

Annotated Interview Notes

[Individual Assignment]

Objectives

- To help you understand the data from your interview sessions by critically assessing the notes taken, questions asked, and insights gathered.
- To increase the usefulness and productivity of future interviews.
- To encourage reflection with respect to your interviewing skills.

The Assignment

- Work with the interview notes taken from *one* interview in which you participated, ideally as interviewer. Using an interview in which you were the note-taker is also OK. (And, if both of those options are impossible because of your interview schedule, using the notes from an interview already conducted by other teammates is also OK.)
- Annotate the notes, reflecting back on the interview process. If the notes are in pen and paper (as you were encouraged to try), either scan or photograph the notes and annotate them digitally *or* annotate a paper copy of the notes using a different ink color and scan the annotated notes to submit. If the notes are digital, then please make sure to use some consistent way to differentiate between the original notes and your annotations – you can use the margin comments feature in your word processor, or you can use a different font color.
- Write your annotations in the margins so that they stand out against the notes themselves. Make two kinds of annotations:
 - Annotations about the *content* of the interview, including summaries, reactions, connections, new questions you have, ideas for analysis or recommendations, etc. Examples:
 - *“This is the most revealing part of the interview, where the participant gets into the guts of how she prepares the data analysis that gets incorporated into their quarterly reports.”*
 - *“We should ask the next interviewee why they don’t use the ‘margin comment’ function in Google Docs to provide feedback.”*
 - *“Wow – this is very different from what P02 said about the way complaints are handled. It could be that managers don’t realize how much the frontline librarians have updated their process.”*
 - Annotations about the *mechanics* of the interview and note-taking, including what parts of the interview went well or poorly, what could have been done better, what ideas you have for conducting future interviews, how the interview protocol could have been better, etc.

- *“The interviewee paused here and didn’t speak for at least 15 seconds (but it felt like an hour!). I wasn’t sure how to respond, but by the time I thought to ask the next question, they kept talking, and provided some useful details. I guess it was OK to not say anything then.”*
- *“Their reaction here was an interesting ‘marker’ – I should have asked for more questions about why they felt that way.”*
- *“We should revise the question in the interview protocol here for the next interviewee; people in this job role don’t seem to know anything about X, so asking them about it doesn’t make sense.”*
- Both quality and quantity of annotations is important. Aim for *at least* 8 meaningful annotations of *each* of the two kinds of annotations indicated above (so, at least 16 annotations total).
- Add a final page, and write 300-400 words reflecting on overall strengths and areas for improvement of the interview, the skill of the interviewer, the interview protocol, and the dynamics during the interview among the interviewee, you, and anyone else present (such as the note-taker). Aim for an honest, thoughtful reflection in which you identify areas in which you can improve. Interviewing is a skill, and like any skill, there is always room for improvement.

[continued...]

Submission

- Please submit an electronic copy to Canvas (in .pdf, .doc, or .docx format) before Lecture on Nov. 1. Do not submit a link to Google Docs or any other site that would allow for editing to continue post-submission.

Rubric

This assignment is graded out of 100.

- Clarity and legibility of annotations. [20%]
- Quality and quantity of annotations with respect to the *content* of the interviews. [20%]
- Quality and quantity of annotations with respect to the *mechanics* of the interviews. [20%]
- Reflection is honest, thoughtful, and includes meaningful areas for improvement. [40%]
- Extra credit for exceptional annotations and reflection [+5%]