

LEARNING JOURNEY



TOOL

What is it?

Learning journeys are meant to take your team to the edges of what they know; to visit the places, people, and experiences that are relevant to the convening question and that they know the least about. It's more than a field trip or interview - it's a sensing experience.

When is it used?

- To break through patterns of seeing, listening and knowing by stepping into different, sometimes uncomfortable, and relevant experiences and perspectives.
- To build the capacities of the team to see and work from the whole system, and to use this to generate new ideas.
- To build relationships with people who may be a part of co-creating and testing prototypes, and implementing new solutions.
- To produce a mindset shift in the team that is more profound than is possible within a typical workshop environment.

How it works:

1. **Design.** The process design team, perhaps with input from the larger team, collects ideas about interesting learning journeys. Find out who has existing connections and reach out to potential learning journey hosts to assess their interest, clarify the purpose, and if possible to set-up the logistical details. It's best if people go in (at least) pairs, and potentially larger groups if that is feasible. You want to balance creating an intimate experience, while also having at least two different perspectives on the experience.
2. **Plan.** In teams, clarify the curiosities and lines of inquiry you have about the person/place you are visiting to help guide your conversation. Figure out how you're going to get there, how/who will lead the conversations, how you're going to record your observations, and any other logistics needed.

3. **Mindsets and Biases.** Take a few minutes to individually write down the assumptions about what you expect to hear and see from each person/place you are visiting in order to surface your mental models – be honest. Share these with each other to deepen understanding of where each of you is coming from. Refine your plan as needed.
4. **Journey!** Set off on your journey, with a focus on deep listening, keeping your minds and hearts wide open, and having fun. Use your questions as a guide, but follow the flow of the conversation to take you to what's emerging. Be sure to record what you're learning, and collect some artifacts.
5. **Reflect.** After your learning journey is complete, take some time immediately afterwards to individually journal about your experience. What did you observe? What was surprising or stood out to you? What ideas or insights were generated? What did you notice about yourself, your assumptions, and your attention? Share these with your learning journey partners.
6. **Report-back.**
 - What were the high points, pain/frustrating points, in sights, and themes that you gathered?
 - Share back some artifacts - photos, other things you may have collected
7. **Say thanks!** Set up the learning journey participants to thank their hosts with small gifts, cards, or honoraria, whatever is most appropriate. It's easiest if they take these with them when they go on the journeys, but this can be done afterwards as well.

