
User Interview



What you'll do

Because you are starting from scratch and building a mobile app with no prior idea in mind, you need to identify a problem to solve.

Your task is to find 1 participant to interview: a friend, parent, spouse, significant other, stranger, whoever. The important thing here is to interview someone and learn about a **problem they face on a daily or weekly basis**.

Ask questions, listen, and learn about their problem. Remember, it's not about you. You are not your user. This interview will determine which problem you solve and how you solve it.

Learning outcomes

- Listening is more important than talking
- Understand that you are not the user
- Identify and understand a real user problem to solve
- Start to get comfortable interviewing people

Step-by-step instructions

1. Using the **Interview script** (pg. 3-6), write a list of 5-10 questions to understand more about your participant's typical day and the most challenging part of it.
2. Meet/call your participant. Optional: ask their permission to record the audio.
3. Use the **Interview script** to interview your participant. This step should take 15-20 minutes. If you can't take notes, record the audio from the interview.
4. Write down your **Top 3 insights** from the interview (pg. 7) and condense them down into a "**How might I...**" question to help guide your design (pg. 8).

Keep in mind

You are not the user. Don't assume you know their problems.

Ask open questions. Open questions allow for a greater response than just a yes or no answer. For example, "Walk me through a typical day for you. What are your highs and lows?" These questions let the participant elaborate and tell you how they really feel.

Don't ask closed questions. A closed question is a question where the only answers to it are yes or no. For example, "Do you like waking up in the morning?" The only answers are yes and no. That doesn't allow the participant to elaborate and tell you how they really feel.

Avoid leading questions. Leading questions bias the participant towards a certain answer, which skew the results. For example, "How much do you hate having to wake up in the morning?" This question biases the participant to answer negatively about waking up in the morning.

Act like they are the teacher and you are the student. Remember, you're trying to learn from them.

Ask the participant about their behavior, not their intentions.

DO: "Describe your morning routine in the past week."

DON'T: "How many times per week would you like to sleep in?"

Up next

After conducting your interview, you'll know which problem you're going to solve for your user. Using that knowledge, you'll conduct a competitive analysis to gain an understanding of the market you're addressing and target any missed opportunities.

Interview script

Introduction

“Hi there! Thanks for taking the time. The purpose of this interview is to learn more about you so that I can design a tailored app that will help you in some way. This interview should only take around 15 to 30 minutes. You may be tempted to answer questions based on what your friends, family, or coworkers believe, but I’m really only interested in your opinions and experiences. You can’t say anything wrong here; there are no right or wrong answers.

(Optional) So that I don’t have to slow us down by taking notes while we’re chatting, is it okay if I record this interview?

Awesome. Let’s begin.”

Question 1

What’s a typical day for you?

Notes:

Question 2

Describe a time of day that you find most challenging.

Notes:

Question 3

Question:

Notes:

Question 4

Question:

Notes:

Question 5

Question:

Notes:

Question 6

Question:

Notes:

Question 7

Question:

Notes:

Question 8

Question:

Notes:

Question 9

Question:

Notes:

Question 10

Question:

Notes:

Wrap up

“What questions do you have for me before we wrap up?”

Thank you so much for your time. I really appreciate it! I will reach out soon with a prototype to get your feedback.”

Top 3 insights

Insight 1:

Insight 2:

Insight 3:

“How might I...” question

Using your Top 3 insights, come up with a “How might I...” question, a sentence that will guide your work and provide focus on the exact needs that you have uncovered. Without properly defining the problem, you won’t have a clear idea of what to solve. It’s like planning a trip without having a final destination.

The “How might I...” question addresses the problem you’re trying to solve and the ultimate impact you want from your solution.

It looks like: How might I [insert the problem you’re solving] so that [insert impact]?

E.g., *how might I help the user feel less tired in the morning (problem) so they have more energy and an improved attitude (impact)?*

What is the problem you’re trying to solve?

What’s the ultimate impact you want from your solution?

How might I...