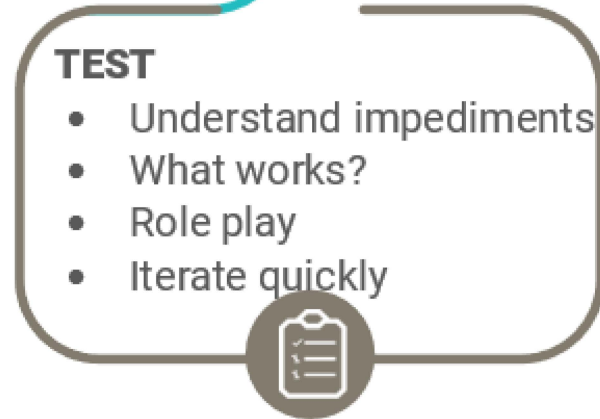
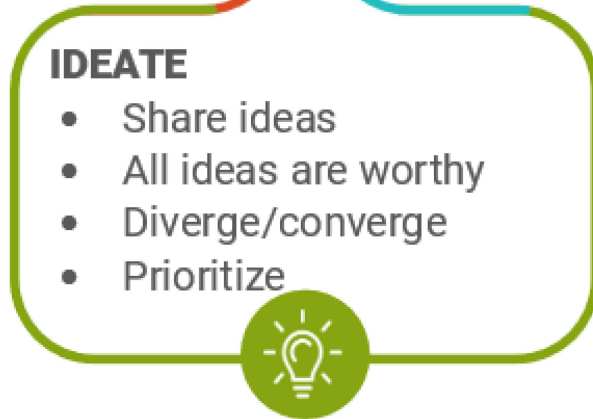
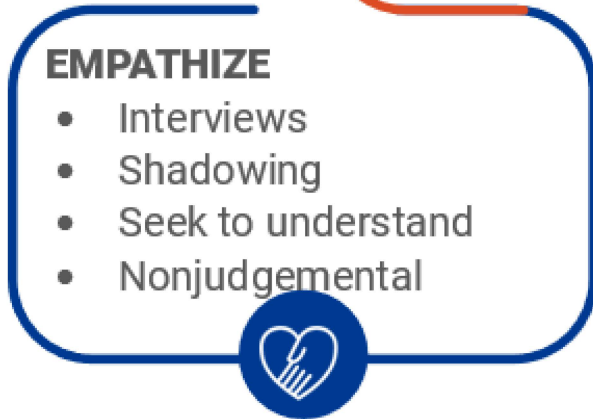
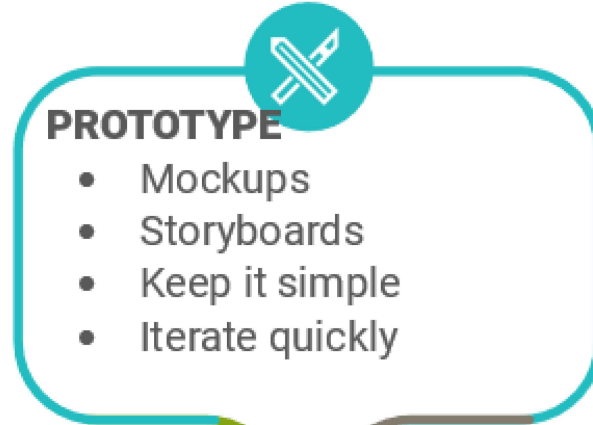
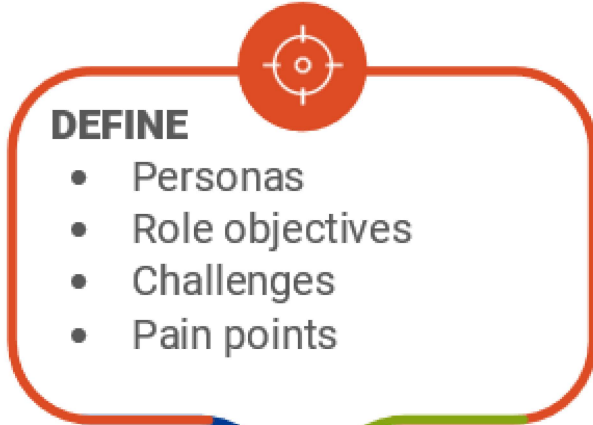


Universal Design: Empathy Mapping

Rebecca Rose &
Kate Glass

Empathy Mapping



“Empathy mapping is a method for characterizing your target audience to inform effective design decisions!”



Why Should I Use an Empathy Map?



Create a shared understanding of needs



Remove bias



Understand what drives behavior



Aid in decision-making





“ If we design for one person,
we design for no one! ”



Example Persona



A persona is a fictional character that represents one of your audience groups.

- Give them a name, age, and job title (if applicable)
- Come up with their bio

How to Use the Map

Start at the top (#1)

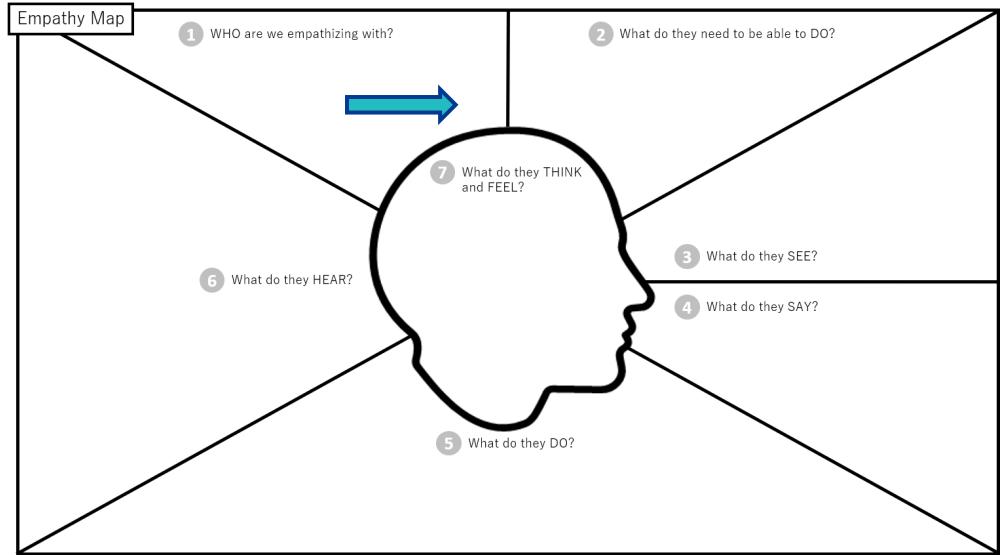
- Who? (develop a persona)
- Need to do? (problem statement)

Work clockwise

- See
- Say (actual quotes)
- Currently do
- Hear (what do others say)

Inside the head

- Think
- Feel (emotional state)





Activity Time!



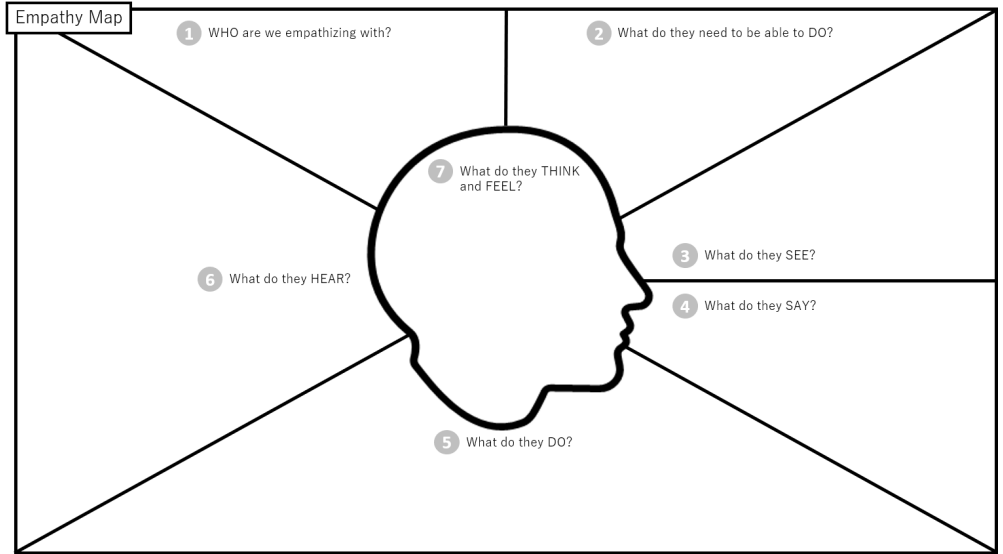
Activity

1. Create a persona
2. Each group will be given a different problem to solve
3. With a persona and problem, create your group empathy map
4. Be prepared to share



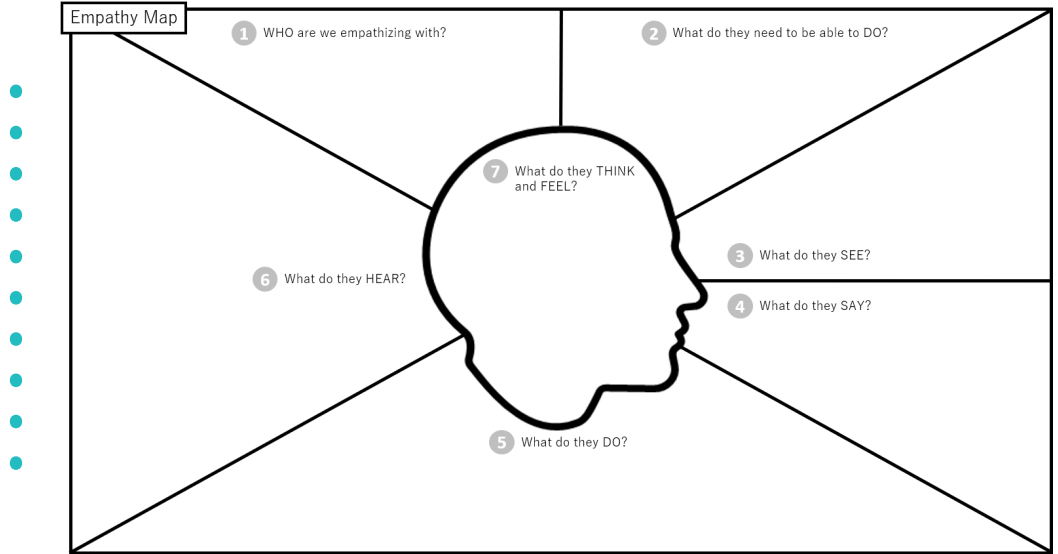
Scenario 1

A professor has been teaching a course for three terms and noticed that one research assignment (involving group work and outside sources) is consistently difficult for students to understand and complete. Each term, the professor gets a flood of questions from the students regarding the assignment, and the professor feels like they're being asked and answering the same questions.



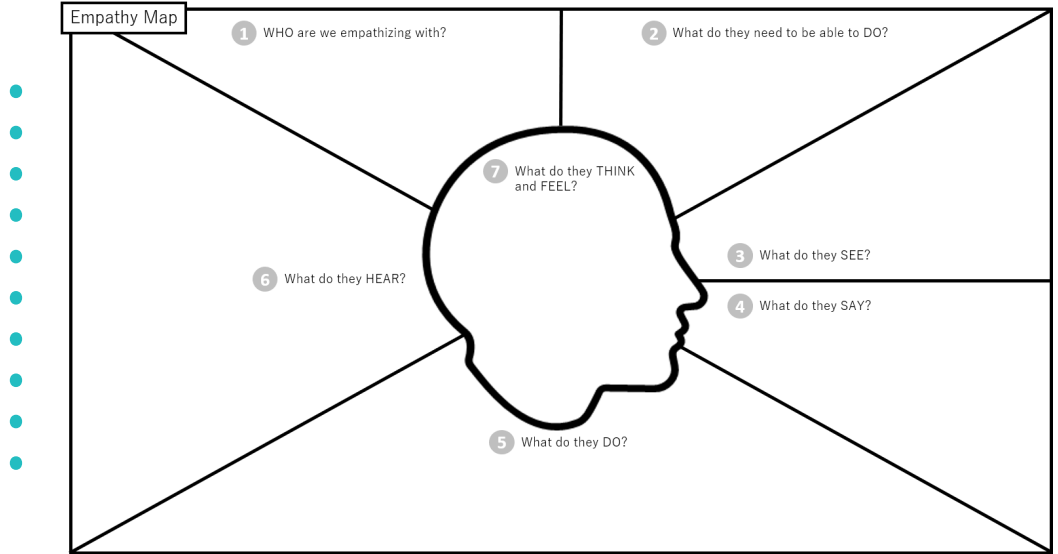
Scenario 2

A student in a 19th-century Literature class has a letter of accommodation for her dyslexia. They struggle when there's a lot of writing to read, or when the language is complicated. What can you, as the instructor, do to help the student be successful in your course? What if a student has no letter of accommodation, but you see them struggling and suspect that they may be dyslexic?



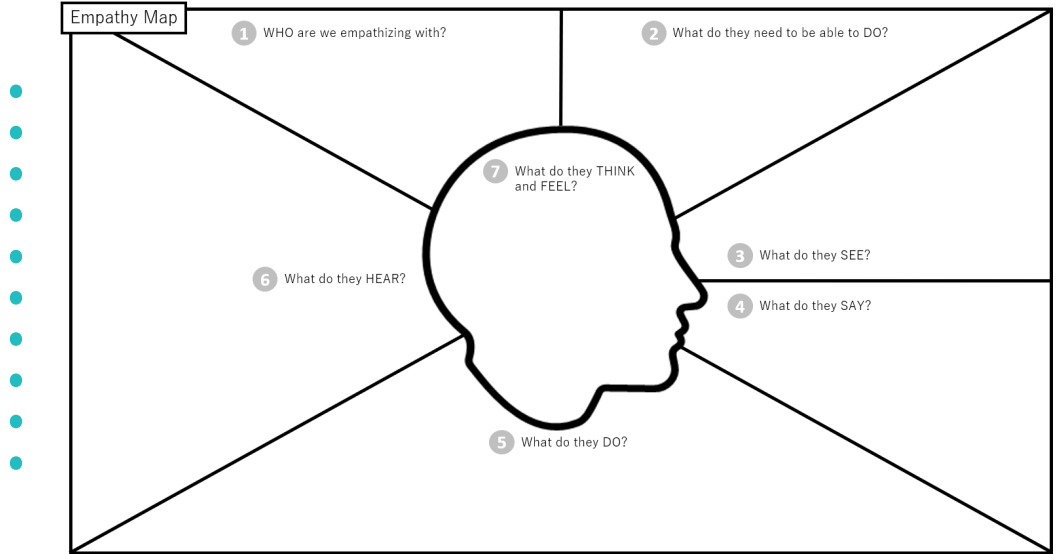
Scenario 3

An instructor has just been told they need to add more interactivity in their online course. The instructor doesn't want to just implement another series of generic discussion boards into their course. They want something that might really create a more memorable learning experience. The instructor decides to think about their general student audience and what kind of interactivity might really excite them.



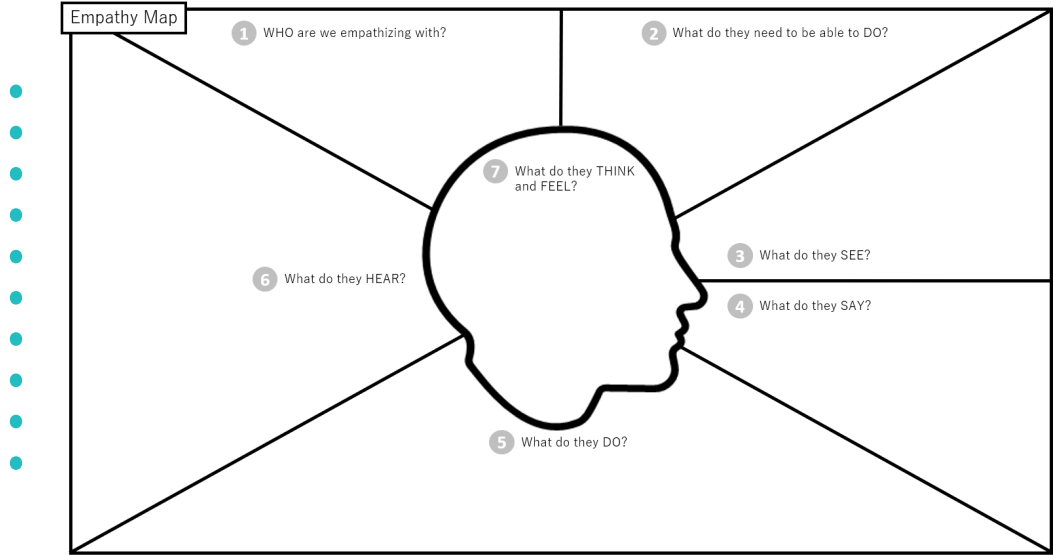
Scenario 4

A department chair is noticing consistently low registration for a course in their program. They just found out that most students didn't even know about this course or how it could benefit their program of study. The chair thinks visibility is the problem: it's difficult to stand out amongst all the courses available. But it's not enough to just get the students' attention. The chair has to convince the students to take the course. The chair must empathy map the students they think would benefit from their course to help think of ways to catch their attention and how to convince them to enroll in their course.



Scenario 5

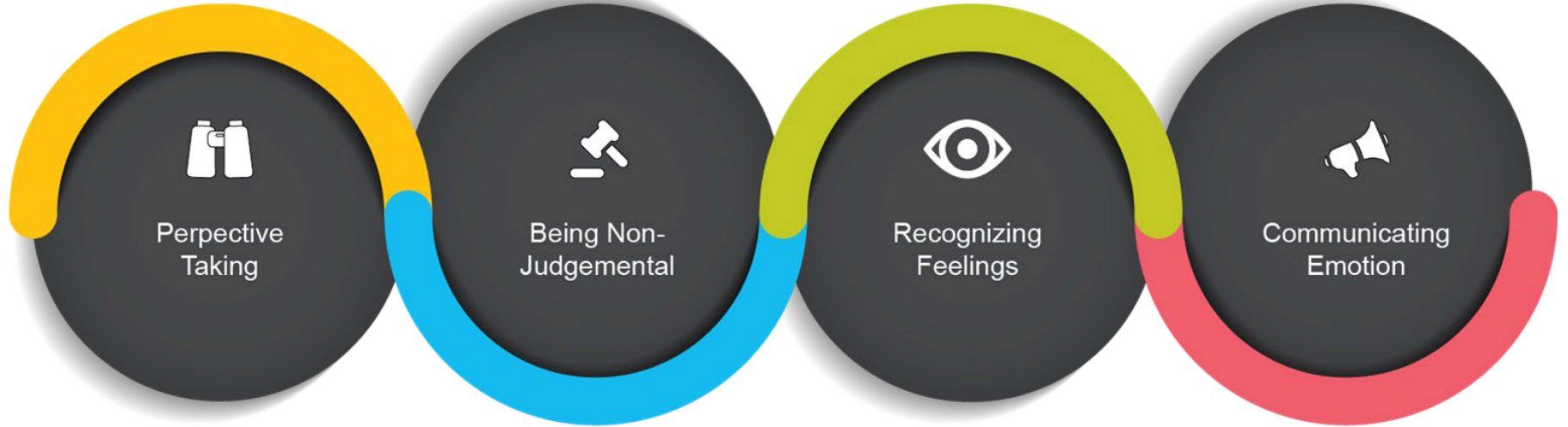
A new instructor is very frustrated with the repeated offenses of academic integrity in their course. They felt like they addressed it very clearly in their syllabus and on the first day of class, but students still found ways to cheat. The instructor realizes that a few sentences in the syllabus and a brief academic integrity comment on the first day of class isn't quite enough motivation for students. The new instructor begins empathy mapping a few profiles of students to figure out how to better communicate the importance of academic integrity without being condescending or making students feel singled out.



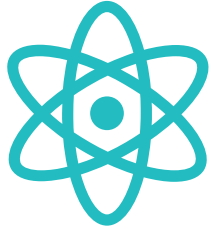
Closing Thoughts: What's Next?



User Center Decision-Making



Change Your Thinking



Visualizing user attitudes and behaviors helps teams align a deep understanding of the end goal.



Remove bias from the process and align your team on a single, shared understanding of the user/student.

Resources

Every Interaction. (n.d.). *How to run empathy & user journey mapping workshops*. Every Interaction. https://www.everyinteraction.com/articles/how-to-run-empathy-user-journey-mapping-workshops/?utm_source=chatgpt.com

Asana. (2025, March 1). *Empathy maps: How to understand your customer*. https://asana.com/resources/empathy-map-template?utm_source=chatgpt.com

Gibbons, S. (2018, January 14). *Empathy mapping: The first step in design thinking*. Retrieved from Nielsen Norman Group: <https://www.nngroup.com/articles/empathy-mapping/>

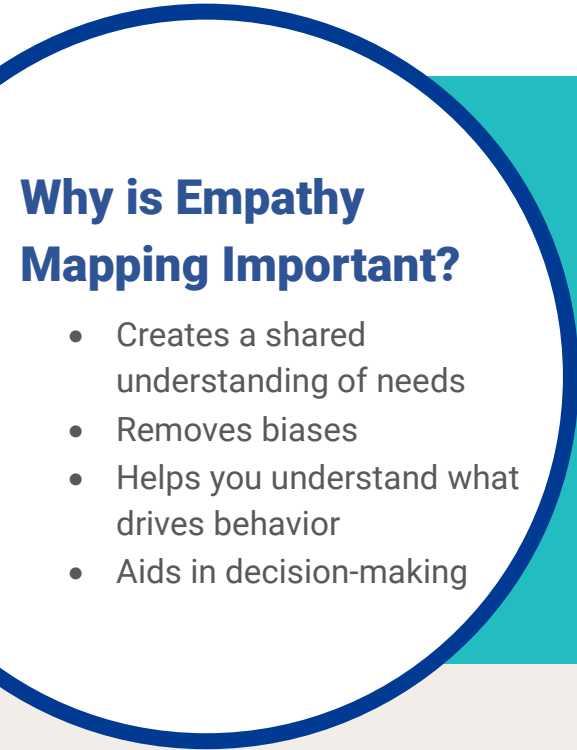
Thank You!



EMPATHY MAPPING



Empathy mapping is a method for characterizing your target audience to inform effective design decisions.

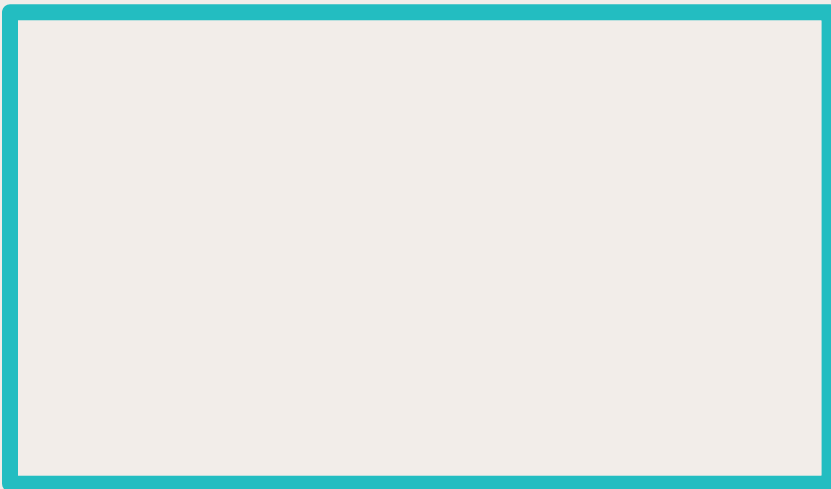


User-Centered Decision-Making

Why is Empathy Mapping Important?

- Creates a shared understanding of needs
- Removes biases
- Helps you understand what drives behavior
- Aids in decision-making

How do I use an Empathy Map?



1. Start at the top (#1)
 - Who? (develop a persona)
 - Need to do? (problem statement)
2. Work clockwise
 - See
 - Say (actual quotes)
 - Currently do
 - Hear (what do others say)
3. Inside the head
 - Think
 - Feel (emotional state)

Interested in having us present virtually or in person at your institution? Contact Kate Glass & Becky Rose at kglass41@gmail.com

References

- Asana. (2025, March 1). Empathy maps: How to understand your customer. https://asana.com/resources/empathy-map-template?utm_source=chatgpt.com
- Gibbons, S. (2018, January 14). Empathy mapping: The first step in design thinking. Retrieved from Nielsen Norman Group: <https://www.nngroup.com/articles/empathy-mapping/>