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## How to make a good interview

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## What is an interview?

- It is the most commonly used method of collecting information
- Interview is a conversation, where questions of the interviewer and answers of the interviewee are equally important.
- Interview differs from an everyday conversation by means of the participants having their own roles:
  1. The "unknowing" (interviewer)
  2. The one with the information (interviewee)

## Who makes interviews and how?

- Journalists, doctors, psychologists, policemen and researchers from different fields of science use interviews in their work for gathering necessary information.
- Different types of interviews:
  1. Structured interview, where questions and answer alternatives are preplanned and preorganized (questionnaire).
  2. Semi-structured interview, where the perspective is preplanned, but the formatting and order of the questions varies.
  3. Recorded interview, where questions are asked either face-to-face or by telephone.

## How to make an interview?

- A successful interview is:
  1. Preplanned
  2. Well managed
  3. The interviewee is motivated to answer
  4. The interaction is natural and the participants trust each other

## What means preplanned?

- The interviewer has got to know the interviewee in advance, especially his/her background and history.
- It is good to carefully plan the questions and the possible follow-up questions.
- One should learn to use the interview devices in advance.



## What means well managed?

- Interview is almost always initiated by the interviewer and he/she has to manage the course of the interview so that the predefined goal is achieved.
- Factors that threaten the succeeding of the interview:
  1. The discussion does not stay on track.
  2. The interviewee talks constantly and does not pay attention to the questions.
  3. The interviewer steers the interviewee too much ("is this how it went?")
  4. The interviewee does not answer the questions.



## How to motivate the interviewee?

- Help! The interviewee can be shy or reserved and does not want to answer the questions. What to do?
  1. Be excited about the interview yourself and justify the importance of the interview and its topic to the interviewee.
  2. Build trust by being polite and understanding. Address elderly people formally, but don't be shy or too humble.



## How to control "verbal diarrhoea"?

- The opposite of an impassive interviewee is a person, who does not let the interviewer talk and forgets the topic of the interview. In this kind of a situation:
  1. Try to return the interview on track by making a short and concise question.
  2. If you have to interrupt the interviewee, do it in a polite manner so that the he/she hardly notices it. ("This leads me into thinking...")



## The result

The interviewer and the interviewee know their roles. The discussion is natural and the participants trust each other. The discussion proceeds as by itself.

