**On the Map**

Understand the minds of your customers and create the user experiences that will keep them coming back.

| Type | Workshop |
| --- | --- |
| Purpose | Training and development |
| Topics | Collaboration, problem-solving, motivation, decision-making, brainstorming, teambuilding, communication, sales, strategic planning, UX |
| Audience | Salespeople |

## **About this activity**

According to PwC, 32% of consumers surveyed said they would leave a brand they love after having just one bad experience. Getting inside the minds of customers and ensuring a positive and rewarding customer experience has never been more important.

In this workshop session, participants will gain a better understanding of their customers’ needs, thoughts, and feelings by working collaboratively to create a Customer Empathy Map. The resulting insights can be used to guide product development, sales strategies, marketing communications, and customer service experiences that achieve winning results.

On the Map is an activity for salespeople and is optimal for groups of 12-48 participants in an in-person setting.

#### Important details

| Best for groups of | 12-48 |
| --- | --- |
| Preparation time | 15 minutes |
| Duration | 90-120 minutes |
| Required materials | * Flip chart with markers or whiteboard * Empathy Map Worksheet * Sticky notes * Pen/pencil * Timer |
| Required location | * Indoors |
| Noise level | Medium |

## **How it works**

#### Instructions

Before conducting the activity (10 minutes):

The facilitator will read the instructions and make copies of the Customer Empathy Map Worksheet for each participant. The facilitator should place sticky notes and pens/pencils at each table and make a flip chart or whiteboard header for each component of the Customer Empathy Map where participants can post their sticky notes with ideas.

Conducting the training:

Introduction (20-30 minutes):

The facilitator will ask for a volunteer to share a bad customer experience and another to share a good customer experience. In each case, the facilitator should ask the participants what they were thinking and feeling during the experience and record the answers on a flip chart or whiteboard.

The facilitator will inform participants that in this workshop, they will use what they know about their own user experiences to put themselves in their customers’ shoes and more fully understand and empathize with the experience of their customers.

To do this, participants will work in small groups to develop a customer empathy map, which is a visual tool used to gain a deeper understanding of their customers by mapping their thoughts, feelings, actions, and observations. The facilitator should pass out a copy of the map worksheet to each participant and explain the benefits of this process, which include:

1. A deeper customer understanding by seeing experiences from the customer’s perspective, which leads to more informed decision-making.

2. Better products and services that result from pinpointing customer pain points and unmet needs.

3. Improved customer experiences that result from knowing how customers feel at different touch points so that you can understand their pain points and optimize positive moments.

4. Enhanced communication that helps to tailor marketing messages, customer support, and communication strategies to resonate with customers on an emotional level.

Empathy Map Worksheet (30 minutes):

The facilitator will divide participants into at least six groups, with the number of participants as evenly distributed as possible.

The facilitator should assign a different part of the empathy map to each group, who will brainstorm the topic and write down each separate idea related to the topic on its own sticky note. The groups will have up to 30 minutes to brainstorm and record ideas. When finished, the group should find their flipchart or whiteboard section and post their sticky notes.

Group One: Answers the question, “What does your customer see?” This involves gathering data on the physical environment, people, objects, and interactions your customer encounters. What do they notice around them? What catches their attention? Understanding what your customers see can help you design products and services that align with their visual experiences.

Group Two: Answers the question, “What does your customer hear?” This involves listening to the messages that are conveyed in your pitches, your branding, and your interactions. Is what you promise consistent with what you deliver? What words do you use with your customers? Understanding what your customers hear can help you design experiences that are true to your company and brand’s purpose and intentions and tailor your messaging accordingly.

Group Three: Answers the question, “What does your customer think and feel?” Here, you delve into the customer's thoughts and mindset. What are they thinking about their needs, challenges, or goals? What questions or concerns occupy their thoughts? What are their emotional highs and lows? Are they frustrated, excited, anxious, or satisfied? Emotions play a significant role in customer behavior and decision-making, so understanding their thoughts and feelings can guide you in creating more emotionally resonant products and experiences.

Group Four: Answers the question, “What does your customer say and do?” This question focuses on the actions and behaviors of your customer. How do they interact with your product or service? What feedback do they provide about their experiences? By understanding what your customers say and do, you can identify areas for improvement and opportunities to enhance their experience.

Group Five: Answers the question, “What is the customer’s problem to be solved?” This question ensures you understand your customer’s motivation in seeking out your products and services. What actions do they take to address their needs or challenges? What features or benefits can we add to improve what we offer? What are we doing that may end in a customer’s problem not being solved? By understanding why your customers invest in your products and services, you have the opportunity to fully address their needs.

Group Six: Answers the question, “How does a customer benefit from our product/services?” This question ensures you understand what produces satisfied customers who tell others about their experience. What benefits does the customer gain from our products/services? What value do we provide? How do we encourage our customers to share good experiences and how do we recover after service errors? By understanding why your customers benefit from what you provide, you can improve overall satisfaction and build customer loyalty.

Results Sharing (30 minutes):

The facilitator will ask each group to take 5 minutes and share the results from their brainstorming with all participants. As the groups present, the facilitator should jot down important follow-up ideas on the flipchart or whiteboard to revisit.

Wrap-Up (30 minutes):

Once every group has presented, the facilitator should ask participants to discuss the following questions and write down important takeaways for the group to explore further.

1. What are some new insights you gained about your customers from this activity?
2. What are some ideas to explore further, or next action steps to pursue based on these new insights?
3. Have you identified any new products, services, or new customer segments that could benefit from these insights?
4. How does this exercise inform our thinking about our customers?

The facilitator will conclude by thanking participants for their participation and capturing the Customer Empathy Map responses for use to develop new customer and product strategies.

Rules

None

#### Example

None

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## **Materials**

#### For facilitator

Flipchart and markers or whiteboard

Timer

#### For attendee

Customer Empathy Map Worksheet

Sticky notes

Pen/pencil