



Experimenting with Human-Centred Design

Wednesday February 28th, 2018

Your Human-Centred Design Challenge

A Crisis of Youth Unemployment

Young workers are facing employment challenges that haven't been seen in generations. Globalization advances in information technology and increased automation in all sectors have contributed to shift in the employment landscape that has been so radical that today, young workers just entering the labor market are facing a workforce radically different from the one experienced by their parents.

Today, Canada's overall unemployment rate is 6.9%, however youth (16-24 years of age) have an unemployment rate of 12.9%. The situation is worse in Ontario where youth unemployment is now at 17%.

While youth unemployment is a global phenomenon, the recession of 2008-09 exposed a particularly painful dimension of this shifting economy for young people: they are most often the first to be fired and the last to get hired during tough economic times. The consequence is that a significant number of this generation is being left without stable employment and/or the opportunity to develop and expand their skills and experience. The impact and cost of having a significant number of today's young people unable to meaningfully and fully participate in today's economy will be felt for decades to come.



HIGHLIGHTS

- Youth are defined as people between 16-29 years-old
- Canada's 2017 overall unemployment rate is 6.9% but youth unemployment is now at 12.9%
- Ontario's youth unemployment rate is currently 17%
- 50-52% of Ontario's youth (16-24 years-old) do not have jobs
- 33.3% of Canadians aged 24-29 are considered underemployed
- Youth who: live in rural areas; lack education; have a disability; are new immigrants; or, are indigenous face greater challenges and higher rates of unemployment and under-employment

A detailed analysis of the Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey reveals Ontario's youth continue to suffer from unemployment levels that are, on average, twice as high as the overall provincial unemployment level. Currently, Ontario is competing with the Maritime provinces for the designation of the toughest place in Canada for youth to land a job. In fact, Ontario's youth employment rate – which is the measure used to determine how many young people have jobs – is worse in 2017 than it was before the recession.

Monthly youth employment rates in Ontario today range from 50% to 52%. This means that half of Ontarians between the ages of 16-24 do not have jobs. StatsCanada data released May 5th, 2017 reported that Canada's youth participation in the workforce is currently at just 63% and that an estimated 33.3% of Canadians aged 24-29 are considered underemployed. Youth who: live in rural areas; lack education; have a disability; are new immigrants; or, are indigenous face greater challenges and experience higher rates of unemployment and under-employment.

Sources:

- ***The Young and the Jobless: Youth Unemployment in Ontario*** by Sean Geobey, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives
- [*Older Workers See Job Gains, While Market Tightens for the Young*](#) by Pete Evans, CBC News, May 7th, 2017

Creating a Persona

EXERCISE DESCRIPTION:

A Persona is a fictional person who is created using information and data, as well as our own knowledge and experience. More than a stereotype, the purpose of a persona is to imagine the typical characteristics of a particular type of person, and then embellish them with as much detail as you can to make them seem like a believable “sketch.” In marketing, personas are often created to represent a particular group of customers using purchasing data, internet browsing history and other pieces of data. In the field of user-experience product design, personas – based on research – to help solve design questions and challenges.



EXERCISE HOW-TO:

Time required: 15 minutes

Instructions:

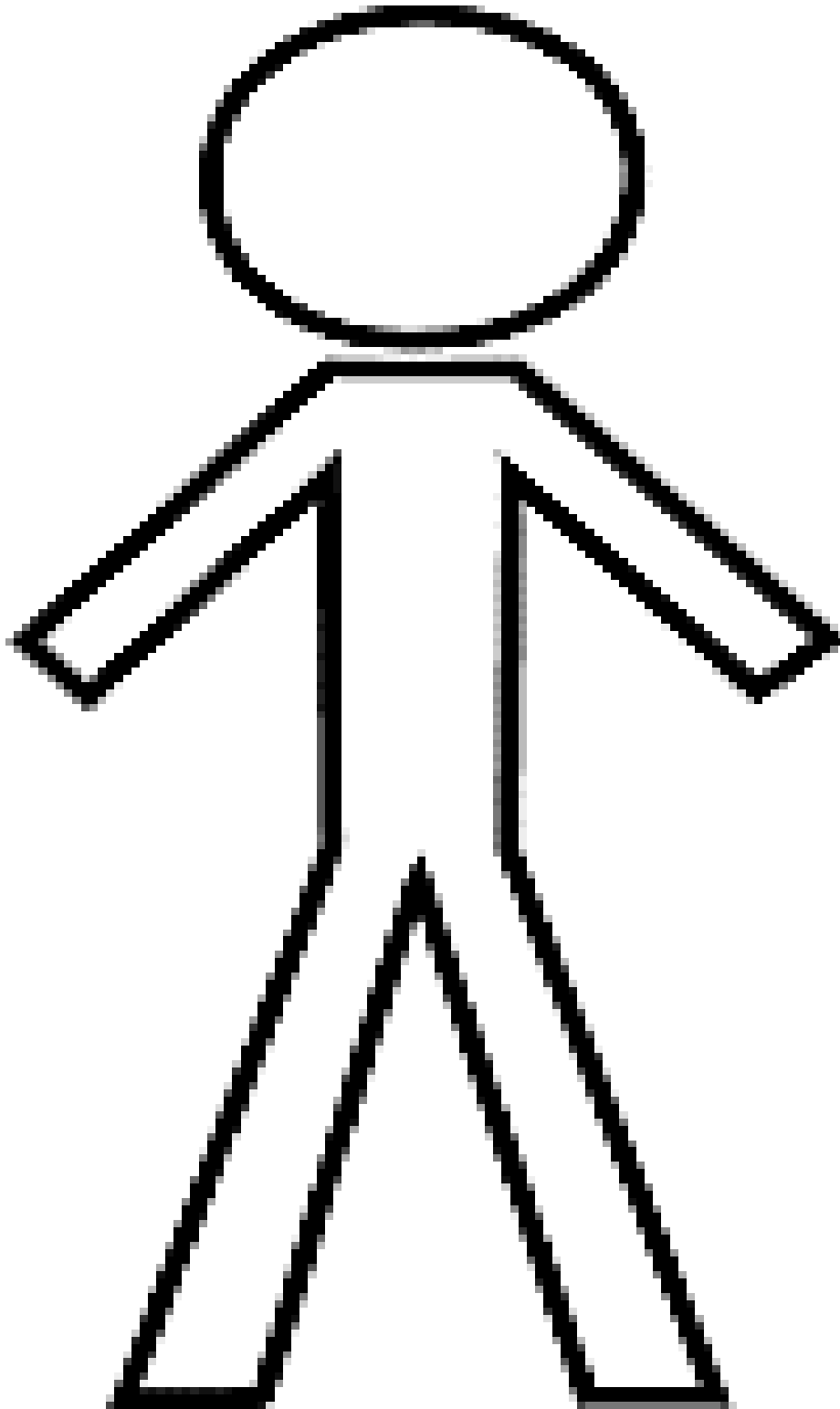
1. Use information from the **Youth Unemployment Case** to create a “persona” for the young person you will focus on with your human-centred design. Please try and be as specific as possible.
2. Draw a figure on a piece of flipchart paper and, as your group reviews and discusses the questions below, write out specific characteristics of your persona and post them on the figure. The questions are:
 - a) What gender does your persona identify with?
 - b) What is his/her name?
 - c) How old is he/she?
 - d) What kind of community does he/she live in?
 - e) What has his/her educational experience been?
 - f) What hopes/aspirations does this person have?
 - g) What supports does this person have?
 - h) What challenges and obstacles does this person face?

EXERCISE DEBRIEF:

Possible debrief questions:

- Review the characteristics noted for your persona. Do you feel that you have a good sense of this individual and their context?
- Is there anything more you would add?

Creating a Persona Worksheet

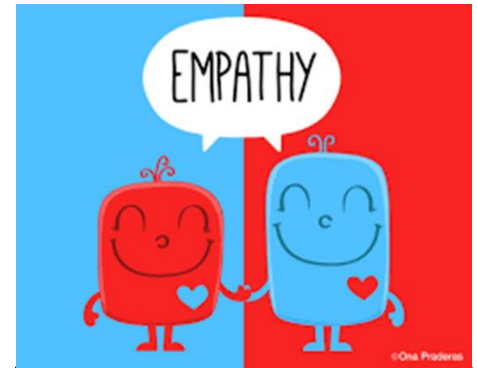


The Empathy Map

EXERCISE DESCRIPTION:

Empathy is the capacity to step into other people's shoes, to understand their lives, and start to solve problems from their perspectives. The Empathy Map is a tool intended to help you to consider the perspectives of those who your project serves or affects. Empathy maps can be created about hypothetical users or customers to better focus on their experience of the project. Empathy maps can be completed individuals or as a team.

Developing empathy maps for varied and contrasting hypothetical users can really round out your understanding of user experience and help your team to consider the many forces around your users and customers that affect their experiences. Post the empathy maps where the team can see them daily and, when you can, invite real live stakeholders to complete first-person empathy maps!



"In order to get to new solutions, you have to get to know different people, different scenarios, and different places."

—Emi Kolawole, Editor-in-Residence,
Stanford University d.school

EXERCISE HOW-TO:

Time required: 30 minutes

Instructions:

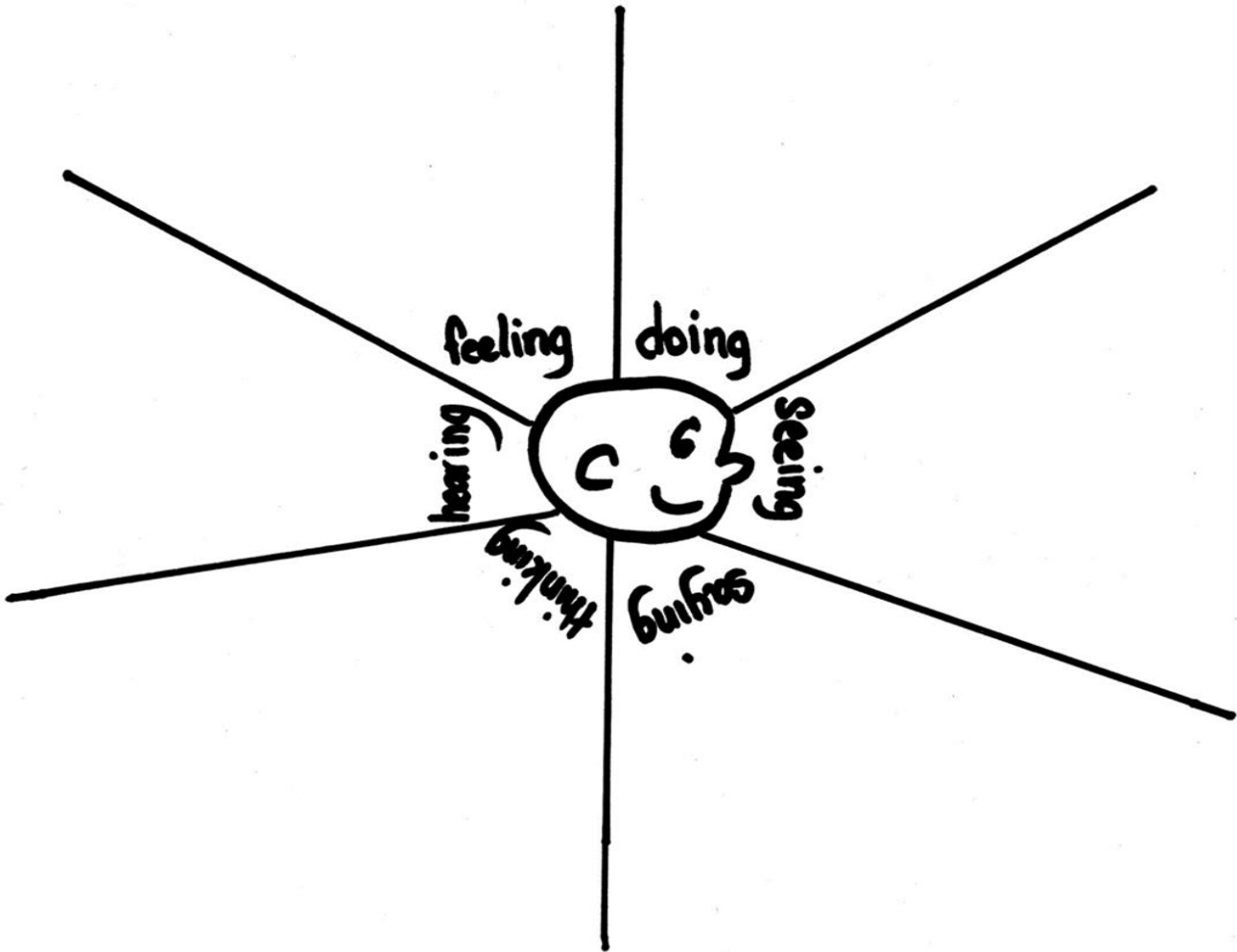
1. **Individually** put yourself in your persona's shoes and think about their experience of your project:
 - a. What are they seeing?
 - b. What are they saying?
 - c. What are they doing?
 - d. What are they thinking?
 - e. What are they feeling?
2. Put your answers on stickies and put it on your persona. Answer all six questions on the map in as much detail as you can imagine.
3. **As a group**, review the empathy map and identify:
 - a. 3 things that this person wants; and,
 - b. 3 obstacles to those desires.
4. Now as a group, choose the obstacle or challenge you want to address.

EXERCISE DEBRIEF:

Possible debrief questions:

- How do we need to refine the engagement, design or delivery of our work based upon the insights generated from our empathy map?
- What's have we learned here that can help us build, and retain, trust among those involved?

The Empathy Map Worksheet



NOTES:

This person's top 3 wants are:	3 obstacles to this person's desires are:
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

How Might We?...

EXERCISE DESCRIPTION:

After having spent times “walking in the shoes” of another and considering an issue or challenge from many different points of view, you will likely have generated several new observations and insights about that issue. You may also have identified additional challenges you would not have previously thought of. This tool is useful for reframing these insights and challenges into opportunities for redesign. Using the phrase **How Might We...?** reminds us that solutions are possible and that each question can be answered in a variety of ways. However, a well-framed **How Might We...?** question doesn’t suggest one specific solution...but should be a perfect prompt for your creativity and innovation.



Initially it’s best to “brainstorm” as many responses to the **How Might We...?** question as you can. And remember, the best way to get to good ideas is to have lots to choose from. Some rules to follow to ensure a great brainstorm include:

- **Defer Judgement.** You never know where a good idea is going to come from. The key is to make everyone feel like they can say the idea on their mind and allow others to build on it.
- **Encourage Wild Ideas.** Wild ideas can often give rise to creative leaps. When devising ideas that are wacky or out there, we tend to imagine what we want without the constraints of technology or materials.
- **Build on the Ideas of Others.** Being positive and building on the ideas of others take some skill. In conversation, we try to use “yes, and...” instead of “but.”
- **Stay Focused on the Topic.** Try to keep focused and on target, otherwise you may diverge beyond the scope of what you’re trying to design for.
- **One Conversation at a Time.** Your team is far more likely to build on an idea and make a creative leap if everyone is paying full attention.
- **Be Visual.** In brainstorming we put our ideas on Post-its and then put them on a wall. Nothing gets an idea across faster than a sketch.
- **Go for Quantity.** Aim for as many new ideas as possible. In a good session, up to 100 ideas are generated in 60 minutes. Crank the ideas out quickly and build on the best ones.

EXERCISE HOW-TO:

Time required: 15 minutes

Instructions:

1. Take 5 minutes to individually brainstorm solutions to address the problem you have identified by asking yourself: **How Might We...**
2. Individually review page and identify your favourite **How Might We** brainstorm. Reframe it as a **Big Idea**
3. On a single card, write:
 - Your **Big Idea**, starting with: “We could...”
 - The first step needed to get your **Big Idea** started

Source: [The Field Guide to Human-Centered Design](#) by IDEO.org

The *How Might We?*... Worksheet

Generate Ideas

*The crazier, The better
(one idea per circle)*

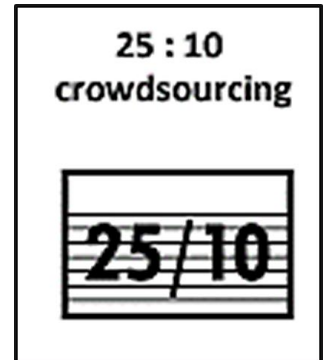
The worksheet contains 18 empty circles arranged in a grid-like pattern for generating ideas. The circles are arranged in four rows: the first row has 2 circles, the second and third rows have 4 circles each, and the fourth row has 3 circles. An oval containing the instructions 'Generate Ideas' and 'The crazier, The better (one idea per circle)' is positioned in the top center, overlapping the first row of circles.

The 25-10 Crowd Sourcing Tool

EXERCISE DESCRIPTION:

This is a tool that is used to sift through a group's most powerful, actionable ideas and prioritize them together. With **25/10 Crowd Sourcing**, you can spread innovations "out and up" as everyone notices the patterns in what emerges. Though it is fun, fast, and casual, it is a serious and valid way to generate an uncensored set of bold ideas and then to tap the wisdom of the whole group to identify the top ten. Surprises are frequent!

Developing empathy maps for varied and contrasting hypothetical users can really round out your understanding of user experience and help your team to consider the many forces around your users and customers that affect their experiences. Post the empathy maps where the team can see them daily and, when you can, invite real live stakeholders to complete first-person empathy maps!



EXERCISE HOW-TO:

Time required: 20 minutes

Instructions:

1. Pass your **Big Idea** cards around the table. When the bell rings, read the idea on the card
2. Have a quick conversation with the person beside you about the ideas on your respective cards
3. On the back of the card, give this idea a score between 1-5 (**1 is low, 5 is high**)
4. Repeat for 3-5 more rounds. On the final round, after you have scored the idea, total the scores on the back of the card
5. As a group, prioritize your Collective **Big Ideas** based upon the scores and discuss

EXERCISE DEBRIEF:

Possible debrief questions:

- "What caught your attention about 25/10?"

Source: [The Surprising Power of Liberating Structures](#) by Henri Lipmanowicz and Keith McCandless

More Resources on Human Centred Design Thinking

Below are links for where you can go to learn more about Human Centred Design Thinking:

- IDEO's Human-Centred Design Tool-Kit: <https://www.ideo.com/post/design-kit>
- Acumen's Online Courses (free & paid) and Resources on Human Centred Design: <http://www.plusacumen.org/courses/facilitator%E2%80%99s-guide-human-centered-design>
- Nesta's DIY Tool-Kit (Practical Tools to Trigger & Support Social Innovation): <http://diytoolkit.org/>