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## Components of an Interview Protocol

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### Understanding User Needs

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# Components of an Interview Protocol

**Overarching question**

**Introduction**

**Main interview**

- Background / warm-up questions
- Core questions

**Observation**

- Think-aloud protocol
- Observation questions

**Conclusion**

**One set for  
every type of  
interview  
participant**



# Overarching Question

**This is the big question you are trying to answer.**

**Keep it in mind throughout protocol development and actual interview.**

**You will not necessarily ask the interview participant this question directly.**

# Introduction

**Script for you to explain process to interview participant:**

- Self-introduction
- Goals of interview
- Duration
- Overview of components
- Confidentiality
- Voluntary nature
- Permissions

# Main Interview

## Background / warm-up questions

- Short
- Simple
- Closed-ended

## Core questions

- Open-ended
- Conversational
- Focused on overarching question
- More details in next video



# Observation

## Think-aloud protocol

- Encourage participant to verbally explain what they are thinking and doing.
- Awkward at first; gets easier.

## Observation questions

- Prompts to perform tasks
- Questions you can anticipate
- Focused on overarching question

# Conclusion

## Script for the end of the interview and observation:

- “Anything to add?”
- Thank you
- Follow-up plans
  - *Additional questions*
  - *Report back*
- Your contact information
- “Any questions?”
- Thank you, again!



# Additional Comments

## **Overarching question**

### **Introduction**

### **Main interview**

- Background / warm-up
- Core questions

### **Observation**

- Think-aloud protocol
- Observation questions

### **Conclusion**

## **Guidelines only – no hard rules**

### **Most important: Interview ethics**

### **Second most important: Answering your overarching question**

### **Variations**

- Multiple overarching questions
- Interleaving interview and observation
- No observation
- In-situ observation, with no think-aloud protocol

### **Interview protocol tips in next video!**