

# Laate Olukotun, MDes

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## Summary & Objective

Design thinker adept at launching new products, services, and experiences. Seeking to work with an amazing team to imagine incredible new solutions for people and the planet.

## Education

2003 - 2006

**Institute of Design, Illinois Institute of Technology** • Chicago, IL  
Master of Design

1994 - 1998

**Yale University**, New Haven, CT  
Bachelor of Arts, Economics

## Experience

2015 - now

**Marketing Manager, NextFab** • Philadelphia, PA

Directed marketing group and all brand initiatives for the region's premier makerspace network – shared workspaces with state-of-the-art prototyping facilities – serving 700+ members and professional clients.

- *Introduced and led a Customer Experience Project to understand the present member experience, build a customer service blueprint, identify new opportunities for strategic growth, and implement new initiatives.*
- *Revamped department by developing and implementing a strategic framework to proactively manage and prioritize brand initiatives, partnerships, events, stories, and announcements.*
- *Hired and led internal and external teams to: bolster company's Inbound and Outbound marketing efforts; build a new website (launching in 12/2016); design & install a member-facing signage system; and create all collateral.*

2015 - now

**Creative Director, Le Bon Magot** • Lawrenceville, NJ

Designed and launched a new food brand targeting sophisticated palates. Built new brand from scratch, including food packaging, signage, collateral, trade show booth, and website for fast-growing business.

2010 - now

**Designer Founder, Lollygig LLC** • Lambertville, NJ

Started active gear brand that designs, develops, and sells new products. Built business to support in-house development and marketing campaigns for multiple products, including:

- *Hopscotch, wall and car mount for iPhones and keys, successfully crowdfunded in 2014.*
- *NapoleonGlove, a patent-pending tablet case enabling people to easily grip and hold tablets, launched in 2011.*
- *BoomMaster music app (one of the first third-party apps for the iPad) launched in 2010.*

2010 - now

**Innovation Consultant, MomentumPunch by Lollygig** • Lambertville, NJ

Created user-centered design consultancy dedicated to solving complicated challenges for new and existing brands of all sizes, from sole proprietorships to multi-billion dollar organizations, including:

- *Amway's Business Innovations Group – led 3-month project to understand how an emerging business model influenced customer purchasing decisions; co-led long-term strategy project to synthesize all previous work done by Business Innovations Group; and facilitated annual planning session for Amway's Nutritions Marketing Group.*

2007 - 2010

**Project Lead & Experience Designer, Workspring, 654 Crowell, and t2 for Steelcase Inc** • Grand Rapids, MI

Launched three ventures – Workspring, 654 Crowell, and t2 – through Steelcase's Growth Initiatives group. Led multiple teams using user-centered processes to launch new customer experiences. Facilitated each team's efforts to understand and translate user needs into breakthrough products and services, resulting in several award-winning brands.

- *Led a new venture, codenamed Birdland, which began with a research initiative that uncovered opportunities to deliver a new type of 3rd Place experience for mobile workers and collocated teams. Co-authored a secondary research document that set the stage for subsequent primary research.*
- *Directed multiple teams – including interns, contractors, internal knowledge leaders and business consultants – to develop a vision for a new platform based on the research initiative. Pitched business plan and secured funding for the first venture based on this platform – Workspring, a high performance offsite facility (launched in Nov. 2008). This same platform laid the foundation for 654 Crowell – a coworking facility (launched in Dec. 2009).*
- *Led the development of Workspring's operations including workspring.com, the back-end IT systems, scheduling systems, and financial processes. Built 654 Crowell's website and design research methodology, utilizing the low-cost facility as a living lab for the Steelcase brand.*
- *Joined t2 core team (which included industrial design, engineering, marketing, branding, experience design, and ecommerce) in 2009 to build a new disruptive business model for the contract furniture industry – a model where products would be shipped via courier instead of through the industry's established dealer network.*
- *As the in-house experience designer, developed and implemented all design research to understand how small businesses and project teams find the right location, lease or purchase spaces, design their offices, find and purchase furniture, and allow for business growth and shrinkage.*
- *Built a customer experience model that compared the existing experience and pain points with an imagined future where products, services, and experiences would be greatly improved.*

- Translated all unmet needs into insights, then developed a systems view for the implementation of all solutions.
- Co-directed the development of a compelling vision for the reimagined Turnstone brand. Directed a third-party vendor on the development of a mock-up for the future website – a critical touch point in the new e-commerce platform. Designed and mocked up a full-scale version of the packaging for the new FedEx-able packaging – a touch point that became the symbol and shorthand for the entire t2 platform. Co-directed an immersive presentation – including a presentation of the new benching solution developed by the team, mock-ups of the new brand, a breakdown of the entire product line, and a new financial model based on an e-commerce channel to generate direct-to-consumer sales.
- MyTurstone.com launched in September 2010, and the first line of the new benching system, called BiVi, won Gold (the highest award possible) during its debut at NeoCon 2011.

- 2005 - 2006 **Extern, Jump Associates** • San Mateo, CA  
Conducted primary research and designed facilitation guides & content, including a product development process infographic, to communicate findings and transform a client's Fortune 100 business from marketing-centric to user-centered while simultaneously developing a new statement of line.
- 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 during thesis project. Co-led a user-centered process to understand MSI's unique offerings, uncover visitors' unmet needs, and develop a system of solutions. The project was warmly received by MSI's CEO who invited the team for a private meeting. The SmartVisit project became required reading for the CEO's staff.
- Summer 2005 **Design Intern, Mayo Clinic, SPARC Innovation Program** • Rochester, MN  
Co-led the Department of Medicine's Plummer Project – an initiative to improve physicians' day-to-day work experiences. Worked with internal team and Steelcase's WorkSpace Futures to develop a 10,000 sq. ft. living lab with mock-ups for new staffing models, room layouts, and products.
- 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, higher education, 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.

- Skills**
- 2D & 3D design sketching; Adobe Illustrator, InDesign, Photoshop; designing for 3D-printing and injection molding in SolidWorks and Rhino + Grasshopper; designing for laser cutting & etching
- interactive designing front-end for web and mobile apps, including wireframing; HTML, CSS, Director
- storytelling facilitating team engagements; pitching to executives, boards, teams, and clients; incorporating improv (from Improv Olympic training); designing original brands; taking photographs; filming and editing in Final Cut Pro; writing and editing for blogs, social media, and collateral

- 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**
- Oct 16, 2013 "High Efficiency Or Great Service?" by Diccon Hyatt, U.S. 1 Newspaper
- Feb 26, 2013 "Inventing the Future: Local Makers Flex Their Talents at the City's 'Gym for Innovators'"
- 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

- Adventures**
- 2011 - now **Founding Member, NextFab** • Philadelphia, PA  
Honing digital design and manufacturing skills at cutting-edge digital fabrication facility.
- 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.