**Open-Ended and Close-Ended Questions**

**1. Open-Ended Questions**

**Definition**

Open-ended questions **cannot be answered with a simple “yes” or “no”**. They encourage the interviewee to **share thoughts, feelings, experiences, and ideas** in detail.

These questions are **critical in Design Thinking** because they help you **understand user needs, motivations, and pain points**.

**Purpose in Design Thinking**

* Explore user behaviors, habits, and preferences.
* Uncover unmet needs or frustrations.
* Generate insights for ideation and prototyping.

**Characteristics**

* Start with **“How”, “What”, “Why”, or “Tell me about…”**
* Encourage stories or explanations.
* Focus on user experiences rather than opinions about your solution.

**Examples**

1. **Productivity App**
   * “Can you walk me through how you plan your daily tasks?”
   * “What challenges do you face when using task management tools?”
   * “Tell me about a time when you missed an important deadline — what happened?”
2. **E-commerce Platform**
   * “How do you decide which products to buy online?”
   * “What features do you wish the checkout process had?”
   * “Describe a recent experience when you abandoned a shopping cart — what caused it?”

**2. Closed-Ended Questions**

**Definition**

Closed-ended questions **can be answered with a simple “yes/no” or a single fact**.

These questions are **less exploratory** and are typically used to **confirm specific facts or quantify responses**, rather than uncover deep insights.

**Purpose in Design Thinking**

* Validate assumptions.
* Collect specific data points.
* Complement open-ended questions for clarity or follow-up.

**Characteristics**

* Can often be answered with “Yes/No”, multiple choice, or a short response.
* Useful for collecting **specific facts** or **demographics**.

**Examples**

1. **Productivity App**
   * “Do you use a task management app daily?” (Yes/No)
   * “How many hours per day do you spend planning tasks?” (Number)
2. **E-commerce Platform**
   * “Have you made an online purchase in the last week?” (Yes/No)
   * “Do you use mobile or desktop more often to shop online?” (Mobile/Desktop)

**3. Comparison Table**

| **Aspect** | **Open-Ended** | **Closed-Ended** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Answer Type** | Narrative, detailed | Single word or choice |
| **Purpose** | Explore behaviors, motivations, pain points | Confirm facts, quantify responses |
| **Use in Design Thinking** | Primary tool for empathy and insight discovery | Secondary tool for clarification or validation |
| **Example Question** | “Tell me about your experience using this app.” | “Do you use this app daily?” |

**4. Best Practices in Design Thinking Interviews**

1. **Start with open-ended questions** to encourage storytelling.
2. Use closed-ended questions sparingly to **clarify or confirm information**.
3. Avoid leading questions; keep them **neutral and non-judgmental**.
4. Follow up open-ended questions with probes like:
   * “Can you tell me more about that?”
   * “Why did that feel frustrating?”
   * “How did you solve that problem?”

**Design Thinking User Interview Questions**

**1. Open-Ended Questions**

(Use these to explore user behaviors, motivations, frustrations, and needs)

| **#** | **Question** | **Purpose / Notes** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | “Can you walk me through how you usually use this app/service?” | Understand workflow and habits |
| 2 | “Tell me about a recent challenge you faced while using [product/service].” | Identify pain points |
| 3 | “What features do you find most useful, and why?” | Discover user priorities |
| 4 | “Describe a time when you were frustrated using [product/service].” | Surface unmet needs |
| 5 | “How do you currently solve [specific problem]?” | Explore alternative solutions |
| 6 | “What would make your experience better?” | Generate ideas for improvement |
| 7 | “How do you decide which product/service to use?” | Understand decision-making criteria |
| 8 | “Tell me about a positive experience you had using [product/service].” | Capture delight factors |
| 9 | “What steps do you take when [specific action/problem] occurs?” | Map processes and pain points |
| 10 | “If you could change one thing about [product/service], what would it be?” | Identify high-value improvements |
| 11 | “How do you feel when using [product/service]?” | Understand emotional experience |
| 12 | “What prevents you from completing [task] efficiently?” | Identify barriers |
| 13 | “Can you describe your daily routine related to [task/product]?” | Contextualize usage patterns |
| 14 | “What tools or services do you use alongside this one?” | Discover ecosystem and dependencies |

**2. Closed-Ended Questions**

(Use these to confirm facts or collect quantifiable data)

| **#** | **Question** | **Answer Type / Purpose** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | “Do you use this app/service daily?” | Yes/No |
| 2 | “Have you ever abandoned a task using this product?” | Yes/No |
| 3 | “Do you primarily use mobile or desktop for this service?” | Multiple choice |
| 4 | “How often do you encounter errors or issues?” | Multiple choice: Never / Rarely / Sometimes / Often |
| 5 | “Do you use alternative products/services for the same task?” | Yes/No |
| 6 | “Have you recommended this product/service to others?” | Yes/No |
| 7 | “Do you find the current onboarding/tutorial helpful?” | Yes/No |
| 8 | “Would you pay for premium features?” | Yes/No |
| 9 | “Do you prefer notifications via email, SMS, or push alerts?” | Multiple choice |
| 10 | “Are you satisfied with the response time of the app/service?” | Scale: Very Unsatisfied → Very Satisfied |

**3. Tips for Using These Questions in Interviews**

1. **Start with open-ended questions** to encourage storytelling.
2. Use closed-ended questions to **confirm facts** or collect specific data.
3. Always **probe deeper** for insights: “Why?”, “Can you explain more?”, “What happened next?”
4. Avoid leading questions; stay **neutral and non-judgmental**.
5. Take notes carefully, capturing both **verbal and non-verbal cues**.