Define Activity 2: Empathy Map

Overview

The Empathy Map activity helps designers unpack their observations from the Understand phase of the design process with a focus on the feelings and behaviors of users.

By the end of this activity you should have a completed Empathy Map. Keep it on hand for reference throughout the rest of the course.

Time

45 minutes

People and Materials

- Sticky notes
- Marker or felt-tipped pen
- Whiteboard or empty wall space
- All of your notes from the "Understand" phase of the design process

Instructions

During the Understand phase of the design thinking process, you gathered a lot of information. Great! Now we're going to do something with all that data. To begin, collect your materials (sticky notes and a marker) and find a place to work with a large, flat surface like an empty wall, a table, or a whiteboard. It's time to "download" your findings! Using one sticky note per response, come up with as many answers as you can to the following prompts. Your goal should be to fill the space with sticky notes. Remember to use one sticky note per an idea/thought. Also try to write down each idea in a way that is succinct—no need to squeeze several paragraphs onto a single sticky note. The following prompts will help you get started. Feel free to add your own.

During the user research, you completed for the Understand activities:

1. What stories or experiences stood out to you?
2. What surprised you?
3. What trends or themes did you notice?

Take a few minutes to think about each question in turn. Review your notes for inspiration and specific examples.

After you've captured your thoughts on sticky notes, it's time to group them with similar ideas. Begin to reorganize your sticky notes into categories. What patterns are you seeing? The goal of this activity is to begin to identify themes within your findings.

When complete, snap a photo of your categorized sticky notes for future reference.

EMPATHY MAP

Say
What are you hearing from users?

Think
What might users be thinking?

Do
What actions are you observing?

Feel
What emotions might the users be experiencing?