



Lesson: Empathy

Activity: Empathy map

Template: Article

An **empathy map** is a collaborative visualization used to articulate what we know about a particular type of user. It externalizes knowledge about users in order to 1) create a shared understanding of user needs, and 2) aid in decision making.

An Empathy Map is just one tool that can help you empathise and synthesise your observations from the research phase, and draw out unexpected insights about your user's needs. An Empathy Map allows us to sum up our learning from engagements with people in the field of design research.

What is the difference between empathy map and persona?

Put simply, personas tell you who your customers are and empathy maps tell you what those customers' attitudes and behaviours are towards your brand.

Try and imagine yourself in the role of a user. Follow the instructions to fill in the map below

Traditional empathy maps are split into 4 quadrants (Says, Thinks, Does, and Feels), with the user or persona in the middle.

The Says quadrant contains what the user says out loud and ideally, it contains verbatim and direct quotes from research.

The Thinks quadrant captures what the user is thinking throughout the experience. Ask yourself what occupies the user's thoughts? What matters to the user? It is possible to have the same content in both Says and Thinks. However, pay special attention to what users think, but may not be willing to vocalize. Try to understand why they are reluctant to share — are they unsure, self-conscious, polite, or afraid to tell others something.

The Does quadrant encloses the actions the user takes. What does the user physically do? How does the user go about doing it?

The Feels quadrant is the user's emotional state, often represented as an adjective plus a short sentence for context. Ask yourself: what worries? What does the user get excited about? How does the user feel about the experience?

When all the sections are complete, take a moment to reflect.



EMPATHY MAP

