
Qualitative Interviewing

4 question types

Descriptive

This type of question gives you concrete, specific stories and details. It also helps your interviewee “arrive” at the interview, resurfacing their relevant experiences and memories.

- Tell me about a time...
- Tell me about the first time...
- Tell me about the last time...
- Tell me about the worst/best time...
- Walk me through how you...

Clarifying

This type of question gives interviewees the opportunity to expand on key points. Skillful clarifying questions also let you subtly direct the interviewee's storytelling towards the areas you find most intriguing and relevant.

- What do you mean when you say...
- So, in other words...
- It sounds like you're saying [...]. Is that right?
- Can you tell me more about that?

Reflective

These questions allow the interviewee to revisit and think more deeply about their experiences. Helping the interviewee reflect is at the heart of your interview. Don't rush – give them lots of space to put their thoughts together.

- What do you think about...
- How do you feel about...
- Why do you do...
- Why do you think...
- What effects did it have when...
- How has ... changed over time?

Exploratory

These questions are an invitation to the interviewee to think creatively about their situation, and are best left for the end of the interview. Careful, though – suggestions from a single person are rarely the answer to your design problem, and you need to be clear to them that you're just collecting ideas at this point.

- How would you change...
- What would happen if...
- If you had a magic wand...