

Ideation Phase

Empathize & Discover

Empathy Map Canvas

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Team ID: C4B8E28377A600AAD9D4711008669C91

Project Name: *Optimize User, Group, and Role Management with Access Control and Workflow*

Introduction

The **Empathize & Discover** phase focuses on understanding the real challenges faced by users who manage, assign, or execute tasks in an organization.

By empathizing with different user personas—such as Project Managers, Team Members, and Administrators—our team gained a clear perspective on their **needs, pain points, behaviors, and motivations**.

This insight forms the foundation for designing a ServiceNow-based system that aligns with user expectations while addressing inefficiencies in role and workflow management.

Empathy Map Canvas

| User Persona | Project Manager (Alice) | Team Member (Bob) |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| Who are they? | A manager responsible for creating, assigning, and approving project tasks while ensuring proper role access and workflow compliance. | A contributor who executes assigned tasks and updates progress while depending on defined role permissions for access. |
| What do they need to do? | Assign roles, manage access levels, monitor workflows, and approve tasks securely. | View assigned tasks, update their progress, and communicate issues effectively within the workflow. |
| What do they see? | Multiple users accessing shared data without proper restrictions, creating confusion and risk of data overlap. | Limited visibility into the system, where some functions or fields are locked due to unclear access rights. |

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| What do they say? | "I need a system that automatically assigns roles and maintains accountability." | "I want to easily update my assigned work without getting access errors." |
| What do they do? | Manually configure user roles and approve access requests through separate channels, often leading to delays. | Depend on the manager for permission changes or updates, causing workflow interruptions. |
| What do they hear? | Complaints from team members about denied access or delayed task approvals; feedback from leadership about security compliance gaps. | Requests from peers or leads to complete updates quickly but face technical barriers due to restricted access. |
| What do they think and feel? | Feels frustrated by repetitive manual configuration and lack of visibility into workflow status. Worries about accountability and audit readiness. | Feels restricted and unproductive due to unclear access boundaries; concerned about being blamed for delays. |
| Pain Points | - Overlapping responsibilities and unclear role hierarchies. - No real-time visibility of access logs. - Manual workflows causing delays. | - Access denied errors during task updates. - No clarity on permissions or approval timelines. - Dependency on admin or manager for changes. |
| Gains / Desired Outcomes | - Automated role and access assignment. - Transparent workflow approval system. - Real-time monitoring dashboards. | - Easy task updates with clear access privileges. - Faster approvals and smooth task routing. - Accountability without administrative burden. |

Key Insights from Empathize Phase

- Lack of Role Clarity** – Both managers and team members face uncertainty in their access boundaries, leading to workflow inefficiencies.
- Manual Workflow Dependence** – Approvals and access changes rely heavily on human intervention, causing delays.
- Security & Compliance Concerns** – Absence of audit tracking and role validation increases the risk of unauthorized access.
- Communication Gaps** – Team members are unaware of their current access status or task dependencies until an issue arises.

User-Centered Discoveries

From user interviews and process mapping, the team discovered:

- Automation and role-based access control are the most desired features.
 - Both personas value **clarity, transparency, and reduced dependency** on manual approvals.
 - Integrating **ACLs** and **Flow Designer** in ServiceNow can solve 80% of identified pain points by enabling smart role allocation and workflow automation.
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Conclusion

The **Empathize & Discover Phase** revealed how end-users interact with current systems and highlighted gaps in access, visibility, and accountability.

By deeply understanding the user perspective through empathy mapping, the project team identified **automation, transparency, and secure access control** as the central design goals.

This phase lays a strong foundation for the **Define** and **Ideate** stages by ensuring that every feature of the ServiceNow solution directly addresses real user needs and frustrations.