

Empathy Mapping

**SESKAT Training
Toolbox**



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Description

In the Empathy Mapping tool, participants will hone their sense of empathy towards individuals or particular groups; for example, a whole class that needs extra support, a co-worker with whom they have had a disagreement, a student who is struggling, etc. In the activity, participants will analyse their chosen individual or group's interests/goals, Socio-Emotional Learning (SEL) needs, areas of strength, academic needs, and optionally, career needs. This will paint a picture that allows educators to better understand the needs of whomever they are focussing on.

Objectives

- To better understand the needs of an individual or group, fostering a sense of empathy
- To understand the impact that having empathy can have in the workplace
- To better connect with and support students emotionally and academically

Connection with Soft Skills and Emotional Intelligence

The initial exercise prompts participants to reflect on personal experiences without empathy, fostering self-awareness and emotional regulation. This self-awareness forms a basis for improved interpersonal relationships and communication, both important aspects of emotional intelligence.



The empathy mapping activity further enhances empathy by encouraging participants to understand the perspectives, needs, and emotions of others, be it students or colleagues. This aligns with recognising and understanding various emotional states, which is central to emotional intelligence.

Moreover, the soft skills developed in this lesson extend beyond emotional intelligence to encompass a broader skill set important for effective collaboration and communication. The activity encourages participants to practice active listening and effective communication as they share and discuss experiences. Constructing the empathy map requires critical thinking and problem-solving skills as participants analyse and synthesise information to identify overarching needs and develop strategies.

Resources and Materials

- You will need this worksheet to do the Empathy Mapping activity, one per participant: <https://wpvip.edutopia.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/LLD2C-Empathy-Map-Template.pdf>
- Participants will need something to write with.
- You will need one object that can easily be passed around a circle – a ball, a pencil, a coin, basically anything can be used for this.

Steps

01

Let the participants know that today, they will be doing an Empathy Map in order to better understand the needs of their students (or colleagues if they so choose). First, they should get into pairs and answer the following questions:

Can you tell me about a time where someone showed a lack of empathy toward you?

How did it make you feel, and did you change anything because of it?

Afterwards, ask the class if anyone would like to share their responses.

Discuss the responses as a class if so.

02

Next, hand out the empathy map worksheet. Ask the participants to think about either an individual or a group with whom they have been having an issue. If they aren't currently experiencing any issues, they can choose a general group such as 'My students.' Participants can ask themselves the following questions about their target individual/group in order to fill in the map:

- *Interests and goals – what motivates [target]? What inspires [target]? What is their end goal?*
- *Areas of strength– What is [target] good at? In which areas/activities do they excel?*
- *Academic needs – Which subject matter is the most difficult for [target] to understand? Which skills are they lacking? Which habits do they need to form?*
- *SEL needs – Do/does [target] seem calm and happy? Can [target] manage their emotions? Is/are [target] socially aware? Do/does [target] seem motivated and engaged?*
- *Career needs – Which skills do/does [target] need to succeed in their chosen career path? Are they well-equipped at the moment for their chosen career?*

03

Once the empathy maps are filled in, participants should identify the overarching needs of their chosen target. They should write down at least 5 of these needs. When the needs have been identified, participants should identify ways in which they can help to meet these needs.

04

Finally, the participants will do a 'gratitude circle.' Everyone should sit or stand in a closed circle and be prepared to pass around an object (see 'Resources and Materials' for details). Passing the object around the circle, each person should say something that they are grateful for that came from this lesson. It can be a piece of knowledge, an insight, or just that they enjoyed it. It is personal to each person.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this lesson, participants will be able to:

- Better understand the socio-emotional and educational needs of a particular person or group
- Devise action points to be able to support these needs
- Reflect upon the lesson and express personal value in it

