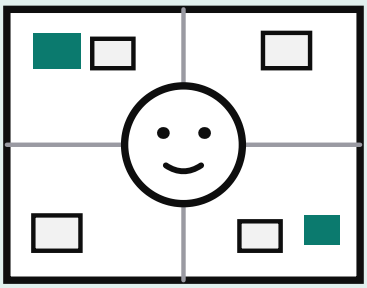
Method

# Empathy map

A template divided into zones, such as what the person says, does, sees, hears, thinks and feels, that the team fills in with what it knows about them to put itself in their shoes.



In Spanish

*Mapa de empatía*

Origin

XPLANE (mid-2000s); Gray, Brown and Macanufo (2010)

Output

A sheet that sums up, as a team, how a type of person sees the world

## What it's for

Helps the team share a single picture of the person it designs for, and see what it knows about them and what it is assuming.

## Key elements

### One person or one concrete type

The map is made for someone specific and with a goal, not for "users" in general.

### What is observed and what is inferred

What they say and do comes from research; what they think and feel is deduced, and it is best to mark it as such.

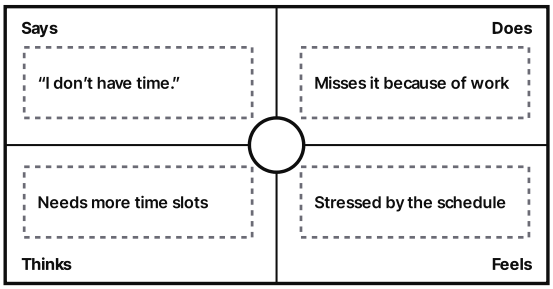
### Filled in as a team

Its value lies in the conversation it sparks and in the doubts it brings to light.

## An example

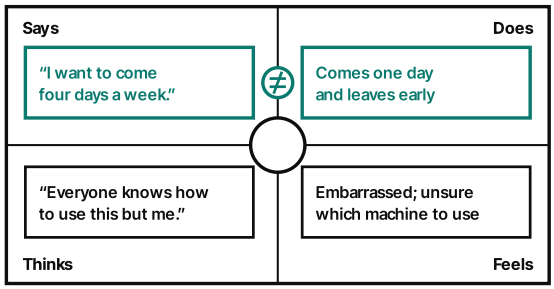
A gym wants to understand why people who have just signed up stop going.

### What the team assumed




Filled in from memory, the map repeats in all four zones what the team already believed: beginners lack time. **One idea, repeated.**

### What the map built from interviews shows




They say they want to go four days a week, but go once and leave early; in interviews they explain they don't know how to use the machines and are embarrassed to ask. **The problem wasn't time.**

By putting what the person says next to what they do, the map exposes the contradiction and changes what needs to be designed.

## How it's done

1

**Choose the person** and what they want to achieve.

2

**The team fills in the zones** with notes from interviews and observations.

3

**Review what is missing** and what needs to be checked with more research.

## Applications in design

### ✓ When to use it

After interviewing or observing, when the team needs to agree on what the person it designs for is like.

### ✗ Avoid

Filling it in from memory, with no research behind it, and treating what was made up as data.

### Don't fall for it

It is a starting point: check it with real people.

# Connections

Used by

- Business design

Related to

- Affinity diagram
- In-depth interview
- Journey map
- Personas

# Authors and works

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | **XPLANE** | According to the company itself, the map was born in the mid-2000s from "big heads" drawn by its creative director, Scott Matthews, which Dave Gray turned into a template. |
| 2010 | **Dave Gray, Sunni Brown and James Macanufo** | They published it in Gamestorming, a book of workshop activities, and it spread from there. |

## Sources

### Original sources


- Gray, D., Brown, S., & Macanufo, J. (2010). Gamestorming: A playbook for innovators, rulebreakers, and changemakers. O'Reilly Media.


### Secondary sources


- XPLANE (n.d.). The empathy map: A human-centered tool for understanding how your audience thinks. XPLANE. View source (https://xplane.com/the-empathy-map-a-human-centered-tool-for-understanding-how-your-audience-thinks/)


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