



EMPLOYEE JOURNEYS

# Empathy Maps & Personas



# Empathy Map

## What is an Empathy Map?

This is a collaborative tool that companies can use to more deeply understand their employees (or clients!). The empathy map helps you visualize how your employees feel, think, and react to things. You do this by walking through a series of questions to try to get into the mind of an employee group. While you might make great hypotheses about how employees feel, this work has to be done with actual interviews/surveys of the impacted group to truly and accurately map their journey.

## Empathy Map Steps

There is an empathy map template and example on the following page. It includes the following steps:

### 1. Who are we empathizing with?

- » Your employee personas will help you answer this question.
- » What is this person's role?

### 2. What do they need to do?

- » What do they need to accomplish or do differently?
- » How will they know if they are successful? What does success look like?

### 3. What do they see?

- » What do they literally see in their environment?
- » What do they see others saying and doing?

### 4. What do they say?

- » What have we heard them say? (interviews)
- » What can we imagine them saying?

### 5. What do they actually do?

- » What do they do today?
- » What can we imagine them doing?

### 6. What do they hear?

- » What are they hearing at work? Second-hand? From friends and family? On social media?

### 7. What do they think and feel?

- » What are their fears, frustrations, and anxieties?
- » What are their wants, needs, and dreams?
- » What other thoughts or feelings might be motivating their behavior?

# Empathy Map Template

[Download Editable Template](#)

## DEFINING GOALS

### Step 1: Who are we empathizing with?

*Who is the person or group?*

*What is their role?*

### Step 2: What do they need to do? (desired action)

*What do they need to accomplish or do differently?*

*How will they know if they are successful?*

### Step 3: What do they see?

*What do they see in their environment?*

*What do they see others doing/saying?*

### Step 4: What do they say?

*What have we heard them say?*

*What can we imagine them saying?*

### Step 5: What do they do?

*What do they do currently?*

*What can we imagine them doing?*

### Step 6: What do they hear?

*What are they hearing at work?*

*What are they hearing on social/family/friends?*

### Step 7: What do they think & feel?

*What are their fears, frustrations, and anxieties?*

*What are their wants, needs, and dreams?*

*What other thoughts or feelings might they have?*

# Empathy Map

## Example: M&A

### DEFINING GOALS

#### Step 1: Who are we empathizing with?

*Who is the person or group?  
What is their role?*

The acquired employees.

#### Step 2: What do they need to do? (desired action)

*What do they need to accomplish or do differently?  
How will they know if they are successful?*

Use our new systems & technology. Adapt to our new processes and ways of doing business. Enroll in new benefits. Etc.

#### Step 3: What do they see?

*What do they see in their environment?  
What do they see others doing/saying?*

New logo on everything. Different office/location. New people (existing employees).

#### Step 4: What do they say?

*What have we heard them say?  
What can we imagine them saying?*

"That's not how we did things."

"I'm probably going to be laid off."

"I miss my old company."

#### Step 5: What do they do?

*What do they do currently?  
What can we imagine them doing?*

Trying their best to change, but probably clinging to many old habits/ways of working. Searching for another job in anticipation of layoffs.

#### Step 6: What do they hear?

*What are they hearing at work?  
What are they hearing on social/family/friends?*

"We bought you because we're better."

"This is how things are done around here."

New ways of speaking/working that reflect new values.

#### Step 7: What do they think & feel?

*What are their fears, frustrations, and anxieties?  
What are their wants, needs, and dreams?  
What other thoughts or feelings might they have?*

Fear over losing their jobs or their colleagues losing their jobs. Concerns over the new way of working. Not feeling valued even though they also have valuable insights and contributions. Hopes that the new company might also offer more security/opportunity.

# Employee Personas

## What is an employee persona?

Employee personas are a way of understanding groups of employees at your company. They are profiles that you create to outline key characteristics of different groups with the goal of being able to better target and craft messages for those groups.

## Why do we use personas?

We should use personas in internal communications for a few reasons.

First, because we need to be better at creating targeted, personalized communications whenever possible. Although all employees are still unique, knowing what groups and, therefore, personas employees roughly fall into can still help you be better at personalizing and targeting messages at scale.

Personas also are key to empathy. They work great when done in parallel with an empathy map. Empathy maps help you understand how employees might react to certain messages based on their situation and environment. Personas also help you understand what employees want and need on a detailed level.

For instance, it might tell you that your senior field managers need detailed communications that include the technical aspects of a change...whereas your hourly field techs need simplified and abbreviated versions of messages with the actions clearly called out based on their education level and the nature of their work.

Working together, empathy maps and personas will help you be better at guiding your target audience towards the desired action or objective behind the message. We often talk about the Do, Say, Think, Feel Approach—the idea that every message should have an objective of your employees doing something differently, saying something, thinking a certain way, or even feeling a certain way. Without empathy and understanding your audience, it may be difficult to activate employees towards that desired outcome.

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# Cathy Communicator

- **Age:** 35
- **Title:** Internal Communications Manager
- **Income:** \$105,000
- **Average Tenure:** 5 years
- **Career Path:** Continued growth on internal comms team
- **Education Level:** Bachelors (sometimes Masters)

Empathetic

Strategic

Creative

Reliable

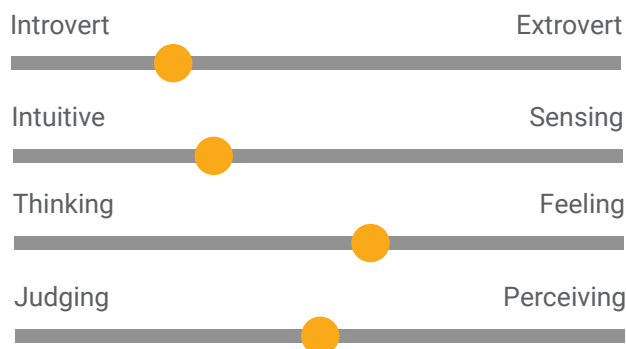
**Bio:** Cathy is an internal communications manager for a manufacturing company where she is responsible for all strategic communication to corporate and field-based employees. A natural empath, Cathy is motivated by understanding her audience and targeting messages to them. She is constantly striving to help others—which is both her greatest strength and largest source of frustration when she isn't given the resources/tools she needs.

## Goals:

- Become strategic advisor
- Launch new channels to reach deskless workforce & revamp existing Intranet to meet deskbound team needs
- Achieve Internal Comms KPIs
- Contribute to top-level business objectives

“ I want a **seat at the table**. I need to prove my value by using my expertise and knowledge of communication strategy to help stakeholders across the organization achieve success.

## Personality:



## Tools & Resources:

- Channels: Employee App, Intranet, Email, Digital Signage, Printed Posters, Shared Kiosks
- Spanish-translation program
- IT support & Zoom for Town Halls & field calls
- Adobe Creative Suite & part-time designer
- Company videographer & editor
- Chief Communications Officer (c-suite champion)

## Challenges:

- Lack of budget
- Small team (1-2 people)
- Leadership doesn't understand the value of video for executive communication
- Lack of clarity from leadership about what internal comms is and should achieve

## Motivations:

- Helping others
- Getting to work in cross-functional teams and understand how all the pieces of the organization's strategy fit together
- Intrinsic motivation to achieve
- Desire to be valued by other stakeholders

# About theEMPLOYEEapp

theEMPLOYEEapp was created by communications and HR professionals to address the challenges organizations face communicating with a dispersed and deskless workforce. theEMPLOYEEapp is an internal communication and engagement solution that allows workers to have fast and easy access to the information, documents, and resources they need to succeed in their work.

Our app allows you to target information to your employees when and where they need it on their smartphone, tablet, or computer, and empower leaders and frontline managers to engage and activate employees across the organization. Unlike most traditional communications channels, theEMPLOYEEapp creates a customized, branded experience for employees, encouraging your workforce to join together in a single, centralized channel.

**Our Mission is to enable the effortless flow of meaningful information for organizations driven by frontline workers.**

