

# Empathy Interviews

**Goal:** To gain a deeper understanding of a user’s experience of the issue you are working on.

# Norms for Empathy Interviews:

* Seek to understand, not confirm
* Ask once, clearly
* Ask questions that elicit stories and feelings
* PROBE: “Tell me more…” “What was that like for you?”

# Prep for Interviews (15 min):

What questions could you ask a student/practitioner/stakeholder to understand their experience of your group’s problem/issue, and the factors contributing to it?

* *Question Selection/Brainstorm* (3 min): Individually**,** review the questions below. Adapt these or generate a few questions of your own.
* *Share & Organize* (5-10 min): As a group, identify/organize your top 5-6 questions. Will they help you understand what makes X challenging, or when students experience success (i.e. the possible root causes you need to address)?
* *Predict & Plan* (3 min): Each person shares one thing they think they will hear. If you are doing the interview with a partner, decide who will interview and who will take notes.

*Consider these possible Empathy Interview Questions:*

* + Tell me about a time when you felt successful in X…
    - What happened? What made this a success? (What did you do? What did others do?)
  + Tell me about a time when X was hard…
    - What happened? How did that feel? Why was that hard? How did you react? What do you wish would have happened? What would have helped?
  + What advice would you give another student/person about X?
  + What advice would you give to me about X?
  + What do you wish others knew about X?
  + If you could describe how you feel about X in one word, what is it?
  + Draw me a picture of what you think about when you hear X… (then “Tell me about what you drew.”)

# Your questions:

**Conduct Interviews (20 minutes):**

*Your notes:*

# Reflect (5 minutes):

***Content*:** What did we **hear**? What are we learning about the **root causes** that contribute to the problem? ***Process*:** Are there **questions we wish we would have asked**? Are there **questions that were particularly fruitful**? Did we **probe** effectively?