

Introduction to Course 6

Introduction to Adobe XD

Optional - Empathize with users

Video: Optional - Empathize with users and understand pain points

4 min

Reading: Optional - Learn more about empathizing with users

20 min

Discussion Prompt: Optional - Discuss the importance of considering user needs

10 min

Reading: Optional - Conduct interviews for empathy maps

20 min

Discussion Prompt: Optional - Share interview questions

10 min

Reading: Optional - Create empathy maps

20 min

Practice Quiz: Optional - Activity: Create an empathy map

1 question

Reading: Optional - Activity Exemplar: Create an empathy map

20 min

Video: Optional - Create personas

2 min

Reading: Optional - Learn more about personas

10 min

Practice Quiz: Optional - Activity: Create personas

1 question

Reading: Optional - Activity Exemplar: Create personas

10 min

Optional - Define user needs

Optional - Define the problem

Week 1 review

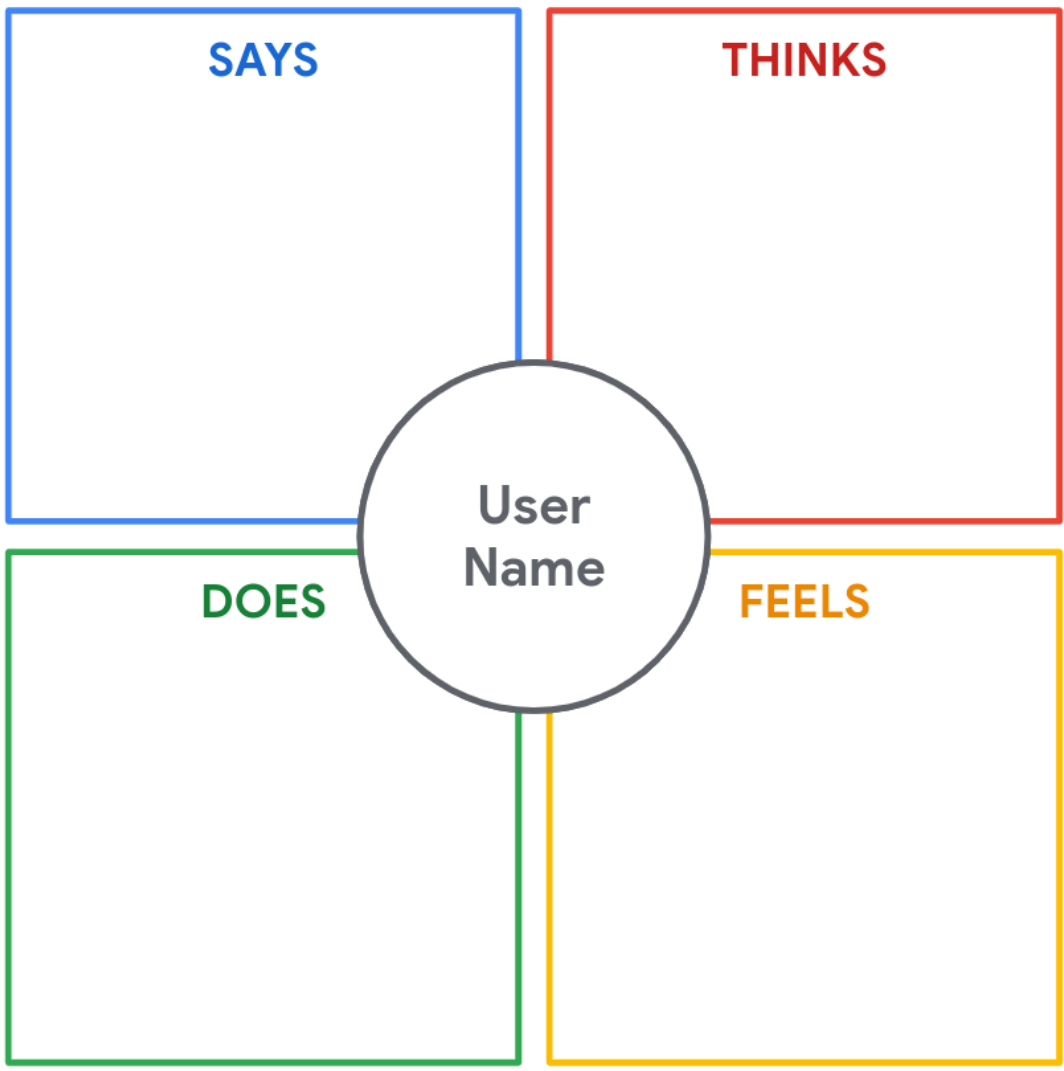
Optional - Create empathy maps

As you might remember from an earlier course of the certificate program, **empathy maps** are diagrams that consist of four squares. Each of these squares show what the user of a product says, thinks, does, and feels in relation to a problem that the product is trying to solve.

Empathy maps were optional and briefly covered in an earlier course, so don't worry if it's not a very familiar concept yet. If you want to review the basics of empathy maps, you can watch the [video on empathy map basics](#).

In the next course item we're going to begin putting them into practice to help empathize with users. We'll also learn more about them in this reading.

It's important to note that empathy maps are one way to empathize with users, and may or may not be needed for projects in the workplace. There are many different strategies for empathizing with users, and this is just one of them. It's up to you to decide the process that works best for you as you develop your own approach to the design process!



Empathy maps come in two forms. **One-user empathy maps** are empathy maps created directly from an interview with a single user, while **aggregated empathy maps** are empathy maps that are created by combining the interview and empathy map data from multiple users who share similar needs, experiences, and goals. Aggregated empathy maps represent groups of users who interact with a product, and can be a good foundation for creating personas.

To create empathy maps, a designer will follow a set of steps:

Conduct interviews. The designer will conduct a series of interviews with users who have been selected based on a set of criteria relevant to the project's goals. You can revisit the reading [recruit interview participants](#) to learn more about how to select users who fit the needs of your project.

Review recordings. Once the interviews are finished, the designer reviews the recordings and the notes they took during each interview. Some designers will make transcripts of their interviews, but this is not required.

Review notes and create one-user empathy maps. Next, the designer will evaluate their recordings and interview notes. Then, they'll sort the data into one-user empathy maps, one for each participant. Each map will show what the users said, thought, did, and felt during their interviews.

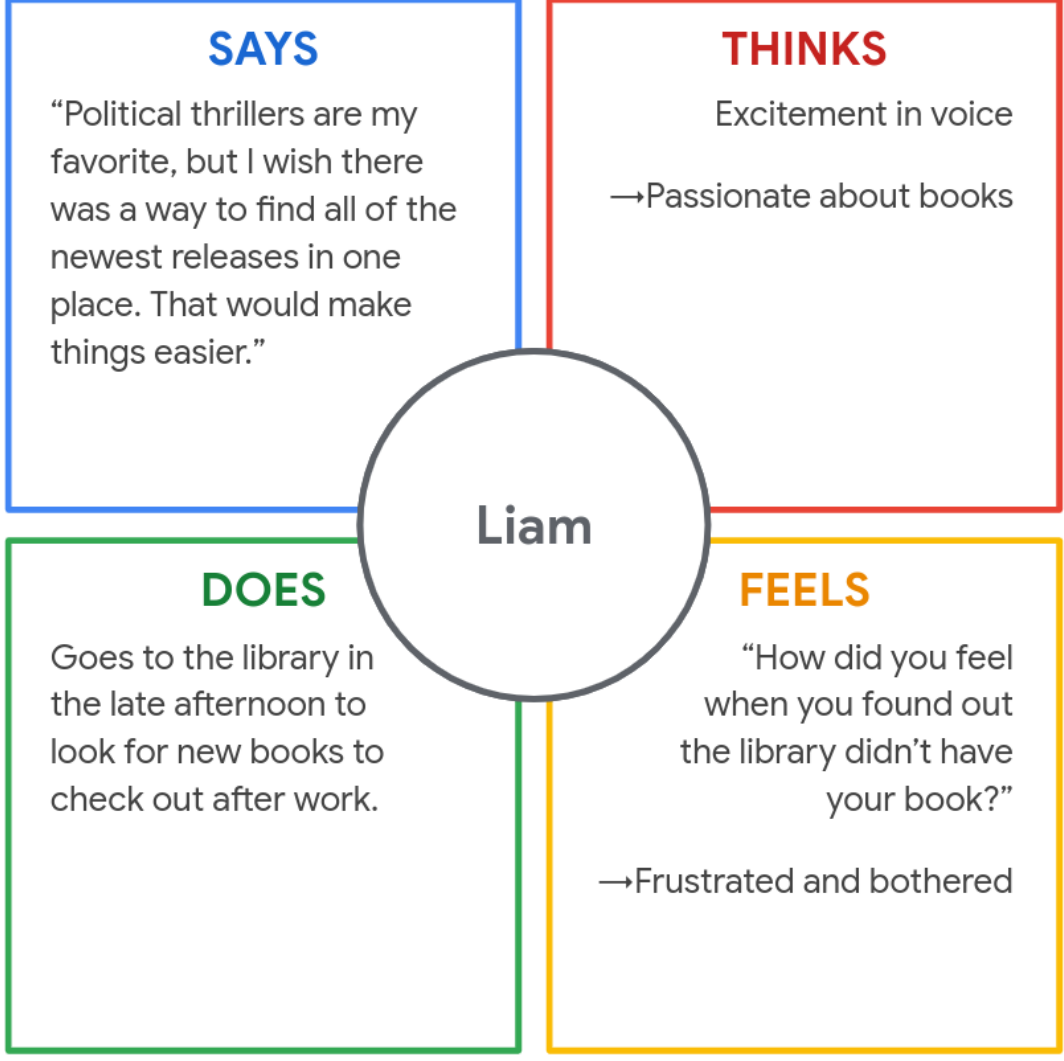
Empathy maps help designers understand their users' needs and pain points. During the interviews, you'll collect a lot of raw data. As you sort the interview data into each empathy map, try to identify the most important topics and details, rather than adding every aspect of the interview. Your completed empathy maps should give a clear and concise description of your user and their problems.

Below is an example of what two one-user empathy maps might include after interviewing two users about a library website. The users who were interviewed are named Eunji and Liam.

Here is Eunji's one-user empathy map:



Here is Liam's one-user empathy map:



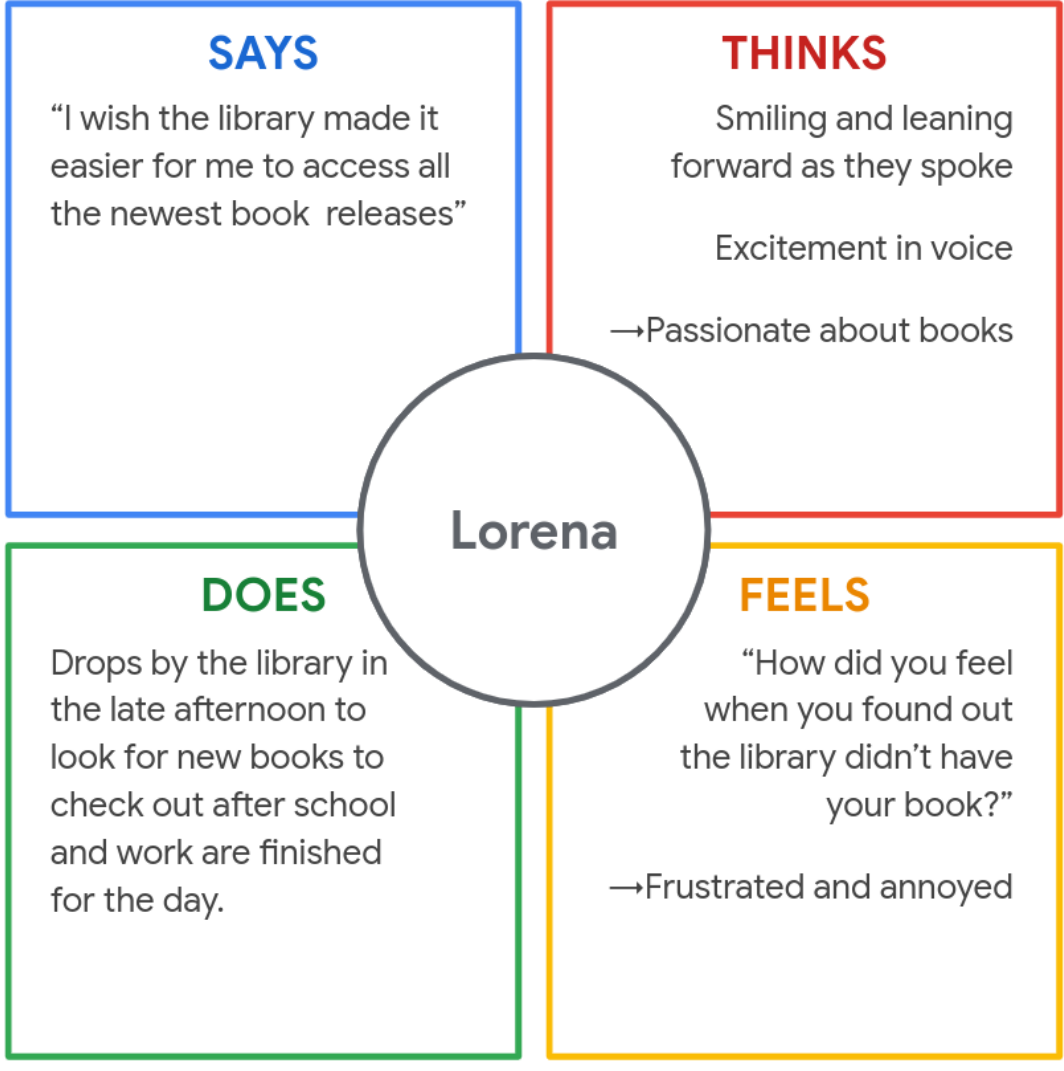
Create an aggregated empathy map. Once one-user empathy maps are created for each interview participant, the designer will combine the one-user empathy maps into aggregated empathy maps. This is done by combining similar thoughts and ideas expressed during the interviews into a single empathy map. These groupings can be made by identifying themes in participant responses.

Identifying themes can be done by sorting similar quotes and responses together into categories. This can even be done on sticky notes or a digital sticky note tool to help visualize the connections between responses. The wording of responses in the same theme don't have to be identical, but there should be an overlap in the type of response, thought, or action being expressed.

Once all similar ideas have been grouped and added to the aggregated empathy map, the designer chooses a name for the aggregated empathy map that represents the whole user group and adds it to the circle in the center of the empathy map.

When converting one-user empathy maps into an aggregated empathy map, you can either use direct quotes from one participant that summarizes the things the entire user group said, or create a quote that represents what each of the participants said during their interviews. As long as you are accurately representing the ideas of your participants, your aggregated empathy map is on the right track. Your goal at this point is to accurately portray the words, feelings, actions, and thoughts of a group of users from the perspective of an individual persona.

Here's an example of what an aggregated empathy map might include after interviewing the two real users, Eunji and Liam, about a library website and grouping their responses. The two users are now represented by a single user name, Lorena.



As the empathy map outlines:

- During the interview, the group of users, represented by Lorena, said: "I wish the library made it easier for me to access all the newest book releases."
- Users in the group you interviewed, represented by Lorena, smiled, leaned forward, and became excited as they spoke during the interview, indicating that they feel passionately about books.
- The group of users, represented by Lorena, described what they do or the actions that they take. Specifically, they drop by the library in the late afternoon to look for new books to check out after school and work are finished for the day.
- And, when asked the interview question, "How did you feel when you found out the library didn't have your book?" the users, represented by Lorena, shared that they felt frustrated.

Turning one-user empathy maps into aggregated empathy maps helps designers empathize with groups of people who experience shared problems. By understanding pain points that affect a group of individuals, the designer can then begin to design solutions that will work for all people in that group. However, it's important to remember that not all users fit into a single group. For a real project in the workplace, you may need to create several aggregated empathy maps that represent distinctly different user groups.

If you would like to practice creating your own empathy map, or just want to have one for future use, you can download this [empathy map template](#). Follow the link and click "Use Template" in the upper right corner to create your own editable version of the template. For the next activity, you'll need to create at least two aggregated empathy maps. Good luck!

Mark as completed

