

Elicitation methods

In the user research of my team (Team 3) we use an unstructured interview for our user research, this technique consists on an interview without a plan, structure or objectives defined before, the purpose of this technique is allow the interviewer to lead it on different topics that often spontaneously appear when making questions, allowing adaption and flexibility but with the risks of diverting from objectives and totally relying on the interviewer. Our team implemented almost like it should but with the difference that there were multiple interviewers.

At the end, only 1-2 of us asked the questions and the other registering the findings but having at least 3 of us doing the same task ended up with redundant information and some of the “scribes” not doing their task (I believe that happened because some of us believed that the others and the recording had it covered), what ended up on the team relying on review extensive audio recordings to get the missing information.

When doing the interview, I tried to ask some questions while registering findings but some of these felt off topic, unlike the questions of the main interviewers, that left me thinking how they came up with the right questions, maybe is about experience (like Diaz having a job and having done this interview more than once) or just sheer initiative, confidence and intuition like Deco? I ended up believing that it's a mixture of all that and abstract “plan”, not a complete structure for the interview, but key points and ideas annotated or registered to get back on the interview.

The way we could improve the technique is going over the documentation and other artifacts before the interview to know what do we know as a team, and what do we need, preparing some questions and key points to have a guideline for the interview, defining roles for each member of the team and encourage initiative within the members to make questions and express their doubts about the things told in the interview in order to avoid incorrect or missing information.

Even with this said, I find hard to know exactly what the point to “attack” are on a interview, because the main stuff (processes, mock-up, documents used, questionnaires) where there, we just had to ask the specific stuff and how do you know something that specific and detailed is important or not? I have the idea that it is about getting as much information as possible and then filtering, but even the filter has that problem of being selective and having to dissect a 2-hour long audio doesn't sound fun either.