

# SUMMER OF EMPATHY

## MAY: OBSERVE – ASSIGNMENT #1

### YOUR MISSION:

- Use the **POEMS Framework** to observe **one context related to your work**. This could be your workplace, a client centre, lunchroom, boardroom, a co-worker's desk – anywhere!
- You can do this by yourself, with a partner, or with a small group (maximum 4).
- **Record your observations!** You can record your observations by:
  - Writing notes in a table similar to the one below
  - Taking photos (if appropriate – if taking photos of people, always ask for permission)
  - Drawing pictures – these don't need to be works of art! Sketches can be useful prompts to remind you about the relations between people and things in the environment.
  - Taking audio recordings (if appropriate – always ask permission if you are recording someone)
  - Using your senses!

POEMS FRAMEWORK	
People	
Objects	
Experiences	
Messages/Media	
Services	
Insights/Opportunities	



- If you aren't quite sure what to observe, try **brainstorming assumptions** related to the context – they could be negative (staff don't like to use the water cooler) or positive (clients love the natural light). Your assumptions can form the basis of what you look for in your observation. Just don't limit yourself to these assumptions – be open to observing more.
- **Based on your observations:**
  - What did you notice?
  - What are your insights?
  - Do you see any opportunities to make an improvement or scale something great?
- Based on your insights and where you see there is an opportunity, **create a 'How Might We' question**. You will explore this question throughout the Summer of Empathy.
  - 'How Might We' (HMW) questions are short questions that launch brainstorm.
- **Bring your learnings** with you to the June Workshop.

***Make sure you record your HMW question, your observations, and your insights – you will use them to build your presentation poster for the August SHARE workshop. Keep your notes, photos, doodles, etc. – you'll use them later.***

## RESOURCES:

- Brené Brown – Empathy Video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=747u3\\_Ms2tU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=747u3_Ms2tU)
- POEMS Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KinfwnPmkJE>
- Photography in Ethnographic Sessions: <http://uxmag.com/articles/photography-in-ethnographic-sessions-creating-a-photo-guide>
- Considering Types of Field Notes: <https://ecfieldnotes.wordpress.com/>
- Crafting ‘How Might We’ Questions: <http://dschool.stanford.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/HMW-METHODCARD.pdf>
- Why Motivation Matters in Public Sector Innovation: <http://www.nesta.org.uk/publications/why-motivation-matters-public-sector-innovation>

## JUNE: PLAY – ASSIGNMENT #2

### YOUR MISSION:

- **Play.**
  - At work. With your colleagues. You decide what, where, when, who, and how.
- **Create some artifacts of your playtime.** You can do this by:
  - Taking photos of the experience
  - Drawing pictures of the experience or your reflections – these don't need to be works of art!
  - Asking people how they found the experience and recording their answers (with permission)
  - Journaling on the experience – some questions you may find helpful to start you off are below, but do not feel limited by these.
    - How did you find the experience?
    - What did you notice about your invitation to play, and how it was received?
    - Did you notice any effects of playing after the fact – on your colleagues' interactions, moods, or energy levels?
    - Would you do this again – why or why not?
    - How might you integrate serious play into your work life? Is this desirable for you?
- **Bring your learnings** with you to the **July Workshop**.

***Make sure you document your playtime in some way – you will use these artifacts to build your presentation poster for the August SHARE workshop. Keep your notes, photos, doodles, etc. – you'll use them later.***

### RESOURCES:

- **ARTICLE:** Bruce Nussbaum – How Serious Play Leads To Breakthrough Innovation  
<http://www.fastcodesign.com/1671971/how-serious-play-leads-to-breakthrough-innovation>
- **ARTICLE:** Laura Seargeant Richardson – Play Power: How to Turn Around Our Creativity Crisis  
<http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2011/05/play-power-how-to-turn-around-our-creativity-crisis/238167/>
- **ARTICLE:** Ricky Gervais – Creativity is the Ability to Play <http://www.rickygervais.com/rickyoncreativity.php>
- **ARTICLE:** Jake Cook – Big Innovation Lives Right on the Edge of Ridiculous Ideas  
<http://99u.com/articles/7080/ideo-big-innovation-lives-right-on-the-edge-of-ridiculous-ideas>
- **VIDEO:** Tim Brown – Tales of Creativity and Play  
[https://www.ted.com/talks/tim\\_brown\\_on\\_creativity\\_and\\_play?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/tim_brown_on_creativity_and_play?language=en)
- **VIDEO:** When There is a Correct Answer <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9TskeE43Q1M>
- **VIDEO:** Shimpei Takahashi – Play this Game to come up with Original Ideas  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RovaUZY3e8k>
- **VIDEO:** Paula Scher – Great Design is Serious, not Solemn  
[https://www.ted.com/talks/paula\\_scher\\_gets\\_serious?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/paula_scher_gets_serious?language=en)
- **WEBSITE:** Playmeo – Group Games & Activity Database & Program Leadership Resources  
<https://www.playmeo.com/>

## JULY: DESIGN – ASSIGNMENT #3

### YOUR MISSION:

- Create your Empathic Explorer Poster.
  - Throughout the Summer of Empathy, you have been observing, playing, and designing. Hopefully, you have collected some artifacts along the way – photos, drawings, notes, or reflections. Use these artifacts to create your poster. Stick them right on there!
  - If you haven't done any of the assignments, don't worry! You can still create a poster. You can:
    - Do the assignments over the next few weeks and create some artifacts, or...
    - Do the readings and reflect on them, or...
    - Just reflect – in an interesting and visual way! – what the different activities of observe, play, and design mean to you, wrap it all up with your explorer statement, and ta dah! You've got a poster 😊
  - You can make your own or poster or team up.
  - Be colourful, visual, and creative!
  - Your **Explorer Statement** is your opportunity to reflect on your total experience being part of the Summer of Empathy. You may wish to consider the following questions, but don't feel tied to these – your statement is your own to make. Reflecting on your experience over the Summer:
    - What did you learn? We hope you learned something!
    - Have you had any A-ha! or WTF moments? Did anything surprise you?
    - What is sticking with you the most? What will you take away from this experience?
    - Favourite part(s)?
    - How will you use your experience moving forward?
- Bring your poster and your friends with you to the **August Workshop**.
  - In the August Workshop, we will create a gallery with your posters. Imagine a gallery opening – some opening remarks, and then it's time to mingle 😊 Invite your co-workers, colleagues, and friends, to come and share in the experience and check out the posters.
  - Brent or Roya will email you asking you to drop off your poster with us a day or two before the session so that we can set up the gallery.
  - Come prepared to speak to your poster and walk others through it if they have any questions.
  - Remember your passports! You know you want that final stamp!

### Suggested Readings:

- **ARTICLE:** *Realizing Empathy* by Seung Chan Lim
  - **Part 1 – Empathy as Art:** <http://www.uxbooth.com/articles/realizing-empathy-part-1-art/>
  - **Part 2 – Empathy as Praxis:** <http://www.uxbooth.com/articles/realizing-empathy-part-2-praxis/>