

Empathy Interviews

There has never been a more important time to practice empathy, as we face the formidable task of teaching and caring for students and their families during the dual pandemics of COVID-19 and systemic racism. Empathy means trying to deeply understand the experiences and feelings of other people. It is both a mindset to embrace and a skill to practice. While we can never fully understand the experiences of another person, we can listen deeply to their stories and perspectives to uncover unacknowledged needs. As we listen, we must simultaneously examine how our own identities, biases, values, and experiences influence how we make meaning of what others share with us. While many of us may already practice empathy in our daily lives, we've learned that one practice — empathy interviews — can help create more human-centered improvement practices across school systems. ([Nelsestuen & Smith, 2020](#)).

What follows are modules aimed at helping us design, conduct, and analyze empathy interviews. Each module contains a series of videos as well as some reflection questions. Slide decks are also included as an additional resource.

Module 1: The setup - what, why, how, and who

Module	Video	Slide Deck
1.1 What is empathy?	What is empathy video module	What is empathy slide deck
1.2 How will empathy help us see the system?	Empathy and the system video	Empathy and the system slide deck
1.3 What questions should we ask?	What questions should we ask video	What questions should we ask slide deck
1.4 Who should we interview?	Who should we interview video	Who should we interview slide deck

Module 2: Liberatory design and during the interview

Module	Video	Slide Deck
2.1 How does empathy connect to liberatory design?	Liberatory design mindsets and empathy video	Liberatory design mindsets and empathy slide deck
2.2 What do we do during an interview?	What do we do during an interview video	What do we do during an interview slide deck
2.3 Preparing for the live session	Preparing for the live session	Preparing for the live session slide deck
Additional Resources: Empathy interview example video and Liberatory Design Deck		

Module 3: Live session - empathy interview protocol feedback and next steps

Purpose	Agenda	Slide Deck
Build a community of practice around the use of empathy interviews to strengthen a specific aspect of your coaching.	Participant Agenda (article referenced in agenda)	Planning for your empathy interviews

Module 4: Empathy interview analysis

Module	Video	Slide Deck
4.1 How do we analyze empathy interview data?	How do we analyze empathy interview data video	How do we analyze empathy interview data slide deck