



POWERFUL QUESTIONS

For getting a deeper understanding of your learners by building empathy.

***"The first rule of user research:
never ask anyone what they want."***

Erika Hall, Just Enough Research

HI, THERE

QUICK OVERVIEW

A positive learning experience has an emotional component. As a Learning Designer, you can unlock delight in your product by focusing on the emotion dimension in the product development process.

Asking learners what they want or need doesn't always get you there. A different approach is to create 'Learner Personas' - archetypes of the potential users of your learning product. Learner Personas capture a learner's desired outcomes, their problems/challenges, what would help them, and what success looks like and in doing so help product teams develop empathy for their users.

A great way to compile a Learner Persona is by using these 'powerful questions' in your learner interviews. These are designed to move from functional questions to more emotion-based ones.

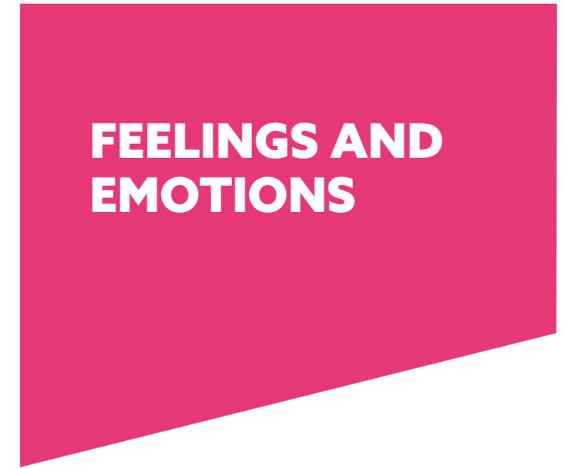
There are certainly challenges and limitations to using the Learner Persona framework, but also significant risks in developing products for users that we don't fully understand.

We hope you find these helpful.

What I say

What I do

How I feel



Functional



Emotional

MOTIVATIONS AND DESIRED OUTCOMES

POWERFUL QUESTIONS

1. What are you trying to accomplish in life that you think <this skill/knowledge> would help you with?
2. What do you think you would get out of life if you did <this skill/knowledge> better?
3. What does success in learning <this skill/knowledge> look like for you?
4. What does 'good enough' look like, with regards to <this skill/knowledge>?
5. What about 'perfect'?
6. If you were a master at <this skill/knowledge>, what problems would it solve for you?
7. What problem with learning <this skill/knowledge> do you wish someone would solve for you?
8. If there was a magic product for <this skill/knowledge> that could do anything, what would it do for you?

CONTEXT AND BEHAVIOUR

POWERFUL QUESTIONS

1. How are you spending your time learning <this skill/knowledge> now?
2. If you had an extra hour free each day to spend on <this skill/knowledge>, how would you spend it?
3. Does it ever seem like you're wasting time while learning <this skill/knowledge>?
4. What are you doing at those times?
5. What factors in your life make learning <this skill/knowledge> more of a challenge?
6. Do any factors make it less of a challenge?
7. When it feels like you're making the most progress in <this skill/knowledge>, what are you doing?
8. If your story of learning <this skill/knowledge> had a hero and a villain, who or what would they be?
9. Do you ever find yourself losing track of time while you're studying <this skill/knowledge>?
10. What are you doing at those times?
11. What do you wish we understood about what learning <this skill/knowledge> is like for you?
12. Do you ever find yourself complaining about learning <this skill/knowledge>?
13. What do you complain about? Is there anything that you do that you wish someone else would do for you?
14. If you could change one thing about how you behave with regards to learning <this skill/knowledge>, what would you change?

FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS

POWERFUL QUESTIONS

1. What kinds of things make you happy?
2. Which parts of learning <this skill/knowledge> make you feel joy or happiness?
3. Where do you feel stuck in your learning?
4. Does anything make you feel angry about learning <this skill/knowledge>?
5. What do you feel passionate about?
6. What frustrates you about learning <this skill/knowledge>?
7. Which part of learning <this skill/knowledge> tires you out the most?
8. When do you feel most proud of yourself?