

Needfinding

Designing the right product

What is Needfinding?

- Process based on Human Centered Design
 - Users drive design inspiration
- Solutions change, needs last longer
- Uncover latent needs
 - Gaps in Use, Usability, and Meaning
 - People are good at getting things done with less-than-ideal tools/situations
- Develop empathy for users

Principles of Needfinding

- Look for needs, **NOT SOLUTIONS**
 - If I can't reach something, I need a way to access it, I don't need a ladder.
 - This thinking is too limited
- Go to the customer's environment
 - Immerse yourself in the experience of your users
- Go beyond the obvious problem
 - Laddering (Five Why's), Double Diamond
- Collect different forms of data
 - Images, written notes, video, audio, etc.
- Iterate

Steps of Needfinding

- Identify your user group and a task/activity to study
 - Example: undergraduates + timekeeping
- Form hypotheses about the activity
 - Example: Undergraduates + timekeeping, hypothesis: “College undergraduates use their cell phones to tell time and therefore don’t wear wristwatches anymore”
- Collect Data
 - Desk research or field studies
- Aggregate finding to identify product opportunities

Field Studies (Observation)

- Find out specifically what tasks they are trying to accomplish and how they do so
- An outside perspective makes it easier to uncover workarounds
- Ask questions but keep them open ended
 - Do ask “Can you walk me through how you would do this?”
 - Do not ask “What problems do you have during your task?”

Interviews

- Prepare questions ahead of time
- Suppress preconceived notions about the user and products and do not bias the discussion
- Aside from questions, ask user for demonstrations.
- Look out for surprises, these suggest latent needs.
- Additionally, watch for nonverbal cues, such as nods or frowns.

Empathy Mapping

- Says
 - What the user says out loud during an interview (or usability study)
 - Ideally contains direct quotes
- Thinks
 - Might be said out loud
 - Can be elicited with questions
 - Can be observed from non-verbal cues
- Does
 - What is the user physically doing during the interview
- Feels
 - Emotional state
 - Adjective plus a short sentence for context
 - ***Impatient: pages load too slowly***

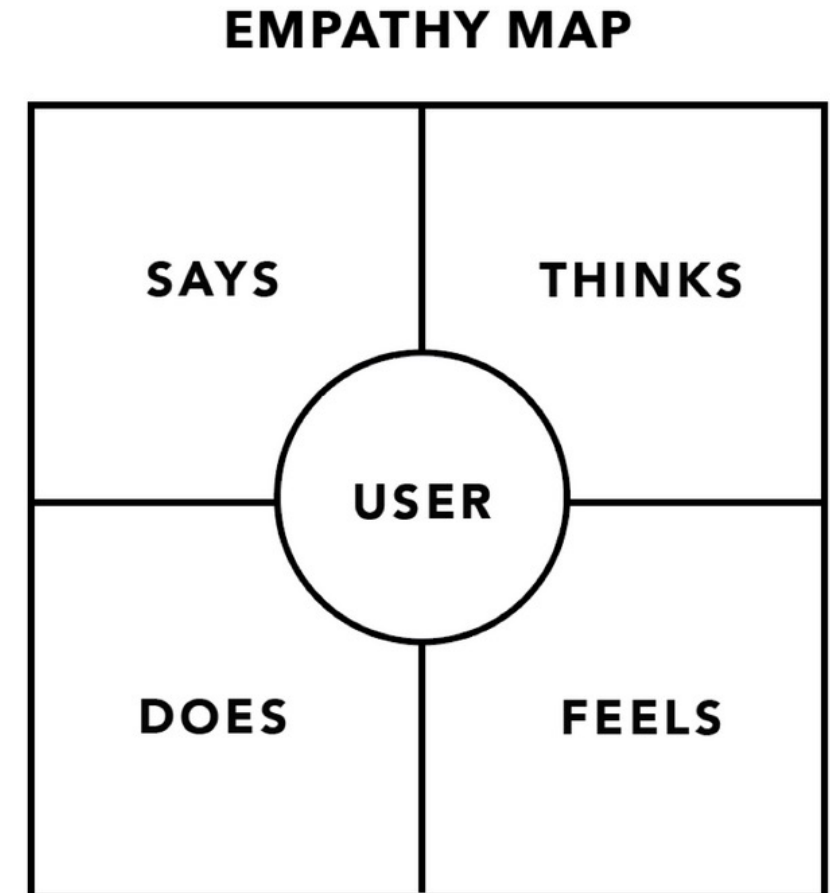


Image from: <https://www.nngroup.com/articles/empathy-mapping/>

Empathy Map Example

EMPATHY MAP Example (Buying a TV)

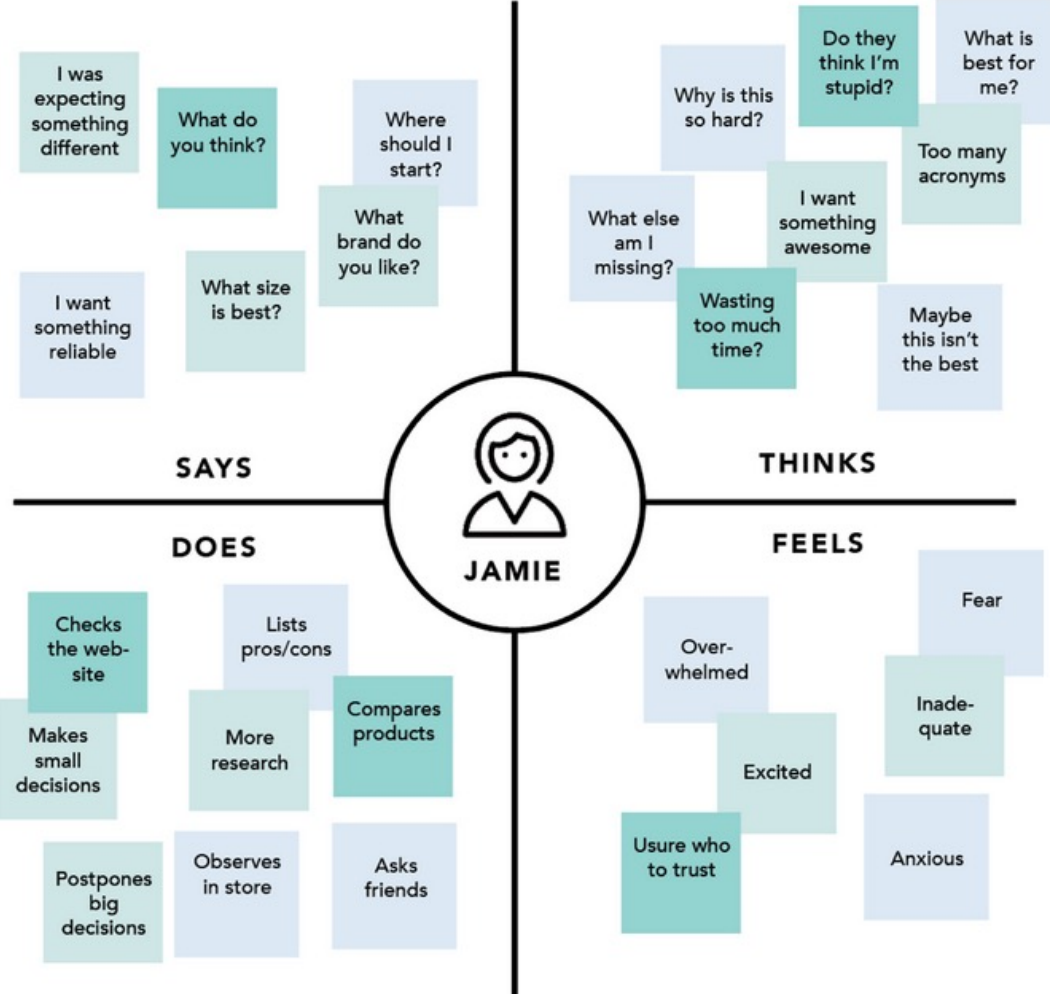


Image from: <https://www.nngroup.com/articles/empathy-mapping/>