

Unit 1

Case study

Contextual Inquiry example-1(Testing a product)

- Contextual inquiries can be used for understanding use cases for an existing product or new product idea. Observing a participant navigating a product can help an interviewer understand what aspects trip them up, what they enjoy, what is unnecessary, and what they might use it for.
- A children's toy brand is considering creating a new educational technology product for preschool-age children. Using a contextual inquiry, an interviewer can observe a classroom full of children using the product, while being guided by their teacher. The interviewer can also observe some children using the product at home with their families. These interviews can help the interviewer understand whether or not the product is age-appropriate, engaging, and actually educating children as promised

Contextual Inquiry example-2(Optimizing Ecommerce)

- Contextual inquiries can also be used to find ways to improve the shopping process for a company. Interviewers can observe how participants navigate an online ordering process to discover ways to make it more efficient.
- An ecommerce clothing brand wants to improve their online ordering process. An interviewer can observe customers surfing the website on their respective devices, adding products to their carts, and completing the order process. The interviewer can then speak with the customers to understand the ways to make the experience easier and faster, such as by allowing customers to save their credit card information for future purchases.

Contextual Inquiry example-3(Designing a User Interface)

- Another great use for contextual inquiry interviews is to better design user interfaces. It can be difficult to get a sense of the best possible user interface by simply asking participants questions about what they like to see. Watching them succeed and stumble through different interfaces can be a better gauge.
- A technology company is designing a new smartphone model. An interviewer can pass out a prototype to a participant and assign them some tasks to complete, such as downloading an emailed file or connecting a Bluetooth device to the smartphone. The interviewer can then ask questions about their experience with the interface and observe if certain apps are difficult to locate or tasks require too many steps.

Contextual Inquiry example-4(Enhancing Customer Experience)

- Contextual inquiries can also be used to improve or modify a customer's experience with your brand, typically at the location site. Following a customer through their journey can give you important insights that would otherwise be difficult to understand.
- A bookstore cafe brand is trying to create a more welcoming environment, as most of their customers currently only come to shop and not to sit at the cafe. An interviewer can invite participants to the location and observe their experience with the location. Throughout, the interviewer can ask them questions. Participants will have a better grasp of their emotions and habits while they're actually performing them at the bookstore cafe.

Contextual Inquiry example-5 (Improving Employee Workflow)

- Contextual inquiries don't have to be solely customer-facing. In fact, one of the most beneficial uses of this interview style is assessing employee workflow. Interviewers can review an internal process at your business and ask employees what can be done to improve productivity.
- For example, if your customer support team is struggling to meet customer demand, you can conduct a contextual inquiry to see where you can improve their workflow. Interviewers can observe your call center and survey agents about the roadblocks they face during their shifts. This can provide you valuable insight when making important business decisions, like whether or not to invest in customer service tools.

Contextual Inquiry example-6 (Anticipating Customer Behaviour)

- Sometimes, business leaders struggle to make a decision because they don't know how customers will react to the change they're proposing. This is the perfect time to use contextual inquiry as it can help organizations anticipate customer behavior. You can analyze how customers are currently using your product or service, and ask them how that may change if you executed the action you're considering.
- Let's say you manage an app that connects people who are looking to play recreational basketball. While your product is loved by your users, you're considering expanding it to include soccer as well, but you don't know how to appeal to this new target audience. To find out, you can go to soccer fields to see how players are meeting and connecting with each other. This can give you plenty of information to determine how your marketing team should position your app's new update.

Contextual Inquiry example-7 (Identify Unanticipated Use Cases)

- Did you know that text messaging was never intended to be a popular cell phone feature? Its original purpose was to give carriers a less-intrusive way to notify customers about problems with their networks. Eventually, people started using this feature to quickly communicate with their peers, and then cell carriers capitalized on the financial opportunity. Now, texting is a staple that's included in almost every cell phone plan.
- This is a great example of how contextual inquiry highlighted an unanticipated use case for a product or service. By analyzing the different ways that customers were using cell phones, carriers uncovered a new feature to monetize.

Contextual Inquiry example-8 (Recognizing Product Flaws)

- Some unanticipated product use cases can end up costing your business. Customers are always looking to get the most from their purchase and it's not uncommon for them to find aspects that they can exploit. While you certainly want to encourage most uses of your product, sometimes you need to make adjustments so you don't end up losing money.
- Take Netflix, for example. The streaming giant found that it was losing over \$100 million each month because users were sharing their passwords and accounts. To salvage this, it added product limitations so users could only create a certain number of accounts. Additionally, Netflix added a clause in its terms and conditions that states it can terminate or freeze an account if it finds that the customer has been sharing passwords.

Contextual Inquiry Questions

- 1. "What did you enjoy about this product/service/experience?"
- 2. "What issues did you face?"
- 3. "When might you use this product/service?"
- 4. "Will you use this product/service for personal or professional reasons?"
- 5. "Will you use this product/service alone or as part of a team?"
- 6. "Do you prefer (a) or (b)?"
- 7. "What would make you choose this product/service over that of a competitor?"