



Identikit.

- Useful for:** understanding the emotions/characteristics of a group regarding a given subject or to generate empathy in a group towards a certain type of person.
- Very good for:** empathy, realization, cohesion.
- Good for:** invention.
- Type of exercise:** team..

General description:

There are various kinds of identikit exercises. One kind is the archetype exercise where the object is to describe the common characteristics of a certain kind of person. Sometimes a single generalization is impossible or undesirable, however, and in these cases you can ask a team to identify two or three kinds of archetypes that can usefully describe a certain category of people (for example this could be a physician type, conservative/prudent and progressive/aggressive or patient type, with comorbidities and without comorbidities).

These types of exercise are useful for understanding the beliefs and experience of the participant group with another group, or for focusing the participant group on the mindset of another group. Sphere of influence is another kind of identikit exercise that can be used to map the external influences of a given subject. The idea is to create a sort of Venn diagram with a representation of the type of person that is the subject in the centre and various circles around them. The participants' task is to describe the circles of influence relevant to the subject (people, situations, institutions, information media, etc.). The detail of the type of influence or the relevant spheres are things you can calibrate in accordance with the objectives of the session.

A third type of identikit exercise is anthropomorphization. Anthropomorphism is the attribution of human characteristics to non-human subjects and it is an innate tendency of human psychology. It can be a very effective tool for learning the emotions attached to an experience – for example, you can ask a group to create an animal/monster to represent their experience of a certain disease or brand.

Requirements:

A worksheet with some kind of representation of a human and plenty of space for personalization. The archetype kind of exercise can employ named captions to direct the thinking of the participants to specific characteristics and even be accompanied by stimuli from previous qualitative or quantitative research and other scientific literature. Archetype and spheres of influence identikit exercises are usually most useful at the beginning of a session; once these have been created, they can become a reference for successive exercises. Anthropomorphic identikit exercises are best used immediately before an exercise like Transforma so that fears can be addressed in some way by the participants.

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Example assignments:

- ‘Describe ZXY (subject) as an animal/monster. What sex is it? What kind of (super)powers does it have? What does it look like? What kinds of habits and habitat does it favour? What kind of character and emotions does it project?’ The worksheet could show a large cage and be accompanied by a bag of ‘parts’ with which to construct an animal/monster (with captions that describe it).
- ‘Define the key similarities and differences of compliant and non-compliant patients with YXZ (subject).’ The worksheet could be a sketch of two very similar people with empty captions for both to be completed.
- ‘Identify and describe the sources that influence the XYZ’s (subject) knowledge/beliefs regarding their clinical practice.’ The worksheet could be a simple sketch of a physician surrounded by circles that participants can name and fill with notes.
- ‘Create three archetypes for ZYX (subject). For each archetype, define what attitude they have, what they believe and how they act. What do they have in common and what makes them different? What else do we know that makes the archetypes different?’ The worksheet could contain sketches of three people, each with an empty space for writing a description.

Outcome:

When reviewing the main thing is to look for congruence and incongruence in the different teams’ worksheets, use group conversation to understand origin and importance of the diversity among worksheets.