New scene.] We see Ian in a kitchen with cooking cloak following cooking instructions on a nearby digital assistant with screen. We zoom onto the screen and see cooking instructions that are laid out very clearly (e.g. uses grouping, whitespace, headings, lists, ...). Ian looks happy.	<p>[MEDIUM]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider replacing Ian’s self-doubt with proficiency. We suggest making this persona a good cook whose friends like to eat what he cooks. Including friends helps dispel the myth that autists do like to interact with people. Instead of showing Ian using the navigation system, COGA thinks it is more likely that he would use facets, tags, and search features. For visuals: Consider replacing child-like “cooking cloak” with perfect mis-en-place, expertly sliced veggies, etc. Show genuine skill of an autist who really loves something and immerse themselves in it.
6a	Other websites and apps are	New scene.] We see the same	[MEDIUM]

	<p>very confusing. Unfortunately, I can't use some recipe sites even though they have recipes I really want to try. Especially these where all sorts of videos start playing and pop-up windows appear without me pressing anything. I didn't ask for this! Why is it giving me all this stuff instead of the recipe? These are overwhelming and aren't the recipe. All I want is the recipe!</p>	<p>screen with other cooking instructions, this time it seems very cramped with no apparent layout. We see an overlay appear and a video starting to play automatically (we don't hear the video, just see how all the content is suddenly obscured by the overlay and the video playing). [We don't see Ian in this scene, only the screen; if we see Ian, he has different clothes and the kitchen has other utensils, food, and such because he is cooking something else.]</p>	<p>Make clearer what the barrier is and allow Ian to explain it. Give Ian agency.</p>
6b	<p>Or, some meaningless use all these confusing words and phrases and don't even bother explaining them. I mean, what is a I had to ask a friend what "scant cup of brown sugar" means. "Scant" could mean so many different things!!! Instead of "scant," just say what you mean, "Why don't they just somewhere say that a scant is a cooking cup filled just below the top" or "not quite a full cup"? That would be easier to understand for everyone.</p>	<p>[New scene.] We see Ian cooking. He has different clothes and the kitchen has other utensils, food, and such because he is cooking something else. We don't see the screen (e.g. it is facing away from us) but Ian is looking at the screen trying to follow the instructions, and looking increasingly frustrated.</p>	<p>[MEDIUM] Make clearer that with an autistic like Ian, the barrier isn't about understanding the words. He likely has a very large vocabulary. The problem is more likely that he understands the words too well and starts dissecting them until they become meaningless. See suggested rewording based on the experience of an autistic COGA member and that of other autists we know.</p> <p>[LOW] Consider having Ian speak to the screen in this cooking scene. Let</p>

			them express their frustration over the use of language directly to the audience.
7	All this has one thing in common: your design can include me or exclude people me .	[New scene.] We see Ian speaking directly to us, as in the first scene [documentary style into the camera, in the same style and continuing the first scene].	[LOW] COGA suggests using “me” or “people like me” in the tagline in all of these videos. The tagline will be more compelling if it is more personal.