

Interviewing

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Choosing Participants

- Representative of target users
- May be current users of a similar system
- Might also be the *non-users*

Say you were designing...

- A lecture support system
- Who would you interview?

Recruiting Participants

- Get a diverse set of stakeholders
- Use incentives and motivation
- Approximate better than nothing

Approximate if Necessary
(may not be ideal, but better than
nothing)

The Importance of Being Curious

Malcolm Gladwell on Journalism

from the introduction to What the Dog Saw

What Are Good Questions?

“Is the daily update an important feature to you?”

“Would you like stores with less clutter?”

What would you like in a tool?

Other Types of Questions to Avoid

- What they would do / like / want in hypothetical scenarios
- How often they do things
- How much they like things on an absolute scale
- Avoid binary Questions

“Tell me a story about yourself”

Good Questions

Conducting An Interview

- Introduce yourself, explain your purpose
- The interview is about them, not you!
- Begin with open, unbiased questions
- Ask the question and let them answer

(a little bit of)
Silence is Golden

Follow up

- Adjust your questions to their previous answers
- Ask questions in language they use / understand
- Pick up on and ask for examples
- Be flexible

Scheduled Interviews Facilitate Depth

Plans are useless
Planning is invaluable

Do a Trial Run first
(gives you practice, catches bugs)

where to interview?

should you record audio
or video?

Audio/Video: Drawbacks

- Time-consuming to review / edit
- Can change participants' responses
- Requires permission

Audio/video: Benefits

- A robust record
- Highlights are GREAT for communication
- Helps you focus on interviewing

Photos Are Powerful Reminders

What is are the gems?

- You've uncovered a surprise or found what is missing
- You can explain why people do unusual things
- You want to tell others about what you have learned

Share with your team

- Stories
- Photos
- Sketches
- Quotes

Save Records - It'll help later

- Keep photos, notes, and artifacts
- Helps tie all design to use, rather than debating things on an abstract plane

Further Reading

- Mike Kuniavsky, Observing the User Experience
- Beyer and Holtzblatt, Contextual Design
- Jeanette Blomberg
- Paul Dourish
- Diana Forsythe, “It’s just a matter of common sense”