

# UNDERSTANDING USER NEEDS

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## Four Steps of Needs Identification\*

- Gather raw data from customers
- Interpret the data
- Organize the needs by type
- Establish relative importance of the needs

\*Source: Product Design and Development, *Ulrich and Eppinger*

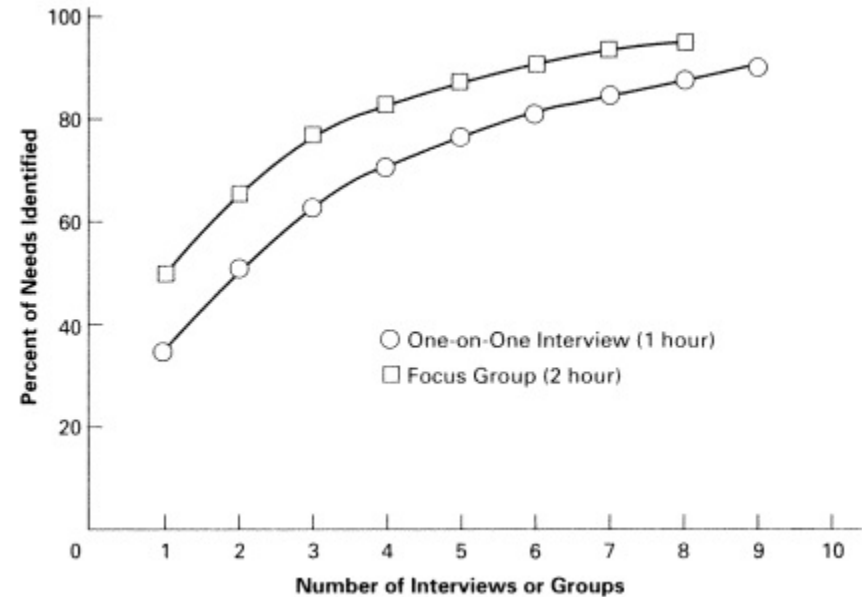
# How to Gather Raw Data on Customer Needs

- Surveys
  - Good for specific questions like pricing and product features but less useful in opportunity identification
- Focus Groups with 8-10 customers
  - Highly productive but expensive
- Interviews
  - 1-on-1 format
  - Cheap, effective and fast



# Interviews: Who and How Many

- Who to interview?
  - All relevant stakeholders (eventual user but also buyer, installation, advisor)
  - Do not assume customer segment of interest
- Is there a right number?
  - Looking for qualitative information and not statistical inference
  - Interview anywhere from 5 to 20 subjects



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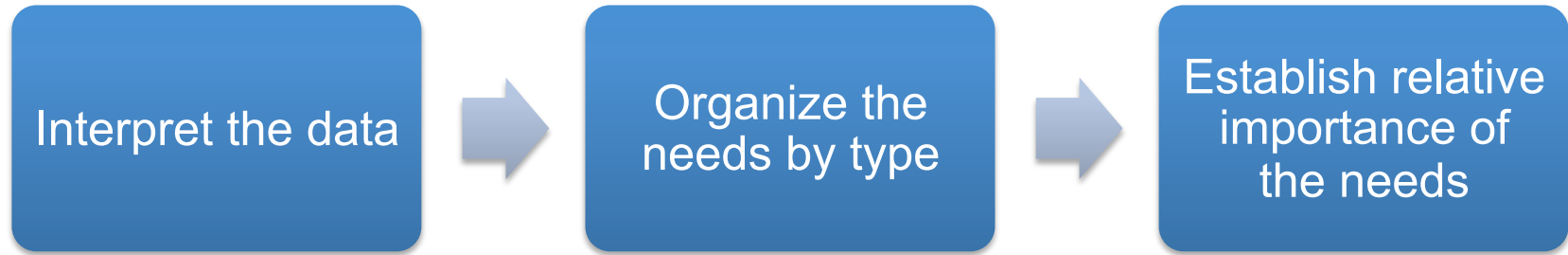
# Best Practices During Interview

- Forget the product concept you have in mind and focus on user need
- No leading questions
- Ask about current behavior rather than speculating about future
- Ask for specific examples rather than generalizations

# Interview Content

- User behavioral patterns
  - Personas: Includes some information that you associate with customer segments – demographics, roles – but also behavioral patterns
- Identify the steps in customer journey or experience
  - What the customer actually does in each step
  - Pain point & emotion in each step

## After the Interview



# Summary

- User research through interviews can save time & money
  - Helping prioritize user requirements
  - Avoid building features you think are important but not relevant to user
  - Reduce the number of product iterations needed to arrive at product-market fit





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