

# Design Thinking for Managers

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# Process of Design Thinking – Empathy

The "Empathy" stage in the Design Thinking process is the first and fundamental step in the framework. It involves developing a deep understanding of the users' perspectives, experiences, and needs. Here's how the Empathy stage works:

## 1. Observation:

- Begin by observing users in their natural environment. This could be in their homes, workplaces, or wherever they interact with the problem or solution you are exploring.
- Take notes, photos, or videos to capture their actions, behaviors, and emotions.

## 2. Interviewing:

- Conduct one-on-one interviews with users to gain insights into their thoughts, feelings, and motivations.
- Ask open-ended questions that encourage users to share their experiences and challenges.

### **.3. Immersion:**

- Immerse yourself in the users' world. Try to experience what they experience.
- Participate in their activities, engage in their routines, and understand their pain points firsthand.

### **4. Empathy Mapping:**

- Create empathy maps to synthesize your observations and interviews. An empathy map typically includes sections for what users Say, Think, Do, and Feel.
- Use the map to identify patterns and insights about the users' needs and emotions.

### **5. Define the User:**

- Based on your observations and interviews, create user personas that represent different types of users.
- Personas help you to develop a more concrete understanding of who you are designing for.

## 6. Problem Statement:

- After gathering a substantial amount of information, work on framing a clear and concise problem statement.
- The problem statement should capture the core issue or challenge that users are facing, which will guide the subsequent stages of Design Thinking.

## 7. Empathize with Teammates:

- Share your observations, interviews, and insights with your team. Encourage them to share their perspectives and interpretations as well.
- This collaborative discussion can lead to a more comprehensive understanding of the problem.

## 8. Empathy for Extreme Users:

- Consider seeking out extreme users, those who have particularly intense experiences or unique needs related to the problem.
- Understanding the extremes can uncover insights that might be applicable to a broader range of users.

## 9. Building Empathy through Stories:

- Share user stories and anecdotes that highlight their experiences. Stories can be powerful tools for building empathy within the design team and stakeholders.