

Empathy map instructions

WHAT IS AN EMPATHY MAP?

An Empathy Map enables exploration of a person's perspective or situation from multiple angles. It's a useful diagnostic tool that helps uncover people's experience, attitudes, and emotions of a service or experience they've already had. This allows deep insight into their context and to build an understanding of people, (our customers), their needs, their perspective, and what's important to them.

An Empathy Map helps you explore people's current or past experiences. Whereas an Expectation Map helps understand how people anticipate or imagine what a service or experience might be like.

Please Note: Ideally you would ask your customer to complete the empathy map themselves. When this is impossible, you can try to imagine their perspective—however we must know this will be full of our own biases and assumptions.

ASKING CUSTOMER TO COMPLETE AN EMPATHY MAP:

Step 1.

Give our customers context about what you are doing and why. Let them know you are seeking their perspective, and there are no right or wrong answers. Ask them to place themselves in the situation you want to learn about. Ask them to complete the map to explore their context and perspective holistically.

Providing an example of what might appear in the Empathy Map from your own perspective will help them understand what you're looking for.

Step 2.

Ask each person to fill out their own template individually, stepping through each quadrant. Let them know not to get caught up on which quadrant their answers belong in. (They can either write directly on the map or use post-it notes).

Provide these prompting questions (or appropriate contextual prompting questions) if needed:

Think and feel. What are you thinking? What are your worries? What is going on in your world? How do you feel about your business and your industry?

Hear. What are you hearing? From staff? From your customers? What are you hearing from your family/business partners? What are you hearing in the media?

See. What are you saying? To customers? To Staff? To family? What is happening? What is noticeable? What's changing in your world?

Say and do. What are you saying? To customers? To Staff? To family? How are you spending your time? What is your attitude? To your business? To your suppliers? What are you doing in your business?

Step 3.

Ask your customer to share what they've written down. Listen carefully, be curious, and ask clarifying questions about what they share. Understand what they mean by the words they've chosen, rather than applying your own perspective and mental models to what you hear.

DOING THE EMPATHY MAP ON BEHALF OF SOMEONE ELSE:

Step 1.

It's best to work in pairs or groups of three.

Characterize the people in focus; your customers. Briefly discuss as a group what you already know, assume, and suspect. Then clarify the aspect of the customer you want to focus e.g., if we wanted to do an empathy map for arcade operators, we might focus it around being on-site and running the day-to-day operation. Picture their context: the environment, the staff, their customers, and their concerns.

Step 2.

While imagining your customer's context, consider each quadrant in the template individually, noting down the things you discuss. Use post-it notes to capture the points. Use these prompting questions if needed:

Note: Don't get caught up on which quadrant your answers belong in.

Think and feel. What might they be thinking? What might be their worries? What is going on in their business? What's happening in their industry?

Hear. What might they be hearing? From staff? From their customers? What might they be hearing from their family and/or business partners? What are they hearing from the media?

See. What can they see in the physical space? Who can they see? What is noticeable? What stands out?

Say and do. What might they be saying? To customers? To Staff? To family? How might they be spending their time? What is their attitude? To their business? To your business/product/service? What are they doing in their business?

Step 3.

Bring the pairs/groups together and create a large Empathy map on butchers' paper. Share and discuss each group's empathy map, and add your sticky-notes to the big map, grouping the common points as you go.