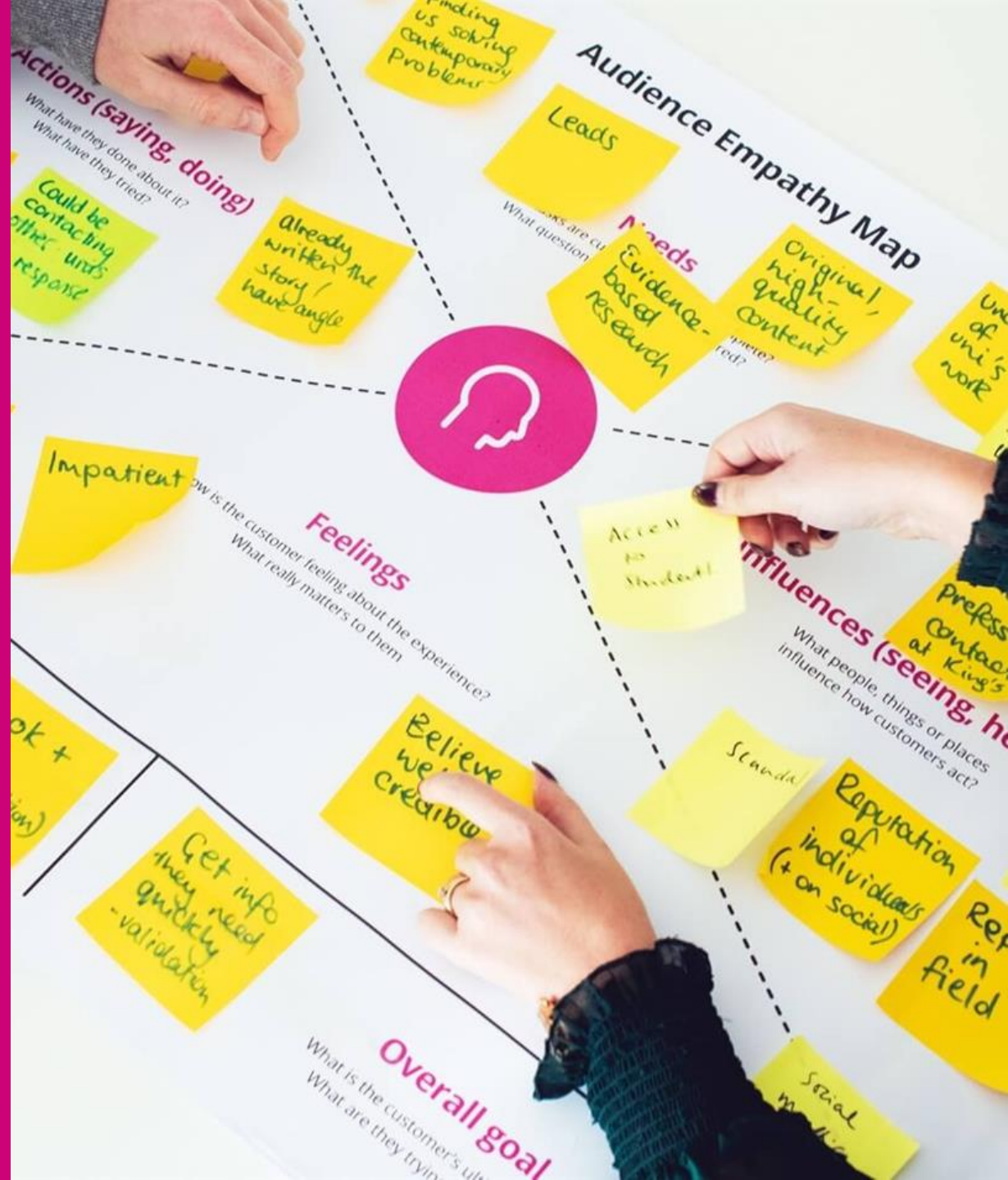# CharityWise

Understanding your audiences: empathy mapping

June 2024

A little about me...

Over 10 years' experience in content and UX.

We use empathy mapping regularly in our audience discovery and content strategy work.

Callum Grantham
Content Director

Today, we'll talk about the following...

- What empathy mapping is

- Benefits of empathy mapping

- How to complete an empathy map

- Empathy mapping exercise

- Takeaways

Empathy mapping is a quick and simple way of thinking about the 'experience' someone has in relation to a specific brand, organisation, business, issue, or thing

An empathy map is a:

✓ **way of characterising target audiences**

✓ **collaborative tool teams can use to gain a deeper insight into their audiences**

✓ **way of representing a group of users or audience segment**

✓ **process enabling stakeholders to draw insights about their audiences**

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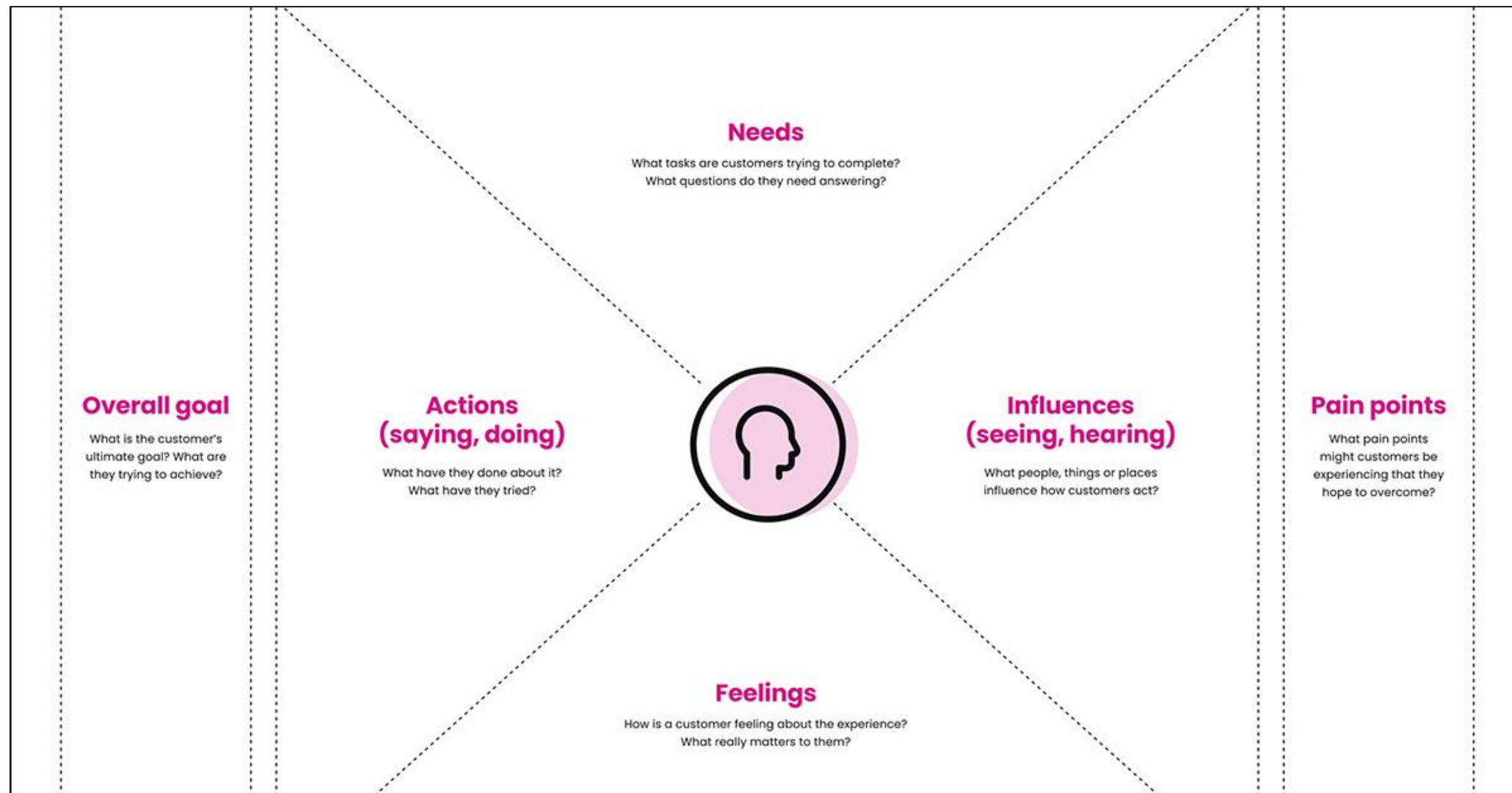- ✓ **process enabling stakeholders to draw insights about their audiences**

The benefits of empathy mapping

Despite its simplicity, empathy mapping has many clear benefits

You can use it to:

✓ encourage team working and collaboration

✓ share and consolidate knowledge from across the organisation

✓ form the basis for need-based personas

✓ help with decision-making about design, content, and marketing activity
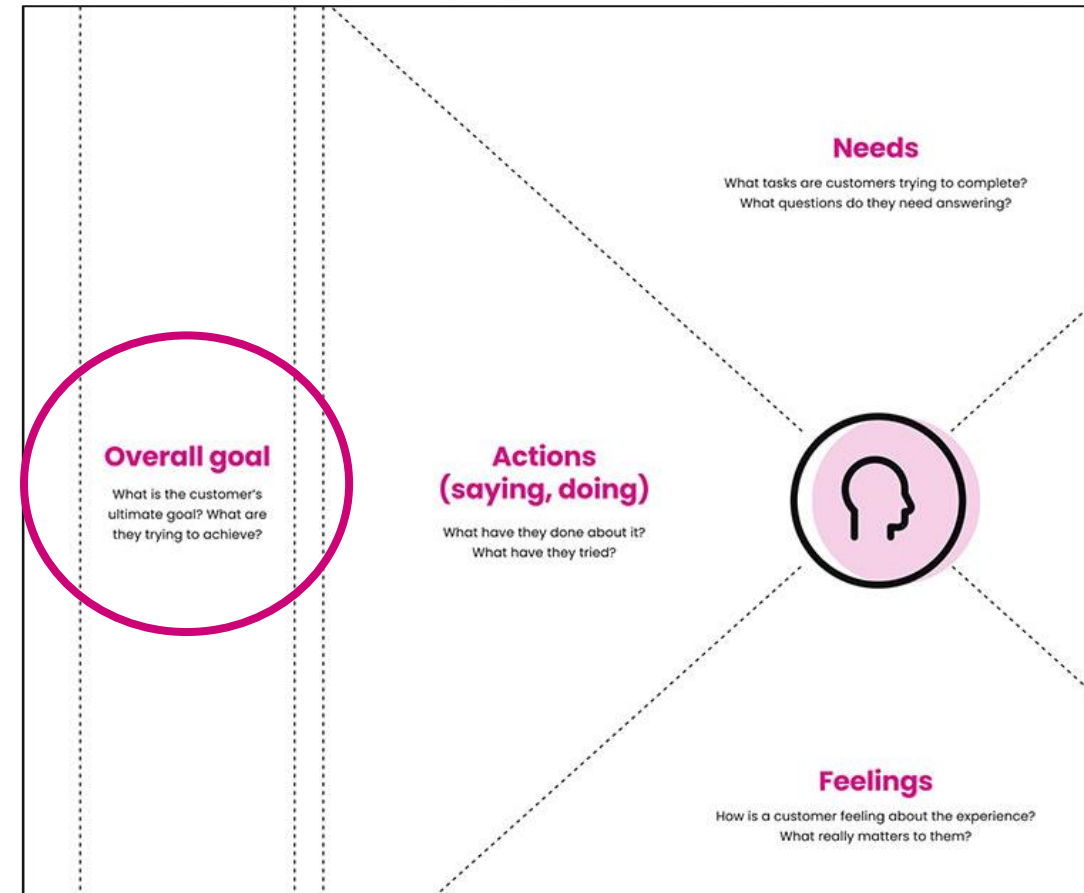
✓ create a starting point for further audience research

Empathy map template

Needs

What tasks are customers trying to complete?
What questions do they need answering?

Overall goal

What is the customer's ultimate goal? What are they trying to achieve?

Actions (saying, doing)

What have they done about it?
What have they tried?

Influences (seeing, hearing)

What people, things or places influence how customers act?

Pain points

What pain points might customers be experiencing that they hope to overcome?

Feelings

How is a customer feeling about the experience?
What really matters to them?

1 Identify the audience's goal

We recommend starting with the overall goal

- What is the person trying to achieve (not just with your organisation)

- In some situations, an audience might have more than one big goal

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How is a customer feeling about the experience?
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2 Empathise with your audience

Move on to each of the other segments

Needs

- What does the person need from the process?

- What questions do they need to be answered?

Feelings

- What do people feel about or during the experience?

- What really matters to them?

Actions (doing)

- What are they doing to help them complete their goal?

- What actions do they want to take?

Influences (seeing/hearing)

- What people, things or places have influenced them?

- What have they seen or heard that may impact their decisions?

Pain points

- What difficulties and challenges might they experience?

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3 Share your outputs

Show off your maps and let others contribute

✓ If there are multiple groups, share findings in turn and encourage other groups to contribute to each map

✓ If there are multiple audiences, you can repeat the exercise for each

✓ Remember to take pictures of the completed maps (in case post-its fall off)

✓ Share pictures or write up on an online whiteboarding tool like Jamboard, Zoom/Teams Whiteboard, Whimsical, or FigJam

Avoiding pitfalls

Empathy mapping is a relatively straightforward exercise, but there are still some things to watch out for

- Ask people to leave their organisational heads at the door (empathising is a skill)

- Get the groups right
  - ✓ The right mix of people
  - ✓ No more than 5 or 6 to a group

- Make sure everyone is contributing

- Encourage specificity

- Keep people on track (stop the solutionising)

Empathy mapping exercise

Instructions

Imagine that you are the person from the group described and map out the elements related to them when interacting with your organisation.

- **Use Post-It notes** to create your empathy map.

- **Start with the 'Overall Goal'** – these are the big/broad things so your map will only need one or two of these.

- Then map out each of the other segments – you can move quickly and **add as many notes as you can that are relevant**.

- Don't worry about discussing each point too much between you – just write and add as many as you can that you feel are relevant

- **We are learning, there are no wrong answers!**
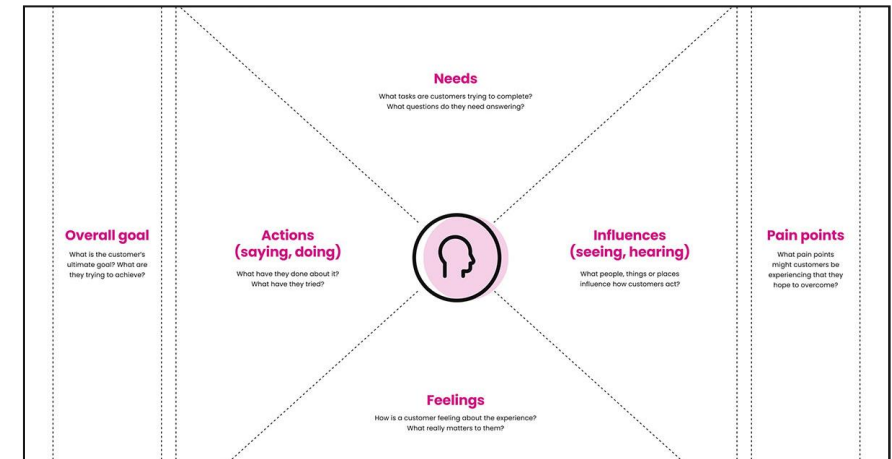
Timings

20 minutes – **Empathy mapping**
5 minutes – **Group discussion**

Example scenario

You're a small UK animal rehoming charity looking to understand the people who support you.

In particular, you're interested in the people who donate directly online.

Journey mapping

	Unaware	Aware	Research	Consideration	Selection	Transaction	Leadtime	Use	Advocacy	Loyalty
Goals										
Needs										
Actions										
Touchpoints										
Moments of truth ☺ ☹										

Archetypes and personas

1. Take the information from your empathy map and journey map

2. Add any insights from further research

3. Refine and design

Reliability Researcher Rachel

" I couldn't believe it... my dishwasher died right after the warranty ended. It felt like a **betrayal**. Now I do my homework **before** I buy. "

Bio

Rachel is a relatively recent homeowner with 2 young kids. She has had major frustrations in the recent past when her 2-year-old dishwasher started leaking water all over her kitchen floor, about 2 months after the warranty expired.

Core needs

- Rachel cares about reliability above all and is willing to take the time to do her research and compare multiple brands on third-party review sites.
- Details about quality, warranty, parts and service costs must be easily available for her to consider a product.
- Initial price is less critical for her compared to total cost of ownership.

Behaviors

- Takes several weeks to make a decision on which appliance to purchase.
- Starts with comparisons on sites such as Wirecutter, Consumer Reports, and Reddit.
- Keeps a list of potential options in a spreadsheet. Focuses on reliability and warranty.

Source: https://www.nngroup.com/articles/personas-archetypes/

Takeaways

A few things to keep in mind...

✓ Empathy mapping is a simple but powerful tool

✓ You can do it anytime, online or in-person

✓ It's particularly useful at the start of a project

✓ The 'empathy' bit is crucial

✓ Start with the goal, then fill in the rest

✓ Make sure the whole group contributes

✓ Remember to take and share pictures and findings
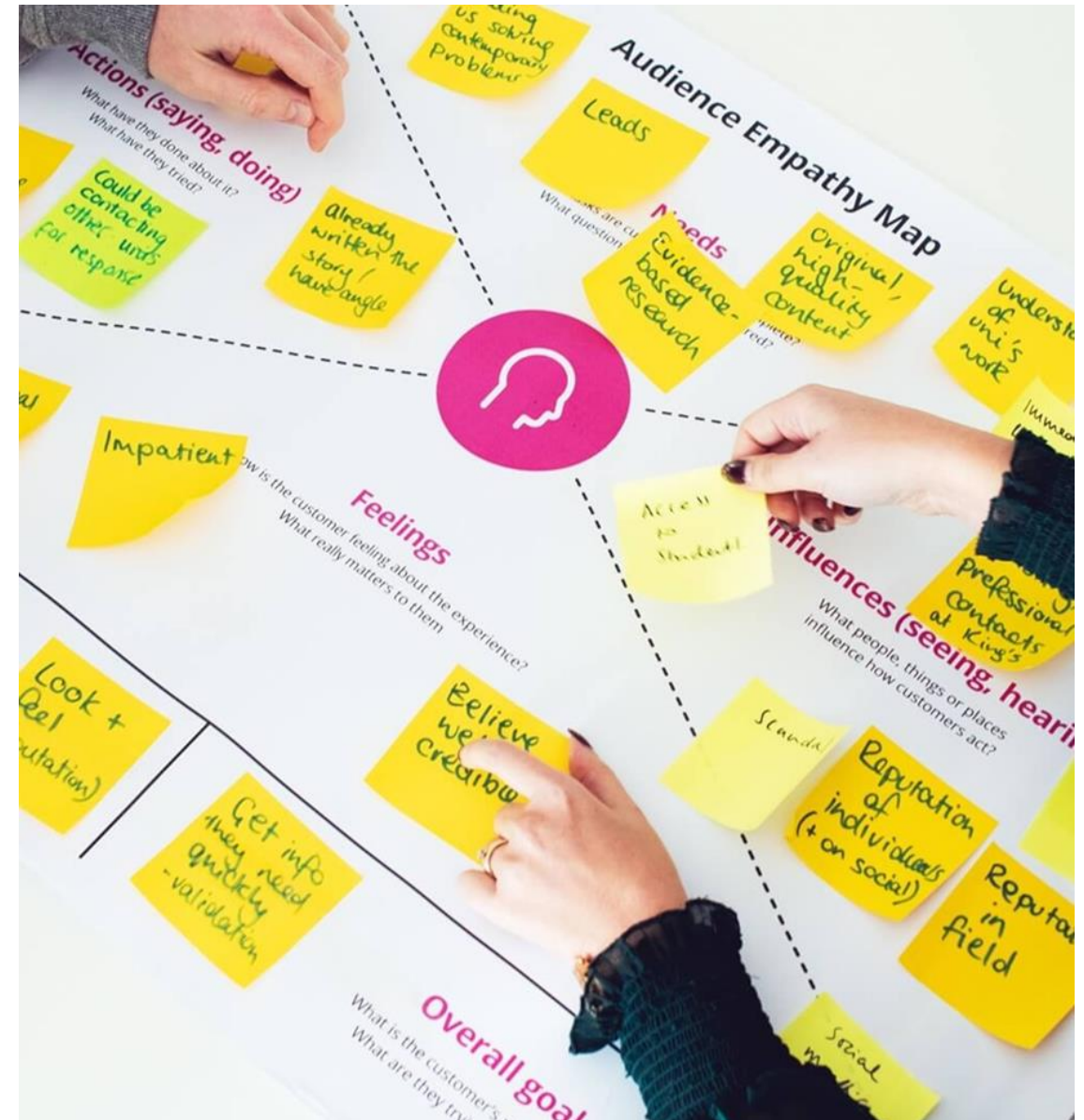
Further resources available through CharityWise

CharityWise.

Thank you.

If you have any questions, please email us

hello@getcharitywise.co.uk