

# Human Centered Design: Needfinding

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## Interviewing People to Find Latent Needs Assignment

You've learned about interviewing and needfinding, now it's your turn to give it a whirl. Good design often benefits from understanding people. What are the goals, problems, and contexts of the people who might use your design? How might their settings and goals inspire you to create new applications, products, and services? In this assignment, you'll first create an interview guide. Then it's showtime: Find a participant, and interview them using your guide. Finally, write a short reflection about your experience and what you learned about interviewing participants to find design opportunities. Remember that at this stage in the design process, your goal is to understand the user's goals and context. We're not yet at the stage where we're looking for feedback on a specific design idea.

The setting for this general area is transportation. You want to learn how people get around. What opportunities can you unearth for redesigning the transportation experience? Your interviewee can be anyone you like: it could be a person on the street, or if you're feeling shy, it could be a friend or family member.

[Here](#) is an example field guide that Google Researcher Dan Russell created for his class at UC San Diego. [Here](#) is another example from Steve Portigal's excellent book, [Interviewing Users](#).

This assignment should take 3-4 hours. If you have mobility limitations, perform your observations and interviews over email, phone, Skype, and/or video chat.

### • Review Criteria

The following criteria will be worth 1 pt each:

#### Setup

- Submission lists a location for interview.

- The location is a good choice for eliciting authentic responses.
- Submission includes a list of equipment, such as notebook and audio recorder.

### **Intro & Participant Background**

- Submission has an intro script.
- Intro script explicitly shares interview goals (why participant is there and what outcomes are sought).

### **Main Interview Questions**

- There are at least 8 'main interview' questions.
- Questions probe specific behavior (e.g., "tell me about a time...", "in the last week") rather than 'in general' behavior ("How often do you think people...").
- All interview questions require a 'substantive' response--with opportunities for elaboration--rather than simply "Yes/No".
- Questions are focused on the topic of the participant's transportation experiences.
- There is a question asking about a specific interesting/unusual example the participant experienced.
- There is a question asking the participant about their motivations/goals.
- There is a question asking about what the participant finds frustrating/joyful.

### **In Closing**

- The wrap-up includes an open-ended prompt for blue-sky thinking or anything missed.
- Wrap-up thanks the participant.

### **The following questions will be worth 2 pts each:**

- Audio submission is present and audible.
- Interview includes an introduction based on the written guide.
- Interview includes main questions based on the written guide.

**The assignment is worth a total of 20 points.**

- My Submission

## Streetward Conversations on Transportation

### - Script Setup

<b>Participant</b> (nickname)	Cheenu
<b>Date-Time</b>	March 2, 2021, 6:00 pm
<b>Location</b>	At his <b>home</b> , from his <b>road-facing garden</b>
<b>Reason for Location</b>	A pleasant atmosphere with sufficient visual cues would help maintain smooth conversations and elicit authentic responses.
<b>Equipment</b>	Script, Notebook, Audio Recorder, Battery Bank, Cables.
<b>Time taken</b>	~60 minutes

### - Intro Script (2 min)

Thank you for participating!

I'll not be evaluating you in any way, but learning from you about how you transit to places, what works, and doesn't work for you. With this, I hope to glean on ways in which the transportation experience can be improved for people like you. There are no right or wrong answers to any of the questions I'll be asking in this study. I'm simply interested in understanding your choices for different occasions. I will conduct this study mostly as a light discussion on various scenarios and ask questions to better understand what you would do in such circumstances. It would be best if you could give a running commentary of what's going on in your mind. You can talk about things you like or don't like about transportation. Feel free to say anything that comes to your mind.

I will record an audio clip of you so that I can go back and review things later and make sure we get everything right. Your name won't be used in connection with the recordings or the results. The audio files will only be used for peer-review and the spoken things you don't want to be shared will be censored at your behest before being opened to the public.

How does all that sound to you? Do you have any things to clarify at this point?

[Have person sign NDA & turn cell phone off]

## - Basic Information from Observation (1 - 2 min)

1. How many personal vehicles at the shed?
  1. How many two wheelers?
  2. How many four wheelers?
2. Maintenance of the vehicles
3. Brand of the vehicles
4. Check for existence of a driver / chauffeur
5. (Optional) Recency of vehicles (by the alphabetic code from their number plate registration)

## - Overview + Main Interview Questions (30 - 50 min)

1. For the record, could you share with me a little bit about yourself -what you do, your hobbies etc.?
2. What does transportation mean to you and your goals?
3. (Follow up based on response) If I'm understanding it correctly...
4. What is your most used means of transport?
5. For what purpose or goal did you travel the highest this past month?
6. (If private transport) What is your rationale behind using private transport?
7. (If public transport) What is your rationale behind using public transport?
8. What irks you the most about using public transport?
9. What irks you the most about using private transport?
10. What's the average distance you've covered in it this past week?
11. When was the last time you've drove your car? Was it long distance?
12. Is this your first car? If not, how many cars have you changed up till now?
13. (Follow up if changed a lot of cars) How does it fit in an economical perspective?  
Are all the cars first-hand?
14. (Follow up) What is the first thing you look for in a car?
15. Do you personally drive the entire stretch of such trips? If not, how do you proceed?
16. Tell me about the longest trip you've personally driven in recent memory.
17. What are your thoughts on ride sharing?
18. What mode of transport do you feel is the most cost efficient, in your opinion?
19. Can you tell me about some unforgettable experiences you've faced during one of your travels?
20. (Follow up) How did it change you?

## - In Closing (6 - 8 min)

1. If you had the power and authority to change and enforce transportation laws at the national level, Based on your experience, what would you change and how would you go about bringing this change?
2. Having been buying cars for a while, how will you go about it now?
3. Musk says "Hyperloop is the future". What's your say on it?
4. Your ideal solution?

Whoo.. I've been asking you quite a lot of questions. Is there anything you would want to ask me?

*[Hand over the compensation envelope]*

Thanks for your time!

## - [Short Reflection with Link to Audio](#)


I was a little tensed when it came to conducting an interview (It is pretty evident in the audio). Thankfully, the cooperative participant helped me ease into the mood. I realised that as an interviewer, one has to listen and have trust in your interviewee to have a meaningful conversation. Moreover, I found that interviewees when faced with open ended questions are prone to have stream of consciousness thoughts which, though ultimately helpful, might mess up the sequence of questions planned in the interview guide. I realised that the interview guide was just that - a guide.

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## • Peer Review Comments


### - Short Reflection Rubric

**From your point of view, which of the things the learner says they will do differently next time do you think is most valuable/important?**


Reviewer	 Comments
Maggie Dorfman	being a better active listener (which i also struggled with)
Yige Song	N/A
Tommy	Understanding that the sequences of questions will change accordingly and that this was just a guide. I agree with this and I've had to shuffle my questions around and do follow-ups later on. It's better to go at it like a casual talk.

## - Overall Assignment Rubric

The best part of the submission was...

Reviewer	 Comments
Maggie Dorfman	it was so detailed. you really went the distance coming up with the questions that you were going to ask. making sure they were open, but also specific and not leading the interviewee towards the specific answers you wanted to hear
Yige Song	You take this assignment seriously. Well done on the choosing of problems, and the interview. Keep doing that my friend!
Tommy	The added end questions were a nice touch to get a little more insight on how the person would handle the situation if they had the power.

One thing the submission could do to improve is...

Reviewer	 Comments
<b>Maggie Dorfman</b>	like you said, just investing more in the interview as its happening rather than getting caught up in the prep work that you did
<b>Yige Song</b>	N/A
<b>Tommy</b>	Practice a few more interviews and do a breathing exercise at the start, it really helps.