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Title: USER INTERVIEWS METHODS

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*This post is a follow up to a* [*previous post*](https://www.tymerry.com/user-interview-methods/tymerry.com/getting-started-with-user-research/) *I wrote about getting started with user interviews. In this post we will deep dive into foundational knowledge on interview methodology.*

###### **COMMON INTERVIEWS PRACTICES**

* 30 minutes to an hour
* Probe for attitudes, beliefs, desires, and experiences
* Interviews can take place through a varierty of mediums, face-to-face, video call, phone call, etc
* Interviews can be used to supplement quanitiative research. For example: an interview can help you write better questions, or participants can be chosen from an online quantitative study.

###### **COMMON PITFALLS OF INTERVIEWS**

* Human memory is fallible - Humans make things up, asking them to recall a previous event is inviting failure into your study. There are [several good ways to have them show you](http://tymerry.com/dont-listen-to-your-users-have-them-show-you/) which will give you far more accurate information.
* People fill in gaps - When a person doesn't know exactly what something is they will make up something it could be and test this against their mental model. This means that you shouldn't ask a user if they would like a new feature, because chances are, they can't comprehend it, and if they can, their vision won't match yours.
* Query Effect - People will make up an opinion on anything if asked to do so. Be careful that you can get users to comment at great length about something that they don't care about.
* Leading questions - A leading question is when the question you ask gives the user direction in a way to answer the question. For example: if you are asking about visual design, colors will come up, but most users likely doesn't care about the colors. BUT if you are talking about content and the colors come up its worth looking into.

###### **COMMON THINGS TO KNOW FOR AN INTERVIEW**

* Background - Background can be broken into several aspects. If your solution involves technology its important to know what degree of confidence your user has with different technologies. Income, and occupation are another piece of background that give insights into their daily challenges and potential processes and ideas you can use to form parallels between,
* Problems - With out knowing what your user struggles with its impossible to know how you can eleviate their pain.
* Goals - If you user can clearly articulate what they think they want that can be a great starting point for where to begin a greater degree of product validation.
* Motivations - Even more so then goals Motivations will tell you about what your user really wants.

*The sources for this research are* [*Interviewing Users by Jakob Nielsen*](https://www.nngroup.com/articles/interviewing-users/)*,* [*Individual interviews by usability.gov*](http://www.usability.gov/how-to-and-tools/methods/individual-interviews.html)*, [User Interviews - The beginner's Guide by Chris Mears](http://theuxreview.co.uk/user-interviews-the-beginners-guide/)*

Prepping for interviews:

<https://www.smashingmagazine.com/2013/09/5-step-process-conducting-user-research/>

Good foundation / background knowledge on user interviews:

<https://www.nngroup.com/articles/interviewing-users/>

<http://www.usability.gov/how-to-and-tools/methods/individual-interviews.html>

<http://theuxreview.co.uk/user-interviews-the-beginners-guide/>

<http://www.uxmatters.com/mt/archives/2014/09/getting-inside-your-users-heads-9-interviewing-tips.php>

<http://www.sitepoint.com/conducting-user-interviews-will-actually-help/>

Good thoughts on techniques to avoid common pitfalls:

<https://whitneyhess.com/blog/2010/07/07/my-best-advice-for-conducting-user-interviews/>

<https://leanstack.com/how-to-interview-your-users-and-get-useful-feedback/>

Let's chat once you've had a chance to get into these - let me know how it's going.