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Activity introduction

Research is a pillar of good UX design, and being able to effectively empathize with users goes a long way and will help you refine your research plan before you even begin interviewing.

In this activity, you'll look at fictional user bios to start empathizing with potential users of your product and designing with their needs in mind. User bios are short biographies describing fictional people that will act as replacements for real-life interview participants for the purpose of this course. Don't confuse user bios with user personas, a common UX design tool that we'll cover later in this module. User personas include more detail and represent the goals and needs of a larger group of users.

Below, you'll find some bios representing some of the users you're likely to design for on the job as a UX designer. You'll be "interviewing" these people with the questions you created in the earlier activity, [Define your interview goals and questions](#)^[↗]. You'll have opportunities to conduct real-life interviews later in the program. For now, these sample bios will enable you to start envisioning and empathizing with your product's target audience without the need for a formal interview.

After completing this activity, you'll have the opportunity to review some sample interview questions and answers.



Step-by-step instructions

Step 1: Choose your subjects

Find the sample bios provided below. Select four that you think represent the ideal users of your app. You can change some details about your selected users if needed, to better fit the audience of the app you'll be designing. Just be sure to clarify which details you changed in your final submission.

Although it's not required, you might prefer to conduct interviews with real people at this stage. Interacting with real-life participants can give you an early look into one of the most important parts of many UX design jobs. Websites like [UserTesting](#)^[↗] and [User Interviews](#)^[↗] can help you connect with research participants. If you choose this option, be sure to reference the reading


[How to determine your research goals and questions](#)^[↗] as well as the optional readings and videos in this lesson.

Whichever method you choose, you should have four completed empathy exercises (or interviews) by the end of this activity.

Link to user bios: [Sample user bios](#)^[↗]

OR

If you don't have a Google account, you can download the bios directly from the attachment below.

 [UX Design Certificate - Sample user bios DOCX File](#)

Step 2: Conduct your empathy exercise

It's time to put yourself in your users' shoes! Pull up the research questions you wrote earlier in this module. In the same document, copy and paste your questions three times, so that you have four identical sets of questions. Then, copy and paste your chosen user bios to the top of each set of questions for reference.

Starting with your first user, review their bio. Now, look at your first research question and imagine how this user might answer it if you were really interviewing them. Do the same with the remaining questions, and then move on to your next user.

Your goal is to think through the opinions, experiences, and pain points of each user. Dig deep into how you imagine these people would answer your questions, and elaborate as much as possible.

Don't worry about writing out your ideas in complete sentences. A bulleted list of main points following each interview question is all you need.

If you chose to interview people instead of using the provided user bios, you can record interview responses as bulleted notes. You don't need to record the interview or create a full transcript, unless you want to!

Step 3: Organize your data

At this point, you should have four completed empathy exercises. Great work! We encourage you to spend some time analyzing what you wrote for each sample user and to identify possible commonalities across your user groups — are there features you can incorporate into your design that will work for a variety of users? You'll be learning more about UX design features in later courses, so it's okay to be vague for now.

Step 4: Write down how you might solve user problems

Refer back to your work and answer the following question in the same document you completed the empathy exercises in:

How could the needs, challenges, or concerns of your users be resolved?

Imagine that the users you just “interviewed” represent a large segment of the audience for your app. What concerns or problems seem most important to your users? What kinds of features might you build into your app to address these concerns? Be as specific or general as you need to be.

Save the document containing your work where you can easily find it later. You'll be referring to it again when you create personas later in the course.

Did you complete this activity?